

Charity registration number 1086571

Company registration number 03786895 (England and Wales)

TOLD BY AN IDIOT
ANNUAL REPORT AND UNAUDITED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

TOLD BY AN IDIOT

LEGAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

Trustees

S Burr
R Dickinson
J Dong
C Duberry
S Fagon
M M Hassall
C Huxley
H E O'Hanlon Stanish
A Paines
S K Scott

Secretary

Jennifer Holton

Charity number

1086571

Company number

03786895

Registered office

Unicorn Theatre
147 Tooley Street
London
SE1 2HZ

United Kingdom
SE1 2HZ

Independent examiner

John Howard FCA
Azets Audit Services
Chartered Accountants
2nd Floor, Regis House
45 King William Street
EC4R 9AN
United Kingdom

Bankers

CAF Bank Ltd
25 Kings Hill Avenue
Kings Hill, West Malling
Kent ME19 4JQ
West Malling

Scottish Widows Bank plc
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Edinburgh EH3 8YJ
Edinburgh

Nationwide Building Society
Pipers Way
Swindon
SN38 1NW

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CONTENTS

	Page
Trustees' report	1 - 11
Independent examiner's report	12
Statement of financial activities	13
Balance sheet	14
Notes to the financial statements	15 - 24

TOLD BY AN IDIOT

TRUSTEES' REPORT (INCLUDING DIRECTORS' REPORT)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

The trustees present their annual report and financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2025.

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the accounting policies set out in note 1 to the financial statements and comply with the charitable company's governing document, the Companies Act 2006 and "Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102)" (effective 1 January 2019).

Objectives and activities

The object for which the charity was established is to advance education for the public benefit by the promotion of the arts, in particular but not exclusively the art of drama. The principle activities of the company have continued to be theatrical productions, projects, artist development and education/participation.

The company's Values, mission and vision is as follows:

Our Values

Our company values are the beating heart of our organisation:

- Revel in the live experience
- Innovate and provoke
- Find laughter in unlikely places
- Include anyone

Our Mission

Told by an Idiot explores the human condition through theatre that is ambitious but never pretentious, experimental but always accessible and we avoid boredom at all costs. We are fascinated by the space between laughter and pain, and we consistently experiment with what theatre can be and who gets to make it. In doing so, our work blurs the line between theatre maker, participant and audience. We nurture the skills and talents of emerging theatre makers, and our work excludes no one. It stimulates and challenges people across the world and we remain committed to making theatre for anyone who breathes.

Our Vision

"I am a working-class Birmingham boy (Father an electrician, Mother a dinner lady) who had no access to theatre and the arts, and I felt excluded from that world for many years. For me to reach a position of influence in the cultural sector has been quite a journey, and I see it as my duty to open doors to the disadvantaged that follow. It is imperative that I give them access and opportunities to realise their potential and reach positions of power" **Paul Hunter, Told by an Idiot's Artistic Director**

At Told by an Idiot we have a burning desire and responsibility to make change happen in British Theatre. It is crucial that we use our public subsidy to give voice to those on the periphery of the story.

Told by an idiot operates on the edge of chaos in a constant quest for exploration, and consistently opens the door to risk in order to deliver the best work by continuing to develop and change.

Entertainment is from the French word 'entretenir', meaning 'hold together' or 'support'. It was associated with hospitality - when you entertained a guest, you were keeping them happy. These sentiments go right to the very heart of our Idiot values. Rather than seeing entertainment as a dirty word, we embrace it fully as the very thing we are trying to achieve. Ultimately at the end of one of our shows, we want the audience to leave the theatre with a smile on their face and remember that Told by an Idiot put it there.

Our vision is to ensure we make a major contribution to the national and international reputation and reach of the cultural sector in England by creating risk-taking, dynamic and critically acclaimed new work which consistently reflects ambition, quality, inclusivity and relevance.

TOLD BY AN IDIOT

TRUSTEES' REPORT (INCLUDING DIRECTORS' REPORT) (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

The aims of the company are:

- To make excellent theatre that takes risks
- To make theatre through unusual provocations and surprising partnerships
- To make theatre through a process that is collaborative, playful and open to the public
- To make theatre rooted in a fundamental belief that everyone is equal, and to represent and celebrate diversity
- To nurture the skills and talents of early career theatre artists
- To deliver innovative, high quality participatory experiences that are made accessible to all, through our Taught by an Idiot programme
- To effectively reach, engage and grow audiences digitally through our website, productions and social media channels
- To make theatre that speaks to and exists within the international arena
- To produce work through a resilient & flexible business model, and from a financially viable and sustainable administrative base.

Achievements and performance

Review of Charitable Activities

Rising inflation and the cost-of-living crisis continued to affect company activity in 2024–2025. Like many across the sector, we observed that audience and participant numbers have yet to return to pre-pandemic levels. While interest in international collaboration began to recover, the longer planning and lead-in times meant much of this work was scheduled for delivery in 2025 and beyond. As in previous years, our strong fundraising efforts played a vital role in sustaining our core creative programme.

Between May and June 2024, we undertook a recruitment drive for two new permanent staff members: a newly established General Manager position and an Assistant Producer role. This process was managed in-house with valuable support from our Board of Trustees. Thanks to our resilient business model, careful budget management, successful fundraising, and a significant Theatre Tax Relief claim, we ended the year with a small deficit of just (£847), a notable improvement on the originally projected (£35,258.13) shortfall. This strong financial position enabled us to designate funds to secure upcoming activity and maintain our reserves within target levels.

TOLD BY AN IDIOT

TRUSTEES' REPORT (INCLUDING DIRECTORS' REPORT) (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

Review of Charitable Activities (continued)

Throughout the year, we continued to deliver high-quality creative work and cultural content to the public in a variety of formats, while prioritising the wellbeing of our core staff and freelance team during a time of ongoing uncertainty. Our 2024–2025 programme included:

- **Leap Before You Look** – an improvisation laboratory and performance with performers with and without learning disabilities, delivered in partnership with Open Theatre and Birmingham Rep.
- A four-week run of **Carl Grose's adaptation of *The Cat and the Canary*** at Chichester Festival Theatre, playing to 97% capacity and enjoying multiple sold-out performances.
- A nine-venue UK tour of ***The Intrusion***, complete with workshop programme; our co-production with new associate company Bric à Brac Theatre. The show was a comic exploration of climate change staged in both major regional theatres and community spaces.
- A three-day residency with Burnley Youth Theatre, resulting in the horror-comedy inspired short film ***Nothing Is What It Seems***.
- **17 workshops** with schools, universities, community centres and theatres, reaching 250 participants – including 103 children and young people aged 0–19.
- **Four research and development periods** exploring future projects to ensure continued creative innovation.
- A **Fun Palace** at Peterborough Central Library, delivered with Bric à Brac, offering a free performance of *The Intrusion* and drama workshops for local families.
- A series of **five in-person professional development workshops**, engaging 41 international theatre-makers. We awarded 12 free bursaries to disabled participants and those from low-income or underrepresented backgrounds.
- The launch of ***Start Your Day the Idiot Way*** – three energising morning sessions featuring playful exercises from *The Cat and the Canary* rehearsal room, offered to 27 theatre-makers.
- **40 free Doctor's Surgery appointments**, offering one-to-one producing and devising advice to freelance artists both in person and online.
- Production of our podcast ***Regrets, I've Had a Few***, with 10 new episodes featuring guests such as Jesse Jones (Artistic Director, Royal & Derngate), members of Bric à Brac Theatre, and performer Audrey Brisson.

The year was bookended by two major creative highlights: *Leap Before You Look*, celebrating inclusive improvisation, and *The Intrusion*, a touring co-production delivered in partnership with Bric à Brac. Midway through the year, our mid-scale staging of *The Cat and the Canary* further showcased our commitment to bold, theatrical storytelling.

In total, **10,521 people** attended our performances over the year.

We continued to grow our digital presence through podcast episodes, livestreamed content, and the creation of short film *Nothing Is What It Seems*, alongside extensive community and educational outreach. These activities reflect our mission to create work with and for “anyone who breathes.”

Our integrated improvisation laboratory, *Leap Before You Look*, marked a highly successful start to the year's performance activity. Following an intensive open audition process, we brought together an ensemble of learning disabled and non-learning disabled performers to collaboratively explore the improvisatory traditions of *Commedia dell'Arte*.

The project was led by Artistic Director Paul Hunter, supported by two company practitioners, and delivered in partnership with Open Theatre's Director, Richard Hayhow. The week-long residency fostered an environment of creative risk-taking and exploration, provoking and challenging participants in new and transformative ways. Their response was remarkable, demonstrating deep engagement, artistic growth, and ensemble cohesion.

TOLD BY AN IDIOT

TRUSTEES' REPORT (INCLUDING DIRECTORS' REPORT) (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

Review of Charitable Activities (continued)

The process culminated in a sold-out, fully improvised performance in *The Door* at Birmingham Rep. The audience response was overwhelmingly positive, and feedback from our key funders reflected strong support for the project's ambition, quality, and impact. *Leap Before You Look* exemplified true integration of our company values and stood out as a powerful and joyful opening project for the year.

- 100% of surveyed performers said they enjoyed the project a lot
- 100% of surveyed performers said the project made them more excited and confident to create their own performance work
- 85% of performers said the project developed their skills in comedy
- 100% of surveyed audiences gave the showing 5/5
- 100% of surveyed audiences said they were more likely to seek out more work by integrated ensembles

Performer feedback included:

"It was great to work with people with all different kinds of access needs and to work with people that I ordinarily wouldn't get to work with! The amount of support and kindness felt in the rehearsal room towards each other was something really special."

"I think the main surprise for me was how the performance ended up looking – I didn't have any particular expectations, but I felt the final showing made so much sense to cater to the various access needs of the ensemble and created a very supportive performance environment – nobody was alone on that stage."

"Thank you. I loved it and would be up for doing more!"

Audience feedback included:

"Such a brilliant concept- simple but so effective laughed so much. I worked at Nottingham Playhouse we used to have the Comedy Store players and your production was next level. So clever I hope the young people get to do more work with you"

"Hilarious, refreshing, inclusive"

"Life affirming and joyful – my cheeks ache from laughing"

"Different qualities enriched and demonstrated the power of embodied communication and human connection"

"Great to see everybody collaborating from all diversities"

"Very forward thinking - brilliant"

One of our standout achievements of the year was our co-production of *The Cat and the Canary* with Chichester Festival Theatre, adapted by Carl Grose from John Willard's original play. Directed by Told by an Idiot Artistic Director Paul Hunter and designed by long-time collaborator Angela Davies (*The Dark Philosophers*, *The Mouse and his Child*), the show was met with strong reviews and near sell-out audiences. The cast brought together established Idiot performers, including Told by an Idiot co-founder Hayley Carmichael, and exciting first time Told by an Idiot actors, including Lucy McCormick and Tarinn Callender, in a vibrant and haunting reimagining of the classic thriller.

TOLD BY AN IDIOT

TRUSTEES' REPORT (INCLUDING DIRECTORS' REPORT) (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

Review of Charitable Activities (continued)

Press reviews included:

*** *'Hunter is a master of comic business and physical nonsense. He brilliantly creates atmosphere and absurdity'* WhatsOnStage

*** *'An absolute joy... I've not laughed more at a play this year'* The Times

'Stuffed with preposterous pleasures' The Guardian

'Unmissable. An exceptional ensemble delivering a delirious twist on a tale that truly deserves it' Fringe Review

'Astonishing... the cast are simply phenomenal' Portsmouth News

'A great couple of hours of fun' Sussex World

Audience responses included:

"I came to see the show on Monday. It was one of the best shows I have seen!!! Loved it"

"The best production I have seen in the Minerva Theatre without exception. Loved it!! It reminded me of the silliness of old Mel Brooks movies. Great fun".

"Bravo Told by an Idiot, Carl Grose and company! "The Cat and the Canary" is a triumph. Grand Guignol, high camp, Pythonesque silliness... all performed with such amazing energy. I really hope it tours, so I can see it again."

In March 2025, our associate company Bric à Brac completed a successful nine-venue UK tour, produced by Told by an Idiot and supported by an Arts Council England touring grant and donations from Unity Theatre Trust and the Frank Litchfield Charitable Trust. The collaboration has been rewarding —Bric à Brac's playful wit, inventive energy, and Lecoq-trained ensemble dynamic made for a stimulating creative exchange with Told by an Idiot. Their response to our provocation; creating a comic take on climate change, was both bold and entertaining, garnering strong audience feedback across theatre and community venues, alongside a series of 4- and 5-star reviews.

While the artistic outcomes were strong, the realities of touring proved challenging. This was our first major tour since *Charlie and Stan* (2023), and it quickly became clear that the touring landscape remains challenging to navigate. Venue teams are under significant pressure, particularly in terms of marketing capacity. In response, our in-house team played a far more active role in audience development, leading grassroots campaigns and local outreach efforts that would previously have been shared.

Touring remains essential for emerging companies to hone their practice and build national venue partnerships. Yet, they are rarely afforded multi-night runs, which are essential for building audiences and momentum. To mitigate this, we worked closely with venues to avoid cancellations and instead invested in targeted local marketing and made the case for two- and three-night runs. Support from key partners such as Birmingham Rep and Unity Liverpool was instrumental in securing stronger audience figures.

Despite unexpected setbacks, including serious illness affecting key team members, both companies demonstrated impressive adaptability and resilience. The Bric à Brac team managed last-minute personnel changes and sustained the tour's momentum with professionalism and composure. We are proud to have supported Bric à Brac on their first national tour. Their creativity, commitment, and collaborative spirit were evident throughout, and we look forward to seeing their continued development within the UK touring landscape.

TOLD BY AN IDIOT

TRUSTEES' REPORT (INCLUDING DIRECTORS' REPORT) (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

Review of Charitable Activities (continued)

Press reviews included

***** **'...bold, provocative, and heartbreakingly relevant, this is an absolute must-see...'** - Northern Arts Review

**** **'This production is a prime example of how theatre can embrace accessibility, making it more inclusive and setting a standard for future performances'** West End Best Friend

'I'll certainly be looking out for future work by Bric à Brac' British Theatre Guide

Audience feedback:

"That could actually happen. That's what I liked about it so much"

"I thought it was so creative and funny and had such an important message. It was brilliant!"

"I loved it! I loved the storytelling, the songs, the giant and small props. I had a great time and thought a lot about the environment – and cockroaches. Everyone should come and see it!"

The international market for touring theatre began to pick up in 2024-2025, making future planning more realistic. As a result, conversations were initiated with various international partners regarding activity from 2025 onwards.

2024–2025 was a strong year for the company's digital output. Our podcast, *Regrets, I've Had A Few*, continued to grow in popularity, attracting nearly 28,000 listens across ten episodes featuring guests from across the industry. We also maintained our commitment to transparency and accessibility by livestreaming rehearsal and research and development periods, offering audiences a behind-the-scenes view of our creative process. These included content from the development of *The Cat and the Canary*, as well as rehearsals and tech week for *The Intrusion*, reaching a total of 13,823 viewers.

Audiences shared: **"This is wonderful. Two legends"**, **"Exciting stuff is happening!"** and **"enjoyable as ever"**.

Throughout 2024–2025, we continued our commitment to transparency through in-person open rehearsals. These included a session for *The Cat and the Canary*, offered to participants from Chichester Festival Theatre's Youth Theatre and West Sussex's Young Carers Activity Programme. Eight young people aged 14–21 attended from Chichester Festival Theatre. In addition, three college-aged young carers from Worthing attended with their Programme Organiser. The group leader described it as a rare and exciting opportunity for the young people, many of whom had never seen a professional rehearsal before: **"Thank you again for having us — it was brilliant and the young people thoroughly enjoyed themselves."**

In 2024-2025, research and development remained a pivotal focus as we explored new ideas for upcoming productions. Time was dedicated to the development of a new high profile upcoming co-production, alongside *The Intrusion* with Bric à Brac Theatre, and two week-long development phases for a new, third collaboration with Kathryn Hunter, following the critically acclaimed *My Perfect Mind* (2012-2015) and *Napoleon Disrobed* (2018) which we hope to take into production in 2027.

Our impactful education and participation initiatives continued to thrive in 2024-2025, organised into five distinct categories: 1) Professional Development workshops, 2) Academic and Community workshops, 3) International engagements, 4) Projects, and 5) Doctor's Surgeries.

A highlight of this period was *Nothing Is What It Seems*, a three-day project with Burnley Youth Theatre which coincided with *The Cat and The Canary*. The project involved fourteen 11+ year olds from Burnley Youth Theatre who worked together to devise and produce a short horror/comedy film taking inspiration from Angela Cartwright's adaptation of *Little Red Riding Hood*, *The Werewolf*.

TOLD BY AN IDIOT

TRUSTEES' REPORT (INCLUDING DIRECTORS' REPORT) (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

Review of Charitable Activities (continued)

The project offered the young participants an in-depth experience of collaborating and devising their own work, taking inspiration from the world of theatre and illusion and taking on different roles within a film production team – from acting, to filming, sourcing props and managing sound. Fully embracing Told by an Idiot's playful approach to making work, these young people created their own film with professional Idiot Director Joe Gilmour and Filmmaker Nick Farrimond, with support from the Burnley Youth Theatre and Told by an Idiot teams. The results were screened online, as part of Burnley Youth Theatre events and ahead of a performance of *The Cat and The Canary* at Chichester Festival Theatre, to a total audience of 4321. Participant feedback included:

"This project taught me to be confident even when it seems silly."

"I loved seeing what goes on behind the scenes and how to act on screen."

"My favourite thing was getting to try behind the scenes stuff and meeting new people."

"When I looked around I could see people who came here with not much confidence and now they are speaking on camera, moving around the space in a different way than before"

"It's really exciting to work with all the equipment, because they all really know what they are doing and it's like being on a proper film set. I really want to try something like this again"

Other notable activities included workshops to welcome new students to Warwick University during Freshers' Week, workshops in partnership with Impact Theatre Company for disabled adults, a session with emerging directors in partnership with the National Theatre and a series of 10 workshop centred on making theatre about the climate emergency before and during the tour of *The Intrusion* with various UK wide community groups. Feedback from these workshops included:

"It was well attended and really enjoyable. I felt better connected when seeing the performance later the same day and hope there will be further opportunities for events such as this"

"The students really enjoyed the workshop and are looking forward to seeing the performance on Friday. They said the facilitator was very positive and encouraging."

"100% of the directors gave Paul's session the top grade of 'Super Useful' and Inspiring. Of the sessions that took place over the week, his was the highest rated!"

"I liked the workshop, I liked working as a team. (the workshop leader) was nice, she was very friendly and helpful. We played games and listened to music. You should come back again soon."

Throughout 2024–2025, we continued our acclaimed series of professional development workshops while expanding the programme with fresh offerings. Highlights included *The Essence of an Idiot* led by Artistic Director Paul Hunter, *Going Beyond Yourself* with co-founder John Wright, and a new addition to the series — *Make 'Em Laugh*, led by international theatremaker Jos Houben. Feedback included:

"The workshop was so much fun. So much work was done to make the space feel communal, accessible and exciting. I learnt so much and met lots of great people. I've been recommending TBAI workshops to my friends."

"Brilliant workshop. Jos packed in two-week worth of exercises into two days! Huge amount of physical comedy skills and tools taught by an expert. Would highly recommend."

"I cannot tell how grateful I am for this workshop! Discovering the world of Mask with John Wright was absolutely brilliant."

TOLD BY AN IDIOT

TRUSTEES' REPORT (INCLUDING DIRECTORS' REPORT) (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

Review of Charitable Activities (continued)

In 2024-2025, we maintained our commitment to inclusivity by providing bursary opportunities. This enabled 12 Deaf and/or disabled participants and those from low-income or underrepresented backgrounds to access our workshops free of charge. This was made possible through a generous donation from The Thistle Trust and also supported in part through our reserves. Our free *Doctors Surgeries* remained popular this year, giving 40 theatre makers the chance to talk through devising ideas and creative projects with the Told by an Idiot team, who offer a sounding board for ideas, advice, guidance and fresh perspectives. Feedback included:

“The Doctor’s Surgery session was a supportive environment allowing me to think critically and creatively through my artistic dilemmas, with Paul Hunter’s years of expertise. I left feeling inspired and reinvigorated!”

“My meeting with Jen was great, she really helped me to understand how to look at the big picture and break it down into achievable and much less scary chunks. Having the opportunity to ask the silly questions to someone with so much experience was invaluable and boosted my confidence.”

“The opportunity to talk through an idea and receive advice on practical matters such as finding a director that fits our style was invaluable. I’ve not come across something like this surgery before so I believe it is a rare gem of support for artists.”

Fundraising Activities

As a result of successful fundraising campaigns in 2024-2025, we received a total of £92,601 in Trust and Foundation, and Arts Council Touring Grant income.

We are grateful to the following funders for their support throughout 2024-2025:

Arts Council England
Frank Litchfield Charitable Trust
Unity Theatre Trust
Charles Mason and Naomi Wilkinson Foundation
AHA Agency

Covid 19

The Trustees have reviewed the risks posed by the ongoing impact of Covid-19 on businesses globally and within the UK. The cultural sector, in particular, continues to face significant challenges, as highlighted in industry reports suggesting that a full recovery may take years or even decades. Theatres have not recovered from closures during the pandemic and audiences have not returned to pre-pandemic levels. Venues both in the UK and internationally continue to largely opt for 'safe' programming choices such as small-cast shows, beloved classics, and musical revivals to mitigate risks. Despite these challenges, Told by an Idiot maintains an optimistic outlook and has a strong track record of producing innovative new work and projects. However, navigating this new landscape in the coming years requires careful consideration of the best path forward.

TOLD BY AN IDIOT

TRUSTEES' REPORT (INCLUDING DIRECTORS' REPORT) (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

Financial review

Principle Funding Sources

Told by an Idiot continues to be revenue funded by Arts Council England as a National Portfolio Organisation (NPO). The company also works in financial partnerships with other organisations/venues to create its productions and relies on Trust and Foundation funding for most of its projects.

Reserves Policy

It is the trustees' policy to hold a sum not less than six months administration and overheads costs as a reserve. The trustees consider that this sum is sufficient to ensure that the company can meet financial obligations.

Funds at 31 March 2025

The 2024-2025 annual budget was well managed and management accounts were submitted to the board quarterly for scrutiny. We successfully delivered activity across the year despite the continued after-effects of the pandemic making activity (touring in particular) extremely financially challenging. The year-end shows a deficit of (£1,797) as opposed to an approved budget forecast deficit of (£35,258.13) (a £33,461 improvement against budget). A significant contributor to this included the Theatre Tax Relief claim at the higher rate of 25%, which was higher than budgeted (£38,847 as opposed to £12,000).

We have maintained our reserves this year whilst being able to implement the industry standard inflationary rise on staff wages and freelance fees. We continue to pay artists and practitioners fairly, ensuring we remain a recognised Living Wage Employer and we continue to follow and at times exceed the ITC/Equity guidelines.

The carried forward fund at 31 March 2025 is £267,201 (2024: £268,998) of which £164,522 is designated funds, £9,562 is restricted funds for the completion of projects started in 2024/25, and £94,067 is free reserves.

Restricted Funds

At the end of 2024-2025 we hold £9,561 restricted funds, for projects to be delivered in 2025-2026.

The trustees have assessed the major risks to which the charitable company is exposed, and are satisfied that systems are in place to mitigate exposure to the major risks.

Structure, governance and management

The Trustees, who are also Directors of the charity for the purposes of the Companies Act 2006, present their report together with the financial statements of the charity for the year ended 31 March 2025. The Trustees have followed the requirements of the Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP) issued 2015.

TOLD BY AN IDIOT

TRUSTEES' REPORT (INCLUDING DIRECTORS' REPORT) (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

The trustees, who are also the directors for the purpose of company law, and who served during the year and up to the date of signature of the financial statements were:

S Burr
R Dickinson (appointed 7 October 2024)
J Dong
C Duberry (appointed 7 October 2024)
S Fagon
M M Hassall (Dep Chair)
C Huxley (appointed 19 December 2024)
H E O'Hanlon Stanish
A Paines
S K Scott (Chair)
S J Woolley (resigned 24 August 2024)

TOLD BY AN IDIOT

TRUSTEES' REPORT (INCLUDING DIRECTORS' REPORT) (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

Recruitment and appointment of trustees

Constitution

The charity was incorporated on 10 June 1999 as a company limited by guarantee and is governed by its Memorandum and Articles of Association as amended by Special Resolution on 21 July 2009, 26 Oct 2018 and 18 Dec 2019. The company was registered as a charity by the Charity Commission in England and Wales on 14 May 2001.

Recruitment and appointment of trustees

The management of the company is the responsibility of the Trustees, who are appointed under the terms of the Articles of Association. All members of the Board of Directors who have served for three years from the date of their most recent election must retire, however they will be eligible for reappointment by resolution of the directors. New Trustees are proposed by serving Trustees or the company's executive team and elected with a majority vote by the Trustees.

Induction and Training of trustees

An induction process has been established for new Trustees. Separate meetings are arranged with the Chair and executive team. In addition, Trustees are presented with a welcome pack, including Charity Commission guidelines, a list of board roles and responsibilities, the company business plan, and Memorandum and Articles of Association. Trustees are also offered the opportunity to attend training for board development.

Organisational Structure

An Artistic Director (part-time), an Executive Director (full-time), a General Manager (part-time), an Assistant Producer (part-time), and a Finance Manager (part-time) manage the everyday operations of the company. The executive team, made up of the Artistic Director and the Executive Director, report to the Trustees at quarterly board meetings. The Executive Director acts as Company Secretary to the board.

Risk Management

The Trustees have assessed the major risks to which the charity is exposed, in particular those related to the operations and finances of the charity and are satisfied that systems and procedures are in place to mitigate our exposure to the major risks.

Members Liability

Every member of the charity undertakes to contribute to an amount not exceeding £1 to the assets of the charity in the event of winding up.

The trustees' report was approved by the Board of Trustees.



Mr S Burr
Trustee

08 October 2025

TOLD BY AN IDIOT

INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT TO THE TRUSTEES OF TOLD BY AN IDIOT

I report to the trustees on my examination of the financial statements of Told by an Idiot (the charitable company) for the year ended 31 March 2025.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the trustees of the charitable company (and also its directors for the purposes of company law) you are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006 (the 2006 Act).

Having satisfied myself that the financial statements of the charitable company are not required to be audited under Part 16 of the 2006 Act and are eligible for independent examination, I report in respect of my examination of the charitable company's financial statements carried out under section 145 of the Charities Act 2011 (the 2011 Act). In carrying out my examination I have followed all the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the 2011 Act.

Independent examiner's statement

Since the charitable company's gross income exceeded £250,000 your examiner must be a member of a body listed in section 145 of the 2011 Act. I confirm that I am qualified to undertake the examination because I am a member of , which is one of the listed bodies.

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination giving me cause to believe that in any material respect:

- 1 accounting records were not kept in respect of the charitable company as required by section 386 of the 2006 Act; or
- 2 the financial statements do not accord with those records; or
- 3 the financial statements do not comply with the accounting requirements of section 396 of the 2006 Act other than any requirement that the accounts give a true and fair view which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination; or
- 4 the financial statements have not been prepared in accordance with the methods and principles of the Statement of Recommended Practice for accounting and reporting by charities applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102).

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the financial statements to be reached.



John Howard FCA
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45 King William Street
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United Kingdom

Dated: 08 October 2025

TOLD BY AN IDIOT

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES INCLUDING INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

	Notes	Unrestricted funds 2025 £	Restricted funds 2025 £	Total 2025 £	Unrestricted funds 2024 £	Restricted funds 2024 £	Total 2024 £
Income from:							
Donations and legacies	2	174,644	16,106	190,750	181,701	9,750	191,451
Charitable activities	3	156,675	-	156,675	122,237	-	122,237
Investments	4	5,097	-	5,097	3,959	-	3,959
Total income		<u>336,416</u>	<u>16,106</u>	<u>352,522</u>	<u>307,897</u>	<u>9,750</u>	<u>317,647</u>
Expenditure on:							
Raising funds	5	36,040	-	36,040	27,623	-	27,623
Charitable activities	6	301,985	16,294	318,279	233,614	6,270	239,884
Total expenditure		<u>338,025</u>	<u>16,294</u>	<u>354,319</u>	<u>261,237</u>	<u>6,270</u>	<u>267,507</u>
Net (expenditure)/income for the year/							
Net movement in funds		(1,609)	(188)	(1,797)	46,660	3,480	50,140
Fund balances at 1 April 2024		<u>259,248</u>	<u>9,750</u>	<u>268,998</u>	<u>212,588</u>	<u>6,270</u>	<u>218,858</u>
Fund balances at 31 March 2025		<u><u>257,639</u></u>	<u><u>9,562</u></u>	<u><u>267,201</u></u>	<u><u>259,248</u></u>	<u><u>9,750</u></u>	<u><u>268,998</u></u>

The statement of financial activities includes all gains and losses recognised in the year.

All income and expenditure derive from continuing activities.

The statement of financial activities also complies with the requirements for an income and expenditure account under the Companies Act 2006.

TOLD BY AN IDIOT

BALANCE SHEET

AS AT 31 MARCH 2025

	Notes	2025 £	£	2024 £	£
Current assets					
Debtors	14	48,700		52,396	
Cash at bank and in hand		249,652		272,414	
		<u>298,352</u>		<u>324,810</u>	
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	15	<u>(31,151)</u>		<u>(55,812)</u>	
Net current assets			<u>267,201</u>		<u>268,998</u>
Income funds					
Restricted funds	17		9,562		9,750
<u>Unrestricted funds</u>					
Designated funds	18	164,522		157,575	
General unrestricted funds		<u>94,067</u>		<u>101,673</u>	
			<u>257,639</u>		<u>259,248</u>
			<u>267,201</u>		<u>268,998</u>

The company is entitled to the exemption from the audit requirement contained in section 477 of the Companies Act 2006, for the year ended 31 March 2025.

The directors acknowledge their responsibilities for complying with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006 with respect to accounting records and the preparation of financial statements.

The members have not required the company to obtain an audit of its financial statements for the year in question in accordance with section 476.

These financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the provisions applicable to companies subject to the small companies regime.

The financial statements were approved by the Trustees on 08 October 2025



Mr S Burr
Trustee

Company registration number 03786895

TOLD BY AN IDIOT

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

1 Accounting policies

Charity information

Told by an Idiot is a private company limited by guarantee incorporated in England and Wales. The registered office is Unicorn Theatre, 147 Tooley Street, London, SE1 2HZ, United Kingdom.

1.1 Accounting convention

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the charitable company's governing documents, the Companies Act 2006 and "Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2019)". The charitable company is a Public Benefit Entity as defined by FRS 102.

The charitable company has taken advantage of the provisions in the SORP for charities applying FRS 102 Update Bulletin 1 not to prepare a Statement of Cash Flows.

The financial statements are prepared in sterling, which is the functional currency of the charitable company. Monetary amounts in these financial statements are rounded to the nearest £.

The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention. The principal accounting policies adopted are set out below.

1.2 Going concern

After reviewing the charity's forecasts and projections and taking into account the economic conditions and possible changes in trading performance, the trustees have a reasonable expectation that the charity has adequate resources to continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future. The charity therefore continues to adopt the going concern basis in preparing the financial statements.

The trustees have also considered the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic lockdown on the future viability of the charity. Although there has been some recovery within the industry, the impact on touring is still apparent. Both international and UK venues are taking a much more cautious approach to programming than pre-pandemic. Budgets for the coming year have been prepared which support the view that the financial statements should be prepared on a going concern basis.

Consequently, the trustees have a reasonable expectation that the charity will have sufficient funds to continue to meet its liabilities as they fall due for the foreseeable future and therefore have prepared the financial statements on a going concern basis.

1.3 Fund accounting

Unrestricted funds are available for use at the discretion of the trustees in furtherance of their charitable objectives.

Restricted funds are subject to specific conditions by donors as to how they may be used. The purposes and uses of the restricted funds are set out in the notes to the financial statements.

Endowment funds are subject to specific conditions by donors that the capital must be maintained by the charitable company.

TOLD BY AN IDIOT

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

1 Accounting policies

(Continued)

1.4 Income

All income, including grant, is recognised once the charity has entitlement to the income, it is probable that the income will be received and the amount of income receivable can be measured reliably.

Donated facilities are included at the value to the charity where this can be quantified and a third party is bearing the cost. No amounts are included in the financial statements for services donated by volunteers.

Income tax recoverable in relation to donations received under Gift Aid is recognised at the time of the donation.

1.5 Expenditure

Expenditure is recognised once there is a legal or constructive obligation to transfer economic benefit to a third party, it is probable that a transfer of economic benefits will be required in settlement, and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably.

Expenditure is classified by activity. The costs of each activity are made up of the total of direct costs and shared costs, including support costs involved in undertaking each activity. Direct costs attributable to a single activity are allocated directly to that activity. Shared costs which contribute to more than one activity and support costs which are not attributable to a single activity are apportioned between those activities on a basis consistent with the use of resources. Central staff costs are allocated on the basis of time spent, and depreciation charges are allocated on the portion of the asset's use.

Expenditure is recognised once there is a legal or constructive obligation to transfer economic benefit to a third party, it is probable that a transfer of economic benefits will be required in settlement and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably. Expenditure is classified by activity. The costs of each activity are made up of the total of direct costs and shared costs, including support costs involved in undertaking each activity. Direct costs attributable to a single activity and support costs which are not attributable to a single activity are apportioned between those activities on a basis consistent with the use of resources. Central staff are allocated on the basis of time spent, and depreciation charges allocated on the portion of the asset's use.

All assets costing more than £500 are capitalised.

1.6 Interest receivable

Interest on funds held on deposit is included when receivable and the amount can be measured reliably by the charity, this is normally upon notification of the interest paid or payable by the Bank.

1.7 Taxation

The charity is exempt from corporation tax in respect of income to the extent that such income is applied exclusively to charitable purposes.

1.8 Tangible fixed assets

Tangible fixed assets are initially measured at cost and subsequently measured at cost or valuation, net of depreciation and any impairment losses.

Depreciation is recognised so as to write off the cost or valuation of assets less their residual values over their useful lives on the following bases:

Fixtures and fittings

Straight line over three years

The gain or loss arising on the disposal of an asset is determined as the difference between the sale proceeds and the carrying value of the asset, and is recognised in the statement of financial activities.

TOLD BY AN IDIOT

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

1 Accounting policies

(Continued)

1.9 Debtors

Trade and other debtors are recognised at the settlement amount after any trade discount offered. Prepayments are valued at the amount prepaid net of any trade discounts due.

1.10 Cash and cash equivalents

Cash and cash equivalents include cash in hand, deposits held at call with banks, other short-term liquid investments with original maturities of three months or less, and bank overdrafts. Bank overdrafts are shown within borrowings in current liabilities.

1.11 Liabilities and provisions

Liabilities are recognised when there is an obligation at the balance sheet date as a result of a past event, it is probable that a transfer of economic benefit will be required in settlement, and the amount of the settlement can be estimated reliably. Liabilities are recognised at the amount that the charity anticipates it will pay to settle the debt or the amount it has received as advanced payments for the goods or services it must provide. Provisions are measured at the best estimate of the amounts required to settle the obligation. Where the effect of the time value of money is material, the provision is based on the present value of those amounts, discounted at the pre-tax discount rate that reflects the risks specific to the liability. The unwinding of the discount is recognised within interest payable and similar charges.

1.12 Financial instruments

The charity only has financial assets and financial liabilities of a kind that qualify as basic financial instruments. Basic financial instruments are recognised at transaction value and subsequently measured at their settlement value.

1.13 Retirement benefits

The charity contributes to personal pension plans and the pension charge represents the amounts payable by the charity to the fund in respect of the year.

2 Donations and legacies

	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Total	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Total
	2025	2025	2025	2024	2024	2024
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Grants	171,309	16,106	187,415	179,310	9,750	189,060
Donations	3,335	-	3,335	2,391	-	2,391
	<u>174,644</u>	<u>16,106</u>	<u>190,750</u>	<u>181,701</u>	<u>9,750</u>	<u>191,451</u>

TOLD BY AN IDIOT

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

3 Charitable activities

	Theatrical Productions 2025 £	Education/ participation 2025 £	Total 2025 £	Theatrical Productions 2024 £	Education/ participation 2024 £	Total 2024 £
Sales within charitable activities	145,174	11,501	156,675	96,733	25,504	122,237

4 Investments

	Unrestricted funds 2025 £	Unrestricted funds 2024 £
Bank deposit interest	5,097	3,959

5 Raising funds

	Unrestricted funds 2025 £	Unrestricted funds 2024 £
<u>Fundraising and publicity</u>		
Direct costs	63	258
Support costs	35,977	27,365
Fundraising and publicity	36,040	27,623
	36,040	27,623

TOLD BY AN IDIOT

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

6 Charitable activities

	Programme Costs 2025 £	Programme Costs 2024 £
Theatre	102,391	38,471
R&D	11,645	18,584
Education	15,027	10,545
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	129,063	67,600
Share of support costs (see note 8)	183,692	167,155
Share of governance costs (see note 8)	6,074	5,129
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	189,766	172,284
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Analysis by fund		
Unrestricted funds	301,985	233,614
Restricted funds	16,294	6,270
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	318,279	239,884
	<hr/>	<hr/>

7 Independent Examiner's remuneration

Legal and Professional costs include Independent Examiner's remuneration which amounts to a fee of £2,750 (2024: £2,700)

TOLD BY AN IDIOT

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

8 Support costs

	Support costs	Governance costs	2025 Support costs		Governance costs	2024
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Staff costs	172,225	-	172,225	149,863	-	149,863
Depreciation	-	-	-	344	-	344
Other Costs	8,915	-	8,915	9,448	-	9,448
Rent	12,000	-	12,000	12,000	-	12,000
Website	7,372	-	7,372	5,798	-	5,798
Insurance	3,009	-	3,009	2,218	-	2,218
Storage	11,605	-	11,605	10,123	-	10,123
Bank Charges	226	-	226	225	-	225
I.C.T	3,351	-	3,351	2,818	-	2,818
Travel	38	-	38	529	-	529
Postage and Stationary	928	-	928	1,154	-	1,154
Legal and professional	-	5,940	5,940	-	5,065	5,065
Board Costs	-	134	134	-	178	178
	<u>219,669</u>	<u>6,074</u>	<u>225,743</u>	<u>194,520</u>	<u>5,243</u>	<u>199,763</u>
Analysed between						
Fundraising	35,977	-	35,977	27,365	-	27,365
Charitable activities	183,692	6,074	189,766	167,155	5,243	172,398
	<u>219,669</u>	<u>6,074</u>	<u>225,743</u>	<u>194,520</u>	<u>5,243</u>	<u>199,763</u>

9 Net movement in funds

	2025	2024
	£	£
Net movement in funds is stated after charging/(crediting)		
Depreciation of owned tangible fixed assets	-	344

During the year, no trustees received any remuneration (2024: £nil).

During the year, no trustees received any benefits in kind (2024: £nil).

During the year, no trustees received any reimbursement of expenses (2024: £nil).

10 Trustees

None of the trustees (or any persons connected with them) received any remuneration or benefits from the charitable company during the year.

TOLD BY AN IDIOT

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

11 Employees

The average monthly number of employees during the year was:

	2025 Number	2024 Number
Production	4	3
Artistic directors	1	1
Total	<u>5</u>	<u>4</u>
Employment costs	2025	2024
	£	£
Wages and salaries	165,566	143,842
Social security costs	3,675	3,332
Other pension costs	2,984	2,689
	<u>172,225</u>	<u>149,863</u>

No employee received remuneration amounting to more than £60,000 in either year.

In the year ended 31 March 2025, staff costs included sums paid to actors and technical personnel engage for specific productions. The key management personnel of the charity are the Artistic Director and Executive Director. Remuneration and benefits received by key management personnel amounted to £77,807 (2024: £79,305).

There were no employees whose annual remuneration was more than £60,000.

12 Taxation

The charity is exempt from tax on income and gains falling within section 505 of the Taxes Act 1988 or section 252 of the Taxation of Chargeable Gains Act 1992 to the extent that these are applied to its charitable objects.

13 Tangible fixed assets

	Fixtures and fittings £
Cost	
At 1 April 2024	8,866
At 31 March 2025	<u>8,866</u>
Depreciation and impairment	
At 1 April 2024	8,866
At 31 March 2025	<u>8,866</u>
Carrying amount	

TOLD BY AN IDIOT

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

14 Debtors

	2025	2024
	£	£
Amounts falling due within one year:		
Trade debtors	7,192	21,351
Prepayments and accrued income	41,508	31,045
	<u>48,700</u>	<u>52,396</u>

15 Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

	2025	2024
	£	£
Other taxation and social security	2,373	469
Trade creditors	19,051	37,665
Other creditors	434	633
Accruals and deferred income	9,293	17,045
	<u>31,151</u>	<u>55,812</u>

16 Retirement benefit schemes

Defined contribution schemes

The charitable company operates a defined contribution pension scheme for all qualifying employees. The assets of the scheme are held separately from those of the charitable company in an independently administered fund.

The charge to profit or loss in respect of defined contribution schemes was £2,984 (2024: £2,689).

17 Restricted funds

The income funds of the charity include restricted funds comprising the following unexpended balances: £9,562 for the delivery of the Naomi Wilkinson Award for Stage Design in 25/26.

	Movement in funds		Movement in funds			
	Balance at 1 April 2023	Incoming resources	Balance at 1 April 2024	Incoming resources	Resources expended	Balance at 31 March 2025
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Project Grants	99,558	-	9,750	16,106	(16,294)	9,562
	<u>99,558</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>9,750</u>	<u>16,106</u>	<u>(16,294)</u>	<u>9,562</u>

The funds are held in accordance with the charity's policy on reserves, as set out in the Trustees' Report.

TOLD BY AN IDIOT

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

18 Designated funds

The income funds of the charity include the following designated funds which have been set aside out of unrestricted funds

	Movement in funds					Balance at 1 April 2024	Incoming resources	Mo Re e
	Balance at 1 April 2023	Incoming resources	Resources expended	Transfers	Revaluations, gains and losses			
	£	£	£	£	£	£		
Administration and Overhead	92,000	-	-	10,840	-	102,840	-	
Creative Resilience	30,000	-	-	-	-	30,000	-	
Digital income generating initiative	-	-	-	10,000	-	10,000	-	
Leap before you look	-	-	-	2,000	-	2,000	-	
R&D	-	-	-	4,735	-	4,735	-	
Bursary places	-	-	-	8,000	-	8,000	-	
Digital Creation of Drama Online Content	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
	<u>122,000</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>35,575</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>157,575</u>	<u>-</u>	

The above funds are held in accordance with the charity's policy on reserves, as set out in the Trustees' Report.

TOLD BY AN IDIOT

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

19 Analysis of net assets between funds

	Unrestricted funds 2025 £	Restricted funds 2025 £	Total 2025 £	Unrestricted funds 2024 £	Restricted funds 2024 £	Total 2024 £
Fund balances at 31 March 2025 are represented by:						
Current assets/(liabilities)	257,639	9,562	267,201	259,248	9,750	268,998
	<u>257,639</u>	<u>9,562</u>	<u>267,201</u>	<u>259,248</u>	<u>9,750</u>	<u>268,998</u>

20 Related party transactions

There were no disclosable related party transactions during the year (2024: none).

21 Members Liability

Each member of the charitable company undertakes to contribute to the assets of the company in the event of it being wound up while he/she ceased to be a member, such amount as may be required, not exceeding £1 for the debts and liabilities contracted before he/she ceases to be a member.

