

Who would have thought Kynren would have exceeded so many expectations?

In our first seven seasons, more than 350,000 ticket holders travelled to Bishop Auckland to experience a show that is now one of the Top 5 Performances in the UK.

The all-volunteer Kynren cast & crew - aka "Archers" – receive every show night standing ovations and rave reviews, and even earned the prestigious Queen's Award for Voluntary Service, the MBE for volunteer groups.

Why join Kynren Cast & Crew?

There are as many reasons to join as there are Archers... and there are 1,000 of us!!! You may want to make new friends or spend time with old ones, add new skills to your CV, gain self-confidence, have fun, get work experience to help you find a job, have a change of scenery from work (or from home!), improve your fitness, do something with your family, give back to the community, make a difference, or just do something cool in your free time...

What really matters is that you are willing to spend some of your leisure time to create an extraordinary show for our audiences.

What will I get out of it?

If you join us, you become an 'Archer' and a part of a very special community. You will leave who you are during the day at the gate and become part of something special, where no individual is greater than the whole and where the show is the most important thing for everyone, and our only common goal. It is a community where everyone looks out for each other.

It's not all going to be rosy; 1,000 individuals from all walks of life creating an enormous show is a journey, and you will be challenged at times and you will get tired, there will be laughter and perhaps a few tears.

What we do know for sure is that there will always be someone to cheer you on, to pick you up and bring a smile back to your face if you falter. That's what being an Archer is all about.

Every year, between 80% and 90% of the Archers from the previous year are returning.

That is virtually unheard of in volunteer organisations. This should give you an indication of how much they have enjoyed it.

One promise we make to you is that you will get a lot more than you ever give. Take it from all Archers!

Why is Kynren entirely orchestrated by volunteers?

We want Kynren to create opportunities for individuals, communities and businesses in County Durham, bringing much needed tourism expenditure across the region. Each summer we attract tens of thousands of visitors to the region. These visitors bestow a positive economic impact on the community as they eat, drink, sleep and be merry. It's that simple.

Our vision is centred on people, not profit.

A purely commercial show is just a show, while a world class show with volunteers has a soul.

For everyone who participates, this is about a journey, being part of a collective adventure larger than life, generating pride for us as individuals and as a community.

For audiences coming to see our show, our passion, professionalism and commitment as volunteers will be the icing on an amazing cake.

I do not have any special skills, can I still join?

Of course! Do not worry about having, or not having, any special skills before you join us; all you need is enthusiasm, a positive attitude and a commitment to make the show the extraordinary, spine-tingling live action night spectacular we know it can be for audiences and Archers alike.

There will be opportunities for people of all ages, all abilities, all backgrounds, and all kinds of personality. You can be shy or extroverted, athletic or steady, creative or clumsy – there will be a role for you, and often one you never thought you could do. We want to work with you to find just what you can achieve and to help you get there.

The trailer of Kynren looks just fantastic, but can I really do what they do?

Trust us, you will surprise yourself with just what you can achieve, and we are committed to working with you to develop your full potential. We will train you professionally alongside other Archers. That said, we will need some specialist skills for certain roles – in horsemanship or in technical direction for example. We'll be constantly on the look-out for your hidden talents, and to help you find a way to enjoy your newly discovered talent – who knows, you might be working with the pros in 2022, you might be the pro in 2025!

I do not know anyone, it is daunting?

"Kynren" means generations.

Joining as a family has proven to be a great idea. Children gain confidence, teens mature, young adults build networks of friends, mums do something for themselves, dads learn new skills, retirees re-engage with their community. Family bonds grow stronger.

Kynren is itself a very special family, so if you are brave and join us without knowing anyone before, you will make friends in no time, even if you are naturally shy. It is the Kynren magic that operates when people have to work together to create a show!

I want to be part of it, but what can I do as a member of Kynren Cast & Crew?

The Kynren Cast & Crew are not just cast on stage or crew backstage but individuals in many other visitor services, all equally contributing to the reputation of the show.

ARCHER ROLES AVAILABLE IN 2023

SHOW TEAM

The Show Team is made up of cast, as well as all the teams who work to get them ready to go on stage.

Onstage:

CAST

The cast on stage are the actors, fighters, dancers and animal handlers who all bring Kynren to life - so it's important that we're all well-trained, well-rehearsed and ready for showtime!

Do not worry about having – or not having – a special skill before you join us; all you need is the enthusiasm and a commitment to make the show extraordinary.

Backstage:

COSTUME TEAM

The Costume Team is responsible for producing, altering and maintaining the elaborate costumes throughout the year. They make sure the actors and dancers on stage always look their best. They work off season, during rehearsal and show nights. They are involved in costume logistics and cast dressing.

PROPS TEAM

The Props Team is in charge of preparing and maintaining the props and the sets all year

round. It also manages the prop logistics on rehearsals and show nights.

GO TEAM

The Go Team is an extension of the Stage Management Team. They are key players in guaranteeing the smooth running of the show. They send cast onstage at the right place at the right time.

EXPERIENCE TEAM

The Experience Team ensures that every visitor to the Eleven Arches night show has the best possible time from the moment they arrive in the car park to the moment they leave. They safeguard the first and last impression that our guests have of Kynren.

Far from being the quiet team, we depend on the Experience Team to be even more outgoing than the cast onstage. They are there to greet visitors with a smile, in a warm, friendly and engaging manner, keeping them entertained after the show as they leave the site.

During all four phases of show night, as an Experience Team Archer you could find yourself in any of the following roles, or several in one night: Box Office Assistant, Shop Assistant, Security Bag Checker, Ticket Check Assistant, Kiosk/Trolley Sales Assistant, Traffic/parking Control, Accessibility Assistants, Tribune Ushers/Marshals.

TECHNICAL TEAM

The Tech Team is at the cutting edge of each performance, ensuring that everything runs like clockwork from the tech suite. They keep the lights, sound and video, mechanics and hydro works running properly. The Pyro team who ensures special effects, fireworks and fire are all deployed safely for the delight of our audience.

As a Technical Team Archer you could find yourself in one or more of the following roles on show night: Lighting Team, Sound Team, Video Team, Show Control Team, Technical Room Operators, Follow Spot Operators, Electrical Team or Sound Monitoring.

CAVALRY TEAM

One of most unique elements of our show is the stunning role our horses and cavalry play. Just as horses were an integral part of the history of England, our horses are centre stage whether riding into battle, jousting, flying flags or pulling carts during pastoral scenes.

Our Cavalry Team ensures our equine stars are well-fed, exercised, groomed, dressed to the nines, ridden beautifully and driven to perfection.

Onstage Cavalry

- Show Rider Team
- Carriage Driving Team

Backstage Cavalry (Non riding roles)

- Cavalry Go (Stage Management Team)
- Cavalry Dressing
- Grooms

OPERATIONS

The Operations Team ensures that the grounds of Kynren are fit for purpose. They keep the 8,000-seat venue pristine and safe for the cast & crew and our visitors at all times.

On show nights, the following teams are involved to manage clockwork operations:

- First Aid Team
- Rescue Divers / Rescue Swimmers
- Event Ops
- Show Ops (operational aspects surrounding our facilities and estates)

Notes for Parents/legal guardians - please read carefully

Any person aged between 5 and 15 as the season commences is automatically enrolled in one of the cast teams on stage, and they are considered as a child from a performance licensing perspective.

Due to licensing and operational reasons, the following conditions apply for all children aged 5 to 15 as of 28th July 2023:

Any child will need to have an Archer over the age of 18 who can act as a responsible adult for him/her at general rehearsals as well as on show nights: this can be a parent, legal guardian, family member, or any other person over the age of 18 nominated by you.

*Any child aged 5 to 15 is welcome to apply, **AFTER** contacting us on volunteer@kynren.com to discuss the specific operational arrangement for our cast of Under 16s.*

What are the Open Call sessions?

They are the start of the adventure for applicants to become Archers, and an introduction to joining us if you are still undecided.

Scheduled to last 90 minutes, our Open Call sessions will help you discover all the opportunities available and the profiles relevant to each role, including the associated commitment.

You will take a behind-the-scenes look at the Kynren site, learn about the show and listen to Team Leaders to get a feel for what each team does. You can let us know your preferred team options so that we can do our very best to place you in the team which suits you and your skills. So hurry, come to see for yourself before you finally commit!

If I join, how much time will I have to give?

Each team has different expectations of time commitment allocated to training and attendance hours on show nights. This is why it is important you discuss these at our Open Calls to understand what best suits your lifestyle and aspirations.

All activities start from January/February, with an induction programme and specific training for all teams. Then after Easter the entire family of Archers is on site to prepare the Season with General Rehearsals. The dates can be found below.

Each show requires a base number for our Cast & Crew, and yet the recruitment target is for a higher number to allow for a rota and a commitment to as many of our 7 Kynren shows in 2023 for each Archer. You can choose which of the shows you attend.

2023 Kynren dates

Saturday 29 July - 9:15 pm
Saturday 5 August - 8:45 pm
Saturday 12 August - 8:30 pm

Saturday 19 August - 8:30 pm
Saturday 26 August - 8:00 pm
Saturday 2 September - 7:30 pm
Saturday 9 September - 7:30 pm

We know that many of you only have evenings and weekends free, so the training is organised accordingly.

We know we need you to sustain your energies and enthusiasm all through the season. You won't want to let your fellow Archers down, but there will be times when you can't be there and we will work with you to make all this possible.

Ok, I think I want to give it a try... what is the next step?

If you are thinking of joining us, come to our next Open Call which date is on our website.

Please reach out to us on volunteer@kynren.com to register your attendance!

**Children aged 5 to 15 must be accompanied by an adult when attending an Open Call.*

We will send you the application form link. Once submitted we aim to come back to you within a week with a role allocated. You get to state your first two choices and we will do our best to accommodate, but no promises!

Regardless of the role you land - on stage, behind the scenes or visitor facing - each and every member of our cast&crew is having the adventure of their lifetime!