

# THE HANDLEBARDS

## Cycling Shakespeare Tour 2025

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### Call for Company Managers

We are seeking a **Company Manager** for our 2025 touring production of **'Much Ado About Nothing'**, which will be visiting (mostly) outdoor venues from May - September 2025.

#### Tour and Production Information

The HandleBards are a four-strong troupe of cycling actors, who have performed their unique brand of irreverent, energetic and environmentally sustainable Shakespeare in venues across the world.

In Summer 2025, a troupe will cycle from London to Scotland, stopping every 30 miles or so for nightly performances in castles, gardens, theatres, bicycle shops and stately homes throughout the UK. The troupe will be managed and supported by the Company Manager throughout.

The Company Manager will be required to cycle approximately 30 miles per day at a pace of 10mph, for up to six days per week during the length of the contract. The troupe typically perform a 5/6-show week with most performances taking place outdoors in all weathers. Bikes, training and related equipment will be provided by the HandleBards. Set, props and costumes will be transported using two bicycle trailers, which will be carried by company members on a rota system.

Accommodation is provided by the company for touring days, and will largely be in hotels and Airbnb's with room sharing, but will occasionally include dormitories and homestays. Please note that we cannot provide accommodation for the rehearsal period in London.

Please have a read through the day-in-the-life of a Company Manager document at the end of this pack for an idea of what touring by bicycle with The HandleBards looks like.

We want our workforce to be representative of all sections of society and welcome applications from everyone. If you require the information in this callout in a different format, or would like to discuss any access requirements for the role, please contact us at [info@handlebards.com](mailto:info@handlebards.com).

#### Job Specification & Key Tasks

##### **Key Tasks:**

1. To cycle with and manage the company on tour, and to liaise with venues.
2. Act as the main point of contact between the troupe and the production/creative team on-tour.
3. To maintain 'the book' during rehearsals, write daily rehearsal reports during the rehearsal period and aid in the preparation of the props and costume inventory.
4. To participate in regular production meetings throughout and prior to the contract.
5. To navigate and lead the daily ride, and to regularly maintain, clean and repair the bikes and trailers whilst on tour (for which training and support will be provided).
6. To draw up, set and communicate company calls – including maintaining the tour schedule.
7. To undertake and manage get-in and get-outs of touring shows and to stage manage during performances, including front of house and technical duties as required.
8. To write ride reports, and daily show reports and circulate them to the production and artistic team,

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and feed back to the company as needed.

9. Record and maintain accurate time-sheets for the company.
10. Assist the production team in updating social media streams with relevant content.
11. To assist with the setup and sale of merchandise at each performance.
12. To organise, or undertake repairs and laundry/dry cleaning of props, set and costumes as required.
13. To be the primary first aider for the troupe on tour (for which training will be provided, if required).
14. Assist the producer with tour wrap up; preparing and transporting kit to storage, and vehicle return.

*This is not an exhaustive list and we may add additional tasks or duties which are of a similar nature or level.*

### **Personal Specification**

We are looking for organised and logistically minded candidates with a broad skill base and a flair for adventure. The role would particularly suit candidates with experience in stage management, producing, project management, technical theatre, live events or production management.

We're keen to hear from as many candidates as possible and are aware that the skills we're looking for may have been gained outside of a theatre. If you have lots of transferrable skills, or don't meet all of the criteria below but think you'd be a great fit please apply, or get in touch with any questions.

### **Essential Skills**

- Experience of supporting theatrical or live productions/events.
- Experience of managing and supporting small teams.
- Great problem solver and multi-tasker.
- Excellent organisation and communication skills.
- A passion or interest in cycling.
- Clean driving license and comfortable driving a van.

### **Desirable Skills**

- Experience of stage management, producing or project management.
- Theatre touring experience.
- Experience of long-distance cycling.
- Interest in/experience of noting rehearsals and performances.
- Bicycle maintenance skills.
- Technical theatre skills including costume and set maintenance.

*The tour involves some international travel, so all applicants must hold a valid passport and no reason to be denied entry to EU member states. All applicants must have the right to work in the UK.*

**The fee for the post is £600 per week plus a £22.50 per diem for touring days. The contract is approximately 24 weeks long, and includes around 1500 miles of cycling.**

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The terms of the contract will adhere to the conditions of the Equity Charter for Outdoor Theatre and any applicable variation agreement.

The Company Manager will be required to attend training sessions and production meetings prior to the contract starting, which will be paid on a pro-rata basis.

## How to Apply

Submit a short personal statement outlining how your skills meet the personal specification and a copy of your CV by 12pm on Monday 13 January to [info@handlebards.com](mailto:info@handlebards.com), with 'Company Manager Application' followed by your name in the subject.

Please also complete the equal opportunities form <https://forms.gle/Mr6ZqCZB8X579CFBA>. The form will be kept separate from your application and will not form any part of the assessment of your application. This data will be stored securely and anonymously and will only be used for internal monitoring.

We will acknowledge all applications by email, and will let both successful and unsuccessful applicants know of their application's progress at each stage.

Statements can be submitted in written or video format. We are also open to submissions in any other format that allows you to show off your experience in the best way, and if you have any questions or want to discuss access needs for the application process or working with us then please get in touch.

We encourage applications from candidates of all backgrounds and welcome different experiences, skills and stories.

Direct all questions about the position to the producer, Will Orton, at [info@handlebards.com](mailto:info@handlebards.com).

## Key information and dates

**The HandleBards:** *Much Ado About Nothing*

A four-actor production of Shakespeare's original, slightly abridged.

Associate Director: **Mark Collier**, originally Directed by: **Emma Sampson**

Application deadline **12pm - Monday 13 January**

First-round Interviews **w/c 20 January**

*We are not currently planning for a second round of interviews, but in the event that we do these will be held w/c 27 January.*

Decision made by **w/c 27 January**

Rehearsals: **14 April - 16 May (London)**

First performance: **17 May**

Last performance: **17 September**

End of contract: **21 September**

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## A Day in the Life of a Company Manager

This example schedule should give you a good idea of what a day of cycling with an evening performance looks like with The HandleBards.

### Tonight's Venue – An outdoor amphitheatre north of Edinburgh

7pm Show      Mid-August      Weather - Drizzle

9:30AM – Travel Call

*You've called the company for 9:30AM to check over bikes, load them with panniers, hitch the trailers up and get ready for the cycle ahead.*

10:00AM – Start Cycling

*Today's cycle is approximately 25 miles but quite hilly. For a cycle like this you'll normally be pedalling for approximately 3.5 hours with an hour extra allocated for punctures/stoppage just in case.*

11:00 – 11:15AM – Pit stop

*Quick pit stop at a corner shop to stock up on flapjacks and snacks.*

12:30PM – Lunch (break in travel call)

*You stop at a local village for an hour's lunch break and you let the company know they're called back at 1:30pm to resume cycling.*

1:30PM – Travel Call – Back on the Road

*You've got around 9 miles left to go.*

1:45 – 2:00PM – Puncture!

*Someone has a puncture! You fix it quickly and are back on the road.*

3:15PM – Arrive at the venue - End of travel call (3:30PM)

*The company break on arrival while you check in with the venue manager for 15 minutes before breaking – the venue are providing some lunch.*

5:00-9:30PM - Show Call

*5pm – you give the company the next day's calls and coordinate the set build/performance area setup (this doesn't take too long as everything fits on the back of a bike), 5:30pm – the company warm-up, 6pm – help seat the first audience members to arrive/sell programmes, 7pm – 9pm – the show: record timesheets, write show report & daily admin tasks, 9-9:45pm – pack down.*

10:00PM – End of Day

*You've booked a taxi to a local hotel where you're sharing a twin room.*

It's a long day but we make sure to balance things out over the tour: there are days with no cycling when you're at the same venue for 2-3 performances, cycle days with no shows, scheduled days off and some shorter cycles. Our working hours adhere to the Equity Charter for Outdoor Theatre.