



HUMANISTINEN  
AMMATTIKORKEAKOULU

BACHELOR'S THESIS  
OPINNÄYTETYÖ

## **How to Build a Theatrical Society**

Case Tyne Theatre Productions

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**ABSTRACT**

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<b>Abstract</b> <p>The aim of this thesis was to develop the organisation and processes of an amateur dramatics society Tyne Theatre Productions, which works at Tyne Theatre &amp; Opera House in the North East of England. The Society is both a fundraising activity and a community project of Tyne Theatre &amp; Opera House Preservation Trust, who own and maintain the Grade 1 listed theatre building.</p> <p>The methods of this thesis are surveying, observing, benchmarking and document analysis. Process charts have also been used to analyse the organisation. The thesis is an operational research based on qualitative material, with elements of service design and case study.</p> <p>A survey has been used to gather data about volunteers' motives. People often do volunteer work to fulfil some inner need or purpose, and it is important to study these motives to be able to develop the organisation. Benchmarking is a method of comparing an organisation to other similar organisations and using the gathered data to explore the strengths and weaknesses of said organisations, which can be used in the Society's development. The Society's previous productions and the theatre's organisational structures are studied by using document analysis.</p> <p>The thesis presents specific features of volunteer culture and studies them in the volunteers of Tyne Theatre Productions. The Society's production process and the development work which started in early 2016 will be introduced, after which the latest production will be presented as a case study. The case study features the production's problems and those practical means by which the problems can be fixed in the future. Finally the thesis introduces options and speculations for the future and summarises why a volunteer culture is good for Tyne Theatre &amp; Opera House.</p> <p>There is a lot of literature about volunteering and volunteers, but less so about amateur theatre. The volunteers' coordinating and developing the Society is important for the theatre's Preservation Trust, because Tyne Theatre Productions is both the Trust's most notable fundraising activity and the most important community project.</p> <p>The results and data in this thesis can be used by other amateur dramatics groups and societies, other volunteer organisations, and professionals of theatre and events management. First and foremost the thesis is meant to be used to develop the Society within organisations of Tyne Theatre &amp; Opera House.</p>	
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# HUMANISTINEN AMMATTIKORKEAKOULU

## Kulttuurituotannon koulutusohjelma

### TIIVISTELMÄ

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<b>Tiivistelmä</b> <p>Opinnäytetyön tavoite oli kehittää Koillis-Englannissa sijaitsevan Tyne Theatre &amp; Opera Housen harrastajateatteriyhteisö Tyne Theatre Productionsin toimintaa. Yhteisö toimii teatterin suojelusäätiö Tyne Theatre &amp; Opera House Preservation Trustin alla ja sen tarkoitus on sekä kerätä varoja teatterin säätiölle että lisätä yhteistyötä alueen väestön sekä teatterin harrastajien kanssa.</p> <p>Menetelminä tutkimuksessa käytettiin kyselyä, havainnointia, benchmarkingia ja dokumenttianalyysiä. Myös prosessikaavioita hyödynnettiin. Opinnäytetyö on kvalitatiiviseen aineistoon perustuva toimintatutkimus, joka käyttää myös palvelumuotoilun ja tapaustutkimuksen (case study) menetelmiä.</p> <p>Kyselyä on käytetty työssä koska se on hyvä tapa tutustua vapaaehtoisten sisäisiin motiiveihin. Vapaaehtoistyö on pitkälle tunneperäistä toimintaa ja organisaation kehittämisen kannalta näihin motivaatioihin on tärkeää tutustua. Benchmarking on tutkimuskeino jolla verrataan omaa organisaatiota muihin vastaaviin organisaatioihin ja hyödynnetään saatua tietoa palvelumuotoilussa sekä kehitysehdotuksissa. Dokumenttianalyysillä avataan yhteisön aiempia tuotantoja ja teatterin organisaatorakennetta.</p> <p>Tutkimus perehtyi vapaaehtois-kulttuuriin, sen ominaispiirteisiin ja siihen, miten ne ilmenevät Tyne Theatre Productionsin vapaaehtoisissa. Yhteisön tuotantoprosessi ja vuoden 2016 alusta asti tapahtunut kehitystyö esitellään, mitä seuraa viimeisimmän tuotannon tapaustutkimus. Tapaustutkimuksessa esitellään tuotannon ongelmakohdat ja ne käytännön keinot, joilla ongelmat voidaan tulevaisuudessa välttää. Lopuksi opinnäytetyö tekee katsauksen tulevaisuuteen ja esittelee päätelmät sille, mitä hyötyä vapaaehtois-kulttuurista on Tyne Theatre &amp; Opera Houselle.</p> <p>Vapaaehtois-kulttuurista on paljon kirjallisuutta, mutta harrastajateatterista on olemassa vähemmän käytännönläheistä materiaalia. Teatterin suojelusäätiön varainkeruun kannalta vapaaehtoisten hyvä koordinoiminen on tärkeää, sillä Tyne Theatre Productions on teatterin tärkein yhteisöprojekti ja säätiön merkittävin varainkeruuelin.</p> <p>Työtä voivat hyödyntää toiminnassaan niin harrastajatuotantoja järjestävät seurueet, vapaaehtoistoiminnasta kiinnostuneet tahot kuin tapahtumatuotannon ammattilaisetkin. Etupäässä työ on suunnattu käytettäväksi Tyne Theatre &amp; Opera Housen organisaatioiden sisällä.</p>	
<b>Tilaja</b> Tilaaaja: Tyne Theatre & Opera House Preservation Trust.	
<b>Asiasanat</b> harrastajateatterit, vapaaehtoistyö, tuotannosuunnittelu	

## CONTENTS

1 INTRODUCTIONS	5
1.1 Goals and methods	5
1.2 Preservation Trust and Limited Company	6
1.3 Tyne Theatre Productions	9
2 COMMUNITY	10
2.1 Volunteers - who are they?	11
2.2 Societies in Newcastle upon Tyne	14
3 OPERATIONAL PROCESS	16
3.1 Choosing the show, appointing the production team	16
3.2 Auditions and volunteer coordinating	18
3.3 Finance and advertising	22
3.4 Production Coordinator	24
4 CASE: OKLAHOMA!	26
4.1 Choosing the show, appointing the production team	27
4.2 Auditions and volunteer coordinating	28
4.3 Finance and advertising	36
4.4 Results and feedback	39
5 FUTURE	41
5.1 Building up the Society	41
5.2 The purpose and value of the Society	43
SOURCES	49
APPENDICES	51
List of images	51

## 1 INTRODUCTIONS

### 1.1 Goals and methods

This thesis is about an amateur dramatics society Tyne Theatre Productions, which is a fundraising and community activity of Tyne Theatre & Opera House Preservation Trust. The Society's structure, the Society's volunteers and the most recent production will be analysed. Document analysis, observing, survey material and benchmarking are used to explore the Society's ongoing development. This qualitative material is used in both process analysis and development planning.

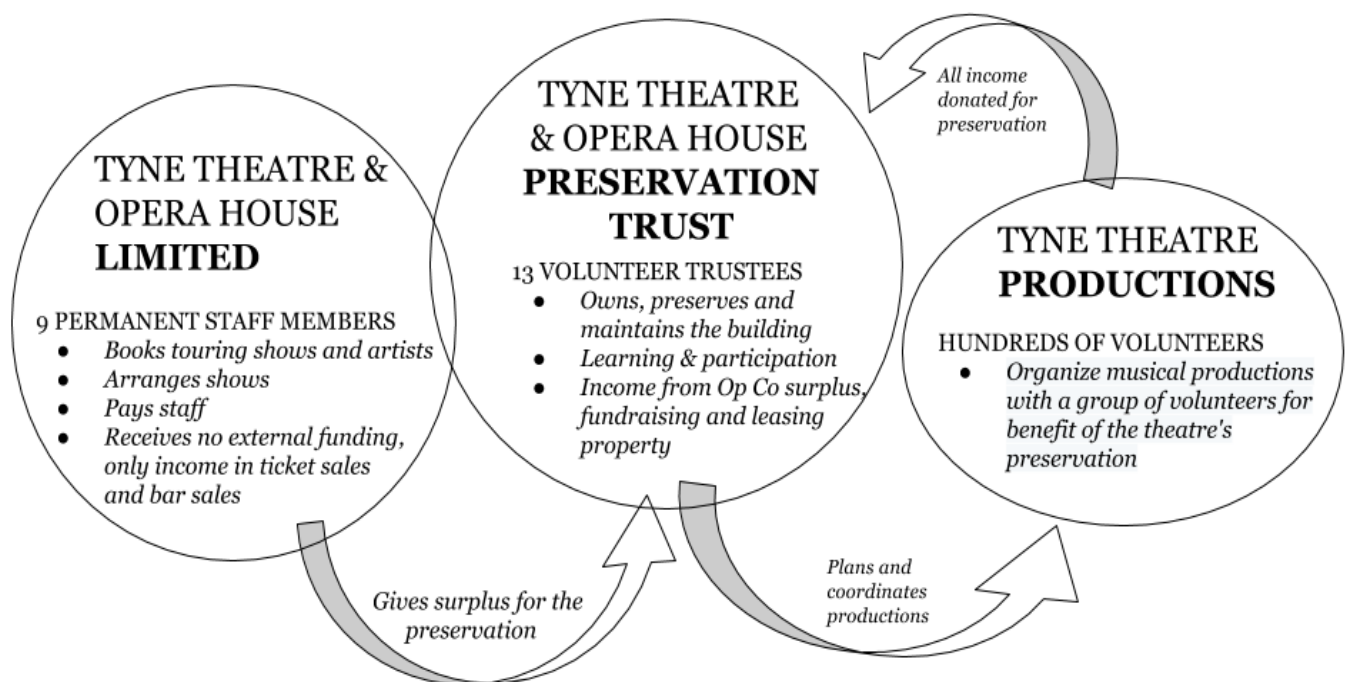
The goal of this thesis is to give the Trustees of the Preservation Trust up to date information on how the Society has organised itself, what problems have arisen in the process, what has been done to fix the problematic areas, and also help the Trustees to better understand the theatre's volunteers. The Preservation Trust consists of volunteer Trustees, who at the moment do not have the resources to develop the Society, nor do they have a clear picture of how the Society works.

Document analysis was the best way of accessing information about the Society's previous productions, and therefore studying the old budgets was important for the production process development. The volunteers come from various backgrounds and have various motives, and a survey was designed to access this important data for the Society's development. Benchmarking, which is an act of measuring one's organisation against competitors (Niva et al., 2011, 5) was used to compare Tyne Theatre Productions to more established societies and make development suggestions.

This thesis is also a practical guide for the person or persons who will be carrying on the work of the Production Coordinator (the author of this thesis and has done all work presented, unless otherwise stated). Since the Society was established, many things have changed, and it is important that the people at the "top" i.e. the Trustees have a clear idea of what the casual volunteers are thinking. The opinions of people on different levels of the organisation can vary on how the organisation is doing (Sakaduski, 2015).

Tyne Theatre Productions, its volunteers, purpose and nature, is the subject of this thesis. However, there would be no Tyne Theatre Productions without the efforts of the Limited Company and the Preservation Trust - two very different organisations. Before presenting the Society, it is important that the reader understands the complexity and many levels of the organisations within the theatre. Many of the Society's unique features arise from this background, and although all organisations work for the same goal of restoring and keeping the theatre alive, they work in different ways.

Image 1: Organisations



## 1.2 Preservation Trust and Limited Company

Tyne Theatre & Opera House is a Grade 1 listed Victorian Theatre, opened in 1867, which still has wooden stage machinery and a flying gallery. After nearly 150 years of many owners and several operational formats, the theatre is now owned by a charitable trust, the Tyne Theatre & Opera House Preservation Trust (Tyne Theatre & Opera House Preservation Trust, 2007).

Under the trust operates a commercial Limited Company as the Trust's subsidiary, Tyne Theatre & Opera House Limited. The Limited Company takes care of the operational side of the theatre, while the Trust maintains the building and develops community projects and other learning and participation aspects.

Tyne Theatre & Opera House Preservation Trust consists of 12 volunteer Trustees. The Trust was registered as a charity in 2007 (Charity Commission, 2016). Its four main objectives are:

(a) To acquire, restore and preserve for the benefit of the public at large the Grade One Listed Building known as The Tyne Theatre and Opera House; (b) The advancement of public education in all aspects of the dramatic arts by the presentation and production of plays and other expressions of drama including the commissioning of new works and the mounting of public performances and the mounting of classes, exhibitions and demonstrations of dramatic arts and theatre technology; (c) The advancement of public education in theatre technology by the preservation, conservation and exhibition of machinery and technology of the performing arts and the interpretation of such artefacts and their historical context; (d) The advancement of public education in all aspects of the arts including music and music theatre, drama, decorative and visual arts, dance, ballet, circus, music hall and comedy and variety performance. (Tyne Theatre & Opera House Preservation Trust, 2016.)

The Board of Trustees meet approximately once a month to discuss and vote on current affairs. The Trust owns the Tyne Theatre - in March 2008, Newcastle City Council transferred the freehold ownership of the theatre to the Preservation Trust (Tyne Theatre & Opera House Preservation Trust, 2007).

At that time, the theatre's business was operated by a national corporate giant SMG. In late 2014, SMG triggered a break clause in the lease, leaving the Preservation Trust with no company to run the business in the house. The Trust then made the decision to form the subsidiary Operating Company, Tyne Theatre & Opera House Ltd. Several staff members, including the current Theatre Director, were transferred under "TUPE" from SMG to run this new, independent business. TUPE means that when a business changes owner, its employees may be protected under the Transfer of Undertakings

(Protection of Employment) regulations (TUPE) (UK government, 2016). The transferred staff members chose to stay at the Tyne Theatre.

Tyne Theatre & Opera House operates as a receiving house for touring shows, artists and other events. The only in-house productions rehearsed and produced at the theatre are the amateur productions of the recently founded society Tyne Theatre Productions. The Society's co-operation with the Limited Company is important, because the Society needs to share the theatre with this professional, commercial business.

The Limited Company has been in operation for almost two years now, with excellent results. The company has been able to "hit the ground running" (in spite of starting with no capital) as a new business and hire three new employees in addition to what used to be a skeleton staff. Surplus profits from the Limited Company are Gift Aided to the Preservation Trust. Donating through Gift Aid means charities can claim an extra 25p for every £1 which is donated through tax reliefs (UK Government 2016).

Now being completely independent, the Trust and the Limited Company have had the freedom to start restoration plans for the theatre and bring back community projects. Restoring the theatre or engaging the community has not been a main concern for the previous commercial operators and there is much to be fixed.

The Trust is preparing a major restoration bid for Heritage Lottery Fund, and another Heritage Lottery grant called 'Resilient Heritage Grant', which aims to help charities and other organisations with employing professionals, capacity building and long-term organisational development (Heritage Lottery, 2016). While the Limited Company has been able to make a profit and hire new permanent staff, the Trustees are still all volunteers. Although the Trust is financially stable, the Resilient Heritage grant is viewed as critical for hiring help.

Next year 2017 marks the 150th year of Tyne Theatre. Having a very colourful history, the theatre is full of heritage to celebrate, and both organisations are busy trying to pull together a special jubilee program, which would reflect the past, present and future of the theatre. The "birthday year" is an excellent platform to start new fundraising projects and increase public awareness of the theatre's charitable status.



### 1.3 Tyne Theatre Productions

Tyne Theatre has a long history of amateur theatricals. It was in fact a full time amateur theatre for almost a decade during 1970's and 1980's, then called The New Tyne Theatre and Opera House Limited. This period in the theatre's history produced a group of loyal volunteers, who helped to get the society on its feet in 2015 when the Trust decided to start organising the volunteer productions. To help the Trust with coordinating the shows, a Production Committee consisting of three Trustees was formed.

"The Pirates of Penzance" was the first production in 2015, followed by "Sweeney Todd" in spring of 2016. The latest production "Oklahoma!" in November 2016 was the third. The next production will be "Little Shop of Horrors" in March 2017. The society is a constantly reforming organisation. New directors, actors, singers and dancers are interviewed and auditioned for each production. The only permanent volunteers in the society are some of the stage crew (including Stage Manager, who is also the Trust's Volunteer Coordinator), many orchestra members and, to some extent, the Preservation Trust's Production Committee members.

The permanent volunteers stay and are used on all productions mainly because their role is too time-consuming and is too big a responsibility for "casual" volunteers, or it would be difficult to find someone to replace them (for example volunteer musicians are hard to find). To explain the terms being used, "permanent" volunteers work regularly, usually on a weekly basis throughout the year, or at least come back to work for every production. "Casual" volunteers come and go according to their interest, availability and casting decisions.

The permanent stage and crew volunteers are valuable for the productions, because the old building is unique and sometimes hazardous. It is a great help to have them around, for their understanding of the stage is vitally important to the productions' set designs and technical possibilities. The rest of the essential production team are appointed for each production. The Trust wants to keep the society all-inclusive and the auditions process as transparent as possible, so Tyne Theatre Productions does not have a "stock" of actors or singers, but holds open auditions every time.

There is, however, a pull for certain volunteers to come back. Main cast and production team for both "Pirates" and "Oklahoma!" consisted of the old volunteers from the amateur dramatics days of The New Tyne Theatre. "Sweeney" was an exception, for then a large group of young people from the same theatrical society background were cast. It can be said there are now two strong "streams" of volunteers running into Tyne Theatre Productions.

Oklahoma!, the third Tyne Theatre Productions show, marked the beginning of notable developments for the Society. The previous productions gave evidence that the volunteers need more guidance and control. The following chapters will further describe the volunteers within the theatre and the region, after which the operational process of the society will be explained.

After that, the most recent production of Oklahoma! will be presented as a case study of this operational process, pointing out the various areas which have been problematic, what has been fixed and what areas are in need of further development. Practical suggestions for improvements will be made, and the society's objectives and Terms of Reference are updated.

In the final chapter, more speculative and reflective suggestions will be made for the future. While the Society is still young and rough around the edges, it does not mean it could not grow to be a well-oiled and valuable part of the theatre. Volunteer communities and theatre are two difficult specialised fields to coordinate. The Society is however full of potential, and with careful planning future can be made visible and, as far as possible, also predictable (Varbanova, 2012, 24).

## 2 COMMUNITY

As mentioned before, Tyne Theatre Productions is largely reformed twice a year for every new production, while a core of permanent volunteers remains from show to show. In this chapter, the many motivations and backgrounds of the volunteers and volunteering culture are studied. This data will partly help to review the functionality of the operational process in chapter 3. Organisational development should start with under-

standing the workers' motives - after all, explaining any human action must start with referring to their intentions, motives and reasons (Musick & Wilson, 2007, 54).

## 2.1 Volunteers - who are they?

Volunteering is difficult to define perfectly. One way of making a distinction between types of volunteering is by dividing volunteers into formal and informal workers. Formal volunteering means work for an organised volunteer organisation and informal volunteering means work that can happen for example in a neighbourhood community (Milligan & Conradson, 2006). The volunteers of Tyne Theatre Productions fall into the category of formal volunteers.

Volunteering is often defined as altruistic behaviour - people give their time and effort and receive no material reward for it. While volunteers are admired for this, volunteering is still often seen as leisure time pursuit, mainly because the common thought is that if a job is important, someone is paid to do it. However, it is becoming increasingly acknowledged that volunteers are needed on many levels of the society - even government agencies need volunteers to achieve their goals. (Musick & Wilson, 2007, 3-4.)

Volunteers can have many reasons for volunteering - it can be the sheer will to help or simply because they find it fun (Lysakowski, 2005). This of course depends on the charity and what the volunteers are doing. When it comes to the chance to perform in a beautiful old building like the Tyne Theatre, the more altruistic or for example religious motives for volunteering are not relevant. Instead of simply giving, the volunteers are also getting something they desire.

While the volunteers of Tyne Theatre Productions receive no material reward, it is possible to state that sheer altruism is not the only fuel to make people spend many stressful hours in difficult tasks, such as putting together a stage show. Without going into too much detail about satisfying basic psychological needs, it is known that volunteering has an emotionally functional purpose - that people volunteer because it fulfils and meets their values or needs (Musick & Wilson, 2007, 65). Therefore we can conclude that emotional gratification is often the reward, and so it becomes important for an organisation to recognise these needs to better serve and understand its volunteers.

The variety of motives and volunteering on many levels can be easily applied to Tyne Theatre & Opera House. While it is a professional commercial theatre under the private ownership of the Preservation Trust, the theatre itself is a part of English heritage - a part which would be under considerable threat without the volunteer work of the Trustees. Their core motive is simply to protect the building which they love. Then again the volunteers of Tyne Theatre Productions have several other motives, such as gaining experience of theatre work or the joy of performing, which was found out from the volunteer feedback survey (appendix 8).

Therefore, while the Tyne Theatre's volunteers' work benefits the theatre financially, giving all volunteers a utilised, universal label of "fundraisers" does not work. They can see themselves for example as aspiring artists or students getting work experience, to whom fundraising for the theatre is only a bonus on top of the feelings of achievement they get from fulfilling their actual motives. The camaraderie of a theatrical group is also one key motive - societies even refer to themselves as "families" (West End Operatic Society, 2014). These motives and the feedback survey will be further studied throughout this thesis.

We have established that the volunteers can have different motives for volunteering at Tyne Theatre. They could however go and fulfil these desires with other societies, so we must look into the factors which make volunteers pick Tyne Theatre Productions over other amateur dramatics groups.

Logical reasons for a volunteer to pick Tyne Theatre include that their auditions for other societies were not successful, or perhaps the show chosen at Tyne Theatre is one they are keen to work with. The theatre's central location of the theatre may be convenient for them compared to other companies, or perhaps they like to perform on the stage of a beautiful and professional theatre.

Tyne Theatre & Opera House is one of the most beautiful theatres in the UK, "in the top 4% of listed buildings" as stated by English Heritage, and is afforded a three star (the highest) rating by the Theatres Trust; "a very fine theatre of the highest theatrical and architectural quality" (Tyne Theatre & Opera House Preservation Trust, 2016). Environment is a big factor in the whole experience of volunteering. The volunteers who

come to Tyne Theatre may also be returning volunteers from previous productions, who want to revisit the experience and belong to the Society.

Tyne Theatre Productions is also one of the very few societies who do not have a joining fee, which can go from £10 to hundreds of pounds in the region, depending on the artistic level and the organisation type of the society. A joining fee for Tyne Theatre Productions has been discussed within the Trust and the Production Committee, but has not been put into place.

We can conclude that the volunteer culture at Tyne Theatre consists of people, who pick the Tyne Theatre for practical reasons and different personal motives. The overall culture of Tyne Theatre Productions is a tricky area to study, mainly because the majority of these volunteers changes for every show, thus changing the culture.

The culture which has been established so far has been largely shaped by the two groups mentioned earlier - the new performers of "Sweeney" and the old volunteers of "Pirates" and Oklahoma!. There is a pull for these volunteers to come back and audition for shows, because once you have belonged in a group, you don't want to be excluded from it (Smith & Brewerton, 2014, 180). Even if the group is reformed for all productions, its essence is still the same - a Society producing musical theatre at Tyne Theatre.

At Tyne Theatre, a volunteer organisation (Trust) is organising a volunteer organisation (Society). The Preservation Trust is much occupied with many other areas of important development, and Tyne Theatre Productions is only one aspect of the Trust's work. As long as the Trust cannot be more involved in the actual production process, other methods of bringing the "big picture" closer to the casual volunteers and developing leadership from the Trust's side should be explored.

Tyne Theatre Productions is a very young society, a bit over one year old, so the Society's structure and culture will no doubt still change. Culture, by one definition, is people's shared assumptions about the organisation (Smith & Brewerton, 2014, 180), and as long as the Society is not more connected with the Trust, there is less of this connecting general consensus of what the organisation, if fact, is.

## 2.2 Societies in Newcastle upon Tyne

To understand where many of the volunteers come from, it is useful to look outside your own organisation. There is plenty of competition for the best singers, actors and directors in the region, and each society has its own strengths and weaknesses. Things like rehearsal schedules, show choices and the venue all matter, when artistic volunteers look into their options of getting involved with theatre in their region.

Benchmarking is good for any organisation for several reasons - it can improve the customer experience (or in the case on Tyne Theatre Productions, volunteer experience), help make more realistic goals and refine strategies (Patterson, 1996, 19-22). To have the ticket prices and show choices in line with other societies is important for customers, and studying the best ways of giving your volunteers a great experience helps to engage people.

There are several amateur dramatics societies in Newcastle upon Tyne. Some of them rehearse and perform in various locations, e.g. West End Operatic Society (West End Operatic Society, 2014), some have their own amateur venues, e.g. The People's Theatre (The People's Theatre, 2016), and some work like Tyne Theatre Productions in cooperation with a professional theatre. For example Newcastle Musical Theatre Company performs at the Theatre Royal (Newcastle Musical Theatre Company, 2014).

There is a list of regional amateur dramatics companies in appendix 1. This list was compiled for future use when seeking talents, researching the show choices of other societies and planning possible collaborations. It includes societies which are comparable to Tyne Theatre Productions - an amateur group who stage shows to a relatively high artistic standard. There are several other societies and groups in the region who get together for dramatics and music, but only relatively local and show staging societies are included in this list. These are the competing societies for Tyne Theatre Productions.

Other volunteer societies are both competition and a source of support. A wide network spanning the societies spreads valuable information, such as sound and light equipment sharing possibilities, rehearsal spaces, good directors and rehearsal accompa-

nists. The problem with this knowledge is that it is not written down, but in the collective mind of volunteers who work in several different societies.

It's difficult to benchmark other organisations when the information is not public, and the only way to learn about other societies is through the experienced volunteers. If these experienced multi-society volunteers apply for and are accepted into productions, it would allow the Society to tap into their knowledge, but it should be done avoiding the danger of favouring the "more useful" volunteers over people who don't have as much experience.

The differences in the societies can be sorted in many ways. Place of rehearsals and performance is one way to sort the groups - are they a touring company or do they have a "home", like Tyne Theatre Productions? Another angle would be the selection of shows; are they an edgier, more youthful group, or do they favour family shows with a big cast of children? Also the types of the organisations vary - there are charities, registered societies and even businesses in the field of amateur dramatics.

Also the general atmospheres around the groups vary. Some take a very formal and professional approach to the arts, and those groups attract people who are aspiring artists, study the field or are even professionals. These are for example West End Operatic Society, Starlight Theatre Productions and Newcastle Musical Theatre Company. Many other groups, especially those involving children, have a more informal fun-centred approach with learning and social aspects as core values, like the Chimney Sweep Theatre Company (Chimney Sweep Theatre Company, 2016).

Tyne Theatre Productions can be summarised as an amateur dramatics society who rehearse and perform at Tyne Theatre & Opera House. The shows are selected based on an established "swing-method" - one contemporary and one traditional show every year. While the society strives to reach a high artistic standard, it does try to accommodate as many new volunteers as possible and to give people the chance to develop their skills. Looking at this description, Tyne Theatre Productions is in fact a society which has something for everyone.

### 3 OPERATIONAL PROCESS

In this chapter, the operational process of Tyne Theatre Productions is summarised reflecting on the development which has been going on since spring 2016. This chapter aims to explain why the process is the way it is. There was a minimal amount of documentation about previous productions available when the production process was designed for Oklahoma!, so the following account is based mostly on experience and on data which was gathered over the period of approximately seven months (May-November 2016).

This chapter takes a look into what has been achieved so far. The study assumes that there will be another appointed Production Coordinator or someone of the same capacity and job description to carry on the started development work. A more detailed account on the full process and practical development suggestions will be presented in the case study chapter 4.

It is important the reader is aware of the changing nature of the society, and that this chapter makes an account of the situation as it is at the moment. Because the society culture changes for every new production, changes are nearly inevitable - the Trust cannot predict or entirely control the way the society will shape itself. Even if there has been an intention to establish a group of specific culture, the culture will in fact emerge only later on as it is affected by internal and external factors (Smith & Brewerton, 2014, 184). Therefore the following description can be seen as accurate only for the time being.

#### 3.1 Choosing the show, appointing the production team

As stated earlier, a Production Committee operates under the Trust. The Production Committee was formed to plan and partly coordinate the productions. The purpose of the Production Committee was to research and present show propositions to the Trust, help appoint the directors, acquire all formal licences needed and solve any problems arising in the process. However, this Committee has lately been unable to fulfil its purpose, because its members have been otherwise engaged.



This has led to the situation where the Trust's Chairman and the Secretary have had to address the issues and gather the feedback from the latest production, with the assistance of the Production Coordinator. For many reasons, but also because of the described situation with the Production Committee, a Production Coordinator was appointed before the autumn 2016 show was decided.

The situation has not been ideal, and the Trust is looking into correcting the system by evaluating the function of the Production Committee and perhaps appointing more people to help the Committee. However, the Production Committee should be the Trust's way of resolving any major issues or concerns with the productions, so it would be a challenge to find volunteers who will be able to carry the big responsibility of fulfilling this purpose.

Shows before Oklahoma! did not have a Production Coordinator, but Oklahoma! was put together without the assistance of the Production Committee, except in the very beginning when discussing the show options and licencing the show. For previous shows, the Production Committee, the directors and some casual volunteers had been sharing the work of coordinating and advertising. For Oklahoma!, the Production Coordinator was responsible for these areas. Many of the new developments stem from this change in the dynamics.

The idea to stage Oklahoma! in autumn of 2016 came from the Production Committee, and the show choice was agreed by the Trust Chairman and Secretary. The society has a "swing-system" for choosing the shows - one more contemporary and one more traditional production every year. "Pirates" is a traditional show, "Sweeney" represented the contemporary choice, and Oklahoma! was another family show. Little Shop of Horrors for spring of 2017 will again be a contemporary piece.

After the show has been chosen, the first steps of the production are securing and buying the show licence, buying the artwork (if needed) and hiring the rehearsal materials. This is usually all done through the show's licencing agent online, which can be found e.g. by entering search words "show title" and "licence" into any search engine.

The Production Committee and the Trust gather applications for director positions (Director, Musical Director and Choreographer) and interview the candidates. Once the directors have been appointed, the auditions are announced in social media and on the homepage, a rehearsal schedule will be planned and the directors adjust the closer details of their roles. At least this is how the process would ideally go - the Oklahoma! case study chapter 4 will take a closer view on the flow of this process.

Recruitment in the arts sector is often complex, and choosing a Production Team needs careful attention. Arts organisations have diverse characters, the skills needed are usually highly specialised and the chemistry between the whole teams needs to be considered when seeking the right talents, instead of more traditional methods of recruitment based on experience alone. (Varbanova, 2012, 201.)

### 3.2 Auditions and volunteer coordinating

Rehearsals need to be scheduled straight after the show has been announced, ideally before auditions. Volunteers base their decision of participation largely depending on their availability on planned rehearsal days, and they will need that knowledge in advance. Tyne Theatre Productions, on the recommendation of the Production Committee, rehearse mainly on Mondays and Wednesdays, because another local society rehearses on Tuesdays and Thursdays. This policy will be reviewed again in the case study chapter 4.

Scheduling hundreds of people on dates which would match the theatre's and the production team's availabilities needs careful coordinating. The formality of the auditions is up to the directors and the Production Coordinator to decide – either schedule all applicants in their own time slots, or have an open day where people can simply show up and wait for their turn. In amateur societies the latter option is often preferred, and at the moment is recommended for Tyne Theatre Productions, for reasons which will be explored in the case study chapter.

After auditions, the directors will get together and discuss the casting. They will then inform the Production Coordinator of their choices, and the coordinator will send out the acceptance and rejection emails. This is to ensure that the Production Coordinator has

the contact details of all volunteers, who will need to fill a volunteer agreement form to be covered by the theatre's insurance policy. The rehearsal schedule, which should ideally be a detailed call sheet covering the whole rehearsal period of the production, will be sent out to the volunteers. The volunteers will also receive a handbook of the theatre's policies (appendix 7) and their rehearsal materials. This handbook will be introduced in the Oklahoma! case study chapter.

There is no joining fee for Tyne Theatre Production volunteers. While even a reasonable joining fee per volunteer would help to cover quite a few production costs, there is a danger of discriminating against those who cannot afford to join. If a joining fee is to be put into place, the society should think of some other methods of joining for those who cannot pay. Even £30 is a big sum for college students and many other talents the society should aspire to engage. If the joining fee were to be as little £10, the cast would have to be big to make a substantial income.

The rehearsals are not always easy to schedule, especially if the theatre is heavily booked or gets a sudden new show booking. Professional show bookings take priority over pre-booked volunteer rehearsals - the professional aspect of the theatre is more important than amateur rehearsals. Still, sometimes there can be several sudden double bookings when the society needs to find somewhere else to rehearse on a short notice. This is one of the times when a good network of volunteers from several other societies comes in handy, because they have a wealth of knowledge and relationships when it comes to rehearsal spaces.

Coordinating rehearsal times and spaces takes time, but coordinating people is equally important - it is essential that all the directors and the production team know what will be rehearsed, on what day and when. The stage crew will occasionally need to use the stage, so the rehearsals need to go in the Bistro Bar, which is the other big rehearsal space in the theatre. The dance crew, the chorus and the principals usually rehearse separately for a good part of a production, so their rotation needs to be thought out carefully. Volunteers should not be invited to rehearsals unless they are needed.

The bigger the cast, the more time it will take to schedule and coordinate their rehearsals. If the show happens to have under-aged cast (aged 16 or younger), they need to

be chaperoned by a Council licenced chaperone, and there should be one chaperone for every 12 under-aged volunteers (Newcastle City Council, 2015). For Oklahoma!, a total of 8 chaperones were rotated in rehearsals and performances for 21 under-aged cast members. Usually chaperones can be found if the show casts children, because the chaperones are mostly parents of the performers.

Under-aged cast need to be reported to the City Council and, if needed, licenced. Under-aged volunteers need a licence for performing, if they have performed in more than six performances over past six months (Newcastle City Council, 2015). All under-aged performers need to give their full name, date of birth and home address, and this data will be passed on to a City Council representative. The chaperones' personal details and their licencing Council also need to be reported to the Newcastle City Council, so they can check that all licences are valid.

The City Council will check if any of the performers on the list will need a licence (according to how much they have been performing over the past six months), and if they need a licence, the person responsible for the production will fill an application form with the performer's guardian(s). Then the application is sent to the City Council representative, who will check them and send the approved licences back.

The process of coordinating chaperones and securing the licences for under-aged cast is extremely time-consuming, so it is recommendable to start researching the up to date legislation as early as possible. The person in charge of coordinating has to do it from start to finish, but for example the Production Coordinator would need the Production Team's support in coordinating the chaperones at rehearsals. The Production Coordinator should not ideally need to attend rehearsals, but sometimes this is needed to chase people and in general let people know who you are.

A child safeguarding policy was written by the Production Committee after Sweeney Todd, in anticipation of having a family show next with children in the cast. It has been complimented with a more practical health and safety guidance for all volunteers and chaperones, with information about important phone numbers, fire exits and first aid (appendix 5).

Under-aged cast should be informed from the very beginning when announcing auditions that their involvement with the show will be under the subject of finding licenced chaperones. If chaperones cannot be found, or a guardian of the under-aged performer cannot attend all necessary rehearsals, they should not be cast. This is of course unfortunate, but it's important the society does not violate the law or its own safeguarding policies.

The productions cast, crew and orchestra communicate mostly in Facebook. There is a closed group for everyone who has volunteered for Tyne Theatre Productions previously, a sort of online living room for reminiscence and spreading information about other societies. For each new production, a closed Facebook group for that particular show is set up. Facebook is an adequate method for communicating and it reaches people quickly, but it does have its problems. The closer details of this communication will be studied further in the case study chapter 4.

The most independent part of the Society are the technical stage crew. It works under the experienced guidance of the Stage Manager, who has volunteered for the theatre for a very long time and has extensive knowledge of the building and the stage. The technical team do their best to meet the directors' ideas about the set, sound and light, search for quotes for hired pieces such as back cloths and see to it that people move safely around the stage.

The stage crew are naturally not auditioned for the productions. They apply through the Society's channels, such as the online application form, after which an interview with the Stage Manager will be scheduled. The Stage Manager keeps the Production Coordinator updated on the situation of how many more volunteers the crew is able to accommodate, so the Production Coordinator will know when to stop advertising and accepting applications for crew positions.

Another largely independent part of the society is the orchestra, which was recruited for the first production and has not changed much since. The Production Committee member, who largely coordinated the first two shows, recruited this orchestra, and still coordinates it independently from other production areas.

It is obvious the Society is a complex organisation. For many amateur dramatics societies, there are more permanent volunteers in bigger roles - usually a Director or a Production Coordinator. Authority in these societies is centred on these key figures. This does not mean that Tyne Theatre Productions should for example appoint an Artistic Director, but it is however important that the Trust will try to bring leadership closer to the Society and rehearsals to avoid the mentioned problems of casual volunteers taking the lead. Leadership is working with people, and needed for creating a sustainable Society (Byrnes, 2008, 222).

### 3.3 Finance and advertising

Most musical theatre productions, amateur or professional, are nearly impossible to stage decently without a budget. Tyne Theatre Productions attempt to fit all production costs (marketing, materials and hire costs) within the amount of sought sponsorship, but for some more expensive productions with larger casts (like Oklahoma! with a cast of 57 singers, actors and dancers), the Trust may grant extra funds if the director makes a detailed request. For Oklahoma!, the costume hires alone cost over £1500.

The production costs consist of material and hire costs - timber and paints for the sets, costume materials, make up, occasional hire of a more special piece of set, lights, sound equipment and so on. Besides material costs, other big expenses are the show licence, royalties of ticket sales and rehearsal materials (scores and librettos) hire costs. No salaries are paid - it is the policy of Tyne Theatre Productions that no one should receive remuneration or any sort of material reward for working with the production. It is a strict volunteers only policy, and it covers everyone from the Trustees to the cast members.

Marketing is only a relatively small expense in the whole budget. The productions have had different levels of local interest depending on timing, production choice and the production team. There is no fixed marketing budget, and the only policy in place for determining the correct marketing budget is to adjust it to the situation. If the production does not attract press coverage, it is a good idea to spend some more money on the advertisement. The differences of the productions' marketing will be studied further in the case study chapter 4.

Expenses are simple: marketing, materials and hire fees. Show profits are equally simple - they have consisted of ticket sales, sponsorship, fundraising and show programme advertisers, in that order. Ticket sales form the biggest part of the whole profit. There are many factors especially in advertising which will impact on the ticket sales, which will be further studied in the Oklahoma! case study chapter. Parkdean Resorts, which has been the main sponsor of all three productions so far, has sponsored a sum of £2000 to £3000 for each production. This sponsorship has been secured through a Trustee who works for the company.

For Oklahoma!, sponsors were not sought out because Parkdean Resorts had already agreed to be the main sponsor again. Seeking sponsors may however be a priority in the future, should Parkdean Resorts discontinue their sponsorship. Advertisers for the show programme are relatively easy to find by asking the theatre's other shows (like the Pantomime), other local societies and the volunteers, who might have their own businesses to advertise.

The show programme itself was designed by the Production Coordinator for Oklahoma!, but finding a graphics volunteer may be a necessity in the future. The printing of the programmes was sponsored - a sponsor relationship which was established by a Trustee for Sweeney Todd and continued through to Oklahoma!. Should this sponsor discontinue their sponsorship, another printing sponsor could be sought out, but if enough advertisers are found for the programme, they would in a way "pay for themselves".

The show expenses have been paid in various ways. For "Pirates" and "Sweeney", a Trustee involved with the productions paid the expenses, and then the total sum was paid back to him by the Trust. This was a simple system for the Trust, because it added little extra work for the Financial Controller. However, the Production Coordinator for Oklahoma! was not a Trustee, and could not therefore authorise expenses independently this way, so all expenses had to be paid one at a time through the Trust.

Paying through the Trust means that every invoice has to go through a chain of authorisation - first the Trustees and the Production Committee approve the planned budget draft, then the invoices and receipts are handed from the Production Team to the Production Coordinator, who checks and authorises them for the Financial Controller, who

will then pay them. If any additional authorisation is needed, for example when the planned budget is exceeded, the Chairman of the Trust or a Production Committee member can deliver it.

The Financial Controller makes sure all transactions are valid and transparent, and the need for carefulness when handling finances through a charitable Trust should be explained to the Production Team from the very beginning. This will help prevent confusion about payments and payment methods. A more detailed budget and invoice handling account will be featured in the following Oklahoma! case study chapter.

### 3.4 Production Coordinator

The Production Coordinator spent a great amount of time trying to work out how the operational process had worked for shows before Oklahoma!. The Limited Company staff did not have much information about how the Society had organised itself previously, so they could not provide much support. The Trustees and the Production Committee members were largely unavailable during the whole production, so changes in the operational process were naturally inevitable.

The Production Coordinator worked as a link between all organisations - the Operating Company, the Trust, the Production Committee and the Society. Responding to the need for better communication, the Theatre Director is now in the Production Committee, so the Limited Company will have better knowledge about the productions in the future.

The Production Coordinator had to start by studying the up to date legislation. Many aspects had been neglected for previous productions - for example Sweeny Todd had under-aged performers but there were no chaperones for them. There were no risk assessments, or at least none have been saved, and it is not sure if the cast members received any safety training about first aid kits or emergency exits.

Since Tyne Theatre is a professional working theatre, and the Society works under a charitable Trust, it is very important that all operations are transparent. Many other societies work in their own amateur theatres and have less complex organisational struc-



tures, so it would be important to explain the importance of following policies to the volunteers who come to the Tyne Theatre.

Finally, as the performances approach, the dressing rooms need to be allocated for the cast. The front of house volunteers for selling show programmes and collecting donations should be recruited and appointed, and the theatre's general information form for staff needs to be fulfilled by the tech crew and the Production Coordinator. The Limited Company will arrange all casual paid staff for the shows. After the performances, the volunteers have an after party in the theatre's Bistro Bar. Before the last performance, the cast and orchestra should hand back their rehearsal materials to be sent back to the licencing authority.

The production process has now been explained and established. While the main points of the operational process, from choosing the show to scheduling the rehearsals, are still as they were, several formalities have been added in between, such as the chaperone health and safety guide, the volunteer's practical handbook of policies and the volunteer agreement form. Before this account, there was almost no written information about the process.

The Society's image has also been improved. The name "Friends of the Tyne Theatre" was changed to Tyne Theatre Productions soon after Sweeney Todd, because the name was found misleading. Usually "Friends of theatre" refers to a paid customers' membership club. The society now has a homepage, which was built by the Production Coordinator. The website includes an online application form for volunteering at Tyne Theatre. Social media has also been boosted, and the society's Facebook page has gained almost 200 more likes within 9 months.

The following chapters will also present a suggested year planner for productions, more practical suggestions for a smoother process and the Society's draft Terms of Reference will be updated. Looking at all the development and improvements, we can conclude that the Society has been, if not reshaped, at least focused. While the production of Oklahoma! was a complicated one, as it will be explained in the following chapter, it was a very useful "pilot production" for trying new policies and discarding old ones.

Much has been learned and the mistakes made can be avoided in the next production, and above all, there now is a written report on the production process to use as reference and help in the future.

#### 4 CASE: OKLAHOMA!

This case-study of November 2016 production of Oklahoma! will recap the essential lessons learnt from the production, following the order of the operational process review presented in the previous chapter. The following chapter will recap the production's issues, present what has been done to fix the said issues, and try to resolve the remaining problems. This report will help the future Production Coordinator, the Production Committee and the Trust to have the multi-layered view of the whole production.

For Oklahoma!, the volunteer experiences were mixed - some "enjoyed every second" (as stated in a feedback form), some have said they will never come back to perform with Tyne Theatre Productions (as reported by the Trust's Chairman at production debrief meeting, 2016, appendix 2). The two main objectives of the Society are to raise funds and to engage community and audiences, so the success of any production could be measured by how well these objectives have been fulfilled.

Therefore, in an ideal situation, the volunteer feedback would be universally positive (engaging community), there would be positive critique for the show and a high artistic standard would be achieved (engaging audiences) and the profit would be maximised by good tickets sales and low production costs (fundraising). The objectives of the Society are studied closer in the final chapter.

In this chapter two practical handbooks; a volunteer's handbook and a director's handbook, will be presented as tools for developing the Trust's and the Production Committee's communication with the volunteers. The handbook texts can be found from appendix 7. By handing out these instructive guidebooks to everyone in the production, and going through the points together with the group should ensure that at least most of the problems stemming from misinformation can be avoided in the future.

#### 4.1 Choosing the show, appointing the production team

Soon after the Production Coordinator was appointed in spring 2016, one of the Trustees approached the Board suggesting Oklahoma! as the next production. The Trustee in question had been the driving force in building the society in 2015, and the most engaged member of the Production Committee in directing and coordinating the previous productions. This time around he was not available in the same capacity, so appointing the Production Coordinator turned out to be a necessity.

Other Trustees did not suggest shows, and Oklahoma! was chosen for autumn 2016. The Theatre Director was not consulted on the show choice, but since the need for the Limited Company's closer involvement has become clear during the ongoing Society's development since spring 2016, the Theatre Director is now an appointed part of the Production Committee. This will ensure that the Tyne Theatre Productions shows do not clash with the rest of the booked shows. The Theatre Director also has extensive knowledge of current and recent productions in the region, and also knows what is in demand.

For Oklahoma!, the licence for the show was bought by the Production Committee. Oklahoma! licence belongs to Rodgers and Hammerstein Organization (Rodgers and Hammerstein Organisation, 2016). There is a deposit of £500 plus VAT which is deducted from the final box office settlement when royalty for ticket sales will be paid. The rehearsal materials and the official artwork are also available online. It is a good idea to give the licencing department a call before filling the application, because the online licencing systems do not always let you know whether the show is available at your desired time period.

After buying the licence, the candidates for the position of Director were interviewed by the Trustees and the Director was appointed. The Director's position was not advertised, which resulted in only two applications, both from theatre's old volunteers. This has been corrected for the upcoming production of Little Shop of Horrors - a paid Facebook advertising campaign has gathered a total of 13 applications, and the Trustees are also taking extra measures by trying to reach their contacts with personal queries of interest to direct the show.

For Oklahoma!, the Musical Director was appointed by one of the Trustees, and the Director appointed the Choreographer. The Musical Director had a track record of directing music for other amateur shows and was also part of Sweeney Todd. There were no other suggestions for filling the position. The Choreographer was chosen by the Director from three candidates. The decision was based on the Choreographer's previous association with the theatre.

Meanwhile the Production Coordinator announced the production officially and the show was set up for sale through the Limited Company's ticketing agent Eventim. The Production Coordinator booked the theatre for rehearsals according to the availabilities, and the directors gathered together to discuss the auditions and rehearsal schedule - one point where, in retrospect, the presence of the Production Coordinator would have been useful to avoid problems which would arise later.

It has become clear from feedback received from both the Production Team and the cast volunteers that the directors lacked communication. The rehearsal schedule was not planned or agreed on, the directors' availabilities were unclear and there was overall confusion about the closer details of each director's role. This resulted in volunteers not always knowing when they were needed at rehearsals and "power struggles" between the directors.

This can be avoided by making sure during the interview process, that either the Director makes sure the Musical Director and the Choreographer are happy to fulfil the Director's vision, or that the Director will let the Choreographer and the Musical Director to lead their respective areas of the production, and vice versa. It would be important to make sure the appointed Production Team leaders are experienced team workers.

#### 4.2 Auditions and volunteer coordinating

For Oklahoma!, a formal, individual time slot auditions schedule was chosen. Chorus auditions were on the first audition day, principal role auditions were on the second and dance crew were auditioned on the third audition day. This was requested by the Director, who wanted to see all principals together on one day. From the Production Coordinator's point of view, it seemed like better service to schedule all applicants in their own

time slots, rather than make people wait, especially since there were many busy parents coming with their children.

The system did not work. No matter how carefully planned, auditions for an amateur show are less formal than the auditions for professionals. Many people will not turn up, or cancel their time only moments before it would be their turn, resulting in many wasted moments. There was confusion about on which date to audition, especially for those who would have liked to audition for both chorus and principal roles, and the three day period was found to be too long.

This was a result of the Production Coordinator not being familiar with the amateur dramatics scene, and also the lack of instructions from other parts of the organisation. Also the directors did not object to the planned auditions routine when it was presented to them, so the system was put in place. An additional element to auditions, which was done for Sweeney Todd but not for Oklahoma!, was a pre-auditions workshop. This is something that was not requested at any point by the Trust or the Production Team, and the Production Coordinator did not have the knowledge that such a thing could be provided.

The fact that there had been a workshop, and that some previous volunteers who were auditioning again were expecting one, surfaced only later when one applicant emailed and asked when the Oklahoma! workshop would be. When told that the production would not provide one, the said applicant informed the Production Coordinator that the lack of a workshop was found offensive and exclusive, and asked to be removed from the auditions list. This is a matter which seems to stir emotions, and should be carefully addressed.

The society obviously does not want to seem too formal or off-putting to people with less experience in performing. However, a workshop raises a matter of fairness of the general auditions. People who attend the workshop may get a benefit over people who, for various reasons, cannot attend it. Should there be a workshop, it needs to be carefully planned so that people are not getting an unfair advantage.

A workshop for people to come along, have a look at the theatre and learn some tunes is nevertheless a good idea, especially thinking about the people who have never volunteered at Tyne Theatre before. This will be both a social event for all and a practical event for those who are not capable of learning songs independently. It is a phenomenon found only in amateur theatre - not many professional shows would consider casting a person who could not learn the audition song in advance.

The auditions process was also criticised because of the volunteer application form, which was sent to all applicants upon sending an application email. It was requested by the Trust's Chairman and the Stage Manager that there should be a form, and one was drafted by the Production Coordinator based on an old template found from the theatre's database. The draft was approved by both the Chairman and the Stage Manager.

It however became obvious that the application form system did not work. Since every person who wants to volunteer for Tyne Theatre, in any position, will be auditioned or interviewed before being accepted, the form becomes irrelevant. A paper application form should be provided only for those casual visitors of the theatre who would like to learn more about the aspects of volunteering. Otherwise it is just an extra step in the process.

Also the information which the form asked to provide was too personal and detailed. People did not want to give out personal details, which is only natural when they had not even been accepted in the society yet. To give an example of an unnecessary application detail, there was a request from the Trust to ensure that the theatre's insurance will cover Oklahoma!'s volunteers. In the end the insurance policy did not require anyone's National Insurance numbers, which was asked for in the application form, but it turned out that the insurance covers them automatically, as long as the Trust has official proof that they are volunteering for the society.

This application has been replaced by a volunteer agreement form (appendix 4), which is handed out to only those who are accepted in the production. This form provides the volunteers with the theatre's insurance and, while not a legally binding document, makes the whole experience more official. A very simple paper application form has also been redesigned, for those who visit the theatre and would like to learn more about

volunteering. They will then be contacted with the information about the department they would be interested in.

The final problem with Oklahoma! auditions process was that the Director, who felt that the applicants from the general auditions were not high enough quality for several lead roles, invited performers she knew of old to perform the parts. It upset many of the younger cast, and it was against the Society policy of open auditions. It was one of the most heavily commented areas of negative critique in the feedback forms.

In the future this can be avoided by letting all the directors know from the very beginning that all performers in the production need to go through the same process, and that no performers are to be individually invited or appointed for parts. It is obvious that while communication was lacking from all parties, the Trust and the Society are not clear enough about the policy, which should be updated and made available from the very beginning.

Based on all this trial and error, the auditions system should be entirely reshaped for Little Shop of Horrors. The recommended system based on the feedback and benchmarking other societies should go as follows: schedule only one big open auditions day, with the possibility of a pre-auditions workshop if the Director wishes there to be one, and it is possible to arrange. Tell candidates to turn up any time during the day and wait for their turn. Give them a queue number if necessary. Ask them for their name and email address only.

After being accepted onto the production, send them the Volunteer Agreement form to fill and bring to the first rehearsals. A Production Coordinator, or whoever shall be organizing the production, should be gathering the forms at first rehearsals. The volunteers should be told they are not allowed to rehearsals until they have brought a signed agreement form. On receipt of the agreement form, the volunteers should receive their rehearsal materials and a volunteer's guide to the society, with the main points of general policy and conduct (appendix 7).

There is no set policy for Tyne Theatre Productions auditions, so their form will probably vary from show to show. For Oklahoma! auditions, the applicants had to choose be-

tween songs from the show, and the chorus applicants had to memorise the title song, Oklahoma!. Later these songs were criticised as too difficult for amateur dramatics audition songs by the director in the debrief meeting (appendix 2), so it might be in order to consider letting people sing whatever they want.

Tyne Theatre Productions, on the recommendation of the Production Committee, rehearse mainly on Mondays and Wednesdays, because Second Act Theatre society rehearses on Tuesdays and Thursdays. This recommendation stems from the notion that the same people might be involved in both societies and productions, but there is the possibility of creating an unfair advantage to those performers on the expense of others.

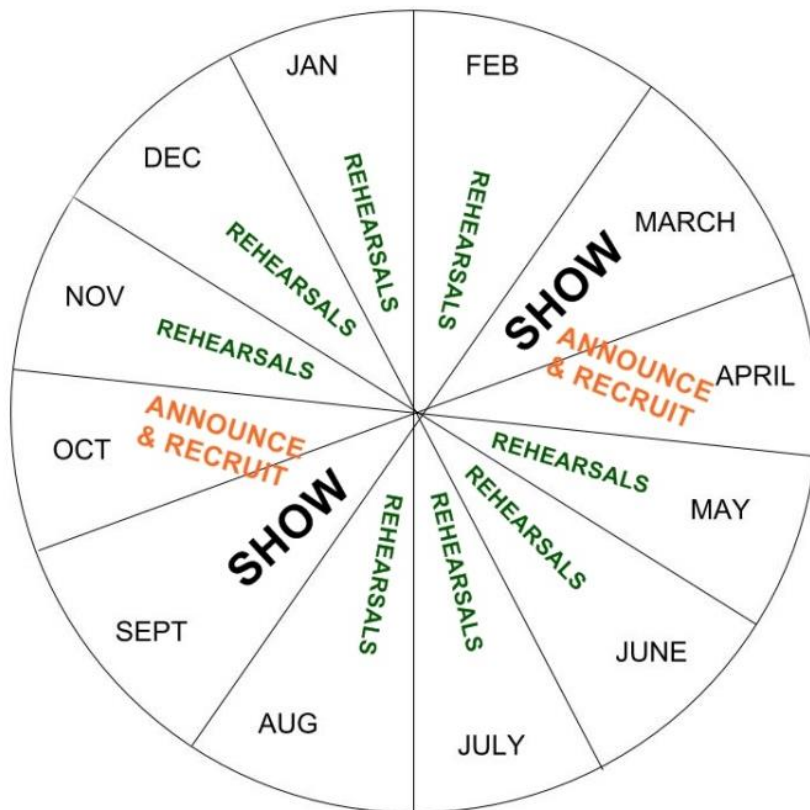
The stage manager's feedback in the production debrief meeting (appendix 2) had the request that the rehearsal schedule should not be formed around the availability of a small number of the whole production company, because it affects all involved with the show. A practical view would be to design the rehearsal schedule around the theatre's available dates.

The show dates should also be reviewed - the Theatre Director holds back the days of the Society's performances in the theatre diary, and changes to these dates are very difficult later on. Not only have the Trust and the Production Committee been late when choosing and announcing the shows, the dates have not been carefully thought out. The unevenness in the planned dates gave Oklahoma! half a year to rehearse, but leaves only two to three months for Little Shop of Horrors before shows in March 9-11. If the rehearsal schedules were more compact, more time could be spent recruiting directors and cast for the upcoming show.

This can be corrected by simply being more forward-thinking. The Society can establish a year planner and for example have the same show weeks every year. Shows should be planned at least one year ahead, and at the moment the Trust should be looking into securing the show licence for the production which will follow Little Shop of Horrors. Below is a suggested year plan for productions.



Image 2: Year planner



The complexity of rehearsal coordinating when the theatre gets a sudden new show booking is a tricky matter to fix. Even if you have enough money in the budget to hire extra rehearsal spaces in the city centre, they might not be available at short notice. One emergency rehearsal room option could be in the company offices next door to the theatre. The Trust owns the property and leases it out to the Chinese ITC Centre. Upstairs are three rather spacious office rooms. Currently only the largest one is being used only for Board meetings. If the rooms were cleared and slightly updated, they could fit at least the principal cast rehearsals.

As stated, the rehearsals were not planned in enough detail by the directors. This resulted in volunteers being invited to rehearsals and having nothing to do, as reported in some of the feedback forms. For many, the trip to the theatre is not a short one, so if a rehearsal schedule needs to be adjusted or changed, the directors or a person appointed to coordinate the call sheets should let all volunteers concerned know immediately if they are not needed.

There was constant Facebook messaging by people who did not know if they were needed at rehearsals, and only during the last week of dress rehearsals was the simple system of pinning an updated rehearsal schedule on top of the Facebook group discovered. This was a good solution which is recommended mainly for its easy accessibility, and it's also featured in the volunteer guide (appendix 7). The directors are also instructed to plan the whole span of rehearsals in their guide.

Facebook is great for societies to boost marketing, because if the involved people can be encouraged to like, share, tag, post rehearsal photos and create an overall "buzz", the organic i.e. free visibility will increase greatly. Besides marketing, the recent merger with Messenger has made it even easier for people to use Facebook for phone messaging instead of traditional texting. While this makes it easy to reach many people, those who coordinate the production are under constant bombardment of messages from several layers of the production, which can sometimes be overwhelming.

Children and chaperones were a new thing for Tyne Theatre Production rehearsals. The Director gave feedback at the production debrief meeting (appendix 2) that the chaperones did not control the children enough, and that the constant noise was a distraction to the rehearsals. The Director tried to address the matter with the chaperones, but apparently with no results. This might be because there were several chaperones who were rotated, who did not know each other on a personal level or communicate about production matters outside the theatre, so the Director did not know if she had talked to all of the chaperones.

Another reason for the children's restlessness might have been in the vague rehearsal schedule - if they had the time to run around, they should probably not have been called to the theatre. To fix these problems, the chaperones will receive the guidance created during *Oklahoma!*, and the Director's handbook will feature the importance of having constructive discussion with the chaperones about the children's conduct at rehearsals.

The spaces, especially the Bistro Bar, were not left tidy after rehearsals. Although it was repeatedly requested of the volunteers to leave the spaces as they were, the Bar Manager of the Limited Company reported untidiness on several occasions throughout the rehearsal period. Even a piano was once left blocking a fire exit. It is not easy to make

people clean up, even after themselves, but an attempt to fix the problem can be made by reminding volunteers that it's not the theatre staff's job to clean after them. This is featured in the volunteers' guides (appendix 7).

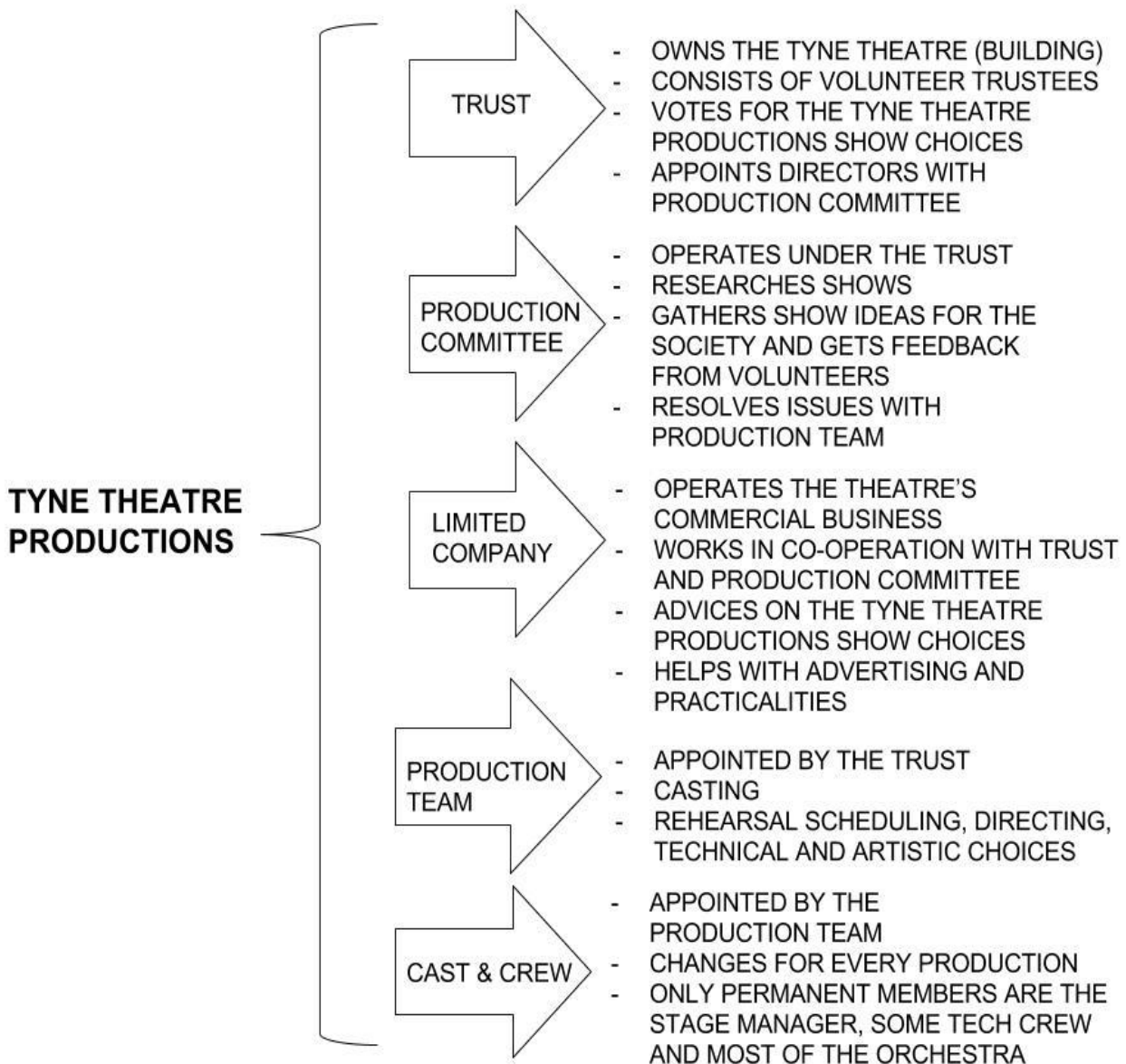
Coming to the end of the performances, there was a problem of cast members not returning, losing or neglecting their vocal scores. If enough scores are lost this is a big expense, up to hundreds of pounds. It should be made even clearer, from the very first moment when the volunteers receive the materials, that they are expensive hired books, which should be returned to the music library in the same condition as they arrived. This is also included in the volunteers' guidebook. If it looks like the problem continues despite these efforts, it could be considered to add to the society policy that volunteers must pay for any hire materials they fail to return in good condition.

While circulating printed information with the handbooks should help, the lack of connection between the Society's layers still needs to be addressed, because it is the source for most of the information sharing problems. Even if the Society's structure will not be changed any time soon, all development work requires at least an assessment of the current situation (Stanford, 2010).

The lack of active involvement from the Trust led to a mixture of formal and informal leadership in the Society. Formal leadership, which means leadership by people who have been granted the authority, comes from the Trust and the appointed Production Team, but there have been some individual volunteers stepping in and taking over parts of the process as informal leaders (Byrnes, 2008, 223). This happened mostly at rehearsals when there were no Trust's or Production Committee's members present. The Trust's involvement with the Society could be increased by appointing a representative to work closely with the Production Team.

An organisational chart or an *organogramme* is a practical tool for analysing the structures, which is one of the first steps in the process of human resource planning (Varbanova, 2012, 202). The following chart, or something similar, should be agreed on by the Trustees involved in the productions, and could also be added in the handbook to help volunteers understand how the system works.

Image 3: Tyne Theatre Productions structure



#### 4.3 Finance and advertising

Oklahoma! sold more tickets than Pirates of Penzance, but it was a more expensive production, with production costs total of £6193,98. Material costs formed over half of the expenses (£3173). Oklahoma! made a profit of £8091,99 for the Preservation Trust. This sum is without the deduction of yet to come recharge costs for lost and poor condition rehearsal materials. "Pirates" material costs were approximately £1226 ("approximately" because the only budget in the theatre's database is unfinished). Due to the show's age no royalty was paid.

This is a modest profit compared to Sweeney Todd's profit of £14,308,88. "Sweeney's" show costs of £6585,5, which includes the royalty, were about the same as Oklahoma!'s, but the high cost reflects the royalty paid for high ticket sales, rather than material costs, which were under £2500.

The production exceeded the given marketing and material costs budget of £3000 by £173. The Director told the Trust early in the process that the costs would be exceeded, mainly because the cast was so large and everyone needed a costume. Also several special items, like blanks for stage guns, a trick lasso and a surrey (wagon) needed to be hired or bought. The Trust accepted the additional costs to the production budget.

Throughout the rehearsals, the Production Team struggled with finding rehearsal accompanists. This culminated when the Production Team, without the knowledge of the Production Coordinator, paid a nominal fee to a visiting accompanist when they could not find someone for free. Paying any expenses to anyone (except orchestra musicians for instrument transportation) is against the Society's policy, and again gives evidence of too little communication between the Trust and the Production Team. Then again none of the people in the Production Team were appointed to the task of finding the rehearsal accompanists, so the matter was circulated around and all were reluctant to take responsibility.

Finding good rehearsal accompanists is hard, and therefore it would be recommendable to make it clear from the very beginning of the production that accompanists need to be appointed early on, and that it would be very useful if the appointed directors would have a good network of musicians, available to help out. Under no circumstances should the Society hire help. This is again featured in the volunteers' guides.

The fee for the rehearsal accompanist was not the only time the volunteers handled money without authorisation. The company came up with an idea that they would like to help cover production costs by baking things at home, bringing them into rehearsals and then collecting donations to cover rehearsal rooms hire fees. This is yet another example of volunteers not knowing the correct policy, and more specifically the way professional theatres and charitable Trusts need to handle their finance. The volunteers

should not handle money, even small sums like those collected at rehearsals. This has been added to the volunteers' guidebooks.

The marketing has varied greatly for all productions. *Pirates of Penzance*, which was the first volunteer production in almost 30 years, got excellent media coverage, because it had a local interest and it was linked with the aspect of a new independent company running the theatre. BBC featured the production in *Inside Out North East* program (BBC: *Inside Out North East*, 2015) and the local *Chronicle* also wrote a piece about the show (*Chronicle Live*, 2015).

*Sweeney Todd's Director* is well known and born in Newcastle, and this leverage was used to advertise for the auditions (*Chronicle*, 2015). Later in the production the ripples of this media coverage in the beginning helped to attract other local bloggers and news pages, and boost social media coverage. Paid Facebook advertisements were used for the value of £10,12. In total the marketing cost according to the production's budget was £120.

*Oklahoma!*, despite many efforts from both the Production Coordinator and the Limited Company Marketing Coordinator, could not interest the press, for it had little local interest. Since Tyne Theatre will be 150 years old in 2017, it may be easier to attract local culture journalists with the jubilee year productions. The Production Coordinator boosted the marketing mainly through Facebook - a total of £40 was used over 6 weeks prior the performances.

There was an attempt to get enough chorus members together for a flash mob. The City Council was contacted and the Grey's Monument would have been available for 15 minutes. This is an ideal location and a good flash mob is excellent free marketing, but in the end the Production Coordinator was unable to gather enough available and/or interested cast around the event. If a flash mob is planned in the future, it's recommended to start planning it very early in the production.

The Limited Company helps the Society with advertising whenever possible. The Society's advert is featured in the theatre's *What's On* -guide for free, the Marketing Coordinator shares and likes everything in social media, official press releases are being sent

out from the theatre's marketing email, to name a few. There is a lot of free marketing which the Limited Company can offer for the volunteers, if the Society's Production Co-ordinator, or someone who is appointed as the society's marketing person, will stay in touch with the Limited Company's Marketing Coordinator.

The social media campaign was targeted through the Tyne Theatre & Opera House Facebook page, because the theatre's page has more followers than the Society's, and because it made it easier finance-wise. The sponsored Facebook boosts are paid with a Limited Company's bank card, and advertising that way makes it easy for the Limited Company to deduct the sum from the box office settlement. The campaign reached thousands of people and it can be speculated whether the show would have sold even as well as it did without the lengthy social media campaign.

#### 4.4 Results and feedback

In this chapter the received feedback from the Production Team and cast volunteers is briefly recapped. Most of the essential feedback has already been handled in previous chapters. At the end of this chapter, the Tyne Theatre Productions draft Terms or Reference will be analysed and updated, according to the reality of the Society as it is now. The draft Terms of Reference is in appendix 6.

The Production Team's (the Director's and the Stage Manager's) feedback was received and noted at a meeting with Trustees on 16<sup>th</sup> November (appendix 2). The Director's concerns were mostly in lack of communication between the Trust and the Production Team. The Stage Manager expressed concerns mainly to do with the lateness of all schedules involving the show choices and auditions. All these problems are concluded to have risen from the simple lack of communication on several levels of the organisation.

The cast were given feedback forms, and a disappointing total of 8 forms were returned. The form and all charted results can be found in appendix 8. The feedback in these forms was half positive, half neutral. When asked if the volunteer had enjoyed

their time with the Society, half said yes and half felt like it was necessary to make an additional comment, such as "yes, at times" or "yes and no". However with such a small sampling this cannot be said to reflect the collective feeling in the whole production, but it represents a random selection of people.

As explored in the second chapter of this thesis, Tyne Theatre Productions casual volunteers work largely for their own joy rather than for the theatre's benefit, which can be proved for example by looking at the amount of returned feedback forms. The form was designed and handed out to volunteers by the Production Coordinator at the last rehearsals and during performances, and also emailed to all cast volunteers after the last show.

While filling the form was not mandatory, it was made clear it would be valuable for the Trust and the Society if everyone could fill the form. From approximately 50 possible returns, a total of 8 forms were returned during three weeks. It takes approximately 5 minutes to fill the form. Also many of the hired vocal scores were not returned, even after several reminders and pleas. This is a big expense for the Trust. All this indicates that casual volunteers with motives arising from personal gain are less concerned about what happens to the Society after their production is over.

Not seeing the big picture when you are a part of a big production is only natural, but this is an area which should be developed in the future. The attendance of rehearsals also suffers when the cast volunteers are not committed enough, which of course slows the production process. Because there were only 8 feedback forms returned, it cannot be used as a realistic reflection of the motives of the whole production cast, but from the returned ones it can be concluded that the motives vary greatly.

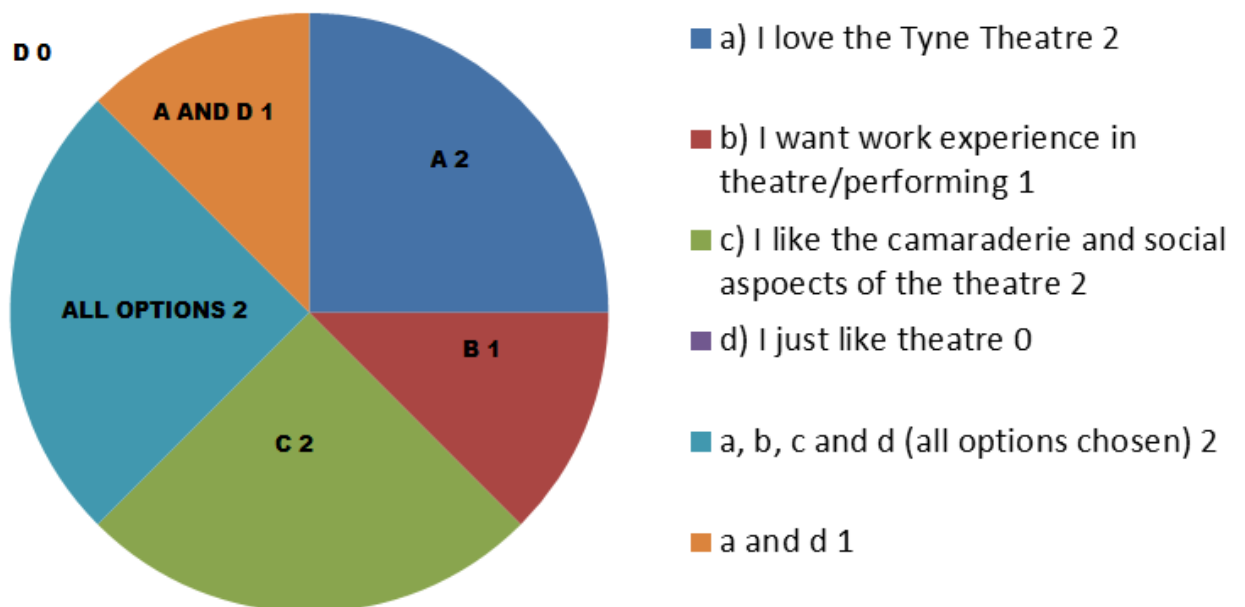
This would suggest that while people may come back and volunteer again, the theatre's benefit is not necessarily ranking very high in the inner motives of the casual volunteers. The casual volunteers were chosen as the target group for the feedback form over the permanent volunteers, because the dedication of the permanent volunteers is more obvious. This is based on the amount of work they do regularly for the theatre on a weekly basis.



The most obvious critique in the feedback forms was towards the auditions and rehearsal coordinating, and the problematic dynamics in directing. As stated, these problems can be corrected only by making the society policies more available and clear to all volunteers, and by making sure that the Production Team works as a team and does not fall into "power struggles". It all should start from the Trust's level by making sure there are people with sufficient time to develop the Society (Varbanova, 2012, 202).

Image 4: Volunteer Motives

## Choose the closest one from these options: I volunteer because



## 5 FUTURE

### 5.1 Building up the Society

Despite all development so far, it takes years for a society to establish itself in the region, even in an old and established venue. The best thing the Society can do right now is just keep on going. Many of the new faces will become old faces, some old volun-

teers will drop out, new people will arrive for every new production, and the Society lives on. Tyne Theatre Productions is still a young society at this point.

What Tyne Theatre Productions has, that is unique to the Society and which no other group has, is the magnificent building and the opportunity for amateurs to rehearse on the stage of one of the most beautiful theatres in the UK. This was mentioned in a volunteer's feedback form. The central location is also convenient for many to travel to rehearsals, and Tyne Theatre Productions does not have a joining fee. It is important that the open, all-inclusive atmosphere is protected by trying to reach out to as many new volunteers for every production as possible.

When it comes to appointing a more long-term Producer, Production Coordinator or Artistic Director - a central and authoritative character that would stay from production to production, it certainly would make further development and Society structure much simpler. The person appointed should run the Society according to the wishes of the Trust, but could and should in the end be able to work quite independently, making the Society's multi-layered authority chain more focused. Management of a creative process is often difficult if the artistic and the administrative tasks are split between e.g. a Producer and a Director, if they have conflicting priorities (Varbanova, 2012, 201).

If the Society aspires to secure certain types of volunteers in the future, or appoint new people to be a part of the process, it has been established that at least rehearsal accompanists, chaperones and a long term Producer, Production Coordinator or even Artistic Director could be considered. Having at least one chaperone as a permanent volunteer would make casting under-aged people much easier and having a permanent rehearsal accompanist would of course be ideal for the rehearsals.

The next production, Little Shop of Horrors, has already been announced and the deadline for directors to send in their applications is 25th of November. The show was chosen without the Production Committee this time, because its members were not available for a meeting to make the decisions and the schedule was (and is) extremely tight. Once the directors are appointed, hopefully by the beginning of December, the auditions can be scheduled for December and maybe, if all goes well, the rehearsals can start even before Christmas.

## 5.2 The purpose and value of the Society

Looking at all the hard work put into coordinating the volunteers, it is valuable to remember the core values and motives for having such a complex branch in the organisation. There are many reasons why it is good for the Tyne Theatre to have a volunteer culture, and those reasons will be explored in this final chapter.

First of all the Society's value as a fundraising activity has to be noted, because the ticket sales from Tyne Theatre Productions shows is the biggest source of income the Trust has from any fundraising activity. Two productions every year can generate based on the ticket sales of the three previous productions from £16,000 to £28,000 per annum, depending on the ticket sales. The economic value of volunteer work is notable in general, especially if considered that the contribution of time is approximately double the value of a contribution of money (International Labour Office, 2011, 4).

Oklahoma! production group consisted of 25 orchestra volunteers, 24 Production Team volunteers and 57 cast volunteers, making a total of 106 volunteers. The production made a profit of £8091,99, and if we split this profit between individual volunteers to estimate the monetary value of their contribution, it would be £76,34 per volunteer. To make 106 individuals donate £76,34 to the Trust would generate the same amount of profit.

It is obvious the volunteers therefore are a financially important element of the Trust's fundraising objectives. The value of volunteering can also be measured at an individual level - has the Society managed to help volunteers develop themselves? The sense of personal development is harder to measure than the monetary value, especially when gathering data proves to be problematic.

Engaging people also means engaging the community, and because engaging community is one of the Society's and the Trust's main objectives, measuring the success in this area would be important. One of the valuable aspects of volunteering in general is giving people a feeling of self-satisfaction and a sense of contributing (International Labour Office, 2011, 5).

To have a better idea of how much the Tyne Theatre Volunteers actually work, the Production Coordinator made an attempt at calculating all rehearsal hours of all volunteers. This happened by analysing the signing in forms, which all people must sign for health and safety reasons when coming in and going out of the theatre. The data would be useful when searching for grants from authorities who press the importance of community aspects.

However, because the signing in sheets were collected at the end of the rehearsals by either the Deputy Stage Manager or the theatre's Duty Manager/Fire Steward, many of the papers went missing, especially during a two week period in the summer when the Production Coordinator was away. Also the orchestra needed to rehearse away from the theatre on several occasions, and most of the attendance forms from those rehearsals never returned.

Considering that the forms for 16 rehearsals were not recovered, the closest estimate from the hours that were calculated is that at least 4000 hours of volunteer work was put into Oklahoma!. This total does not include the independent work of practise or planning carried out at home, or the crew volunteers' extra hours building the set. It also does not include the work hours of the Production Coordinator, so the actual total for every hour spent will probably be somewhere closer to 5000-6000 hours. The data which was gathered can be found from appendix 3.

The knowledge of the volunteers' efforts and estimated hours would be useful for the Trust when writing bids for grants. If the Trust can give evidence of an active volunteer base and the efforts of an engaged community, it will improve the chances of proving the need for financial support from Heritage Lottery Fund and other grant giving authorities. After all a Heritage Grant is not just about saving a building but sharing the Heritage with the people (Heritage Lottery Fund, 2016).

Finally, to conclude the Society's objectives, we can take a look at the drafted Terms of Reference for Tyne Theatre Productions, made by the Production Committee sometime in early 2016 or late 2015. The Society has however changed in many places. As a final look into the organisational development and the future of the Society, the old Terms of Reference will be now analysed and complimented with suggested updates and correc-

tions. Both old and new Terms of Reference can be found as separate documents from appendix 6. The suggested updates are written in *italics* under each draft clause below.

## **Objectives**

Tyne Theatre Productions is a group of volunteers who perform dramatic works at the Tyne Theatre and Opera House with the following objectives:

1. Improve utilisation of the theatre at times when it would otherwise be dark.

*The theatre has increased the amount of bookings so much over the past year that the utilisation of the theatre building is not an area which needs improving any more.*

2. Raise funds for the restoration of the theatre
3. Engage volunteers and audiences with the theatre

The group is part of the activities of the Tyne Theatre and Opera House Preservation Trust.

## **Governance**

1. The group will be monitored and governed by 3 Trustees from the Tyne Theatre and Opera House Preservation Trust Board of Trustees. These will be known as the Production Committee. The Production Committee will invite The Chairman, Treasurer and Secretary for attendance and participation of all Production Committee meetings.

*Suggested change: The group (or the Society) will be monitored and governed by an appointed production team and Production Coordinator. A Production Committee of 3 Trustees from the Tyne Theatre and Opera House Preservation Trust Board of Trustees works as the Production Team's support group on behalf of the Trust.*

2. Dates and choices of show and production budgets will be proposed by the Production Committee following consultation with the Theatre Director and will be individually approved by the Board of Trustees.
3. Production team positions (namely Director, Musical Director and Choreographer) will be advertised for each production and will be interviewed and approved by the Production Committee. Where a Production Committee member wishes to apply for a Production Team position an additional Trustee needs to be appointed temporarily in relation to the Production Team appointments.

*Suggested change: "... will be interviewed and approved by the Production Committee, the Chairman and the Secretary, and any Production Team members already appointed.*

4. Crew, lighting, sound, stage management positions will be advertised and appointed for each production by the Volunteers Coordinator.

*These are not being advertised but the applying process is open. Suggested change: "Crew, lighting, sound and stage management positions will be appointed for each production by the Volunteers Coordinator."*

5. Cast will be recruited only by advertising and an open audition process which must include at least one of the Production Committee. All cast positions including principals will be based on performance in the audition process.

*Production Committee was not present at Oklahoma! auditions. Suggested change: "Cast will be recruited only by advertising and an open audition process. All cast positions including principals will be based on performance in the audition process."*

6. A voluntary orchestra will be used for music productions. The orchestra for each production will be appointed on a first come first served basis and based on experience playing for previous productions. In the event of oversubscription an audition may be required. Transport expenses may be payable to orchestra

member with large instruments that require special transportation (eg harp, keyboards, percussion).

*Suggested change: "The orchestra for each production will be appointed based on experience playing for previous productions. In the event of needing more musicians, musicians shall be sought through networks and open auditions. In the event of oversubscription for an instrument part an audition is arranged."*

7. All production expenses to be signed off by a Production Committee member subject to them being within the original board approved budget.

*Suggested change: "All production expenses to be approved by the Production Coordinator subject to them being within the original Trust approved budget."*

8. Sponsorship is to be sought for all productions.
9. License applications once board approved must be completed by one of the Production Committee. The Production Committee are to be invited to all production meetings and are invited to attend all rehearsals.

*Suggested change: "Production license, once the production is approved by the Trust, must be completed by the Production Committee or the Production Coordinator."*

10. The Production Committee has the right to warn and then replace all members of the production if there are performance concerns during the rehearsal phase.
11. All production members must be members of Tyne Theatre Production by paying (gift aiding where possible) an annual donation of £10 (increasing by RPI each year from 2017 subject to rounding to the nearest £1). The donation is voluntary for those not performing on stage (for instance voluntary for orchestra, crew and front of house volunteers).

*This did not happen for Oklahoma!. Suggestion to remove the clause, unless the Trust and the Production Committee agree on the policy.*

12. All production members must act respectfully to each other and be concerned with each other's welfare and safety and those of other theatre users. Failure to do so will result in removal from the production and from any future productions at the discretion of the Production Committee.

*Suggested change: "...at the discretion of the Trust".*

13. The Trust's safeguarding policy must be complied with for children acting as part of cast, crew or orchestra. Licenses for children performing in production must be filed with local authority by 4 weeks prior to production date and confirmation of this and licenses received forwarded to the Production Committee by the Production Team.

*Suggested change: "The Production Coordinator, or a license coordinator appointed by the Trust and the production team, shall gather and protect all data regarding the under-aged cast, file the applications and work in cooperation with the chaperones."*

14. Risk assessments to be carried out by the Production Team or Technical Team and submitted to the Production Committee for any potentially risky activities.
15. Use of the theatre for rehearsals will result in a recharge from the Trust to the Op Co of £25 per hour (for 2016 – this amount will increase by RPI annually). This will be deducted from the settlement of ticket sales.

*The theatre is not recharging the Trust for the theatre's use. Only staffing costs are deducted from the settlement. Suggested change: "Use of the theatre for rehearsals is not recharged from the Trust. All staffing costs and other expenses from the performances at the theatre will be deducted from the settlement of ticket sales."*

16. Ticket prices, programme prices and merchandise pricing to be agreed by the Production Committee with the Theatre Director.



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APPENDICES	Page
Appendix 1: Regional amateur dramatics societies	52
Appendix 2: Oklahoma! production debrief meeting minutes	53
Appendix 3: Oklahoma! rehearsal hours value calculation	54
Appendix 4: Agreement form	55
Appendix 5: Health & safety guidebook, child safeguarding policies	56
Appendix 6: Terms of Reference, draft and updated	63
Appendix 7: Volunteer's and director's guide to Tyne Theatre	67
Appendix 8: Volunteer feedback form and analysis	69

#### List of images

Image 1: Organisations	6
Image 2: Year planner	32
Image 3: Tyne Theatre Productions structure	36
Image 4: Volunteer motives	41

**APPENDIX 1: REGIONAL AMATEUR DRAMATICS SOCIETIES**

(Societies long distance away in brackets.)

Acting Up Theatre School  
Blyth Musical Theatre Company  
(Chester-le-Street Amateur Operatics Society)  
Chimney Sweep Theatre Company  
(Durham Musical Theatre Company - DMTC)  
First Act Theatre  
Gosforth Musical Society  
Newcastle Musical Theatre Company  
Newcastle University Theatre Society  
Northern Star Theatre Arts (Productions)  
Northumbria Drama Society (University of Northumbria)  
Northumbria Musical Theatre Society (University of Northumbria)  
NUTS (Newcastle University Theatre Society)  
Second Act Theatre  
Spennymoor Stage and Song  
St Andrew's Operatic Society  
Starlight Theatre Productions  
The People's Theatre  
Tyne Theatre Stage School  
Tynemouth Amateur Operatic Society (Playhouse Whitley Bay)  
Tynemouth Gilbert & Sullivan Society  
West End Operatic Society  
Whitley Bay Operatic Society Ltd

## **APPENDIX 2: Minutes of Oklahoma! debrief meeting on 16th of November 2016**

Present: Chairman, Secretary, Director, Stage Manager, Production Coordinator. No members of production committee present.

Aim of the meet is to review the production process only.

### **DIRECTOR:**

- What went well: team work within the production team was good, good communication with staging, lighting and sound, with lots of meetings. Developing ideas together was good, one of best teams ever worked with. Stage & tech constantly being in touch with the director positive. Best experience with the production.
- What did not go well: the rehearsal accompanists were too hard to find and in many cases were not able to prima vista.
- The areas of responsibility and rehearsal schedule need to be more carefully planned together with all directors in the beginning, now there was uncertainty of who wanted to do what on which day.
- Auditions took too long and the audition pieces were not suitable
- more liaison between the production committee and the marketing department.
- Timing of the show not good, falling on Bonfire night and rehearsals on Halloween
- shows should have started at 7 pm instead of 7:30 pm.
- would be useful to have a sing song evening/reading before actual auditions, to invite people in to have a look, in most operatic societies it's a part of the process.

### **STAGE MANAGER:**

- Rehearsals should not be designed around the availability of few people alone.
- Lack of attendance to rehearsals worst ever
- Need to be earlier about announcing and booking shows, otherwise we get the "leftover" people
- Production Committee needs to be available or some other arrangements made

### **CHAIRMAN AND SECRETARY**

- apologies on behalf of the production committee
- Chairman: some children have said they are never coming back due to the choreographer not being present at rehearsals and they had nothing to do.
- To clarify the Trust's position; they have made a conscious effort not to get involved, it's the directors' show. In future the director will be appointed first, followed by choreographer and md.
- Explaining the volunteers and especially the stage crew about how shows are being picked would be useful in the future.
- point made: we should be looking into the shows on 2018. The Trust is struggling with completing all things it's trying to do.

### **MISC AND OVERALL CONSENSUS:**

- The cast was too large, this also heard from the cast, although a large cast sells more tickets.
- People who do not attend rehearsals should be kicked out. The importance of commitment has to be stressed all the way from auditions.
- Thanks from the director, more appraise to the stage crew. All concerns duly noted.
- The whole purpose of the production committee is to offer the support it has failed to provide this time.

### APPENDIX 3: Appendix 3: Oklahoma! rehearsal and performance hours calculation

DAY	DATE	REHEARSAL TIME	REHEARSAL HOURS	PEOPLE HOURS	MINS	
Monday	13.6.	7:30-9:30pm	2	53	11	
Wednesday	15.6.	7:30-9:30 pm	2	125	15	
Monday	20.6.	7:30-9:30 pm	2	21	18	
Thursday	23.6.	7:30-9:30 pm	2	87	23	
Monday	27.6.	7:30-9:30 pm	2	25	50	
Wednesday	29.6.	7:30-9:30 pm	2	105	52	
Monday	4.7.	7:30-9:30 pm	2	36	25	
Thursday	7.7.	7:30-9:30 pm	2	77	38	
Monday	11.7.	7:30-9:30 pm	2	24	13	
Wednesday	13.7.	7:30-9:30 pm	2	60	34	
Monday	18.7.	7:30-9:30 pm	2	35	29	
Wednesday	20.7.	7:30-9:30 pm	2	107	31	
Monday	25.7.	7:30-9:30 pm	2	77	6	
Wednesday	27.7.	7:30-9:30 pm	2	103	37	
Wednesday	3.8.	7:30-9:30 pm	2	64	52	
Monday	8.8.	7:30-9:30 pm	2	24	30	
Wednesday	10.8.	7:30-9:30 pm	2	107	17	
Monday	15.8.	7:30-9:30 pm	2	129	12	
Wednesday	17.8.	7:30-9:30 pm	2	72	6	
Monday	22.8.	7:30-9:30 pm	2	71	35	
Wednesday	24.8.	7:30-9:30 pm	2	45	11	page missing?
Monday	29.8.	7:30-9:30 pm	2			
Wednesday	31.8.	7:30-9:30 pm	2	135	3	
Sunday	4.9.	7:00-9:30 pm	2,5			
Monday	5.9.	7:30-9:30 pm	2	75	22	
Wednesday	7.9.	7:30-9:30 pm	2			
Sun	11.9.	7:00-9:30 pm	2,5			
Monday	12.9.	7:30-9:30 pm	2	31	50	
Wednesday	14.9.	7:30-9:30 pm	2	112	33	
Monday	19.9.	7:30-9:30 pm	2	52	30	
Wednesday	21.9.	7:30-9:30 pm	2	138	32	
Thursday	22.9.	7:00-9:30 pm	2,5	32		
Monday	26.9.	7:30-9:30 pm	2			
Tuesday	27.9.	7:00-9:30 pm	2,5			
Wednesday	28.9.	7:30-9:30 pm	2			
Thursday	29.9.	7:00-9:30 pm	2,5			
Monday	3.10.	7:30-9:30 pm	2			
Wednesday	5.10.	7:30-9:30 pm	2	150		
Thursday	6.10.	7:00-9:30 pm	2,5	38		
Sunday	9.10.	1:00-5:00 pm	4	167		
Monday	10.10.	7:30-9:30 pm	2	53		page missing?
Wednesday	12.10.	7:30-9:30 pm	2			
Thursday	13.10.	7:30-9:30 pm	2			
Sunday	16.10.	2:00-5:00 pm	3	204	4	
Monday	17.10.	7:30-9:30 pm	2	154		
Wednesday	19.10.	7:30-9:30 pm	2	136	44	
Thursday	20.10.	7:00-9:30 pm	2,5			
Sunday	23.10.	1:00-5:00 pm	4			
Monday	24.10.	7:30-9:30 pm	2			
Wednesday	26.10.	7:30-9:30 pm	2	140	13	
Thursday	27.10.	7:00-9:30 pm	2,5			
Sunday	30.10.	2:00-6:30 pm	4,5			
Monday	31.10.	11 am-5:00 pm	6	570		
Tuesday	1.11.	6:00-9:30 pm	3,5	339,5		
Wednesday	2.11.	6:00-9:30 pm	3,5	339,5		
Thursday	3.11.	6:30-10:30 pm	4	376		SHOW
Friday	4.11.	6:30-10:30 pm	4	376		SHOW
Saturday	5.11.	1:30-5:00pm	4,5	423		SHOW
		6:30-10:30 pm	4	376		SHOW
			145	3064	776	
				HOURS	add MINS	
MISSING	16 DAYS		TOTAL	3076 h 56 min		

## Appendix 4: VOLUNTEER AGREEMENT

### DECLARATION

We wish to assure you of our appreciation of your volunteering with us and will do the best we can to make your volunteer experience with us enjoyable and rewarding.

The association (Tyne Theatre & Opera House Preservation Trust) will a) Provide a thorough induction including details of your volunteer role and expectations, the Association, employees, duties and tasks, b) Nominate a person to meet with you to discuss your volunteer role, c) Provide insurance cover for you whilst you volunteer with us, d) Explain its health and safety provisions, f) To resolve any problems you face during your volunteering.

The volunteer will a) Help the Association to fulfil the service it provides to clients, b) Follow the Association's health and safety regulations, c) Follow the commitments and standards of the Association, d) Endeavour to attend to volunteer regularly.

As a volunteer there is no obligation to attend regularly or work under a high level of control. We would expect you to keep us informed of when you intend to volunteer and operate to the standards required by our Association. There is no prescribed length of time that the volunteer agreement is in place. The Association will meet with you regularly to discuss your thoughts on the volunteering agreement, and to ensure you are content.

If at any point you wish to cease volunteering, you are entitled to do so immediately. If at any point the Association wishes to terminate the agreement, it can do so immediately. This agreement is not a legally binding contract.

Any false, incomplete or misleading information given in this agreement may result in withdrawal of any voluntary agreement made. I declare that to the best of my knowledge that the information submitted in this and any accompanying document is correct.

---

Signed (Volunteer)

(Volunteers under 18 need also a guardian's signature)

---

Print name (Volunteer)

---

Signed (On behalf of the Association)

---

Date

## Appendix 5

# STAGE & BACKSTAGE HEALTH GUIDANCE FOR TYNE THEATRE PRODUCTIONS CHAPERONES

### *General policies and conduct.*

1. IF YOU MAKE AN AGREEMENT TO BE A CHAPERONE AT REHEARSALS AND/OR PERFORMANCES, YOU MUST GIVE NOTICE **AS SOON AS YOU CAN** IF YOU HAVE TO CANCEL YOUR SHIFT.
2. IF YOU NEED TO CANCEL AT SHORT NOTICE, PLEASE CONTACT OTHER CHAPERONES AND TRY TO GET SOMEONE TO COVER YOUR SHIFT. **ALWAYS TELL THE PRODUCTION COORDINATOR** IF YOU HAVE TO CANCEL AND/OR IF YOU HAVE ARRANGED SOMEONE ELSE TO FILL IN YOUR SHIFT.
3. THE CONTACT INFORMATION OF THE PRODUCTION COORDINATOR, THE DEPUTY STAGE MANAGER AND OTHER CHAPERONES ARE ATTACHED. **PLEASE KEEP THE DOCUMENTS WITH YOU** AT THE THEATRE IN CASE OF AN EMERGENCY. ALL PERSONAL DETAILS ARE CONFIDENTIAL.
4. **ALWAYS CHECK YOUR CHAPERONE PARTNER(S) ARE PRESENT.** IF A CHAPERONE DOES NOT TURN UP WHEN AGREED, REPORT IT TO THE PRODUCTION COORDINATOR. ON THE NIGHT, CONSULT THE DEPUTY STAGE MANAGER ABOUT WHERE THE PRESENCE OF A CHAPERONE IS MOST NEEDED.
5. AT REHEARSALS AND SHOWS, DIVIDE THE CHAPERONING BETWEEN YOU AND YOUR CHAPERONING PARTNER(S) AS NEEDED. THE REHEARSALS AND SHOWS ARE CHANGING SITUATIONS AND **AN OPEN DIALOGUE WITH OTHER CHAPERONES IS NEEDED.**
6. **GET TO KNOW THE NEEDS OF UNDER-AGED PERFORMERS** IN YOUR CARE (MEDICAL CONDITIONS, ALLERGIES, SPECIAL NEEDS), BUT DO IT DISCREETLY AND DO NOT TALK ABOUT THEIR CONDITIONS IN FRONT OF OTHERS.
7. COLLECT THE PHONE NUMBERS OF THE LEGAL GUARDIANS. LEARN THE DRESSING ROOM PLAN AND ALWAYS BE ALERT TO ACT IN AN EMERGENCY. STAY IN STAGE WINGS DURING STAGE REHEARSALS AND KNOW WHERE THE NEAREST EMERGENCY EXITS AND FIRST AID KITS ARE.
8. MAKE SURE THE PERFORMERS DRINK ENOUGH WATER, TAKE THEIR MEDICATION IF NEEDED, HAVE SOMETHING SUGARY AT HAND IN CASE A PERFORMER HAS DIABETES, AND MAKE SURE THEY MOVE SAFELY AROUND THE THEATRE AND DO NOT GO IN RESTRICTED AREAS.
9. TO BE ABLE TO VOLUNTEER AS A CHAPERONE, YOU NEED TO GIVE A COPY OF YOUR CHAPERONE LICENCE TO THE PRODUCTION COORDINATOR, WHO WILL TAKE CARE OF THE NECESSARY PERFORMANCE LICENCES. THE PRODUCTION COORDINATOR WILL COLLECT THE ADDRESSES, BIRTHDATES AND OTHER LICENCE DETAILS NEEDED, BUT FOR REHEARSAL AND PERFORMANCE NIGHTS **THE CHAPERONE MUST COLLECT THE PHONE NUMBERS OF THE PERFORMERS' GUARDIANS.**



## *Situations of distress, injury and/or emergency.*

1. IN ALL CASES OF ACCIDENTS OR ANY OTHER INCIDENTS, YOU MUST **LOG IT IN THE THEATRE'S INCIDENT BOOK**. IF THE REASON FOR AN ACCIDENT HAS BEEN SOMETHING BROKEN OR HAZARDOUS AT THE THEATRE, MAKE SURE NO ONE ELSE GETS INJURED BECAUSE OF IT AND CONTACT THE PRODUCTION COORDINATOR FOR INSURANCE DETAILS.
2. **TRIPPING/FALLING ETC. ON STAGE**. IF A PERFORMER SPRAINS OR TWISTS A MUSCLE, GETS CUTS OR BRUISES, BREAKS OR FRACTURES A BONE ON- OR OFFSTAGE ETC., ASSIST THE INJURED PERSON OFFSTAGE OR AWAY FROM ANY DISTRACTING SITUATION AND GIVE FIRST AID AS NEEDED. A LIST OF FIRST AID KITS IS ATTACHED.
3. **FAINTING**. IF A PERFORMER FAINTS ON- OR OFFSTAGE, IMMEDIATELY REMOVE THEM FROM STAGE OR AWAY FROM ANY DISTRACTING SITUATION, ROLL THEM ON THEIR SIDE, CHECK THEIR PULSE AND BREATHING AND CALL 111 IF THEY CANNOT BE DETECTED. TRY TO WAKE THEM UP BY GENTLY SHAKING THEM AND CALLING THEIR NAME LOUDLY. IF YOU KNOW THE PERFORMER TO BE DIABETIC, NEVER GIVE THEM INSULIN BUT TRY TO ADMINISTER SUGAR ORALLY, OR IF THEY HAVE OTHER MEDICATED CONDITIONS, GIVE THEM THEIR MEDICATION IMMEDIATELY.
4. **UPSET/DISTRESS/PANIC**. IF A PERFORMER IN YOUR CARE HAS A MOMENT OF UPSET, DISTRESS OR A PANIC ATTACK, REMOVE THEM FROM STAGE OR ANY OTHER DISTRACTING SITUATION. SIT DOWN WITH THEM AND INSTRUCT THEM TO BREATHE SLOWLY, AND GENTLY TRY TO CALM THEM DOWN. IF PARENTS ARE AT THE THEATRE OR IF YOU CAN CALL THEM, GET THEM TO SPEAK TO THE PERFORMER. DO NOT LET THE PERFORMER GO BACK TO REHEARSALS OR PERFORMANCE UNLESS THEY ARE 100% FINE TO GO BACK. REPORT THE INCIDENT TO PARENTS.
5. **GETTING LOST/MISSING UNDER-AGED PERFORMER**. IF IT SEEMS SOMEONE HAS GONE MISSING, CHECK THE SIGN IN –SHEET TO SEE WHETHER THEY HAVE SIGNED THEMSELVES IN OR OUT. IF THEY HAVE SIGNED IN, BUT ARE NOWHERE TO BE FOUND, ARRANGE SOMEONE WHO HAS GOOD KNOWLEDGE OF THE THEATRE TO SEARCH FOR THEM AND STOP THE REHEARSALS IF NEEDED. IN CASE SOMEONE GETS LOST OR GOES MISSING DURING A PERFORMANCE, INFORM THE DUTY MANAGER OF THE NIGHT AND THEY WILL HELP FIND THE MISSING PERSON. IF THE PERSON CANNOT BE FOUND, CALL THE GUARDIANS IMMEDIATELY AND DISCUSS THE NEEDED ACTIONS WITH THEM. CALL THE POLICE IF THE GUARDIANS REQUEST.
6. **IN ALL SITUATIONS** OF DISTRESS, INJURY OR EMERGENCY, ALERT THE OTHER CHAPERONE(S) AND LET THEM KNOW WHAT HAS HAPPENED. DO NOT LET THE REHEARSALS CARRY ON IF THERE ARE NOT ENOUGH CHAPERONES AROUND. ALWAYS REPORT TO THE PRODUCTION COORDINATOR AFTER AN INCIDENT.
7. **MORE DETAILED INFORMATION IS IN THE ATTACHED CHILD SAFEGUARDING POLICY**.

*Important phone numbers, first aid and emergency exits*

EMERGENCIES (FIRE, SERIOUS INJURY)  
CALL 999

NON-URGENT SITUATIONS & GUIDANCE  
CALL 111

PRODUCTION COORDINATOR  
XXXX

DEPUTY STAGE MANAGER  
XXXX  
TO CALL THE DUTY MANAGER RADIO  
"DELTA MIKE"

**FIRST AID KITS:** BOX OFFICE, BISTRO BAR, ONSTAGE, BACKSTAGE

**THERE ARE EMERGENCY EXITS** ALL OVER THE BUILDING, MARKED WITH STANDARD GREEN SIGNS. PLEASE FAMILIARISE YOURSELF WITH ALL EXITS ON ALL LEVELS, FRONT OF HOUSE AND BACKSTAGE. FRONT OF HOUSE STAFF WILL HELP EVACUATE IN CASE OF AN EMERGENCY.

*CHAPERONES*

(Names and phone numbers are listed here)

DIRECTOR'S INSTRUCTIONS (Olkahoma!)

- Children to be in dressing room with chaperones during performances.
- Children not allowed to move around backstage without supervision.
- Children to be taken to side of stage for entrances. Chaperones to ensure children leave stage area when they come offstage.
- Chaperones to ensure that children are quiet backstage and kept in position for their entrances.
- stage manager and deputy stage manager will assist if needed.
- No food or drink to be taken to the stage wings.

(Appendix 5 CONTINUES)

## Tyne Theatre Productions Safeguarding Policy

### Policy Statement

It is the policy of Tyne Theatre Productions to safeguard the welfare of all young people with which it works. The Tyne Theatre Productions is fully committed to safeguarding the wellbeing of its participants, protecting them from neglect and physical, sexual and emotional harm.

Staff and Volunteers should be fully aware of the organization's Child Safety guidelines. They should also show respect and understanding for their own rights, safety and welfare and conduct themselves in a way that reflects the principles of The Tyne Theatre Productions. The process of implementing the policy is the responsibility of the staff and volunteers under the direction of the Theatre Director.

All staff and volunteers are provided with a copy of The Tyne Theatre Productions' Safeguarding Policy Statement. Reference is made to this within the Membership Agreement and can be viewed by both members and parents.

### Objectives

In order to achieve the principles of the Policy Statement, The Tyne Theatre Productions will:

- Create an environment where young people feel secure, have their view points valued and are encouraged to talk and are listened to.
- Continue to develop awareness in all staff and volunteers of the need for Safeguarding and their responsibilities in identifying abuse.
- Ensuring that all staff are aware of the referral procedures at The Tyne Theatre Productions
- Ensuring that outside agencies are involved as appropriate.
- Providing information for parents/carers outlining procedures laid down within this and other related The Tyne Theatre Productions' policies.
- Ensuring young people know that there are adults at The Tyne Theatre Productions whom they can approach if they are worried.

### BEHAVIOUR STATEMENT FOR STAFF & VOLUNTEERS

Always:

- Treat others as you would expect them to treat you.
- Provide an example you wish others to follow.
- Ensure that when possible another adult is present when you are in the company of young people (ideally mixed genders) including situations when a young person is waiting to be collected.
- Respect a person's right to privacy.

- Encourage young people and adults to feel comfortable and caring enough to point out attitudes and behaviour they do not like.
- Remember someone might misinterpret your actions and your comments, no matter how well intentioned.
- Recognise that caution is required, particularly in sensitive moments, such as when dealing with bullying, bereavement, grief or abuse.
- Be aware of the possible implications of physical contact with young people.

#### Never

- Show favouritism to any individual.
- Make suggestive remarks or gestures.
- Do anything of a personal nature for a child that they could do for themselves.
- Allow young people to use inappropriate language unchallenged (i.e. swearing, racial/sexual taunts).
- Permit abusive youth peer activities (e.g. bullying, ridiculing or initiation ceremonies).
- Jump to conclusions.
- Allow yourself to be drawn into any inappropriate attention seeking behaviour by young people (e.g. tantrums, crushes).
- Exaggerate or trivialize child abuse issues.
- Rely upon just your good name to protect you.
- Believe 'it could never happen to me', either dealing with abuse or being accused of committing abuse.

#### If one-to-one contact is unavoidable

- Make sure it is for a short a time as possible.
- Ensure you remain accessible to others.
- Tell someone where you are going, what you are doing and why.
- Try to move with the young person to areas where there are more people.
- Obtain permission from the young person before any physical contact is made, for instance if you need to administer first aid.
- Try to avoid unnecessary physical contact especially if it may be misconstrued by the child or other people.
- Avoid where possible giving young people a lift alone, however short the journey.

When this is unavoidable, it is advisable to get consent from the young person's parents or guardian. You must also ensure the young person sits in the back of the car.

## PROCEDURES:

If you suspect or are told that a young person is being abused:

- You must always refer to the designated person at The Tyne Theatre Productions. Don't investigate yourself.
- Write down the details as you know them.
- Ensure that the young person is given the opportunity to talk to you, or an independent person.
- Listen to the young person without interruption and do not ask questions about what you may suspect.
- Do not approach a suspected abuser yourself. Provide support to the young person.
- Accept at face value what the young person says.
- Do not pass judgment on what is said, but do try to alleviate any fears or guilt which the young person may have.
- Make it clear that you can offer support but that you must pass on the information.
- Please follow the Procedures for Reporting guidelines.

If you receive an allegation of child abuse by an adult:

- Contact the named Safeguarding officer. Any information, no matter how trivial it may appear, must be shared.
- Record the nature of the allegation in detail.
- Do not try to resolve the issue yourself – follow the Procedures for Reporting guidelines.
- Staff/volunteers, who hear an allegation of abuse against another member of the team, or indeed themselves, should report the matter immediately to the designated person. If the allegation is against the designated person, the Chair of the Board of Trustees should be contacted.

## MONITORING & RECORD KEEPING

- All incidents should be written up with the hour. They must be recorded within 24 hours.
- Written notes should be kept in a secure place and passed to the Safeguarding Officer.
- Reports should be signed and dated by the staff member/volunteer, with the name printed and designation.
- Reports and records should be passed to the designated safeguarding officer who in turn will take responsibility for the safe storage and processing of this information.
- All information gathered will be treated with strict confidentiality, but will need to be shared with the designated Safeguarding Officer.
- Permission to contact in writing, and in person, at least one local person who has experience of their work or contact with young people who may be asked for a reference.
- An informal discussion with the applicant will also be undertaken.
- Volunteers and staff without a DBS check will not be permitted to serve unsupervised with the organisation until the process has been completed.

## THE ROLE OF THE DESIGNATED PERSONS

To be effective in this role they must:

- Act as a source of advice, support and expertise within the organization and be responsible for co-ordinating action regarding referrals, liaising with Children's Services and other relevant agencies in cases of abuse and allegations of abuse, regarding both young people and members of staff/volunteers.
- Ensure each member of staff has access to, and is aware of, The Tyne Theatre Productions Safeguarding Policy.
- Ensure that the Safeguarding Policy is reviewed annually.
- Be able to keep accurate, detailed and secure written records of concerns and referrals.
- Ensure parents/carers see copies of the Safeguarding Policy to alert them to the fact that The Tyne Theatre Productions may need to make referrals and that children are made aware some information cannot be assured of confidentiality.

## THE ROLE OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

- To sanction a robust Safeguarding Policy, review it annually, monitor and evaluate its effectiveness and be satisfied that it is being complied with.
- To ensure a designated person or persons are allocated with the responsibility for safeguarding co-ordination along with a nominated board member.
- To ensure necessary training takes place for the Designated Persons to carry out their role.
- To ensure that there are safe and effective recruitment and disciplinary procedure in place.
- To ensure an annual item is placed on Board of Trustee meeting agendas, detailing changes affecting policy and procedures, training undertaken and numbers of cases/incidents (without names or details)

This policy was written 8th February 2016

**APPENDIX 6  
TYNE THEATRE PRODUCTION  
TERMS OF REFERENCE**

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**ORIGINAL DRAFT**

**Objectives**

Tyne Theatre Productions is a group of volunteers who perform dramatic works at the Tyne Theatre and Opera House with the following objectives:

1. Improve utilisation of the theatre at times when it would otherwise be dark
2. Raise funds for the restoration of the theatre
3. Engage volunteers and audiences with the theatre

The group is part of the activities of the Tyne Theatre and Opera House Preservation Trust.

**Governance**

1. The group will be monitored and governed by 3 Trustees from the Tyne Theatre and Opera House Preservation Trust Board of Trustees. These will be known as the Production Committee. The Production Committee will invite The Chairman, Treasurer and Secretary for attendance and participation of all Production Committee meetings.
2. Dates and choices of show and production budgets will be proposed by the Production Committee following consultation with the Theatre Director and will be individually approved by the Board of Trustees.
3. Production team positions (namely Director, Musical Director and Choreographer) will be advertised for each production and will interviewed and approved by the production Committee. Where a Production Committee member wishes to apply for a Production Team position an additional Trustee needs to be appointed temporarily in relation to the Production Team appointments.
4. Crew, lighting, sound, stage management positions will be advertised and appointed for each production by the Volunteers Co-ordinator.
5. Cast will be recruited only by advertising and an open audition process which must include at least one of the Production Committee. All cast positions including principals will be based on performance in the audition process.
6. A voluntary orchestra will be used for music productions. The orchestra for each production will be appointed on a first come first served basis and based on experience playing for previous productions. In the event of oversubscription and audition may be required. Transport expenses may be payable to orchestra member with large instruments that require special transportation (eg harp, keyboards, percussion).
7. All production expenses to be signed off by a Production Committee member subject to them being within the original board approved budget.

8. Sponsorship to be sought for all productions.
9. Licence applications once board approved must be completed by one of the Production Committee.
10. The Production Committee are to be invited to all production meetings and are invited to attend all rehearsals.
11. The Production Committee has the right to warn and then replace all members of the production if there are performance concerns during the rehearsal phase.
12. All production members must be members of Tyne Theatre Production by paying (gift aiding where possible) an annual donation of £10 (increasing by RPI each year from 2017 subject to rounding to the nearest £1). The donation is voluntary for those not performing on stage (for instance voluntary for orchestra, crew and front of house volunteers).
13. All production members must act respectfully to each other and be concerned with each other's welfare and safety and those of other theatre users. Failure to do so will result in removal from the production and from any future productions at the discretion of the Production Committee.
14. The Trust's safeguarding policy must be complied with for children acting as part of cast, crew or orchestra. Licences for children performing in production must be filed with local authority by 4 weeks prior to production date and confirmation of this and licences received forwarded to the Production Committee by the Production Team.
15. Risk assessments to be carried out by the Production Team or Technical Team and submitted to the Production Committee for any potentially risky activities.
16. Use of the theatre for rehearsals will result in a recharge from the Trust to the Op Co of £25 per hour (for 2016 – this amount will increase by RPI annually). This will be deducted from the settlement of ticket sales.
17. Ticket prices, programme prices and merchandise pricing to be agreed by the Production Committee with the Theatre Director.



**APPENDIX 6 (CONTINUES)**  
**TYNE THEATRE PRODUCTIONS**  
**TERMS OF REFERENCE**

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**UPDATED 20.11.2016**

**Objectives**

Tyne Theatre Productions is a group of volunteers who perform dramatic works at the Tyne Theatre and Opera House with the following objectives:

- Raise funds for the restoration of the theatre
- Engage volunteers and audiences with the theatre

The Society is part of the activities of the Tyne Theatre and Opera House Preservation Trust.

**Governance**

The Society will be monitored and governed by an appointed production team and Production Coordinator. Production Committee of 3 Trustees from the Tyne Theatre and Opera House Preservation Trust Board of Trustees works as the production team's support group on behalf of the Trust.

1. The Society will be monitored and governed by an appointed production team and Production Coordinator. Production Committee of 3 Trustees from the Tyne Theatre and Opera House Preservation Trust Board of Trustees works as the production team's support group on behalf of the Trust. The Production Committee will invite The Chairman, Treasurer and Secretary for attendance and participation of all Production Committee meetings.
2. Dates and choices of show and production budgets will be proposed by the Production Committee following consultation with the Theatre Director and will be individually approved by the Board of Trustees.
3. Production team positions (namely Director, Musical Director and Choreographer) will be advertised for each production and will be interviewed and approved by the Production Committee, the Chairman and the Secretary, and any Production Team members already appointed. Where a Production Committee member wishes to apply for a Production Team position an additional Trustee needs to be appointed temporarily in relation to the Production Team appointments.
4. Crew, lighting, sound and stage management positions will be appointed for each production by the Volunteers Coordinator.
5. Cast will be recruited only by advertising and an open audition process. All cast positions including principals will be based on performance in the audition process.
6. The orchestra for each production will be appointed based on experience playing for previous productions. In the event of needing more musicians,

open auditions will be advertised. In the event of oversubscription for an instrument part an audition is arranged.

Transport expenses may be payable to orchestra member with large instruments that require special transportation (eg harp, keyboards, percussion).

7. All production expenses to be approved by the Production Coordinator subject to them being within the original Trust approved budget.
8. Sponsorship is to be sought for all productions.
9. Production license, once the production is approved by the Trust, must be completed by the Production Committee or the Production Coordinator. The Production Committee are to be invited to all production meetings and are invited to attend all rehearsals.
10. The Production Committee has the right to warn and then replace all members of the production if there are performance concerns during the rehearsal phase.
11. All production members must act respectfully to each other and be concerned with each other's welfare and safety and those of other theatre users. Failure to do so will result in removal from the production and from any future productions at the discretion of the Trust.
12. The Trust's safeguarding policy must be complied with for children acting as part of cast, crew or orchestra. The Production Coordinator, or a license coordinator appointed by the Trust and the production team, shall gather and protect all data regarding the under-aged cast, file the applications and work in cooperation with the chaperones.
13. Risk assessments to be carried out by the Production Team or Technical Team and submitted to the Production Committee for any potentially risky activities.
14. Use of the theatre for rehearsals is not recharged from the Trust. All staffing costs and other expenses from the rehearsal and performances at the theatre will be deducted from the settlement of ticket sales.
15. Ticket prices, programme prices and merchandise pricing to be agreed by the Production Committee with the Theatre Director.

## APPENDIX 7 A DIRECTOR'S GUIDE TO TYNE THEATRE

1. Respect the theatre's staff - leave the spaces as you would wish to find them; bin your rubbish, put chairs and tables back, don't leave props or costumes around and take care of your belongings! The theatre staff should not need to clean up after the Productions members.
2. Sign your volunteer agreement - without that we cannot provide you with insurance. This protects both you and the theatre - should you hurt yourself during rehearsals or performances, the insurance will be our mutual friend.
3. Stay updated- an up to date rehearsal schedule is pinned on top of the closed Facebook group of your production. If you need to make alterations to the schedule, let the person in charge of updating the schedule know. This can be the production coordinator, deputy stage manager or one of the directors. If the schedule changes, let the people concerned know immediately. You should have a complete and clear rehearsal schedule planned from the very beginning, it is essential that volunteers are not invited to attend rehearsals if they are not needed!
4. Work as a team - the Trustees and the production coordinator will not interfere with the artistic directing. It is your show, so be aware of your role and your responsibilities. Have regular meetings with your co-directors, have constructive discussion about artistic choices and, above all, respect each other's authority. It is ok to disagree, but under no circumstances should one director undermine the work of other directors.
5. Remember good online etiquette. Discussions in Facebook are good, but remember to address private society matters in the closed show volunteers' group or via private messages. If you take rehearsal photos, which is much encouraged for marketing purposes, please remember to ask everyone present before taking the picture, and if you choose to post it online, consider it official society marketing - keep it classy! Tag the society in Facebook and Twitter, so the production coordinator can share and spread it.
6. Help boost online advertisement. Join the show event, and remember to like and share everything!
7. Take care of your libretto/score! They are expensive, official hire materials, and every ruined or lost one will be charged for. Be aware of the date when it needs to be returned, do not make excessive markings and treat it carefully. All markings are to be made with a pencil and erased off before returning the book. Should you need copies e.g. to be able to make more markings, please ask your production coordinator, who will be able to provide a reasonable amount of photocopies.
8. Please do not make payments on behalf of the production (material or hire costs) before consulting the production coordinator. If you need something to be paid for, give the invoice or receipt to the coordinator, who will authorise all payments according to the planned budget. If you wish to make a donation for the production, please slip it in one of the donation boxes you will find around the theatre. Don't pay anything from your own purse or collect donations from other volunteers. Under no circumstances should anyone receive remuneration or a material reward for volunteering - it is strictly volunteer work only.
9. Try your best to stick to your planned budget - the Trust will need a detailed request for any moneys which exceed the given budget.
10. Do not appoint performers without an audition. Every volunteer should go through the same audition process. If there are not enough performers, the auditions process will be extended and if needed, advertised with money.

## APPENDIX 7 (CONTINUES)

### A VOLUNTEER'S GUIDE TO TYNE THEATRE

1. Respect the theatre's staff - leave the spaces as you would wish to find them; bin your rubbish, put chairs and tables back, don't leave props or costumes around and take care of your belongings! The theatre staff should not need to clean after the Productions members. Please remember this is the workplace of dozens of other people and customers visit the building almost daily.
2. Sign your volunteer agreement - without that we cannot provide you with insurance. This protects both you and the theatre - should you hurt yourself during rehearsals or performances, the insurance will be our mutual friend.
3. Stay updated- an up to date rehearsal schedule is pinned on top of the closed Facebook group of your production. If you are unsure if you should attend rehearsals, refer to that list first. If there is still confusion, contact your directors and your production coordinator. If you are not in Facebook, please let your directors and the coordinator know this at once, and you will be kept up to date with your preferred method.
4. Remember good online etiquette. Discussions in Facebook are good, but remember to address private society matters in the closed show volunteers' group or via private messages. If you take rehearsal photos, which is much encouraged for marketing purposes, please remember to ask everyone present before taking the picture, and if you choose to post it online, consider it official society marketing - keep it classy! Tag the society in Facebook and Twitter, so the production coordinator can share and spread it.
5. Help boost online advertisement. Join the show event, and remember to like and share everything! It is by far the most simple and cost effective way for you to support the show's publicity, so like like like!
6. Take care of your libretto/score! They are expensive, official hire materials, and every ruined or lost one will be charged for. Be aware of the date when it needs to be returned, do not make excessive markings and treat it carefully. All markings are to be made with a pencil and erased off before returning the book. Should you need copies e.g. to be able to make more markings, please ask your production coordinator, who will be able to provide a reasonable amount of photocopies.
7. In no circumstances should volunteers handle any money related to the production. The Trust is a charitable organisation so we need to be very careful about our finances. If you need something paid, ask the production coordinator. If you wish to make a donation for the production, please slip it in one of the donation boxes you will find around the theatre.
8. Should have any concerns about any aspect of the society or the production, please don't hesitate to contact your directors and production coordinator. Address the matter promptly and we will make sure the issue will be investigated promptly.

APPENDIX 8

OKLAHOMA VOLUNTEER FEEDBACK FORM - ANONYMOUS

Have you volunteered for Tyne Theatre before? YES/NO

If this was your first time, would you consider volunteering again? YES/NO

Are you volunteering for other societies? YES/NO

If yes, which one(s)?

Was the society easy to approach (finding information, audition process etc.)? YES/NO

If not, what did you find off-putting?

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Have you enjoyed your time with us? YES/NO

If not, can you give more details why not?

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Choose the closest one from these options: I volunteer because...

- a) I love the Tyne Theatre
- b) I want work experience in theatre/performing
- c) I like the camaraderie and social aspects of theatre
- d) I just like theatre

Please give any suggestions you have to help us improve our Society and policies

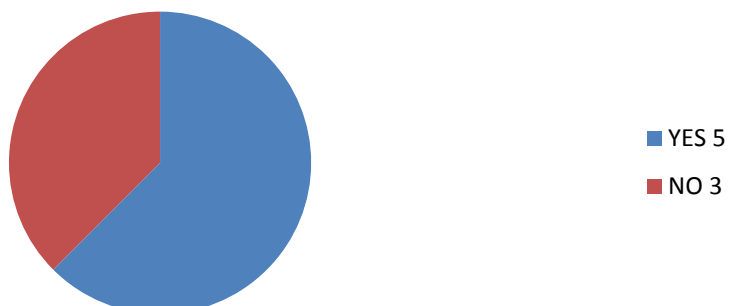
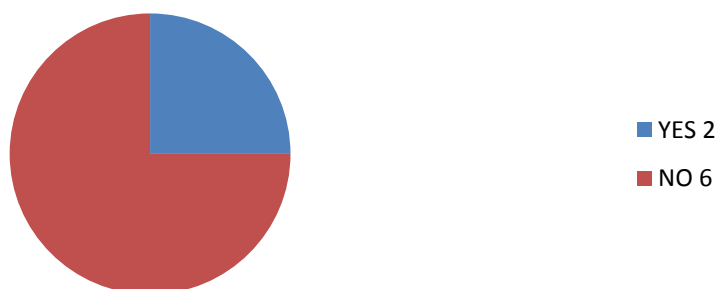
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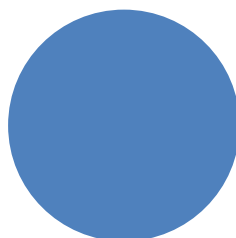
## APPENDIX 8 (CONTINUED): VOLUNTEER FEEDBACK FORMS ANALYSIS

**Have you volunteered for Tyne Theatre before?****If this was your first time, would you consider volunteering again?****Are you volunteering for other societies?****If yes, which one(s)?**

Second Act Theatre 1 PERSON

Starlight Productions and West End Operatic Society 1 PERSON

### Was the society easy to approach (finding information, audition process etc.)?

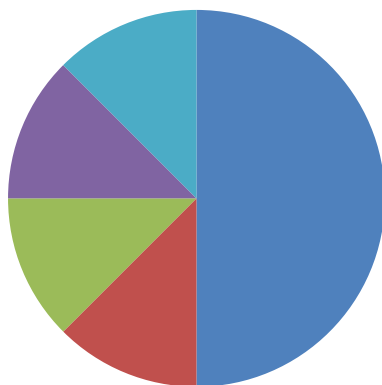


■ YES ALL  
■ NO 0

(Additional comment from one form: I know people involved didn't go through computer access.)

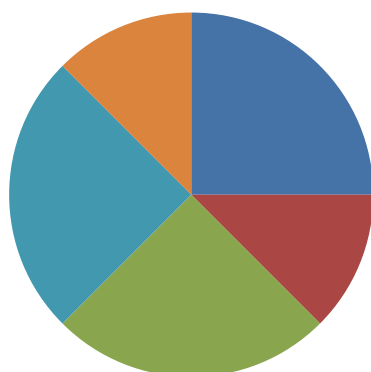
**If not, what did you find off-putting?**  
(No answers)

### Have you enjoyed your time with us?



■ YES 4  
■ YES AND NO 1  
■ YES GENERALLY 1  
■ YES LOVED EVERY MOMENT  
1  
■ YES AT TIMES 1

### Choose the closest one from these options: I volunteer because



■ a) I love the Tyne Theatre 2  
■ b) I want work experience in  
theatre/performing 1  
■ c) I like the camaraderie and  
social aspects of the  
theatre 2  
■ d) I just like theatre 0

## OPEN COMMENTS SECTIONS

If (YOU HAVE) not (ENJOYED YOUR TIME WITH US), can you give more details why not?

- The audition process was unorganised, which some people found a little confusing as they did not know which day to come on etc. It also took quite a while for the cast list to be announced. There was also talk of several cast members taking part in the show without being auditioned, and several principal parts being given to certain cast members without an audition. A lot of people spent hours preparing for their audition and to find out others had got into the show without an audition was unfair.
- There was very little communication between the production team which as a result, ideas and personalities would clash during rehearsals, creating a tense atmosphere. The Director was not open to other people's ideas or thinking.
- Rehearsals were not kept to their original structure – at times people would turn up expecting to work but would spend most of the rehearsal sitting around.

Please give any suggestions you have to help us improve our Society and policies

- A more fair audition process
- A carefully thought-out rehearsal schedule based on people's availability (e.g. use of commitment forms)
- Better communication between the production team (through production meetings?) and to the cast.
- Size of the cast – it was great to have a big ensemble, but due to the amount of cast and dancers there was very limited space backstage and in the wings.
- Heavy on Facebook, posters and newspapers for advertising
- Keep audition process transparent and constant (it wasn't this year/NO INVITES!)
- Contact Colleges/Universities/drama courses for volunteers for production team and crew
- Definitely have tech full day on a Sunday, Monday for extra tech / practise and dress on Tuesday (Wed break)
- Clear definitions at roles in production team to prevent miscommunication/ doubling at work, "power struggles"
- Have been in shows etc. for over 28 years. Learn from past mistakes - choosing your production team carefully - ask the cast
- Spend extra time doing public auditions and advertise nationwide for cast members when planning next show several months in advance to ensure larger number of applicants and keep standard high.
- easier access to tickets maybe
- office open 2 till 6 pm week of show
- better parking needed for people in charge of props - maybe one designated space by stage door week of show.