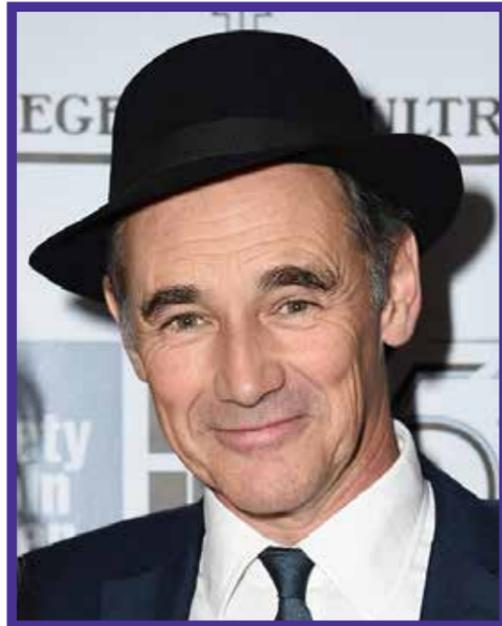


STEPPING OUT THEATRE

Annual Report 2016-17

www.stepsingouttheatre.co.uk

Reg. Charity No. 1117912



“The work Stepping Out Theatre is doing should be supported by all interested in a society that is healthy. Stepping Out understands and does not shy away from the possibility that theatre, the ancient art of these islands North West of Europe, is a transformative and healing activity which brings joy into people’s lives. If you want to hear something true, go and hear what Stepping Out Theatre are saying. I only found myself in theatre, and I hear that Stepping Out is helping other people do the same. I have great hopes for this company and deep respect for what they are doing right now.”

Mark Rylance, Patron

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Graphic Design; **Ann Stiddard**

Photography by **Farrows Creative, Michael Brydon and Viki Browne**

Reference and Administrative Details

'Stepping Out Theatre' is an unincorporated association with aims which are benevolent and philanthropic. We are a registered charity who registered with the Charities Commission in February 2007.

Charity Registration Number;1117912

The group was formerly sometimes known as **'Bristol Survivors' Poetry'.**

The group's name is sometimes lengthened to **'Stepping Out Theatre Company'.**

'Stepping Out Theatre' was founded in 1997.

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Structure, Governance and Management

Membership

Membership of Stepping Out Theatre is open to all local mental health service users and their allies with an interest in the work of the group. Involvement in any of our productions or activities confers membership. All members are entitled to attend our Annual General Meeting and vote for the election of a group of Trustees who are responsible for running the group. Copies of the group's constitution with more information on all this are available from the Stepping Out Theatre office.

Governing Document

Constitution, amended and signed prior to Charity Registration 6th October 2006. A new constitution is currently being drafted to assist the group with incorporation in 2017.

Governing Body

A Board of Trustees, currently eight in number, elected in accordance with the Constitution at the Annual General Meeting

Staff

Project Co - ordinator (Full time)
Steve Hennessy
Development Worker (Full time)
Olivia Ware

Annual General Meeting

Our AGM for 2016 – 17 was held at 7.00 p.m. on 22nd July 2016 at the Gasworks Studio, Narroways Road, St. Werburgh's, Bristol. The following eight trustees were either elected for the first time or confirmed to serve the three years for which they were previously elected.

Trustees 2016 - 2017

Charles Thompson – Chair
Joanna Smith – Secretary
Mark Breckon – Treasurer
Tom Collis – Trustee
Danann McAleer – Trustee
Tom Jones – Trustee
Emma Stadon – Trustee
Gareth Pitt – Trustee

Trustees have generally been drawn from the existing membership and we try to have a range of people who reflect the nature of the group – i.e. people who have used and / or worked in mental health services and people who work in theatre and the arts. Any group member can put themselves forward for, or be nominated to be a Trustee. For the first time this year, the group also advertised for and interviewed new Trustees for recruitment in 2017 – 18 to fill skill shortages that the current Trustee group had identified.

Project Co-ordinator's Report

After an incredibly busy year in 2015 – 16, 2016 – 17 saw a much quieter year marking the fact that we lost our three core funders at the end of a six year funding cycle, and had to replace all of our core funding. This was a long, slow process which took over 12 months and meant that we mounted a much smaller number of productions than usual along with a reduced programme of activities.

Highlights of the year included;

- Two runs of our seasonal pantomime – 'Cinderella – The Cillit Bang Years' showcasing the talents of some of our most experienced service user artists as writers and performers.
 - A national tour of a double bill of new writing 'Spiders By Night' which toured to Edinburgh, Bath, Bristol London and Plymouth.
 - A comedy sketch night at The Rope Walk in Bedminster, Bristol in collaboration with The Laughing Ostrich and final year drama students from the University of West England.
 - Alongside these productions, we ran a reduced programme of dance and music activities in collaboration with Mind Your Music and Joyofdance, as well as our popular Drama and Devising for Performance workshop with new Associate Artist Viki Browne.
 - The launch of the first ever Stepping Out youth group, attracting 20 new members aged 16-25 years.
 - A cabaret event showcasing short pieces featuring individual members was organised for the AGM in July. Further cabaret events are planned for 2017.
- We continued to work with seven poets towards a large scale event planned for 2017 when we will publish seven new anthologies of poetry by local service users. The Director of the Cheltenham Poetry Festival and other local poets and writers are working with us on this project.
 - We are currently developing several new projects for production in 2017/18 including two more plays about R. D. Laing, an adaptation of Will Self's novel 'Great Apes' in collaboration with the writer and a new production of Sir John Vanbrugh's restoration comedy 'The Provok'd Wife,' at Kings Weston House, which Vanbrugh himself designed.
 - We continue to help service users locally and across the country by setting up and supporting new theatre and arts projects initiatives with service users such as Polar Bear Theatre and Joyofdance in Bristol, Arts Etcetera in Kidderminster and Coffee House Theatre in Plymouth.

Sadly, the funding for our Deputy Project Co ordinator was lost in early 2016, and after six years in post, Ann Stiddard came off as a payroll worker although she continues as very much part of our freelance team. Funding for the Project Co ordinator post from the same Big Lottery Fund grant was also lost, but fortunately a new grant from the Lloyds Bank Foundation will continue funding this post until 2019.

We were also fortunate enough to secure funding for a new post of Development Worker, mainly through a new grant from the People's Health Trust. Olivia Ware was appointed to this post in early 2016.

2016 - 17 was our nineteenth year as a group and our tenth year of operation as a registered charity.

Progress on The Aims and Objectives of Stepping Out Theatre 2016 / 17

Our charitable aims and objectives as set out in our constitution are;

- 1) To relieve the conditions of mental health service users through the medium of theatre.
 - 2) To advance the education of the public about mental health in order to raise their awareness, by producing plays which deal with this issue and counter negative stereotypes of people with mental health problems.
 - 3) To advance the education and training of mental health service users and their allies to develop their creative talents, build supportive networks and produce high quality theatre on mental health themes.
- 1) Mental health service users have been offered a diverse range of therapeutic creative activities, as well as training bursaries to help with their own creative development. They have also been offered membership of a supportive network and a busy programme of shared activities.
 - 2) We mounted a much smaller number of individual productions this year, but both productions raised public awareness of mental health issues and challenged negative stereotypes. These productions were performed in front of hundreds of people in Bristol, Bath, London, Plymouth and Edinburgh.
 - 3) As well as producing high quality theatre productions on mental health themes, this year's work offered more new education and training opportunities to service users and their allies to build their creative talents in the way we do best – by creating good theatre.

As the Project Co - ordinator's report makes clear, we can claim to have made considerable progress towards these aims this year.

External Evaluation

As part of our preparations for the three year programme of work, 2016 – 19, Stepping Out Theatre commissioned a new External Evaluation of the group from Prof. Steve Onyett of Exeter University who conducted our last evaluation some years ago. This evaluation interviewed 58 group members, and was conducted over a six month period. It was a substantial and detailed piece of research involving email, postal and online questionnaires, in depth interviews and several site visits to Stepping Out events, activities and productions. The Report has been submitted to Lloyds Bank, the Big Lottery Fund, The Henry Smith Charity, the People's Health Trust and other funders. You can read and download a copy of the full Report by clicking on the appropriate link on our website.

The Executive Summary of the new Evaluation was as follows;

- The survey achieved a very positive response rate (58) from more than half of the potential population of people who might have responded. Six people were interviewed in more depth. The sample was very diverse, with 79% still actively involved with SOT. The average duration of involvement was seven years. Most people had multiple involvements in SOT with acting and going on social trips being the most frequent forms of involvement. 67% of the sample was current or past users of mental health services.
- Global ratings of the experience and outcome of involvement with SOT were extremely positive. Involvement appeared to have the biggest impact in expanding the range of friends and contacts creating a sense of belonging and significantly reducing feelings of isolation and loneliness. This was created through the establishment of a highly accepting, safe and welcoming environment characterised by practical and emotional support.
- Another very significant area of impact was the development of increased confidence and self-esteem through the

creation of opportunities to learn and practice new and socially valued skills. Almost the whole sample felt that SOT had helped them develop new skills to some extent.

- For many the non-judgemental and flexible approach taken to people's mental health problems was an important feature, both from the perspective of people deriving a new perspective on their own challenges, and in being able to offer support to others.
- A sense of achievement in creating a socially valued, intelligent and challenging piece of work that impacted on people's awareness and understanding of mental health issues was also important for some.
- 80% of participants reported that involvement had a positive impact on their mental health to some degree. For 27% this impact was judged to be "huge".
- The most widely reported improvement in mental health was in reduced depression. People felt that SOT had helped through providing human contact, friendships, and a chance to belong. It provided purpose and direction and a sense of being valued.
- 70% judged that there had been some positive effect on their use of mental health services with around 30% of those who had used mental health services feeling that there had been some preventative effect with respect to the risk of hospitalisation.
- Involvement also had an impact on participants' self-assessment of their ability to obtain paid or voluntary work, or educational opportunities, though to a lesser degree than the outcomes described above. It had also had a positively rated effect regarding physical health, reliability and use of forms of coping such as alcohol and drugs, though again to a more limited degree than the large impacts described above.



- Exploration of the effect of SOT involvement on feelings about oneself as a mental health service user echoed the findings above in stressing a sense of being part of something, and achieving a new level of confidence and self esteem that promoted an identity beyond being a mental health service user. Being creative among others experiencing mental health difficulties was experienced as empowering and validating.
- Inquiry into the effect on feelings about mental health services and the people that use them generated a strong critique of mainstream mental health services as overstretched, underfunded and often coercive. The importance of SOT as a non-stigmatising, creative, person-centred independent resource in this context was further highlighted. People also underlined the value they attached to deeper relationships with people with mental health problems, and the greater awareness of mental health issues that this had engendered.
- Where people were able to identify concerns or difficulties about SOT involvement these often centred on difficult interpersonal dynamics and issues surrounding challenging behaviours that risked compromising the experience for others. The dilemma of providing an alternative to mainstream services while also needing to maintain some duty of care to people at some risk to themselves and others was explored.

- In exploring hopes for the future of SOT, people clearly wanted the work that was already making such a significant difference to people's lives to continue while also urging significant expansion so more productions could be undertaken, in more locations and helping more people. People sought more publicity and recognition for this important and unusual work; unusual in that it brought together professional and non-professional actors and brings challenging high quality work to larger audiences. The need for increased and secure funding was strongly underlined to maintain and expand the range of activities.

- Internally there was a call for spreading responsibility among a wider staff group in order to reduce the burden on the Project Co-ordinator and to free up capacity for fundraising.
- The evaluation process itself was judged positively as comprehensive, easy, and well structured.

The group were delighted with the ringing endorsement of our effectiveness and our methods that emerged from this Evaluation. Funders have been similarly impressed with the conclusions that Steve Onyett's new research has come to and it has been instrumental in securing new three year grants for the group.

There was a very sad postscript to the evaluation process. A few days after delivering the final draft of his Evaluation, Steve Onyett died suddenly of a heart attack while taking part in a fundraising bicycle ride in Palestine to raise money for MAP (Medical Aid for Palestinians). Steve was just 53. Group members were involved in helping to produce a CD and organise a memorial event for him in the Spring of 2016. Besides conducting two rigorous academic evaluations, Steve was a long term supporter of Stepping Out's work who provided personal support and coaching to group members as well as attending countless productions as an audience member over many years. He is sadly missed. A second event in his memory commemorating his work with Stepping Out Theatre and Mind Your Music is being organised in the summer of 2017.

Productions 2016 – 17



Spiders By Night

A double bill of swift and strange scuttling ...

Waiting for ISON by Emma Staddon

Through a telescope in his attic, a spellbound man follows the course of the comet ISON, enthralled. But isolation starts to dissolve his reality with the arrival of some new eight legged friends . .

Insider by Katherine Melmore

A spider scuttles across the ceiling of a psychiatric ward. But minutes ago this spider was a young woman. She's once again trapped. Magical transformation or supernatural malice?



We have been working with Plymouth based writer Katherine Melmore for four years now and helped her to set up her own company, Coffee House Theatre. Following on from our rehearsed reading of her play 'Spell Me Slowly', in 2015 we produced her monologue 'Insider' with Stepping Out Trustee Emma Staddon playing the young woman. This piece was first performed at the Stepping Out AGM in 2015, and again at the Rose Theatre in London later that year.

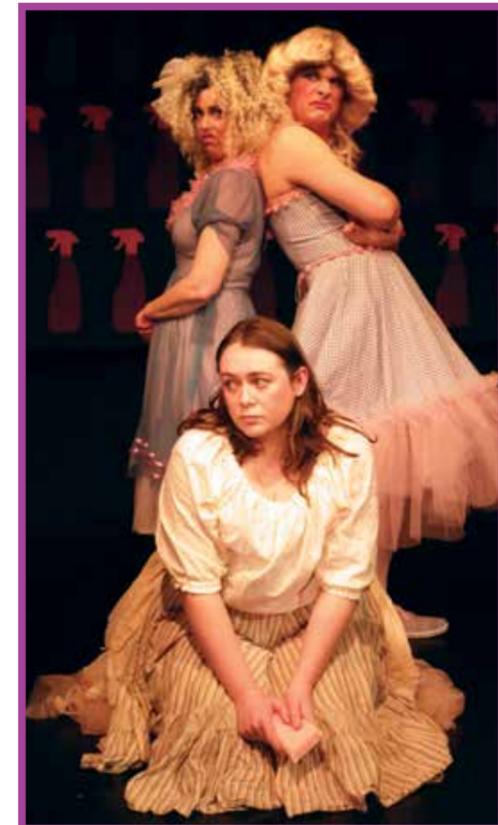
Katherine's piece was combined with 'Waiting For Ison' by Stepping Out Trustee Emma Staddon. Both pieces were further developed with the help of an Arts Council grant and then toured to Bristol, Bath, the Edinburgh Festival, London and Plymouth in 2016 – 17.



Cinderella – The Cillit Bang Years!

It's the evening of the Cillit Bang Cleaners Ball but Cyndi Shine won't be going. Cyndi helped her father build his cleaning company into the best in Bristol. But those happy glittering days are gone. With her father dead and her stepmother and evil twin sisters driving the company into the ground. Now all Cyndi ever does is clean. Can her only friend Henry (half hoover/half man) Buttons help? Not exactly but he knows a woman that can. And with Lily Surfaces, a 1970s Corrie St fairy godmother, on the case maybe Cyndi can go to the ball!

Pantomime has long played a part in Stepping Out's large scale productions, but this was our first full foray into the genre. Written, directed and performed entirely by group members, it had a sellout run at the Alma Tavern Theatre. Sadly, funding cuts prevented the group taking the show up to the Edinburgh Fringe Festival in 2016 as we had hoped, but the show was revived for Xmas and New Year 2016 – 17 when it had a second sellout run at the Alma.





Message Not Received

Over 10 weeks, members of the newly established Stepping Out youth group went through a devising process exploring issues that were important to them. The theme of technology and its possible and negative effects on people emerged and they were accelerated into a digital world run by machines and robots.

The play was directed by Chloe Masterton and performed in front of 70 people at the event space in Hamilton House.

Devised by young people at Stepping Out Theatre



Super Me

A celebration devised by Stepping Out Members

*We have been othered, labelled, put into boxes and left outside in the cold.
Because we have struggled.
Because at times, it has been difficult.
We have encountered the bully devil, and experienced the terrible darkness.
We have come face to face with the na na na negative and been shaped by the narcissist.
So we dared. We dared raise up our voices in speech and in chatter.
We have seen with our hearts and laughed at adversity.
We have picked up our shopping bags and hummed our way through.*

*We are 20 people with experience of mental illness.
We have been on a journey.
As part of mental health awareness week.
We want to share a little bit of that with you.
Come and celebrate with us?*

SuperMe was performed by the adult group who boldly share their own experiences of mental illness in an interactive performance at The Wardrobe Theatre. Directed by Viki Browne who brought her own unique style of bringing autobiographies alive on stage, the group broke down 'the third wall' of theatre and invited the audience to learn about their struggles and celebrate their feats.



Feedback from Audiences / Performers and Reviews



A selection of what audience members, performers and reviewers said about our productions in 2016 - 17.

Cinderella – The Cillit Bang Years!

"A brilliant twist on a classic story. Love the music numbers and double entendres."

"A great alternative to the traditional Christmas panto - enjoyed by kids and adults alike. A polished performance."

"We were very impressed by their acting skills. The humour was timed to perfection and they drew in the audience with clever craft and improvisation. It was a dazzling performance."



Spiders By Night

"Two lyrical, intense, haunting explorations of obsession. Sometimes poetic and beautiful, occasionally gruesome, and often very funny. I was genuinely spellbound. Beautiful writing and subtle and nuanced performances from two very talented actors."

"Both pieces were well written, thought provoking and well acted. Physically fantastic."

"The movement and monologues combined were really inspiring. The stories made me think of old fashioned fairytales and really consider life through all other's eyes. Brilliant."

"Extremely well-acted and the unusual writing took me to places I wasn't expecting to go . . . eerie, but a vein of bizarre comedy prevents either piece from becoming bleak . . . incredibly poetic and brought to life by well-judged changes in lighting . . . The writing is incredibly immersive and sensual . . . both pieces wrap the audience in their haunting atmosphere."

Simon Fearn, Broadway Baby

" . . . Intense, obsessive, compulsive and disturbing . . . The fundamental essence of simple story telling shines out with these two short performances."

John Kennedy, The Edinburgh Reporter

"Doing Spiders by Night has helped me in my everyday life .. it has helped me see that I shouldn't hide my disability . I have never use my crutches before on stage I always left them backstage . But doing this I realise my disability doesn't stop me from doing things if anything it helps me . I can now do a lot more than I use to all because I trust in my crutches and that's all down to using them in Spiders by Night." **Performer**



Super Me

"I thought it was a brilliant, anarchic, honest glimpse into the lives of the participant's stories of being human and sometimes not being OK. And THAT is Ok. Thank you for sharing and thank you for the joy"

"It was fabulous, informative, brave and very well presented. You covered a lot of important issues but I was able to watch and smile and laugh all the way through."

"I found the whole experience very organic and unique. I enjoyed the obvious development that all participants went through" **Performer**



Message Not Received

"Genuinely enjoyed the performance! Humorous and to the point. A real eye-opener in today's technology and just how the society is out of touch with communication today. Really liked the concept."

"Really creative piece of work, great seeing young generation's ideas. Skilful performance techniques - enabling young people to have a pride in their work. Team work and trust development really apparent."

"Stepping Out has made me more confident to speak openly about mental health and to not be ashamed of it" **Performer**

"This project has been really up lifting and just amazing. I feel like I got to create lots of new friendships and have gained confidence." **Performer**

Poetry Work at The Square Club Cafe and Elsewhere

Over recent years, our poetry work focused on producing poetry anthologies by current and past Fromeside Medium Secure Hospital service users, in particular L.S. Kimberley and Thomas Glover. For both service users concerned, this was the fulfilment of a lifetime's ambition. Three Fromeside anthologies were published with launch events at the Bristol Old Vic, supported by local writers, along with anthologies by Kehinde Obileye, a group member we also helped to publish.

Our third anthology of poetry to come out of Fromeside was 'Love's Gutter' by Thomas Glover which was edited by Crysse Morrison and launched with events at the Bristol Old Vic and the Square Club in Berkley Square. 'Love's Gutter' received an amazing series of endorsements from celebrity poets.

"There is painfully raw subject matter in these poems, but they contain it: using form, wry wit and even a kind of grave playfulness, with now and then a simile that makes you blink and see things anew, they are reaching towards the balance that art can offer, even when it is on a tightrope over a frightening drop."

Philip Gross, poet & playwright, winner of TS Eliot Poetry Prize 2009

"Thomas Glover's journey to wellness through writing is stark, truthful and moving. He catches hold of his disintegrating life through the strong power of turning destruction into creation, and reading his poetry, it seems that every word, every phrase, is first set down with the determination to tell his story, and then energised with the involvement of making - discovering joy in the process."

Rose Flint, internationally award-winning poet

"Poems with punch and verve that linger behind the eyes for hours."

Luke Wright, award-winning performance poet and broadcaster

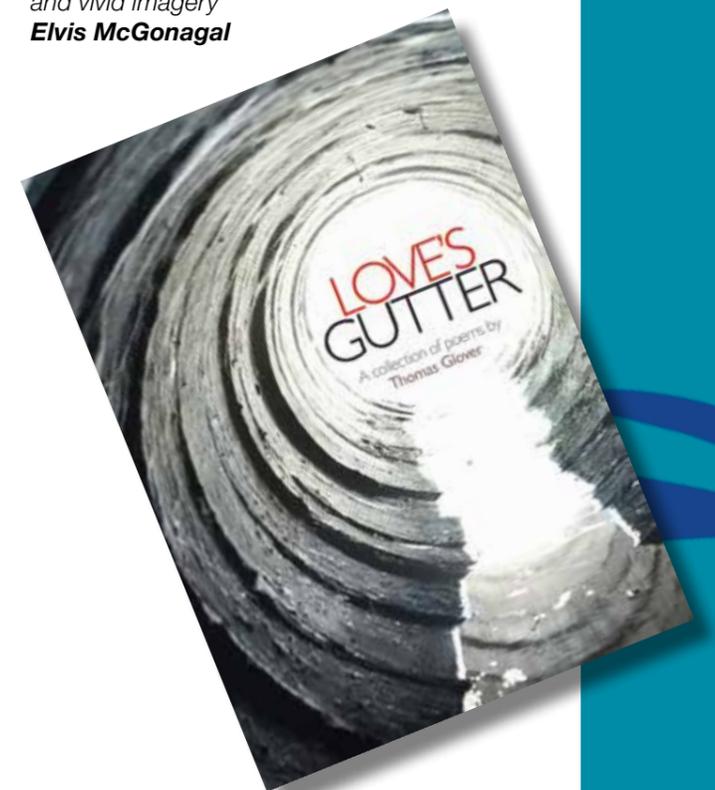
"This is brave and startling writing. Thomas Glover is not afraid to tell it how it is."
Abigail Morley, award-winning poet and editor

"Suffering is shapeless and endless when we are in it. Once, however briefly, out of it we look to give it shape and meaning if only to map where we have been and might be again. Thomas Glover's poems are confessional in the sense that they speak out of direct personal experience but they are not confessions. A poem is an object you can stand away from and these are poems, coherent, moving, dramatically composed and, strange as it may seem, independent of the life that made them. It is their dramatic beauty, their shaping, that constitutes their being. There is always something miraculous about such shapes. Hence the poems."

George Szirtes, award-winning poet and writer, winner of TS Eliot prize 2005

"Poems from the gutter of love that search for the starlight with candour, dry humour and vivid imagery"

Elvis McGonagal





Stepping Out Theatre and Mind Your Music members have had an increasing presence at the regular poetry event run at the Square Club, Berkley Square by group Trustee Charles Thompson. Several members have performed at this regular event.

We are currently working with Anna Saunders who is Director of the Cheltenham Poetry Festival, Charles Thompson and Frome writer Crysse Morrison to develop more opportunities for poetry with our group members. Anna has edited an anthology of poetry by group member Charlie Ekpaloba who has performed at the Cheltenham Festival several times as part of her work with Anna.

It is hoped to publish seven new anthologies by poets L. S. Kimberley, Thomas Glover, Charlie Ekpaloba, Chrissie Harmer, Ruth Foster, Katherine Melmore and Emma Stadon at a major poetry event in late 2017.

Copies of all of the anthologies mentioned here are currently, or will be shortly available from the Stepping Out office. Thomas Glover's 'Love's Gutter' is also available on Amazon and as a Kindle download.

Drama Groups

Our popular evening drama groups have been meeting again in 2016 – 17 with funding from the People's Health Trust. This year they have been run by new Stepping Out Associate Artist Viki Browne with assistance from the Development Worker Olivia Ware. These groups are an important part of the package of support we provide to all our members, they help induct new members into the group and they form a useful bridge into performance for those who want to develop their stage skills further. The drama group develops and performs new pieces of drama in front of the Stepping Out membership. This popular and successful new group is scheduled to run again in 2017 – 18.

A spinoff group from our usual adult drama group in 2016 – 17 was our first ever youth drama group which specifically caters for younger people. This group has already devised and performed pieces of drama for audiences at Hamilton House and the Wardrobe Theatre in Bristol.



Fundraising Activities - Stepping Out Sponsored Walk

Our first ever Sponsored Walk was in 2011. Members walked from Fromeside Medium Secure Hospital to the Alma Tavern Theatre in Clifton to symbolise the journey from mental ill health to healing through the creative power of theatre. The event has been repeated every year since and was run for the sixth time in November 2016 with our walk ending up at the Alma Tavern Theatre raising hundreds of pounds for group social activities.



Stepping Out Theatre Online

Throughout 2007 – 17 our website at www.steppingouttheatre.co.uk has been an increasingly important resource for group members, funders and those wishing to find out more about the group. During our busiest periods in and around production times, the website is updated daily and at all other times it is updated regularly. Postings are also made regularly on the Stepping Out Facebook page which can be found at; www.facebook.com/stepping.out.545.

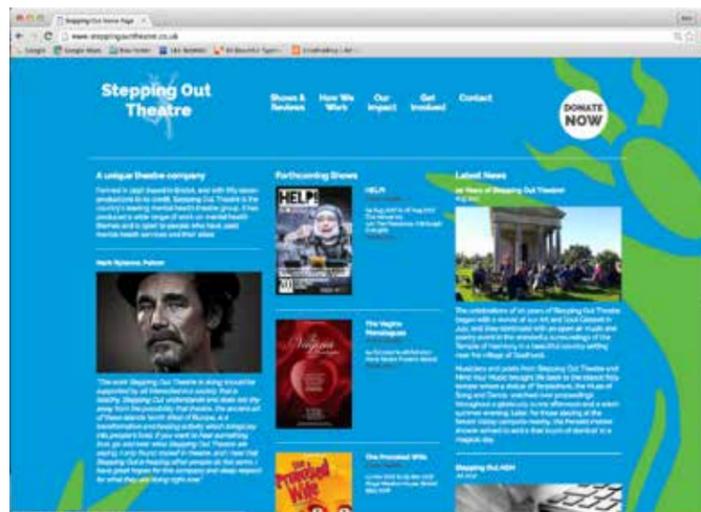
After 8 years with our previous design, in 2015 our website was redesigned and relaunched with help from actor and web designer Richard Warrick who has also appeared in Stepping Out productions.

The kind of information that can be found on the website and our Facebook page includes;

- An account of all the work we have done, what we are currently doing and future plans
- Details of all forthcoming social activities and how to access them.
- Rehearsal schedules and performance schedules for productions
- Feedback from audiences while a production is in progress – this is usually added daily

- Feedback from participants in a production once it is over
- Reviews of all our productions past and present, usually posted as soon as they appear in print, and occasionally before
- Feedback from other people using the group including mental health staff who take part in training days run by the company
- Notice of forthcoming Trustee meetings and the AGM
- Digests of the group's activities over the previous twelve months and its plans for the coming year
- News of projects and activities with other groups which members of the company are involved in
- News of funding successes

The website is attracting an increasing number of visitors all the time and this has resulted in us being contacted by many more people who are interested in joining the company, by writers whose work deals with mental health themes and by mental health staff who wish to refer clients to our group.



Other Work – Associated Groups and Co – Producers

Stepping Out Theatre has many members with a wide range of creative interests and an increasing part of our work has been supporting and assisting these people in setting up groups of their own and helping them to raise funding and to further their creative interests with other like – minded individuals.

Over many years now we have played an active role in helping to set up and support the following groups;

Chrysalis Theatre

Our 'sister' theatre company works with users of HIV/AIDS, drug and alcohol services. It was originally set up by Stepping Out group member David Carter with support from Stepping Out Theatre and it now jointly runs a programme of workshops and productions involving service users from its target groups. To date, we have mounted fifteen co – productions with Chrysalis Theatre, and there are plans for others.

Mind Your Music

Fourteen years ago, Stepping Out Theatre supported a group of members to set up a dedicated mental health music organisation in Bristol which is now one of the leading groups in its field. Mind Your Music offer a busy programme of workshops and gigs throughout the year in addition to organising concerts, touring and recording CDs. In 2013 they were successful in a three year application to the Big Lottery Fund which created the first ever permanent paid worker for the group. After a lengthy selection and



interview process, former Stepping Out Secretary Elliot Hall was the successful candidate and he started work as Music Projects Manager in May 2013.

Mind Your Music were our main partners in producing a CD of music by Fromside singer songwriter Jonathan Little, and they co – produced a new CD of all the music written by Ernie Bell and used in Stepping Out's stage productions over the previous ten years. Copies of this CD 'Ernie Bell – Songs from the Stepping Out shows 1999 – 2011' are available from the Stepping Out office, or from Mind Your Music.



Fallen Angel Theatre

We helped Associate Director of Stepping Out Chris Loveless to get funding for his own company, Fallen Angel and they have been regularly co – producing work with Stepping Out ever since both in London and Bristol. Chris directed the highly successful productions of 'Moonshadow' and 'Ray Collins Dies On Stage' in 2009 and 'Stairway To Heaven' in 2010. He went on to direct all four of our Broadmoor plays in 2011. Our work with Fallen Angel has helped us to build links with Simon James Collier and his Okai Collier Company who have co – produced three London productions with us. In September 2014, we co – produced a new musical with Fallen Angel Theatre with Chris Loveless directing, based on Thomas Hardy's classic novel 'Tess of the D'Urbervilles' at the New Wimbledon Theatre. The team behind 'Tess' are currently working on a musical theatre adaptation of Dickens' 'Great Expectations'.



Healing Arts Unlimited

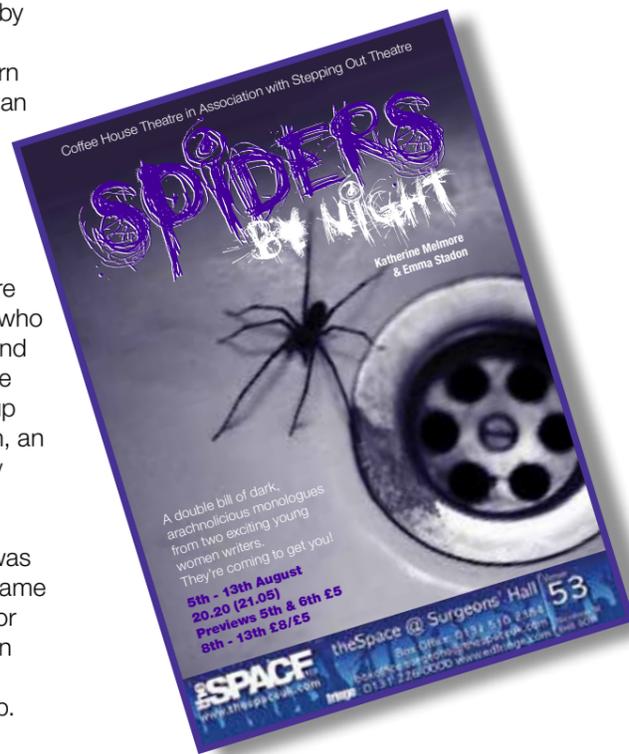
In 2013, Stepping Out were instrumental in setting up Healing Arts Unlimited, a new organisation whose mission is to nurture self expression, self discovery, healing and personal growth using an eclectic mix of different art forms, drama, dance and guided imagery. The group offers a chance to access the unique world of your own creativity, imagination and spirit for healing. Healing Arts Unlimited works with people in recovery from illness and traumatic experiences in Bristol and rural Somerset. In 2015 – 16 Healing Arts and Stepping Out jointly ran a series of mask workshop with spectacular masks made by service users. Healing Arts was a co – producer for ‘Cinderella’ at the Alma Tavern Theatre in February 2016 with the help of an Awards For All grant.

Arts Etcetera

Arts ETC (‘Empowerment Through Creativity’), are a new community theatre and arts group based in Kidderminster who work with mental health service users and people with learning difficulties. We were instrumental in supporting and setting up this new group and their first production, an adaptation of Oscar Wilde’s ‘The Happy Prince’ was a sellout success at the Kidderminster Arts Festival in 2014 with input from Stepping Out Theatre. This was followed up by a cabaret event for the same Festival in 2015 and a new production for the Kidderminster Arts Festival in 2017 in collaboration with Vamos Theatre, the nationally acclaimed mask theatre group.

Coffee House Theatre

Stepping Out Theatre has been working with Plymouth based playwright Katherine Melmore for the last three years. We supported Katherine in setting up her own mental health theatre company based in Plymouth. Katherine’s first play received a staged reading at Plymouth Mind in February 2015 and we are working with her towards a full production of this play with her own company as well as co – producing two shows touring to the Edinburgh Festival in 2016 in the double bill ‘Spiders By Night’.



Financial Report and Accounts 2016 / 17

In the financial year 2016 / 17, the group received a total of £104,583 in income, and spent a total of £106,273. This was a substantial drop in our turnover from the previous year (corresponding figures of income of £336,475 and expenditure of £309,418, our highest ever turnover as a group.). The drop was owing to the loss of all three of our previous core funders at the end of a six year cycle of support. Six years is usually the maximum that most charitable foundations will support a group, and after six years of support, we lost the Big Lottery Fund, the Esmee Fairbairn Foundation and Comic Relief within months of each other. This fall in funding was reflected in the amount of theatre produced – from nine productions in 2015 – 16 down to just two in 2016 – 17.

By the end of the financial year, we had replaced all of our lost core funding with new three year grants from the Henry Smith Charity, the Lloyds Foundation and the John Ellerman Foundation, but there were many other unsuccessful applications along the way, and we had to offer a greatly reduced programme of activities to our members – the loss of our flagship large scale community theatre production being particularly missed. Our new core grants secure the future of the group up to Feb. 2020.

The financial news was not all bad, and although we lost the funding for the Deputy Co ordinator post, we secured funding for a new Development Worker from the People’s Health Trust. Olivia Ware started this new full time post in May 2016.

As usual, the largest items of expenditure were salaries and payments to the freelance artists and service users involved in our ambitious programme of productions. Together, these accounted for well over 50% of all expenditure.

In 2015 – 16, our unrestricted reserves at the end of the year stood at £36,213. In 2016 – 17, these were down to £23,571.96, but this still represented about 5 months operating costs. Restricted funds cannot form part of Stepping Out Theatre’s reserves as the

spending of these funds is laid down in the funding applications and signed contracts upon which they were granted. For this reason, although restricted funds may be carried across at the end of an accounting year, they do not constitute free reserves. At the end of 2016 – 17, the group carried across £42,136.30 in Restricted funds. These were mostly core grants towards salary costs and a Heritage Lottery Fund grant towards a production in 2017.

Stepping Out Theatre - Reserves Policy

‘Reserves’ or ‘free reserves’ is the term generally used to describe that part of a charity’s income that is freely available for its general purposes. Reserves are therefore the resources the charity has or can make available to spend, for any or all of the charity’s purposes, once it has met its commitments and covered its planned expenditure.

It is the policy of Stepping Out Theatre that any unrestricted income which the charity is in possession of may, at the discretion of the Trustees, be spent in any way which advances the causes of the charity. These free reserves may also be carried over between accounting years, for example when the group is trying to build up reserves in order to finance a large production. Building up of reserves is sometimes a prudent measure, but should not be seen as an end in itself, and for this reason, it is Stepping Out Theatre’s policy to have reserves set at a maximum of half of the charity’s annual income.

REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES AND UNAUDITED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 28 FEBRUARY 2017 FOR STEPPING OUT THEATRE COMPANY

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The trustees present their report with the financial statements of the charity for the year ended 28 February 2017. The trustees have adopted the provisions of 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 2015).

STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

Governing document

The charity is controlled by its governing document, a constitution and constitutes an unincorporated charity.

REFERENCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS

Registered Charity number

1117912

Principal address

19 Webb Court
Park Road
Shirehampton
Bristol BS11 0FH

Trustees

Charles Thompson
Joanna Smith
Tom Collis
Emma Staddon
Tom Jones
Mark Breckon
Danann McAleer
Gareth Pitt

Independent examiner

Hunter Accountants Chartered Accountants
3 Kings Court
Little King Street
Bristol BS1 4HW

Approved by order of the board of trustees on 12th September 2017 and signed on its behalf by Hugh Groves (Treasurer)

INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT TO THE TRUSTEES OF STEPPING OUT THEATRE COMPANY

I report on the accounts for the year ended 28 February 2017 set out on pages three to seven.

Respective responsibilities of trustees and examiner

The charity's trustees are responsible for the preparation of the accounts. The charity's trustees consider that an audit is not required for this year (under Section 144(2) of the Charities Act 2011 (the 2011 Act)) and that an independent examination is required.

It is my responsibility to:

- examine the accounts under Section 145 of the 2011 Act
- to follow the procedures laid down in the General Directions given by the Charity Commission (under Section 145(5)(b) of the 2011 Act); and
- to state whether particular matters have come to my attention.

Basis of the independent examiner's report

My examination was carried out in accordance with the General Directions given by the Charity Commission. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and seeking explanations from you as trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit, and consequently no opinion is given as to whether the accounts present a 'true and fair view' and the report is limited to those matters set out in the statements below.

Independent examiner's statement

In connection with my examination, no matter has come to my attention:

(1) which gives me reasonable cause to believe that, in any material respect, the requirements

- to keep accounting records in accordance with Section 130 of the 2011 Act; and
- to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and to comply with the accounting requirements of the 2011 Act

have not been met; or

(2) to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Mark Hunter
Chartered Accountant
Hunter Accountants Chartered Accountants
3 Kings Court
Little King Street
Bristol
BS1 4HW

Date: 12th September 2017

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES for the year ended 28 February 2017

	Notes	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	2017 Total Funds £	2016 Total Funds £
INCOME AND ENDOWMENTS FROM					
Donations and legacies		-	93,754	93,754	174,861
Charitable activities					
Receipts		10,829		10,829	161,614
Total		10,829	93,754	104,583	336,475
EXPENDITURE ON					
Charitable activities					
Payments		23,471	82,803	106,274	309,418
NET INCOME/(EXPENDITURE)		(12,642)	10,951	(1,691)	27,057
Other recognised gains/(losses)					
Gains/(losses) on revaluation of fixed assets		(830)	(1,691)	(2,521)	-
Net movement in funds		(13,472)	9,260	(4,212)	27,057
RECONCILIATION OF FUNDS					
Total funds brought forward		39,757	38,685	78,442	51,385
TOTAL FUNDS CARRIED FORWARD		26,285	47,945	74,230	78,442

CONTINUING OPERATIONS

All income and expenditure has arisen from continuing activities.

BALANCE SHEET At 28 February 2017

	Notes	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	2017 Total Funds £	2016 Total Funds £
FIXED ASSETS					
Tangible assets	5	2,713	5,809	8,522	11,044
CURRENT ASSETS					
Cash at bank		23,572	42,136	65,708	67,398
NET CURRENT ASSETS		23,572	42,136	65,708	67,398
TOTAL ASSETS LESS CURRENT LIABILITIES		26,285	47,945	74,230	78,442
NET ASSETS		26,285	47,945	74,230	78,442
FUNDS					
Unrestricted funds	6			26,285	39,757
Restricted funds				47,945	38,685
TOTAL FUNDS				74,230	78,442

The financial statements were approved by the Board of Trustees on 12th September 2017 and were signed on its behalf by Hugh Groves (Treasurer)

The notes form part of these financial statements

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS for the year ended 28 February 2017

1. ACCOUNTING POLICIES

Basis of preparing the financial statements

The financial statements of the charity, which is a public benefit entity under FRS 102, have been prepared in accordance with the Charities SORP (FRS 102) '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 2015)', Financial Reporting Standard 102 'The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland' and the Charities Act 2011. The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention.

Income

All income is recognised in the Statement of Financial Activities once the charity has entitlement to the funds, it is probable that the income will be received and the amount can be measured reliably.

Expenditure

Liabilities are recognised as expenditure as soon as there is a legal or constructive obligation committing the charity to that expenditure, 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 accounted for on an accruals basis and has been classified under headings that aggregate all cost related to the category. Where costs cannot be directly attributed to particular headings they have been allocated to activities on a basis consistent with the use of resources.

Tangible fixed assets¹

Depreciation is provided at the following annual rates in order to write off each asset over its estimated useful life.

Taxation

The charity is exempt from tax on its charitable activities.

Fund accounting

Unrestricted funds can be used in accordance with the charitable objectives at the discretion of the trustees.

Restricted funds can only be used for particular restricted purposes within the objects of the charity. Restrictions arise when specified by the donor or when funds are raised for particular restricted purposes.

Further explanation of the nature and purpose of each fund is included in the notes to the financial statements.

2. TRUSTEES' REMUNERATION AND BENEFITS

There were no trustees' remuneration or other benefits for the year ended 28 February 2017 nor for the year ended 28 February 2016.

Trustees' expenses

Trustees have been reimbursed for services provided and/or expenses incurred in the course of their work for the charity.

3. STAFF COSTS

The average monthly number of employees during the year was as follows:

Project Co-ordination	2017 2	2016 2
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No employees received emoluments in excess of £60,000.

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS for the year ended 28 February 2017

4. COMPARATIVES FOR THE STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total Funds £
INCOME AND ENDOWMENTS FROM			
Donations and legacies	-	174,861	174,861
Charitable activities			
Receipts	161,614	-	161,614
Total	161,614	174,861	336,475
EXPENDITURE ON			
Charitable activities			
Payments	138,401	171,017	309,418
Total	138,401	171,017	309,418
NET INCOME/(EXPENDITURE)	23,213	3,844	27,057
RECONCILIATION OF FUNDS			
Total funds brought forward	16,544	34,841	51,385
TOTAL FUNDS CARRIED FORWARD	39,757	38,685	78,442

5. TANGIBLE FIXED ASSETS

	Equipment £
COST	
At 29 February 2016	14,725
Additions	319
At 28 February 2017	15,044
DEPRECIATION	
At 29 February 2016	3,681
Charge for year	2,841
At 28 February 2017	6,522
NET BOOK VALUE	
At 28 February 2017	8,522
At 28 February 2016	11,044

6. MOVEMENT IN FUNDS

	At 29.2.16 £	Net movement in funds £	At 28.2.17 £
Unrestricted funds			
Unrestricted	39,757	(13,472)	26,285
Restricted funds			
Restricted Fund	38,685	9,260	47,945
TOTAL FUNDS	78,442	(4,212)	74,230

Net movement in funds, included in the above are as follows:

	Incoming resources £	Resources expended £	Gains and losses £	Movement in funds £
Unrestricted funds				
Unrestricted	10,829	(23,471)	(830)	(13,472)
Restricted funds				
Restricted Fund	93,754	(82,803)	(1,691)	9,260
TOTAL FUNDS	104,583	(106,274)	(2,521)	(4,212)

7. RELATED PARTY DISCLOSURES

There were no related party transactions for the year ended 28 February 2017.

DETAILED STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES
for the year ended 28 February 2017

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	2017 Total Funds £	2016 Total Funds £
INCOME AND ENDOWMENTS				
Donations and legacies				
Big Lottery Fund Grant	-	-	-	30,001
Esmee Fairbairn Foundation	-	-	-	15,000
Arts Council Grant for the Arts	-	12,900	12,900	30,800
Comic Relief (via Quartet Foundation)	-	-	-	15,000
Mind Your Music Projects Manager Salary	-	5,125	5,125	16,580
The Clothworkers Foundation	-	-	-	10,000
The People's Health Trust	-	9,479	9,479	9,480
Lloyds TSB Foundation	-	-	-	24,000
Henry Smith Charity	-	25,000	25,000	24,000
Heritage Lottery Fund	-	11,250	11,250	-
John Ellerman Foundation	-	30,000	30,000	-
		93,754	93,754	174,861
Charitable activities				
Big Give Xmas Challenge and other Donations	4,093	-	4,093	107,320
Box Office Receipts	939	-	939	37,223
Interest and Refunds	797	-	797	1,058
Co Producer Contributions	-	-	-	3,013
Small Grants	5,000	-	5,000	13,000
	10,829	-	10,829	161,614
Total incoming resources	10,829	93,754	104,583	336,475
EXPENDITURE				
Support costs				
Management				
Payroll	-	51,344	51,344	51,536
Rent (incl Theatre Hire)	-	9,123	9,123	15,167
General Running Expenses	-	8,868	8,868	14,872
Miscellaneous Production Costs	-	3,895	3,895	75,745
Training	56	-	56	7,500
Travel for Staff, Service Users and Volunteers	7,829	1,207	9,036	6,865
Subsistence	4,482	-	4,482	5,552
Promotional Materials	-	-	-	8,277
Theatre Trips	1,610	-	1,610	2,623
Charitable Donations	600	-	600	11,202
Workshop Leader Fees	551	-	551	7,000
Freelance Workers and Artists	8,269	8,121	16,390	88,354
Net Fixed Assets	74	245	319	14,725
	23,471	82,803	106,274	309,418
Total resources expended	23,471	82,803	106,274	309,418
Net (expenditure)/income	(12,642)	10,951	(1,691)	27,057

This page does not form part of the statutory financial statements





The
Henry Smith
Charity

**John Ellerman
Foundation**



LOTTERY FUNDED

Supported by the funding of
**ARTS COUNCIL
ENGLAND**

LLOYDS BANK FOUNDATION
England & Wales

