



# STEPPING OUT THEATRE

Annual Report and Accounts  
2022-23

[www.stepsingouttheatre.co.uk](http://www.stepsingouttheatre.co.uk)

Reg. Charity No. 1179310



“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 **Peter Hall**

## Reference and Administrative Details

**‘Stepping Out Theatre’ is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation with aims which are benevolent and philanthropic.**  
We are a registered charity who registered with the Charities Commission in February 2007.

**Charity Registration Number; 1179310**

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

**‘Stepping Out Theatre’ was founded in 1997.**

**Principle Charity Office:** 13 Creedwell Orchard  
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**Bankers:** Co-operative Bank, P.O. Box 250, Skelmersdale, WN8 6WT

**Independent Examiner of Accounts:**  
Achini Sankalpana, 28, Newbury Road, Bristol, BS7 0DS



## 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. Subsequently amended to assist with registration as a CIO in 2017.

### Governing Body

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

### Staff

**CEO (Full time) Steve Hennessey**  
**Music Projects Manager (Part time)**  
**Elliot Hall**

### Annual General Meeting

Our AGM for 2022-23 was held at 7pm on 19th December 2023 on Zoom. 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 2022 - 23

**Danann McAleer** – Chair  
**Emma Staddon** – Secretary  
**Ravi Kullar** – Treasurer  
**Maria Falzetti** – Trustee  
**Jolene Foley** – Trustee  
**Wendy Murphy** – Trustee  
**Dr. Sue Chambers** – Trustee  
**Geoff Innoles** – 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. The group also regularly advertise for new Trustees to fill skill shortages that the Trustee group identifies.



## CEO's Report

2022 – 23 was the last of the three year cycle for our current core funders, leaving some uncertainty over the next three years.

Highlights of the year included;

- 'The Leopards are Already Here' – the fourth in our series of online events showcasing new writing from Ukraine since the outbreak of war there. As usual, the event was attended by several of the Ukrainian playwrights featured, who are all members of the Playwrights Theatre of Kyiv. This series of events has raised many thousands of pounds for Ukrainian theatre artists and their chosen charities during a time of war.
- A full production of 'Refugee Cats' by Ludmyla Tymoshenko and Marina Smilyanets, performed in Bristol and Clevedon. Billed as 'cat therapy for children and adults', this heartwarming children's play aimed to make the refugee experience more bearable for Ukrainian children. The production featured original music written especially for the play by Stepping Out musicians Steve James and Gerry Rowe.
- Alongside these productions, we ran a programme of music activities (workshops, gigs and recording) in collaboration with long term collaborators and partners Mind Your Music.
- Three years in the preparation, and twice postponed due to Covid, the group finally managed a trip to perform at the 'Water is Memory' theatre festival in Vichy, France. This Festival is hosted annually by Procédé Zèbre under their amazing Artistic Director Fabrice Dubusset. We performed 'Refugee Cats' at an incredible Art Deco theatre in Vichy, and we also put on four performances inside schools of a dance and movement interpretation of Oksana Grytsenko's haunting short piece about Russian war crimes, 'Just Tell No One.'
- Our traditional Xmas show this year was 'Mother Xmas' by Associate Playwright Mark Breckon which was performed in two venues new to the group, the Hen and Chicken in Bedminster, and the wonderful Backwell Playhouse in Backwell.

2022-23 was our twenty seventh year as a group and our sixteenth year of operation as a registered charity.



## Progress on The Aims and Objectives of Stepping Out Theatre 2022 / 23

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.
- As the CEO's report makes clear, we can claim to have made considerable progress towards these aims this year.
- 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, Clevedon, Vichy and online.
  - 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.



## Financial Report and Accounts 2022 / 23

In the financial year 2022/23, the group received a total of £119,856 in income, and spent a total of £161,459. This was a considerable drop in our turnover from the previous year (corresponding figures of income of £196,964 and expenditure of £181,987). The drop was mainly owing to many grants being paid late in the previous year and carried over to the current year. This fall in funding was reflected in the amount of theatre produced – from twelve productions in 2020 – 21 down to just four in 2022 – 23.

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 2021 - 22, our unrestricted reserves at the end of the year stood at £42,300. In 2022- 23, these were down to £19,957. The fall was mainly due to the massively ambitious project of taking 21 group members involved in six different production to take part in the Edinburgh Festival in 2022. However, this level of unrestricted reserves 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 2021 - 22, the group carried across £ 18,859 in Restricted funds. These were mostly core grants towards salary and other core costs.

### 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 or project such as the trips to Finland (2018) and France (2023) to take part in mental health theatre festivals. 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.

## Section A - Receipts

	Unrestricted	Restricted	2022-2023	2021-2022
The People's Health Trust (1)	6805.00	-	6805.00	19100.00
Lloyds TSB Foundation	-	-	-	25000.00
Henry Smith Charity	-	-	-	25000.00
Garfield Weston Foundation	-	-	-	15000.00
The Foyle Foundation (2)	10000.00	-	10000.00	20000.00
Paul Hamlyn Foundation (3)	27500.00	-	27500.00	25000.00
The Clothworkers' Foundation	-	-	-	15000.00
Charitable Donations (4)	-	32022.88	32022.88	6821.83
Box Office Receipts (5)	-	4118.92	4118.92	2181.65
Interest and Refunds	-	2237.82	2237.82	1771.33
Small Grants (6)	7171.75	-	7171.75	13115.27
Other Income	-	-	-	16573.98
Arts Council Grant for the Arts	-	-	-	12400.00
Tudor Trust (7)	30000.00	-	30000.00	-
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>81476.75</b>	<b>38379.62</b>	<b>119856.37</b>	<b>196964.06</b>

Note 11)

	2021-2022 Cash Basis	Adjustment	2021-2022 Accrual Basis
Donations	176,437.10	-	176,437.10
Charitable Activities	3,952.98	-	3,952.98
Other Income	16,573.98	-5,535.02	22,109.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>196,964.06</b>	<b>-5,535.02</b>	<b>202,499.08</b>

## Section B - Payments

	Unrestricted	Restricted	2022-2023	2021-2022
Payroll	57938.45	-	57938.45	57745.54
Rent (incl. Theatre Hire)	16167.76	-	16167.76	13838.18
General Running Expenses	4013.20	3000.00	7013.20	9535.85
Miscellaneous Production Costs	4975.70	3000.00	7975.70	9422.84
Travel for Staff, Service Users and Volunteers	6095.22	6038.70	12133.92	9830.19
Subsistence	1132.95	9456.01	10588.96	6048.65
Promotional Materials	-	-	-	263.00
Theatre Trips	-	1832.20	1832.20	2384.54
Charitable Donations (8)	-	7796.11	7796.11	511.75
Freelance Workers and Artists	10013.02	30000.00	40013.02	56912.45
Fixed Assets	-	-	-	15495.00
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100336.30</b>	<b>61123.02</b>	<b>161459.32</b>	<b>181987.99</b>

Note 11)

	2021-2022 Cash Basis	Adjustment	2021-2022 Accrual Basis
Payroll	57,745.54	-	57,745.54
Rent (incl. Theatre Hire)	13,838.18	-	13,838.18
General Running Expenses	9,535.85	-	9,535.85
Miscellaneous Production Costs	9,422.84	90.16	9,513.00
Travel for Staff, Service Users and Volunteers	9,830.19	-	9,830.19
Subsistence	6,048.65	-	6,048.65
Promotional Materials	263.00	-	263.00
Theatre Trips	2,384.54	-	2,384.54
Charitable Donations (8)	511.75	-	511.75
Freelance Workers and Artists	56,912.45	-14,578.45	42,334.00
Fixed Assets	15,495.00	-14,798.00	697.00
Services Provided by Trustees - Professional Fees	-	14,578.00	14,578.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>181,987.99</b>	<b>-14,708.29</b>	<b>167,279.70</b>

## Section C - Balance Sheet

	Unrestricted	Restricted	2022-2023	2021-2022
Bank Balance at Start of Year (9)	18859.55	42300.31	61159.86	46183.79
Bank Receipts	81476.75	38379.62	119856.37	196964.06
Bank Payments	-100336.30	-61123.02	-161459.32	-181987.99
<b>Bank Balance at End of Year</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>19556.91</b>	<b>19556.91</b>	<b>61159.86</b>
Cash Balance at Start of Year	-	-	-	-
Cash Receipts	-	-	-	-
Cash Payments	-	-	-	-
<b>Cash Balance at End of Year</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>
<b>Fixed Assets at End of Year (10)</b>			<b>15088.50</b>	<b>20118.00</b>
<b>Net Assets at End of Year</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>19556.91</b>	<b>34645.41</b>	<b>81277.86</b>

## Section D - Notes

- 1) Restricted Fund grant from the People's Health Trust towards a programme of new music workshops headed up by new Music Projects Manager.
- 2) Restricted Fund grant from The Foyle Foundation towards production of new work by Ukrainian playwrights
- 3) Second instalment of 3 year grant from Paul Hamlyn Foundation towards core costs.
- 4) Donations from major donors, charitable appeals, fundraising events and Gift Aid.
- 5) Box Office Receipts from all productions, including Edinburgh Festival, London and Bristol
- 6) Including the Quartet Foundation and the Society of Merchant Venturers towards work with Ukrainian writers.
- 7) First year of new two year restricted grant from the Tudor Trust towards core costs.
- 8) Charitable Funds raised through group fundraising events for others. The two main recipients were SALVE International, working with street children in Uganda, and the Playwrights' Theatre of Kyiv, supporting theatre artists and others in a time of war.
- 9) Includes Restricted Funds carried forward from 2021 - 22 towards core costs and projects in 2022 - 23.
- 10) Solely the charity vehicle. The vehicle is 80% owned by the charity who also pay 80% of the maintenance and running costs.
- 11) Due to the switch from accruals accounts (2021 - 22) to receipts and payments accounts (2022 - 23), these tables are included to reflect the two sets of figures for last year.

## Section D - Notes

Signed: **Ravi Kullar (Treasurer)**  
Date: **19th December 2023**

Signed: **Achini Sankalpana (Independent Examiner)**  
Date: **14th December 2023**

## Independent Examiner's Report to the Trustees of Stepping Out Theatre

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the Stepping Out Theatre (the Trust) for the year ended 28 February 2023.

### Responsibilities and basis of report

As the charity trustees of the Trust you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ('the Act').

I report in respect of my examination of the Trust's accounts carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act and in carrying out my examination I have followed all the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

### Independent examiner's statement

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material 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 Trust as required by section 130 of the Act; or
2. The accounts do not accord with those records.

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 accounts to be reached.

Signed: **Beralaliya Gamage Achini Sankalpana**  
Address: **28, Newbury Road, Bristol BS7 0DS**  
Date: **14th December 2023**

