



Annual Report 2025

Charity No. 232488

AUDIENCE



56,834 audience members at LAT

51% were children (29,262)

9% came through our Puppets for All scheme (5,199)

18% came with a school or nursery (10,100)

26% of family visitors were from Islington

71,640 people saw our shows on tour

DIGITAL

207.7K YouTube views

16.1K subscribers
5.3k watch hours
5.7m reach
61 countries

4 digital pay-per-view production films
127 families watched a production online

PRODUCTIONS

8
in-house productions

893
performances of
in-house productions

10
touring productions

612
performances of
shows on tour

11
visiting companies

65
performances from
visiting companies

SOCIAL MEDIA & WEBSITE

f 15K
followers on Facebook

X 19.3K
followers on X

@ 22.4K
followers on Instagram

208K hits at
littleangeltheatre.com

Welcome

As we reflect on 2025, we are filled with immense pride and gratitude for what has been another busy and productive year for Little Angel Theatre.

We reached more children and families than ever before, through inspiring performances, nationwide touring, an innovative literacy project, and deeply rooted school and community engagement. Whether welcoming first-time audiences to our Islington venues, touring *Charlie Cook's Favourite Book* across the UK, or developing new work with families in prisons, every part of our programme has championed our belief that puppetry can ignite imagination, nurture wellbeing, and connect people across generations and backgrounds.

We are particularly proud of the continued growth of our *Suitcase Theatre* initiative, and the wide reach of our *Reading Through Play* literacy project, and the second edition of our *Children's Puppetry Festival*, which brought together companies and audiences from across the country. These milestones reflect our commitment to artistic excellence, accessibility, and innovation.

Behind each statistic and story in this report lies a remarkable community: our hardworking staff and freelance creatives, our funders and partners, and the children, teachers, families and community members who continue to inspire us. We are also proud to have been recognised by several prestigious awards this year, which affirm the ambition and impact of our work.

As we look to the future, we remain focused on deepening our reach, strengthening our sustainability, and ensuring Little Angel Theatre remains a home for creativity, learning, and joy.



S Lane
Samantha Lane
Artistic Director



P Swindall
Peta Swindall
Executive Director

This past year has been a challenging but ultimately fulfilling one for Little Angel Theatre (LAT). The fundraising environment continues to be tough for arts organisations, including ourselves. As ever, the LAT team has shown great resilience and grit, pulling out of the hat some amazing achievements. A particular highlight was the successful conclusion of our first mid-scale UK-wide tour of *Charlie Cook's Favourite Book* with the production visiting 56 venues. Complementing and inspired by the show, The *Reading Through Play* Initiative also toured a workshop to schools and libraries across the country. We have had a bumper year for productions in the theatre and the studio space including: *The Curious Rat*; *Prince Charming*; *Dogs Don't Do Ballet*; *The Singing Mermaid*; *Rosie Robin and the Christmas Post*; *A Squash and a Squeeze*; and Little Angel Theatre's *Miniature Travelling Circus*. We also toured nine shows. We are proud to have cemented

our reputation as a place where the local community feels both welcomed and included, as demonstrated by our June Community Street Party which had 200 attendees. A big thank you to everyone – from trusts and foundations to individual givers and volunteers – who continue to support and help make possible the work we do in Islington and beyond.



Katie Owen
Katie Owen, Chair of the Board

Awards

We are delighted to have been recognised across our activity for the following awards. It shows the breadth and depth of our work to have community projects and productions being shortlisted for such a range of prestigious awards.



Islington In Bloom — Best Community Garden 2024

The garden at Little Angel Studios area is tended by an intergenerational garden club formed from our local community members. Children come with their adults and learn about nature, planting and the environment in a practical way. We are so proud that this community project has been recognised in this way.



Fantastic for Families Awards — Audience Impact & Innovation Award Finalist

The Welcome Project: a Suitcase Theatre project created by and for children with experience of

migrant and refugee status. These awards acknowledge outstanding opportunities created for families and older people to access creative opportunities and enhance wellbeing through arts and cultural activities. You can read more about our *Suitcase Theatre* strand later on in this report.



The Stage 100 — Samantha Lane and Peta Swindall

For the second year in a row (2024, 2025), our co-CEOs were named in The Stage's list consisting of the 100 most influential people in theatre. The judges quoted successes such as our Suitcase Theatre strand, having two shows in the West End at Christmas, and the future UK tour of *A Squash and a Squeeze*.



Art Explora: Académie des beaux-arts European Award — Shortlisted Project

Suitcase Theatre Initiative: A unique series of projects by Little Angel Theatre that brings small-scale, co-created theatre shows to marginalized audiences who face barriers to accessing traditional theatre venues. This European Award recognises new forms of access, participation and audience engagement with arts and culture. It is firmly focused on projects which have been created with and for the public.

The Offies 2025 Nominations

Design

Rosie Robin and the Christmas Post

Prince Charming

Lottie, the Travelling Doll (String Theatre)

The Etties 2025 Nominations

Lottie, the Travelling Doll (String Theatre)

The Zoo that Came to You (Scarlet Oak Theatre)



On Stage

8 in-house shows

893 performances

56,834 audience members

60% of family visitors came for the first time

5,199 PFA tickets

18 accessible performances

10 shows on tour, with 612 performances and 71,640 audience members

3,459 audience members for the Children's Puppet Festival with 11 productions

Watch our show trailers here:

<https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLoj9np3ZxfIDZSYHa9IS5i-g3fXOIbEWH>

"Fantastic, ingenious interpretation of one of our favourite books. Brilliantly performed by highly skilled team. Never disappoints — best show in London. Not just for children! Little Angel Theatre is a little treasure!" Audience Member (*A Squash and a Squeeze*)



"Absolutely cannot praise the performance enough. Acting was superb and it truly brought the book to life with addition of songs and dancing. All the children in the audience were mesmerised and many of the adults were laughing and joining in with the show. All the staff involved are wonderful from reception to the auditorium people. I recommend Little Angel Theatre to everyone I meet!" Audience Member

PUPPETS FOR ALL

This year we gave out 2,212 tickets to our shows to families and 2,987 to school visitors through the scheme, with a value equating to £50,870.

The more donations we receive, the more children we can reach and welcome into our venue.

- £245 pays for a whole class of school children to see one of our shows.
- £1,368 pays for 100 family tickets to shows at our venues.

"Thank you so, so, so much for the Puppets for All scheme, without it we wouldn't be able to see any of the shows so we're eternally grateful" PFA Beneficiary

Photos: Ellie Kurtz (left); Alex Brenner (right)

Photos: Rachael Light



The Curious Rat

Studios / 4 May–21 Jul 2024 / Ages 3–8 /
123 performances / 8,233 audience members /
90% capacity

A Little Angel Theatre and Page One Theatre
co-production

A big adventure for a small city rat.



The Singing Mermaid

Theatre / 23 Nov 2024–26 Jan 2025 /
Ages 3–8 / 103 performances / 8,793 audience
members / 96% capacity

A Little Angel Theatre and Royal & Derngate,
Northampton co-production, in association
with Watershed Productions, based on the
book by Julia Donaldson and Lydia Monks
The singing mermaid is tempted away from all
of her sea creature friends.



Prince Charming

Theatre / 18 May–27 Jul 2024 / For everyone
over 6 / 93 performances / 4,137 audience
members / 42% capacity

A Little Angel Theatre production

It's a lot of pressure being Prince Charming.



Rosie Robin and the Christmas Post

Studios / 23 Nov 2024–5 Jan 2025 / Ages 2–5 /
89 performances / 6,301 audience members /
99% capacity

A Little Angel Theatre production

Welcome to the post office! It's the busiest time
of the year!



Dogs Don't Do Ballet

Theatre / 13 Sept–16 Nov 2024 / Ages 3–8 /
109 performances / 8,702 audience members /
90% capacity

A Little Angel Theatre production, based on
the best-selling book by Anna Kemp and Sara
Ogilvie

Biff doesn't think he's a dog, Biff thinks he's a
ballerina.



A Squash and a Squeeze

Studios / 1 Feb–10 May 2025 / Ages 3–8 /
150 performances / 10,735 audience
members / 102% capacity

A Little Angel Theatre and Lowry co-
production, based on the book by Julia
Donaldson, illustrated by Axel Scheffler

A little old lady lives all by herself but her house
is just too small, even for one.



The Mystery of Little Angel Theatre

Studios / 21 Sept–17 Nov 2024 / For everyone
over 6 / 63 performances / 2,973 audience
members / 62% capacity

A DMS Productions and Little Angel Theatre
co-production

An Interactive Murder Mystery Show.



Little Angel Theatre's Miniature Travelling Circus

Theatre / 15 Feb–19 Apr 2025 / Ages 2–5 /
107 performances / 5,783 audience members /
57% capacity

A Little Angel Theatre production

Roll up! Roll up! Take your seats for the smallest
circus in town.

Photos: Suzi Corker (A Squash and a Squeeze); all others Ellie Kurtz

Children's Puppet Festival



The second annual Children's Puppet Festival took place across both Little Angel Theatre venues from 2 August – 1 September 2024. This was a fantastic opportunity for us to showcase a wonderful range of puppetry and performance styles from visiting companies from across the UK.

11 productions

65 performances

3,459 audience members

70 artists involved

“Once again the festival is an opportunity to showcase the amazing breadth of the versatile artform of puppetry.... We are more impassioned than ever to create a platform where puppetry and theatre for young audiences can thrive and flourish, receiving the recognition they deserve.”
Oliver Hymans, Associate Director and Festival Curator

“It’s a great festival which is local to us and has provided some great things to watch or do during the summer break from school.”
Audience Member

“It was great to have a puppet festival so we could see several shows with different sorts of puppets. Our child loved it!”
Audience Member

Photos: Mark Pitman (Jack and the Beanstalk); Paul Blakemore (Boxville); Julian Guidera (Under the Little Red Moon)



Claytime
 An Indefinites Articles production



Boxville
 A Cardboard Adventures production



Out of the Hat!
 A Long Nose Puppets production



Minnie Stynker
 A Soup Soap Theatre Company production



Lottie the Travelling Doll
 A String Theatre production



The Zoo that Came to You
 A Scarlet Oak Theatre production



Jack and the Beanstalk
 A Garlic Theatre production



Under the Little Red Moon
 An English Touring Opera production



The Little Prince
 A Lyngo Theatre production



Moonsmile
 A Goofus Theatre production



Monster Circus Workshop Experience
 With Georgia Hill

“I think it’s so unique and special, the theatre halls are perfect sizes not too big which creates a lovely intimate setting. The puppets are amazing at how real they look! And the staff are great. We come every summer and will continue coming”
Audience Member

On Tour

Dogs Don't Do Ballet

April 2024
Continuation of 11 week tour
22 performances
1,880 audience members

Handa's Surprise

May - July 2024
10 week tour
88 performances
5,075 audience members from venues
720 audience members from schools
5795 total audience members

Me...

December 2024 - January 2025
5 week tour
40 performances
2,464 audience members

Finding Santa

December 2024
5 week tour
55 performances
5,919 audience members

Scruffs Christmas Adventure

Little Angel Theatre and Old Town Hall
December 2024
4 week tour
31 performances
1814 audience members from venues
1,150 audience members from schools

Persephone: A Tale of the Seasons

February - April 2025
8 week tour
52 performances
890 audience members from venues
234 audience members from schools
1,124 total audience members

The Mystery Of...

DMS (Danyah Miller Storyteller)
and Little Angel Theatre
February - March 2025
3 week tour
12 performances
1456 audience members

The Smartest Giant in Town

Fiery Light
October 2024 - March 2025
25 week tour
228 performances
45,593 audience members

Snowflake

Birmingham Rep Theatre, Polka
Theatre and Little Angel Theatre
December 2024 - January 2025
9 week tour
84 performances
1,309 audience members at local
libraries
3,136 audience members at
Birmingham Rep

Charlie Cook's Favourite Book



After a 10 week run in house at Little Angel Theatre, *Charlie Cook's Favourite Book* (co-produced with The Lowry and Rose Theatre) went out on a nationwide mid-scale tour throughout 2024. The show enchanted audiences across the UK before ending at Trafalgar Studios in the West End for Christmas. This was the largest and longest tour that Little Angel Theatre has produced to date, and we are delighted with the reception we received.

This vibrant adaptation of Julia Donaldson and Axel Scheffler's beloved story has delivered a mesmerising blend of puppetry, music, and imagination, delighting both children and adults. Reviews have highlighted the production as "ingenious," "delightful," and "mesmerizing." With over 55,000 total attendees, *Charlie Cook's Favourite Book* has proven a beacon for children's theatre, igniting a love for stories and imagination across generations.

"A great show to take your kids to see. It is an interactive and entertaining watch... The songs were light and cheerful, and enjoyable for everyone, not just children. The puppets were brilliant and tied everything together"

What's On in Manchester

"It's 60 minutes of pure joy and a wonderful chance to let your imagination run wild"

Lancashire Post

"Absolutely wonderful and delightful play! Great use of props and kept all the children mesmerised."

Audience Member

Producers: Little
Angel Theatre, The
Lowry, Rose Theatre

9 February – 4 November 2024
48 week tour
56 venues
428 performances
49,164 audience members

West End Run:
Trafalgar Studios

5 December 2024 – 5 January 2025
4 week run
31 performances
6,045 audience members

“This show was absolutely fantastic! My two sons aged 2 and 8 absolutely loved it! So engaging for all audiences.”



“Brilliant children’s production demonstrating how important books are to promote imagination”



Photos: Ellie Kurtz

Reading Through Play Literacy Project



Our nationwide ‘Reading through Play’ initiative, delivered in partnership with Macmillan Children’s Books and The National Literacy Trust, offered free workshops for children in primary schools and libraries across the UK from June to December 2024. Inspired by Julia Donaldson’s *Charlie Cook’s Favourite Book*, this project used puppetry and drama to create immersive storytelling experiences, supported by resources designed alongside the National Literacy Trust. Our facilitators travelled to schools and libraries throughout England, Scotland and Wales, prioritising disadvantaged communities and schools with a high proportion of pupils on free school meals.

By engaging children’s imaginations, the project nurtured a love for books, improved literacy skills, and fostered confidence among participants. Teachers and parent/carers expressed overwhelming enthusiasm for the use of puppets and their long-term potential to inspire reading. The project’s success underscores the importance of interactive, multisensory approaches to literacy, particularly for disadvantaged children.

Photos: Suzi Corker

182 workshops
60 schools visited
24 libraries visited
4,156 children engaged
298 teachers engaged

Teachers noted that **95.5%** of students enjoyed the workshops, including typically reluctant participants.

64% of teachers reported increased confidence in using drama and puppetry to support literacy.

Creative Engagement

435 babies came to explore in our Angel's Little Explorers baby classes

252 children joined us for a holiday playcation day

We facilitated **72** After School Puppet Club sessions in our **8** Partner Schools

23 local children and parents (on average) attended **23** crafternoon sessions, totalling **518** instances of engagement

We took **22** Christmas performances in schools

We helped **47** children celebrate their birthdays

We made **15** visits to family days at **8** different prisons across the UK, bringing performance and puppet making to the day

200 people came to our Community Street Party, closing Sebbon Street

4,146 children around the country engaged in our Reading Through Play workshop in 84 schools and libraries

389 people attended **34** professional development workshops

26 students at Higher Education Institutions learnt from Little Angel Theatre staff as part of their course

18 new marionettes were carved on our Marionette Carving Course

We supported **11** placement students

We trained **67** students on our termly puppetry courses

We worked with **71** freelance facilitators

We gave away **11** bursary places to people who couldn't otherwise attend our workshops

6 Weekend Free Family Fundays had a total of **217** visits from local community members

Artist Development

Little Angel Theatre has continued to champion emerging talent through a robust programme of artist development initiatives. Alongside our regular adult professional development courses these diverse activities reflect our ongoing commitment to nurturing the next generation of puppeteers, makers, and theatre artists, ensuring the future of the art form is innovative, inclusive, and thriving.



- **Puppet Design Traineeship** In its fourth edition, our acclaimed traineeship is the UK's only vocational training programme for puppet designers, offering hands-on experience alongside industry leaders.
- **Supporting New Work** We provided a platform to fresh voices in family theatre with the Children's Puppet Festival, including the critically-acclaimed 5-star show 'Lottie, the Traveling Doll' by String Theatre.
- **BBC's Bring the Drama Festival** We opened our doors to aspiring creatives through backstage tours, bespoke workshops and artist Q&As, offering a rare glimpse into the professional world of puppetry.
- **Marionette Carving Course** Led by Associate Director Oliver Hymans. Designed to pass on traditional skills to the next generation of makers, the course covers every stage of marionette construction — from design and carving to jointing and stringing — ensuring a deep, hands on understanding of this intricate craft. As marionette making remains on the Red List of Endangered Crafts, as designated by Heritage Crafts, this course plays a crucial role in preserving and revitalising the art form.

Photo: Rachael Light (left)

30 short professional development courses
4 week long marionette carving courses
5 termly puppetry courses
456 adult course attendances
11 bursary places given out
5 design focused work experience placements
26 students at Higher Education Institutions engaged with us



On an international scale, we proudly took part in the Homo Faber Fellowship. You can read more about this opportunity later on in this report.

HOW CAN YOU HELP?

Help us to support the next generation of puppeteers:

- £300 pays for a bursary place on our termly foundation course
- £5,000 provides a budget for our puppetry trainee to develop their own production

Schools

Local Schools Partnership

Our Local Schools Partnership Programme gives pupils, at 8 of our closest primary schools, access to all of our in-house productions as well as workshops, after school puppet clubs and teacher training opportunities. Pupils at these schools have a higher than average level of need, and these opportunities are vital at a time when arts access and provision are becoming more and more difficult and unaffordable for schools to provide. Puppetry is a well recognised, cross-curriculum teaching tool used to raise literacy levels, self-expression, confidence, communication and team-working skills.

“We’ve really enjoyed access to the variety of shows on offer, as this allows us to enrich our English curriculum and give life experiences that our families would not ordinarily access. We’ve also loved the LAT puppet club for pupils and the staff training on shadow puppets.” *Partner School Teacher*



Find out more about the National Schools Partnership programme:

www.littleangeltheatre.com/for-schools/schools-partnership-programme

Schools involved in the programme this year:

**Hugh Myddleton School • Laycock School
• New North Academy • Sacred Heart RC School • St John the Evangelist School
• St Mary’s School • William Tyndale School • Winton School**



National Schools Partnership

This year we launched a new National Schools Partnership strand, offering a minimum of 6–8 high quality filmed productions per academic year in addition to resource packs that support the curriculum and enable teachers to connect the performances with the pupils’ learning. We are also offering other partnership packages which include workshops and live performances. This means that no matter where a school is located, pupils can access our inspiring performances in their classrooms.

“The club helps me to be more confident and creative. I am very grateful” *After School Puppet Club Student, age 9*

Scruff’s Christmas Adventure

Between 18 November and 20 December 2024, Scruff’s Christmas Adventure toured a wide range of venues, bringing festive cheer to audiences in schools, at Christmas light switch-ons, and at seasonal parties.

This brand-new production from Little Angel Theatre featured magical puppetry, lively characters, and plenty of audience participation, as children joined Scruff on a tail-wagging quest to find the perfect Christmas gift.

Designed as an engaging festive treat for young audiences, the show was particularly popular with school groups. Many schools also opted to book a follow-up workshop, in which pupils had the chance to create their own Scruff puppet, further extending the creative learning experience.

“I liked it because Scruff was very cute and very funny” *School Pupil*

“I loved it because the elf made sounds!” *School Pupil*

“Thank you Little Angel Theatre – a real treat!” *School Teacher*

Find out more about Scruffs Christmas Adventure:

www.littleangeltheatre.com/scruffs-christmas-adventure



16 shows across **10** schools

3 other Christmas events

1,150 children (estimated) saw the show



2,382 tickets given away to partner schools

72 After School Puppet Club sessions run, which 105 children attended

3,364 instances of engagement within our partner schools

50% of partner school pupils eligible for pupil premium free school meals*

10% of partner school pupils with special educational needs*

66 schools workshops facilitated in addition to our partner school scheme

564 tickets given away to Islington Schools as part of the 11 by 11 scheme**

*On average across the 8 schools

**an Islington Council scheme to give children 11 cultural experiences by year 11

Story of Stories

Our Story of Stories workshops for Key Stage 2 improves children's literacy and oracy skills in a fun, creative and engaging way, allowing them to discover the power of their voices and the limitless possibilities of storytelling.

A Storyteller first performs an interactive show in the classroom, using puppets, props, and music to help children understand exactly why we tell stories. After the show the children then work together to tell their own story, collaborating to brainstorm characters, settings, and plots. Each child in the class plays a vital role, bringing the story to life through a collective performance.

"Kids were engaged from the moment they came in" KS2 Teacher from LAT partner school

Find out more about Story of Stories:
www.littleangeltheatre.com/story-of-stories-show-and-workshop-for-schools



During our trial period, **220** children engaged with Story of Stories. We will be rolling this out across the next academic year.



HOW CAN YOU HELP?

Enrich children's education by supporting the Partnership Programme

- £490 pays for 2 classes of children to come and see a show
- £1,761 pays for an after school puppet club at a partner school
- £7,500 covers the costs of the whole local partnership for one school

Photos: Suzi Corker

Suitcase Theatre

The Welcome Project

Welcome! (which was made by and for children with experience of migrant and refugee status) toured around London primary schools with A New Direction in April 2024, visiting schools that had high levels of children with a second language. We also visited a Play Day (run by Chichester Festival Theatre) at Chichester Park Hotel in March 2025, where **20 families in the bridging hotel** watched the show and made their very own butterfly puppet.



Photos: Ellie Kurtz (left, top), Viv Coupe (left, bottom)

The Prison Project

Our new Suitcase Project is being designed and developed for **children and their incarcerated adults at prison family days**, through visits to 8 different prisons around the country, bringing performances and puppet making workshops with us. The children at HMP Foston Hall created and performed their own puppet show using paper bag puppets we'd crafted together. We have built a strong relationship with HMP Pentonville, taking various puppets and craft activities to their sessions over the year, and we will debut the finished *Bobbins Big Adventure* show for them in Autumn 2025. Although still in development, the performance will invite families to solve puzzles and work together to help the protagonist complete their quest.



"Coming together on days like this are worth their weight in gold. I'm a lifer, so it's days like this that I look forward to. My niece is normally so shy when she comes to see me, but today she was brought right out of her shell and it helped me too!" Paula, 40, HMP Foston Hall Inmate

HOW CAN YOU HELP?

The Prison Project is still being developed. You can help us make this show.

- £335 covers the planning and delivery costs for a workshop leader at a prison family day
- £4,172 pays for 4 days of R&D for the new show

Community

Our community work is divided into two main strands: our core programme based at Little Angel Studios – now in its 10th year – and our outreach programme, which takes us further into Islington to deliver activities, often in collaboration with key local partners. All of our activities are completely free, specifically designed for Islington residents who face barriers to accessing the arts, creating an open and welcoming environment where residents can connect with one another.

- **Craft Collective** A new weekly project for children aged 8 – 13. This project emerged after many of the children began to age out of other projects in our programme. It became clear they were ready for more ambitious and creative challenges, so in Craft Collective they work together on a big project over a term.
- **Sew, Knit and Make** A warm, welcoming morning where adult residents can learn and receive support with knitting and sewing. The project has been very well received, with many participants not only gaining valuable new skills but also forming friendships. The session emphasises sustainable practices: we primarily use donated and recycled fabrics and support residents in mending their clothes so they can be worn again.
- **Young Actors Theatre Islington (YATI)** We hosted puppetry masterclass workshops for Little Angel Theatre community members and regular YATI attendees. These helped children to learn new skills in performance and art and we hope to continue the partnership further this year.
- **St Mary's Church Garden Club** In spring 2025, we began a collaboration with St Mary's Church on a garden plot. Our intergenerational club learns all about eco systems, what makes happy planting, and lots of different types of flowers and are proud of both gardens that they help keep looking tidy and cheery.



Community Partners

Islington Council • Nia • Islington Fire Brigade • Quentin Blake Centre for Illustration • Whitecross Street Party & YMCA Islington • St Mary's Church • Young Actors Theatre Islington • Smoking Apples • Whittington Health Trust

Photos from top: Suzi Corker, Rachael Light; Viv Coupe

Community Street Party

Little Angel Theatre's show-stopping Community Street Party is a much loved event that has been running for several years, and the 2024 celebration was the biggest yet drawing over 200 attendees! We closed off Sebbon Street – home to Little Angel Studios – for a full day of festivities. Highlights included a free performance of *The Curious Rat* and the *Bug Ball Parade* led by local children showcasing their giant *Crunchy the Caterpillar* puppet, created during our arts and crafts after-school club Crafternoon. The event also featured face painting, walkabout puppets by Judith Hope, live music, and craft activities. We were delighted to be joined by the Islington Fire Brigade and the Quentin Blake Centre for Illustration, adding even more excitement to the day.



"These events are so special and you all plan and deliver them so brilliantly. I feel very fortunate that my family can benefit from your skill and hard work." *Community Member*

"My family and I are from a low-income household and so if it wasn't for Little Angel Theatre's free activities it would be really hard for us to attend. It is especially difficult in winter, where it gets dark early and it is super cold, so my children are more likely to be looking on a screen or on the TV for hours. I would love to take them to the park or do something to avoid this, but it is hard to know where we can go. We live very close by, literally 3 minutes' walk away from the theatre." *Community Member*

"At Little Angel Theatre my child feels welcome, respected, listened to and fairly treated despite any disabilities. My child is invited to take part in all activities and feels welcome. This has an amazing impact on confidence and wellbeing!" *Community Member*



HOW CAN YOU HELP?

The funding landscape is challenging at the moment – we need your help to bring projects to as many people as possible.

- £55 pays for 10 children to attend a Crafternoon session
- £225 covers the cost of one session of Sew, Knit and Make
- £2,940 pays for the community street party next year

Puppets for All

Our Puppets For All scheme enables us to offer tickets completely free of charge to those who might otherwise miss out. The theatre is situated in Islington, one of the most unequal boroughs in the country, where some of the wealthiest families live alongside the poorest families – 28% of children in our borough live in an income deprived household. We know that the cost of tickets just isn't feasible for everyone, so we work very hard to make sure that the magic and wonder of puppetry is accessible to all, regardless of financial constraints.

“Such a lovely performance, it was so relaxed and welcoming. Really appreciate that PFA exists and that we can benefit from this brilliant scheme” *PFA Beneficiary*

“I just wanted to say thank you so much for the opportunity! I think that it's brilliant that you offer tickets to those who can't afford it! I am financially struggling and hate to see it affect my son's ability to be included. We enjoyed the show so so so much” *PFA Beneficiary*



This year we gave out **5,199** tickets to our shows to families and school visitors through the scheme, with a value equating to over **£50,000**, plus additional tickets for workshop places.

“More often than not our pupils are being invited to see a show every single term. Many of our children are from low-income households, and this paired with our tight school budgets, means that these children simply couldn't go without LAT support.”

Partner School Teacher

“It held our 3 year old's attention totally - diction was very suitable and clear. He has a disability - we are his grandparents so are very thankful to you for including us in your scheme so we can bring him regularly while his parents are at work. We used to bring our daughter here 30 years ago.” *PFA Beneficiary*



HOW CAN YOU HELP?

Support for our Puppets for All scheme helps us to bring the magic of puppetry into more children's lives:

- £82 pays for 6 family tickets to see our shows
- £345 pays for 5 children to take part in an all-day Puppet Playcation
- £3,360 pays for 16 classes of Islington school children to come and see a show for free*

* through the 11by11 Islington council scheme

Heritage Craft

Homo Faber Fellowship

From Sept 2024–April 2025, Little Angel Theatre was honoured to participate in the prestigious *Homo Faber Fellowship*, an international programme celebrating excellence in craftsmanship and mentorship. The Fellowship paired our Associate Director, Oliver Hymans, with Ash Appadu, a talented emerging puppet-maker and graduate of our Puppet Design Traineeship. Ash spent a month in Venice, undertaking a series of creative and entrepreneurial masterclasses developed and certified by ESSEC Business School and Passa Ao Futuro. Then over a 6-month residency at Little Angel Theatre, Oliver and Ash collaborated on a rich process of skills exchange focused on the endangered craft of wooden marionette carving.

Their work culminated in an exhibition at Milan Design Week, where the two marionettes they created were showcased to **23,522 visitors**, of which **308 were journalists**. The Fellowship offered Ash the opportunity to deepen his technical and creative practice, while Oliver reflected on his own work through the lens of mentorship. Looking ahead, the duo plan to use the puppets in a future performance at Little Angel Theatre. The Fellowship powerfully embodied our commitment to heritage, innovation, and intergenerational collaboration in puppetry.



HOW CAN YOU HELP?

We are working hard to keep the craft of marionette making alive.

- £700 pays for a bursary place on our marionette carving course
- £2,000 pays for tutor costs for a Marionette-Carving Course, covering 5 days delivery and 3 days planning

Milan Design Week

22 international pairings
16 different crafts
2 new marionettes, showcased to
23,522 visitors, of which
308 were journalists

Photos: Ellie Kurtz (left); Rachael Light (right)

Photos: Ginevra Formentini (top); Christian Sinibaldi (bottom) Michaelangelo Foundation

Audience Feedback

"My little boy was laughing the whole way through! Actors were brilliant, engaging and always such a good show every time we come!"
Audience Member of
A Squash and Squeeze

"A magical rainy-day escape"
Audience Member of
Prince Charming

"After we left, my goddaughter (age 3) told me several times that she wants to see more shows, so rave reviews from the target audience! We'll be back next time I'm in the country. Also, your staff were all lovely!"
Audience Member of
The Curious Rat

"The show was really funny, I would love to come and watch it again and again. 10 stars!" 10 year old
Audience Member of
Prince Charming

"It was magical, such a lovely show. I also loved the intimacy of the venue and being so close to the action."
Audience Member of
The Curious Rat

Ambitious show full of fun and beautifully observed detail. The set was amazing too, audible gasps as the audience walked in.
Audience Member of
The Mystery of Little Angel Theatre

"As always, a heartwarming stunning performance, we love the work you do!" Audience Member of
The Singing Mermaid

"It was fantastic – especially the puppets. We loved the songs and the performers were excellent. Just the right length for little ones too." Audience Member of
A Squash and Squeeze

"It was just fantastic! Everything theatre should be – imaginative, magical, beautiful, delightful. The performer, set, puppets and show itself were completely magical"
Audience Member of
Rosie Robin and the Christmas Post

"It was our two year old's first ever theatre experience and he loved it – such a special morning for us as a family"
Audience Member of
Rosie Robin and the Christmas Post

"Honestly so magical – my daughter has not stopped talking about it since. Absolute highlight of our trip to London"
Audience Member of
Dogs don't do Ballet

"It was a delightful experience from start to finish. Our boy, 2 years old, was completely captivated throughout the performance, which says a lot about the magic created on stage. The puppeteers were truly amazing, bringing the characters to life with such skill and charm. You could see the love and effort they put into every movement." Audience Member of
Dogs don't do Ballet

Accessibility

At Little Angel Theatre, we believe that puppetry and live performance has the power to be transformative and that everyone deserves to have access to these benefits. We are working hard to ensure that everyone can access our buildings and feels comfortable coming to, and moving around, our venues.

- **Access Audit** This year we undertook an audit which was crucial in highlighting the areas where we could improve access to our buildings. We now have the information we need to take the next steps in removing any existing barriers.
- **Inclusivity Training** Front of House Staff and Facilitators that we work with received training from AngelShed to support us in making our activities as welcoming as possible.
- **Accessible Performances** This year we put on 18 accessible performances of our productions (some BSL interpreted and some relaxed performances) to make sure that children and adults with varying needs can enjoy our shows. All of our shows are accompanied by a Visual Story.
- **Access Riders** We have created documents to allow visitors, including creatives, performers, interviewees and audiences, to find out about our buildings before their arrival.

We recognise there are additional steps we can take and more specialised shows we can offer to meet diverse needs, and we're actively working towards this.



Find out more about access at our buildings here:
www.littleangeltheatre.com/visiting-us/access

HOW CAN YOU HELP?

Help us make our buildings more inclusive for everyone

- £625 covers the cost of additional seating in our garden area to support those who need rest breaks
- £2,800 pays for BSL interpreters for one performance of each of our inhouse shows for a year
- £7,300 would help us to install automatic doors in our studio theatre entrance

Photos: Rachael Light (left and right, top); Suzi Corker (right, bottom)

Environmental Responsibility

Here at Little Angel Theatre, we believe it is our responsibility to reduce our net carbon output and encourage others to do so. We are committed to, and actively working towards, reducing our carbon emissions in our buildings, productions, workshops and tours.

Some actions we have made this year:

- **Carbon Literacy Training** We ran our first carbon literacy training for staff in October 2024, accredited by the *Carbon Literacy Project*. A third of our core staff are now carbon literate.
- **Crafts from recycled materials** The community group, *Sew, Knit and Make*, have been repurposing old fabrics and mending clothes. The family after school craft session, *Crafternoon*, spent the whole of the summer term crafting from recycling household objects.
- **Litter Picking** We held a staff litter pick in St Mary's Church Garden, right next to the Theatre, in March 2025. Staff went to this local green space and cleared litter from the area to support our immediate community.
- **Theatre Green Book** We are working towards achieving Basic Theatre Green Book standards across all of our productions. This year, our workshop staff designed 'The Snowflake' (co-production with Birmingham Rep and Polka Theatre) to Basic standard.



Find out more about our sustainability efforts here:

www.littleangeltheatre.com/environmental-responsibility

HOW CAN YOU HELP?

We are fundraising to pay for a solar installation on the roof of both our buildings.

- £4,000 pays for an electrician to work on the installation of solar panels on our theatre roof
- £8,000 covers the material cost of a solar power system on our theatre roof
- £15,000 pays for us to remove the asbestos tiling from our theatre, which has to be the first step in the project



Photos: Suzi Corker (left); Rachael Light (right, top)

People

Four Day Week Update

Our 4-day working week trial has continued throughout 2024–2025, with the organisation committed to embedding this practice into our work. Now over a year into the trial, the response from staff remains overwhelmingly positive. Wellbeing continues to be a major benefit cited by the team, with staff members reporting that they are able to maintain high levels of output while benefiting from more meaningful time away from work. As in the first phase of the trial, we have continued to review and refine the model as needed, developing tailored solutions in close collaboration with our teams. One of our original aims was to reduce our carbon footprint by closing buildings one day per week, although we have started to open our buildings on some Mondays to support artists and avoid the often fully booked remainder of the week.

Alongside embedding the model internally, we’ve also been sharing our journey externally. In June 2024, we spoke at the SOLT/UK Theatre Conference about our experiences, followed by a presentation at The Cultural Enterprises Conference in February 2025. We have also worked closely with Zoo Co, providing consultancy support as they prepare to adopt their own 4-day working week. These opportunities have allowed us to reflect on our learning and contribute to wider sector conversations about new ways of working.

As we now approach the end of the current trial period in August 2025, our focus is on refining the model further, addressing any remaining challenges, and continuing open conversations with staff about their experiences. This will help inform decisions about the long-term future of the 4-day working week at LAT and our ability to make it permanent from September 2025.

“It gives me more time to focus on my personal growth; I can more easily attend classes or training outside of work. I have more time to see friends, relax, and generally live a life outside of work.”
LAT Staff Member

- 30 core members of staff, both full time and part time
- 25 box office and visitor experience assistants
- 56 freelance creatives
- 71 workshop leaders and facilitators
- 4 freelance technicians
- 21 volunteers
- 11 Placement Students

“I absolutely love the flexibility and the time it allows me to spend with my family.”
LAT Staff Member

“I feel way more productive when I am at work and feel like I am getting lots ticked off my lists every day. It feels good to feel like I am making the most of the time I have.”
LAT Staff Member

Trustees

Katie Owen (chair)
Lydia Cotton
Gregory Gray
Monique Johnson
Jayda Khatun
Chris Lowry
Matt Parritt
Bonnie Royal
Linda Stanfield (outgoing)
Sarah Wright (outgoing)

Patrons

Dame Judi Dench DBE
Clive Owen & Sarah-Jane Fenton
Michael Pennington
Fiona Phillips
Baroness Pitkeathley OBE
Sir Simon Rattle CBE
Michael Rosen
Gregory Doran (Honorary)
Honorary Associates
Ronnie Le Drew
Lyndie Wright MBE

Finances

It’s been a fantastic year for LAT with awards, exciting projects, and creative milestones. None of this would have been possible without the generous support of our funders, the strength of our partnerships with co-producers and local organisations, and our ambitious yet agile approach to financial management.

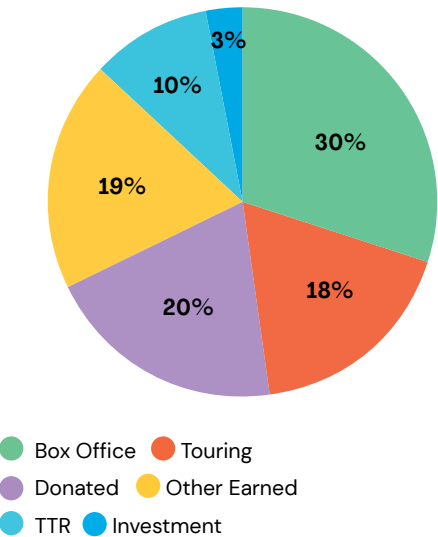
Looking forward to the 2025/26 financial year, we will still rely on income from philanthropic sources, in particular for our heritage, community and outreach work, with 70% of our target from trusts and foundations secured. In order to address the ongoing challenges such as rising costs and inflationary pressures, we are strategically investing in ways to diversify and expand our earned income streams, to ensure we can continue to deliver our charitable activities and reach our beneficiaries.

We continue to adapt our model in response to the ever-changing economic landscape by:

- **Diversifying our fundraised and enterprise income streams** to help subsidise our schools and community engagement programmes, as well as our digital output
- **Keeping our admission prices accessible**, with discounted and free tickets available to those who might not otherwise be able to attend
- **Expanding our touring programme** by collaborating with third-party producers and growing our own touring operations
- **Upholding at least living wage salaries across our staff and creative teams**, in recognition of ongoing cost-of-living challenges
- **Reducing our environmental impact** while continuing to protect and maintain our cherished buildings
- **Allocating dedicated budget** to activity that increases ethnic and/or disability diversity in our work and operations.

	23/24 Actual	24/25 Estimate	25/26 Forecast
Income (£000s)			
Earned	1,433	1,587	1,790
Donated	437	420	465
Other	71	58	60
	1,941	2,065	2,315
Expenditure (£000s)			
Direct Activity	782	796	970
Staff	896	1,014	990
Other	320	325	330
	1,998	2,135	2,290

24/25 Income



Thank you

Little Angel Theatre is pleased to be supported by a wide range of organisations and individuals. We are also proud to work closely with a number of businesses in mutually beneficial sponsorship arrangements. Thank you to the following people who have supported us in the past year.

Public Funders



Principal Funders: Trusts & Foundations



Significant Funders: Trusts & Foundations

Alchemy Foundation
Bagheera Trust
Baily Thomas Foundation
Benham Charitable Settlement
Belacqua
Boris Karloff
Central District Alliance
Chapman Charitable Trust
Charles S French
City and Metropolitan Welfare Charity
City Bridge Trust
Co-op Community Fund
Garrick Club
Heritage Craft
Inner London Magistrates
Court Poor box and Charity feeder trust
Ironmongers
Maria Bjornson Memorial Fund
Old Possums Practical Trust
Sandra Foundation
Sobell Trust
Weinstock

Little Angel Theatre is a charity, and we receive no regular core funding to support our work. A generous donation to any of the projects mentioned in this report will enable us to bring the magic of puppetry to children and their families. If you are part of a Trust or Foundation who would like to support our work, please get in touch at development@littleangeltheatre.com.

Corporate Partners



How to Donate

As a charity, Little Angel Theatre needs regular support to continue to have a magical impact on young audiences and families. We rely on donations to support our community work in schools, to make sure our shows are open to everyone, to help our shows visit hard-to-reach spaces like hospitals and prisons, and to look after our cherished buildings. A regular donation gives us a stable income and confidence to plan for the future.

If you are an individual who is able to make a regular donation to LAT, please head to our website:

www.littleangeltheatre.com/support-us

- **£25 per month** helps to ensure that our shows are accessible to families who might otherwise miss out
- **£50 per month** helps pay for bursary places for specialist creative workshops
- **£100 per month** helps pay for school children to visit the theatre with their peers, enriching the school curriculum
- **£200 per month** helps pay for performer costs for our suitcase shows, ensuring our work is accessible to those who cannot access our spaces
- **£500 per month** helps pay for our rolling community program, supporting families on our doorstep
- **£1,000 per month** helps us to maintain our traineeship program and the future of puppetry

Company of Angels

Thank you to the philanthropic individuals who regularly support Little Angel Theatre. We could not do our work without your generous regular gifts

Platinum Angels

Ben & Ann Davison
Jill Nichols

Golden Angels

Peter Ball
John Duffy
Marcus and Caroline Jones
Andreia Jurquete
Alison Macdonald
Roger Mears
Dr Felix von Reiswitz
Jack Thorne & Rachel Mason
Sharon White

Silver Angels

Frances Barry
James Bierman
Philip and Natasha Broke
Ana Cascon and Bill Shadwick
Peter Charlton
Elizabeth Comstock-Smith
D R Hall
Roanne Insley
Charles Ledigo
Selina Macnair
Ann Marshall
C T Smith

Thank you also to our 59 Bronze Angels.

Significant Funders: Individuals & Generous Friends

Anonymous
Christopher & Simon
Bailey-Woods
Anthony Conway
Sarah-Jane Fenton
& Clive Owen
Sarah B. Fleming
Rebecca Glassberg
Rosemary Hanson
Ian McVeigh
James Neilson
Katie Owen
Rob Owen
Sue Owen

“Fuelling the imagination through puppetry”

Charity No. 232488

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