

**THE ASSOCIATION OF
BRITISH THEATRE TECHNICIANS**

Registered in England and Wales No. 1231725

Registered Charity No. 282069

ANNUAL REPORT & FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

31 DECEMBER 2020

The Trustee-Directors are pleased to present their Report together with the Consolidated Financial Statements of the charity and its subsidiaries for the year ending 31st December 2020. This Report is the forty-sixth since the incorporation of the Association and the fifty-seventh since its inception.

Chairman's Report 2020

In common with the theatre and entertainment sector we represent, our Association had a challenging year in 2020. The significant impact of Covid-19 has affected our members, supporters, committees and staff. Through this time, I have been impressed and proud of the ways the ABTT has used our expertise, networks and influence to support the industry, both adapting existing activities, and engaging in new ways.

Robin Townley, our full-time Chief Executive, continued to be a superbly committed and effective advocate for the ABTT leading the office and our relationships with stakeholders within the sector. Elysia Moore as Association Co-ordinator and Stuart Roberts as Financial Controller continued as our core team. Restrictions associated with the pandemic forced our office team to work remotely for much of the year. I thank them for the flexibility and resilience they have shown efficiently running our activities on a day to day basis, and their significant contributions to the Association's presence and activities under these difficult conditions. Investment in recent years in the IT infrastructure made this transition easier than would otherwise be the case. The Association has made use of the Government's Job Retention Scheme as a mechanism to align expenditure with the reduced income and industry activity while retaining staff ready for the sector recovery. We will also benefit from a successful application to Arts Council England's Cultural Recovery Fund. A new five year lease was confirmed for the ABTT Office in Farringdon with provision of a break clause for 2021 and 2022.

As in previous years, the core of the ABTT's work is undertaken by the hugely experienced specialist practitioners who work through our committees to provide leadership to the industry in safety, standards, training and other activities. The reports of these various committees are to be found later in this 2020 Annual Report.

I am enormously grateful for the time and energy which these individuals dedicate to the ABTT. The committee Chairpersons remained the same at the start of 2020 as they were at the end of 2019: the Safety Committee was chaired by Michael Anderson, Principal Consultant at Anderson Bradshaw Limited; the Training and Education Committee was chaired by Sebastian Barnes, freelance Trainer and Assessor; the Historical Research Committee was chaired by Roger Fox; the Theatre Planning Committee was headed up by Theatre Architect Tim Foster and the Stephen Joseph Committee is chaired by Alistair Livingstone. Jean Shevelan continued to Chair ABTT NorthNet, Martin Hunt, Technical Director of the Wales Millennium Centre chairs ABTT Cymru, and Paul Durose managed the School Theatre Support Group . Mark White continued as Chairman of the Communications and Publications Committee, and Nikki Scott chaired the Core Values Working Group.

Rebecca Morland continued as paid Editor of Sightline, with four issues published in 2020. This remains a prestigious journal of record for technical aspects of the theatre industry with content that is highly regarded and well received by members and the wider industry. Recognising that our members and supporters have not been at their usual place of work, from Spring onwards this journal was issued in electronic format only.

In conjunction with our Chief Executive and office staff, the services of paid consultants are used for various role to support our work. These were minimised in 2020, though Geoffrey Joyce continued to deliver and develop ABTT Training, and I thank him on behalf of the membership of the ABTT.

The Annual Theatre Show was scheduled to take place in Alexandra Palace in June. I am grateful to

Isobel Hatton and her team's work planning this event in her second year as ABTT Theatre Show Director. The exhibition floor was fully booked with a strong programme of parallel events planned. It was therefore with great sadness that we had to take the decision to postpone the 42nd show. This event makes a considerable financial contribution, which is used to support the Association's other charitable activities. Many of the costs associated with the Theatre Show had been committed and this significant reduction in net income is reflected in the financial statements.

Unable to meet in person, we launched a series of online seminars to engage with our membership and the wider industry addressing important issues including Diversity, Mental health, Reopening, Training, Sustainability and more. I thank Mig Burgess and Elysia Moore who have championed this activity. I also thank the speakers and panellists who have brought a genuine depth of experience and knowledge to these events, drawing attendance in the hundreds.

The work and investment launching a new website has been rewarded with much improved control of content. Together with social media channels this has enabled us to be responsive to our members and the industry, curating an up-to-date, trusted channel of the best advice and information available.

The Award for Technician of the Year was presented in June to Sarah Hemsley-Cole acknowledging her exceptional achievements as a production manager, as well as inspiring the next generation through her activities with technical students at The Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama. In 2020 a new award was added to recognise the achievements of individuals at the start of their career who consistently deliver excellence in all that they do. This award for Emerging Excellence was presented to Jamie Vella of Derby Theatre. It is a delight on behalf of the ABTT to offer them both our warmest congratulations on receiving these awards.

There were two vacancies on Council in 2020 occurring through the retirement by rotation of the members of Council who have completed their three-year term of office. Annette Ollerearnshaw and John Young had served two consecutive terms and were not eligible to stand this year. There were two nominations received, and as a result no election was held, Alex Cann and Anton Woodward join the Council as new Trustee-Directors. They join our continuing trustees Louise Birchall, Mig Burgess, David Evans, Andy Franks, Peter McCoy, Caroline Rouse, Nikki Scott and Emma Wilson. Darren Joyce resigned as Trustee-Director in September.

Nikki Scott, Trustee-Director continued as Vice-Chair. Matthew Jones from Taylor Wessing has continued to serve as Honorary Secretary, and Loretta Tomasi as our Honorary Treasurer. I thank them all for the considerable time, wisdom and advice they have given to the Association in these difficult times. Jane Thornton continues as Honorary Archivist.

I also thank Matthew Freeman and Tamykha Patterson as co-opted Young Associate Representatives to the Council. Their contributions and insight at Council meetings, in committees and to the Young Associate page for Sightline has been of tremendous value to the Association and our membership. In July, the UK Theatre & Live Events Apprenticeship Network was launched providing past, current and future Apprentices with a much needed safe space to ask questions and to seek advice.

I am grateful for the companies and organisations that form the ABTT Industry Supporters' Group. This philanthropic support makes a real difference to funding our work and provides a collective commercial knowledge which helps our work stay aligned with the needs and emerging issues facing our industry.

We were unable to meet in person at the end of the year and an online event was hosted in place of our usual Christmas party. At this event we were pleased to publicly appoint four new Fellows: Health and Safety professional Michael Anderson, Phill Brown, Head of Risk and Safety at the Society of London Theatre, Mark Dakin, Director of Technical and Production at the Royal Opera House, and Lighting Designer Prema Mehta.

Richard Bunn, Chairman

Our Purpose

The purposes and the charity are the advancement of public education in the technical subjects connected with the theatre and theatrical presentation and the promotion for the benefit of the public of excellent theatre design and technical presentation of theatrical works.

Our vision of work remains the promotion and fostering of knowledge and the appreciation of the art of technical theatre from well-designed theatres and better trained staff. Our Codes of Practice continue to be developed and we debate safe ways of working that become universal standards for theatres across the nations of the United Kingdom. The Association produces a number of other publications that inform those working in the theatre industry. These are also useful references for those members of the public who have keen interest in finding out more about the technical aspects of performance and venues necessary to provide a seamless experience when they attend a performance.

In guiding our activities for 2020 the Trustees continued to observe the Charity Commission's requirements for public benefit. The Association primarily relies on membership subscription for income which is supplemented both by the income generated from the annual ABTT Theatre Show and subscriptions from members of the ABTT Industry Supporters' Group. The International Theatre Engineering and Architecture Conference (ITEAC) held every four years and next in 2022 also provides welcome returns. The trading activities of the group are carried out by the trading companies and any profits are distributed as a dividend to the charity as required by the Memorandums of Association of the profit-making trading entities.

Our Objectives

Our objectives are set out in the ABTT Memorandum of Association, a copy of which is to be found on our website: www.abtt.org.uk

The strategies employed to achieve the Association's objectives of publicly available good works are to:

- Advocate and provide efficient standards of planning for the building or reconstruction of theatres and to promote theatre design which will offer the widest possible scope for theatrical expression;
- Promote and encourage improvement in the design and the proper installation and use of stage equipment and materials;
- Advocate an enlightened and flexible approach to measures for public safety and fire precautions in theatres and the application of new technical knowledge and experience in those fields to changing conditions;
- Encourage excellence in all technical matters relating to the theatre;
- Facilitate the exchange of ideas and information amongst theatre technicians and others concerned in any way with the theatre, paying attention to the different needs and opportunities of each locality, organisation and form of theatre;
- Organise meetings, correspondence, demonstrations, exhibitions, and courses of training in relation to the technical aspects of theatre;
- Publish books, magazines and other matter relating to the art of the theatre and provide information services for the collection and dissemination of technical information.

Our Core Values

Appropriate to the current state of the theatre sector the ABTT has adopted five core values. These values are in addition to the objects as stated in the Memorandum of Association. These values underpin all the activities of the Association and act as a 'toolkit' to guide us in the way we meet our objects. The ABTT demonstrates as many of the values as appropriate in all with which it engages. The values are:

- **Promoting equality, diversity and inclusion**

The ABTT believes that those who are interested or working in the design of places of entertainment or in their operation or in the production of performance should be as diverse in all respects and attributes as the members of the society in which we all live. The Association will be welcoming and respectful to all who seek to connect with it. In addition, it recognises that it must work to overcome barriers of any nature that prevent or inhibit anyone from seeking connection, support, guidance or participation with the ABTT. This value mandates the ABTT to find ways of actively promoting equality, diversity and inclusion and removing barriers for those who are underrepresented in our current membership, association leadership and sector.

- **Enabling excellence**

The ABTT recognises that the development of excellence in attitudes, behaviours, skills and knowledge is essential to sustain the areas it supports. In all that it undertakes it will seek to enable participation and the achievement of excellence, identifying barriers to entry and progression and seeking to find solutions by which they may be removed.

- **Acknowledging achievement**

The ABTT will work to communicate and celebrate the contribution that the sector it represents makes to the success of the theatre and live performance industries and it will acknowledge excellence in the performance of all the associated crafts and disciplines.

- **Representing all**

The ABTT is for all who are interested or working in the design of places of entertainment or in their operation or in the production of performance. It will seek to offer support and be relevant to all the regions and nations of the United Kingdom, those whose participation is waged and unwaged, the small and the large, those with buildings and those without; everyone no matter where or how they pursue their interest.

- **Combating climate emergency**

The ABTT is committed to taking positive action in response to climate breakdown and biodiversity collapse. It has pledged to support all those operating in live performance production, technology and building design to strengthen working practices and redesign business activities, operational processes, use of resources, organisational policy and overall governance in order to create and present live performance in a way that has a more positive impact on the world around us. The ABTT also pledges to adopt positive measures in its own activities.

Structure, Governance and Management

Governing Document

The Association of British Theatre Technicians is a non-profit distributing company limited by guarantee of its Members each of whom agree to contribute £1 in the event of the charitable company winding up.

The Association is governed by its Memorandum and Articles of Association dated 30 October 1975 (as amended by Special Resolutions dated 31 July 1987, 5 April 2000, 24 April 2002, 13 December 2002, 22 September 2005 and 12 October 2016). It obtained dispensation from the Secretary of State for Trade to omit the word “Limited” from its registered name. The Association is registered as a charity with the Charity Commission.

Reference and Administrative Details

Inception:	3 March 1961
Company number:	1231725, registered as a company in England and Wales on 30 October 1975
Charity number:	282069, registered as a charity on 6 April 1981
Principal Office:	4 th Floor, 55 Farringdon Road, London EC1M 3JB A five-year lease was entered into commencing on 14 th May 2020, with provision for a mutual break in September 2021 and September 2022.
Telephone:	020 7242 9200
E-mail:	office@abtt.org.uk
Registered Office:	2 London Wall Place, 6 th Floor, London, England, EC2Y 5AU
Auditors:	MHA MacIntyre Hudson, 2 London Wall Place, 6 th Floor, London, England, EC2Y 5AU
Bankers:	Royal Bank of Scotland, 40 Islington High Street, London N1 8XB

Council of Management

The Council of management is responsible for the overall direction of the affairs of the Association and decides all matters of policy. The Council meets at least four times each year depending upon business. The Council comprises:

- The elected Trustee-Directors;
- The Committee Chairmen ex officio;
- The Officers ex officio;
- Any Member or Associate of the Association co-opted by the Trustee-Directors to fill a casual vacancy amongst the elected Trustee-Directors or by way of addition to the Council, the maximum number of persons to be at the discretion of the Council. When considering co-opting Trustee-Directors, the Board has regard to the requirement for any specialist skills needed.

Only elected Trustee-Directors have a vote.

The Council met five times in 2020.

Trustee- Directors

As set out in the Articles of Association, the Electoral College elects the Trustee-Directors. There are up to eleven Trustee-Directors who serve for three years and who are eligible for a second consecutive term but who are not eligible for further election until the year after the termination of their second term of office.

Accordingly, the Electoral College was sent an invitation to nominate Trustee-Directors prior to the AGM and advising them of the retiring Trustee-Directors.

Two vacancies occurred at the time of the 2020 AGM through the retirement by rotation of Annette Ollerearnshaw and John Young who had completed their current three-year term of office, and having served two consecutive terms were not eligible to stand again in 2020.

Two nominations were received for the two available positions and Alexander Cann and Anton Woodward were appointed for an initial 3 year term.

Darren Joyce resigned from his position as Trustee-Director in September 2020.

New Trustee-Directors are informally introduced to their roles as Directors and Trustees of the charitable Company. The Council of Management has issued a handbook to assist new and existing Trustee-Directors and holds a more formal induction process that informs the additional responsibilities that are placed on trustees of a charitable organisation on an ad-hoc basis.

The Trustee-Directors serving at the end of 2020 were as follows:

Louise Birchall	(appointed 2018)
Mig Burgess	(appointed 2019)
Alexander Cann	(appointed 2020)
David Evans	(re-appointed 2018)
Andy Franks	(appointed 2019)
Peter Maccoy	(re-appointed 2019)
Caroline Rouse	(re-appointed 2019)
Nikki Scott	(re-appointed 2019)
Emma Wilson	(appointed 2019)
Anton Woodward	(appointed 2020)

Officers

The Trustee-Directors appoint biennially a Chairperson, a Vice-Chairperson, an Honorary Treasurer and an Honorary Secretary.

At their meeting of 6th November 2019, the Council re-appointed Richard Bunn and Chairman, and Matthew Jones as Honorary Secretary for a further 2 year term. Nikki Scott continued as Vice-Chair and Loretta Tomasi as Honorary Treasurer.

Jane Thornton continued as Honorary Archivist

The Officers serving at the end of 2020 were as follows:

Richard Bunn	Chairman
Nikki Scott	Vice-chair
Matthew Jones	Honorary Secretary

Loretta Tomasi	Honorary Treasurer
Jane Thornton MBE	Honorary Archivist

Co-opted Council Members

Paul Moore	Co-opted member
Matthew Freeman	Young Associate representative
Ben Mills	Young Associate representative
Tamykha Patterson	Young Associate representative

Staff

There were no changes in the permanently employed staff responsible for day to day administration of the association.

The permanently employed staff at the end of 2020 were as follows:

Robin Townley	Chief Executive Officer
Elysia Moore	Association Co-ordinator
Stuart Roberts	Financial Controller

Consultants

The association paid for the following consultants during 2020 to help deliver the association's activities:

Geoffrey Joyce	Training Consultant
Rebecca Morland	Editor of Sightline

Committees

The Trustee-Directors appoint from time to time various committees, working parties and ad-hoc panels to deal with specific matters. The technical work of the Association is carried out by Technical Committees. A report on the activities of the Committees forms part of this Report. The Association is proud of the extent of public good that is carried out by these committees and the hard work that is put in by them to assist the Association in fulfilling its aims.

Related Parties

Theatrical Trading Ltd and Theatrical Events Ltd

The Association has two wholly owned commercial subsidiaries. Theatrical Trading Ltd produces the annual ABTT Theatre Show and produces the majority of the Association's publications and training. Theatrical Events Ltd stages conferences such as the International Theatre Engineering & Architecture Conference and has published related books. The profits of both companies are distributed as a dividend to the charity as required by the Memorandum of Association of these profit-making trading entities

Strategic Partnerships

The Theatre Safety Committee

The ABTT is one of eleven members of the Theatre Safety Committee. The other members are: Society of London Theatre; UK Theatre; Independent Theatre Council; Institute of Entertainment

and Arts Management; Little Theatre Guild; Society of Independent Theatres; Equity: Musicians Union; Stage Management Association and BECTU. The Theatre Safety Committee supports the ABTT in the production of a Code of Practice for the Theatre Industry.

Stage Management Association (SMA)

The Association has a close working relationship with the Stage Management Association (SMA), an organisation that exists to promote better standards in stage management. It is a joint partner with the Association in the Production Managers' Forum.

International Organisation of Scenographers, Theatre Architects and Technicians

The Association is a member of the International Organisation of Scenographers, Theatre Architects and Technicians (Organisation Internationale des Scénographes, Techniciens et Architectes de Théâtre) (OISTAT). OISTAT is a co-operative, non-governmental organisation which operates under the auspices of UNESCO. OISTAT's principal purpose is to foster opportunities for co-operation between and among theatre organisations. The ABTT is one of the OISTAT Centres in the UK and as such plays an active role in each Commission. www.oistat.org/

Theatres Trust

Theatres Trust is the national advisory public body for theatres. It believes that current and future generations should have access to good quality theatre buildings where they can be inspired by, and enjoy, live performance. It champions the future of live performance by protecting and supporting excellent theatre buildings which meet the needs of their communities. It does this by providing advice on the design, planning, development and sustainability of theatres, campaigning on behalf of theatres old and new and offering financial assistance through grants. The ABTT provides expert technical assistance to the Theatres Trust. www.theatretrust.org.uk

Association of Performing Arts Collections (APAC) & SIBMAS

The Association is a member of the Association of Performing Arts Collections and SIBMAS the International Association of Libraries, Museums, Archives and Documentation Centres of the Performing Arts. APAC is a key forum for the placement of performing arts archives and collections for which the ABTT's and particularly the Historical Research Committee's help is sort in connection with their disposal.

Membership of the Association

There are various ways of joining the Association. These are as a Member, an Associate or an Affiliated Organisation.

Membership of the Association at 31 December 2020 was as follows:

	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016	2015	2014	2013	2012	2011
Fellows	22	22	22	19	18	19	16	14	13	9
Honorary Members	14	14	15	15	16	16	15	13	13	14
Members	346	370	316	303	312	322	319	297	279	261
Associates	1258	1168	1255	1291	1338	1350	1193	1057	1019	1134
Affiliated Organisations	199	226	217	199	198	201	194	194	198	201
TOTALS	1839	1800	1825	1827	1882	1908	1737	1575	1522	1619

Members

Any individual with relevant experience and manifest commitment to the technical aspects of the art of the theatre is qualified to be a Member of the Association. Those people who have given a lifetime commitment to the art of technical theatre can continue as retired Members.

The admission of applicants is determined by the Trustee-Directors.

The Trustee-Directors may appoint as Fellows of the Association any persons who, in the opinion of the Trustee-Directors, have rendered signal service to the technical aspects of the art of the theatre. The Trustee-Directors may also appoint as Honorary Members of the Association any persons who, in opinion of the Trustee-Directors, have rendered signal service to the Association. Fellows and Honorary Members are entitled to the privileges and rights of Members. Members together with Fellows and Honorary Members have the right to vote and are collectively referred to in this Report as the Electoral College.

During 2020 the Association appointed:

Michael Anderson	Fellow of the ABTT
Phill Brown	Fellow of the ABTT
Mark Dakin	Fellow of the ABTT
Prema Mehta	Fellow of the ABTT

Associates

Any individual who is interested in technical aspects of the art of the theatre is qualified to be an Associate of the Association. This includes student, young and retired Associates who are keen to both enter the industry and maintain their links once their working life is over.

A new membership category for early career associates aged between 26 and 30 was introduced in 2020.

Affiliated organisations

Any non-profit distributing organisation interested in technical aspects of the art of the theatre is qualified to be affiliated to the Association. There are two kinds of Affiliates large (up to six named employees) and small (up to three named employees).

Activity, Achievements and Performance

The ABTT is proud of its many achievements in bringing together a wide range of people who wish to make UK and international theatre even more successful currently and in the future. We work collectively to ensure that theatres are better designed, better equipped and that the staff are trained to the highest possible standard. The ABTT is a unique organisation that facilitates bridges between producers, theatre operators and designers, technicians and architects. We bring people together who discuss improvements in theatres and theatrical practices which allow the successful staging of productions of all sizes. The Association has high ambitions. It encourages debate and welcomes the recruitment of new members to help shape forthcoming generations of practitioners.

The major areas of demonstrable activity are in the provision of publications and training; the work of the technical committees and the presentation of the annual Theatre Show and the quadrennial ITEAC Conference.

In 2020 the ABTT contributed to the charitable public benefit requirement by continuing updated advice on the operation, refurbishment, and compliance with safety regulations by theatres within the United Kingdom.

The ABTT produces with the support of the national Theatre Safety Committee a Code of Practice for the Theatre Industry in the UK. The members of the Theatre Safety Committee in addition to the ABTT are: Society of London Theatre; UK Theatre; Independent Theatre Council; Institute of Entertainment and Arts Management; Little Theatres Guild; Society of Independent Theatres; Equity; Musicians' Union; Stage Management Association and BECTU. The Code of Practice consists of ABTT Blue Book Codes of Practice, Guidance Notes, FAQs and the regular Safety Matters column which appears in *Sightline* the ABTT's Journal of Theatre Technology and Design.

The primary reference is, *Technical Standards for Places of Entertainment* for which the ABTT provides the secretariat and administrates the editorial Standing Committee and to which it contributes substantially. It also contributes to other publications such as *R U Safe?* and *Non-Conventional Theatre Spaces*.

Training is vitally important to the theatre industry for ensuring that managers and technicians have the skills which will equip them to work in an ever-changing technology-based work environment. The ABTT also provides in-service training for theatre employees based around National Occupational Standards compiled by our Sector Skills Council (Creative and Cultural Skills) and accredited by the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland (RCS). This is carried out peripatetically at centres around the country. Our remote learning CAD course has also continued to receive a growing number of registrations.

Sub-sections below highlight the work of the various committees and record the importance of the ABTT's work going on within the committees. This will help members to understand how the Association is fulfilling its remit of continuing education and the development of technical theatre. The outcomes of the ABTT's work is primarily directed at its members, but there is also a wide public benefit from the ABTT's work by helping the theatre industry as a whole to remain safe and innovative. The prime purpose of the ABTT is to provide a means of cross communication of knowledge and experience amongst those who design, build and operate theatres not only in the UK but also around the world. A better-informed industry will always achieve more.

Marketing and Promotion

The Association aspires to present itself in a modern and positive light. In 2020, we continued our campaign of encouragement to those people who make theatre work in the nations of the United Kingdom to form the backbone of the ABTT. The greater the number of members, the greater amount of knowledge will be exchanged. Our aim is to ensure that all forms of British technical

theatre are guided, directed, are safe and above all are rewarding and challenging. The ABTT continues to play a role in helping British cultural industries to lead the way in the international arena. In 2020 we were able to use the new Association website, launched in 2019, to provide access to ABTT resources and its community despite the prevailing restrictions in response to the pandemic and continued to promote the Association and its work via various social media platforms.

ABTT Theatre Show

The annual Theatre Show is designed to inform the theatre and allied industries of the technological advances that have been made in equipment over the previous twelve months and to showcase the equipment currently available in the market-place. The Association uses the event to showcase itself to members and to enunciate that for which the organisation stands. The Theatre Show encapsulates that which the ABTT is all about, new, tried and trusted equipment, a programme of seminars to educate and a programme of meetings and gatherings for those who work in the theatre industry and the general public alike. The Theatre Show, being open to everyone, is of great benefit not only to professional theatre, but also to amateur and school theatres.

As a result of government restrictions in response to the COVID-19 pandemic it was not possible to present the ABTT Theatre Show as had been planned for Alexandra Palace on the 10th and 11th June. Planning is underway for the next show in 2021. The ongoing restrictions and industry impact is being monitored, to allow timing and format for the next show adjusted to align with the industry need.

Seminars

In the absence of a physical trade show exhibition the ABTT mounted a programme of ten online seminars, presented using the ZOOM platform to coincide with the planned Theatre Show dates. These events were well attended live and recordings were posted online as a public resource.

Following the success of these first events, a further programme of regular online seminars was hosted through the second half of the year including at the Association's September AGM.

International Theatre Engineering and Architecture Conference

The International Theatre Engineering and Architecture Conference (ITEAC) is a major event bringing together those involved in the planning, design, construction, specification and operation of places of entertainment. It is held every 4 years and organised by the ABTT,

Planning is underway for the next conference in 2022, with programme curation being led by Paddy Dillon who has been appointed as Chairman of the Editorial Board.

ABTT Theatre Awards

Due to the postponement of the ABTT Theatre Show, the Product and Stand of the Year Awards were not presented in 2020.

However, it was decided that the ABTT should take the opportunity to celebrate and acknowledge those people making a difference to our Industry.

In addition to the established ABTT Technician of the Year Award, a new ABTT Award for Emerging Excellence was launched for an individual who from the moment of commencing to work in a backstage role for the support of live performance establishes a reputation among their vocational network for excellence in all aspects of their conduct and delivery. This award was proposed by ABTT Young Associate Representative, Tamykha Patterson who felt it was important to introduce an award for those achieving outstanding working early on into their careers.

Both of these awards were scheduled to be announced on the 10th June 2020, which is when the original ABTT Awards were due to take place at the Annual ABTT Theatre Show, via social media and the ABTT News page.

Technician of the Year Award	Sarah Hemsley-Cole, SC Productions LTD
Emerging Excellence Award	Jamie Vella from Derby Theatre

ABTT Safety Committee

Chairman *Michael Anderson*

Vice Chairman *Mark White*

Secretary *Ross Anderson*

The ABTT Safety Committee met 11 times in 2020. Due to the initial stay-at-home and lockdown we did not meet in March.

The membership list in January included 23 likely to attend members and 29 less able to attend members receiving and commenting on minutes. By December things had changed and with the benefits of a Zoom platform to provide access (coming into use from April) we saw an increase to 113 members and through the year up to 45 attendees online (June).

The change to online access for those wishing to attend has positively affected the sexual diversity of the group and we currently list 19 females where previously there were but 2.

The ABTT Safety Committee maintained a presence within two of the currently sitting BSI Standards Committees and is well regarded for bringing a practical and reasoned approach to the development of Standards. Additionally, the committee maintains representation within the SAGE, PLASA/NRAG, TSC and JACE industry groups.

Jeffrey Phillips managed to retire from (MHE3/13) that has developed the Code of Practice on the Operation and Management of Stage Automation that brings all of Europe into a common standard for manufacture, interchangeability and operation of automated stage machinery.

The ABTT Safety Committee maintains its focus as a major contributor to *Technical Standards for Places of Entertainment* and continues to have many active members in common at December 2020.

The David Spink report – every month the committee is kept up to date with changes in relevant British Standards courtesy of our roving reporter who has provided these most useful and relevant pieces of information for many years.

Mark White noted in his September report to Council -

“The meetings have almost exclusively concerned themselves with the measures required for the re-opening of theatres and providing information on how to do that as well as agreeing the manner and content of the ABTT Guidance Notes.

As a consequence, the normal business of the ABTT Safety Committee has been more or less suspended as the current issues of safety in performance has disappeared as theatres have not been open and hence no incidents are presented to be considered.

The main matter to report is the preparation and publication of the ABTT Guidance Notes 101, 102 and 103 and the continuation of the preparation of Guidance Notes 104 and 105. 104 will be Fire Precautions and 105 will be for Planned Maintenance. The Planned Maintenance will include the Inspection and Testing of theatre systems such as Air Handling, Fire Alarms, Ceilings, Lifting Equipment (LOLER) etc with the recommended or statutory intervals between inspection noted. It should be noted that these inspections must be carried out whether or not the theatre is open and therefore will be helpful when the seemingly inevitable decision to mothball many theatres is taken.

We are also in receipt of detailed production guidance compiled by Production Managers, Stage Managers and Wardrobe Managers which will be edited and published by the ABTT as time permits.

If nothing else, these new [and sometimes extraordinary] meetings have provided a relatively united voice for a range of diverse practitioners with whom the ABTT had little previous contact. We hope to build on that momentum to provide them with a 'home' for the betterment of UK Theatres in general."

For our efforts, the Welsh Government accepted the ABTT COVID related guidance as standards to be met for the return.

The committee membership did not dwindle as we prepared for a socially distanced re-opening, with a few more people joining us as we trudged through the Autumn of COVID restrictions.

The DCMS developed working groups, they changed the groups and now are looking for a positive return in late Spring 2021.

The ABTT Safety Committee were put forward for the SHP Magazine (Safety & Health Practitioner) Most Influential Team 2020 and were shortlisted as 1 of 4 from more than 100 entries.

And, we lost our founding member David Adams who reformed and stabilised the technical standards for places of entertainment with a firm hand and consistent approach/force of will. He will be sorely missed.

ABTT Communications and Publications Committee

Chairman and Editor Mark White

The committee meets on an ad-hoc basis to prepare Guidance Notes and the like for inclusion in the ABTT Code of Practice. It is closely allied to and draws upon the expertise of the many members of the ABTT Safety Committee as well as the Standing Committee for the ABTT flagship publication *Technical Standards for Places of Entertainment*.

2020 proved a particularly productive year for Comms and Pubs given the appalling circumstances of the COVID-19 pandemic and the catastrophic effect that had on the UK and worldwide theatre industries. This year will be remembered as the year in which the theatres shut on or about the 23rd March and re-opened for a short time in November only to close again with very short notice in December as a result of the third wave of widespread COVID-19 infections taking hold.

Theatres were shut in order to stop the transmission of this potentially lethal infection between members of the public when in close proximity. It was recognised fairly early on that the infection was spread by moisture droplets from infected persons and the incubation time was some 7-10 days following exposure, meaning that the infected person could be symptom-free and unknowingly spread the infection to many people.

Also recognised early on was the need for social distancing, face coverings and frequent washing of hands and a system to contact those individuals who had or may have been in contact with infectious people leading to the catchphrase Space, Face & Trace.

Theatres on the whole have to sell something like 68% of the tickets for each performance to cover the costs of performance and production. When faced with the necessary 2 metre spacing between audience members, theatres remained closed.

The ABTT took the opportunity to create a series of Guidance Notes for backstage/technical staff to assist them in returning to work in a safe manner once the issue of audience numbers had been resolved. Following extensive consultations and based on current government guidance, six COVID-19 ABTT Guidance Notes were produced and widely circulated within and beyond the UK.

They were:

- GN 101 Returning to Work Risk Assessment
- GN 102 Returning to Work Supporting Information
- GN 103 Production Departments Return to Work
- GN 104 Performers, Rehearsals and Performance
- GN 105 Audits and Inspections Checklists
- GN 106 Fire Inspection Checklists.

In addition, work in progress projects included Flame Effects on Stage, Exit Signs in Places of Entertainment, updates of Weapons in Theatre, Working in Confined Spaces plus Theatrical Flying and Wire Ropes.

There were a number of requests for copies of the 2014 Guidance on Fog and Smoke Effects as a rumour spread that theatrical Fogs and Hazes would spread COVID-19 infections (they do not).

We must record the sad passing of David Adams in December 2020. David was the founder of not only the ABTT Guidance Notes but also the glue that kept the *Technical Standards for Places of Entertainment* committee together for many years. Although unable to participate in our meetings for around 5 years, so great was his knowledge and influence that to this day when presented with a new proposal we ask ‘What would David think of that?’ such was the measure of the man.

ABTT Training and Education Committee

Chairman Sebastian Barnes

This committee has met three times during the year, mainly remotely using Zoom which has tended to improve our attendance.

We have 18 members from a range of theatre organisations including employers, education, training providers and freelance sector.

We met during this unprecedented and difficult year to:

- Discuss and influence current training and education developments in Technical Theatre sector, including safety, qualifications, operating and legal standards
- Guide the development and delivery of our courses
- Advise Council on the training budget
- Help set and maintain our training standards
- Increase awareness of learning routes in our sector

Courses:

In the last year we have discussed the delivery of our training courses under the varying Covid restrictions. We have continued to research potential venues, to respond to the varying demand for our courses.

We have worked to plan innovative ways to safely deliver our courses, including reducing maximum numbers per course and rescheduling start times to account for travelling issues. Geoff Joyce has been key to developing Covid safe Risk Assessments and systems for our course delivery.

Despite the unusual situation we have successfully delivered our courses at a variety of locations including Cheltenham, London, Stevenage and Derby, all scheduled within the Government’s

varying restrictions. This has made up for the regretful cancellation of our regular Summer School at Warwick Arts Centre. We're very grateful to the venue contacts and managements for working with us to enable these courses in their venues.

We're delighted that Mig Burgess has been key to the integration on our Bronze course into the BA Theatre Production Degree at The Guildford School of Acting.

Apprenticeships:

We are pleased to have seen numbers of apprentices taking part in our Bronze courses across the country. This has hopefully helped them during a time they've not been able to work in venues.

We have contributed to some of the webinars delivered under our Apprentice Network series.

OISTAT Architecture Commission

Chair: Tim Foster

“The OISTAT Architecture Commission (AC) exists to facilitate communication and understanding about theatre buildings amongst architects, consultants, technicians and artists worldwide. Through communication about common interests, the commission provides forums for professional growth, develops projects and collects and disseminates information. It meets in order to exchange knowledge about theatre architecture and related technical topics. The commission welcomes participation by anyone with an interest in theatre buildings”.

In June 2020 I stood down as chair of the Architecture Commission, having completed two four year terms, and in an online meeting Maaïke Westinga from the Netherlands was elected as the new chair. I wish her every success in the role.

The Covid 19 pandemic has had a considerable impact on OISTAT as an international organisation, which normally relies on people travelling to meetings. I was due to attend my final meeting of the Governing Board in April 2020 in Berlin. This was cancelled following lockdown and there have been no further live meetings since. However OISTAT has embraced the online meeting, which for an international organisation makes complete sense, and there have been many meetings and webinars hosted by the various commissions, which have been well attended. This has opened up the opportunity for much wider participation in OISTAT events than previously, which is widely welcomed.

One of the principal activities of the AC every 4 years is the organisation of the OISTAT Theatre Architecture Competition (TAC), which is aimed at architectural students and young practitioners, to encourage them to develop an understanding of the design elements which make a successful theatre. The competition is organised to coincide with World Stage Design (WSD). The next WSD, originally due to be held in 2021 in Calgary, Canada, has been postponed to August 2022. The site for the competition is usually located in the country where the exhibition is taking place to encourage local participation and we are currently preparing a brief for a site at The Banff Centre, close to Calgary, with its beautiful location in the Rocky Mountains. The competition is judged by an international jury of architects and theatre practitioners and significant cash prizes are awarded to the winners at World Stage Design.

ABTT Theatre Planning Committee

Chairman: Tim Foster

The Theatre Planning Committee has not met during the year to review any theatre projects. Our main work has been preparation for the production of a revised edition of Theatre Buildings: A Design Guide.

Theatre Buildings: A Design Guide was published by the ABTT in 2010, as a successor to Theatre Planning edited by Roderick Ham, which first appeared in 1972 and was revised and updated in 1985. There was therefore 25 years between publications and much had changed during that period. The book was divided into nine sections which covered general planning principles and the key areas of a theatre building, from the auditorium to the foyers to backstage, as well as technical sections dealing with stage engineering, lighting and sound. It also included 28 reference projects, providing scale drawings, photographs and vital statistics for a range of theatre buildings, ranging from large scale new projects to smaller scale conversions and restorations of existing buildings. Each section of the book was assigned an editor, who in turn commissioned other experts to contribute specialist sections and the book as a whole was edited by Judith Strong.

Changes in theatrical presentation, building management, sustainability thinking and the technology which serves them has developed at an increasingly rapid rate and the book now needs to be updated to keep up with these developments. The ABTT is recognised as the leader in this field through its custodianship of the Technical Standards, which are constantly updated, whereas the design guidance provided by Theatre Buildings has remained static. It is therefore now time to update this publication to reflect current developments and new ways of doing things. The intention is that this will be an updated not a new book, which seeks to keep what is still relevant, replace what is out-dated or inadequate and introduce new content on issues which were not covered previously.

Following a well-attended forum to discuss the revised edition of the book in February (pre-lockdown) a new editorial board was formed, made up of the section editors, Margaret Shewring as overall editor and myself as chair. Meetings have been held fortnightly to discuss and review progress and it is hoped that final drafts will be completed in May 2021. A formal submission to Routledge to confirm their interest in publishing a revised edition has been made and their response is awaited.

ABTT Historical Research Committee

Chairman Roger Fox

The Covid 19 Pandemic has curtailed activity and Committee met only once during the year.

As well as its role as the Association's expert group on historical matters, the Committee remains available to act in an advisory capacity to the Theatres Trust and other bodies on matters which may affect significant technical installations in theatres. The Theatre Trust has not called on this service during the year

In January the Committee mourned the loss of long standing member Brian Legge. Several members were able to attend his funeral at Hither Green Cemetery on 29 January.

In February the Committee toured the Peacock (Ex-Royalty) Theatre in Kingsway. This theatre which replaced the former Stoll Theatre in 1960 met with controversial reviews on opening and was one of the influences which resulted in foundation of the ABTT in 1961. The theatre management led a comprehensive tour of all areas including the boiler house which retains coal chutes from the Stoll Theatre. There are many technical artefacts remaining in situ from productions including parts of the swimming pool lift from the 1970s Royalty Follies.

The Committee is contributing to the History of the Association project specially through the work of the ABTT Hon. Archivist, Jane Thornton. It continues to monitor theatre buildings which may be under threat or contain significant technical installations.

Other regular Committee activity has been dormant with members handling a few external queries.

The Committee fronts the Association's membership of APAC, the Association of Performing Arts Collections, and its international equivalent SIBMAS, and is represented by Jane Thornton, the

ABTT Honorary Archivist, Jason Barnes and Robin Townley.

ABTT Northnet Committee

Chairman Jean Shevelan

The main business of the committee is organising ABTT member's visits to theatres and other venues of special interest in the North of England. NorthNet also provides opportunities for networking in the North of England. The number of active members within the committee continues to shrink and ABTT NorthNet seeks new participants. The committee doesn't meet on a strictly regular basis but when members and venues to host meetings are available. Venue hosts and colleagues are encouraged to participate in committee meetings. The committee endeavours to meet east of the Pennines (around Leeds) and West (around Manchester) on alternate occasions.

The committee seeks to attract a new generation of members to its numbers. It also continues to recommend that there be an ABTT poster available for display in working venues to help keep the ABTT at the forefront of potential members' minds.

The Chairman of NorthNet normally attends council meetings and reports on the activities of this committee to the council of the ABTT. The flow of information is a two way process with a report to this committee of those proceedings of the council which are available for publication. However, because of the Covid pandemic and other difficulties the chairman has not been able to attend council meetings in 2020.

Visits

As all venues were required to close because of the Covid 19 pandemic and because many staff had been furloughed it has not been possible to arrange any visits.

There is the possibility that grants proposed for the arts sector may produce significant refurbishments or redevelopments of venues, which may be of interest to the wider membership. This may produce the opportunity to arrange visits for members.

Possible future member's visits, however, are a regular agenda item.

Meetings

For various reasons including illness and the pandemic no formal meetings of the committee were possible in 2020, but members have kept in contact mostly by telephone. It is hoped that it may be possible to arrange some future meetings using the "Zoom" application.

Similarly, no presentation of the "Phil Windsor Spanner Award" was made in 2020 (it is presented on an ad hoc basis). The award is named in memory of a long standing former member who gave much valued service to the committee and the association. The "Spanner" in the title refers to an occasion when he was in hospital in his latter days and asked his wife to bring him a spanner so he could tighten a loose reading lamp over his bed.

Declining committee membership makes the addition of "New Blood" ever pressing. It is hoped that an initiative from the CEO may introduce members keen to help with NorthNet.

The NorthNet committee welcomes interest from any members in the North in order to continue the running of this longstanding committee.

ABTT Cymru Committee

Chairman Martin Hunt

Venues in Wales are gearing up to re-open as soon as possible. Large numbers of staff, both full time and freelance have had to find work elsewhere in the last year and we will need their skills in the

future.

In the last year much reduced activity at venues in Wales switched to socially distanced events, rehearsals and filming. And in some cases, use as medical facilities.

Productions moved online, including music with the Welsh National Opera and plays from Theatr Genaethlythol , Ffwrnes and Theatr Clwyd amongst others.

Four events were combined - The WMC Festival of Voice, Aberystwyth Arts Centre Comedy Festival, Focus Wales and Other Voices Cardigan – to form Gwyl 2021, streamed on BBC Wales.

The WMC and Lyric in Camarthen both had spells acting as TV studios for Sky, Avanti and the BBC

When possible, some events continued to take place with reduced capacity, including shows at Chapter Arts Centre and outdoor shows at Theatre Clwyd

Meetings came online with Zoom

There was just enough of the year completed for the Apprentices to be assessed - but we are aware that some hands on experience was lost - we will look at how we can make up for this in the future. I hope the new cohort will start in August 2021.

Some training was still possible - WNO used the large rehearsal rooms to hold BS7909 and first aid courses

Cardiff and Vale College have secured funding to provide free training for theatre and event staff throughout Wales, aimed at those who have lost income and need skills updated. This will be rolled out from May 2021, we hope, starting with trainers that can work online or socially distanced. This should include the ABTT Bronze award.

ABTT School Theatre Support Group

Chairman Paul Durose

The ABTT School Theatre Support Group (STSG) is a network of professional theatre technicians and managers working in UK schools and colleges, established in 2005. As an affiliated committee of the ABTT since 2014, the primary aim is to offer a community of support in this specialist field, with members responsible for many professionally-equipped theatres and studios across the country, as well as training and facilitating the next generation of theatre practitioners in schools.

STSG once again maintained a healthy membership during 2020, with well over 100 subscribers and a healthy number of new members. For the first time, ABTT members were able to obtain free STSG membership (if eligible). 27 ABTT members or affiliated organisations took up this option.

The committee did not meet during 2020 due to the COVID pandemic (a planned meeting had to be cancelled). However, most business was able to continue by email, group chat and Zoom.

The annual STSG conference was held at Ampleforth College in North Yorkshire in February. Workshops and seminars were provided by our industry sponsors (including several ISG members), and the event was once again attended by Robin Townley of the ABTT.

Other training events and meetings planned for 2020 were postponed or cancelled due to the pandemic, although STSG was able to provide several COVID-related virtual training courses, which proved very popular with members. The online format was also used to provide regular “Virtual Meets”; some purely for social interaction, whilst some were themed with a hot topic for discussion. The online group chats, a members’ survey, and shared school-specific resources have all been provided to help members during the difficult time.

Stephen Joseph Committee

Chairman Alistair Livingstone

Stephen Joseph was a theatre director and teacher, who founded theatres in Scarborough and Stoke on Trent, both working in-the-round, a form of theatre passionately promoted in his lifetime. Stephen was a founder member of the ABTT, and founded the stage management course at the Royal Central School of Speech and Drama. The committee is working to promote his memory and his ideas, and to celebrate the centenary of his birth in 2021. We meet monthly, online, and have 30+ members. Formerly known as the Stephen Joseph Association, we are now fully constituted as a committee of the ABTT and have a wide membership of theatre practitioners, who had either worked with, or been influenced by Stephen Joseph.

Remembering Stephen Joseph, publication.

This publication consists of transcriptions of talks given at a symposium to honour the legacy of Stephen Joseph, that took place at the University of Manchester in 2017. Stephen had taught in the Drama Department of the university from 1962 to 1966.

Theatre Then and Now - The relevance of Stephen Joseph.

The SJC contributed to the series of online seminars that replaced the annual ABTT Theatre Show and ran in June 2020. The SJC participated in a presentation called ‘Theatre, Then and Now’, discussing the relevance of Stephen’s ideas in his lifetime and today. The panel consisted of Sam Walters, founding director of the Orange Tree Theatre, Dr Barbara Day, of the English College in Prague, and Peter Tate, Co-Artistic Director of the Playground Theatre; the seminar was chaired by Alistair Livingstone, Chair of SJC.

Terry Lane’s archive donated to the V&A

Terry Lane, one of the founder members of the Stephen Joseph Association, had worked with Stephen and went on to found the Traverse Theatre in Edinburgh. He had accumulated a wide range of theatre memorabilia associated with Stephen Joseph and with his own work in theatre and this was acquired by the V&A Collections Strategy Group.

New Members

We welcomed 18 ABTT members who have become member of the SJC, many of them are from the Young Associates group. Mathew Freeman acts as the spokesman for the Young Associates and presented an impressively researched and wide-ranging paper of ideas to promote the legacy of Stephen Joseph. These include a mentoring scheme, connecting experienced professionals with Young Associates at the start of their careers, with an interest in developing their understanding of non-conventional performance, design, or production. Stephen Joseph’s contribution to theatre architecture, acting and stage management are explored as bases for training and education, and in the round staging considered as a possible way forward in allowing audiences back into theatres safely, as explored recently at the National Theatre.

Proposed Projects for 2021

The committee has continued to work on events for 2021, the centenary of Stephen Joseph’s birth. These include a new ABTT award for innovative theatre in Stephen’s name, and a proposed collaboration with the Playground Theatre, London, to encourage new theatre making. One of our members, Dr Barbara Day, MBE, has been commissioned to write articles for Sightlines and for the Society of Theatre Research Theatre Notebook on Stephen Joseph and his important place in British and World Theatre. Matthew Freeman continues to develop ideas for a series of online seminars around the work of Stephen Joseph and related theatre practice. Also, in 2021 it is hoped to contribute to celebrations of Stephen’s work, based in the drama department of the University of

Manchester.

ABTT Core Values Working Group

Chairwoman Nikki Scott

The ABTT has written a Core Values statement. There are now five Core Values:

- Promoting diversity and inclusion
- Enabling excellence
- Acknowledging achievement
- Representing all
- Combating climate emergency

The statement of the Core Values is designed to be a toolkit by which the ABTT can address the issues it covers in all the activities it undertakes. The aim is that whenever any ABTT activities take place, the Core Values are implemented whenever and wherever possible.

Following our inaugural meeting in 2019, the ABTT Core Values Working Group (CVWG) which has around fourteen members met four times via Zoom in 2020 to explore and challenge various aspects of the work of the Association.

UK Theatre and Live Events Apprenticeship Network

Founded in July 2020 by ABTT Young Associate Representative Tamykha Patterson, a past apprentice herself, the UK Theatre & Live Events Apprenticeship Network was developed to create a space where apprentices can connect with one another and speak with those who have been through the same experiences.

The UK Theatre & Live Events Apprenticeship Network hosted its inaugural networking and Q&A event on Tuesday 4th August at 2pm which had over 40 attendees who were able to ask a range of experts in the field about what Apprenticeships are currently available, how they work, what they cover and what they can do once they've finished.

Owing to the popularity of the event and the current circumstances for Apprentices due to covid we hosted further networking events in September, November and December of 2020 on topics including CVs and covering letters, upskilling during COVID and dealing with rejection.

Quickly becoming colloquially known as "The ABTT Apprenticeship Network" the name was amended and a group was established on LinkedIn to enable relevant jobs/ apprenticeships and resources to be shared.

Resources are also available on the ABTT Website where the ABTT Apprenticeship Network is listed a committee and on our "Industry Resources" page under "Backstage Apprenticeship Resources" where information on CV tips, training, apprenticeships, relevant organisations and mental health resources have been provided.

Plans for 2021 include speaking with the Apprentices directly to see what they want to gain from the Network moving forward an organising suitable events and/places for them to network moving forward.

Plans for Future Periods

The CEO will lead on continuing and developing the association's work with a focus on four goals of:

- Supporting the sector
- Supporting the membership
- Financial and Organisational Security
- Vocational training

Supporting the sector

The ABTT will continue to develop technical standards, codes of practice and guidance. The ABTT's work has become increasingly recognized in the UK as "soft law" defining the term "reasonably practicable" in the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act within the context of the operation of a place of entertainment or in the production and presentation of live performance in a place of entertainment. This is now the primary instrument by which the sector achieves self-regulation.

We will organise the Theatre Show and International Theatre Engineering and Architecture Conference as landmark National and Global events for social, business and professional networking and advancement of best practice, and to contribute to ABTT revenues to support other activities.

Supporting the membership

The ABTT wishes to be identified for the promotion of technical excellence in live performance, to acknowledge this and linking to its organizational value of 'acknowledging achievement' the ABTT will promote associate membership of the Association as an important progression for personal and professional development and admission as a full Member as aspirational recognition by industry peers of successful relevant experience and practice. In turn the authority and validation of the ABTT and its work is reliant upon a broad representation of the industry. Awards will be used and developed to recognise outstanding contributions to the industry.

Meetings will provide members with opportunities to physically visit venues and to engage in face to face discussion, and debate. All of this in a sociable fashion with those who share similar interest and passions. Sightline will continue to be positioned as the Journal of Record for Theatre Technology and Design. Social media channel will be used to provide a rich and valued content about the Association's activities and news, events and groups of interest to our members.

Financial and Organisational Security

To undertake its charitable aims the ABTT needs to be confident of its annual income and will look for opportunities for increasing that income to facilitate greater activity. In the short term, this is expected to be constrained by recovery of the wider industry following the COVID-19 pandemic. Options for hybrid and home working will be reviewed at least break points.

Vocational Training

The ABTT has developed a good reputation for providing appropriate, fit-for-purpose vocational training in backstage production skills. The ABTT will continue to provide specific vocational training, ensuring an efficient provision to support career development at entrance/early career, intermediate and supervisory levels.

Risk Management

The Council has addressed the risks that face the Association and seeks to establish procedures to mitigate those risks that have been identified. Council has considered the following potential problems and taken steps to address them as detailed below:

- The surplus from the Theatre Show accounts for 2/5 of annual income. Council made provision for collapse of the Theatre Show by establishing a Contingency Fund. This was called upon following cancellation of the 2020 show.
- Subscriptions from individual members, affiliate member and industry supporters account for 3/5 of annual income. It is considered less likely that subscription and contribution income could fail completely. However, there is uncertainty in the rate of recovery of income from all sources following the COVID-19 pandemic, and the council has agreed future budgets allowing for short term use of reserves. The association seeks to build resilience by encouraging diverse membership across an increasing number of industry sectors and roles.
- The Association appointed a Chief Executive Officer to lead the organisation and split the governance from the management of its activities. The Trustees are keen to see the Association develop. Amongst other things the CEO takes responsibility for the financial planning of the Association.
- The Association continues to need the support of its voluntary Chairperson and other Officers as the administration of the organisation is so small. The Officers act as senior ambassadors for the Association and through their industry contacts help to drive the Association forward. However, it is hoped that with the recovery of the organisation and more income over the next five-year cycle, the activities of the Association can be widened, and the time required of the Officers reduced.
- The activities of the Association depend upon relatively few members; however, there is a new generation of members who want to play a part in the running of the organisation. It is hoped that more national and regional committees can be formed to further the aims and ambitions of both the members and the theatre industry.
- It is recognised that the Association needs to constantly adapt itself to a fast-changing environment. Technological changes are frequent and sometimes industry-changing and the ABTT needs to ensure it is at the forefront of technical thinking. The committees that are the workhorse of the Association need to constantly attract new members.
- The greatest strength of the Association is its members and their participation in for a common purpose. The responsibilities of Trustee-Directors and the time necessary to fulfil the role can make it unattractive to many busy people. This problem occurs with many charities. In practice it is only people controlling their own timetables who are really able to contribute; this is particularly the case given working patterns in the theatre industry. The Council is seeking to increase the pool of potential Trustee-Directors by actively encouraging more Associates to become Members and increase the Electoral College.
- The Association seeks to further develop its trading activities to raise extra funds for its charitable work and better serve its communities.

Financial Review

The Trustee-Directors continue to monitor the financial position on a quarterly basis via the preparation and review of Management information, which, amongst other procedures, is discussed at ABTT Council meetings. The following year's activities for both the Charity and its trading subsidiaries are agreed during the process of setting detailed budgets in the autumn of the preceding year. The Budget for the 2020 financial year was approved in November 2019, this was reviewed in April 2020 at the start of the Pandemic.

The Consolidated Financial Statements for the year ending 31 December 2020 together with the related Notes to the Financial Statements are annexed to this Report. The Trustee-Directors present Consolidated Financial Statements in accordance with Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1st January 2015) – (Charities SORP (FRS 102)), the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) and the Companies Act 2006.

The Consolidated Statement of Financial Activities shows a loss for the year of £55,586 (2019: surplus of £1,204). The budget for the year had an outcome of a surplus of £3,050 so the final position was worse than expected, due to the effect of COVID-19 and the cancellation of Theatre Show.

The Charity's wholly owned trading subsidiary, Theatrical Trading Limited made a loss for the financial year of £20,386 (2019: profit of £126,350).

The charity's wholly owned trading subsidiary, Theatrical Events Limited made a loss for the financial year of £2,679 (2019: loss of £1,116). There was no significant business in the company in the year.

The principal funding source of the Charity, other than the trading activities of the subsidiaries, is membership subscriptions. Membership and subscription Revenues fell slightly to £120,265 (2019: £123,130). As expected, revenues overall were less than 2019, due to the cancellation of Theatre Show and not being able to run training courses £310,767 (2019: £619,707).

Investment powers and policy

Under the Memorandum and Articles of Association, the Association has the power to invest in any way the Trustee-Directors determine. The Council, having regard to the liquidity requirements of operating the Association and its policy regarding reserves has operated a policy of keeping available funds in interest-bearing deposit accounts.

Reserves policy

The Trustee-Directors reconsider the level of unrestricted reserves on an annual basis. (Unrestricted reserves are funds that are freely available which the Association needs to pursue its objectives).

The unrestricted reserves at 31 December 2020 were £260,343 (2019: £315,929; 2018: £314,725; 2017: £274,963; 2016: £270,720). The Trustee-Directors view this level of reserves as sufficient to meet the Charity's immediate objectives and to provide some degree of financial flexibility into the medium term and in the current economic conditions.

The General Fund stands at £120,343 (2019: £175,929; 2018: £174,725; 2017: £144,963; 2016: £140,720;) (see Note 21). The Trustee-Directors established the General Fund at a level sufficient to ensure the financial viability necessary to provide the Association with working funds and for the generic development of the Association's activities. In broad terms, the fund represents 6 months' expenditure for the Charity. monitored on an ongoing basis.

The level of the General Fund is subject to annual review by the Trustee-Directors to ensure that it remains appropriate.

Charities SORP (FRS 102) requires the Trustee-Directors to consider the risks to which the Association is subject and to take steps to mitigate those risks. Further information on how this risk assessment and monitoring has been conducted is set out in the Risk Management section above. As part of their overall review of risks, the Trustee-Directors considered that provision should be made for contingencies, particularly in view of the Association's reliance upon the financial surplus arising from the activities of Theatrical Trading Limited and Theatrical Events Limited, which cannot be assured to continue at the same level from year to year. The activity of Theatrical Events Limited was to run the International Theatre Engineering and Architecture Conference, which was last held in June 2018. The next edition of ITEAC will be held in 2022. The Theatre Show run by Theatrical Trading Limited is held every year. The Trustee-Directors have decided that the level of the Contingency Fund should remain at £95,000 (2019: £95,000) given the risks in the business and will continue to monitor this closely in future periods.

The Trustee-Directors have reviewed the level of each of the designated funds and have set the Publication Fund at £20,000 (2019: £20,000) and the Training Fund to £20,000 (2019: £20,000), to reflect expected expenditure on the planned activities of the Charity. Specifically the Publication fund will be used in the continued plans to transfer the catalogue of ABTT publications from print to online and to support the revision of a number of Codes of Practice. The Training Fund will be used to support training particularly the increase in activities resulting from the Creative Venue Technician Apprenticeship and increasing requests for training from overseas.

The Technical Access Passport Fund is maintained at £5,000 (2019: £5,000) and this will be monitored on an ongoing basis.

The Trustee-Directors currently expect the designated funds to be used within one to two years and further detail on the movements in unrestricted funds is shown in the annexed financial statements.

Trustees responsibilities in relation to the financial statements

The Trustees (who are also directors of The Association of British Theatre Technicians for the purposes of company law) are responsible for preparing the Trustees' Report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

Company law requires the Trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year, which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charitable company and of the incoming resources and application of resources, including the income and expenditure, of the charitable company for that period. In preparing these financial statements, the Trustees are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP 2015 (FRS 102);
- make judgments and accounting estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable UK Accounting Standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements;
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charitable company will continue in operation.

The Trustees are responsible for keeping adequate accounting records that disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charitable company and enable them to ensure that

the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charitable company and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

In so far as the trustees are aware:

- there is no relevant audit information of which the charitable company's auditors are unaware, and
- that the Trustees have taken all the steps that they ought to have to make themselves aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the auditor is aware of that information.

Auditors

At the 2020 Annual General Meeting, MHA MacIntyre Hudson were re-appointed as Auditors to the Association for the ensuing year.

By order of the Trustee-Directors

Nicola Scott
Trustee-Director

Date: