

**MIDDLE  
CHILD**

# **Chair of the Board of Trustees**

*Recruitment Pack*

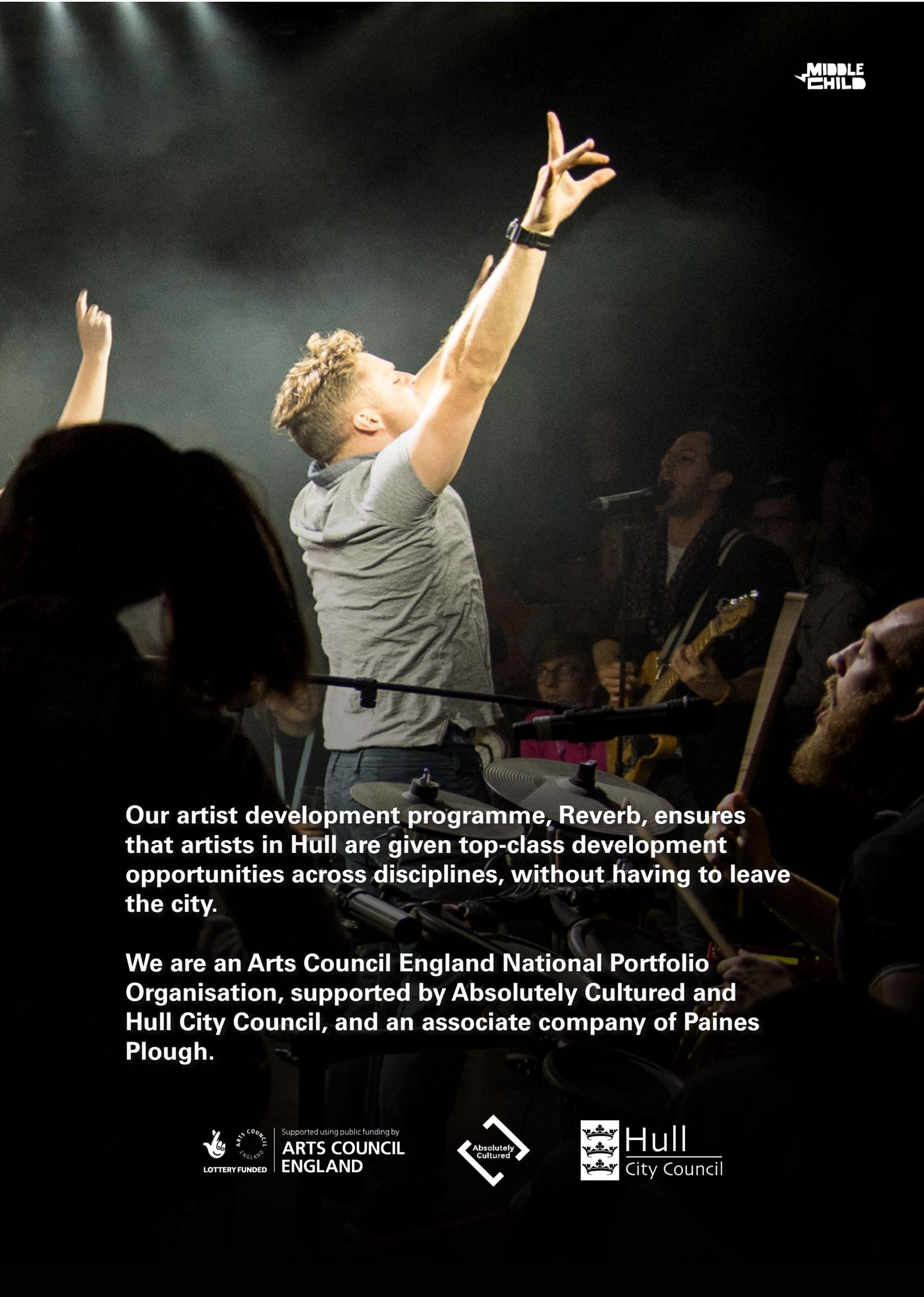




## **About Us**

**We are a Hull-based company creating gig theatre that brings people together for a good night out with big ideas. We tell untold stories, which capture the electrifying moment when the beat drops, mixing original live music with bold new writing.**

**Our events are live and loud, making sense of the modern world. We are committed to breaking down barriers and ensuring that theatre is affordable and accessible for all. We will set fire to your expectations of what a night at the theatre can be.**



**Our artist development programme, Reverb, ensures that artists in Hull are given top-class development opportunities across disciplines, without having to leave the city.**

**We are an Arts Council England National Portfolio Organisation, supported by Absolutely Cultured and Hull City Council, and an associate company of Paines Plough.**



Supported using public funding by  
**ARTS COUNCIL  
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## **An introduction to Middle Child**

**By Paul Smith, artistic director, CEO and founding member,  
and Hattie Callery, executive director (maternity cover)**

Thank you for taking the time to read this recruitment pack and for taking an interest in working with us.

Middle Child were formed in Hull, back in 2011, by nine 20-something University of Hull graduates, who wanted to change the world in a way you think is easy when you're young. We each put £40 into a pot and set off, into the world, to make Political theatre – note the capital 'P' – that rallied against the injustices of the time and fought for a better world.

Over the years this mission evolved to be about more than what is said on stage and to lead a movement

in reclaiming theatre: rejecting its elitism, making work that is a good night out with big ideas and reaching far beyond the usual theatre crowd.

***“A good night out with big ideas... reaching far beyond the usual theatre crowd”***

Now in our tenth year, we are an Arts Council England National Portfolio Organisation (NPO), with several hugely exciting projects in the pipeline, that we can't wait to put into the world. Over the coming years our aim is to grow Middle Child

in alignment with our core values, while continuing to tell new stories in accessible and formally inventive ways and investing meaningfully in local communities. Our work always starts with Hull, but has national and international ambitions as we strive to reach new audiences.

***“We invest in people, ideas and meaningful change”***

Everything we do is geared towards building a fair and equitable world, where anyone’s story can be told and heard. We are open, transparent and keen to invest in people and support them to be their best selves.

Being the chair of our Board offers the opportunity to govern a nationally recognised, award-winning theatre company at a hugely exciting time, as we look towards the next decade. You will lead high-level decision-making, chair quarterly board meetings and take part in our board development programme of away days and training opportunities.

After this introduction we’ve included some words from our departing chair, Martin Green CBE, who will give you an insight into the role before he heads off to focus on the 2022 Commonwealth Games.

You don’t need to have chaired a board before, or even necessarily been on one. We are looking for

somebody with passion for our work and our mission, great people skills, management experience, an alignment with our core values and a desire to get stuck in with an ambitious company and support us to continue making outstanding work.

We are especially keen to hear from people from backgrounds or characteristics underrepresented in the arts and on theatre boards. We encourage those who are uncertain if they are suitable or qualified to talk with us regardless. We recognise potential and take pride in giving people a platform to make a step-change in their career, and in their personal development.

This role is an incredible opportunity to play a key role in the next stage of Middle Child’s journey, as we bounce back from a pandemic that brought into sharper focus than ever before the fight for equality and the importance of the arts. This will be at the heart of our next application to continue being a NPO.

If you have any questions, or would like to discuss the role in more detail, then please do not hesitate to reach out and email

[hattie@middlechildtheatre.co.uk](mailto:hattie@middlechildtheatre.co.uk).

We look forward to hearing from you.

Paul and Hattie



## **Being the Chair of the Board**

**By Martin Green CBE**

My time as Chair of the Board of Trustees for Middle Child has been many things: exciting, challenging, stimulating and inspiring. Most importantly, it's been an opportunity to lead an organisation that I hugely admire.

For the past ten years, Middle Child have pioneered the form of gig theatre, made fantastic work that sits at the centre of Hull's community, always operated with true transparency and integrity, and become nationally recognised for their artistic excellence. They have achieved so much in their first decade and I can't wait to see what the next ten years will bring.

I first came across Middle Child in my role as director of Hull 2017 UK City of Culture. I was instantly drawn to their work because it is energetic, fun, thought-provoking and, most importantly, hugely accessible to an audience who aren't your usual theatre-going crowd.

***"Fantastic work that fits at the centre of Hull's community"***

I was also drawn to their company values. They prioritise the wellbeing of the people they work with, strive for their performances to be affordable and accessible to everyone

and are committed to creating greater equality in who can make and enjoy theatre. These values not only align with my own, but are also of vital importance to our industry.

This has been my first time chairing a board and it's been a hugely rewarding experience. I've had the opportunity to make key strategic decisions with Middle Child, know the inner workings of the company and impact upon the future of one of the most exciting theatre companies in the UK. I would actively encourage you to apply even if you haven't been a chair or trustee before – the key things to consider are being passionate, knowledgeable in your field and dedicated.

I will miss being Chair of Middle Child's Board. It's been a rollercoaster four years, in which I've overseen the company become an NPO, produce several award-winning shows, inspire a new generation of theatre makers and steer their way, with great care, through the Covid-19 pandemic. At all times Middle Child have operated with artistic integrity, genuine love for their staff and audiences, and been transparent and open with everyone they work with.

If you are considering applying – go for it. You will be challenged, stimulated and inspired by the work of this incredible company.

Martin Green CBE

## Board of Trustees

### Current

Jane Fallowfield, *literary manager at the Royal Court*

Fiona Hope, *student at the University of Hull*

John R. Wilkinson, *artistic associate at York Theatre Royal*

Emma Tucker, *accountant*

### Outgoing

Aysha Powell, *co-founder of LVL/UP Arts*

Meg Miszczuk, *freelance project manager and arts and culture adviser*

Sharon Darley, *independent artist*

David Watson, *executive director of audiences and media at National Museums Liverpool*

“ There is a disconnect between an industry predominantly based in metropolitan areas, which faces its own ongoing issues around diversity, and those who feel unheard, those who never go to the theatre, who think it’s not for them, or who have no access. Middle Child is the kind of company that can bridge the gap, one that needs to be addressed when the effects of austerity, pressure on the NHS and schools, and benefit cuts are getting worse, not better.

**Lyn Gardner**



# Our Work

## Our vision

A world where anybody can create and engage with world-class theatre, regardless of their background or where they have come from.

## Our mission

To energise a new generation of audiences and artists in Hull and beyond.

To provide a step-change in our industry in the stories we tell, the way we do things and the people we work with.

## Our strategy

### For audiences:

We will create theatre that brings people together for a good night out with big ideas.

### For artists:

We will invest our time, money and resources in the artists and theatre-makers living and working in Hull.

## Our values

- We prioritise the wellbeing of the people we work with and challenge damaging behaviours and habits within the industry;
- We endeavour for our work to be affordable and accessible to all;
- We do not believe there is a place for elitism within theatre;
- We are a Hull company and that is vital to our work, our stories and our entire ethos;
- We put Hull artists and theatre-makers at the heart of our creative process, our growth and our successes;
- We are determined to increase the diversity of artists and audiences in Hull and beyond.

## The Middle Child style

- We blur the lines between gigs, stand-up, theatre and a night out, with a focus on breaking down barriers;
- We tell stories that are new, Northern and reflect the diversity of the United Kingdom;
- Our work prioritises liveness, remaining responsive and reactive to each audience;
- We believe theatre works best as a social event with a reason to come early or stay late.

# The Past 18 Months

In March 2020 we were in the strongest position in our history, producing quality theatre while building resilience and sustainability since becoming an NPO in 2018.

Middle Child led the next generation of theatre-makers, producing nationally recognised, award-winning new writing and running a thriving arts hub in Hull, with a world-class artist development programme supporting new talent.

We built reserves and general funds for long-term security and grew our organisation from the ground up to be a model of best practice.

Sadly, the pandemic had a huge impact on the above. Our community space was sold, three productions cancelled, reserve growth halted and a significant amount of Theatre Tax Relief income lost.

Without a home or performance programme, our status as one of the UK's most exciting and progressive companies, based outside of London, in a city expected to be badly hit by the pandemic, was at risk.

However, despite these difficulties, we found ways to repurpose what we do and how. We took a flexible approach and quickly found ways to

continue supporting and developing artists, audiences and our workforce, using three key questions to guide our decision making:

1. How can we support our staff and freelancers through this time?
2. How do we use this time to improve as an organisation and ensure long-term sustainability?
3. How can we find new ways to create work without the liveness that is key to our company style?

As a result, we have emerged with a renewed sense of vision, purpose and community, fully in-line with Arts Council England's Let's Create strategy, and begun to apply what we learned from this challenging time. This includes returning to the stage with our sell-out show, 'we used to be closer than this' and delivering Recover, Restart and Reimagine, a ground-breaking support programme for Hull-based theatre freelancers.

We continue to be a vital source of development and employment opportunities for new artists, have a scheduled programme of extremely high-quality work, are a proven entry point for audiences new to theatre, are soon to launch our new home, which will serve the people of Hull, and have a robust plan and vision for long-term sustainability.



we used to be closer than this, Jul 2021



Recover, Restart and Reimagine, Jun 2021

# Role Description

**Position:** Chair of the Board of Trustees

**Direct reports:** Artistic Director and Joint-CEO, Executive Director and Joint-CEO and Executive Director (Maternity Cover)

## Role summary

Middle Child Theatre Ltd is a charity.

The Chair of the Board of Trustees provides leadership and direction enabling the Board to fulfil its responsibilities for the overall governance and strategic direction of the organisation. The Chair ensures that the organisation complies with its governing documents, company law, and any other relevant legislation or regulations, and that it pursues its objects as defined in its governing document.

The Chair works in partnership with the Chief Executives to support the employees, and optimises the relationship between the Board and the staff.

In addition to the general responsibilities of a Trustee (see below), the Chair has a number of tasks specific to that role.

Principle responsibilities of the Chair:

- Providing leadership for the Board in setting the strategy and policies of the organisation;
- Planning the annual cycle of Board meetings and setting the agendas;
- Chairing and facilitating the Board meetings;
- Ensuring that decisions taken at Board meetings are implemented;
- Representing the organisation at appropriate events, meetings or functions;
- Acting as a spokesperson for the organisation where appropriate;
- Liaising with the Chief Executives to keep an overview of the

- theatre company's affairs and to provide support as appropriate;
- Reviewing and appraising the performance of the Chief Executives;
  - Sitting on appointment panels as required;
  - Acting as final stage adjudicator for disciplinary and grievance procedures if required;
  - Attending and being a member of other committees or working groups when appropriate in role as Chair;
  - Oversee Middle Child's commitment to being a PiPA (Parents and Carers in Performing Arts) Charter Partner, striving towards creating a more family friendly working environment. PiPA campaigns to enable and empower parents, carers and employers to achieve sustainable change in attitudes and practices in order to attract, support and retain a more diverse and flexible workforce;
  - With the Chief Executives, recruit and interview new Trustees.

## **Remuneration and Time Responsibility**

This is an unpaid post. Reasonable out-of-pocket expenses will be reimbursed.

The initial term will be for three years in accordance with the Memorandum and Articles of Association.

The Board meets at least four times a year, with an additional annual 'Away Day'. In addition to Board meetings, it is envisaged that a member of the Board will hold regular meetings with the Chief Executives, attend shows and other occasions held by Middle Child, and represent the company at local, regional or national events as required.

Time commitments will therefore vary and a flexible approach is essential.

# Person Specification

**Middle Child welcomes and encourages applications from everyone regardless of their age, sex, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation, gender identity, ethnicity, disability or nationality.**

We are a PiPA (Parents and Carers in Performing Arts) partner. PiPA enables and empowers parents, carers and employers to achieve sustainable change in attitudes and practices in order to attract, support and retain a more diverse and flexible workforce. We are always happy to discuss solutions that allow people to balance their caring responsibilities with their working lives, for example through job shares or flexible working arrangements.

## **Essential experience, skills and qualities**

- Commitment to Middle Child, its core values, ethos and brand
- Leadership ability
- Strategic vision
- Integrity
- Willingness to devote the necessary time and effort to the duties of membership
- Ability to take decisions for the good of the organisation
- Good, independent judgement
- Good communication skills
- Tact and diplomacy
- Willingness to speak one's mind and listen to the views of others
- Ability to work effectively as a member of a team
- Understanding of the legal responsibilities and liabilities of a trustee

## **Desireable experience, skills and qualities**

- Prior experience of committee and/or trustee work
- Knowledge of the NPO application process and reporting requirements
- Knowledge of, or experience in, the arts and theatre
- A good knowledge of any networks in Hull and the city region

# How to Apply

The deadline for applications is **9am on Monday 20 September 2021**.

Please submit a covering letter and an up-to-date CV to [hattie@middlechildtheatre.co.uk](mailto:hattie@middlechildtheatre.co.uk), with the subject heading 'Chair Application' to apply for the role.

Please tell us why you would like to be the Chair of the Board of Trustees for Middle Child, and how you possess the experience, skills and qualities listed above.

We will also accept a video or voice note (no longer than five minutes) in place of a covering letter, if preferred.

We value applications from a range of applicants. If you need any assistance, have any additional access needs or would like an informal conversation before making an application please do get in touch with our executive director (maternity cover), Hattie Callery on [hattie@middlechildtheatre.co.uk](mailto:hattie@middlechildtheatre.co.uk).

Interviews will be held on **Tuesday 5 October**.

## Key Dates

Once the Chair has been appointed, we will go through a period of recruitment for new Trustees, with which we would like the new chair to be involved.

Trustee shortlisting:	Tuesday 26 October
Trustee interviews (online):	Friday 29 October Tuesday 2 November
Middle Child 10th birthday party (in Hull):	Thursday 4 November



# MIDDLE CHILD

[middlechildtheatre.co.uk](http://middlechildtheatre.co.uk)  
@middlechildhull

Us Against Whatever, Apr 2019