

arts alive :: FLICKS :: IN THE STICKS ::

2023 Arts Alive in Shropshire and Herefordshire
Incorporating Flicks in the Sticks

Candidate
Information Pack

WELCOME



Season 22-23 stats for live and flicks events

"Through Flicks in the Sticks we have come to know our local villagers and feel part of the local community. We are now using the village hall for other activities, so there is an essential symbiosis between Flicks in the Sticks and other local activities."

Audience Member

"I loved last night's show, in fact I have loved every Arts Alive show I've been to!! I've never seen a bad performance. We are so lucky to have such inspiring professional live performances in local venues."

Audience Member



4,476

Live Event
Audience Members



909

Flicks
Screenings



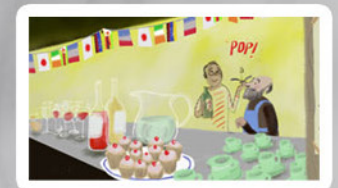
98

Live Events (including
live satellite screenings)



30,814

Flicks Audience
Members



10,600

Volunteer
Hours

Welcome from our Chair

Thank you for showing an interest in becoming part of our committed and enthusiastic Arts Alive and Flicks in the Sticks team.

"Exciting" is a rather overused word these days, but these newly created posts that we have on offer really are. Why? Because over the last twenty years or so Arts Alive and Flicks in the Sticks have become a hugely important part of the rural fabric of Herefordshire, Shropshire, and beyond.

In partnership with our local volunteers we promote and subsidise wonderful professional drama, music and dance, show the latest movies, and project live screenings from London theatres and concert halls - in village halls, little theatres and other venues as diverse as the local pub or library.

We provide a glue that brings our rural communities together and local people are excited and enthused by what we do. So are we.

I hope that you will be too and will want to come and join us!

Paul Graham, Chairman of the Board



About us

History

Arts Alive is a Shropshire based rural touring scheme that covers Shropshire and Herefordshire and seeks to bring quality arts experiences to rural communities.

We started from humble beginnings in 1991 as Shropshire Live with 4 venues and by 1999 had developed into a rural touring scheme that covered the two counties, Shropshire and Herefordshire with over 100 venues. In 1999 we also developed Flicks in the Sticks, a pioneering touring cinema circuit which also includes live Satellite screenings.

Essentially, we partner with local venues and volunteer promoters who will choose the event they want to see and we will support them through the process of putting on a successful event. We also partner with venues such as libraries and work with theatre companies and artists to support their development in making work for rural touring.

Over the years, Arts Alive has developed projects to diversify the communities and audiences we serve:

- » young@art – a young programmers project
- » Kindergardens – shows for the very young
- » Globally Local - celebratory arts activities that offer opportunities for all local people to share in positive experiences of the cultural roots of diverse individuals within communities
- » Taking pArt - A collaborative storytelling project
- » Black Country – Green Country – a rural and urban arts based community exchange project
- » My Big Fat Cowpat wedding – an Urban/Rural commissioned tour of theatre.
- » Creative Conversations – working with artists in care homes and touring a commission play.



Our Mission

Our mission is to support and enhance the cultural life of rural areas by providing access to high-quality arts experiences that would otherwise be unavailable to those living outside of urban centres.

We believe that the arts have the power to transform lives, and we are committed to ensuring that everyone has the opportunity to experience the joy and enrichment that the arts can bring.

Our Ambitions

At Arts Alive, our ambition is to be the leading rural touring scheme in the UK, providing a platform for emerging and established artists to share their work with audiences in rural communities. We are passionate about nurturing artistic talent, and we believe that our work contributes to the diversity and richness of cultural life in the UK. By bringing the arts to rural areas, we aim to inspire and engage audiences, stimulate local economies, and create lasting connections between artists and communities.

Our Vision

Our vision is a world where access to the arts is a fundamental human right, and where every community, regardless of its location, has access to high-quality arts experiences. We believe that the arts have the power to bring people together, to bridge divides, and to inspire creativity and imagination.

By working with artists, promoters, and community organisations across the rural ecology, we aim to build stronger, more resilient communities that are enriched by the arts.

Our commitment to excellence, accessibility, and inclusivity is at the heart of everything we do, and we are dedicated to ensuring that the arts remain alive and vibrant in rural and market town areas for generations to come.

Our Plans for the coming years

We know that people and communities who engage with culture have a better quality of life and improved wellbeing. Through our events we will create stronger, more cohesive communities, support the local economy, bring in visitors and provide local communities with access to the best in culture from around the world.



Overview of plans

Our plans for the next three years, which align to Arts Council England's Let's Create vision, are to utilise the resources we have, to nourish, nurture and pollinate the cultural ecology that surrounds Arts Alive. This eco-system is made up of our Staff and Trustees, Promoters, Audiences and Companies.

Staff and Trustees – We will continue to build skills and confidence within our staff team through training and development opportunities to support them in their work and ambitions. Building up the skills and diversity of our Board will also be a key feature. We will continue to hold Staff and Board Away Days as an important part of our review and planning cycle. We will develop an overall Organisational Development Plan and will work with a Fundraiser to develop a Fundraising Strategy.

Venues, Promoters and Partners – Our 500 Promoters are critical to the success of offering high quality performance to our core audiences. For our live events Promoters receive a curated menu, including a range of high quality and varied music and theatre selected in response to feedback from their communities. We offer Promoters showcase opportunities to see work before they book shows. We will continue to work with Promoters to offer training and support, including email and telephone support, Promoter meetings online and a new peer network. Many of our Promoters are volunteers and this support from us enables them to deliver high quality events. We also partner with venues such as libraries to deliver bespoke shows for audiences who may be traditionally underserved in the other spaces.

Audiences – Our core audiences are mainly older people and families from rural areas. Over the next 3 years we will continue to enable access to local and affordable culture for our audiences in these (often isolated) rural communities whilst working to engage underserved communities through new initiatives.

From 2023-26 we will seek opportunities to extend our 2022 pilot programme, which engages directly with underserved audiences such as SEND and young audiences from low socio-economic backgrounds in environments that these communities are in and/or are particularly suitable for their needs. For example, partnering with libraries and the HAF holiday provision to bring live high-quality performance to those who are currently underrepresented in our core audience demographic.

Companies and Artists – We will continue to include a wide range of companies in our programming menu by viewing new works at festivals such as Edinburgh, Brighton Fringe and The NRTF Conference and connecting with artists through social media to raise Arts Alive's professional profile. We will programme 20% of our work with companies from a diverse background and offer additional support in our menu selection process to companies who are under-represented, such as artists of colour and disabled artists. We will offer support to artists (including emerging artists) through our artist training programme and enhanced support to encourage Promoters to book them. Annually we will offer a digital workshop, 'So you want to tour with us?' which will be offered to companies who are new to Arts Alive to answer questions and connect with us.



National Rural Touring Forum

We are a member of the National Rural Touring Forum (NRTF) which is a rural touring scheme umbrella organisation and our Artistic Director sits on their board.

<http://www.nrtf.org.uk>

NRTF members are made up of a national network of Rural Touring Schemes who programme menus of professional artistic events that tour in their region. They also have artist, venue, promoter, producer and festival members all promoting and developing professional work for rural settings. There is a regular national conference and as the members are from rural areas this usually occurs in particularly pleasant surroundings! The NRTF provides a wealth of experience across its membership as well as professional development opportunities for member schemes, market research and cross regional project development opportunities. The conference is in Shrewsbury this year and Arts Alive are curating some of the programme.

Equal Opportunities Statement:

At Arts Alive, we believe that passion and enthusiasm are the key ingredients for success and we welcome applications from all individuals who share our values and have a genuine interest in the role. We are open to applications from candidates with a variety of qualifications, experience and backgrounds who can demonstrate a clear passion for the job and a commitment to the communities we serve.

We are committed to providing equal opportunities for all individuals, regardless of their race, gender, age, sexual orientation, religion, disability, or any other characteristic protected by law. We value diversity and believe that it is essential to our success as a rural touring scheme.

We understand that everyone has unique talents and abilities, and we encourage applicants to submit their applications in a format that best showcases their strengths. This may include a short video, voice recording, or any other format that they feel best represents themselves.

We are committed to creating an inclusive working environment where everyone can feel respected, valued, and supported. We will provide reasonable adjustments for individuals to ensure that they have equal access to employment opportunities.

If you require any reasonable adjustments to enable you to participate in our recruitment process, please let us know and we will do our best to accommodate your needs.

We encourage all staff and volunteers to contribute to our commitment to equality, diversity, and inclusion. Together, we can create a positive and welcoming culture that reflects the communities we serve.

If you have any questions or concerns about our equal opportunities policy, please do not hesitate to contact us.



Policies

We have a range of policies to help us steer and monitor our work. These policies include:

- » Artistic Programming Policy
- » Equality and Diversity policy
- » Child Protection Policy
- » Expenses Policy
- » Health and Safety Policy
- » Anti Bullying/Harassment Policy
- » Reserves and Risk Management Policy
- » Volunteer Policy
- » Environment and Social sustainability
- » Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults policy

We have a newly developing Staff-Wellbeing policy that includes;

- » 1 hour paid time per week to take part in a wellbeing activity of choice
- » Regular reflection opportunities for staff with peers and senior leadership.
- » Flexible working arrangements that reflect and understand that we are all human beings and have demands outside of our working life
- » An organisational expectation of 'kindness' for both internal and external communications
- » Emphasis on curiosity within working practices that enables headspace and time for people within the organisation to be creative and innovative
- » Opportunities to see and experience the arts to nourish well-being



Trustees, Staff and Volunteers

Trustees

Arts Alive is led by a Board of Trustees which collectively has a wide range of expertise and experience in the arts, law and business. Trustees are elected for a 3-year term but may stand for re-election. Trustees meet a minimum of three times per year. Trustees regularly attend AA events to meet promoters and artists, taking an active advocacy role and supporting staff.

Trustees and staff have a biennial, consultant-led, away day which always includes self-evaluation and strategy planning.

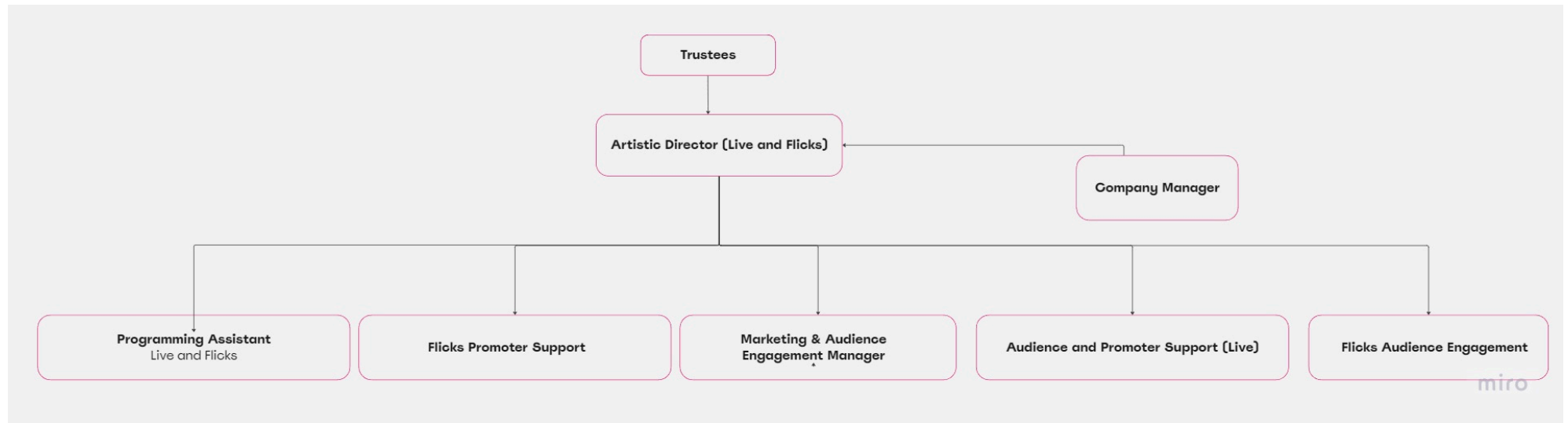
We will be undertaking a recruitment drive for new Trustees to add to the Board in the near future.

Staff

We have a small but very experienced and committed staff.

We have an Artistic Director, and a Company Manager, alongside a range of other posts supporting new audiences and Promoter Support.

Other freelance designers and project workers join the team as required.



How we look after staff

We have a strong culture of flexible working and recognise that the traditional 9-5pm working structure is not practical or desirable for everyone. We are happy to consider any reasonable working pattern requests and have staff currently working on schedules that meet their required working patterns. We recognise that our staff are human beings first and foremost and we offer opportunities within the working week to replenish and reflect - staff that are happy work better and do more for the organisation. Staff have opportunities for weekly wellbeing time and also for time to share and reflect. Our staff have the option to work from home and/or a working hub and all reasonable requests around this will be considered. Staff can see shows and films for free locally.

Volunteers

We have built up an extensive network of hundreds of loyal volunteers that select and promote events. They are invaluable partners that bring community control, advocacy, and powerful word of mouth marketing to the organisation, facilitating effective reach and delivery.

Plans to help support these Partner Promoters include:

- » pre-visits to new promoters and their venues
- » supporting them on the night for first events
- » 'go and see' grants to festivals and showcases
- » offering promoter comp tickets to see other shows
- » visiting speakers at promoter meetings
- » promoter training
- » facilitating promoter sharing of experiences and wisdom at meetings
- » building a group identity and a "sense of belonging"
- » annually reviewing and updating the Promoter Handbook
- » on call support via phone and email
- » Developing a new Online Portal with crucial information on making their promoting of events more streamlined



A vibrant, hand-drawn illustration in a sketchy style. In the center is a tall, yellow, stylized tree. To its left, a person in a yellow dress with arms raised. To its right, a person in a pink dress with arms raised. Further right, a person in a grey coat holding a yellow trumpet. The background is dark blue with three yellow stars hanging from above. The foreground is filled with many white, sketchy outlines of people's heads and shoulders, suggesting a large crowd.

arts aLive

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