

Dewsbury Arts Group

(CIO Registered Charity Number 1161083)

Minutes of the meeting of the Charity Trustees

held on Monday 10th August 2026 at 7:30pm

In Room 1

Committee members known as: Mark Bailey (MB - Chair), Maria Bailey (MaB), Simon Beaumont (SB), Ian Bowers (IB), Kat Brook (KB), John Crawshaw (JC), Nick Cunliffe (NC), David Fletcher (DF), Jacky Fletcher (JF), Stuart Marshall (SM), Carol Parkinson (CP), Malcolm Parkinson (MGP), Sue Saville (SS), Zahoor Sakharkar (ZS) and Iain Winstanley (IW)

	Item
1	Apologies for absence. These had been received from MB, MaB, CP, NC, ZS, SB and JC. SS took the chair.
2.	Approval of the minutes of the previous meeting, review of action log and matters arising. It was RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 13 th July 2026 be passed as a correct record. The Action Log was considered and amended.
3.	Correspondence and news Dewsbury East Forum - Councillor Kapsa. MGP and JC attended the first ward forum for Dewsbury East held by the three new Reform Councillors elected recently. They took Councillor Kapsar on one side after the meeting as he had shown interest in cultural activity. Subsequently JC had been in email contact and had invited him to a rehearsal and a performance of Bleak Expectations. Community Trust Fund. MGP had received an email dated 31 st July 2026 from Jackie Ingram relating to the Dewsbury and Mirfield Community Newsletter. MGP had engaged with her by email and took up the offer to meet her to show her round. He has offered potential dates. When one is fixed he will then assemble a meeting party. It was noted that in past years the Mayor had been invited to a production but not recently. MGP is to look into doing so for this season. MGP reported the sad news that Shirley Westwood had died after a long illness. The funeral will take place at Dewsbury Crematorium on Thursday 20 th August at 2.45. The consensus of the meeting was that an appreciation ought to appear in the newsletter.
4.	General Management. a. Members and Season Ticket Holders. JF summarised the current position as set out in the attached report. At the end of last season there had been 178 season ticket holders and 13 half season ticket holders. Were they all to renew income generated would be £15,780. The amount received so far was in the region of £6,000. b. Front of House Coordination. Discussion was deferred to the next meeting. c. Newsletter. Content: • Audition details for Rutherford and Son, Trap for a Lonely Man and Young

	Frankenstein. • Shirley Westwood appreciation. • Flyers for Treasure Island and the Murder Mystery Evening. • New committee contact details. SS is to continue to let Andrew Leverton know about newsletter content so that he can use it in the Chimp and on Facebook. d. Publicity Committee: meeting and plan of action. DF reported that he SS and Andrew Leverton will meet by the end of August. Ideally he would like to see one further member. e. Performance Status System (see attached). IB reported that this had now been installed. MB to report back to the October meeting on how the pilot had worked during Bleak Expectations. f. Weapons Policy. It was RESOLVED that the attached Weapons Policy be adopted. MGP is to ask if Becky Ashwell will conduct an audit of weapons held to see what is to be kept and where and what is to be disposed of.
5.	Art Section • Update. MGP reported, in the absence of ZS, that two new members have joined and been given the appropriate forms to complete. Louise Bates has moved to Huddersfield and is likely to be less involved. ZS is also going to contact Anya Firth about closer links with the Arcade Group now that the Arcade is due to open in September.
6.	Finance • Update: Virgin Money: £38,985.25 CAF Bank : £9,165.15 Total : £48,150.40 JF also reported that she and MaB had conducted an audit of the wardrobe. Several bags had been filled with costumes no longer required. These had been bought for £150 by Anya Firth's aunt Natalie Liddell. • Bank Mandate. JF has put arrangements in hand to transfer both mandates into the names of the senior officers namely MB, SS, MGP and JF. • Handover. JF has as yet not been able to "meet" Emma Thompson by Zoom. She has a list of questions and hopes to have answers presently.
9.	Drama Section a. Treasure Island: cast. DF reported that the cast is as follows: MRS HAWKINS (MUM): Justin Trewren KITTIE: Kat Brook JIM HAWKINS: Caitlin Moss SQUIRE TRELAWNEY: Matthew Bailey JENNY TRELAWNEY: Sophie O'Leary SEADOG SAM: Alison Hartley SEADOG WILLY: Stacey Fleming BILLY BONES: Iain Winstanley. LONG JOHN SILVER: Si Beaumont BLOOD BOILER: Cameron Gledhill

	GIZARD SLITTER: Mark Bailey POLLY: Kat Brook MRS HENDERSON: Sue Saville. MRS BATTERSBY: Carol Parkinson. MRS CARTER-BROWN: Jacky Fletcher MRS NORMINGTON: Stephanie Roe BEN GUNN: Iain Winstanley. THE FRIDGE: Lines to be spread between other pirates. MRS TUBB, MRS DODD, MRS PARKER, MRS SNOOK: Lines to be allocated b. Ticket sales: DF reported that ticket sales for Bleak Expectations were not bleak and were as expected. However, he commented that, increasingly, the trend has been for cash sales to be made closer to a production. c. Rutherford and Son. Audition 13th October 2026: panel and I. C. Discussion deferred until the next meeting.
9.	Premises. Update – IB confirmed that the work to the corridor had been carried out and cost covered by the maintenance budget. Happily, no fundamental structural weakness was revealed. The next significant work will be the installation of handrails alongside the steps backstage.
10.	Any Other Business. KB and (if he agrees) JC to be added to the committee WhatsApp group. JC also to be asked if he agrees to his details appearing on the website.
11.	Date of next meetings: Monday 14th September 2026 and thereafter broadly every second Monday of the month. JF is to circulate a colour coded calendar with full details.
	ADDENDUM
	MGP had received prior to the meeting the following updates from MaB. Whilst not discussed in the meeting the information is important and ought to appear here as a matter of record. Youth Section Update MaB had provided MGP with an update as follows: “I’ve had some more interest since sharing my fliers on Facebook again. There’s 7 on the list now to start in September and I’ll be taking a large number of fliers into Heckmondwike Grammar as they’re going to hand them out to all of their year 7s, which I anticipate will boost numbers even further.” Gathered Leaves. Audition 15th September 2026: panel and I. C. MaB had provided MGP with the following update: “I’ve sorted my audition panel out for The Gathered Leaves, it’s Nick Cunliffe and Carol Parkinson. I don’t have anyone to IC yet”.

DEWSBURY ARTS GROUP

Weapons on Stage Policy

Document Title: Weapons on Stage Policy

Version: 1.0

Approved by: Management Committee

Review Date: Annually or following any production involving weapons.

1. Purpose

Dewsbury Arts Group (DAG) is committed to providing a safe environment for members, volunteers, contractors and audiences.

This policy establishes the procedures governing the possession, storage, rehearsal and use of all weapons used as theatrical props during rehearsals, performances and associated activities.

The objective is to minimise risk whilst allowing productions requiring weapons to be presented safely and professionally.

2. Scope

This policy applies to:

- all members
- visiting performers
- directors
- stage management
- technical staff
- contractors
- anyone handling or using weapons owned by or brought into Dewsbury Arts Group premises.

3. Definition of a Weapon

For the purposes of this policy a weapon includes, but is not limited to:

- replica firearms
- blank-firing or starting pistols
- imitation firearms
- swords

- daggers
- knives
- bayonets
- spears
- arrows
- axes
- clubs
- any pointed or bladed prop capable of causing injury.
- Other blunt instruments that could be used as a weapon, such as hammers, bottles etc.

The policy applies equally to real, replica, modified and theatrical prop weapons.

4. Legal Framework

This policy is written with reference to:

- Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974
- Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999
- Firearms Act 1968 (as amended)
- Firearms Act 1982
- Firearms (Amendment) Acts
- Violent Crime Reduction Act 2006
- Crime and Security Act 2010
- HSE guidance on the management of firearms and weapons in productions
- Current Home Office Firearms Licensing Guidance

Nothing within this policy overrides statutory legislation.

Where legislation changes, this policy shall be updated accordingly.

5. General Principles

The following principles apply at all times.

- Every weapon shall be treated as potentially dangerous.
- No weapon shall ever be used casually or for amusement.
- Horseplay involving any weapon is strictly prohibited.
- Weapons shall only be handled by authorised persons.
- Weapons shall only be removed from secure storage when required for rehearsal or performance.
- The minimum number of weapons necessary shall be used.
- Where practical and possible the use of on-stage weapons should be minimised.

6. Weapons Register

Dewsbury Arts Group shall maintain a register containing:

- description of weapon
- unique identification number
- storage location
- condition
- inspection history

The register shall include the Group's two starting pistols together with all bladed and pointed weapons.(applies to metal blades only).

7. Storage

All weapons and blank cartridges shall be stored:

- in a locked cabinet or secure room
- inaccessible to the public
- inaccessible to children
- under the control of authorised personnel only.

Keys shall only be held by nominated key holders appointed by the Committee..

8. Appointment of Weapons Custodian

For every production involving weapons the Director shall appoint a Weapons Custodian.

Normally this will be:

- Stage Manager.
- Deputy Stage Manager.
- Properties Lead.

The Weapons Custodian is responsible for:

- issuing weapons
 - collecting weapons
 - checking condition
 - secure storage
 - maintaining records
 - ensuring compliance with this policy.
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9. Risk Assessment

A specific written risk assessment shall be completed before rehearsals commence, where a production has significant weapons use, such as sword fights or requires fighting choreography.

The assessment shall consider:

- type of weapon
- choreography
- competence of performers
- audience proximity
- escape routes
- backstage handling
- lighting conditions
- emergency arrangements.

10. Training

Anyone handling a weapon shall receive instruction covering:

- safe handling
- carrying
- passing between performers
- storage
- emergency procedures
- reporting defects.

Where fight scenes are involved, rehearsal shall be supervised by an appropriately experienced fight director or suitably competent choreographer.

11. Bladed and Pointed Weapons

Only blunt theatrical weapons should be used.

If a production requires genuine metal blades:

- they shall be inspected before every performance
- edges should be dulled wherever practicable
- stabbing or thrusting shall be simulated
- contact shall never be made with another performer.

No unscripted use is permitted.

12. Firearms

The Group currently owns two small starting pistols.

These shall be regarded as firearms for the purposes of handling and safety.

The following rules apply:

- only authorised persons may handle them
- they remain under the control of the Weapons Custodian
- they shall only be loaded immediately before use
- they shall be unloaded immediately afterwards
- they shall never be pointed directly at any person unless specifically choreographed and risk assessed to ensure there is no person in the line of discharge
- a minimum safe separation distance shall always be maintained
- they shall never be discharged towards the audience
- hearing protection shall be considered during rehearsals.

Even blank-firing or starting pistols can cause serious injury through muzzle blast or expelled gases and must never be regarded as toys.

13. Blank Cartridges

Blank cartridges shall:

- be counted before and after each performance
- only be issued immediately before use
- only be handled by authorised persons.

Any unused cartridges shall immediately be returned to secure storage.

14. Public Notification

Where productions involve:

- gunshots
- weapons
- loud reports

the audience should be warned in advance through programme notes or front-of-house announcements where appropriate.

If firearms may be visible outside the theatre, or gunfire audible to the public, West Yorkshire Police should be informed in advance to avoid unnecessary emergency responses.

15. Defective Weapons

Any weapon found to be:

- damaged
- loose
- cracked
- unsafe
- malfunctioning

shall immediately be withdrawn from service.

Only the Weapons Custodian may authorise its return to use.

16. Transport

Weapons shall only be removed from the theatre premises:

- With approval from the committee
- directly to and from the venue
- securely contained
- out of public view
- by authorised persons.

Unnecessary public display of imitation firearms or weapons is prohibited.

17. Incident Reporting

Any incident involving a weapon, including:

- accidental discharge
- near miss
- injury
- loss
- theft
- damage

shall be reported immediately to the Stage Manager and Committee and investigated before further use.

18. Responsibilities

Committee

- approve this policy
- provide secure storage
- ensure adequate insurance.

Director

- determine whether weapons are necessary
- minimise their use
- ensure rehearsals are conducted safely.
- Appoint a weapons custodian

Stage Manager / Weapons Custodian

- maintain custody
- inspect equipment
- supervise issue and return
- maintain records.

Cast

- follow instructions
- report defects
- never use weapons outside rehearsals or performances.

19. Breach of Policy

Failure to comply with this policy may result in:

- Removal from the production
- Disciplinary action
- Notification to the Committee
- Where appropriate, referral to the police.

Appendix A – Weapons Inventory

The following items are currently held by Dewsbury Arts Group:

- Two theatrical starting pistols (blank-firing) held in the Groups safe, along with the blanks.

- Bladed and pointed stage weapons (Most of these are of a plastic construction and held in the props store).

AUGUST 10TH 2026

SEASON TICKET REPORT

TOTAL SEASON TICKETS ON DATABASE – 178 FULL

13 HALF

SEASON TICKETS CURRENTLY PAID - 69 FULL

6 HALF

POSSIBLE INCOME - £15,780

INCOME SO FAR £6115

JUST OVER A THIRD HAVE PAID.

NEW SEASON TICKETS

MALCOLM PEACE FULL, MARY FOLLOWS INCREASED TO 2 SEASON TICKETS, BILL CHAMBERS NEW HALF ST, MARGARET BENDLE INCREASED FROM HALF TO FULL

MEANS 2 NEW FULL PLUS ONE NEW FULL BUT ONE LESS HALF AND ONE NEW HALF – CONFUSED? YOU WILL BE!

LAPSES – BRIAN PEARSON AND MARGARET BIGLANDS HAS REDUCED TO HALF

2 FULL 2 HALF NEW – 1.5 LAPSED

MEMBERSHIP REPORT

TOTAL MEMBERS ON DATABASE – 105

CURRENTLY PAID - 22

POSSIBLE INCOME - £2,625

INCOME SO FAR - £550

Action log – Dewsbury Arts Group

22/25-56	Investigate the cost of providing an updated and efficient heating system in room 3	SB/IB	31 st October 2026	Evaluation is best deferred until the autumn.
29/25-26	Contact the appropriate department at Kirklees to remove DF/JF from their contact list	SB	30 th June 2026	
31/25-26	Convene a Premises Meeting to investigate wi fi options	SB	1 st September 2026	Report back to September meeting
32/25-26	Investigate the cost of providing an effective user friendly sound system in liaison with Simon Fletcher	MB and DF	1 st September 2026	Report back to September meeting
1/26-27	Ascertain JC's attitude to being on the committee WhatsApp group	MGP	17 th August 2026	
2/26-27	Contact life drawing group regarding death of Shirley Westwood	MGP	17 th August 2026	
3/26-27	Contact Mary Fellows regarding an appreciation of Shirley West wood for the newsletter,	MGP	17 th August 2026	
4/26-27	Ask Becky Ashwell to conduct an audit of the weapons held in the props room	MGP	17 th August 2026	Report back to September meeting.