



MEMBERSHIP WELCOME PACK

All you need to know about the Chatsworth Players



JANUARY 16, 2024
CHATSWORTH PLAYERS



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Introduction

Welcome to the Chatsworth Players, a theatre group based in Bakewell and founded in 2007 by Sylvia Jackson. Sylvia was a professional actor and director who moved to the area and was asked to consult on making the private theatre at Chatsworth House fit for purpose, and we have been performing there ever since. Our main meeting and rehearsal space is the Over Haddon Village Hall just beyond Bakewell.



Over Haddon Village Hall,
School Lane,
Over Haddon
DE45 1JE

We have high aspirations and aim to produce quality theatre three times a year - usually twice in the Theatre at Chatsworth and once on open-air venues in July. We often raise money for charities (most recently Diabetes UK, Cancer Research, and the Alzheimer's Society). We are currently applying for Charitable Status.

Inclusive

We want everyone who loves the theatre to be able to join the Players and, with that in mind, we aim to reduce all the barriers to involvement that we can - we don't charge a membership fee, we arrange our rehearsals to suit the Players cast, we arrange for car shares and lifts where we can, and our rehearsal space is fully accessible (although the Theatre at Chatsworth is not).

If you are joining the ranks of our neurodiverse members and need support at auditions or during the rehearsal process, please let us know. We are a welcoming and inclusive group and we want everyone to be able to participate if they'd like to do so.

Main point of contact

Membership Secretary, Grace Day: g.helenaday@gmail.com



How membership works

We welcome players of any age or experience and have a current membership age range of 15-85. As you have expressed interest in joining the players you will be added to the membership newsletter and then need to sign up to the membership area of the website. This can be done yourself and will give you access to audition materials and key dates. As a member of the Chatsworth Players, you will also be invited to social functions and trips to the theatre, for which all information will be circulated through the newsletters.

If you are interested in a future play, then come to a play reading. These are social events where you meet others in the society and get to know what the planned plays for the year will be like. These are not auditions so there is no pressure to perform, simply come and enjoy.

Once a year there will be an Annual General Meeting (AGM) that all members are invited to attend. This entails a review of the year as well as an opportunity to put yourself forward for a committee role. The current committee consists of:

- Chair- Lindsay Jackson
- Marketing and Business Development- Rachel Wilson
- Child Protection Officer- Jon White
- Secretary- Carole Middup
- Treasurer- Ashley Bainbridge
- Box Office and Front of House Manager- Simon Nicholls
- Membership Secretaries- Grace and Sean Day

Most of our members are also members of other groups. There is no need to commit to being involved with every show in a year, or even one show, every year. Once you express an interest in the group you will stay on the mailing list until you unsubscribe.

Insurance

There is no membership fee required, however, we do ask for a payment for insurance purposes when you are cast in a play or helping backstage. This also goes toward paying for your space at OHVH for social readings, castings, and parties, and rehearsal refreshments. We are committed to the safety of our cast and require a contribution towards our staging insurance in the event that you are injured on stage. This is a single payment that will insure you with the players for a year and will need to be made to the treasurer.

Adult insurance: £20

Child insurance (up to 16): £10

As a society we are committed to financial inclusivity and have an inclusivity fund. If you wish to join us but cannot afford the insurance, please email Lindsay Jackson, the Chair of the players, at chatsworth.players.derbyshire@gmail.com and we can help anonymously. You will be reminded upon being cast if an insurance payment is needed.



Auditions

Productions for the year will be announced via Newsletter and available on the website. When audition materials become available, they will be posted on the Members page of the website. Audition materials will consist of the character breakdowns, individual audition pieces and, if you are auditioning for a musical, song sheets.

The audition process is set by each director, with the requirements outlined clearly on the membership and auditions page of the website. At least two audition dates will be available for each play, however, if you are interested in auditioning but cannot make either date, some directors will be happy to arrange a different time for you. Our auditions are pretty relaxed, and we aim for them to be enjoyable experiences, so please don't worry.

While we welcome all age groups, not all of our productions are suitable for all ages and we do not always have a child protection officer in situ at auditions. If a potential member is under 16, we ask that they are accompanied by an adult to social readings and auditions. If they are cast in a show then we will arrange suitable chaperonage with our child protection officer.

Rehearsal rules

If you are cast in a Chatsworth Players production, then you have made a commitment to the play and agree to attend any and all rehearsals required. Before rehearsals begin, directors will ask for your conflicting dates and do their best to avoid scheduling your scenes on days/dates you cannot attend. Please inform your director before rehearsals begin of any outstanding commitments. Illness or emergencies are unavoidable, but please inform your director as soon as possible if you cannot attend a rehearsal.

As a member of the cast, you will be added to a WhatsApp group chat where your director will be able to send you details such as a rehearsal schedule and be a main point of contact for any production news. If you do not have WhatsApp, please email your director to discuss an alternate form of contact.

If you are given a major role in a production, there is the potential you will be given an understudy. This is to ensure that we are able to perform, even in the event of ill health or other situations. We want everyone to have as much opportunity to perform as possible.

Roles other than acting

Chatsworth Players wants to hear from everyone who is interested in participating, whether you are interested in acting, directing, set designing, lighting, props, costumes, or business administration. We set our seasons 12-18 months in advance, so if you are interested in the possibility of directing a show, please get in touch with Lindsay for further information.



Roles other than acting Cont'd

We try to have a balanced programme for the year. For example; classical, comedy, modern, musical (every other year), big cast production, outdoor, limited numbers indoor etc. so please keep these in mind when thinking of a play. If you are interested in acting or any other backstage roles, please get in touch with Grace, our membership secretary.

Backstage roles

If you wish to join a production in a backstage capacity, simply contact Grace to register your interest. You will be put you in touch with the production manager for that show who will assemble the backstage team or register your interest for future shows. There are several backstage roles that are vital to the running of a show:

Stage Manager-

- Maintaining a backstage presence and leading the stage hands
- Annotating a script with cast cues, props placement etc.
- Managing furniture and props
- Helping costume quick changes
- Liaising with all backstage departments and collating information
- In charge of the First Aid kit
- Stage set up- the 'get in' and 'get out'*

*The 'get in' and 'get out' is the setting up and taking down of the staging, lighting, backstage etc. This usually is time sensitive as the venues will not be available to us long.

Stage hand-

- Stage set up-the 'get in' and 'get out'
- Helping costume quick changes
- Set changes
- Curtain and house lights
- Prop placement

Costume –

Our current costume manager is Sally Shaw. However, please volunteer if you would like to assist her or on the chance that she is unavailable for a show.

- Working with the director to assemble a costume list
- Helping maintain/alter costumes for shows
- Cast measurements and fittings
- Obtaining, in some cases making, costumes



Props-

- Working with the director to assemble a props list
- Helping maintain/alter props for the show
- Prop inventory
- Helping with the 'get in' and 'get out'
- Obtaining, in some cases making, props.

Tech team-

Our current tech team consists of Bryn, Ashley and Ian. However, please volunteer if you would like to assist them or on the chance that they are unavailable for a show.

- Set up of technical equipment
- Assisting with sound and light cues
- Managing communication equipment
- Assisting with tech maintenance
- Fitting cast microphones

Prompt-

- Attending rehearsals for the month leading up to the show
- Following the script and providing prompts should the actor forget
- Sitting in the wings on show nights to provide emergency prompts

Musician-

This depends on the production, however if you are willing to play an instrument for a show, please let us know. You never know when it will come in useful either in a play or assisting with the score for a musical.

Front of House-

- Taking audience tickets
- Raffle tickets
- Promoting charity donations
- Last minute ticket sales
- Directing audience to seats
- Fire safety coordination