



Luton Culture Trust Business Plan 2018-22



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SUMMARY

Luton Culture Trust is an independent charity and company limited by guarantee, established in 2008. We produce and present year-round programmes of activity across our two theatres, museums, arts centre, gardens, historic hat factories and network of libraries.

We deliver and develop library services for Luton Borough Council and we also manage the town's heritage collections and archives.

We have a collection of over 2 million artefacts, and we hold the most extensive and complete hat and headwear collection in the UK and the Mossman carriage collection at Stockwood Discovery Centre is the largest in Europe.

We have an incredible resource of over 1.5 million local photographs and maps and provide access to over 6million books through the London Libraries Consortia.

We are proud to be based in Luton and we welcome thousands of regular local and regional users to our venues.

We also invite the wider international community to engage with this incredibly diverse and stimulating town through our cultural offer.

Our purpose

We are a vibrant and progressive cultural Trust focussing on arts and culture and our purpose is to widen reach and develop talent through high quality arts and culture

Our vision

is to be recognised as a national arts and cultural exemplar

Our strategic aim

is to be financially sustainable by 2025 by generating over 50% of costs through our activity, facilities and trading

Our values

drive our choices, approach and organisational culture. We are;

- Passionate
- Relevant
- Inspirational
- Distinctive
- Ethical

Priorities:

Through this business plan, we are focussing on delivering three priorities through arts and culture and organisational development;

PRIORITY 1: Widening Reach

PRIORITY 2: Talent Development

PRIORITY 3: Sustainability.

Impact:

We contribute positively to the social, economic and cultural prosperity of our home-town Luton and surrounding regions. We improve lives by delivering our priorities and we will demonstrate and communicate this by measuring what we do against the following impact statements;

- **We care** for, regenerate and promote heritage and raise awareness of our environment
- **We provide** access to learning, information and culture for everyone through libraries
- **We increase** engagement in exemplary arts through diverse activity, venues and off-site programmes
- **We contribute** significantly to the economy by providing jobs, workspace and investment
- **We contribute** to the visitor economy through the promotion and animation of our 3 core sites
- **We help** our environment through recycling, local sourcing and energy efficiency
- **We invest** in skills, develop talent, commission research and collaborate in order to foster growth

1. OUR PRIORITIES

We nurture our customers and audiences and we engage the creativity of artists, curators, writers, performers and producers to make great new work. Through our programmes we actively promote the value of arts and culture in creating a sense of place, regeneration, wellbeing, community cohesion and in improving the quality of people's lives.

Across our programme we provide creative opportunities and activities for young people to inspire them and generate skills for life. We create transition and progression routes between formal education and successful careers to enable anyone with a skill, interest or passion in arts and culture to meet their full potential.

Arts and cultural activity, resources, venues, stock and collections are an important way for the Trust to deliver its objectives and so access to our communities particularly through Libraries is a priority for us.



Fig. 1 Stockwood Discovery Centre Gardens
Image: Luton Culture

Our Programme:

What we programme:

theatre, dance, circus arts, film, literature, story-telling, exhibitions, workshops, talks, artist residencies, family events, comedy and music. We develop and promote our programme in three seasons; we celebrate in Autumn, share in Summer and experiment in Spring.

Where we programme:

the Hat Factory studio theatre, gallery, basement lounge & bar, arts workshop, Connors café and courtyard, all Library open spaces and Luton Central Library Theatre, Wardown House, Museum and Gallery, Murray Barford gallery, exhibition galleries and gardens, Stockwood Discovery Centre, special exhibition space and outdoor events spaces and the Luton Cultural Quarter comprising old hat factories and animation spaces within the public realm.

Our primary target market is:

local, under 25s, artists/creative practitioners and diverse communities: We will predominantly target young people under the age of 25, students and creative practitioners and arts graduates. We also re-engage lapsed local users or those who attend infrequently and provide opportunities for them to engage more regularly. We will specifically focus on increasing audiences and users from our diverse communities especially those who rarely engage in arts and culture.

Our secondary target market is:

regional and national: We will develop incentives and campaigns to attract people from a one hour travel time by bike, car, bus, train or plane to attend our major programmes and events and use/hire our spaces.

International partnerships:

are also important to us to connect our work between the Trust and national and international partners who share arts and cultural objectives with us. By flight it's one hour to Paris, two hours to Milan and seven hours to New York. We will build on our existing cultural links with Lahore, Karachi, Marseille and Berlin.



Fig. 2 Colour of Time Holi Festival
Image: Luton Culture

PRIORITY 1: WIDENING REACH

As arts & cultural engagement specialists, we encourage more people, particularly from our diverse community, to enjoy and learn about arts and culture, engage with heritage and use their talents and interests to make a difference. We invest in opportunities that enable anyone to take part in reading, writing, performing, making, creating, experimenting, discussing, collaborating and presenting culture. We actively support and showcase artistic talent, creativity and skill.

Work streams:

1.1 Audience Development:

We will improve our management of audience data and monitor use patterns and trends. For every activity, site and project we will know the characteristics and needs of existing users, have a strategy for targeting new-users and measure the impact of our offer & activities.

1.2 Visitor Experience:

We will achieve consistency across all our sites and activities, operations and libraries to be responsive and customer focussed at all times in order to retain high quality customer satisfaction. We will establish and respond to a new regular satisfaction and perception survey for users and non-users

1.3 Arts & Cultural Programme:

We will grow our artistic programme to meet audience needs, take risks, be of national acclaim and intensify arts partnerships. We will direct and deliver curated, collaborative and co-commissioned programmes and will prioritise our three core sites, Hat District and Library Theatre.

1.4 Experiential Libraries:

We will increase library use and membership, improve literacy and cultural engagement through our new cultural learning offer. We will deliver our service level agreement with Luton Borough Council to their satisfaction. We will review what our customers want and need.

1.5 National Portfolio Organisation:

We have secured our NPO status with Arts Council England in 2018 and will use it to activate more Museum Makers and deliver the creative case for diversity through arts engagement with schools and with national and international touring partners.

1.6 Creative & Industrious collections:

We will promote Luton's making and manufacturing strengths historically, presently and potentially through our collections. We will focus on promoting, partnerships and funding to develop our collections of Hats and headwear at Wardown and vehicles and gardens at Stockwood. We will develop our collections policy and long-term plan for the wider collection and its management.

1.7 Digital Engagement: We will be pioneers and ahead of the curve by improving the quality of communication with our customers, our operations and promote innovation. We will develop more sustainable practices, incorporate new and more efficient technology and automation for transactions.

1.8 Luton Invites: We will curate a long-term programme inviting artists, place makers, architects, ecologists, historians, philosophers and designers to respond to Luton and collaborate to create new public commissions and arts interventions. The commissions will aim to promote exploration and discovery between our sites.



Fig. 3 Hat Factory dance performance
Image: Luton Culture

PRIORITY 2: TALENT DEVELOPMENT

As talent and skills developers, we will provide support for emerging artists and creative practitioners through creative workspaces, bursaries, residencies and partnerships that promote and showcase talent at all stages.

We will invest more resources into providing opportunities for people to regularly take part and grow their skills and talents in order to broaden horizons and support creative business/career growth. We will promote young people's engagement in the visual arts, design, theatre, film, drama and production and broker partnerships with professional arts companies and the wider business sector to enable young people to access opportunities and apply their skills.

Work streams:

2.1 Skills & Talent Pipeline:

We will lead in developing stronger progression routes for young people interested and skilled in the arts. We will complement but not replicate formal arts and cultural education by working in partnership with schools, Colleges and Universities and filling the gaps. The Hat District Creative Ecosystem will demonstrate progression through jobs, start-ups and creative industries enabled. We will advocate for cultural careers and we will draw upon Luton's successful Alumni. We promote positive and diverse arts and cultural role-models to inspire young people and promote cultural leadership internally and externally.

2.2 Bursaries & Awards:

We will enable talent development specifically to our target audience of young people and people from BAME backgrounds. We shall provide new bursary funding, membership and workspace to promote new ideas and innovation, micro-business initiatives and enable talent to flourish and progress into a career. We will also provide incubator and start-up opportunities within our creative workspaces, enabling young people to work within a professional environment.

2.3 Hat District Capital Project:

We will develop a new creative ecology of 25,000sqft of creative workspace in central Luton. We will develop and deliver the capital project ensuring quality, functionality and high quality workspace that will enable 154 jobs by 2021. The Hat District includes Hat House, Hat Works, Hat Studios, the Hat Factory Arts Centre and The Storefront Gallery and these functions will be fully self-funding by 2022.

2.4 Diversity, Learning & Wellbeing:

We will develop a clear cultural learning offer at our core cultural sites and libraries which encourages reading, writing, creativity, curiosity and innovation, play and learning. We will specifically focus on young people and positive mental health and wellbeing. Programmes and new audiences will be encouraged to connect with other work streams including our skills and talent pipeline, Library and Museum Makers and arts and cultural programmes.



Fig. 4 Stockwood Discovery Centre Gardens
Image: Luton Culture

PRIORITY 3: SUSTAINABILITY

As a diligent cultural organisation, we will use our resources effectively and we will demonstrate the value and impact of our charitable work.

We will manage a sustained reduction in the environmental impact of our organisation, our activities, processes and systems. We will also develop our IT and digital systems to improve customer services, internal processes, efficiency, access to information and website use.

Work streams:

3.1 Property: We will strategically focus on our three core sites and grow our freehold assets. We will set and maintain a very high standard of space for programming, public engagement and creative industries across all our sites. We will implement our newly adopted lettings strategy to secure partnerships across our venues that align with our priorities and values and adhere to principles of environmental sustainability

3.2 Brand and Marketing: We will develop our positioning through our high quality marketing, promotions, communications and key messaging, our cultural research and partnerships with national networks. We will launch a new 'Trust' operating name and brand which will promote our vision and values and articulate our positioning and the family of assets and functions that join up to be one Team and one Trust.

3.3 Cultural Impacts: We will ensure that all our cultural activities, events and programmes, site and practices and performance impact positively on creating vibrancy, widening reach and develop talent through arts and culture. We will also publish and communicate our impacts regularly to funders, customers and staff.

3.4 Ethically Greener: We will revisit our environmental credentials at Stockwood Discovery Centre and develop a green strategy that creates a strong direction relating to how we work, travel, consume

and trade. We will promote recycling, organic horticulture, local food production and regional sourcing.

3.5 Independent Operating Functions:

We will develop an independent IT and HR system. We will implement these in a cost-efficient way that will benefit our customers and streamline and update our operations.

3.6 Sustainable Trust Model: We will develop the Hat District creative industry implementation plan and a new commercial strategy for the Trading Company in order to introduce significant new incomes to the Trust by 2022 and to achieve our strategic vision of over half our operating costs by 2025.

3.7 Policies & Practice: We will review all policies and practice to better enable the charity and trading company to work ethically and professionally. We will be an exemplary custodian of our cultural charity and our reputation will grow from strength to strength.

3.8 Core Operations: We will ensure that we perform and that our core operations are managed effectively and efficiently. We will invest time and resources into our team to ensure everyone can achieve their full potential and flourish as specialists. We will celebrate and recognise high performance, nurture strategic partnerships and make good strategic investments for the future

2. CONTEXT



Fig. 5 Luton Culture staff
Image: Luton Culture

2.1 Our structure:

We are a not-for-profit charity with a turnover of c£5.5m and we own a trading company which gifts profit to the charity. We submit annual returns to Company's House and the charities commission. We have a Board of Trustees who provide governance and meet quarterly, monitoring performance through HR, Finance and Trading Sub-Committees. Day to day running of the charity is delegated to the Chief Executive who reports to the board.

2.2 Our revenue funding:

We generate funds through our ticket sales and events and also through our trading company profit (retail, catering and hire). We also receive an annual donation from London Luton Airport Limited (LLAL) and we receive restricted funds from Luton Borough Council for library services. In addition we have a new four year funding agreement with Arts Council as a new National Portfolio Organisation (NPO). In 2017 we generated 20% income through activity and trading and 80% through grants and our LLAL donation. It is recognised that this is not sustainable and that we are heavily reliant on these funds. It is our strategic aim to be financially sustainable in 2025 by generating net income which covers over 50% of our costs through trade and activity. This will mean that we are not over-reliant on grants and the LLAL donations to deliver our core work. Should funding and facilities be withdrawn, the Trust would be able to deliver its charitable objectives from its own freehold properties. Whilst this is not our preferred option, the model provides the charity with assurance that it has a very long-term sustainable future.

2.3 Our operation:

We operate primarily from Libraries and three cultural sites which are Wardown House, Museum & Gallery, Stockwood Discovery Centre and the Hat Factory Arts Centre and a network of community centres across Luton. The three cultural sites are important and attractive heritage buildings and grounds, and they are the main focus for our programmes, activities, commercial operation and audience development. Each site tells a different and important historical story about the people of Luton and they each create a different type of platform to present today's stories. Our library and community centre network enables us to engage with our communities, individuals and groups. The Luton Culture team of staff, volunteers and board members specialise in enabling our visitors to engage with our collections, programmes, resources and with each other. Most of our buildings are owned by Luton Borough Council (LBC) and we operate under a peppercorn rent, leases and agreements of varying terms and tenures. Our three core sites have long leases, we have two freehold properties along with a number of operational agreements with LBC relating to IT, HR and Health & Safety.

2.4 Our team:

We have 125 FTE staff and employ over 500 people a year (2017) which includes part time and casual staff. We have undergone a complete restructure of our permanent staff in the last two years. This process began in 2015 with the appointment of a new Chief Executive and the development of a new business plan 2017-21. The plan re-prioritised the work of the Trust and responded to an unplanned £1m reduction

in funding over two years from London Luton Airport. The organisational change led to a new staff structure which follows the DDD model (see below). In phase one, the Heads of Development were appointed to become a team of specialists in libraries, learning, arts programmes, museums/heritage, marketing/communications, finance and operations. The Development team then built their specialist Delivery teams as a phase 2. Finally as phase 3 the Director structure was reviewed to provide four cross-functioning 'business strategy' pillars – operations, public programmes, finance and business performance/sales. Everyone in this model is a specialist and we will all know the part we play in delivering the overall vision and business plan priorities.

2.5 Our DDD Model:

The Direction, Development and Delivery (DDD) model outlines the way in which we develop, deliver and direct our work, how we communicate and how we share ideas and, importantly, how we remain responsive and make decisions.

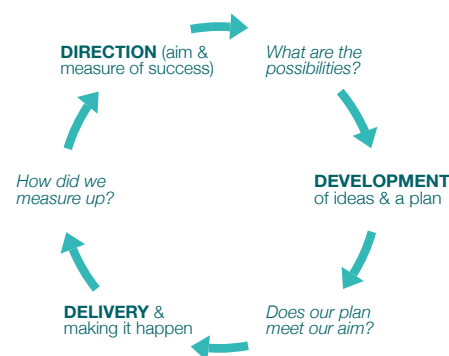


Fig. 6 Direction, Development & Delivery model

2.6 Luton:

Luton is a post-industrial town, known for its history in manufacturing through Vauxhall Motors, Electrolux and hat factories such as Olneys, Gurney's and Connors. Hat making began in Luton during the 16th century and this industry dominated the local economy. Luton-made straw and felt hats have been, and still are, marketed across the world. Once boasting over a hundred hat factories across the town, Luton now has four. Economically Luton now benefits from the development of London Luton Airport, a new enterprise zone, and excellent transport links and infrastructure which places Luton in an enviable position with easy access to national and international travel, trade and recreation. Luton has a population of just over 200,000 (51% are white, 30% Asian, 10% Black and 9% other). The 2011 census identified Luton to be a 'plural' town, where no one ethnic group is in the majority. Luton has a higher than national average population of young people and a lower than national average number of people over the age of 44.

2.7 Cultural engagement:

Research undertaken through the Active People survey in 2010, found that just 35% of Luton's population engage or participate in cultural activity, placing the town in the bottom 20% of least culturally engaged places in the UK. In September 2015 the Royal Society for the Arts (RSA) listed Luton as the second worst town (324th) for heritage engagement, assets and areas of natural beauty. Heritage Lottery Fund has identified Luton as a priority development area.

2.8 Our users:

We attract 74,000 visits to the Hat Factory Arts Centre, 200,000 to Stockwood Discovery Centre, over 80,000 visits to Wardown House, Museum & Gallery and 400,000 to the Central library. We lend over 600,000 books to 21,000 active users in our Libraries and with over 100 languages used in Luton we now draw our library book stock from the London Consortia to ensure that we can meet these diverse needs. The majority of our audiences are local with currently 20% of the visitors for the Hat Factory and Wardown House, Museum and Gallery coming from beyond Luton. Based on the Audience Agency's segmentation

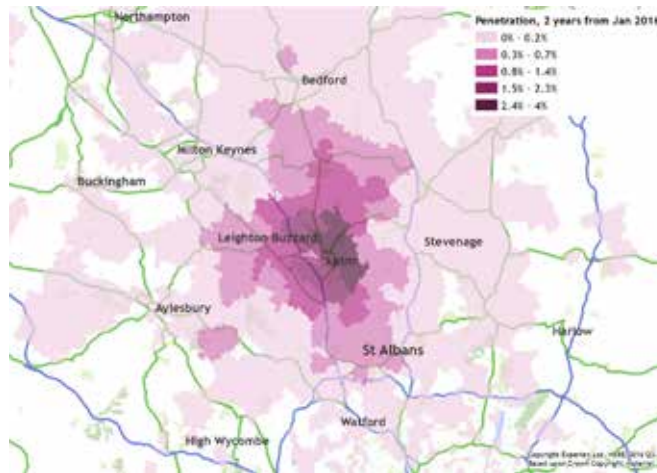


Fig. 7.1 Our regional reach showing Trust users postcodes
Image: Experian Ltd.

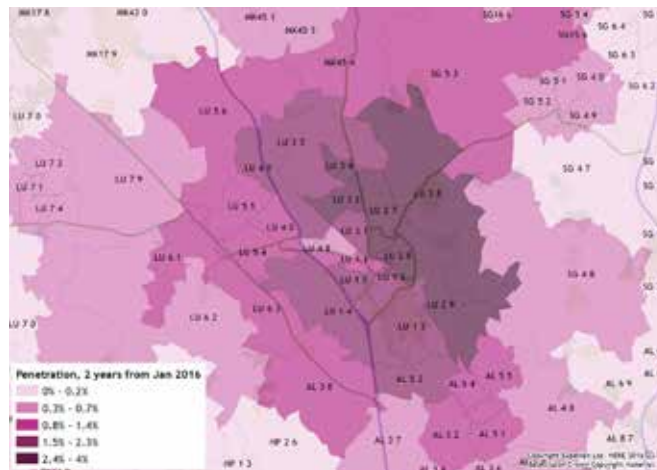


Fig. 7.2 Our local reach showing Trust users postcodes
Image: Experian Ltd.

tool Audience Spectrum, those attending ticketed events at the Hat Factory and Library Theatre are from the segments that are traditionally 'highly engaged' with the arts, categorised as people who like 'Trips & Treats' (26%), people described as 'Dormitory Dependable' (20%) and 'Commuter-land Culturebuffs' (13%). It could therefore be said that our existing audience is already culturally engaged, so we need to develop programmes, marketing strategies and incentives to better engage non-users.

2.9 Our regional reach:

Our ticketed audience map identified the reach of our current audience (2017-18) and where we need to target our marketing to intensify audiences locally. The maps below show the % of households in that area that bought a ticket through our ticketing system. This map also demonstrated what 'local' and 'regional' reach looks like for to the Trust.

3.

STRATEGIC CULTURAL VENUES

We focus our resources on animating our three cultural venues and heritage sites and ensure that they are well used, locally relevant and nationally important. Our three strategic sites are Wardown House and Gallery, Stockwood Discovery Centre and the Hat Factory Arts Centre. These venues will remain free entry and open throughout the year thanks to funding from London Luton Airport Limited.

Fig. 8 Wardown House Dining Room
Image: Luton Culture



3.1 Hat Factory Arts Centre

The Hat Factory Arts Centre is one of Luton's leading arts venues featuring live music, club nights, theatre, dance, films, children's activities, workshops, talks, networks and exhibitions.

We specifically target young and diverse audiences to engage in our programmes, but welcome everyone to be inspired by the UK's leading productions, artists and to develop artistic skills and talents through skills development and professional practice. Complementing our own programming, we welcome local/regional promoters to the venue, broadening our music offer and at the same time supporting young promoters and their businesses. We programme contemporary theatre and dance with a focus on fresh, new and relevant stories from both established and emerging touring companies who are making high quality work in the UK.

The Hat Factory Arts Centre comprises a 90 seat studio theatre, a basement venue, gallery and flat floor music venue, 13 creative workspaces, meeting rooms, Connors Café and offices. Capital refurbishment started in April 2018 and will take 12 months. Funded by the Trust, Arts Council England, SEMLEP Local Growth Fund and Luton Borough Council this project will transform public areas of the Arts Centre.

Fig 9 Visualisation of completed Hat Factory refurbishment 2019. Image by Architects 'Fabric Space'





Fig 10 Wardown House, Museum & Gallery
Image: Luton Culture

3.2 Wardown House, Museum and Gallery

Wardown House, Museum and Gallery is a mid-Victorian, Grade II listed building situated in the beautiful landscaped Wardown Park on the outskirts of Luton town centre.

Entry and parking is free and the House provides inspiring, eclectic and beautifully curated collections for people of all ages. The museum underwent a £3.5m redevelopment during 2016, reopening in April 2017 following a £1.8m grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) to conserve the historic building and transform the way its story is told.

Wardown House now gives visitors an insight into a wealthy family home during the Victorian period as the original use of each room is communicated through the

collections including the Billiard Room, Smoking Room, Library and Kitchen. With an exemplary hat collection, local and social historical collections, the displays chart the development of Luton and celebrate its diverse communities.

Originally designed in 1872 as a private residence for Frank Scargill, a local solicitor, the house was bought by two local Councillors in 1903 who opened up the grounds as a public park. The house was used as a military hospital during the First World War before becoming a museum in 1931. A new café provides direct access to the park and the Morning Room is now an art gallery as well as venue for events and exhibitions, and extensive work has made the building fully accessible.



Fig. 11 The Drawing Room
Image: Luton Culture

Fig.12 Wardown House
Image: Luton Culture



3.3 Stockwood Discovery Centre

Stockwood Discovery Centre is located in the Georgian Grade II listed stable block and walled garden of the former Stockwood House.

It reopened in 2008 after a £6m investment programme and includes interactive displays exploring local history from prehistoric times to the present, a temporary exhibitions programme, an award-winning carriage display, a visitor centre with a shop and café, an outdoor children's discovery area and world, sensory, medicinal, world and wildlife gardens.

Stockwood Discovery Centre includes walled gardens, woodland, historic greenhouses, beautifully designed formal gardens and an array of specialist plants, shrubs and trees. The garden is one of the few places in the country where the work of acclaimed artist Ian Hamilton Finlay can be seen on permanent display. The site is free to access as are the Museums and so the site is very popular with people of all ages throughout the year. The Garden Café is open every day and provides an exceptional variety of food and drinks to the many thousands of visitors every week.

Our Museum galleries present local history, carriage and car collections and tell the stories of real people behind the collections, exploring the history of the region from prehistoric times to the modern day. Highlights include the Wenlok Jug - a rare medieval masterpiece with strong links to Luton's history and development, the town's last tram, and the famous Mossman collection of carriages - the largest collection of its kind on display in the UK.

Fig. 13 The Mossman Carriage Collection
Image: Luton Culture



Fig. 14 Concert Area
Image: Luton Culture



4. STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS

4.1 Luton Libraries

A funding partnership with Luton Borough Council

We deliver library services for Luton Borough Council across Luton Central Library, five branch libraries, and the home library service. In addition there are three library access points in community centres across the town. These libraries serve around 700,000 visitors a year, issue 500,000 items and provide access to over 100 public computers. We are part of the London Libraries Consortium which is made up of 18 authorities; customers now have access to over six million items of stock.

We offer access to a wide range of library services online and via an app, including: online book renewal, reservations or requests; e-book downloads; online courses with Universal Class; online language courses with Transparent Languages; online newspapers with Press Display and online magazines with Zinio.

The libraries also offer Homework Help, Bookstart activities, Rhyme Time sessions for under-fives, reading groups, Lego Club, Library Games, Yu-gi-oh groups and other seasonal activities like the Summer Reading Challenge. A new, Cultural Learning programme, reflects the added value that arts and cultural bring to this service.



Fig. 15 Luton Central Library
Image: Luton Culture

4.2 National Portfolio

A funding partnership with Arts Council England

We are delivering a unique model for community and volunteer engagement that has been shared as an exemplar across the UK. Our commitment to co-producing the museum with our communities has changed the way we operate and helped secure investment into Wardown House. The model has informed the Library Makers pilot and we plan to take it a stage further with Culture Makers in the next 2 years. Now that we have secured NPO funding we will engage and activate more people from Luton's diverse communities to join. The NPO delivery plan focusses on collections excellence, digital engagement and participation through Museum Makers.

The programme covers 4 key areas:

- 1. Collections Excellence:** achieving this through Grow Your Own (investing in our staff), providing funds to improve our Digital Resources.
- 2. Museum Makers 2.0:** a review, evaluation and new strategy to activate more Museum Makers, and aligning with our digital work through a virtual curator.
- 3. Creative Case for Diversity:** we will contribute this through our targeted arts programme working with BAME and women artists,
- 4. Museum Maker Schools:** Co-Pro Schools will develop and strengthen our Arts work with local schools.

Our Partnerships

London Luton Airport Limited (LLAL)

provide a donation to the Trust annually. The funding we receive enables us to widen reach through providing free entry museums, engagement with collections and cultural sites and accessible public engagement programmes. We also ensure the funding supports opportunities for young people to develop their creative and cultural skills and talents into careers. We specifically deliver the Community Funding Policy objectives

Luton Borough Council (LBC)

is a long-standing partner who originally set up the Trust. LBC continue to support us in many ways and has enabled the Trust to grow greater independence so that we can stand on our own two feet and make a major contribution back into the town. We have a 3 year funding agreement with LBC to delivery Luton's Library Service and the Council also owns and maintains most of the buildings we operate from. We value the funding, support and partnerships we have with LBC to develop culture, regenerate, protect our heritage, grow skills and promote Luton. We contribute to: The Luton Investment Framework; Arts & Cultural 10 Year Vision; Local Plan.

Arts Council England (ACE)

has supported our ambitions through funding the Creative People and Places Revolution programme, and the Luton Investment Fund for 'As you Change So do I' project. More recently ACE has invested in our Hat Factory refurbishment capital costs and accepted our application for National Portfolio Funding (NPO) to expand our Museum Makers development at Wardown House. Our four year NPO started in 2018. We value the funding we have benefitted from and the strategic



Fig. 16 Hat District Community Heritage
Tour Image: Luton Culture

discussions about arts engagement and best practice. Nationally we contribute to the Culture White Paper 2016 and we deliver Great Art and Culture for Everyone

Heritage Lottery Fund

has regularly invested in the Trust over the last 10 years and continues to support our vision and plans to widen access to the town's incredible heritage buildings, sites and collections. Through our partnerships with HLF we have also been able to develop our locally relevant and nationally important stories through our exhibitions and engagement programmes. We have also been able to encourage more visitors to engage in our Museums and to learn about the importance of local heritage. We recognise and respond to the HLF 2013-2018 strategic framework.

South East Midlands Local Enterprise Partner (SEMLEP)

has helped support our work in promoting the growth of creative enterprise and industries in Luton through over the years by being part of their regional network. Through this group we found out about funding and subsequently applied for the Local Growth Funding which was accepted in 2016. SEMLEP are a key supporter and funder of our future sustainability work. We contribute nationally to the government's Industrial Strategy and regionally to SEMLEP's: Heritage, Sports, Visitor Economy, Cultural & Creative Industry Plan and the Strategic Economic Plan.

5. STRATEGIC PROJECTS

5.1 Hat District Creative Cluster Project

Hat District is a project to develop a cluster of inspiring work, study and show spaces in the cultural quarter. We are creating facilities and infrastructure to bring creative and talented people together so that they can innovate and collaborate.

Learning from the town's important history of hat making and manufacturing, the creative cluster will once again contribute to the local economy by increasing job opportunities, visitors and spend whilst

regenerating the area and boosting pride of place. The Hat District consists of: Hat Factory Arts Centre on Bute Street, Hat Works, Hat Studios and Hat House on Guildford Street. Two of these sites are vacant historic hat factories, which will be brought back into new use.

The Hat District buildings are within the Plaiters Lea Conservation Area, which is a key location for the future development of Luton. We have developed a business model that shows how the Hat District will be self-funding by 2022. The Hat District cluster project is the first step towards stabilising and sustaining the Trust's long-term position.

By 2022, the Hat District project will:

- **Develop** 25,832sqft of new and bespoke creative business workspace in the quarter
- **Support** develop and enable 133 additional Creative and Digital Industries jobs by 2021
- Have an economic impact of £29m
- **Boost** the local economy by attracting 135,000 more visits to the four sites by 2022
- **Grow** a vibrant creative ecology and 'life-style brand'

Fig 17 Visualisation of Hat House top floor creative workspace



Fig 18 The Hat District: Clockwise from the top – Hat Factory Arts Centre, Hat House and Hat Works. (Image: Peter Laponder, 2016)



5.2 Revoluton Arts Creative People and Places

A consortium programme funded by Arts Council England

Revoluton Arts is one of 21 national Creative People and Places (CPP) programmes funded through Arts Council England to enable more people to engage with and be inspired by the arts. It is led by a consortium of partners committed to changing the arts landscape in Luton and we chair the group.

Research undertaken through the Active People survey in 2010, found that just 35% of Luton's population engaged or participated in cultural activity, placing the town in the bottom 20% of places of least cultural engagement in the UK.

Revoluton is a programme of arts engagement programming, targeting hard to reach and unengaged communities in Luton. Over the next 3 years it will focus on working with communities to understand their needs, ideas and challenges to bring artists, grass root practitioners and nationally exemplary arts organisations to Luton to impact on these needs. Working with local groups such as the Mela group, Luton Irish Forum and UK Centre for Carnival Arts, we will deliver strategic and local residencies, commission local and national artists and identify, support and grow a creative economy of talented creative citizens and artists.

Fig. 19 Colour of Light event (August 2017)
Image: Compagnie Off



6. STRATEGIC COLLECTIONS

6.1 Hats and Headwear

Hats and headwear are synonymous with Luton. Over the last 5 years we have refocused our approach to curation away from being generalists and toward a focus on this collection.

Our plan is to secure ACE designated status by 2021. By growing our own skills and expertise we are positioning ourselves as the national experts and through this will make new partnerships with other significant collections, such those at Stockport Museum and with international partnerships with Italy, Switzerland and Japan.

The focus for the next 3 years will be on researching all aspects of the Luton hat industry story. We will do this through the hat district project and developing better links with the remaining hat manufacturers. We will redisplay our collection in a larger gallery at Wardown House. We will also be maximising income generating opportunities through a national/international touring exhibition, publication and retail.

6.2 Carriages and Vehicles:

The Mossman collection at Stockwood is the largest horse drawn vehicle collection in Europe.

It offers a unique opportunity to develop and collate a nationally important archive of the history of horse draw vehicles, design manufacture and social history. Building on our experience with hats and headwear we will to look at developing this collection.

Along with our own 4 Vauxhall cars, is an opportunity for a new partnership with Vauxhall Motors Ltd. Over the period of this business plan we will develop a partnership that will secure into Trust the Vauxhall heritage collections at the Luton site and with it a proposal to investors and funders to develop a new gallery at Stockwood to show this collection.

Fig 20 Images: Luton Culture



7.

IMPACTS

By 2022 we will:

- Welcome 300,000 visits to our two museums and 500,000 visits to our libraries
- Develop 30,000sqft of new creative workspace and actively commission artists
- Engage with 65 schools and engage 185,000 young people in the arts and skills development
- Drive up heritage open days to engage 350 people in the hidden stories of Luton
- Provide meaningful engagements for 575 active volunteers throughout the year
- Employ over 500 team members across the year and support 50 creative industry jobs
- Satisfy 33,000 ticket holders at our diverse and stimulating arts and cultural events
- Reduced carbon footprint by ensuring 65% of our consumables are purchased locally

Find out more:

For regular progress in our delivery of this plan please visit our website, www.lutonculture.com.