



**ACCOUNTS FOR THE PERIOD
FROM
1st SEPTEMBER 2024
TO
31st AUGUST 2025**

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 1st SEPTEMBER 2024 TO 31st AUGUST 2025**

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 23rd July 2019 in order to create a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO).

FINANCIAL REPORT

The financial report for the period 1st September 2024 to 31st August 2025 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. After discussion with our two newest committee members, Suzanne Toynton and Robert Barker, they have agreed to become Trustees of our CIO and this will be confirmed by vote at the AGM.

Heather Young agreed last year to take 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

We have had another very successful year both in terms of productions performed and from a financial point of view. This will be outlined further in the Treasurer's report.

In November 2024 we put on a play entitled 'The Late Mrs Early' by Norman Robbins. This was a comedy in which Mrs Early, a battleaxe of the highest order, meets an early demise much to the relief of her family but, a little later, returns to haunt them as a ghost with very amusing results. This was skillfully directed by Pam Edmonds and the production team did a brilliant job with the lighting, set and backstage to ensure the production ran smoothly. This play was very much enjoyed by our audiences and we had a full house practically every night which also helps financially. The two-course meal provided by Janet Smith and her excellent team of helpers was very well received and added to the ambience of the evening.

We were approached early in 2025 by Colin Saunders on behalf of Heathfield Church asking whether the Village Players would be prepared to put on some entertainment in the church on 10th May as part of the town's VE Day celebrations. It was agreed that we would like to contribute to this event and Pam Edmonds and Maria Hadlow with the help of Pippa Poulton put together a 45 minute performance of songs, poems, readings and a short 'Dad's Army' sketch which was performed twice by members of the group and was extremely well received by the audiences at both performances.

In May we staged a play entitled 'Plaza Suite' by Neil Simon. This was a well written play in three acts. Each act told the story of a different couple in the same hotel room of the Plaza Hotel in New York. Each act was extremely well performed by the actors taking part and it was particularly rewarding to have three actors who were new to our group taking part. These were Jana, Paul Cox and Andrew Stredder and we are delighted to welcome them to the Village Players.

All our productions rely heavily on our excellent production team who work tirelessly behind the scenes towards ensuring that all aspects of the production run smoothly. With this in mind I would like to make special mention of the phenomenal input from both Jonathan Austin, who is responsible for the sound and set building, and Graham Stoner, who designs and builds our wonderful sets with the help of Jonathan Austin and also Ian Charlesworth. We are extremely grateful for their contribution.

Looking ahead, rehearsals are already underway for our next production which is to be a comedy entitled 'It Runs in the Family'. This is a play written by Ray Cooney and is a play we originally performed in 2009. It is extremely funny and we are very pleased once again to have some new members in the cast of this play. Both Hollie and Joseph are new to our group and it is lovely to welcome them, especially as they reduce the average of the group considerably! The play will be performed from 19th to 22nd November.

On a different note, we had purposely built-up reserves in order to fund the upgrade of our lighting to LED lights. However, we subsequently established that a common problem for small groups like ours, hoping to install LED lighting, is that the change would require re-wiring at a prohibitive cost. As we can still buy and maintain our current lights we decided that it is best to keep to our existing system.

In addition, our existing stage blocks which were specifically designed and built to extend the depth of our stage, are extremely heavy and needing to be replaced. We are currently exploring what our options are to achieve this.

During our last two spring productions in both 2024 and 2025 we have experienced particularly hot weather which has made the hall extremely uncomfortable for both the audience and the actors on stage. We therefore decided that, in future, when faced with high spikes in temperature, we should hire in air conditioning units. Although this will increase the cost of the production, it will make the whole experience much more comfortable for everyone involved.

We are currently in the process of updating our website and hope that the new fresher version will be up-and-running within the next month or so. This work is being carried out by Robert Barker (Committee Member) at no cost to the group and we are very grateful to him for the time spent on this project.

For many years Andrew Nairne has been in charge of Lighting and has given a huge amount of his time on a voluntary basis to maintain the lamps and rig the lighting for each show. However, Andrew has asked that he be allowed to step down and with this in mind he has trained Suzanne Toynton (Committee Member) over the course of our last few productions. This has worked out very well and Suzanne now feels able to take full charge of the lighting with Andrew in a consultant role. Suzanne will now be the lighting lead for our future productions.

3. Drama Sponsorship

As mentioned in my report last year, as a Charitable Incorporated Organisation it is part of our remit to try to encourage drama for young people in our area. Last year we donated £150 to Punnetts Town School towards their drama department, and I had the pleasure of attending the school in July to see their summer production 'Yee Haw!' which was performed by the two top years at the school. This was very well performed and the children looked after the lighting and sound as well as acting on the stage, which is no mean feat. Following this performance, Clyde Young, Treasurer, and myself met once again with Mrs Claire Kinsella, School Principal, and as a result we have donated a further £150 towards the next year's production.

4. 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 productions- 'The Late Mrs Early' which was quite a challenging play from the actors' point of view and 'Plaza Suite', which produced some outstanding performances from a number of the people taking part.
- (ii) gave an opportunity to two members, Pam Edmonds and Heather Young to direct, with the support of everyone on the Committee. Both plays being performed very successfully.
- (iii) approved that our next production - the play 'It Runs in the Family' - would be directed by another member, Maria Hadlow.
- (iv) provided sponsorship to a local primary school with a view to encouraging drama within the school.

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. I would especially like to thank Pam Edmonds who has been an excellent secretary over the last year and also Clyde Young who is a much valued 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.

2024-25 has been another very successful year for the Village Players and I look forward to another exciting year with great optimism.

Ann Walker, Chair & Trustee

TREASURER'S REPORT

The Income & Expenditure Statement covers the 12-month period from 1st September 2024 to 31st August 2025 which is our normal financial year. From this, our total income was £23,079.99 whilst our total expenditure was £21,154.20 thereby providing a healthy profit of £1,925.79.

This compares with a profit of £3,909.07 in the previous year. However, I would like to point out that we received a generous, anonymous donation of £2,500 in that year which means that the underlying true profit for 2023/24, for comparison purposes, was £1,409.07.

I would now like to cover the main Income & Expenditure items:

Income:

- (i) £508: Subscriptions. Last year's figure was higher at £660 due to there being a large cast in the pantomime "Aladdin". Historically, subscriptions are higher when we are putting on a production with a large cast.
- (ii) No donations were received during the financial year, and none were expected.
- (iii) £285.69: Interest (a slight improvement of £267.57 for the year before!).
- (iv) £746.95: Bar sales for Sussex Jazz. As Treasurer for The VP, I also run a small jazz club (Sussex Jazz) with Robert Barker at a local village hall where we organise three concerts a year. In the past, the bar was run on a cash basis, but there was a demand for contactless payments to be made. As there are only 3 concerts a year, I asked the Committee if I could use The VP card reader on these three annual occasions? The Committee unanimously agreed to help but with one caveat namely that The Chair should satisfy herself that everything was bona fide, and this she did by signing a statement to this effect.
This form of payment has become more popular with the jazz audience, reflecting in the higher sales made this year (by comparison, card sales last year amounted to only £233). As Treasurer, I feel that this has now become uncomfortable for The VP from an auditing perspective and, as a result, Sussex Jazz will arrange to have its own card reader in future so there will be no further need for them to borrow the VP unit and therefore these items will no longer appear in our accounts.
- (v) £10,828.11 receipts (i.e. ticket & bar sales etc) from the play, "The Late Mrs Early".
- (vi) £10,711.24 receipts (i.e. ticket & bar sales etc) from the comedy "Plaza Suite".
- (vii) No fund-raising events were arranged in this financial year.

Expenditure:

- (i) General costs totalling £1,407.68 which included: Administration costs (£5.68); Scripts to read (£49.95); Front of House items (£nil); Hall hire for meetings (£32); renewal Insurance Premium (£322.26- same as last year); Misc (£16.17); Other- Bar sales to Sussex Jazz, as mentioned earlier (£746.95); Provisions

(£46.60); Publicity (£74); Gifts (£114.07 - Wine to Auditor [£34.07] & flowers to various people [£80]).

(ii) Specific expenditure items totalling £1,113.18 -

- (a) Committee & Guests Dinner (£418.78)- 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.
- (b) Charity Donation: A donation of £150 was made to Punnetts Town Primary School to help fund their drama events. This is the second year that we have made this donation and it is our aim to make this a regular donation to help develop drama in the school.
- (c) Special expenditure: We decided to install a new loft ladder in the hall at £443.55 to make it easier, and safer, to store items for the set, props and lighting.
- (d) Other- Costume storing: We decided to spend £100.85 on vacuum packaging for some of our costumes so that they take up less room when stored and can be kept dry.

(iii) £18,533.34: Production costs:

- "The Late Mrs Early": £7,890.13 - Total costs incurred in producing this Café Theatre play. Main items included Hall hire (£784); Set Construction (£484); Costumes (£208); Publicity (£253); Sound (£100); Gifts (£103); Bar (£2,341); Catering (£3,258); Note: Royalties of £264 were paid in the previous financial year.
- "VE Day Celebration": £200 musician costs in staging some entertainment in support of All Saints Church, Old Heathfield, on 10th May as part of the town's VE Day celebrations.
- "Plaza Suite": £9,372.99: Total costs incurred in producing this Café Theatre play. Main items included Hall hire (£982); Set Construction (£477); Costumes (£285); Props (£155); Publicity (£278); Royalties (£389); Sound (£150); Gifts (£80); Scripts (£287); Bar (£2,538); Catering (£3,306).
- "It Runs in the Family": £1,070.22 - Initial costs in setting up our next production in November 2025.

(iv) £100: Angie Trew Award i.e. two awards of £50 each.

Notes:

1. In my report for the year ending 2024, I mentioned that we were facing a large increase in hiring the village hall which would bring the average hire charge of £750 per show to an estimated £1,000! I'm pleased to report that we have been

able to absorb the additional cost through careful planning and budgeting and without the need to increase our ticket price. All of this has resulted in each production still being able to generate a reasonable profit.

2. As mentioned earlier by the Chair, we had purposely built-up reserves in order to fund the upgrade of our lighting to LED lights. However, after consultation, it became apparent that the cost would be prohibitive and that it was in our best interests to keep our existing system. However, our existing stage blocks are needing to be replaced, and we are currently exploring what our options are to achieve this.
3. It is now approaching two years since we opened a 95-Day Notice Account at NatWest with a sum of £4,000. This provides a higher interest rate than that given in our Reserve Account. For example, the 95 Day account generated £147.48 interest during the last year whereas the Reserve No1 account, with a far higher amount deposited, generated £132.84!
It therefore makes sense to retain this account and to consider increasing it by making a further transfer from our Reserve Account but to do so without stretching our finances and to retain sufficient funds in our Reserve No1 Account which can be withdrawn without notice.

Summary

- £15,810.83: Balance carried over from 2023/24
- £23,079.99: Income
- -£21,154.20: Expenditure
- £17,736.62: Balance carried forward.

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

- £12,534.67: Reserve 1 Account
- £ 423.83: Reserve 2 Account
- £ 495.80: Current Account
- £ 4,282.32: LM95-Day Account
- £17,736.62: Total

Notes

- (i) The amount available to The Village Players in order to carry out its charitable function is £17,312.79 i.e. the Total amount shown above less the amount in the Reserve No 2 Account.
- (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.

This is a “depreciating” fund in that it will, at some stage, reduce to zero.

- (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 £1,910 i.e. Tablecloths (£5), Lights (£900), Sack barrow (£5), Microphones (£500) & Shed (£500).

The group's bankers are NatWest Bank plc. The accounts were examined by Mr James Cook, Chartered Accountant and I would ask that we give a vote of thanks to Jim for taking the time to audit the books for us.

In closing, The Village Players ended the reporting period with funds of £1,925.79 higher than in the corresponding period last year. We have staged two very successful productions with excellent audience numbers, have supported a local church during its VE Day celebrations, have made a donation to a local primary school to help their drama department 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, The Village Players