



**ACCOUNTS FOR THE PERIOD  
FROM  
1<sup>st</sup> SEPTEMBER 2023  
TO  
31<sup>st</sup> AUGUST 2024**

**TRUSTEES**

Ann Walker – Chair  
Clyde Young – Treasurer  
Pamela Edmonds – Secretary  
Anita Gunn  
Maria Hadlow  
Elizabeth Hutcheson  
Irene Osprey

Registered Charity Number

1184546

**THE VILLAGE PLAYERS**

**REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES  
FOR THE PERIOD 1<sup>st</sup> SEPTEMBER 2023 TO 31<sup>st</sup> AUGUST 2024**

**THE OBJECTS OF THE TRUST**

The objects of the CIO are:

- (1) to advance the education of the public in the arts through the provision of live theatre.
- (2) to advance the education of the public in the arts by providing opportunities to work with professionally trained and experienced mentors.

The Trust was registered as a charity number 1184546 with the Charity Commission in England and Wales on 23<sup>rd</sup> July 2019 in order to create a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO).

**FINANCIAL REPORT**

The financial report for the period 1<sup>st</sup> September 2023 to 31<sup>st</sup> August 2024 is stated in the Income and Expenditure account attached. A commentary is also made by the Treasurer later in this report.

**REVIEW OF ACTIVITIES – REPORT FROM THE CHAIR**

**1. Committee Activity**

We began this financial year with a Committee which consisted of 7 Trustees and 3 Committee members. However, after an extensive period on the Committee as Membership Secretary Jane Uren resigned as a Trustee in the Summer. As mentioned in last year's report, we attracted two new people to the Committee and Irene Osprey subsequently agreed to become a Trustee, which was notified to the Charity Commission, and this will be voted for and confirmed at our forthcoming AGM. Jonathan Gray, who was also mentioned in last year's report, has decided to resign from the Committee and will therefore not become a Trustee. We have also co-opted on to the Committee Robert Barker who has kindly agreed to update our website and take on responsibility for publicity for our next production. As a result, we enter the 2024/25 year with 7 Trustees and 2 Committee Members and will be actively looking towards appointing a new Committee Member to bring the total up to 10.

Heather Young has taken on the role of Membership Secretary and we are pleased to have a healthy number of members of our group. Anyone who is involved in one of our productions is obliged to become a member for insurance purposes.

I'm pleased to report that the Committee functions very well as a unit with each person contributing well towards the tasks in hand.

## **2. Production Activities**

This last year has been another very successful one for The Village Players, both in terms of productions performed and from a financial point of view. We have staged two productions and also put on a third Burn's Night celebration in January due to popular demand. We also took part in the Rushlake Green Little Arts Festival which took place in August.

In November 2023 we put on a pantomime entitled 'Aladdin' which was written by Alex Jackson and superbly directed by Maria Hadlow. A pantomime is always tremendous fun both to rehearse and perform and all the audiences responded well to the performances joining in vociferously when required to do so. From the point of view of the group a pantomime is very good in that it has a large cast and whereas not everyone wants to act in a play many people enjoy the singing and dancing involved in a pantomime. It also attracts new members and there were a number of children in the cast who did a wonderful job in leading the chorus numbers. The pantomime was particularly challenging for the production team, but a wonderful job was done by all concerned.

On 27<sup>th</sup> January we held our third Burn's Night. Once again this was an extremely successful event brilliantly organised by Pam Edmonds with the help of a small sub- committee. The meal was excellent, provided by Julie Barker and her team of helpers.

In May we staged a play entitled 'Upham Hall' which was both written and directed by Helen Halliday. The play was a comedy spoof on Downton Abbey and told the story of the demise of the British Aristocracy in the twenties. The play was a step outside the normal sort of production The Village Players puts on and produced many challenges for all involved. However, it was largely well received by all audiences and attracted a full house every night. The hall was set out with long tables as in a banqueting hall which also produced challenges for the front of house team and the excellent meal was provided by Janet Smith who hopefully has taken the catering role over from Mary Dick Cleland who has moved away from the area.

A few weeks after the play we had an evening to view the DVD for discussion and critical appraisal and a very good social evening was enjoyed by all who attended.

Looking ahead, rehearsals are already underway for our next production which is to be a comedy entitled 'The Late Mrs Early' written by Norman Robbins and directed by Pam Edmonds. This will be a theatre supper and once again Janet Smith will be doing the catering and it will take place from 20<sup>th</sup> to 23<sup>rd</sup> November this year.

## **3. Drama Sponsorship**

As a Charitable Incorporated Organisation, it is part of our remit to try to encourage drama for young people in our area. With this in mind Clyde Young, Treasurer of the Village Players, and I met with Mrs Claire Kinsella, Headteacher of Punnetts Town School, to discuss the possibility of the Players offering sponsorship for drama within the school. This offer was welcomed enthusiastically and as a result we have donated £150 in the form of sponsorship to the school and will continue to donate the same sum for the next two years. This will be reviewed after that time when a decision will be made as to whether we continue or possibly offer sponsorship to another school in the area.

#### **4. Little Arts Festival**

In August this year a Little Arts Festival was held at Rushlake Green and The Village Players were asked if they would like to participate. As we are part of the Rushlake Green community the Committee felt that it was important we took part and Pam Edmonds kindly agreed to be our representative on the Little Arts Committee.

Owing to Pam's hard work and organisation we were able to put on three events. The first was a drama workshop for children held on 10<sup>th</sup> August. Six children attended and spent a very enjoyable two hours being coached in drama by Pam with the help of her husband Jim and Anita Gunn and Isla Mayhew, who is one of the younger members of our group.

On Saturday 17<sup>th</sup> August we held an afternoon of readings for which a number of the Village Players acted as readers and people were asked to suggest readings or poems which they would like read during the afternoon. This was well attended and very successful and a couple of people also read poems which they had written themselves.

On Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> August The Village Players staged a murder mystery entitled 'Murder at the Blue Parrot'. This proved enormously popular and the audience were invited to dress up in twenties clothes to become part of the performance. At the end of the play the audience had to decide who had committed the murder and a prize was awarded to the table who guessed correctly. A prize was also awarded to the most impressive costume. A ploughman's supper was served in the interval and the evening was extremely successful.

#### **5. Summary**

We feel that our Charitable Objects have been achieved in that we:

- (i) have successfully provided the community with live theatre via two very different styles of productions- 'Aladdin', a pantomime which had a large cast including a number of children which also gave the cast the opportunity to work with a professional musical director, Richard Eldridge, and 'Upham Hall' which was a play that proved challenging for both the actors and the audience but explored new boundaries for the group.
- (ii) provided the opportunity to the cast & crew of "Upham Hall" to work with a professional director, Helen Halliday.
- (iii) gave an opportunity to a member, Maria Hadlow, to direct, with the support of everyone on the Committee, the pantomime 'Aladdin' which was challenging to cast & crew but which was a huge success.
- (iv) approved that our next production – the play 'The Late Mrs Early' – would be directed by another member, Pam Edmonds.

Finally, I would like to thank my wonderful committee for all their hard work in helping to achieve all that the group has achieved over the last year. Looking back at my report we do seem to have done rather more than usual and particular thanks must go to Pam Edmonds who has not only done a great job as Secretary of the group but has also steered us through the Little Arts Festival and is now

directing our next play! I would also like to thank Clyde Young for the wonderful job he does as Treasurer of The Village Players. Our finances are in very good shape, which is a great tribute to Clyde, and it enables us to confidently plan for the future.

As I said at the beginning, this has been a very successful year for the Village Players, and I look forward to the 2024 - 25 year with great optimism.

Ann Walker  
Chair & Trustee

## **TREASURER'S REPORT**

The attached Income & Expenditure Statement covers the 12-month period from 1<sup>st</sup> September 2023 to 31<sup>st</sup> August 2024 which is our normal financial year. From this, our total income was £24,327.46 whilst our total expenditure was £20,418.39 thereby providing a healthy profit of £3,909.07. This compares with a profit of £3,452.70 in the previous year.

The main Income & Expenditure items are detailed below:

**Income:** As mentioned earlier, total income for the financial year amounted to £24,327.46 which arose as follows:

- (i) Subscriptions, totalling £660 were higher than last year's figure of £474 due to having a large cast in the pantomime "Aladdin".
- (ii) Donations received totalling £2,545 -see Notes.
- (iii) £267.57 Interest (an improvement of £84.70 for the year before!).
- (iv) £232.98 bar sales for Sussex Jazz – but see Expenditure & Notes
- (v) £7,524.29 receipts (i.e. ticket & bar sales etc) from the pantomime, Aladdin.
- (vi) £10,935.63 receipts (i.e. ticket & bar sales etc) from the comedy "Upham Hall".
- (vii) £2,161.99 receipts (i.e. ticket & bar sales etc) from the fund-raising Burn's Night event.

**Expenditure:** Total expenditure in the financial year amounted to £20,418.39 the bulk of which was spent on the following items:

- (i) General administration costs of £8.49, plus, Scripts to read (£155.15); Front of House items (£101.94); Hall hire for meetings (£68); renewal Insurance Premium (£322.26); Misc (£10.65); Other– Bar sales to Sussex Jazz, see Notes (£232.98); Provisions (£33.98); Publicity (£44); Gifts– Wine for Auditor (£51.69); Angie Trew Award (£100).
- (ii) £599.23: Specific expenditure items – Committee & Guests Dinner (£349.23); Charity Donation (£250 > £100 Little Arts Festival + £150 to Punnetts Town Primary School).
- (iii) £17,096.09: Production costs:
  - "Dracula": £64.86 (Provisions & Screening).
  - "Aladdin": £5,990.74: Total costs incurred in producing this pantomime including Hall hire (£729); Set Construction (£541); Costumes (£693); Lighting (£106); Music

(£1,747); Props (£85); Publicity (£337); Royalties (£275); Sound (£150); Gifts (£100); Bar (£873).

- "Upham Hall": £10,400.17: Total costs incurred in producing this Café Theatre spoof of Downton Abbey including Catering costs (£2,956); Hall hire (£1,014); Set Construction (£716); Costumes (£349); Props (£16); Publicity (£250); Royalties (£400); Director's Fee (£600); Sound (£1,150); Scripts (£84); Gifts (£100); Bar (£2,166).
  - "The Late Mrs Early": £640.32 - Initial costs in setting up our next production in November 2024.
- (iv) £1,627.91: Running costs incurred in the fund-raising "Burn's Night" event including Catering (£855); Bar (£397); Front of House (£120- hire of the piper).

### Notes:

At this point, I would like to highlight the following aspects:

1. As Treasurer, I wish to point out that I also run a small jazz club (Sussex Jazz) at a local village hall where I organise three concerts a year. In the past, the bar was run on a cash basis, but there is now a demand for contactless payments to be made. Whilst researching the card reader market, I found that it was not possible to operate a separate card reader with SumUp as I already operate one for The VP, and other retail providers charged sizeable fees which would make it uneconomical. I therefore asked the Committee if I could use The VP card reader on these three annual occasions?  
The Committee unanimously agreed to help as it was a way of supporting a local club which provides the local community with the opportunity to see and listen to jazz musicians of an exceptionally high standard.  
The Committee had one caveat namely that The Chair should satisfy herself that (a) the SumUp statement did indeed reflect bar sales at the concert and (b) the bank account, to which the proceeds would be paid to, was a bona fide account used solely for Sussex Jazz, and this she did by signing a statement to this effect.  
As a "thank you", Sussex Jazz donated £35 to The VP which was half the cost of purchasing a new card reader from SumUp.
2. In December 2023, we were faced with an announcement from the village hall that they were increasing their hire charges. Previously, as a "frequent user", we were given a preferential rate per rehearsal and free use of the hall to build the set. With immediate effect, the new hire charge would be based on an hourly rate and this would also apply to set construction, although 2 free days would be given. This will have a substantial impact on our costs in that it will add approximately one-third to our hire charge e.g. from an average of £750 per show to an estimated £1,000! Thankfully, we have been able to absorb the additional cost and have conscientiously thought-through the number of rehearsals needed and what element of set construction could be undertaken offsite.
3. On hearing that we were facing higher hall charges, we were exceptionally fortunate in receiving a most generous, anonymous, donation of £2,500 in December 2023. In addition, a member donated £10 and Sussex Jazz donated £35 (as mentioned earlier) bringing the total to £2,545 in this financial year. Thanks to careful budgeting, we have had no need to use these

funds to supplement the production running costs and the Committee will therefore consider the best use of the monies received – perhaps to update our lighting or sound equipment.

4. As mentioned last year, it was decided to resurrect our normal “Committee & Guests Annual Dinner” (which had been cancelled during 2020 and 2021 due to Covid) and this continued into the current year 2023/24. This is an important event to thank certain individuals for the generous amount of time & energy that they had freely given to the group during that year. The cost of the guest’s dinner was borne by the society whereas the Committee’s meals were subsidised by 50%. Both the Chair and the Treasurer believe that the cost of this annual event is fully justified when weighing up the social benefits and the goodwill it creates.
5. A donation of £100 was made to The Little Arts Festival to support this local group in delivering an eclectic range of the arts to the village community during the month of August. In addition, a donation of £150 was made to Punnetts Town Primary School to help fund their drama events and it is our aim to make this a regular donation to help develop drama in the school.
6. Following the discussion at last year’s AGM regarding interest rates on deposit accounts, our application to NatWest for a Liquidity Manager 95-Day Notice Account, offering an interest rate of 4.25%pa, was approved and opened on 1<sup>st</sup> November 2023. An amount of £4,000 was subsequently transferred out of our Reserve No1 Account and into this new account. It was felt that we could comfortably set aside this amount, to obtain a higher interest rate, without stretching our finances and in the knowledge that there were sufficient funds in our Reserve No1 Account which could be withdrawn without notice.

### Summary

- £11,901.76: Balance carried over from 2022/23
- £24,327.46: Income
- -£20,418.39: Expenditure
- £15,810.83: Balance carried forward.

The closing balance in the accounts, as shown above, reconciles with monies held in the four accounts as shown below:

- £ 1,455.70: Current Account
- £ 9,701.83: Reserve 1 Account
- £ 4,134.84: LM95-Day Account
- £15,292.37: Sub-total
- £ 518.46: Reserve 2 Account
- £15,810.83: Grand Total

### Notes

- (i) The sub-total figure shown above is, in effect, the group’s operational monies.

- (ii) The Reserve 2 Account shown above was originally opened in 2009 following a donation of £1,000 made by Lady Pile (in memory of her late daughter, Angie Trew - the founder of The Village Players) with the request that two book tokens, to the value of £25 each, be awarded each year to deserving members under the title of The Angie Trew Awards. The Committee decided in 2023 to increase the award to £50 each. The above figure is the current balance (including interest), and this money is kept separate from the group's operational monies.
- (iii) In addition to monies on deposit, there are certain assets held by The Village Players to which the Treasurer has given a nominal combined value of £1,925 i.e. Tablecloths (£20), Lights (£900), Sack barrow (£5), Microphones (£500) & Shed (£500). However, in view of the age of these items, it was decided at a recent Committee Meeting that, in future, no value will be given for any of these items as it is doubtful whether buyers would be found e.g. our lighting is analogue whereas LED lighting is now preferred.

The group's bankers are NatWest Bank plc. The accounts were examined by Mr. James Cook, Chartered Accountant, and I would like to thank Jim for taking the time to audit the books for us.

In closing, The Village Players ended the reporting period with funds of £3,909 higher than in the corresponding period last year thanks to the very generous donation received and a fund-raising Burns Night event. We have staged two very successful productions with excellent audience numbers and have weathered the increased hall hire charges due to careful budgeting.

Overall, therefore, the group remains in a very healthy financial position.

Clyde M Young  
Treasurer & Trustee