



**Northern
Broadside**

ANNUAL REPORT

2019/2020

Our Objectives

The company's charitable objectives are to promote, maintain, improve and advance education, particularly by encouragement of the Arts, including the Arts of Drama, Ballet, Music, Singing, Literature, Sculpture and Painting with particular reference to presenting new texts and adaptations of classical texts in a manner firmly rooted in the North of England.

The trustees have paid due regard to guidance issued by the Charity Commission in deciding what activities the company should undertake.

Northern Broadsides Theatre Company provides access to the arts for the community throughout the Yorkshire region and beyond. The company tours the UK and internationally giving performances of classical and new plays that are dramatic, educational and fun. The company's venues include theatres and educational establishments. Theatrical workshops are also carried out in association with various schools.

Chair's Report

The financial year to 31 March 2019 was a period of re-organisation, new opportunity and theatrical excellence for Northern Broadsides.

Conrad Nelson and Kay Packwood offered outstanding leadership and change management on an interim basis.

Then in March 2019, the appointment of Laurie Sansom as Artistic Director and CEO, and Kay Packwood as Executive Director sparked an exciting future for the Company.



During the tenure of Conrad and Kay, significant changes were made to the organisational structure of the Company bringing key roles in house and re-siting our office within Dean Clough making a meaningful saving on our overheads. During this time The Board contributed to the stability and leadership of the Company ensuring a stable interim to provide real opportunity for growth and development.

The Company's involvement locally and nationally is an exciting opportunity to develop new ideas and relationships to benefit both the communities we work in and Northern Broadsides alike. Our partnerships with Education, Arts organisations and other outreach continue to flourish. We look forward to working alongside a more diverse range of socio-economic groups and integrating more fully with the exciting cultural and ethnic diversity within Calderdale.

The financial year to 31 March 2020 saw the beginning of the company's leadership under new Artistic Director and CEO Laurie Sansom and the permanent appointment of Kay Packwood as Executive Director.

Due to previous commitments Laurie officially joined us in June 2019 but worked remotely with us from Vanuatu during the interim.

Having made a conscious decision not to produce an Autumn show in 2019, the Executive team were able to establish a vision for the company and new business plan to enable this.

Christmas 2019 saw collaboration with St Augustine's Centre working with asylum seekers who had only recently settled in Halifax. This was a new direction completely for the company, not funded as part of our Arts Council NPO funding, and one which saw unprecedented partnership working.

The reviews from audiences were of genuine emotion, wonder and appreciation of the combination of folk story, music from local folk singer Alice Jones, and the extraordinary musicianship and heart rending stories of Kamran and Amir from Iran. Laurie's first funded show as Artistic Director was a wonderful production of J.M. Barrie's *Quality Street*, which was sadly curtailed shortly after it began, due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The remainder of March 2020 saw the company plan what it could to ensure the survival not only of the company but also to support those artists and crew who we had contracted for the rest of the tour. Recruitment of new Trustees strengthened our skill set on the Board and enabled new challenge and collaboration, as we welcomed Emma Goodway and Rebecca Yorke in October 2019.

Nick Jones stepped down from the Board during the financial year, and Grant Stott and Steven Bonfield have both decided to step down from the Board since the end of the year. We are very grateful to them for the time they spent on the Board and for their ongoing commitment to the company. We are continuing to recruit new trustees to the Board to further increase its diversity and skills.

As ever our incredible audiences continue to support us and prove to be great 'critical friends'.

Rachel Harris
Chair of the Board



The Executive Report

Achievements and performance

Review of the year

This was the first year of Artistic Director/CEO Laurie Sansom and Executive Director Kay Packwood leading the team, restoring stable leadership to Northern Broadsides. The company has a small loyal team in the Finance Officer, Marketing Manager and Community Engagement Producer.

The Marketing Manager continues to increase the profile of the company on social media and has improved the quality of all print and publicity material. We believe we are seeing the benefit in audience numbers and certainly in the relationship with marketing departments of the touring venues.

2019/20 saw the conclusion of our tour of Shakespeare's *Much Ado About Nothing* which was directed by Conrad Nelson. It toured to 11 UK venues in Spring 2019, followed by a short sell-out run at the Neuss Shakespeare Festival in Germany. *Muddle in Messina*, a new education piece produced in tandem with this production, toured to libraries and colleges in Spring 2019.



Autumn 2019 was a period of planning and development for the company where the new Artistic Director/CEO mapped out his plans for the company. Autumn 2019 also saw us working with users of the St Augustine's Centre devising a Christmas concert, *Christmas Broadsides*, directed by Laurie. It was a unique blend of broadside ballad, festive sing-a-long and storytelling, and was performed by two local actors, a folk singer and multi-instrumentalist, and two musicians from Iran. St. Augustine's Centre, based in Halifax, is a community centre for anyone who needs help, advice or support, and is a focus for people looking for asylum and refugees. This production was extra to our funded activity and the start of a new direction of community engagement projects working with local people.



Spring 2020 saw Laurie's touring directorial debut for Northern Broadsides with a production of J.M. Barrie's *Quality Street*. This rare revival also featured a commentary from the Quality Street factory workers, who were the first 'Creation Squad' working in collaboration with Northern Broadsides as part of our community engagement programme.

Sadly, the 14-week tour was curtailed mid-March 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. We also undertook open recruitment for freelance positions – a practice generally unknown within the industry – and will continue to engage at least one freelance creative role in this way for each production in our drive for diversity, inclusion and fair recruitment practices.

Future plans and developments for 2020

Following the cancellation of the *Quality Street* tour, we continued to pay the cast and crew until the end of their contracts, showing our commitment to the freelance community. We did not furlough the core team who were able to continue to work and act quickly in responding to the crisis by developing Digital Squad which commissioned 18 films posted throughout May and June to provide an extraordinary account of an unprecedented period, ranging in content from the struggle of a junior doctor to deal with life on the front-line and a Muslim doctor dealing with racism, a teenager losing herself in social media, to a celebration of nature's renewal by a blind artist. It was in fact a huge undertaking for the company, we had over 43,000 viewers of the films, and considerably increased traffic via Twitter, Instagram and Facebook.

We also co-produced with The Piece Hall Trust and Northern Rascals, *The Aftermath*; an open-air dance theatre piece exploring the passion and agency of youth in the age of COVID-19. In this brand-new show devised with the young people of Calderdale, Northern Rascals and Northern Broadsides placed them front and centre like never before. 20 young people, aged from 16 to 25, explored their feelings of isolation, anger, and hope about a world hurtling towards a future they will inherit but is out of their control.

We are now making plans for further work we can produce while we are still subject to COVID-19 restrictions and also looking at developing a longer-term cultural project which would encompass public art, education and performance.



Key Statistics

Key achievements in 2019/20 were:

Total ticket revenue: £215,920

Total audiences: 16,979

Number of new productions: 2

Number of venues visited: 12

Number of performances: 91

Our company model and demanding performance style inspired the development of a highly skilled ensemble of actors. We produced 3 productions with a collective cast size of 29.

We also employed 8 backstage and technical staff and 11 company creative freelancers, as well as the producing venue partners in-house staff we contracted supplier companies such as set builders and transport.

Finance

The charity has net expenditure for the year of £78,974 (2019 - £33,767 net income). This is made up of net expenditure in unrestricted funds of £40,599 and net expenditure from restricted funds of £38,375. The main funding sources for the charity are from the sale of tickets for the theatre performances and the Arts Council Grant. The funding sources directly support the objectives of the charity.

Significant efforts to reduce the running costs of the organisation were made in 2018 and 2019 which, along with the restructuring of the Company, have improved the financial sustainability. However, the cancellation of the Quality Street tour has led to the net expenditure in unrestricted funds experienced for the last financial year.

The net expenditure from restricted funds results from depreciation of the costs associated with the redevelopment of the Viaduct Theatre in 2016 and 2017. The company has secured a 10-year lease on the property and the costs are being depreciated over the life of the lease. It is important to note that these restricted funds represent neither funds that can be spent nor an asset that can realistically be sold.

However, they represent a significant improvement to the infrastructure of the organisation which is intended to reduce costs and generate income for many years to come.

Government and Staffing

The following have served on the Board of Trustees during the period:

Rachel Harris

Grant Stott (Resigned 27 July 2020)

Steven Bonfield (Resigned 20 October 2020)

Sarah Horne

Charles Jones (known as Nick) (Resigned 30 October 2019)

Nicky Chance-Thompson

Nicola Goodway (known as Emma) (Appointed 30 October 2019)

Rebecca Yorke (Appointed 30 October 2019)

One of the key responsibilities of the Board is to ensure that the charity has sufficient resources to pursue its aims and objectives. This responsibility requires Trustees to take a proactive interest in fundraising and development. They agree the company's mission and strategy to ensure it takes the long view, assess appropriate risks and play their part as lead generators, advocates and champions to support the charity's expansion and growth.

Fundraising

Northern Broadsides undertake fundraising to diversify its income streams as part of its Business Plan goals. Earned income from ticket sales and an Arts Council grant represent more than two thirds of the company's annual income, the remainder is raised from membership/donations, grants and business support.

Friends of Northern Broadsides: 407 members

Donations and legacies 2019/20: £24,144

Christmas Broadsides donations: £2,903

(£1000 Friendly Soap, £1150 Dean Clough, £753 collection buckets)

Grants: £7,000

(£1500 CFFC to work with Quality Street workers, £4,000 Creative Scene to run poetry workshops with South Asian women, £1,500 Leeds University to fund Leonora Gunn's internship)

Marketing and Audience Development

2019/20 has been a significant period in terms of Communications for Northern Broadsides. A key moment was the announcement of the new Executive Team which has led to the development of a host of new performances aimed at attracting younger, more diverse audiences, whilst retaining our loyal core drama audiences. All in all, 2019/20 has been a period of transition and development for the company as we re-evaluate our company mission, aims and audiences.

In 2019/20 there were 16,979 tickets sold at average ticket yield of £21.86.

There were 20,201 website users, 28,070 website sessions, a bounce rate of 53.31% and an average session duration of 1 minute 40 seconds. 83.2% of users were new visitors to the website and 16.8% were returning visitors.

50.9% of website views came from Organic Search, 21.6% Direct and 16% from social media.

Due to issues with Google Analytics and a website server switchover, these figures are under-representative. No website analytics were recorded between 31 August 2019 and 10 October 2019.

We earned 956,600 impressions on Twitter and had a 7% Engagement Rate, with 4,000 link clicks, 1,875 retweets and 5,086 likes. Our followers grew by 570 users.

Facebook followers grew from 4,263 to 4,612 throughout the year and we had an average post reach of 1,105.

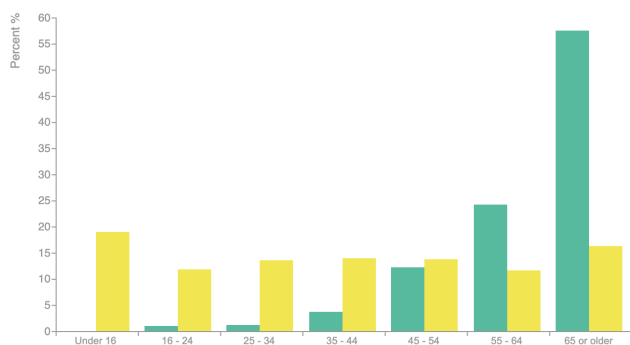
We achieved 10,072 YouTube views (a total watch time of 136 hours).

Data collated through the Audience Agency's Audience Finder portal demonstrates the following about our audiences on tour in 2019/20.

AUDIENCE AGE GROUP

Which of the following age groups do you belong to?

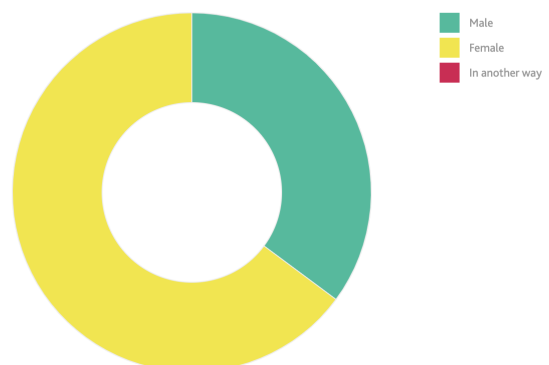
Margin of error: 5%



GENDER

Which of the following best describes how you think of your gender identity?

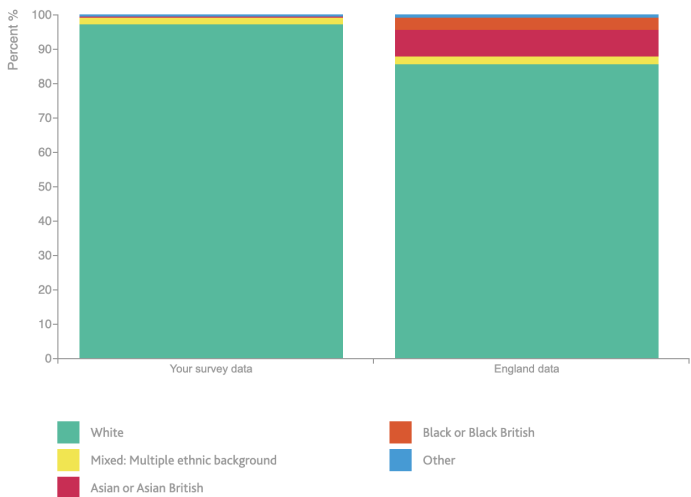
Margin of error: 5%



ETHNICITY

What is your ethnic group?

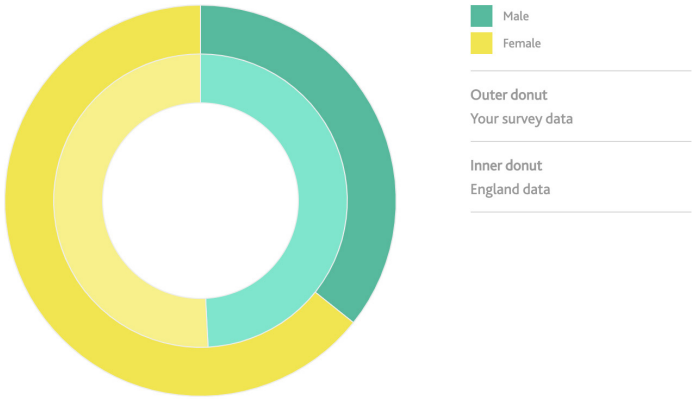
Margin of error: 2%



SEX

Are you...

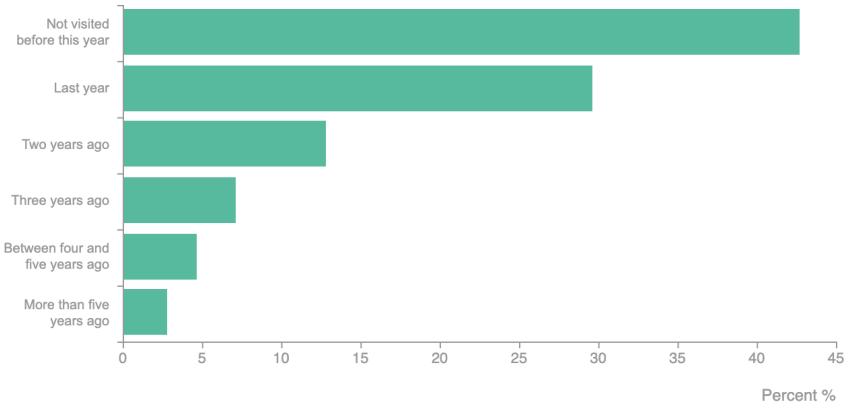
Margin of error: 5%



PREVIOUS ATTENDANCE (WHEN)

When was your last visit before this year?

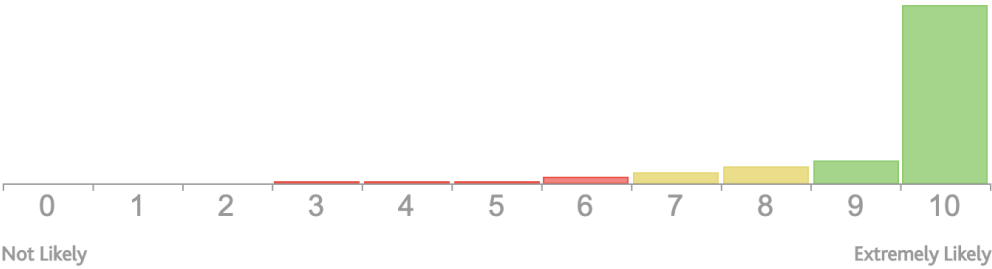
Margin of error: 5%



NET PROMOTER SCORE

How likely is it that you would recommend [org] to a friend, family member or colleague?

Margin of error: 5%



NET PROMOTER SCORE: 80

Total responses (primary survey): 324

84% promoters - 4% detractors

Key highlights include:

- A Net Promoter Score of 80, indicating a vast majority of happy, satisfied audiences
- 43% of audiences were new attendees
- A small increase of diverse ethnicities by 1% compared to 2018/19 data
- 94% of respondents were motivated to visit ‘to be entertained’
- 54% of respondents were motivated to visit because ‘the artform is an important part of who I am’

Creative Engagement

Creative Engagement is not just a new strand of work for the company, but a cornerstone in all our artistic projects. We continue to develop our model of “creation squads” where each production is made with a non-hierarchical cohort of artists and local people. Our ambition is to work across communities in Calderdale and develop a socially engaged practice that is unique to Northern Broadsides. To that end we are involved in networks such as the Valley of Sanctuary whose aim is to make Calderdale a more welcoming district for people seeking sanctuary. These networks will elicit partnerships and a collaborative way forward. We are now leading on a major project with artists, organisations and communities across Calderdale that aims to reduce social isolation and develops relationships with under-served groups.



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Fletchers Mill
Dean Clough
Halifax
HX3 5AX

01422 369 704