

LEWES LITTLE THEATRE
BOARD REPORT 2022

	Last Elected	Term Expires	6-Year Rule	Attendance
Chris Spinks	October 2021	2024	2027	8/8
Estelle Carpenter	October 2020	2023	2023	8/8
James Meikle	October 2019	2022	2022	5/8
Mike Palmer	October 2019	2022	2025	8/8
David Rankin	October 2020	2023	2023	8/8
Chloe Holland	Coopted for 2022			5/5

1. Governance and Management

As was reported at the last AGM, we are now a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO), and we are completing our first year of operation under our new constitution.

The working title of the theatre has, for some time, been Lewes Little Theatre. However, for the Charity Commissioners to approve a change of main title of the CIO from Lewes Theatre Club, the confirmation of members of the charity is required. Therefore, members are asked to confirm at this meeting the change of main title, (agenda item 5). All assets have now been transferred to the CIO apart from the transfer of property ownership, completion of which is awaited.

The Board of Trustees have met on eight occasions since the last AGM, with Chris Spinks as Chair.

Day to day management of the theatre is delegated to the Executive Committee (EC), who have met on 15 occasions since the last AGM, with Mike Palmer as Chair. The other members are David Rankin, Chris Spinks, Shaun Hughes and Tony Bannister. The EC are appointed by the Board and are directly accountable to them.

Shaun Hughes is continuing as Artistic Director, and David Rankin is Premises Manager.

After an extensive period of development, a new electronic membership scheme has been introduced, allowing members to join and renew directly on-line. It has been generally well received. The development team remain on hand to assist with transition. The Board are very grateful to them, as they are to the former Membership Secretary, Nigel Sharpe, who has now stepped down.

The Board have approved a further increase in ticket prices for 2022/23 to £12 for members and £18 for non-members. We feel these prices continue to represent good value, and the significant discount is a strong incentive to promote membership. Membership rates remain unchanged.

The theatre's Health and Safety, Safeguarding and Inclusion policies are being regularly reviewed, with Chloe Holland taking lead responsibility.

Rowan and Co are the theatre's legal consultants, and Mentor UK our consultants on Health and Safety.

2. Appointment of Trustees

The Board are of the view that all trustees should bring particular areas of expertise and experience that will be of value to the organisation. There are three trustee appointments to be confirmed at this meeting.

Chloe Holland was coopted by the Board in April 2022 to a vacancy not filled at the last AGM. The Board recommend Chloe's appointment for a new, three year term. She brings valuable expertise in the area of disability awareness and training, as well experience of governance and management in the voluntary sector.

The second vacancy is created by the departure of James Meikle under the six year rule. The Board recommend the appointment of Tony Potter, whose extensive legal experience as well as a long association with this theatre, will be of great value.

Finally, Mike Palmer is coming to the end of his first, three year term. He is eligible to continue for a new term, and is prepared to do so. Mike gives tireless service to the theatre, not least as Chair of the Executive Committee, and the Board recommend his continued appointment.

The Board are grateful to James Meikle for his six years of service as a trustee. He will continue to work closely with the Board in his capacity as Publicity and Marketing Manager.

3. The route out of lockdown

The 2021/22 season, which opened in October 2021, was our first season of unrestricted performances since December 2019. A socially distanced production had been staged in July, and a number of the audience management procedures used then were carried forward into the new season, in view of the ongoing concern about Covid transmission. For example, the auditorium was opened earlier, to enable patrons to take their seats on arrival rather than gather in the foyer. Refreshments and programmes were offered without charge (although donations were welcomed), to reduce the need for queueing and the handling of cash. These proved popular, and were continued throughout the season.

Production	Author	Seats sold	%
The Chalk Garden	Enid Bagnold	480	38.96
The Railway Children	E Nesbit adap Hughes	635	51.54
Getting Through to Harry	Philip Ayckbourn	455	36.93
The Importance of Being Earnest	Oscar Wilde	706	57.31
Hay Fever	Noel Coward	586	47.56
A Midsummer Night's Dream	William Shakespeare	548	44.48

These figures are illustrative of the challenge facing many amateur theatres at the moment, and it is taking time to build audience levels back up to pre-pandemic levels. For us, the challenge is not only the regeneration of our traditional audience base, but also the need to attract the new audiences so necessary to our future growth. Our programme is carefully selected by the Artistic Director with the specific aim of delivering high production values, as well as the impact needed to attract and engage with audiences new to the theatre. Our new season for 2022/23, which opened at the beginning of October, is being backed up by an extensive review of publicity and marketing, headed up by James Meikle. This will cover every aspect including social and printed media, local publicity, advertising and a full review of the effectiveness and functionality of the website.

4. Buildings and Finance

The Board and Executive Committee continue to work hard to ensure that the theatre is an attractive, comfortable and safe venue for our audiences and volunteers. All electrical, fire and safety systems are regularly checked and upgraded. Before the theatre was reopened to the public last summer, the windows and exterior doors to the foyer were replaced, and security was upgraded. The auditorium was redecorated for the first time since the early 2000s.

Over the winter, leaks appeared in the dressing rooms and bar which confirmed that the flat roof over the dressing rooms required replacement. The Board took the decision to upgrade the roof to include full insulation, and the work was completed in the spring.

Following this work, an initial survey was conducted of the flat roofs over the wardrobe and workshop, and the remaining low level flat roof to the side of the building. This indicates that all are reaching the end of their useful lives and will require significant attention within the coming two to five years. An inspection of the slated pitched roof has indicated that it is also reaching the time when replacement will need to be considered.

Taken together, these works will require considerable investment. The Board have appointed a group comprising Chris Spinks, Mike Palmer and David Rankin to arrange a detailed audit of the work required in order of priority, the estimated cost of each phase, and the options available for funding.

The ongoing task facing the Board is the need ensure funding for building maintenance and repairs, whilst at the same time guaranteeing the Artistic Director the funds needed to stage a high quality programme. Strategic financial management is an increasingly important aspect of the Board's work, and they are fortunate to have the support of Bob Leeds, not only as keeper of the books, but also in providing quality advice.

5. **Recruitment and Training**

Within the last year, training in Health and Safety, and Disability Confidence has been delivered to volunteers in all departments by Darren Heather and Chloe Holland respectively.

The risk assessments drafted last year for all areas of theatre activity will be implemented progressively, with specific activity training if required.

One of the biggest challenges facing the theatre continues to be a shortage of active volunteers. The Board are embarking on a coordinated programme of recruitment and volunteer management aimed at introducing more active members during the coming season. All departments are affected.

6. **Future Developments**

The Board are establishing a 3-5 year plan identifying projects for future development. The first priority is being given to improving accessibility for non-ambulant patrons. Further information will be given as plans develop.

At the last AGM we reported on plans to operate the theatre car park as a paid public car park. Discussions with contractors have taken place but the project is currently on hold pending planning permission. Further information will be given when available.

Lewes Theatre Club

Accounts for the year ended 31st July 2022

EXAMINER'S REPORT

I have examined the Balance Sheet as at 31st July 2022 together with the attached Income and Expenditure Account for the year ended on that date, and hereby certify that they have been correctly prepared in accordance with the books, records, vouchers and explanations furnished to me by the Hon Treasurer.

Signed

Kelvin Spain

Date

26th Sept. 2022

LEWES THEATRE CLUB**BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31 JULY 2022**

	2021-2	2020-1
Fixed Assets		
Freehold property - Site Value	£2,100,000	£1,100,000
Fixtures and fittings	£32,490	£39,566
Additions for year	£25,311	£3,754
Less 25% depreciation for year	-£14,450	-£10,830
	£43,351	£32,490
Current Assets		
Bank current accounts	£2,520	£7,311
Bank deposit accounts	£11,770	£3,774
Hampshire Trust Bank	£22,500	£22,500
Monmouthshire BS	£26,142	£38,008
Cash	£470	£485
Total cash and banked funds	£63,402	£72,078
Bar stock	£339	£339
Total current assets	£63,741	£72,417
Less Current Liabilities		
Sundry creditors (Audit Fee)	£500	£780
Net current assets	£63,241	£71,637
TOTAL ASSETS	£2,206,592	£1,204,127
REPRESENTED BY		
Accumulated funds brought forward	£1,204,127	£1,220,545
Revaluation of freehold property	£1,000,000	
Increase/(decrease) in bar stock		-£16,418
From income and expenditure	£2,185	
	£2,206,312	£1,204,127

APPROVED:
(Hon Treasurer)

LEWES THEATRE CLUB**INCOME FOR THE PERIOD ENDING 31 JULY 2022**

	2021-2	2020-1
Production Income		
Bar sales	£6,630	£110
Foyer refreshments income	£886	£0
Programme sales	£874	£200
Seat sales	£38,759	£5,976
Total Production Income	£47,149	£6,286
Non-Production Income		
Car park rental	£510	£1,150
Covid-19 Small Business Grant		£8,000
Income tax refund (Gift Aid)	£885	£0
Interest income	£291	£22
Legacies	£500	
Subscriptions	£8,132	£5,244
Theatre hire		£100
Total Non-Production Income	£10,318	£14,516
TOTAL INCOME	£57,467	£20,802

LEWES THEATRE CLUB**EXPENDITURE FOR THE PERIOD ENDING 31 JULY 2022**

	2021-2	2020-1
Production expenditure		
Backstage refreshment	£220	£0
Bar expenditure	£191	£180
Bar purchases	£3,643	£0
Costumes & wigs	£487	£0
Foyer Refreshments Expenditure	£274	£0
Hall hire	£570	-£275
Licences	£1,181	£411
Lighting & sound	£300	£0
Photographs	£65	£0
Programmes	£1,115	£0
Props & furniture	£270	£0
Publicity	£3,727	£355
Scripts	£122	£0
Set expenditure	£1,821	£95
Total production expenditure	£13,986	£766
Non-Production expenditure		
Audit fee	£500	£780
Computer accessories	£48	£96
Depreciation	£14,450	£10,830
Electricity & gas	£2,747	£4,454
Equipment	£813	£20
Health and Safety	£112	£0
Insurance	£3,559	£3,464
Legal fees		£1,195
Little Theatre Guild	£105	£105
Maintenance	£8,682	£8,257
Miscellaneous	£462	
Music	£0	£0
Newsletter	£2,080	£0
Postage	£1,167	£131
Rates, water & refuse	£1,498	£711
Software	£1,021	£874
Stationery and printing	£312	£238
Telephone	£490	£599
Theatre management	£3,250	£4,700
Total Non-Production expenditure	£41,296	£36,454
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	£55,282	£37,220
CHANGE IN ACCUMULATED FUNDS	£2,185	-£16,418

Lewes Theatre Club

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