

Dewsbury Arts Group

(CIO Registered Charity Number 1161083)

Minutes of the meeting of the Charity Trustees held on 9TH February 2026 at 7:30pm In Room 1

Committee members known as: Mark Bailey (MB - Chair), Maria Bailey (MaB), , Simon Beaumont (SB), Ian Bowers (IB), Nick Cunliffe (NC), David Fletcher (DF), Jacky Fletcher (JF), Andrew Leverton (AL), Paul Lightowler (PL), Carol Parkinson (CPO), Malcolm Parkinson (MGP), Sue Saville (SS), Zahoor Sakharkar (ZS) Emma Thompson (ET) and Iain Winstanley (IW)

No.	Item
1	<p>Apologies for absence.</p> <p>Apologies had been received from PL who has tendered his resignation as Publicity Officer and from SB. IW did not attend.</p>
2	<p>Approval of the minutes of the previous meeting, review of action log and matters arising.</p> <p>It was RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 13th January 2026 be passed as a true record.</p> <p>The Action Log was considered and updated. Posters for Suddenly at Home and Accommodations had been delivered to Bagshaw Museum. Since then MGP had spoken to Janet Earnshaw of Kirklees Libraries who contradicted what MGP had been told at Dewsbury Library. She said that there was, as far as she knew, no reason why the Group could not place A4 posters in libraries. The fact that there would be an entry fee would not be a bar. As for autism, posters could be placed in a designated section. MGP is to follow this up further.</p>
3	<p>Correspondence and news</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Post. MGP apologised for not monitoring the post box as often as needed. This has accumulated for some while including over the Christmas period. Most of the post was from EON for an account next door. ET had telephoned them and EON were very apologetic. Forget Me Not had acknowledged and thanked the Group for a donation of £698.35. There had been an enquiry from Ings House Nursing Home to provide entertainment. MGP telephoned to say that the Group was not at the moment in a position to do so. There was also a cheque from a Season Ticket Holder. MGP paid the cheque in, passed the details on to ET and spoke to the Season Ticket Holder concerned. The Season Ticket Holder appreciated the call. MGP will continue to have overall responsibility for monitoring post. However, as he does not visit the premises as often as others he has arranged with MB and SS for them to monitor the post box as well so that post is at least retrieved. SI and IB are considering the installation of an internal letter box to be installed as the current one is not secure and arguably partially blocks a fire escape route. It will lessen the risk of post getting missed. JF and DF registered their opposition to the idea.• Kirklees Strategy Steering Group. MGP had attended a further meeting. The strategy has been written and will go out for consultation after the May elections.• Culture Collective. This is made up of a significant number of arts organisations. There is a Huddersfield bias. However, it aims to be a lobbying group to give culture a higher profile and give more heft to funding applications.

- Charlie Wells is a freelance Arts Development and Events Manager for Dewsbury. She is preparing a Strategic Cultural Development Plan. MGP met her at the theatre and they spoke for an hour and a half. Arising out of that conversation she has produced a draft entry for the Group.
- Talks: Daftness in Dewsbury and What a Performance. MGP has written two separate talks. The first centres on the works of Weston and Lee. He presented it in Mirfield for the U3A Local History Group. It was very well received and as a result three further bookings were secured. No fee was payable but there will be for the other three. MGP will donate the fees to the Group. What a Performance is a part history of the Group, part history of Batley Gilbert and Sullivan with bits of the Collegians thrown in. He and CP presented this for Mirfield Probus at the invitation of Helen Holdsworth. The fee of £50 has been paid to Batley Gilbert and Sullivan Society to cover the cost of the Group's advert in the programme for Gondoliers in April. Helen thought that was an excellent idea as the Group gets free publicity and the Society gets advertising income.
- KTV. This is linked to the Culture Collective. The station has a reach of 40,000. MGP is liaising with Antonia Gospel and IW about collating information for a podcast. The head of the station, Milton Brown, will come to the theatre. He was been before and was impressed.

4 **General Management**

- a. Treasurer. ET has obtained a job in the Isle of Man. It means that it is impracticable for her to continue as licensee of the theatre or to deal with day to day financial arrangements. Her duties could be divided into three separate elements. 1. It is feasible for her to continue to prepare accounts remotely and deal with bookkeeping. 2. It is not feasible for her to do day-to-day paying in and balancing floats etc. NC has volunteered to do this element of the job. He has been involved in the authorisation of payments for some time. ET, NC, MB and SS met to discuss practical arrangements after which ET expressed her full confidence in NC. 3. The annual return must be submitted to the Charity Commission within ten months of the financial year end. This includes the Annual Report and Accounts. The Report is prepared by the auditors (Paxtons) and includes the Secretary's Report. The submission of the Return itself is a secretarial matter which MGP could do. NC is to apply for a personal licence. Once obtained MGP will apply for the Premises Licence to be transferred. He will look into whether it is possible at the same time to extend opening hours. The Trustees thanked ET for her work for the Group and wished her well.
- b. Publicity. MGP reported that PL had submitted his resignation as Publicity Officer and from the Group. He has other commitments in his life which mean that he cannot devote sufficient time to the role and is stepping away from the Group. Work outstanding includes the programmes for Suddenly at Home, Accommodations, Youth Showcase and Lust, posters for Lust (Hugh Raine has done the design) and posters for the Launch and Youth Showcase. DF has the templates for the programmes and will cover those. Matt Bailey will prepare the Poster for the Youth Showcase. DF will also collate all necessary information to submit to Chris Fletcher so that he can prepare the brochure. In the meantime SS suggested that there be a dedicated publicity/marketing team to co-ordinate efforts. AL agreed to be a part of it as did MGP.
- c. Mirfield Show. MGP reported that the show would take place on Sunday 16th August which would be a week earlier than usual. It means that MGP, CP, MB and MaB would not be available. It was agreed not to apply for a stall this time.
- d. JF reported that during an assessment of the wardrobe she noted that hanging poles in the "bee end" had rusted. Replacement of the poles and associated fittings would cost

	<p>in the region of £300. It was RESOLVED to allocate a budget of £500 for this work.</p> <p>e. Newsletter content: Flyers for Accommodations, Youth Showcase, the new season and Launch Night, reminder that Life Drawing Classes have started again and are open to all.</p>
5	<p>Art Section</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Update (ZS) Life drawing classes have resumed. However, there are some notable absentees. Alec Jackson and David Bennett have not rejoined. Alec no longer lives at night and has completed his David Bennett production. Alec for 10 and is doing more staff work. MGP is to provide ZS with a copy of JF's annotated list of artist members. ZS will then indicate which are still attending and which have lapsed. ZS confirmed that he would ensure that there would be an exhibition in place for the run of Suddenly at Home.
6	<p>Finance</p> <p>ET presented the following figures: CAF Bank: £14,848.60 Virgin: £ 32,011.17 Total: £ 46,859.77</p> <p>No exceptional items of expenditure are anticipated.</p>
7	<p>Youth Section</p> <p>Update. MaB reported that the juniors will present Legacy while the seniors will present Oubliette.</p> <p>Following the tragic death of James, those connected with the youth section have kept a watchful eye on the youth members generally and upon those closest to him particularly. All of them know that the Group is a safe space for them. On reflection, it is sad that James joined later than the others. Otherwise he may have gained an even greater sense that the Group was his safe space where he could celebrate being different. All memories of him are of a cheerful lad with a beaming smile.</p>
8	<p>Drama Section</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Kind Hearts and Coronets: Director's report. AL presented the attached report. Suddenly at Home. Chris Hall has agreed to operate the sound for two performances. Antonia Gospel is to collate the sound in liaison with MB. MGP is to provide a 1970s style DECCA record player. Accommodations: Nothing to report. Lust: Nothing to report. Ticket sales: DF presented the attached report. Launch night: It was agreed that this will take place on Friday 29th May. Cheese and wine will be provided and there will be a quiz. Director and Stage Manager roles (JF email 15th January 2026). This will be reviewed at March meeting. Murder mystery evenings. A fee of £300 has been agreed with Club 1931 to present an evening on either 8th or 9th May.
9	<p>Premises.</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contractual arrangements. The contract with IB's company has now been completed and dated 27th January 2026 • Update. IB confirmed that a provisional assessment had been made of what will be needed to heat room 3. Five radiators had been installed initially. However, his provisional view is that only three may be needed. As for the toilets the situation is being assessed. Before the next meeting the Premises Sub Committee will meet to discuss the matter in detail. He acknowledged the need to comply with building regulations. • Transformers North. MGP reported that there had been a further session. The mound by the gate had been cleared of stones and brambles had been dug out as far as possible. There is now a possibility of creating an attractive flower bed. Many grave stones had been revealed for the first time in many years. Pictures of the work had been posted on Facebook. In response, one contributor asked for photographs of all the gravestones as some may refer to members of her family. MGP had obliged. There is a large quantity of stone which may well have a value. MGP is to make enquiries. • Chairs. IB reported that an opportunity had arisen to acquire for free a quantity of chairs for use in the gallery. Those chairs had been delivered. There is now an excess of plastic chairs (formerly used as theatre seating) in good condition. Those chairs could be sold at auction.
10	<p>Any Other Business</p> <p>It was agreed that posters for Batley Gilbert and Sullivan Society's production of The Gondoliers could be displayed during Suddenly at Home.</p>
11	<p>Date of next meeting: Monday 9th March 2026</p>

Action log – Dewsbury Arts Group

20/25-26	Procure cabinet to house the first aid kit and accident book	SB/IB	9 th February 2026	An accident book has been obtained. SB and IB have considered 3 or 4 locations for first aid kits (e.g. bar, kitchen, workshop) so that they are more readily accessible. They will report more fully at the February meeting.
21/25-26	Update FOH manual in relation to Duty Manager's duties in respect of medical emergencies/incidents	MaB	9 th February 2026	
22/25-56	Investigate the cost of providing an updated and efficient heating system in room 3	SB/IB	9 th February 2025	IB is evaluating the output of radiators in room 3 to assess how many would be needed. He will also look at Rooms 1 and 2. Before reporting back fully at February meeting
23/25-26	Investigate display of publicity at Bagshaw Museum	MGP	9 th February 2026	Report back to February meeting
23/25-26	Negotiate with Roberttown Village Hall and Club 1931 within the parameters set out in the January minutes	MGP	9 th February 2026	Report back to February meeting.

DAG TICKET SALES – 2025/26 SEASON

FINAL FIGURES

(* - extra capacity)

MAIN PRODUCTIONS	Seats Available	Total Tickets Taken	Total Sales £ After TicketSource Costs	Payment to Ticket Source £	% Take up	Total Season Tickets	Total General Admissions and Sponsors Tickets	Seats NOT Sold
DANGEROUS CORNER	651	509	2278.35	173.96	78%	327	182	142
ALADDIN	930*	867	6259.39	413.85	93%	241	Full – 327 Conc - 299	63*
KIND HEARTS & CORONETS	651	503	2508.22	199.98	77%	310	193	148
SUDDENLY AT HOME	651	355	1233.87			254	101	296
ACCOMMODATIONS	651							
LUST	651							

2024/2025 season for comparison

MAIN PRODUCTIONS	Seats Available	Total Tickets Taken	Total Sales £ After TicketSource Costs	Payment to Ticket Source £	% Take up	Total Season Tickets	Total General Admissions and Sponsors Tickets	Seats NOT Sold
WIFE AFTER DEATH	651	568	2692.44	233.56	87%	347	221	83
JACK AND THE BEANSTALK	830*	788	5462.24	325.80	95%	237	Full –274 Conc – 277	42*
WORST WEDDING EVER	651	516	2262.58	187.42	79%	333	183	135
THE WINSLOW BOY	651	508	2107.14	160.86	78%	340	168	143
THE REVLON GIRL	651	461	2027.57	170.43	71%	291	170	190
GUYS AND DOLLS	651	578	3319.56	236.37	89%	317	261	73
SEASON TOTALS	4085	3419	17871.53	1314.44	85%	1865	1554	666

OTHER EVENTS	Seats available	Total Tickets taken	Total Sales £ After TicketSource Costs	Payment to Ticket Source £	Seats NOT sold
MURDER MYSTERY	93	88	498.57	39.59	5
RETURN OF COL. GATLING	231	209	3324.77	233.85	25

BOOKINGS - SOURCE OF BOOKINGS DECLARED (not ST's)

PLAY	Kind Hearts and Coronets	Aladdin	Dangerous Corner	Wife After Death	Jack and the Beanstalk	Worst Wedding Ever	The Winslow Boy	The Revlon Girl
Word of Mouth	13	41	24	26	41	14	10	21
Brochure	29	20	21	22	23	27	20	23
Flyer	10	14	16	15	12	19	15	10
Chimp/Mailshot	5	3	10	10	14	11	8	7
Website	6	4	2	2	3	4	6	5
Facebook	2	11	1	2	5	5	5	1
Poster	1	5	1	1	1	2	-	2
Search Engine	2	2	-	-	1	2	-	-

Kind Hearts and Coronets – 17th to 24th January 2026 – Director Andrew Leverton

Directors report.

This production has not been without it's challenges! Even before rehearsals started we were debating copy write issues. We had a good attendance at auditions but subsequently 4 cast members dropped out, all for valid reasons. This meant frantic recasting and eventually having to write one character out completely as no one could be found to play the part. Josh Sanders, one of our new members, stepped up taking on a much larger role than he originally wanted.

Technical issues dogged my vision, and that meant I lost some focus on more essential and fundamental tasks. I am eternally grateful to David Fletcher for getting me out of a hole with sound and projection elements. Mike Parsons, took on operating lights for the first time, with Jacky on hand for assistance, a baptism of fire with 122+ lighting cues! Thanks to Andy Wright, for his commitment and advice.

Nick Cunliffe did a fantastic job with the prison cell, (the verdigris on the copper pipework, a lovely touch) and as the only 'fixed' place I felt it really grounded the piece.

I wanted to convey the period, opulence and eccentricities of all the characters and while all the cast were all amazing, Jacky's costume design and choices were exactly what I had envisaged, and we had many comments about how good the costumes were, so many thanks Jacky, your talent, time and enthusiasm were definitely appreciated.

This was a piece that had 28 scenes many in different locations, meaning multiple scene changes, together with key props that needed to be altered and adjusted between scenes. All in all, a nightmare for the stage manager. Mark took it all in his stride, with calm logic, even when I was prepared to lose some of the more problematic props like the large pram, Mark came up with a solution.

Alison Hartley was an essential part of the back stage crew, acting as dresser to many of the cast during quick changes!

My thanks to the amazing cast who all deserve to be named individually but time and space prevent, however apologies to Richard Buxton for missing him off the cast list in the program!

To the committee for allowing me to put on this classic tale, and finally to my amazing wife who has been a real rock during this production, going above and beyond, and dragging me out of a spiral of negativity when things were not going in the direction I had hoped.