

Trustee Recruitment

Application pack

THE GRAND
THEATRE | BLACKPOOL



Photographer: Martin Bostock.

Trustee Recruitment

WELCOME FROM THE CHAIRS

Thank you for your interest in the role of Board Member for Blackpool Grand Theatre.

The Grand Theatre is a Charity run by two voluntary boards: The Trust, which owns the Grade II* Listed Building; and Arts & Entertainment, which operates a thriving arts, education and heritage business.

We govern the charities with the skills, expertise and passion of supportive individuals who give their time and energy, free of charge, to ensure that this beautiful historic building offers relevant, varied and exciting opportunities for young and old to enjoy, learn and participate in live theatre experiences.

Why do we do it? Well, because we believe that the theatre plays an important role in the town, not just economically, but socially and educationally, helping Blackpool to be a great place to live, work and learn. It is our way of giving back to a town, a sector and an industry that we believe has the power to transform lives. Trustees serve for a term of 4 years and can then be re-elected for a further 4. With a number of our colleagues now coming to the end of their service, we are now searching for their replacements.

Each board meets 4 times a year. For the Arts & Entertainments charity there is a Finance Sub Committee which meets one week before the Board to scrutinise the finances prior to board papers being distributed. Other project or task and finish groups are created as and when required and we attend events as advocates for the business. Both Boards come together annually for a joint strategic away day.

We are Trustees of the Charities and Directors of the Companies, which are limited by guarantee (there are no shareholders). Blackpool Grand Theatre is a small to medium-sized enterprise which normally employs around 40 members of staff and turns over approximately £3m per annum.

Being a Trustee of Blackpool Grand Theatre is a rewarding and engaging opportunity and we welcome applications from people of all backgrounds who believe they have the insight, attributes and interest contribute to the continuing success of this much loved, nationally recognised local resource.

Alistair Armit

Chair, Blackpool Grand Theatre (Arts & Entertainments) Ltd.

Bryan Lindop

Chair, Blackpool Grand Theatre Trust Ltd.





DESTINATION BLACKPOOL

Blackpool is one of the largest and most popular seaside resorts in the country. It is a town and unitary authority in the geographic and historic county of Lancashire, England, on the Irish Sea coast. The total resident population of Blackpool is just under 140,000 (JSNA 2020). It is estimated that the resort currently attracts up to 20 million visitors a year.

Blackpool has a lively entertainment scene and the illuminations are the quintessential attraction. These are constantly being reinvented, currently through the Lightpool Contemporary Light Art Festival commissioning new works from national and international artists.

It is estimated that, during the summer months, there are up to 20,000 seats available every day in theatres, circuses, venues, hotels and pubs, focused on entertaining the visitor.

The town also has a growing arts and cultural offer available all year round for the resident, with Blackpool Grand Theatre, Grundy Art Gallery and Lightpool Festival currently receiving multi-annual funding as Arts Council England National Portfolio Organisations, the Winter Gardens Exhibition Centre and Opera House, LeftCoast as a Creative People and Places project, and a brand new museum, ShowTown. Grass roots organisations, such as The Old Electric, Abingdon Studios and Aunty Social CIC, bring energy and creativity to the town.

Like many coastal towns in Britain, Blackpool suffered decline since its boom in the 60s and 70s, as foreign holidays became more accessible, along with guaranteed sunshine. Today, the town is benefiting from multi-million pounds of regeneration activity and social value investment to improve infrastructure and benefit the health, education and wellbeing of its residents. The new Department of Work and Pensions offices will soon open to house 3,000 civil servants; and work has started on the new multiversity town centre campus.

Blackpool sits on the edge of some of Britain's most beautiful countryside and vibrant cities. Small towns and villages fan out behind the town across Fylde and Wyre into rural Lancashire. The Trough of Bowland and the Lake District are under an hour's drive away, with Lancaster, Preston and Salford all within the theatre's catchment area.

ABOUT THE GRAND

Blackpool Grand Theatre is a Grade II* listed building designed by pre-eminent Victorian theatre architect Frank Matcham and opened in 1894. It is governed by two charities: Blackpool Grand Theatre Trust Ltd (which owns the building and physical assets) and Blackpool Grand Theatre (Arts & Entertainments) Ltd. Which runs it. A third charity, Friends of The Grand, provides financial and voluntary support to the theatre. Together, the three charities make up 'The Grand Family' and work together to achieve greater strength, financial sustainability and increase our public benefit.

Blackpool Grand Theatre is dedicated to being a nationally recognised local resource, committed to inspiring a life-long love of [the] theatre. We use our rich and varied artistic programme and heritage assets as tools to power participation, learning, resilience, and positive experiences. We are proud to be an Arts Council England National Portfolio Organisation and partner theatre of the Royal Shakespeare Company.

Our unique Story Led Resilience programme won the UK Theatre Award for Excellence in Arts Education and helps make the stories presented on our stage more accessible, developing new and diverse audiences, more reflective of the communities of Blackpool. This work has been commissioned by Children's Theatre Partnership, PW Productions and Royal Opera House, amongst others. Our work with Blackpool's most vulnerable communities, in particular children

and young people, is currently supported by The Goldsmiths' Company Charity and The Backstage Trust, and previously by repeat awards from the Esmee Fairbairn and Ragdoll Foundations. We are early adopters of technology to reduce overheads and generate additional income and are currently working with revenue, retention and loyalty specialists TRG Arts. Our health and safety management systems are supported by industry leaders RB Health & Safety.

We have an ambitious Capital Masterplan developed in collaboration with theatre conservation specialist Dr David Willmore and theatre architects Paddy Dillon and Peter Hall of Sansome Hall Architects and are at pre-planning RIBA stage one for significant improvements to accessibility and front of house spaces. The first phase of our capital development plan was awarded £450k Arts Council England Capital Investment Funding in April 2024, which has delivered the restoration of the external envelope of the building and returned architectural features including the original pineapple finial and lighted "GRAND" sign to their former glory. The Foyle Foundation has awarded The Grand £40k to install additional seating in the Stalls during Summer 2025 which will enable future changes to Gallery seating arrangements to meet contemporary audience expectations.



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Blackpool Grand Theatre is at the heart of the cultural scene in the town, bringing fantastic shows to its audiences with many actors who have appeared on its stage going on to have hugely successful careers.

It also offers invaluable creative experiences to children and young people through its Grand Young Company and award-winning Story-led Resilience Programme helping to build confidence and skills. We're delighted to support the theatre as one of our National Portfolio Organisations and offer hearty congratulations on its 130th anniversary!

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Jennifer Cleary
Director, Combined Arts and North
Arts Council England.

THE PROGRAMME

As Lancashire's premier presenting theatre, the Grand Theatre offers an artistic programme that is distinct within Blackpool's busy entertainment market. As the main playhouse for the town, we offer a broad and balanced programme of West End touring drama and musicals, contemporary dance, ballet, opera, children's theatre, stand-up comedy, live music and one night appearances by named artists. Current and recent productions include Stephen Daldry's National Theatre production of *An Inspector Calls*, the West End hits *2:22 Ghost Story*, *Pride & Prejudice* (*Sort Of)* and *Noises Off*, the musicals *Beautiful – The Carole King Story*, *The Rocky Horror Show*, *Titanic The Musical* and *Dear Evan Hansen*.

We have worked with some of the UK's major producing theatres to extend the runs of their home produced productions including Nottingham Playhouse's d/deaf and disabled led production of *The Real & Imagined History of The Elephant Man* and Bolton Octagon's production of Willy Russell's *Shirley Valentine*. We are proud to showcase work created in the north of England including work from award-winning *ThickSkin*, *Emmerson & Ward*, *Northern BroadSides*, *John Godber Company* and *Liverpool's Royal Court*.

In 2025, Blackpool Grand Theatre will be co-producing major new productions including the UK Tour of *Little Women* in theatres from Aberdeen to Plymouth starring Belinda Lang and *Honeysuckle Weeks* and an actor-musician led production of the hit musical *Grease* with the award-winning *Pitlochry Festival Theatre*. The Grand is also co-commissioning with Gary Clarke Company *Detention* – the third piece in his acclaimed 'Thatcher trilogy'.

The Grand Theatre is a partner theatre of the Royal Shakespeare Company and in 2026 will be presenting Rupert Goold's critically acclaimed staging of *Hamlet*, direct from its sell out run in Stratford Upon Avon. As Education Lead for the Children's Theatre Partnership, The Grand has created the education resources and engagement programme for the current tours of Marjorie Blackman's *Pig Heart Boy* and *The Boy At The Back of The Class*, as well as, for PW Productions, Bristol Old Vic's Sally Cookson production of *Wonder Boy* and the UK tour of *An Inspector Calls*.

The Grand is proud to support a thriving local amateur and community theatre scene, offering space in the programme on the main stage and in the studio for a wide range of drama, dance, musical and operatic societies/organisations including BOPS, BFLOC, Blackpool Children's Pantomime, Whitaker's World of Dance and the Blackpool Scout Gang Show. The Studio provides a hub for small scale and fringe productions, work in development and rehearsals and we work in partnership to provide space, time and mentorship for local freelancers and emerging professional artists to support and develop the creation and staging of new work.



Pig Heart Boy.
Photographer: Ali Wright.

CREATIVE LEARNING & DEVELOPMENT

Blackpool Grand Theatre has a long established and award-winning programme of work with local groups and communities who are underrepresented and marginalised.

Our nationally recognised Story Led Resilience programme works specifically with children, young people and families from some of the most socio-economically deprived communities in England, both in Blackpool and beyond. Blackpool has the highest numbers of children living in care in England and our Illuminate Project has had a transformative impact on the care experienced children we have worked with over a three-year period, with children who were elective mutes and/or who were unable to focus on any activity, now able to confidently perform their own poetry, raps, dances and performances on stage or work with our resident technicians to programme the theatre's lighting desk. Many of these care experienced children now refer to Blackpool Grand as "home" or the place in which they feel safe.

Our Tales Retold programme uses the characters on stage and a resilience lens for children and young people to reframe their own lived experience and propose interventions that could have alternative outcomes for the characters in the plays they come to see at the theatre. This practice is used as a tool to help them positively change outcomes in their own lives resulting in feedback from teachers that children are more settled, more confident and more fulfilled in a classroom setting.

This year we have relaunched our Grand Young Company who performed as part of the National Theatre Connections Youth Theatre Festival and in August 2024, presented our first annual Summer Youth Project with over 100 local children performing in a professionally supported production of the musical Bugsy Malone. Following the launch of a pilot Young Technicians programme, receiving over 98 applications for an initial 6 places, a year-round programme

focusing on skills development and pathways to future employment has been implemented.

We are currently working in partnership with Gary Clarke Company to deliver a two-year adult participatory residency focusing on the impact of Section 28 on the lives and experiences of LGBTQ+ community members in Blackpool, leading to public performances and photographic exhibition entitled "Pride In Motion".

We are working with Northern BroadSides to deliver a 3-year first time playwright development programme with partners in Halifax, Barnsley and South Shields under the working title "Life In A Northern Town".

We are proud to have won the 2023 UK Theatre Award for Excellence in Arts Education, the 2023 Children and Young People NOW Award for Arts & Culture and the 2024 Northern Cultural Education Award plus shortlist nomination for The Stage Award for Community Project of the Year for this work. Our Illuminate Project was a featured case study in the Local Government Association Commission on Culture.

WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP

Blackpool Grand Theatre has a wide range of long established partnership relationships.

We are members of UK Theatre (the membership organisation for theatre managers and producers), Dance Consortium, Ramps On The Moon Cohort for Change, Venues North, T-BID, and Blackpool Pride of Place Partnership. The Grand has been actively involved in the co-creation of Blackpool's new Cultural Strategy and is the Accountable Body for Creative Blackpool Delivery Group's £750k Place Partnership bid to Arts Council England.



"One of the most beautiful theatres in the country"

Sir Ian McKellen

"We're proud to work in partnership with The Grand. Their expertise in co-designed programming & evaluation practices ensures consistent development of work that inspires & makes a tangible difference to the lives of audiences, participants & peers. Their commitment to social justice is palpable & underpins their practice & ethos, as is their generous sharing of skills & knowledge. We learn so much from working with The Grand."

Jacqui O'Hanlon

Deputy Executive Director,
Royal Shakespeare Company.

"Children's Theatre Partnership commissioned The Grand to make a programme of Creative Learning for our touring shows. The depth of knowledge, understanding of the environment in which we're working & skill in delivering the programme has been exemplary. Their work has benefited the many venues we visit & has also provided training & ideas for those theatres, that can be carried forward in their own work."

Hedda Beeby

Producer Children's Theatre Partnership
& Fiery Angel.

"The key to creating a future-proof venue is a willingness to try new things, experiment with different offerings, processes & technology. The Grand has always exemplified this approach & it reaps the benefits in terms of the experience the team there are able to offer their audiences."

Hugh Topping

CEO, crowdEngage.

"Since 2015 Gary Clarke Company have developed a strong partnership with The Grand & its community. As co-commissioner, artistically & strategically we consider The Grand to be a relevant & committed partner."

Gary Clarke

"Through their Story Led Resilience programme, The Grand gives high quality teacher training, free resources & ongoing support to Blackpool schools. It contributes to the town-wide English Strategy & we're proud to work in partnership with them as they achieve positive outcomes for hundreds of children in mental health & well-being."

Dr Elaine Allen OBE

Blackpool Literacy Lead and Chair
of the National English Hub Council.

VISION, MISSION AND VALUES

Our Vision

Blackpool's Grand Theatre is to be a nationally recognised local resource committed to inspiring a life-long love of [the] theatre.

Our Mission

We offer opportunities to enjoy, participate and learn through theatre.

Our Values

Trustworthy
Respectful
Professional
Open and Honest
Welcoming and Helpful.



Photographer: Martin Bostock.

GOVERNANCE

Theatre Ownership

The Grand Theatre is owned by Blackpool Grand Theatre Trust Limited ('the Trust') a company limited by guarantee and having charitable status. The main charitable objects of the Trust are to conserve, maintain, develop, and enhance the building and the Theatre's historic and archival collections. The Trust leases the Theatre to Blackpool Grand Theatre (Arts & Entertainments) Limited ('A&E').

Theatre Operator

The Theatre is operated by Blackpool Grand Theatre (Arts & Entertainments) Limited ('A&E'), a company limited by guarantee with charitable status. The main charitable objects of A&E are to present an eclectic programme of the performing arts. In addition, the Theatre contributes to the development of creativity and learning in the local and wider community. The Catering Company, Grand Productions and Showseats Limited are subsidiaries of A&E and profits from their operations are donated to the parent company.

The Friends of The Grand

The Theatre is supported by the Friends of The Grand an independently constituted voluntary group that organises social events and raises funds for the theatre.

Blackpool Grand Theatre (Arts & Entertainments) Limited Trustees

Alistair Armit (Chair)

A solutions architect with experience in venue operations and ticketing platforms.

Peter Akroyd (Chair, Finance Sub Cttee), Former City of London banker.

Tony Depledge OBE (Vice Chair) Director and manager in the passenger transport industry in both the public and private sectors.

Michelle Amos Associate Director of Marketing & Digital at University of Salford.

Karen Metcalfe Freelance producer and director.

Jeanette Pope Head of People, Capability and Operational Performance BAE Systems.

Ann Royle Secretary of the Friends of the Grand and retired teacher.

Martin Scragg Retired Department of Work & Pensions HR specialist.

Karen Cody (Observer) Arts Council England Relationship Manager.

Blackpool Grand Theatre Trust Limited Trustees

Bryan Lindop (Chair) Head of Heritage at Blackpool Transport.

Zoe Hammond (Vice Chair) Lawyer working in Finance Industry.

Amelia MacPherson (Treasurer) Finance and Audit Specialist.

Richard Baguley Managing Director, GDR Publications.

David Barnett Retired finance specialist.

Mark Cunliffe Associate Director at Buro Happold.

John Grady Chair of the Friends of the Grand.

Michelle Morris CEO in the Charitable Sector.

Mark Price Planning and Heritage Specialist.

Lisa Slack Head of Service, Quality, Contracts and Safeguarding Adults at Lancashire County Council.

David Barnett Retired finance and resources specialist.

Blackpool Grand Theatre Executive Team

Adam Knight Chief Executive

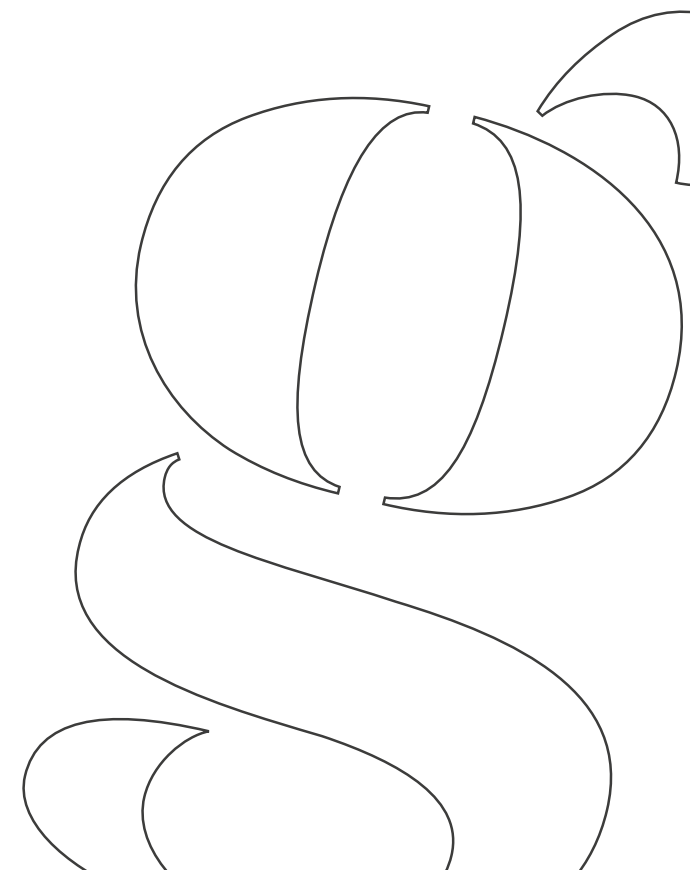
Colin Johnston Deputy Chief Executive.

Mark Preston Head of Business & Finance.

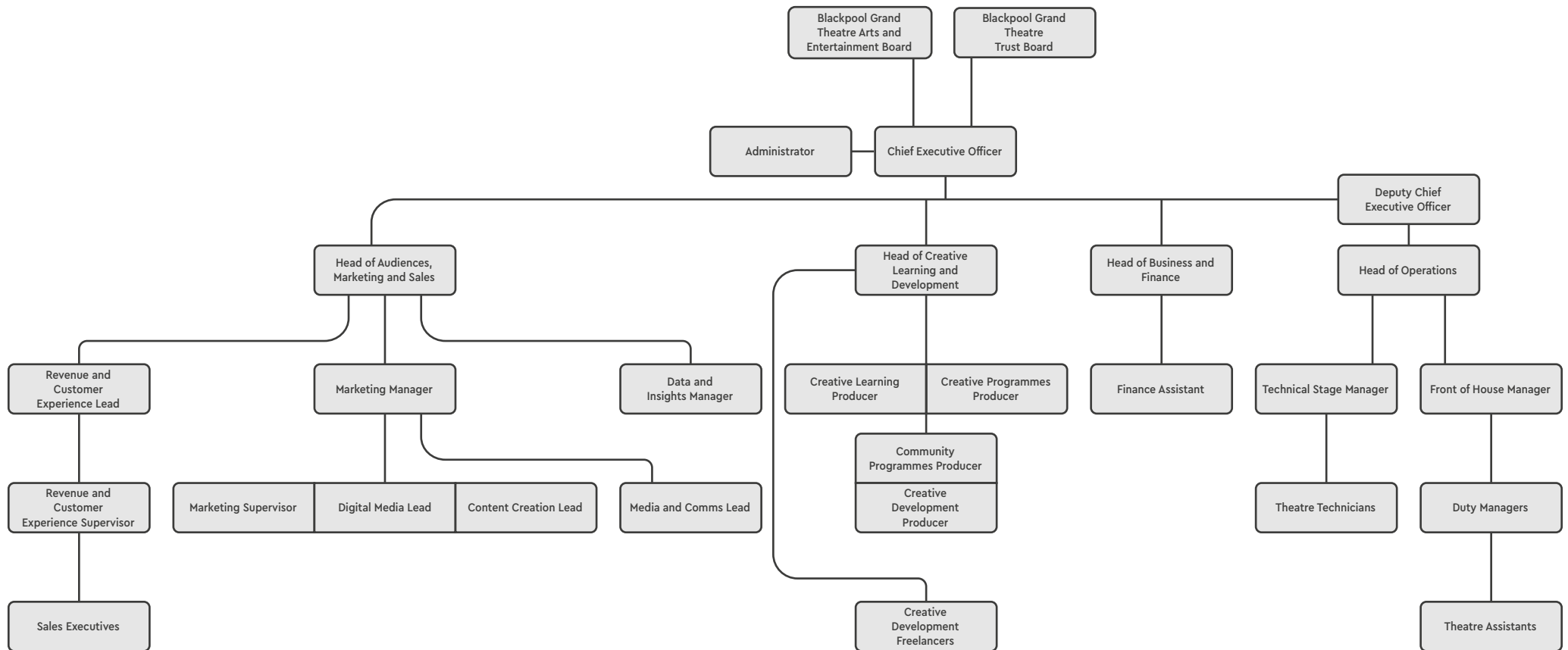
Andrew Howard Head of Audiences, Marketing & Sales.

Celine Wyatt Head of Creative Learning & Development.

Shaun Gorrington Head of Operations.



ORGANISATIONAL CHART



CUSTOMER SNAPSHOT

- The Grand presents approximately 350–400 performances a year
- 120–140,000 tickets are sold to 30,000 bookers annually
- 79% are Web sales (51% use mobile), 15% Counter, 6% Phone
- Dormitory Dependable 24.2%, (18% within 40min drive time)
- Trips and Treats 21.1% (21% within 40min drive time) 48% of ticket income comes from local FY postcode bookers
- 32.4% Male, 67.6% Female bookers
- 45–54yrs 19.1%, 55–64yrs 33.2%, 65+ 35.4%
- 52% are first-time bookers
- NET Promoter Score 82
- Average Price Paid £23.01
- Ticket Types 91% Full Adults, 9% Other

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As we celebrate 130 years of vibrant performances and timeless stories, we should also honour the theatre's vital role in shaping our cultural landscape. The cultural arts are for everyone, and they are incredibly life enhancing and The Grand's beautifully rich arts heritage is something to be very proud of. Here's to the countless moments of inspiration and connection that await us in the years to come.

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Alistair Armit
Chair, Blackpool Grand
Theatre (Arts & Entertainment) Ltd.

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As directors of the Grand Theatre Trust, we are the owners and custodians of one of the nation's most historic and architecturally significant theatres. We pledge to tirelessly and steadfastly pursue our aims to continually invest in the heritage of our beautiful building to ensure future generations can continue to enjoy it. Knowing that we are all part of something very special that lives and breathes and is a benefit to others is a great reward for our time, our commitment and our expertise.

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Bryan Lindop
Chair, Blackpool Grand Theatre Trust.

*West End and Broadway Smash-Hit
Buddy: The Buddy Holly Story.*



FINANCE & SUMMARY

Audited accounts for Blackpool Grand Theatre's charities can be found at the following links:

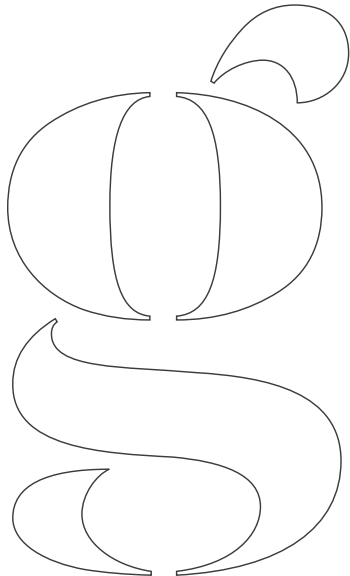
Blackpool Grand Theatre (Arts & Entertainments) Ltd

<https://register-of-charities.charitycommission.gov.uk/en/charity-search/-/charity-details/1022754>

Blackpool Grand Theatre Trust Ltd

<https://register-of-charities.charitycommission.gov.uk/en/charity-search/-/charity-details/506601/>

Both the Grand Theatre Arts & Entertainment and Trust charities currently hold reserves within their stated policy levels. Ongoing financial support from Arts Council England and Blackpool Council helps enable the business to continue as a going concern and invest in a vibrant and sustainable future.



PERSON SPECIFICATION

Board Member and Charitable Trustee is a voluntary role with full training given and reasonable out-of-pocket expenses covered.

You do not have to have any previous experience of being a Board Member or Trustee but a passion for the theatre and its role in the community is essential. We welcome applicants from all backgrounds and, particularly, young people, those from the LGBTQ+ and global majority communities and people with disabilities.

We would also like to hear from anyone with specialist experience in any of the following areas:

- Legal (contract and law, intellectual property, construction and property)
- Fundraising
- Finance
- Education
- Government (in particular devolution)
- Environmental Sustainability

Commitment

Both the Trust and Arts & Entertainments Boards meet 4 times a year. These meetings take place in person at Blackpool Grand Theatre with provision available for hybrid attendance on occasions where work/family commitments prevent physical attendance.

The Arts & Entertainments Board has a Finance Sub Committee to which some members are invited to join and meets prior to the Board to scrutinise the finances. From time to time, 'Task and Finish' Groups come together to work on particular projects or initiatives. All board members are encouraged to attend events at the theatre to broaden their understanding of the business and act as advocates for the charities.

Information about best practice, good governance is available on Arts Council England's website: <https://www.artscouncil.org.uk/developing-creativity-and-culture/leadership-and-governance>

If you would like an informal chat with a current Board Member, to learn more about the role, please email our Theatre Administrator, **Helen Booth**, on helenb@blackpoolgrand.co.uk and she will be happy to organise it for you.



HOW TO APPLY

Blackpool Grand Theatre aims to attract, develop, and retain the best talent for all roles and will always appoint based on merit. We consider that diversity is good for the art we make, good for artists, good for audiences, and good for the cultural sector.

Blackpool Grand Theatre is an equal opportunities employer. We value diversity in our workforce and positively encourage applicants from all sections of the community, particularly applicants underrepresented across the arts workforce.

How to apply:

If you would like to apply to become a Trustee of Blackpool Grand Theatre, please write (no more than 2 sides of A4) to explain your interest in the role and what you believe you could contribute to the governance of the organisation and send this, with a copy of your CV and completed equal opportunities form, to helenb@blackpoolgrand.co.uk

Closing date:

The deadline for applications is 12noon on Wednesday 2nd April 2025.

Interview:

If successful, an in-person full interview/introduction will be held during the afternoon and early evening of Thursday 10 April 2025.

We want to make sure that our application process is accessible to everyone, so please do tell us if you need any of this information in another format.

Send in your application to us:

Email your application form to helenb@blackpoolgrand.co.uk using the subject line 'BOARD TRUSTEE' or post the form to;

Helen Booth
Theatre Administrator
Blackpool Grand Theatre,
33 Church Street,
Blackpool,
Lancashire FY1 1HT

In your application, please tell us about your relevant skills and experience and how you meet the person specification.

Further information on how we use and store the data provided in your application form is available on our website www.blackpoolgrand.co.uk/jobs

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Blackpool Grand Theatre is the premiere presenting theatre in Lancashire with a range of strong and established local, regional and national partnerships. We are proud to be an Arts Council England National Portfolio Organisation and winners of the UK Theatre Award for Excellence in Arts Education. We pride ourselves on being a theatre for everyone, enriching the lives of people through our work in Blackpool and beyond. With an entrepreneurial culture and an enterprising team, we have ambitious plans: investing in our people, our programme of activity and our iconic Frank Matcham designed auditorium. There is no better time to join and build your career with us as we embark on the next stage in The Grand's story.

Adam Knight
Chief Executive
Blackpool Grand Theatre.

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