

**Minutes of the Annual General Meeting
of the National Operatic and Dramatic Association
held on Saturday 16th September 2023 at 2.30pm
at the Preston Marriott, Preston, Lancashire**

Officials Present:

Nick Lawrence
Christine Hunter Hughes
Ian G. Cox
Stuart McCue-Dick

National President
Vice President
Chairman of Trustees
Vice Chairman and
Regional Councillor Scotland

John Barnes
Michael Hastilow
Gordon Richardson
Jacquie Stedman

Life Member
Life Member
Life Member
Life Member and Chairman of Summer School

Tessa Davies
Pam Armstrong
Peter Oliver
Leslie Smith
Andy McNicholas
Kay Rowan
Graham Liverton
Sharon Davies
Andy Brown

Regional Councillor East
Regional Councillor London
Regional Councillor North
Regional Councillor North East
Regional Councillor North West
Regional Councillor South East
Regional Councillor South West
Regional Councillor Wales & Ireland
Regional Councillor West Midlands

In Attendance:

Dale Freeman
Rob Williams

Chief Operating Officer
Marketing and Publishing Executive

NODA President, Nick Lawrence, called the meeting to order.

CONFIRMATION OF NOTICE OF MEETING

The President, Nick Lawrence, welcomed everyone to the AGM of the National Operatic and Dramatic Association (NODA) at the Preston Marriott on that day Saturday 16th September 2023.

In accordance with Clause 11 of the agenda, no resolutions had been received by the due date. Formal notice of the AGM had been sent out and confirmation was given regarding having a quorum. Electronic votes & proxies had been received.

An updated Agenda was available on the NODA website and copies were available for those present within their pack.

A message received from the Patron of NODA; Connie Fisher was read out to

those present.

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

The President read out apologies from:

Past National Presidents – Margaret Barker, Geraldine Branton, Derel Grattidge, Bert Lumsden, and his wife Anne.

Individual member – Tony Harris (North East)

Individual member and Regional Representative – Oriel Bennett (South West)

Joint members – Barry and Sarah Hall (South West)

Joint member – Robert McCue-Dick (Scotland)

Regional Representative – Michelle Coulson (North)

Society apologies

At2K Theatre, Axminster Musical Theatre, Exmouth Players, St David's Players, Exeter, Big Bad Wolf Children's Theatre Company.

IN MEMORIAM

The meeting held a period of silence as a mark of respect to those individual members of the Association and affiliated Societies, who have passed away during the previous year. Their contribution to amateur theatre was gratefully acknowledged.

In particular:

Roger Rowan - Consort to South East Regional Councillor.

Geoff Haywood - North East Treasurer and Regional Representative

Noel Rigg - North East Regional Representative

'There are some who bring a light so great into the world that even after they have gone the light remains.'

MINUTES OF THE LAST ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The minutes of the last AGM held on 8th October 2022, at the Crown Plaza Hotel Plymouth, Devon were available prior to the meeting.

The following amendments were made:

- 1) John Barnes was recorded as attending; however he had sent apologies.
- 2) Sharon Davies was recorded as having sent apologies, however, was present at the meeting.

Adoption of the minutes:

Proposer: Ken Allan
Seconder: Tessa Davies

In favour – 24 IMs + 12 Societies

Against - 0

Abstentions - 0

NODA President, Nick Lawrence, signed the minutes.

ADOPTION OF THE COUNCIL'S REPORT FOR THE PERIOD ENDING 31ST DECEMBER 2022

The Annual Report was presented by Ian G.Cox, Chairman of Trustees

Jacquie Stedman - Chairman of Summer School presented a review of Summer School 2022 attended by 122 students. Jacquie valued the support from Council. Summer School had included a visitors' day for Regional Representatives. Jacquie announced the launch of Summer School 2024 on 1st December 2023.

Nick Lawrence offered thanks to Jacquie Stedman and her team for the work undertaken.

A proposal was put forward to accept the Council's Reports as a true record of the year's activities of the Charity's Annual Report.

Seconder: Ken Allan

In favour – 36 IMs + 19 Societies + 16 Electronic votes

Against - 0

Abstentions – 3 (by proxy)

ADOPTION OF THE ACCOUNTS FOR THE PERIOD ENDING 31ST DECEMBER 2022.

There were no questions from the floor.

The President asked for the proposal to adopt the accounts as a true record.

Seconder: Leslie Judd

In favour – 42 IMs + 21 Societies + 59 postal votes

Against

Abstentions - 3

APPOINT THE ASSOCIATION'S AUDITORS IN ACCORDANCE WITH CLAUSE 11(1)(b)(vii)

The Council proposed:

Azets, of Ruthlyn House, 90 Lincoln Rd, Peterborough be elected as Auditors for 2023-2024.

Secunder: Margaret Coltman

In favour – IMs 39 + 21 Societies + 57 Electronic votes

Against - 1

Abstentions - 3

DECLARATION ON THE NUMBERS OF MEMBERS (and NON-VOTING MEMBERS) IN ACCORDANCE WITH CLAUSE 11 (1)(b)(iii) as at 31/12/2022

Group	1,992
Individual Life and Honorary Member	690
Total	2,682

Secunder: Rob Williams

ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTIONS FOR 2024 – 25 IN ACCORDANCE WITH CLAUSE 11(1)(b)(iv)

Individual subscriptions are effective from 1st October 2023, on a rolling subscription.
Group subscriptions are for 12 months from 1st April 2024 to 31st March 2025

The Council proposed the annual subscription payable for the membership year, inclusive of VAT as presented to the delegates.

Band A	£88.00
Band B	£145.00
Band C	£199.00
Band D	£230.00
Band E	£245.00
Schools	£55.00
Individual	£45.00
Joint	£55.00

Secundered: Chris Ingram

In favour – IMs 38 + 23 Societies + 56 Electronic votes

Against - 2

Abstentions - 7

NODA LTD. BOARD REPORT

In the absence of the NODA Ltd board Chairman, Mr. Eric Smart, a report of the NODA Ltd activity was read out by NODA's COO Dale Freeman.

The President thanked Dale for presenting the report.

On behalf of the Association, the President thanked Eric Smart for his work with

NODA and thanks to his wife, Wilma for the amount of time they have given to NODA over the years. Applause from those in attendance.

In favour of the Ltd report – IMs 40 + 23 societies

Against - 0

Abstentions - 0

ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN OF TRUSTEES FOR 2023 TO 2024 IN ACCORDANCE WITH CLAUSE 18 (5)

The current Chairman, Ian G. Cox will continue in post until 2024.

TO ELECT THE APPEALS TRIBUNAL IN ACCORDANCE WITH CLAUSE 11(1)(b)(vi)

Su Dupont has stepped down; the President offered his thanks to Su.

The following current members are willing to stand:

Stewart Adkins - (Witham)
Helen Abraham -(County Durham)
Dee McIlroy - (Abergavenny)

In favour – IMs 41 + 24 Societies + 59 Electronic votes

Against - 1

Abstentions - 0

PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS

President Nick Lawrence addressed the meeting having attended, over his term of office, attended nearly 100 shows, meetings and galas at each Regional events.

The President awarded the NODA Commendation Medal as a mark of the Associations and personal gratitude for going above expectation to Joyce and David Pomeroy.

The President awarded the President's Cup for 2022-23 to Richmond Drama Society at the Georgian Theatre, Richmond, Yorkshire.

The award was collected by Past President – Gordon Richardson, who will present it at his earliest convenience.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE ASSOCIATION OF IRISH MUSICAL SOCIETIES

The President then invited Feargal Cavanagh, president of AIMS, to address the meeting.

The President of AIMS spoke of the close association between them and NODA and spoke of welcoming Christine Hunter Hughes -Vice President to Ireland in June 2023 and wished her well for her forthcoming term as President.

TO DECLARE NODA REGIONAL COUNCILLORS FOR THE YEAR 2023-2024 IN ACCORDANCE WITH CLAUSE 11(1)(b)(v)

The individuals were asked to stand as their names were read out.

East	Mrs Tessa Davies
London	Mrs Pamela Armstrong
North	Mr Peter Oliver
North East	Mr Leslie Smith
North West	Mr Andy McNicholas
Scotland	Mr Stuart McCue-Dick
South East	Mrs Kay Rowan
South West	Mr Graham Liverton
Wales and Ireland	Mrs Sharon Davies
West Midlands	Mr Andy Brown
East Midlands	Ms Jules Jones (Not Present)

TO ELECT LIFE MEMBERS OF THE ASSOCIATION, TO SERVE ON THE COUNCIL IN ACCORDANCE WITH CLAUSE 11(1)(b)(v)

President Nick Lawrence thanked Past President Michael Hastilow for his service to NODA in particular to the West Midlands Region as well as former Chairman of Trustees and Treasurer of Summer School. The President wished Michael a long and happy retirement.

President Nick Lawrence stated that the Council proposes the following nominees to service as life members to serve on Council:

- Mr. John Barnes
- Mr. Gordon Richardson

Seconded by: Ken Allan

In favour – IMs 36 + 23 Societies + 56 Electronic votes

Against - 1

Abstentions - 0

TO ELECT THE NOMINEES OF THE COUNCIL FOR HONORARY MEMBERSHIP OF THE ASSOCIATION

Nomination:

Mrs. Janet Elworthy (South West).

Seconded by: Joyce Pomeroy

President Nick Lawrence presented to Regional Councillor Graham Liverton to present to Janet.

TO DECLARE THE ELECTION OF VICE PRESIDENT AND THE PRESIDENT OF THE ASSOCIATION FOR THE YEAR 2023-2024. IN ACCORDANCE WITH CLAUSE 18(6)(e)

The Vice President was declared as Graham Liverton for the year 2023-2024 NODA President presented the Vice President's Badge to Graham Liverton (South West). Applause and photos followed.

The new President was declared as Christine Hunter Hughes for the year 2023-2024

Nick Lawrence and Ian G Cox placed the Presidential Chain on Christine Hunter Hughes. Applause and photos followed.

Chairman Ian G Cox invited the new President of NODA to address the meeting.

The new President then presented a short address to the meeting. She is thrilled at having another chance to serve as President following her disruptive term during the years of the pandemic.

TO ELECT THE NOMINEE OF THE COUNCIL FOR LIFE MEMBERSHIP OF THE ASSOCIATION IN ACCORDANCE WITH CLAUSE 18(9)

As the Past President Nick Lawrence is already holds Life Membership of the Association this item was not required.

President Christine Hunter Hughes announced the conclusion of the formal part of the AGM.

OPEN FORUM

This was an opportunity to ask questions and offer ideas. There were no questions asked.

President Christine Hunter Hughes closed the open forum.

PRESENTATION OF NATIONAL POSTER AND PROGRAMME AWARDS

The Chairman, Ian G. Cox, then announced the winners of the poster and programme awards under the new upgraded rules which came into effect on 1st January 2022.

President, Christine Hunter Hughes presented the awards of the trophies:

The National Poster Competition Awards for 2022

RUNNER-UP and recipient of the Bill & Nora Timmens Trophy:

IN YOUR FACE THEATRE (North) – “The Trouble with Fathers”
The award was collected by Regional Councillor Peter Oliver on their behalf.

WINNER and recipient of the Thomson-Leng Trophy:

HALIFAX LIGHT OPERA (North East) –
“The Addams Family”

The award was collected by Kathryn L Beverly, Chairman, Halifax Light Opera.

The Barnes Class National Programme Awards for 2022

RUNNER-UP and recipient of the Underwood Quaich:
BOLSOVER DRAMA GROUP (East Midlands) – “Hansel and Gretel”

The award was collected by Chris Peck, Chairman Bolsover Drama Group.

WINNER and recipient of the Barnes Trophy:
MURTON THEATRE GROUP (North) – “Guys and Dolls”
The award was collected by Council Member Gordon Richardson on their behalf.

The Perkins Class National Programme Award

RUNNER-UP and recipient of the Kay Darbyshire Trophy:
SUNDERLAND THEATRE COMPANY (North) – “Curtains”

The award was collected by Regional Councillor Peter Oliver on their behalf.

WINNER and the recipient of the Perkins Trophy:
EREWASH MUSICAL SOCIETY (East Midlands) – “Little Shop of Horrors”

The award was collected by Kathi Ludlow, Membership Secretary, Erewash Musical Society.

The Peacock Class National Programme Award

RUNNER-UP and recipient of the Ralph Whittaker Trophy:
DOUGLAS CHORAL UNION (North West) – “The Hunchback of Notre Dame”

The award was collected by Nathan Benson – Regional Representative North West region 02.

WINNER and recipient of the Owen Peacock Trophy:
CHESHAM MUSICAL THEATRE COMPANY (London)

The award was collected by Judith Watsham – Regional Representative London region 11A.

Chairman Ian G. Cox congratulated all the winners and thanked everyone for their attendance.

Notice was given regarding the next AGM date and place. This will be at The Crown Plaza Hotel, Plymouth, Devon on 28th September 2024.

The AGM was then pronounced closed at 16:05pm.

The following pages contain the speeches given at the AGM.

PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS – Nick Lawrence

What a delight to complete another exciting year for the Association. It must be admitted that back in Plymouth last October many of us doubted that I would make it, but 14,815 miles later, I am pleased to report that I have managed to visit every Region and attended each Region's annual event. It comes to nearly 100 shows, meetings, and galas. It is such a pleasure to meet with the members and chat to them about their difficulties and their many successes.

I am pleased to report that our members in all Regions are enthusiastic to reach higher standards in entertaining their local communities. From the small village halls to the mighty Hippodromes, groups of varying sizes are stretching the bounds of possibilities to give the locals "a good night out". We often laugh at members of the public saying, "It's as good as in London", but quite often the emotions generated in the local hall are just as genuine as any visit to the National Theatre.

The camaraderie that our groups engender is priceless. There is nothing so lovely as to sit among the locals as they are brought together by the sharing of the local group. NODA can provide a special voice for all the wonderful work that is being done at grass-roots level and as Representatives of the Association we should be shouting out loud about the brilliance of local theatricals in the UK.

As the Association approaches its 125th birthday, we should be looking back at the aspirations of our founding fathers and asking ourselves whether we are maintaining their noble ideals. To this end, your Council initiated an independent survey of the Association's activities and I express my thanks to all those who took the time to take part. The participation was larger than we expected, and the results once analysed were positive. When back in February 1899, Mr. A.P. Bulfield, Musical Director of Lancaster Amateur Dramatic and Operatic Society, suggested the setting up of a mutual aid network he probably never envisaged that it would grow and grow until it was a support to the whole UK. We now have lots of plans for facing up to the future and the incoming President and Council will soon be charging you to new heights.

I first moved from tutor to Regional Rep 35 years ago and not only has life in Britain changed greatly in that time, but the expectations of our members and their audiences have also moved on. Every week I have had the pleasure of witnessing amazing fetes of brilliance in the use of technology, the immersion of actors into intricate characterisations, and wonderful storytelling, and it isn't all about the glamour of the expensive productions. Certainly our 'big' companies are spending large sums on lavish productions in expensively hired theatres and their members are coming up to standard with a performance to match the venue and cost of tickets, but often the most thrilling is the production put on in an old warehouse with a couple of bits of borrowed furniture and some first-class acting/singing.

As we heard from the Chairman of the NODA Theatre Summer School, we continue after more than 70 years to provide a major training opportunity for our members, presently at Yarnfield Park in Staffordshire. Jacquie Stedman has spoken with her usual enthusiasm about its legacy throughout the country. We now have a regular contingent from our most northerly members on Shetland. The professional theatre is constantly moving forward, learning new tricks, developing new techniques, advancing the possibilities of our ability to communicate. We are fortunate to have tutors at our Summer School who are well versed

in all of these new skills and experts in tried and tested techniques. If you are a golfer, you'd happily pay a little extra to get the Pro to improve your technique. As an actor, a director, or a techie we should be leaping at this opportunity to brush up our technique and improve our swing (so to speak).

I have a lot still to learn and a lot to be reminded of, so you'll see me there in the future.

As Representatives of the Association, we must not be afraid to step out and be heard. Of course, our members don't like being made aware of any foibles they may have. None of us do, but if we as Representatives of the Association are to be of any use, we must set out to maintain the standards of assistance for each other, mutual support at the box office, and sharing of equipment and members. The Association must set the highest standards and each of us must maintain that image for our members. Spend time getting to know your districts, stay after productions and talk positively to the members, make yourselves available to committees with helpful advice or the contact for a knowledgeable friend.

My immediate predecessor, Gordon Richardson, spoke to us at the beginning of his term of office about being inspired. There have been many people over the years whose performances on stage, and general friendship have inspired me to try to improve myself. As a national umbrella association, it is our task to live up to our strapline and seek constantly to inspire our member societies and individuals to raise their game. I ask you to go forward into our celebratory year with the words of The Bard. "Be Bloody, Bold and Resolute" in your efforts. Yes, the chances of disaster remain imminent, and the bank is almost empty, but be fearless. Your audiences will be so grateful for your existence and your communities blessed.

Above all, I would like to remind you that what we do is a hobby. It is supposed to be a fun activity away from the humdrum life of work and domesticity. So, learn to smile and get out there and have fun!

It would not have been possible for me to serve you this year without the dedicated help of our amazing NHS. For me, in particular, the wonderfully warm and encouraging staff of the Renal Units in the Royal, Devon and Exeter and Honiton hospitals whose care has extended to keen interest in my next Friday train journey.

As, Past President Gordon Richardson will attest, our railways are not always reliable at present: especially South West Railways. This can cause me to be stranded at random stations or require me to chase a train to another station. This would not have been possible without the unwavering support of the Pomeroy family. In particular, Joyce, who has appeared with transport at the most odd hours and never ceases to be interested in what I've been up to.

I should like to present Joyce and her husband, David, with NODA Commendation Medals as a mark of the Association's and my gratitude. Your assistance has gone way beyond what we expect of a NODA Rep and her spouse.

As I have already mentioned, the general standard of productions around the country this year has been very high, and I have had the privilege to meet members of some amazing groups giving outstanding service to their local communities. It was tempting to say that I could not choose between them. But on reflection there was a standout production. This group has the privilege to perform in one of the oldest theatres in the country. The theatre has been lovingly restored to its Georgian splendor. It is tiny. The audience sit tightly

packed onto benches demanding friendship. The actors are extremely close and there really is no place to hide.

I was privileged to see this group perform “Swive”, a recently written play by Ella Hickson about Queen Elizabeth I. Not only was the play appropriate to its surroundings, but it was presented in a way which blended the old building and the modern style with the addition of monitors displaying factual historical information. The play, which uses historical situations to reflect on modern political power struggles, featured many startling portrayals of familiar historical characters. The first act centers on the Princess Elizabeth as she negotiates the dangers of the reign of Mary I. I discovered in chatting with the cast afterwards that the actor who gave a stunning performance as the teenage princess was merely sixteen years old. We must encourage our societies to tackle new work and to give opportunities to exciting new talent (whatever the age). I award the President’s Cup for 2022-23 to **Richmond Drama Society** at the Georgian Theatre, Richmond, Yorkshire.

Chairman’s Report for AGM Ian G. Cox

Ladies and Gentlemen good afternoon. Welcome to the Marriot here at Preston. It is my pleasure to present our annual report as part of the NODA review for 2022.

Firstly, to all our volunteers I extend grateful thanks for their commitment and dedication in supporting and working with society, group, and individual members each and every week of the year.

Of course, everything we do is inextricably linked to the hard work and input from of our team at Head Office led by Chief Operating Officer, Dale Freeman and I would like to personally thank every team member for their energy, commitment, and consistency in helping drive NODA forward.

It is important to re-emphasize that NODA is totally committed to providing the best and most accessible range of services for the benefit of all our members directly and indirectly. And we can take great encouragement positivity for the future of amateur theatre as we emerge from the more damaging impacts of Covid-19. more closely with our membership.

As we look back on 2022 some of my personal highlights include:

- Sourcing a creative agency to support our marketing ambitions.
- Our membership being retained in challenging conditions.
- And for the many thousands of young people the initial stages of a new youth development programme.

Achievements and Performance

Membership at 31/12/22

	2022	2021
Groups/Associates	1,992	1,880
Individual/Joint/Life/Corporate	690	729

NODA is fully committed to a strategy of exploring the potential for new and improved services for members. Engaging the consultancy of Indigo, to conduct a comprehensive survey of our members and analyse the benefits we offer has been an important step. This has formed the basis of an organisational review, which will ensure NODA's future for the coming decades.

Income & Expenditure

Our structure in terms of revenue is always based on ticket revenue received for the previous year. Covid-19 restrictions in 2021 resulted in many groups who prior to the pandemic were in higher bands dropping down to band A, therefore in 2022 generating a lower income. In 2023 and 2024 we anticipate seeing a return to pre-covid-19 membership banding and a consequential increase in income.

With the resumption of events in full, our expenditure has risen back to pre-Covid-19 levels.

NODA Theatre Summer School

The residential theatre summer school returned to in person teaching in 2022 at the Yarnfield Conference centre near Stafford. The school attracted 172 students from across the NODA membership in UK and overseas and this is one of the ways in which NODA fulfils its educational objectives.

National Conference

This important event in our calendar was held in Plymouth on 8th October 2022

Regional Events

All Regions held their own conference and/or AGM for the most part returning to in person events. Some activities were held online, including regions holding training workshops and award events.

Advice

NODA whilst not being a governing body are in a position to provide advice and guidance from specialist professionals in their respective fields of expertise and knowledge both on a one-to-one basis or through highly informative fact sheets. The NODA Legal Helpline is provided by Counterculture LLP and Health and Safety Advice by NODA Safe. All are used on a regular basis by members.

Website & Publishing

During 2022, our magazine 'NODA Today', saw three editions published available online and by hard copy. Both at National and Regional level in addition for both specific articles/information and those of a more general nature newsletters are published.

The website is continually improving and offers access to an increasing range of information and services. Factsheets are proving a sound source of information for members. The website recorded 189,369 visits in the 12 months to 31st December 2022, compared with 178,305 visits

in the 12 months to 31st December 2021. This was an increase of 6.2%, reflecting the increase in show reports and general NODA activity during this period following the end of the pandemic.

Fundraising

Fundraising undertaken by the charity is closely monitored by the trustees, and there are no external fundraisers. The CIO has however enjoyed the support of the Benefact Group with a donation to support a youth development programme.

Programme and Poster Competition

Each region holds its own Programme and Poster competition, all to the same rules as published on the website, with the winning entry in each category going forward to the national competition. The national winners and runners up for 2021 were announced at the National AGM in October. And those for 2022 will be announced here today.

The rules for the competition were reviewed and the new criteria became effective for programmes and posters for productions and are in place for 2023 as of January 1st.

NODA Limited

NODA Limited, our trading arm, generated a profit of £43,416 which was used to support the activities of NODA CIO.

1537 long service awards during 2022 were awarded, including 226 youth awards and certificates in the year compared with 794 in 2021. NODA awards are in recognition to service in the dramatic arts and are available to all NODA affiliated groups and individual members. A Commendation Award is available for those who do not meet the criteria for a long service award, such as paid officials.

The dedicated **pantomime website** (pantoscripts.org.uk) with the facility to examine scripts, order perusal copies and complete licensing arrangements has been made available all online in 2022.

Income on Royalties and Awards was affected by the pandemic, though insurance commissions have not been affected as severely as other trading activities. Groups are still encouraged to insure their assets with the continuation of their public liability insurances. During the last two years NODA Insurance has been positively supportive of insured groups.

Item 10 on the agenda is a NODA Limited report from the Chairman of NODA Limited Eric Smart who will be retiring on 31st December this year. Also leaving NODA Limited is Neil Maidman a key contributor over many years. Neil will continue his professional advice on NODA Safe.

COVID-19 - Extended Impact

As referred to earlier 2022 was as anticipated a challenging year, the impact of the pandemic extending well into the trading period, though we can look forward to a more balanced year in 2023.

The pandemic, and its affect though diminishing, during 2022 curtailed to a degree activities of the CIO and its members, albeit to a much lesser extent than in the previous two years. One key impact being some productions running for shorter periods and unfortunately several groups driven to closure.

Yes, the challenges remain as the economic climate continues its grip on all our lives. We can and must look forward to the future with considerable optimism.

Future Changes

The coming 12 months will see a revised phase in our rolling 5-year plan to include:

- An exciting new marketing and branding strategy.
- Enhanced volunteer training programme.
- New Investments in technology and web site design
- Improved social media communications with our members.

There are also some plans that are in their very early stages, and these I look forward to sharing them with you all soon.

Front and centre in our plans will be a NEW BRAND STRATEGY for NODA

Being driven by a project to define and agree a new Brand Strategy for NODA which is now complete. This strategy has been developed with the input and help of several colleagues from across the Organisation, to ensure that it is equally reflective of our ambitions for the future but also authentic to the Organisation.

- That challenge is for us all to make sure that NODA is - and is known for and respected for being - **relevant, visible, and valued.**
- **Relevant:** If we are to thrive, we must make sure that we celebrate, support and champion all amateur theatre and provide the support and services our members need and continue to inspire and to create opportunity for individuals, groups, and their communities.
- **Visible:** Take a leading role in promoting the unique benefits and positive impacts of this wonderful pastime supporting our members to spread the word. Inspiring all the audiences and stakeholders who can help our members, and NODA, to thrive.
- **Valued:** NODA must recognise that we are here for the benefit of our members and volunteer community, with highest quality services helping to create opportunity; so that we can help them to be the best they can be and to thrive.
- First signs will be new brand identity for the Organisation; and we start the design process for this from later this month. It will also be at the heart of how we build and design a new website and online tools for NODA. Embedding this new brand into our plans and activities beyond marketing and communications.
- The strategy articulates a new definition of the role of NODA; making clear what we are here to do, why we are here: and how we partner with our members so that the greater number of people and communities, everywhere, can enjoy the fantastic

benefits and impacts of the unique pastime that we love so much;

- **NODA helps members to make theatre that makes lives better.**

Thank you all for another excellent year. I look forward to continuing to break barriers in 2023/24 with you all.

Independent Auditors report to the members of the National Operatic and Dramatic Association

Due to the increasing length and detail of the Auditors report to comply with Charity Commission regulations, it is not possible to include the report in this summary. However, the report from Azets Chartered Accountants & Registered Auditors will be made available at or immediately after the Annual General Meeting. For the purposes of this report, the trustees are pleased to confirm that the audit was successfully completed and the information in this report is consistent with financial statements.

NODA LIMITED – ANNUAL REPORT – Eric Smart

I prepared this annual report for your information and this year, it is with some sadness. I will explain my reasons for saying that a little later.

With Covid prominence now somewhat diminished from its peak, I am pleased to report that NODA Limited has continued a recovery path since that traumatic period. This year, looking at our three principal streams of revenue, we have seen a reasonably reassuring trend.

On Insurance, provider of our largest revenue stream, we earned £119k just £1k below budget. Medals and badges have seen a period of buoyancy producing an income of over £33k. Royalties are taking a little longer to recover but we did achieve an income of over £25k. This figure was a little disappointing and well below our budgeted figure. However, overall, I am pleased to report a profit for the year of just over £43k, which compares favorably with the profit of just under £31k last year.

And now on to the future and returning to my opening comments. NODA Limited was introduced in the early 1930's, as this was a means of raising funds for NODA without having to suffer tax. The company has contributed, in no mean way in the past, to assist NODA to provide benefits to members through the profits generated over these years.

It has recently been brought to our notice by our newly appointed auditors that recent changes in legislation would allow two of the three main activities of NODA Limited to be run within the CIO. These activities are sales of Medals and Badges and scripts, rights, and royalties as these are classed as 'primary' trading activities. NODA Insurance, however, would not be classed in the same way and would have to continue to be handled by NODA Limited. It has been agreed that we transfer the running of the 'primary' trading activities to the CIO and that NODA Limited retains responsibility for NODA Insurance only.

The advantages of doing this are as follows:

1. Accounting would be simplified:
 - a. The splitting of costs between NODA and NODA Limited need no longer be made although a small amount would have to be identified and charged for the amount of staff time spent on NODA Limited business.

- b. The company could be deregistered for VAT as the only income would be exempt and therefore no input VAT on expenditure would be able to be claimed.
 - c. Administrative burden would be reduced for the finance manager doing day-to-day accounting.
 - d. Auditing requirements would be reduced resulting in a reduction in auditors' time and fees.
 - e. Costs of NODA Limited board meetings would be eradicated.
2. NODA Limited board of directors would be reduced to two in number. (One is the requirement but two would be best practice to take account of resignation, illness etc.) They would be members of NODA Council.
 3. Company Secretary responsibilities would fall to the COO.

It may be that new Articles of Association need to be prepared for NODA Limited. The proposed date for this to take effect is 1 January 2024. I am happy to remain as Chairman of NODA Limited until that date and the current NODA Limited board have agreed that.

So, this is to be my final report to the NODA AGM and results in my stepping down from the NODA hierarchy after 31 years, first serving as regional rep in the Eastern Region from 1992, Regional Councillor between 1995 and 2005, National President in year 2005/6 and the Charity's first chairman from 2006 – 2010. I have served as a NODA Limited director for over 25 years and its chairman for the last 6 years. I would like to thank all the directors who have served with me on the board and on council over all these years. It has been a very rewarding experience for me and a very big part of my life and now wonder how the NODA gap will be filled. Thank you.
Eric Smart