

ANNUAL REPORT

& FINANCIAL
STATEMENTS
2022/23



**BLACK
COUNTRY
TOURING**

Funders & Supporters

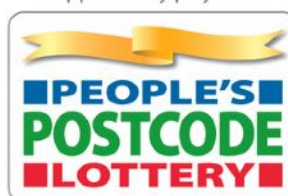


Many thanks to our 2022/23 funders and partners:



Supported using public funding by
**ARTS COUNCIL
ENGLAND**

Supported by players of



Awarded funds from



What's in Store Wednesbury was part of We Are Wednesbury, a cultural programme produced by Multistory for the High Streets Heritage Action Zone initiative, funded by Sandwell Council and Historic England.



HM Government



Funded by
Historic England



Black Country Touring (BCT) produces and promotes high-quality theatre, dance and film in the Black Country, putting local communities at the heart of everything we do.

Vision

Our vision is of a Black Country where everyone has the opportunity to experience captivating, inspiring and diverse performances in their community, regardless of their background, age or income.

Mission

We believe the arts have the potential to change lives by allowing us to see new possibilities, develop new skills and provide opportunities to reflect on our own lives, communities and the wider world.

We work with people across the Black Country to select and present the very best available artists and companies to our local communities.

We endeavour to make our work accessible to, and reflective of, the diverse communities that make up the Black Country.

We collaborate with artists and local people to create new work born out of contemporary Black Country stories for both local and national audiences.



Curious Cargo perform at What's In Store Bearwood

All of BCT's work is focused on creating opportunities for local people to experience theatre, dance and film. They are actively involved in programming, promoting and creating performances, events and festivals. We achieve this through four strands:

- **Community Promoters:** Supporting local volunteers working in their community to select and promote touring theatre, dance and film in accessible and friendly neighbourhood venues such as community centres and libraries
- **Young Promoters:** Schoolchildren and young people aged from 5 – 18 in mainstream and SEN education transform their school or college into a venue for a touring production, learning the skills required to run a theatre venue
- **Original Productions:** Site-specific theatre productions that reflect the cultural diversity and the lived experiences of Black Country people – their histories, origins, memories, interests, hopes and aspirations
- **Community Cinema:** We support local people and venues to bring an immersive cinema experience to their community. The focus is on bringing people together to enjoy the magic of film, programming everything from sing-alongs to documentaries



Rupinder Kaur performs in Al-Raqib Modest Fashion in What's in Store Bearwood. Photo by Anand Chhabra.

Chair's Statement



Rekindling Performing Arts in the Black Country

Dear Friends and Supporters,

I am delighted to present this Chair's Statement for our Annual Report, reflecting on the remarkable strides our organisation has made during the 2022/23 year. This period has witnessed transformative change, continued resilience and new collaborations.

Reconnecting Communities Through Culture

The past year was exceptional for Black Country Touring as we observed the enthusiasm of our audiences across the wider Black Country in returning to events following the pandemic. After a period of isolation, these opportunities to come together in welcoming community spaces felt particularly special and essential, significantly contributing to our collective well-being and sense of togetherness.

The role of culture in connecting communities and reducing isolation cannot be overstated. We swiftly transitioned from the challenges posed by the pandemic to addressing the economic difficulties faced by our communities due to the rising cost of living. Our mission was clear: to ensure that residents across the Black Country could still afford to enjoy outstanding theatre, dance, and film experiences in their neighbourhoods.



A community cinema screening at the Wesley Centre for All in Wednesbury

Breaking Down Barriers

Much of our work centres on challenging and removing barriers and welcoming people into new places, ideas, and experiences. The primary hurdle is often the belief that "it's not for me". In the Black Country, many individuals lack access to arts and culture due to profound inequalities in arts provision across all age groups.

We firmly believe that everyone in the Black Country should have the opportunity to experience the arts, regardless of income, education, or background. This year, much of our site-specific work was focused on taking performances into everyday spaces to engage people where they live, work and shop. Art should be part of the fabric of our lives, something unexpected, happened-upon and exciting, not always confined to a venue with the expectation that the audience will travel for it.



What's in Store Wednesbury. Photo by Philip Parnell.

Enriching Our High Streets

In the heart of the Black Country, we animated high streets and town centres with captivating storytelling, poetry, and performances. What's In Store breathed life into these areas, celebrating the unique stories of local shops, their proprietors, and customers, all crafted in collaboration with local artists. The streets resonated with the sounds of the Rajasthan Heritage Brass Band, and families delighted in the wordless adventures of a Yeti, staged inside Bearwood Indoor Market.

We were proud to present **What's In Store Bearwood** as part of the **Birmingham 2022 Festival**, enriching the cultural tapestry of Sandwell during the Birmingham 2022 Commonwealth Games. **What's In Store Wednesbury**, delivered as part of a three-year partnership with Multistory, was another milestone in our commitment to promoting community engagement and cultural diversity throughout the region. Although both towns are within the same borough, they have very different and distinctive identities and environments, so the project was adapted to suit each locale.

Pushing Artistic Boundaries

We furthered the bold experimentation that defined the company's work throughout the pandemic. We embraced the lessons learned during this time, where our company continued to connect with audiences and create immersive and accessible performances. Collaborating with Ghana's Accra Theatre Workshop, we produced **Where Are You?**, a live theatre production for families simultaneously staged in the Black Country and Accra, connected through a live Zoom link.

This endeavour pushed the boundaries of our work within physical spaces and celebrated the power of technology to bridge geographical divides. I particularly enjoyed seeing children from different continents connect through theatre, greeting one another from over 3,000 miles away. The project was made possible thanks to support from the British Council and Birmingham 2022 Festival.

Chair's Statement



Circus Bezerkus at Friar Park Millennium Centre, Sandwell

Rebuilding with Communities

In 2022/23, providing ongoing support and subsidy to our Community Promoters in the Black Country was a top priority. We minimised the risks our Promoters faced during these challenging times by providing additional subsidies and support for their events, thanks to generous financial support from **Arts Council England**, **Esmée Fairbairn Foundation**, **Postcode Culture Trust**, **British Council** and many more. We are hugely grateful to our funders for the flexibility they have allowed us as we rebuilt our programme, which allowed us to meet the needs of our communities, partners and promoters as we navigated difficult times.

A Sustainable Future

Our focus this year was on laying the groundwork for a sustainable future. The challenges of sustaining our levels of activity in the Black Country have been apparent for years, with little increase in our core funding from Arts Council England in over a decade. Fortunately, we have received support from local authorities, trusts, and individuals, which significantly boosted our capacity in recent years. However, we recognised that substantial, long-term investment was needed at the core of our organisation to achieve true sustainability and fulfil our potential for impact.

In November, we received the welcome news that **Arts Council England** would increase our annual funding by 51% from 2023 to 2026. This increase will allow us to reach more people than ever in the Black Country, bringing outstanding performances to people's doorsteps and engaging individuals in areas with limited access to the arts. We were delighted to see a vital increase in funding across the Black Country, with a number of brilliant organisations receiving increases or joining the portfolio.

Securing grants of this scale was only possible with the continued financial support of **Sandwell Council** and **Wolverhampton City Council**. Their funding enables us to leverage significantly more income into the boroughs, resulting in a substantial return on investment for the Black Country's communities, venues, and artists.



Enhancing Arts Provision in Libraries

We were delighted to learn that **Rekindle**, a national project to enhance arts provision in libraries, had secured funding for three years from 2023 to 2026 from Arts Council England. Our partnership with Sandwell Libraries will create a culturally relevant, accessible, and inclusive arts programme across five libraries, with training provided to library staff, making these libraries even greater cultural hubs for their local communities.

As we look back on this year of challenges, ambition, and new ways of working, we take pride in the dedication of our Community Promoters, volunteers, and venues in the Black Country. They have proven to be resilient in the face of adversity and passionate and excited about bringing outstanding performances back to Black Country audiences. Together, we understand that the arts have the power to unite and enrich our community, and we continue to strive for a brighter and more culturally vibrant Black Country.

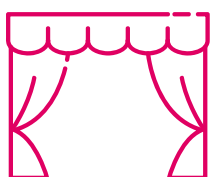
Timothy Rushby
Chair, Black Country Touring



2022/23 In Stats



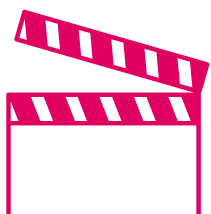
35,249 people attended events, performances and productions supported, or produced, by Black Country Touring. This is over double our audience for 2021/22!



Community & Young Promoters featured **92 performances** of **36** individual touring productions or acts, in **35** venues across the Black Country. This is a **26%** increase in performances on last year.



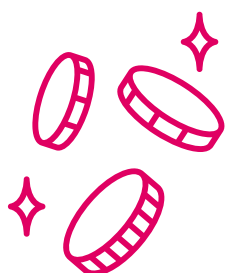
What's in Store took place in two towns in Sandwell, featured **32** artists, **10** performances and was attended by **5,923** people in total.



1,199 people attended **Community Cinema** screenings. A **116%** increase on last year.



730 people engaged with our digital projects, including the **Black Country Stories podcast** and short films for **What's In Store** and **Where Are You?**

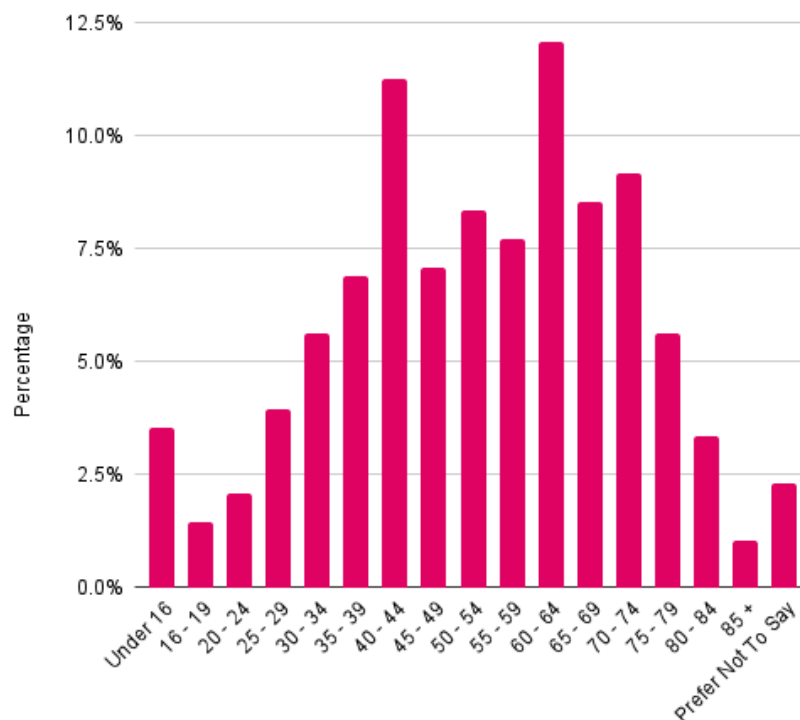


For every £1 granted to Black Country Touring by Arts Council England, Sandwell Council & Wolverhampton Arts & Heritage, **we raised a further £1.83** to invest in the performing arts across the Black Country.

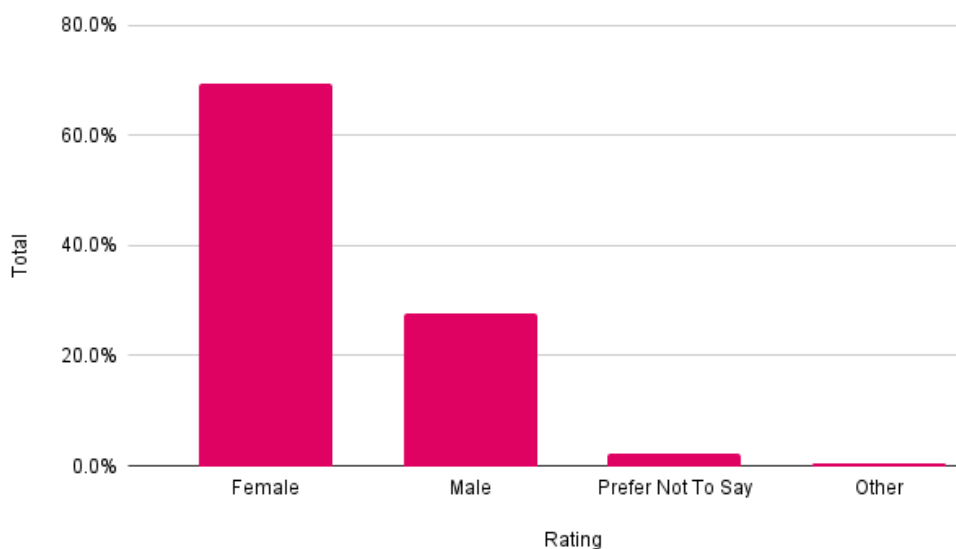
2022/23 Our audiences



Age Range



Gender



20% of our audience identified as having their daily activities limited by a disability.

Data is taken from audience surveys conducted between April 2022 and March 2023.

2022/23 Our audiences



Count of CQ8

Asian/Asian British: Any other Asian background

1.4%

Mixed/multiple ethnic groups: Any other Mixed/multiple

1.2%

White: Any other White background

2.9%

Prefer not to say

2.2%

Mixed/multiple ethnic groups: White and Black Caribbean

1.4%

Mixed/multiple ethnic groups: White and Asian

2.4%

Asian/Asian British: Asian/Asian British: Indian

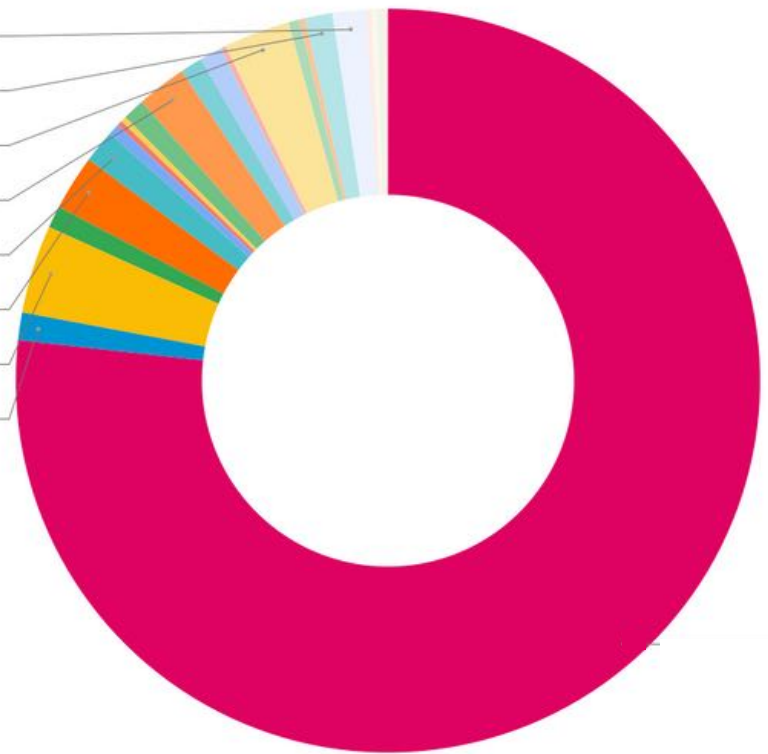
3.8%

White: Irish

1.2%

21% of audiences were from ethnically diverse backgrounds. This is a small drop from pre-pandemic levels, potentially due to the range of active promoters and the areas of the Black Country where performances took place.

Our 2023-26 business plan and programme aims to further engage under-served and under-represented communities, including people from ethnically diverse backgrounds.



White: English/Welsh/Scottish/Northern Irish/British

76.7%



62.3% of Black Country Touring's audiences live in the 30% most deprived areas in the UK, based on postcode data. Many have been hit hard by Covid-19 and the cost of living crisis, which is why we are providing additional support to promoters, keeping ticket prices low and trialling pay-what-you-can ticketing.

60% of our audiences travelled less than 2 miles to attend an event. 82% of our audience travel less than 5 miles, demonstrating the localised focus and impact of our work, in an area with few dedicated arts venues.



2022/23 Our audiences



90% of audiences rated the performance they attended as Very Good, 9% as Good and 0% as poor.



91% of audiences rated the performance they attended as Very Good value for money.



Pleasant evening out, joyful & thought provoking subject matter

It was a wonderful show, I haven't laughed that much in years. well done, excellent!!

It was so original and funny. Something very different, loved it

It's an important event bringing people together. The years of the pandemic have been awful and we need more events like this please.

This event has been perfect for us. As a big family (8) we struggle to find events in our price range and that will be appropriate for all the children's ages. We will definitely be looking for more.

I loved the creativity. The sets were beautiful. My youngest gasped when the big book was opened. It's brilliant to have something like this on our doorstep, very accessible.

It was a magical experience with my close & extended family and made me feel connected to this community. The fact it took place in a library felt like the books came alive!

A chance to really see in a new way, my local high street. Thank you!

Great for lifting people's spirits, community building, educational, fun and imaginative.



Audience data is based on 514 audience surveys and 597 postcodes collected between April 2022 and March 2023

2022/23 Highlights

WHAT'S IN STORE



The Rajasthan Heritage Brass Band perform in Bearwood Indoor Market as a part of What's In Store Bearwood.



Lorna Meehan performs in Allsorts as a part of What's In Store Wednesbury.

2

towns

4

days

46%

of commissioning fees
were paid to artists
from ethnically diverse
backgrounds

32

artists

19

micro-
productions

110

performances

5805

people attended

47.5%

of audiences were from the
lowest 3 deciles for multiple
deprivation (32% in
Bearwood, 69% in
Wednesbury)

Celebrating Our High Streets

What's In Store has seen Black Country Touring develop a unique approach to presenting performances in town centres and on high streets; invigorating, animating and celebrating the independent spirit of shops, cafes and businesses in Bearwood and Wednesbury. It built on developmental projects in West Bromwich and Wolverhampton in 2019 piloting the work in partnership with the local Business Improvement Districts. The project embodied the organisation's ethos of *Big Ideas in Small Spaces* – presenting high-quality and accessible work, with emotional depth and rich storytelling in everyday but unexpected spaces where audiences don't expect to find theatre, poetry and live music.



What's In Store celebrated the positive impact multiculturalism has on our high streets – the vibrancy of culture and cuisine from around the world and the stories of the people that have settled in Black Country towns; shaping the sights, smells and signage of these bustling thoroughfares. At a time when society often feels fragmented and divided, it's more important than ever that we encourage local people to step over thresholds that they usually pass by, to hear the stories of the people within and walk away with new, positive perspectives of the people and places where they live.

“

A chance to really see, in a new way, my local high street. Thank you!

***Great for lifting people's spirits, community building,
educative, fun and imaginative.***

Brilliantly presented, fun & funny. Great combination of story & music and a window into people's lives & local shopkeepers you'd never be aware of otherwise.

Great event! So lovely to see live & local theatre & poetry in such a different space!

”

What's In Store Bearwood

17 & 18 June 2022

20
artists &
performers

11
micro-
productions

54
individual
performances

11
participating
shops

3,200
people
attended

What's In Store brought two days of live poetry, music and theatre performances to independent shops and cafes along Bearwood Road, Smethwick. Part of the **Birmingham 2022 Festival**, it helped to bolster Sandwell's representation within the festivities and spotlight its rich cultural diversity. The high street is reflective of the many communities that have settled in the area, with cuisine, culture and groceries from Brazil, Mexico, India, the Caribbean and many more.

The project was made possible with funding from the **Esmée Fairbairn Foundation's Reinvent Performing Arts Fund**, which allowed BCT to invest greater resources into a production than ever before and unprecedented creative freedom and capacity to develop the project at a hugely challenging time, as we emerged from the disruption of Covid-19.



It made me realise how important it is to write about lived local experiences and lives. Storytelling is a very powerful medium and sometimes we do overlook it.

- Artist feedback



20 freelance artists were employed in total, the majority of whom are residents of Sandwell and the wider West Midlands. At the heart of the project were a team of 7 local artists who were in residence in shops along the high street. They developed new performances based on stories gathered from business owners and customers and inspired by the Bearwood Road. Examples include **Auden Allen**, who celebrated the crackle of vinyl in RPM Audio, while **Rupinder Kaur's The Never Ending Journey** was inspired by the clothing store Ar-Raqib Modest Fashion and the story of its owner. **Bohdan Piasecki's The Shop of Poems** popped up Bearwood Indoor Market in the run-up to What's In Store and saw Bohdan write and perform poems based on stories gathered from local people who visited.

There were two special shows for children and families – BCT's original production **Where Are You?** at Bear Bookshop, and **Is That A Yeti, Hetty? by Crow's Nest Theatre** in Bearwood Indoor Market. Poet **Dreadlockalien** created freestyle poems together with members of the public, while **Jake Oldershaw** performed **Coffee & Tea**, a warm-hearted performance inspired by tales from Black Country cafés that finds the extraordinary in the everyday. High street spaces came to life with **Curious Cargo's** mischievous **Lollipop Ladies** and the incredible **Rajasthan Heritage Brass Band**.

Where Are You?

17 & 18 June 2022, presented as part of What's In Store Bearwood

Where Are You? is a hybrid theatre production for families produced by Black Country Touring in collaboration with **Accra Theatre Workshop** in Ghana, commissioned by **Birmingham 2022 Festival** and funded by the **British Council**. It tells the story of two penpals, Rochi in Bearwood and Abena in Dzorwulu, who embark on a perilous journey courting danger and adventure in order to meet each other in the middle.

Because of COVID, we couldn't travel and be in the same place, but to have the opportunity to explore a new way of working was really what we needed at the time.

Emelia Asiedu, Artistic Director – Accra Theatre Workshop



The creative team crossed both locations and never met in person, collaborating entirely over Zoom and Whatsapp. The show, featuring a mix of live performance, pre-recorded performance and animation, was staged simultaneously in Bear Bookshop (Bearwood) and J-CLU School of Arts (Accra) and was connected through a live stream. It was accompanied by a beautifully illustrated children's book and a standalone film.

A wonderful feelgood show with an excellent use of digital technology. Made me feel more connected to my community and people in Ghana. Brilliant to take place in a local bookshop.

Audience member

What's In Store Wednesbury

23 & 24 September 2022



Black Country Touring were commissioned by fellow Sandwell arts charity **Multistory** to produce a version of What's in Store bespoke to Wednesbury, as part of **We Are Wednesbury**, a three year programme of cultural activity in Wednesbury led by Multistory for the **Wednesbury Heritage Action Zone**. The aim of **We Are Wednesbury** is to enable local people to express the pride they feel for their town, celebrate the role and importance of the high street as a hub of the community and enable people to understand the history of their town and share their memories and stories.

The project was built on the learnings of the Bearwood iteration and responded to the unique identity of Wednesbury town centre and its communities. The We Are Wednesbury steering group were engaged throughout the project and the programme was tailored towards families and people with limited opportunity to engage with the arts. New market stalls in the heart of the town were transformed into performance spaces, welcoming passers-by with **Is That a Yeti, Hetty by Crow's Nest Theatre**, stilt performers **Top Bananas** and a stall hosted by Wednesbury Poet Laureate **Brendan Hawthorne**.

Actor **Vimal Korpai** and musician **Derek Nisbet** led audiences on a journey to some of the fantastic independent businesses throughout the town, uncovering their stories and giving a new insight into the people at the heart of the local community. **Lorna Meehan** wove stories of her crafty past with that of the Allsorts wool shop and its loyal customers, giving insight into what makes it an integral part of the Wednesbury community and how important it is to let the world see what you've made. Poet and actor **Suzan Spence** welcomed audience into Mama L's coffee shop, with tales of an often overlooked gem on the high street.



Wonderful to have activities in [the] town centre for everyone.

***Good quality theatre in the heart of the community.
Bringing people to participate in the arts in the heart of the
community is important connecting people and place.***

*Interesting to find out who the people are behind the shops. It was
nice to hear their stories.*

***This event is so beautiful, it meant a lot to me since I was able to
learn more about Wednesbury and had a lot of fun.***



Smethwick Celebrates The Queen's Jubilee



A New Creative Consortium for Smethwick

In Spring 2022, a consortium of four venues in Smethwick, Sandwell, joined forces to create a vibrant arts project funded by Arts Council England's Let's Create Jubilee Fund. With Black Country Touring's support, **Bearwood Community Hub, CAP Centre, The Dorothy Parkes Centre, and Thimblemill Library** secured £10,000 via the Heart of England Community Foundation to organise four community events featuring live theatre, uniting the diverse communities of Smethwick in celebration of the Queen's Platinum Jubilee.

The primary goal of this project was to bring Smethwick's communities together after enduring the hardships of the pandemic. Prolonged loneliness, isolation, rising living costs, and the emotional trauma of Covid-19 had taken a toll. Furthermore, limited arts opportunities exacerbated social inequality and deprivation, particularly for low-income families. According to the Active Lives Survey, Sandwell had the lowest arts engagement in the Midlands.

BCT supported the consortium in selecting and promoting professional touring theatre companies. We also assisted in organising creative workshops, booking and contracting theatre companies, event logistics, and marketing.

Community Engagement:

- 474 people attended Smethwick Celebrates events, theatre shows, and workshops.
- 123 people participated in 6 workshops, creating decorations for each venue.
- 98.8% of attendees rated their experience as 'very good' or 'good.'
- Attendees expressed the impact on their well-being and sense of community. Quotes like: "Helps me get out of the house as I haven't been very well" and "Queen's Platinum Jubilee - really special to me" highlight the event's significance to local people

Reaching Underserved Communities:

- 68.5% of attendees lived within 2 miles of the event, demonstrating successful local engagement.
- For 45.4% of attendees, this was the only professional arts event they had attended in the last 12 months, addressing the impact of Covid-19 on arts attendance.
- 67% of attendees were from the lowest 3 deciles for indices of multiple deprivation.
- 22.2% of attendees identified as having a disability, and 20% were from ethnically diverse backgrounds, reaching often underserved communities.

This partnership between the consortium venues and BCT not only brought live theatre to Smethwick but also fostered community, alleviated the effects of the pandemic and addressed inequalities in arts access. Our future aim is to support and expand this creative consortium to bring more cohesive and collaborative projects to Smethwick, bringing its community assets to life in with arts and creativity.



“These opportunities are vital for the wellbeing of our community. We had vulnerable adults and children attending workshops and a show free of charge. We were able to utilise the power of the arts and link it with a historical event, and it will have created lasting memories for all attendees. We also learnt more about the impact of partnership working as the offer we provided overall for the Smethwick community was a lot more than we could have ever done on our own.”

-Robert Bruce, Chief Executive, Dorothy Parkes Community Centre



The Head Gardener by Untied Artists



In recent years and for obvious reasons, the nation has collectively embraced the joys of gardening, from tending windowsill herb gardens to embarking on ambitious horticultural projects. Amid this green revolution, Black Country Touring played a pivotal role in bringing a transformative theatre production to life.

Seed Funding

When *The Head Gardener* faced uncertainty due to funding challenges, Black Country Touring stepped in to help Untied Artists bring the project to fruition, as Jake Oldershaw explains:

“Without the support of Black Country Touring, our touring performance ‘The Head Gardener’ simply would not exist. After two unsuccessful Arts Council grant bids, the first tour in 2022 was in serious jeopardy. As an artist and producer, this was deeply worrying as we had a tour of over 20 dates booked.

It was at this stage that BCT offered not only enough money for us to finish creating it, but also suggested that visiting various community gardens in the region might also provide inspirational material for the work. This was a process that directly informed the material, and it was a moving and humbling experience to then perform the show in those venues.”

The result has been 2 tours, over 40 shows, to venues across the country. We also have a good deal of interest for touring in 2024, including several Rekindle library venues, thanks to the pilot scheme we conducted with BCT in Black Country libraries in July 2023”

We believed that this production that celebrated community, growing and mental health needed to be seen by audiences in The Black Country and beyond. Jake and Warren Oldershaw combined storytelling with live music to create an immersive experience, while their heartfelt songs added depth and resonance. As Warren’s garden thrived, it served as a metaphor for the growth and transformation experienced by Warren, Jake and many other people as they connect with nature.

A Breath of Fresh Air

“A joyful, courageous, and inspiring piece of theatre, just what Riverside House stands for. The living garden on stage mirrored the growth we all aspire to.”

“A spectacular live performance, touching and skillfully delivered. It felt like stepping into a world where the boundaries between the stage and the audience dissolved.”

“Your story touched me deeply, promoting nature’s healing power. Your brotherly bond was heartwarming and added a layer of authenticity to the narrative.”



Trustees & Team

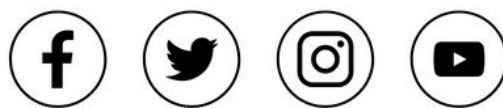


Trustees

Timothy Rushby, Chair
Imtiaz Dungarwalla, Vice Chair
Akila McLean
Julie McKirdy
Hitesh Patel (resigned November 2022)
Carla Priddon
Paul Reece

Black Country Touring Team

Frances Land, Co-Artistic Director
Steve Johnstone, Co-Artistic Director
Matt Andrews, Development Director
Corinne Morris, General Manager (joined June 2022)
Deb Justice, Company Manager (resigned June 2022)
Natalie Kidman, Promoter Manager
Sampira Al-Fihri, Creative Producer
Bobby Tiwana, Development Producer (Freelance)
Amrit Kaur Juss, Marketing & Communications Coordinator
Olivia James, Community Cinema Coordinator (Freelance)
Donna Clarkson, Community Programme Coordinator (from April 2023)
Laura Leech, Administration & Projects Assistant



Black Country Touring | @bct_touring

www.bctouring.org.uk

Black Country Touring
c/o Thimblemill Library
Thimblemill Road
Smethwick
West Midlands
B67 5RJ

Charity No: 1080608
Company No: 3446320

Black Country Touring is an Arts Council England National Portfolio Organisation.

Company registration number: 3446320

Charity registration number: 1080608

Black Country Touring

(A company limited by guarantee)

Annual Report and Financial Statements

for the Year Ended 31 March 2023

Bissell & Brown Birmingham Limited
12 Portman Rd, Kings Heath
Birmingham
B13 0SL

Black Country Touring

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Black Country Touring

Trustees' Report

The trustees, who are directors for the purposes of company law, present the annual report together with the financial statements of the charitable company for the year ended 31 March 2023.

Structure, governance and management

Nature of governing document

The company is limited by guarantee and does not have a share capital. It is governed by Memorandum and Articles of Association and was incorporated on 8th October 1997. It was registered as a Charity on 8th May 2000.

Organisational structure

Chief Executives : Steve Johnstone & Frances Johnstone

Company Secretary: Frances Johnstone

General Manager: Corinne Morris (appointed during the year)

Company Manager: Deb Justice (resigned during year)

Recruitment and appointment of trustees

Recruitment and Appointment of New Trustees

1 Members of the Committee will be invited on the basis of their working expertise and experience, and/or their background and other experiences and skills. The committee as a whole will aim to reflect the broad make-up and cultural diversity of the Black Country and the West Midlands.

2 As a general rule, there should be a relationship between the Company and a person proposed for Committee membership. The person proposed should know something of Black Country Touring's work. This criterion does not apply to people offering specific skills.

3 The time limits for membership laid down in the constitution should be applied consciously, rather than renewing automatically.

4 There should be a provision for new members to be brought on for a fixed term of one or two years in the first instance, with the possibility of extension to full membership, after review. (Co-options for specific projects or developments are already laid down in the constitution)

In applying these criteria Black Country Touring will take a pro-active approach in fully operating its policy of equal opportunities.

Induction and training of trustees

All proposed new members must be provided with an induction pack and have a formal discussion with a member of the Company's staff, before their final approval by the Committee.

These guidelines run alongside the terms of Black Country Touring's Articles of Association.

Objectives and activities

Public benefit

In the exercise of their powers as charity trustees, they have had due regard to the published guidance from the Charity Commission on the operation of the public benefit requirement, and the aims of the charity are carried out for the public benefit.

The trustees confirm that they have complied with the requirements of section 17 of the Charities Act 2011 to have due regard to the public benefit guidance published by the Charity Commission for England and Wales.

Black Country Touring

Trustees' Report

Objects and aims

The objects of the Company are to promote, maintain, improve and advance the education of the public by the encouragement and practice of the arts, by fostering and promoting for the benefit of the public the improvement and development of artistic knowledge, taste, understanding, and application of the arts and in particular but not exclusively, to provide arts based activities and encourage participation by all sections of the community in such activities in the Wolverhampton, Walsall, Dudley and Sandwell Metropolitan Boroughs and their environs.

Trustees and officers

The trustees and officers serving during the year and since the year end were as follows:

Trustees:	Timothy Rushby
	Imtiaz Dungarwalla
	Carla Priddon
	Julie McKirdy
	Paul Reece
	Akila Mclean

Achievements and performance

See attached Annual Report

Financial review

See attached Annual Report

Policy on reserves

The income and expenditure of the charity fluctuates according to the pattern of grant and project income secured. As the Charity employs a number of staff, the Management Committee (Trustees) consider that reserves are needed to provide for an orderly wind-down in the event of an unexpected reduction in the funds secured. The Charity is also required on occasion to incur the costs of developing and researching work before the grants which have been awarded, and other income, are actually received. The Charity therefore needs a level of reserves for cash flow reasons. In the opinion of the Management Committee the reserves of the Charity are appropriate for its scale of operation.

Black Country Touring

Trustees' Report

Reference and Administrative Details

Charity Registration Number: 1080608

Company Registration Number: 3446320

The charity is incorporated in England and Wales.

Registered Office: Thimblemill Library
Thimblemill Rd
Smethwick
B67 5RJ

Principal Office: Thimblemill Library
Thimblemill Rd
Smethwick
B67 5RJ

Independent Examiner: Bissell & Brown Birmingham Limited
12 Portman Rd, Kings Heath
Birmingham
B13 0SL

Bankers: The Co-operative Bank

The annual report was approved by the trustees of the charity on 10/10/21 and signed on its behalf by:



Timothy Rushby
Trustee

Black Country Touring

Statement of Trustees' Responsibilities

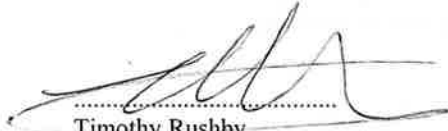
The trustees (who are also the directors of Black Country Touring for the purposes of company law) are responsible for preparing the trustees' report and the financial statements in accordance with the United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice) and applicable law and regulations.

Company law requires the trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year. Under company law the trustees must not approve the financial statements unless they are satisfied that they give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charitable company and of its incoming resources and application of resources, including its income and expenditure, for that period. In preparing these financial statements, the trustees are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and apply them consistently;
- observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP;
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable UK Accounting Standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements; and
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charitable company will continue in business.

The trustees are responsible for keeping adequate accounting records that are sufficient to show and explain the charitable company's transactions and disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charitable company and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charitable company and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

Approved by the trustees of the charity on 12/12/23 and signed on its behalf by:



.....
Timothy Rushby
Trustee

Black Country Touring

Independent Examiner's Report to the trustees of Black Country Touring ("the Company")

I report to the charity trustees on my examination of the accounts of the Company for the year ended 31 March 2023.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the charity's trustees of the Company (and also its directors for the purposes of company law) you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006 ('the 2006 Act').

Having satisfied myself that the accounts of Black Country Touring are not required to be audited under Part 16 of the 2006 Act and are eligible for independent examination, I report in respect of my examination of your charity's accounts as carried out under section 145 of the Charities Act 2011 ('the 2011 Act'). In carrying out my examination I have followed the Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the 2011 Act.

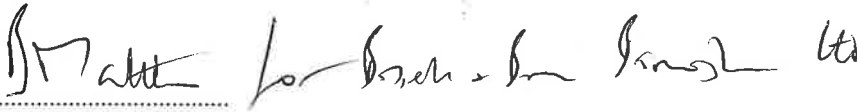
Independent examiner's statement

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

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

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

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



B J Matthews, FCA
Bissell & Brown Birmingham Ltd
12 Portman Rd, Kings Heath
Birmingham
B13 0SL

Date: 10/11/23

Black Country Touring

Statement of Financial Activities for the Year Ended 31 March 2023 (Including Income and Expenditure Account and Statement of Total Recognised Gains and Losses)

	Note	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	Total 2023 £	Total 2022 £
Income and Endowments from:					
Donations and legacies	2	196	-	196	1,398
Charitable activities	10	348,866	125,500	474,366	391,422
Other income		146	-	146	-
Total Income		<u>349,208</u>	<u>125,500</u>	<u>474,708</u>	<u>392,820</u>
Expenditure on:					
Charitable activities	14	<u>(349,208)</u>	<u>(124,851)</u>	<u>(474,059)</u>	<u>(349,607)</u>
Total Expenditure		<u>(349,208)</u>	<u>(124,851)</u>	<u>(474,059)</u>	<u>(349,607)</u>
Net income		<u>-</u>	<u>649</u>	<u>649</u>	<u>43,213</u>
Net movement in funds		-	649	649	43,213
Reconciliation of funds					
Total funds brought forward		<u>92,805</u>	<u>97,985</u>	<u>190,790</u>	<u>147,577</u>
Total funds carried forward	9	<u>92,805</u>	<u>98,634</u>	<u>191,439</u>	<u>190,790</u>

All of the charity's activities derive from continuing operations during the above two periods.

Black Country Touring
(Registration number: 3446320)
Balance Sheet as at 31 March 2023

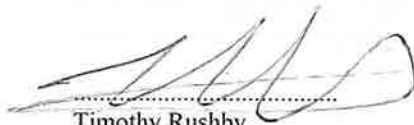
	Note	2023 £	2022 £
Fixed assets			
Tangible assets	4	882	-
Current assets			
Debtors	5	21,391	16,437
Cash at bank and in hand	6	<u>175,307</u>	<u>204,266</u>
		196,698	220,703
Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year	7	<u>(6,141)</u>	<u>(29,913)</u>
Net current assets		<u>190,557</u>	<u>190,790</u>
Net assets		<u>191,439</u>	<u>190,790</u>
Funds of the charity:			
Restricted income funds			
Restricted funds	9	98,634	97,985
Unrestricted income funds			
Unrestricted funds		<u>92,805</u>	<u>92,805</u>
Total funds	9	<u>191,439</u>	<u>190,790</u>

For the financial year ending 31 March 2023 the charity was entitled to exemption from audit under section 477 of the Companies Act 2006 relating to small companies.

Directors' responsibilities:

- The members have not required the charity to obtain an audit of its accounts for the year in question in accordance with section 476; and
- The directors acknowledge their responsibilities for complying with the requirements of the Act with respect to accounting records and the preparation of accounts.

The financial statements on pages 6 to 14 were approved by the trustees, and authorised for issue on 19/10/23 and signed on their behalf by:


 Timothy Rushby
 Trustee

The notes on pages 8 to 14 form an integral part of these financial statements.

Black Country Touring

Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 March 2023

1 Accounting policies

Summary of significant accounting policies and key accounting estimates

The principal accounting policies applied in the preparation of these financial statements are set out below. These policies have been consistently applied to all the years presented, unless otherwise stated.

Statement of compliance

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with 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)) (issued in October 2019) - (Charities SORP (FRS 102)), the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) and the Companies Act 2006.

Basis of preparation

Black Country Touring meets the definition of a public benefit entity under FRS 102. Assets and liabilities are initially recognised at historical cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant accounting policy notes.

Going concern

The Trustees have considered budgets and cash flow forecasts through to October 2021, and the level of post year-end support received from Arts Council England. On this basis, the trustees consider that there are no material uncertainties about the charity's ability to continue as a going concern nor any significant areas of uncertainty that affect the carrying value of assets held by the charity.

Exemption from preparing a cash flow statement

The charity opted to early adopt Bulletin 1 published on 2 February 2016 and have therefore not included a cash flow statement in these financial statements.

Income and endowments

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

Donations and legacies

Donations are recognised when the charity has been notified in writing of both the amount and settlement date. In the event that a donation is subject to conditions that require a level of performance by the charity before the charity is entitled to the funds, the income is deferred and not recognised until either those conditions are fully met, or the fulfilment of those conditions is wholly within the control of the charity and it is probable that these conditions will be fulfilled in the reporting period.

Deferred income

Deferred income represents amounts received for future periods and is released to incoming resources in the period for which, it has been received. Such income is only deferred when:

- The donor specifies that the grant or donation must only be used in future accounting periods; or
- The donor has imposed conditions which must be met before the charity has unconditional entitlement.

Black Country Touring

Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 March 2023

Expenditure

All expenditure is recognised once there is a legal or constructive obligation to that expenditure, it is probable settlement is required and the amount can be measured reliably. All costs are allocated to the applicable expenditure heading that aggregate similar costs to that category. Where costs cannot be directly attributed to particular headings they have been allocated on a basis consistent with the use of resources, with central staff costs allocated on the basis of time spent, and depreciation charges allocated on the portion of the asset's use. Other support costs are allocated based on the spread of staff costs.

Charitable activities

Charitable expenditure comprises those costs incurred by the charity in the delivery of its activities and services for its beneficiaries. It includes both costs that can be allocated directly to such activities and those costs of an indirect nature necessary to support them.

Taxation

The charity is considered to pass the tests set out in Paragraph 1 Schedule 6 of the Finance Act 2010 and therefore it meets the definition of a charitable company for UK corporation tax purposes. Accordingly, the charity is potentially exempt from taxation in respect of income or capital gains received within categories covered by Chapter 3 Part 11 of the Corporation Tax Act 2010 or Section 256 of the Taxation of Chargeable Gains Act 1992, to the extent that such income or gains are applied exclusively to charitable purposes.

Tangible fixed assets

Individual fixed assets costing £500.00 or more are initially recorded at cost, less any subsequent accumulated depreciation and subsequent accumulated impairment losses.

Depreciation and amortisation

Depreciation is provided on tangible fixed assets so as to write off the cost or valuation, less any estimated residual value, over their expected useful economic life as follows:

Asset class

Equipment

Depreciation method and rate

33.33% straight-line

Fund structure

Unrestricted income funds are general funds that are available for use at the trustees' discretion in furtherance of the objectives of the charity.

Restricted income funds are those donated for use in a particular area or for specific purposes, the use of which is restricted to that area or purpose.

Black Country Touring

Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 March 2023

2 Income from donations and legacies

	Unrestricted funds General £	Total 2023 £	Total 2022 £
Donations and legacies;			
Donations from individuals	196	196	398
Trusts and foundations	-	-	1,000
	<u>196</u>	<u>196</u>	<u>1,398</u>
		Note	Total 2023 £

4 Tangible fixed assets

	Furniture and equipment £	Total £
Cost		
At 1 April 2022	22,782	22,782
Additions	<u>1,323</u>	<u>1,323</u>
At 31 March 2023	<u>24,105</u>	<u>24,105</u>
Depreciation		
At 1 April 2022	22,782	22,782
Charge for the year	<u>441</u>	<u>441</u>
At 31 March 2023	<u>23,223</u>	<u>23,223</u>
Net book value		
At 31 March 2023	<u>882</u>	<u>882</u>
At 31 March 2022	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>

5 Debtors

	2023 £	2022 £
Trade debtors	13,391	14,437
Other debtors	<u>8,000</u>	<u>2,000</u>
	<u>21,391</u>	<u>16,437</u>

6 Cash and cash equivalents

	2023 £	2022 £
Cash at bank	<u>175,307</u>	<u>204,266</u>

Black Country Touring

Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 March 2023

7 Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

	2023 £	2022 £
Other taxation and social security	4,441	3,102
Accruals	1,700	9,505
Deferred income	-	17,306
	<u>6,141</u>	<u>29,913</u>

8 Charity status

The charity is limited by guarantee, incorporated in England and Wales, and consequently does not have share capital. Each of the trustees is liable to contribute an amount not exceeding £1 towards the assets of the charity in the event of liquidation.

The principal place of business is:

Thimblemill Library
Thimblemill Rd
Smethwick
B67 5RJ

9 Funds

	Balance at 1 April 2022 £	Incoming resources £	Resources expended £	Balance at 31 March 2023 £
Unrestricted funds				
<i>General</i>				
General unrestricted	77,633	349,208	(349,208)	77,633
<i>Designated</i>				
Development reserve	15,172	-	-	15,172
Total unrestricted funds	<u>92,805</u>	<u>349,208</u>	<u>(349,208)</u>	<u>92,805</u>
Restricted funds				
SCVO Epic	4,985	-	(4,985)	-
Esmee Fairbairn	93,000	44,000	(106,866)	30,134
D'Oyly Carte	-	3,500	-	3,500
Saintbury	-	3,000	-	3,000
The Postcode Lottery	-	75,000	(13,000)	62,000
Total restricted funds	<u>97,985</u>	<u>125,500</u>	<u>(124,851)</u>	<u>98,634</u>
Total funds	<u>190,790</u>	<u>474,708</u>	<u>(474,059)</u>	<u>191,439</u>

Black Country Touring

Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 March 2023

10 Income from charitable activities

	Unrestricted funds General £	Restricted funds £	Total 2023 £	Total 2022 £
Arts Council core grant	146,137	-	146,137	146,137
Arts Council Culture Recovery Fund	-	-	-	5,016
Local authorities project income	26,332	-	26,332	26,335
Programme projects and production income	-	-	-	22,875
Fees and shows	143,002	-	143,002	48,254
BFI - Black Country Community Cinema	26,902	-	26,902	14,000
Esmee Fairbairn	-	44,000	44,000	90,000
Sandwell	-	-	-	13,374
Post Code Lottery	-	75,000	75,000	-
SCVO	-	-	-	18,508
Saintbury Trust	-	3,000	3,000	-
D'oyly Carte	-	3,500	3,500	-
Other income	1,093	-	1,093	6,923
A & H Pilkington	1,000	-	1,000	-
The Feeney Trust	4,400	-	4,400	-
	<u>348,866</u>	<u>125,500</u>	<u>474,366</u>	<u>391,422</u>

Black Country Touring

Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 March 2023

11 Net incoming/outgoing resources

Net incoming resources for the year include:

2023
£

12 Staff costs

The monthly average number of persons (including senior management / leadership team) employed by the charity during the year expressed as full time equivalents was as follows:

	2023 No	2022 No
Staff	<u>8</u>	<u>7</u>

No employee received emoluments of more than £60,000 during the year.

13 Trustees remuneration and expenses

No trustees, nor any persons connected with them, have received any remuneration from the charity during the year.

No trustees have received any reimbursed expenses from the charity during the year.

14 Expenditure on charitable activities

	Unrestricted funds General £	Restricted funds £	Total 2023 £	Total 2022 £
Black Country Cinema cost	29,488	-	29,488	25,306
Productions & performances	30,878	84,851	115,729	86,548
Artistic directors	45,317	-	45,317	41,746
Marketing & publicity	7,863	-	7,863	1,015
Travelling & subsistence	1,956	-	1,956	537
Salaries & employers NI & pension	129,804	40,000	169,804	130,195
Development	-	-	-	13,000
Training	3,149	-	3,149	50
Insurance	1,763	-	1,763	1,762
Rent	7,042	-	7,042	6,293
Computer/ network	2,309	-	2,309	5,325
Printing, postage & stationery	2,030	-	2,030	-
Shows & performances	73,832	-	73,832	25,899
Telephone	300	-	300	1,266
Independent examination	1,766	-	1,766	1,943

Black Country Touring

Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 March 2023

	Unrestricted funds General £	Restricted funds £	Total 2023 £	Total 2022 £
Subscriptions	2,174	-	2,174	3,466
Repairs	-	-	-	3,714
Other costst	7,238	-	7,238	-
Bank charges	67	-	67	244
Removal costs	1,791	-	1,791	3,275
Depreciation	441	-	441	-
	<u>349,208</u>	<u>124,851</u>	<u>474,059</u>	<u>351,584</u>

15 Taxation

The charity is a registered charity and is therefore exempt from taxation.