

£80,000 lifeline to Bristol youth theatre.

Travelling Light Theatre Company is celebrating after receiving a boost of £79,400 for its youth theatre provision.

The youth theatre is open to everyone but targets young people who aren't normally able to take part in theatre activities. This includes young people who have been excluded from school, young carers and children whose families are homeless.

The award is from Arts Council England's Sustain Programme and supports arts organisations that have been hit by the recession.

The youth theatre is a lifeline for many of its young members. One member explained: "Everyone needs somewhere where they can go to get away from everything else in their lives and be themselves, for me that place is Travelling Light".

Cath Greig, General Manager, Travelling Light commented:

"Our youth theatre has a huge impact on these young people, they gain confidence in themselves and improve their team working skills, in a safe environment. This helps them in their daily lives and eventually the workplace. Travelling Light Theatre Company helps to set them up for the world."

At one point it looked as if this valuable work would have to stop. Quartet Foundation and Youth Opportunities came to the rescue but the recession has made it increasingly difficult to raise the level of funding needed to keep the youth theatre running. The Sustain programme means that the immediate future is secure.

Travelling Light is one of only four Arts Council Regularly Funded Organisations to be fortunate enough to be awarded funds from the Sustain Programme. The company had a double hit with shows over Christmas with Ali Baba & the Forty Thieves at the Tobacco Factory and How Cold My Toes at Bristol Old Vic. It's upcoming shows are Bob, the Man on the Moon, with Sixth Sense Theatre Company and a weekend of exciting original plays for families on 10 & 11th April at the Create Centre, Hotwells in partnership with other local stalwarts, Show of Strength.

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Notes for editors:

Travelling Light is a professional theatre company that creates work for young audiences. We believe that theatre can transform young people's lives. Our plays tour to local schools and national venues whilst our participatory projects involve three youth theatre groups based in the Lawrence Hill area of Bristol and various development projects within local schools.

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The Arts Council Sustain programme is a £40 million open application fund for arts organisations suffering as a result of the recession. More information at <http://www.artscouncil.org.uk/funding/sustain/>