



THE
CULTURE
TRUST
LUTON



CULTURE TRUST LUTON

BUSINESS PLAN
2024-2028

CONTENTS

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Business Plan Executive Summary
- 1.2 What we do
- 1.3 Our Strategic Aim and strategies for delivery

2. OUR ORGANISATION

- 2.1 Our Structure
- 2.2 Our revenue funding
- 2.3 Our Sites
- 2.4 Our Audiences
- 2.5 Our Team
- 2.6 Our Quality
- 2.7 Our Partners
- 2.8 Our Equity Diversity & Inclusion Statement

3. CONTEXT

- 3.1 Luton
- 3.2 Luton Rising
- 3.3 Luton Borough Council
- 3.4 Arts Council England
- 3.5 National Lottery Heritage Fund

4. CREATIVE & CULTURAL STRATEGY

- 4.1 Regular Multidisciplinary Programme
- 4.2 Schools, Skills & Family Programmes
- 4.3 Cultural Momentous Months
- 4.4 Talent, Alumni & Progression (TAP) & Creative Networks

5. MUSEUMS, HERITAGE & PLACE STRATEGY

- 5.1 Wardown Museum & Art Gallery
- 5.2 Hat Factory Arts Centre
- 5.3 Hat Distict & Heritage Development Trust
- 5.4 Stockwood Discovery Centre
- 5.5 Site Leadership, Digitisation & Technology
- 5.6 Environment and Sustainability

6. ENTERPRISE & MARKETING STRATEGY

- 6.1 Customer Relationship & Audience Development
- 6.2 Commercial Events
- 6.3 Catering & Retail
- 6.4 Ceremonies
- 6.5 Creative Industry Workspace
- 6.6 Marketing, Communications & Promotions

7. ORGANISATIONAL RESILIENCE STRATEGY

- 7.1 Financial Resilience
- 7.2 Efficient and Effective Operations
- 7.3 Fundraising
- 7.4 Team Developement
- 7.5 Evaluation & Continual Improvement
- 7.6 Reporting, Transparency & Accountability

8. BUSINESS PLAN ACTIONS & KPIS

1. INTRODUCTION



Image: Shaun Armstrong

1.1 Business Plan Executive Summary

Our Business Plan exists to focus and monitor the progress of our development over the next three years. It sets-out our vision, mission and strategic aim. A critical and key element of this plan is to grow our resilience from the foundations and strategies we have implemented and through strengthened partnerships with our core funders and partners.

OUR VISION

For culture to serve as a catalyst for change, promoting sustainable growth and generating positive impacts in our community and beyond.

OUR MISSION

To connect communities through culture.

OUR STRATEGIC AIM

To balance access to high quality cultural experiences or and with our community with a continued drive to diversify our income and achieve long-term financial sustainability.



1.2 What we do

Established in 2008, the Culture Trust, Luton is a vibrant and progressive independent charity, and our mission is 'to connect communities through culture'. We do this through our accredited museums, theatres, galleries, creative workspaces and Arts Centre in Luton. We contribute positively to the social, economic and cultural prosperity of our home-town Luton and surrounding regions. We improve lives, wellbeing and prosperity and contribute towards making Luton a place that is vibrant, exciting, educational and engaging.

We attract over 250,000 visits per annum to our five sites (2023/4): The Hat Factory Arts Centre, Hat House and Hat Works creative workspaces, Wardown House Museum & Gallery and Stockwood Discovery Centre Gardens & Museum. We connect these local heritage assets and collections with our community through collaboration, co-curation, community engagement and care. We celebrate and present the diversity of Luton through a year-round programme that celebrates contemporary culture. We co-create events, festivals, exhibitions and collections with our neighbours, volunteers and partners and we care for historic buildings, museum collection's and sites across Luton.

Collectively our team of staff, volunteers, board of trustees, partners, funders, donators and tenants form this Cultural Trust's expertise so that it can operate effectively and serve the community of Luton.



Hat Works / Wardown House, Museum & Gallery



As Cultural Museum and Heritage experts;

- We advocate for and care for heritage, museum collections and historic buildings and widening public participation through year-round access to free Museums, collections and heritage.
- We promote wellbeing, social engagement, learning education and inclusion at Stockwood Discovery Centre and Wardown House Museum & Gallery.
- We are proud to be one of Arts Council England's National Portfolio Organisation (2023-6).
- We deliver accredited Museum services and collection care with specialist curatorial expertise
- We remove social and poverty barriers by providing free to access museums and heritage sites for all.
- We raise awareness of our environment, sustainability and commit to becoming Net Zero at Stockwood Discovery Centre playing our part in Luton 2040
- We invest in the running and operation of our Luton's heritage sites annually contributing to their upkeep and ensuring free public access to safe and inspiring venues.
- Over the last ten years we have raised £13m to invest in improving local and publicly owned heritage buildings, sites and Museums
- Excellence in Heritage building transformation is recognised with our status as one of 12 new Heritage Development Trust's in the UK (2023-5)

As Cultural Programming experts,

- We present accessible, diverse and inspiring theatre, dance, comedy, film, exhibitions, events, workshops and cultural celebrations at the Hat Factory Arts Centre and Hat District.
- We co-create events, festivals, exhibitions and collections with our neighbors, volunteers and partners. We aim to mirror our diverse community by programing exceptional artists and performers.
- We Welcome over 250,000 cultural visitors each year to engage with heritage, museums, arts & culture
- We ensure Customer satisfaction. Wardown and Stockwood are Trip Advisors 2nd 3rd top 'things to do in Luton'.
- We commission artists and creative industries investing in local talent
- We enable the showcasing of creativity to animate our town centre with innovative, exciting and stimulating art, public art, window display and outdoor projections creating a desirable town centre destination.
- We invest in skills, develop talent, commission research and collaborate in order to foster growth

As Cultural Enabling experts:

- We co-curate and collaboratively programme locally relevant and nationally important stories.
- We provide professional platforms and partnerships that explore and present narratives that are issue based and inspiring for Luton's contemporary and diverse audiences.
- We enable young people (0-25 years) with year-round opportunities to participate in cultural skills
- We provide young people with carer advice and a pipeline for creative careers.
- We engage with over half of Luton Primary Schools in creative workshops and activities.
- We Nurture creative industry micro-businesses with affordable hot-desking space
- We support teachers and students with curriculum delivery and out of school activities.
- We provide a platform for creative people to perform, practice and nurture their talents in professional venues in front of live audiences to develop their confidence and communication skills.

As Cultural & Creative Industry Growth Cluster experts:

- We nurture creative career progression across Luton through schools and education partnerships, cultural workshops, access to facilities and professional venues, creative workspaces and studios and through learning programmes, mapping progression into jobs, careers and prosperity.
- We foster growth and contribute to the local economy supporting creative businesses and entrepreneurs with bespoke creative workspace, networks, directory and start-up creative industry business training.
- We invest in jobs and training, talent development, local and national partnerships, commissions, research, regeneration and tourism
- We employ cultural and skilled staff and provide significant work for industry freelancers, tech, duty officers, artists, producers, security and bar/catering staff.
- We are growing the Hat District town centre creative workspace provision through re-using and repurposing historic and underused buildings in the town centre contributing to town centre vitality, attractiveness, animation and heritage conservation area improvements.





1.3 Our strategic Aim & Strategies for delivery

This business plan consists of four strategies to advance our strategic aim **to balance access to high quality cultural experiences for and with our community with a continued drive to diversify our income and achieve long-term sustainability.**

1.3.1 Creative & Cultural Strategy

will ensure high quality, diverse, inspiring and impactful engagement in arts, culture, creativity and skills with a focus on families, young people, artists and creative industries. Commercially our focus shall be to encouraging audience progression and repeat use and increased our donations, ticket sales and volunteering.

1.3.2 Museum, Heritage & Place Strategy

will widen public access to Wardown Museum & collections, focus on re-developing Stockwood Discovery Museum and grow the Hat District Cluster by safeguarding more heritage buildings and animating this town centre conservation area.

1.3.3 Enterprise growth & Marketing Strategy

will grow incomes and trading, by developing more frequent commercial cultural events with a focus on live music, great hospitality and entertainment at the Hat factory and across all sites ensure effective marketing for audience growth leading to customer satisfaction and repeat use.

1.3.4 Organisational & Resilience Strategy

will ensure we are financially resilient by promoting the impact of our work, investing in effective and efficient resources to maintain high quality delivery and generate credible and sustained increases in commercial incomes, grants and donations and to fundraise for additionality.



Sarfraz Manzoor, Guest curator for the *Luton in 50 Objects* exhibition.
Image: © Aleksandra Warchol Photography

2. OUR ORGANISATION

2.1 Our Structure

We operate across three core sites; The Hat District (Hat Factory Arts Centre, Hat House and Hat Works); Wardown House Museum & Gallery and Stockwood Gardens & Museum. We connect these local assets with our community through collaboration, co-curation, community engagement and care.

We are a not-for-profit charity and we own a trading company which gifts profit to the charity. We submit annual returns to Company's House and the charity 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 are entrepreneurial and we are increasingly commercially focused. Our approach is underpinned by specialist expertise in the creative culture sector, deep local knowledge and longstanding partnerships. We generate funds through our ticket sales, creative workspaces and events and also through our trading company profit (retail, catering and hire).

We are extremely grateful and thankful to the continued core support we receive from **Luton Borough Council** our principal funding partner, by way of an annual donation from **Luton Rising** (a business and social enterprise that is owned by Luton Council and owns Luton Airport). In addition we have a

renewed three-year grant agreement with the **Arts Council England** as a National Portfolio Organisation (NPO) and three year funding from the **Architectural Heritage Fund** as a Heritage Development Trust.

Core funding is critical to our work and provides significant support for core business activity, collections and resources and in the management of a heritage portfolio of buildings and Luton's museum services. Luton Rising funding also enables the provision of free to access Museums in Luton which has significant benefits to local people, particularly those on lower incomes. As a Charity active in raising our own funds to add value to our core investment, particularly earned income.

It has taken us time to recover from COVID and we are still facing the cost of living crisis. But, we have been front-footed to address increased costs by ensuring that in 2023/4 we gave attention to diversify our income mix to help us address increased costs. We saw a steady increase in income from of sources such as arts and cultural activity, commercial events, hires and workspace use since the pandemic 2020-21. Despite this, unplanned increased costs due to high rates of inflation has meant that we have needed to invest more of our income into our day to day operation, especially staffing, heating and lighting. We value our staff team, our heritage resources and our customer services and recognise that investment in these elements is core to our cultural offer. That said, we seek to continually review our operation to ensure we are as effective and as efficient as we can be, in order to achieve long-term financial sustainability and resilience.



Wardown House |Museum & Gallery (left).
Stockwood Discovery Centre Gardens (right). Image: Marie Kirbyshaw

2.3 Our Sites

We operate primarily from three cultural sites; Wardown House Museum & Gallery, Stockwood Discovery Centre and the Hat District Cluster and Hat Factory Arts Centre (along with an off-site store for our Museum Collections at Cuttenhoe Road). These wonderful, well loved and cared for sites are visited by over 250,000 people every year.

The sites are important heritage assets, which all include Grade II listed buildings or grounds of which we are custodians. We share the care and cost of operating these sites with Luton Borough Council (LBC). Wardown House Museum & Gallery, Stockwood Discovery Centre and the Hat Factory Arts Centre are owned by Luton Borough Council and leased (long-term) to the Trust. These leases are provided along with a number of operational agreements with LBC relating to IT, HR and Health & Safety. For these Council owned assets we have raised £3.5m for the redevelopment of Wardown House Museum & Gallery and secured £2m for the Hat Factory Arts Centre. Our strategic plans and fundraising can add significant value to Council investments in heritage care and improves provision, cultural access and customer services. This business plan outlines how we will continue to use our skills and resources to make capital improvements to these sites with a focus on Stockwood Discovery Centre and freehold assets in the Hat District.

We own two heritage buildings within the Hat District; Hat House and Hat Works we redeveloped into creative workspace (2016-22). These assets have enabled us to grow provision for creative industry clustering in the Town Centre whilst actively contributing to area regeneration, high quality heritage redevelopment and the preservation of Hat Industry history. We also have an off-site store for our Museum Collections at Cuttenhoe Road.

Our three cluster sites are the main focus for our programmes, activities, trading, 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 contemporary cultures. We translate the heritage stories and diverse cultures of our town into narratives and engagements that are relevant and inspiring for today's community and users, ensuring that what we do is locally relevant and in line with our commitment to Equity, Diversity and Inclusion.

- **The Hat District & Hat Factory Arts Centre** promotes creativity, performance and participation and provides a platform for creative industry ingenuity, skills development, collaboration and a platform for sharing talent.
- **Wardown Museum & Gallery** promotes local stories about exploration, migration, family, fashion, hats and headwear and the home providing a platform for co-curation, sharing family stories and histories through objects and conversations.
- **Stockwood Discovery Centre** promotes discovery, togetherness and wellbeing and presents a platform for learning about energy, movement, transportation and life's-journeys through museum objects, cultural activities, and horticulture.



Image: Shaun Armstrong



2.4 Our audiences

In 2023/4 we welcomed 251,361 visitors to our sites, we value every single person and we are pleased visitors have returned to our well-loved sites and programmes of activity. To address cost and poverty as a barrier to inclusion, our sites are free to enter, museums free and many of our activities are either free or subsidised. We know this is valued.

We engage with our customers to understand what they like, want and how we can improve. We programme activity that meets need as we know 77% of respondents visit our sites in order to be 'entertained' and we know that coming to our sites and engaging in activities with a family focus and places to meet friends is important to 68% of our respondents. As such, social engagement is factored into our events, spaces and planning. Coming to our programmed events is one of the main reasons people come to visit us (57%). We also ask our customers what they use the most, Children and Family cultural activities was the top attraction (50%) followed by Christmas Shows (37%), Plays & Drama (35%), Music (32%) and Comedy (17%).

We know that we are hyperlocal because 50% of all tickets sold in 2022/23 were sold to households within 2km of our venues. 52% of the Trust's audience come from Luton with a further 20% coming from Bedfordshire representing almost three quarters of audiences. In 2023, our ticketed audience mapping identified the reach of our audience (2022-23) and highlighted where we need to target our marketing to intensify local audience attendance, participation and engagement.

We are expanding our understanding of our local community by engaging more with non-users to understand what would attract them to our sites. We will continue to be responsive and develop programmes, marketing strategies and incentives to grow audiences.



2.5 Our team

We have 44 FTE staff, 12 Trustees and over 51 active volunteers (June 2024). Our talented, skilled and experienced team deliver our mission and work across our three core sites to engage communities with culture. Everyone is a Trust ambassador and representative. We operate across different sites across seven days, days and evenings which means we work at different times and for different venues/events/functions but we deliver high quality customer services and organisational standards as one team. We operate as four teams and our roles and how we work is outlined below;

Our team roles are as follows;

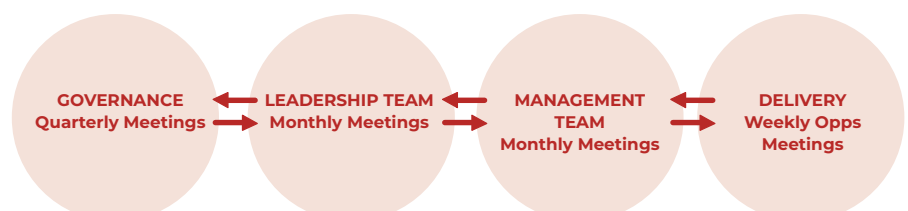
- **Governance team** (Chair and board of Trustees and funder representatives) who ensure that the Trust operates in accordance with company and charity law and is prudently financially managed. Setting the long-term strategic direction, policy and high-level goals. The Governance team manages risk and evaluates performance against agreed targets under the leadership of the Chair. They report to the Charities Commission and Companies House and delegate the running of the Trust to the Chief Executive.
- **Leadership team** (Chief Executive & Directors) who develop strategy, business planning, recommend on policy and lead on cultural direction, financial and operational controls, policy compliance and formal reporting and communications. The Leadership team harness opportunities, partnerships and funding to grow the impacts set out in the Business Plan and Charitable Objects. They report to the board of Trustees and lead the Management team.

- **Management team** (Heads of Department & Project leads) who develop and ensure the delivery of plans, partnership engagement, project and programme management, cultural programme and asset management, building, venue and operational management, budget and income management. The Management team ensures quality and service delivery standards and communications. Reporting to the Leadership team and managing the delivery team.

- **Delivery team** (Development, Finance & Administration, Customer services, Venue and Events) who deliver the plans and programmes, provide exemplary customer services, communications and ensure high quality experiences through delivery to our partners, customers and tenants. Venue and operational delivery. Reporting to the Management team and supervising volunteers and casual staff).

We connect and report through a structured communications and performance management system of meetings; Fig (below):

Team connection and reporting flow:



We also connect through all Trust annual strategy days focused on information sharing, organisational planning, learning and skills development. There are staff-led wellbeing initiatives and we deliver a range of mandatory and development training sessions, departmental 'look and see's along with an annual BBQ social. Our 12 Trustees meet quarterly at board meetings and selected subcommittees (Finance, Nominations & HR) and task finish groups. Trustees attend an annual strategy day and an away day test, challenge and develop best practice, good governance and team strategies. Funders are new to sit on our board as Trustees from 2024 with three additional trustees joining the board in 2024 from Luton Borough Council and Luton Rising making our Trustee board 15 strong. Arts Council have funder representation on our board.

2.6 Our quality

Our ambition for ensuing quality across our programmes, venues and practices accepts that we are always improving and that by listening to our partners, customers, audiences, artists, creative collaborators, tenants, neighbours and networks we will gain the best possible feedback from which to continually improve. Our method for cycling this feedback into our planning and our methods for ensuring quality and excellence shall be improved in this strategy. We will do this though our evaluation and continual improvement framework (see section 7.5) and through reporting, transparency and accountability (section 7.6)

2.7 Our Partners

Throughout this plan we rely on and benefit from working in partnership with others. We continue to grow our core partnerships and we value insight from our critical friends. This contributes towards widening impacts, growing audiences, diversifying our programmes and ensuring we collaborate to deliver the best quality arts and cultural provision. We collaborate locally through our representation on the following networks and boards;



Image: Marie Kirbyshaw

	Local (sample)	Regional/National (sample)
Governance/ Leadership team	Town Centre Strategic Board Arts & Cultural Strategy Group Curating Luton, Heritage BID, Business Improvement Luton 2040 Strategic board	Civic Museums Network Heritage Network Arts Council NPO network District Heritage Development Trust Network South East Midlands Growth Hub
Management Team/Delivery	Luton Cultural Education Partnership Fairness Taskforce Creative Forum Heritage Forum Creative Industry Network	Museum Association South East Midlands Careers Hub Arts Centres Network GEM – Group for Education in Museums Hat Guild

Our wide-ranging partners include Luton schools, Sixth form and University, Luton PRIDE, Luton Town Hatters Heritage, the Vauxhall collection group, Save our Town, the Bute Street Film Festival, Vinyl Revolution, Full House Theatre company, Swirl Night club, Revoluton Arts, Sundown Cinema, Utter Lutonia and Luton Beatz Lab and New Generation Youth Theatre; UKCCA; Kadam Dance; the Morley College and the Point just to name a few. **The impact of our work is greater together** and we welcome conversations about how we can continue to widen impact by work in collaboratively.

Our funders are key partners in enabling our core work and in helping us through funding additionality. They include Luton Rising, Luton Borough Council, Arts Council England, National Lottery Heritage Fund, Historic England, the Architectural Heritage Fund and Bedfordshire and Luton Community Foundation. We value the many funders who also provide us with enabling grants and support too.

2.8 Our Equity Diversity & Inclusion Statement

The Culture Trust Luton believes that culture should be accessible, meaningful and relevant to our local communities, whatever their socio-economic background, age, race, religion, sexual orientation, gender or disability. Our commitment to Equity, Diversity and Inclusion, and our plans for change are based on an audit in 2022 and our statement of intent to advance this agenda. At the heart of this, is our purpose to be a progressive and an entrepreneurial arts and cultural charity with a mission to connect communities through culture.

Our over-arching EDI ambition is to mainstream equity, diversity and inclusion (EDI) across the Trust, as an employer, venue, partner, landlord and commissioner. We want to ensure that the work we do enables a diverse range of people to work and connect with us enabling our community to enjoy, inform, produce and benefit from culture.

We aim to deliver this in the following ways;

2.8.1 Activity Diversification: We will ensure that our programmes, our content, our policies and our projects, are of relevance to a diverse range of people and are delivered in collaboration and with an inclusive approach. We will continually improve in how we engage with our audience in order to understand what they would like from us and how we can involve and respond to them. We want to better collect and use both qualitative and quantitative data to be more responsive to our audience's needs and identify gaps in participation. We will do this by ensuring;

- **EDI (a) Culturally Momentous Months Community co-production:** We grow our partnerships, discussion (and listening) groups and forums from the South Asian, Black and LGBTQ+ communities to collaborate in a shared mission to develop momentous month events with a view to diversify our regular public programmes and museum collections year round.
- **EDI (b) Cultural training programmes for Young people.** We offer cultural career opportunities for young people (17-30yrs) and target under-represented individuals and groups. We will ensure we diversify selection panels and tailor recruitment methods to widen applications from under-represented individuals and groups.

- **EDI (c) Community Museums Programme:** We will co-producing a programme locally relevant diverse music, immersive theatre, workshops and temporary exhibitions at Wardown House Museum with our one mile community. In collaboration this shall inform the curation of our permanent collection to be more relevant and representative of contemporary Luton. Audience development to Target areas in Luton that currently identified as having low-engagement in our work.
- **EDI (d) Wardown Museum & Collection exemplar in ACE National Portfolio.** Locally relevant heritage stories are told through our Museum collection. We will target our Museum audience development to areas in Luton that currently identified as having low-engagement.

2.8.2 Workforce development (staff, board of trustees and volunteers). We will attract the best talent to work with us and ensure that our people reflect the demographics of the communities that we serve. This will enable us to benefit from a diverse range of perspectives to inform, change and grow the Culture Trust's locally relevant and nationally important cultural provision. We will recruit from the very widest and best pool of talent. We want to attract, nurture and retain our people with the offer of good work, people policies which cater for their diverse needs, supporting them at their different life stages and ensuring that we continue to support their mental health and well-being. We aim to ensure that;

- **EDI (F) Team Culture Trust, Luton:** Our people mirror the place we serve. We will ensure we diversify selection panels and tailor recruitment methods to widen applications from under-represented individuals and groups. We plan to develop tools within our HR & Marketing/communication functions, recruitment processes that will enable us to compliantly and consistently monitor and measure outcomes and outputs to better understand our EDI progress.
- **EDI (G) Good news and great opportunities shared.** Our social impact, values and inclusive culture is promoted. We will produce an annual review to demonstrate impacts, progress, celebrate success and outline plans for continual improvement. We shall promote diversity through imagery, content and range in our programme guides, website and social media.

These actions enable us to play our part in developing a more diverse and inclusive culture. They are integrated into this business plan and specifically draw out as deliverable action, to ensure we maintain visibility and can monitor impacts and effectiveness and enable change.

3. CONTEXT



Town Centre Hat District creative workshop
Image: Shaun Armstrong



We are incredibly proud to be born out of and based in Luton, we celebrate our local heritage, industrious past and our exciting future through our work. We ensure that all that we do is locally relevant and that the diversity of our home is mirrored in our programmes and people as outlined in our EDI statement. We endorse the Step Forward Luton place-brand and play our part in presenting Luton as an amazing and inspiring cultural destination.

3.1 Luton

Luton is a post-industrial town, known for its history in manufacturing through Vauxhall Motors, Electrolux and hat factories such as Olney's, 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 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 is one of four authorities outside of London with the majority of the population being from ethnic minority groups. Luton has one of the youngest populations in the country with a fifth of the population aged below 16. Luton is a young, super-diverse town with a bright social and economic future. It is part of national Government's Levelling Up agenda, it's one Arts Council's England Priority Places, it's an Area of Focus for the National Lottery Heritage Fund, and Luton Borough Council has strong commitments to eradicate poverty and achieve net-zero by 2040.

Luton's connectivity both nationally and internationally via train and plane means it continues to attract new and existing business, young families, and increasingly cultural tourism.



3.2 Luton Rising

Luton Rising annual donation is an essential support to the Trust, it provides core funding that enables us to operate from the heritage buildings and open collections, museums and heritage to local communities free of charge which helps deliver Luton 2040. The donation enables us to grow our incomes and add value through enhanced Museum delivery through the NPO 3-year funded programme, Heritage Trust delivery through AHF three year funded programme and the regeneration of the Town Centre through the Hat District self-sustaining ecology.

We receive funding from the Community Investment Fund which provides significant and sustainable funding to charitable organisations. Luton Rising is committed to supporting the achievement of our shareholder's strategic priorities for Luton 2040 as a town built on fairness where everyone can thrive.



3.3 Luton Borough Council

We were originally set up by Luton Borough Council in 2008 and their vision to develop a flourishing arts and cultural Trust and strong partnership delivery for Museums, Arts and Heritage remains in our DNT. The Council still supports our operation with support and we have a collective ambition to be financially resilient and independent going forwards. As our landlord and major stakeholder in the Trust, we work towards ensuring we collaborate and demonstrably deliver to local strategies and agendas. Key strategies we support in delivery are;

Luton 2040: is Luton Borough Council's strategic vision setting out its ambitions for the town by 2040. Its five main themes are:

- Building an inclusive economy that delivers investment to support the growth of businesses, jobs and incomes.
- Improving population wellbeing and tackling health inequalities
- Becoming a child friendly town, where our children grow up happy, healthy and secure, with a voice that matters and the opportunities they need to thrive.
- Tackling the climate emergency and becoming a net zero town
- Supporting a strong and empowered community, built on fairness, local pride and a powerful voice for all our residents

The strategy identifies an important role for culture across all of these ambitions and the Trust is a key partner in delivering these outcomes. Our support for the aims of Luton 2040 is reflected in our updated vision for “*culture as a sustainable catalyst for change in Luton.*”

Harnessing Momentum, Luton's cultural strategy

2021-27: Luton's cultural strategy highlights the importance of culture and creativity in the well-being, community cohesion and economic prospects of people in Luton:

- Vision: A town transformed by vibrant arts, culture and creativity that brightens the lives and life chances of everyone in Luton.
- Mission: To enable a diverse cultural offer that empowers people to dream and aspire, supports communities to grow strong and sustainable and develops a vibrant, inclusive creative economy that supports everyone in Luton to thrive.

The Trust's mission of “*Connecting communities through culture*” is strongly aligned to the aspirations of the cultural strategy. We continue to develop a high quality, locally relevant and nationally important arts and culture offer that will inspire, engage and enable local people to take agency, inform and contribute to our programming offer.

Curating Luton Heritage, Luton's heritage strategy

2021-31: As the custodian of three of the Council's primary heritage assets and its museum collections, the Trust is a key partner in the delivery of the Council's heritage strategy:

Vision: Luton's sense of place is anchored through its heritage; wellbeing, civic pride and our identity as a proud industrious working-class town will be celebrated and sustained. Strategic Priorities are:

- Place-making
- Conservation, preservation and valuation
- Embedding diaspora and diversity into heritage interpretation narratives
- Improving prospects for young people
- Embracing Digital innovation
- Future proofing – beyond sustainability

The Trust's commitment to contributing to *Curating Luton Heritage* is reflected in one of our three mission themes, *Heritage Custodianship* as well as a number of our nine priorities (see Section 7). Our continued work on our collections, co-curating museum displays at Wardown House and our heritage outreach programmes – along with our commitment to care for our Heritage buildings - all support the delivery of *Curating Luton's Heritage*.

Luton Inclusive Economy Strategy (part of Luton 2040): Culture has a role to play in 3 of the 7 aims of this strategy:

- Sustaining economic growth
- Local wealth building
- Skills for the future
- A Real Living Wage town
- Growing the airport
- A Thriving town Centre
- Transforming lives through arts, culture & Heritage

The Trust's work in nurturing and enabling Luton's creative business community in the Hat District means that economic growth and skills development are at the heart of its mission. Our Creative Cluster Network for tenants enhances the exchange of ideas in the district and creating wider business opportunities.

Luton Town Centre Masterplan Framework:

The Masterplan sets out a vision for the Town Centre which includes a central role for creativity and local talent in shaping Luton as a place:

- Focal point for community and commercial life
- Consolidated retail offer, emphasis on independents
- String of well-connected green spaces
- Supporting Luton-made businesses
- Creativity and local young talent to shape the character of the town centre

We contribute to the delivery of the fifth priority of the masterplan through our continued animation of the Hat District and Hat Factory through our artistic and creative development programmes and creative commissioning work in the public realm.

3.4 Arts Council England

As an Arts Council England National Portfolio Organisation (NPO), we are funded through our work at Wardown Museum. We strategically support and deliver ACE's vision, outcomes and Investment Principles in *Let's Create*.

Vision: “*By 2030, we want England to be a country in which the creativity of each of us is valued and given the chance to flourish, and where every one of us has access to a remarkable range of high-quality cultural experiences.*”

Outcomes: Creative People; Cultural Communities; A Creative and Cultural Country

Investment Principles: Ambition & Quality; Inclusivity & relevance; Dynamism; Environmental Responsibility.



Our current Arts Council England (ACE) funding runs from 2023 – 2026, their standard 3 year period, however in January 2024 ACE announced that ACE National Portfolio Organisations (NPOs) will be able to apply for an additional year's funding to until 2027. We plan to apply for this extension. Our 10 key deliverables for 2023-26 are;

Creative people:

• MUSEUM AND CURATORIAL WORK BASED LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES:

Enrich the opportunity for students, providing access to industry experience across the Trusts cultural and operational activity

• ENHANCED AND INCLUSIVE SCHOOLS RESOURCES: produce refreshed and relevant arts based learning and educational material. Design, pilot, and evaluate new thematic approaches and deliver with artists

• TAP (Talent, Alumni and Progression): creative and cultural talent growth in Luton by through accessible creative industry progression routes for young people, training opportunities and a mentoring

• MUSEUM MAKERS MATTER: Improving representation of the museum makers towards the profile of Luton communities through a programme of social activity and recruitment events.

Cultural Communities:

• CABINET OF CONVERSATIONS:

gathering and showcasing local voices, ideas and opinions from across the One-Mile Community, the Curate a Space programme, Museum Makers, and wider trust programmes.

• ONE-MILE COMMUNITY: launch audience development programme that engages business, religious, and community leaders to build trust and develop creative pathways to engage Pakistani, Bangladeshi, and Polish communities within a 1 mile radius of Wardown

• ART TRAIL & HAT TRIENNIAL: build and acquire museum-tech resources along with staff training in the area. Develop digital objects. Create new digital assets for engagement off site with the University, Students, Children and Families). Plan the festival and develop and deliver the (Hat Triennial)

A Creative & Cultural Country:

• CURATE A SPACE: Supporting community curators to research, collect, and present relevant stories and objects for temporary exhibitions with Global Majority and Eastern European partners and audiences (Specifically targeting African Caribbean, Pakistani, Bangladeshi, and Polish).

• ONE-MILE COMMUNITY CULTURAL PROGRAMME: a 12month co-curated programme of ambitious collection-inspired activities, collaboratively delivered with the One-Mile community.

• NEW NARRATIVES: commission specialists to collaborate with artists and audiences and develop three levels of refreshed, and culturally and socially reframed interpretation.



3.5 National Lottery Heritage Fund

The National Lottery Heritage Fund's 10-year strategy, Heritage 2033, sets out its ambitions to make a *"difference for people, places and communities as we invest an anticipated £3.6billion raised for good causes by National Lottery players over the next decade."*

Vision NLHF's vision is for heritage to be valued, cared for and sustained for everyone, now and in the future.

Investment principles four investment principles guides NLHF decision making:

- *Saving heritage:* conserving and valuing heritage, for now and the future.
- *Protecting the environment:* supporting nature recovery and environmental sustainability.
- *Inclusion, access and participation:* supporting greater inclusion, diversity, access and participation in heritage.
- *Organisational sustainability:* strengthening heritage to be adaptive and financially resilient, contributing to communities and economies.

Our plans for developing Stockwood Discovery Centre and our continued work on our collections, co-curating museum displays at Wardown House, and our heritage outreach programmes all align with NLHF's priorities and will provide us with future opportunities to seek support for our work in these fields.



4. CREATIVE & CULTURAL STRATEGY

Creative & Cultural Strategy will ensure high quality, diverse, inspiring and impactful engagement in arts, culture, creativity and skills with a focus on families, young people, artists and creative industries. Commercially our focus shall be to encouraging audience progression and repeat use and increased our donations, ticket sales and volunteering.

We commission, collaborate and present diverse, inspiring and engaging arts and cultural activities events and exhibitions for all. Our work with our collections and our activities help catalyse creativity in Luton across all ages and abilities. We promote, present and nurture arts and culture and celebrate local talent. We do this predominantly in our arts centre, Museums and heritage sites but with strategic audience engagement and partnerships across Luton, regionally and nationally.

Here we describe how we invite, intrigue and inspire audiences to do more, want more and say more about locally relevant and nationally important arts and culture. Our Audience development strategies, artistic programmes and our commitment to Equity, Diversity and Inclusion in our collaborative partnerships, year-round programmes, commissions and opportunities.

Our commitment to diversity will ensure that we continue to develop the relevance of our public programmes to be reflective of local people. We know from our own EDI audit that local audiences are not representative of our local demographic, and we know from our collaborative Black History and South Asian

Heritage Month programme groups, that local Black and Asian artists and creatives seek more opportunities to showcase local stories and creativity.

Our activities align specifically to Luton Borough Council Harnessing Momentum Arts and cultural strategy and we deliver to also achieve Luton 2040 through this strategic programme of work. Our delivery will also focus on achieving Arts Council Investment Principles; Inclusivity & Relevance, Ambition and Quality and Dynamism and outcomes through our three year activity programme.

4.1 Regular Multidisciplinary Programme

We present a vibrant and eclectic programme of live music, theatre, spoken word, comedy, film, digital art, workshops and courses. We work with artists, partners and promoters to identify and showcase the best local and national talent. We co-curate and develop activity in order to sustain and build audience engagement, and deepens relationships with our partners, communities and spaces. We focus on fresh, new and relevant stories from both established and emerging touring companies who are making high quality work in the UK with diverse performers who mirror our community in line with our EDI statement. We will seek to work in partnership our community, momentous months groups and arts organisations to widen impacts and share audience development impacts.

The Hat Factory Arts Centre is our primary venue for our regular programme, inviting audiences into its Studio Theatre, Factory Floor, Hatch Workspaces and Basement Bar. The programme is designed to give audiences three different entry points. They can watch, make, and participate. We enable audiences to experience and move through all of these perspectives by extending and enhancing our public programme with opportunities for deeper engagement; through post-show discussions, scratch performances, creative R&D, or skills and talent development workshops.

Regular Multidisciplinary Programme at the Hat Factory:

We are developing more regularly programmes at the Hat Factory tailored to meet local demand whilst providing a platforms for emerging and grass-roots artists. Our regular live music, comedy, theatre and mixed performances aim to attract maximum audiences and venue use. We are listening to community needs and monitoring audience use and adapting offer programmes to meet public demand and needs.

We are developing the programme to ensure that it is vibrant and responds to the needs of our local community. This will support our trading company and we will seek to maximise ticket sales for more sell-out performances. A priority for year one is to grow the commercial element of this work to create a strong structure to enable more developmental work. We shall include more live music, mainstream comedy and tribute acts/bands to attract and maximised audiences and incomes. This income will help to underpin our more experimental programming offer; enabling us to work with a broad range of new and emerging artists and companies. We will continue to build relationships between artists, producers and audiences – they will understand each other, look forward to their interactions, and appreciate each other's creative value. **Here we engage:** *Experience Seekers, Trips & Treats, and Dormitory Dependables*

Cultural Venue Activity

Partnerships: We are working with networks, panel groups, organisations and cultural groups/agencies on sharing our resources. We are open to ideas, collaborations and partnerships to ensure our venues are fully used when we are already open – thus maximising the cost of running and operating this building. We are presenting more large scale, popular and commercial events by building on great partnerships. This will help us grow.

4.2 Schools, skills & family programmes

We will work with education and non-education providers on developing and delivering a cultural programme that engages young people with our collections and local histories. Through TAP, Artists' Commissions and facilitated sessions we will continue to develop and deliver an artist-led programme with practitioners that mirror the diversity of Luton as a community. Our exemplary schools work has grown to develop greater communication about creative skills and careers. We are ensuring that through our schools and skills programme that every child and young person we work with understand more about creative and cultural careers and how they can develop their creative talent.

Schools, skills and career

progression: We will develop clear progression routes through our creative and cultural talent pipeline for young people (specifically 16+). We will promote pathways to develop creative skills and talents into careers, start-ups and jobs. In partnership with cultural agencies, educational partners, the local authority and the business sector we will support and track progression.

We develop projects as part of our NPO funded activity which include hand-on sessions, theatre in education, as well as digital and accessible resources for teachers and families. We continue to work in partnership with a range of organisations to deliver our ambition to grow our schools and families offer. These are becoming much loved favourites and enabling us to build a significant multi-site offer.

Family Arts programmes. We are building on and enhancing our family seasonal and holiday programmes, with a focus on half-terms, Easter, Summer and Winter holiday activity, as well as culturally relevant and National Celebration. During these periods we will continue to offer a mix of free and ticketed activity that will animate our venues with family friendly regular activities and special holiday programmes.

The Stockwood Garden Part' has become a recognised and much anticipated event which sees us animate our green spaces throughout the summer months. We will enhance this offer though collaborations with local and national artists to develop a festive atmosphere with memory-making moments with a focus on high quality cultural experiences featuring a mix programmed artist-led work and self-led activities in order to allow to access, participate and engage in way that suits their needs. **Here we engage:** *Trips & Treats, Kaleidoscope Creativity, and Dormitory Dependable*



Images: Marie Kirbyshaw



4.3 Cultural Momentous Months

This is a priority programme development for us. We focus on three nationally celebrated months, making a sustained artistic contribution to community themes, heritage and social movements. These months are;

- **LGBTQ+ History Month**
February
- **South Asian Heritage Month**
July – August
- **Black History Month**
October

Culturally Momentous Months Community co-production: We grow our partnerships, discussion (and listening) groups and forums from the South Asian, Black and LGBTQ+ communities to collaborate in a shared mission to develop momentous month events with a view to diversify our regular public programmes and museum collections year round (EDI Action A)

We invite local and national artists, creatives, promoters and community leaders to lead the discussions. They explore through talks, discussions, performance and visual art, we celebrate people, places, and ideas that gives Luton and these momentous communities identity. The look and feel of each programme, its purpose, creative outputs, gaps in our audiences, and the sensitive lines between celebrating and acknowledging. We use these thematic focuses to widen and deepen our year-round cultural offer. Each year we will review and progress popular programming strands from our Momentous Months to inform and feed in to our regular year round offer. This will ensure that the diversity and relevance of our programme grows, attracting a wider more representative audience. Over three years this will have a significant impact on the work we present shape of our Trust wide programme.

Here we engage: *Experience Seekers, Kaleidoscope Creativity, and Dormitory dependables*

The Fabulous Hatter is the proud name of a new LGBTQ+ positive and inclusive space that celebrates and champions everyone's individuality in the basement vaults of the Hat Factory Arts Centre. The space is home to a book swap area, already hosts numerous LGBTQ+ social events. We are developing a regular programme of community activations and commercial activity including club-nights showcasing local DJ talent, protected regular time and space for the LGBTQ+ community to pilot creative events, curating the revolving community exhibition space through local collaborations/ We will also be developing new and innovative ways to connect and signpost communities to other relevant local services. The new space was refurbished with support from Bedfordshire and Luton Community Foundation. This space not only provides a new venue space for programme and audience development, but also a space for hire and income generation.

4.4 Talent, Alumni & Progression (TAP) and Creative Networks

We present a visible and accessible changing cultural programme that animates our public spaces. The programme aims to inspire Luton's curious and creative community to network, socialise, and participate in arts and culture. The café will become a hub for creative and expressive activity, building on the first Thursday 'Hat District Lates' programme trialled in 2023. We will continue to focus on free and affordable events, testing a range of activities with a variety of participants. Building on our learning, in 2024 we will aim to visibly animate the café and bar area, encouraging first time visitors and actively encouraging individuals and groups to return and engage with our wider programme. We will test a range of offers; hosting Hat District Lates and daytime activities, curating outdoor pop-ups that meld live arts and DJs, inviting people to enter the building and dwell within the space. In the afternoons we welcome groups or family based activities, within the space for all measure of creative activity. The Hat District Café celebrates collaboration, creative experiences and experimentation for all ages and from all walks of life.

Cultural training programmes for Young people. We offer cultural career opportunities for young people (17-30 yrs) and target under-represented individuals and groups in recruitment (EDI action B). We will also expand and publish training and network programmes and opportunities for artists and creative industries as a source of information a refreshed Hat District Website. This will include two new Factory Associates at the Factory and a Curate as space early career training for artists and creatives at Wardown Museum

Talent Alumni & Progression:

Our Arts Council Funding for Talent Alumni and Progression (TAP) is centred in the Hat District, introducing two new trainees and supporting 10 start-ups in Hat Works creative workspace in Year 1. We will also build the network of activity for creative industries to gather, engage in and deliver training, talks and events. Our Luton Creative Alumni is a growing group of ambassadors for Luton. We will help champion their journey and promote routes to creative careers with young people through our schools programme. We will specifically focus on alumni who mirror the diversity of Luton so that every young person can see how they can progress and develop a creative carer.

Creative Networks: We will build the Hat District Network for our Creative Cluster tenants, creative community, visiting artists, speakers and entrepreneurs by hosting regular social and networking sessions in the newly imagined Hat Factory Café Bar and Hat Works. This creative hive will connect organisations from a range of sectors to each other, promoting growth and highlighting business opportunity across the network. In year 2 and three we will lead a refreshed programme of creatives sharing and showing their talents and knowledge through talks, workshops, events and by mentoring the next generation of creatives through our Talent Alumni and Progression (TAP) programmes and

Creative Industry Network:

Through our Talent, Alumni and Progression programme (TAP) we offer training, mentoring and skills for creative industry and start-ups. We promote Luton's creatives and cultural talent and support the creative industry growth economy. We will also produce a new online creative industry directory and provide funded opportunities for artists, trainees and start-ups. The Factory Associate Artists will benefit local and under-represented artists seeking a platform.

The Hat District Café and social activity will enable us to draw out the imagination of our communities, encouraging and fuelling 'un-programmed creativity' across our public spaces, with artists and audiences interacting, whilst developing new ideas and collaborations. We will promote the network through our website creating a sales platform for dedicated retail opportunities as well as endorsing the Creative Cluster. We will, through TAP develop a programme of income generating events and activities that will attract creatives from across Luton and further afield. We will also seek to raise more funding to growth the Hat District Network's profile and influence. Here we engage: Experience See Based at the Hat Factory, the new Factory Associates for Artists, we will expand and publish regular programmes and opportunities for artists and emerging creative industries annually. This benefits: Early career artists, Mid-career artists, Local artists and Under-represented artists and young people seeking a platform

We will also launch a 6-month programme for a trainee to work with the Trust full time (paid) to grow industry skills and experience and we will support them into work after the programme and provide follow up mentor support. We plan to repeat this programme as a regular opportunity for young people in Luton to engage with each year. We will also fundraise for additionally and grow the cohort from one to more. **Here we engage:** Early career artists, Mid-career artists, Local artists, Under-represented artists.

5. MUSEUM, HERITAGE & PLACE STRATEGY

Museum, Heritage and Place Strategy will widen public access to Wardown Museum & collections, focus on re-developing Stockwood Discovery Museum and grow the Hat District Cluster by safeguarding more heritage buildings and animating this town centre conservation area.

This Plan describes how we develop and care for the heritage of our three sites as custodian of 3 historic listed venues, gardens and within conservation areas to be used by the public for creative and cultural benefit. How we raise funds to develop them, update them and how we grow our freehold ecology. Our places are:

Image: © Aleksandra Warchol Photography / Shaun Armstrong



- **Wardown Museum & Gallery**

– An enthralling Museum set in a historic Victorian manor house in Wardown Park offering free exhibitions of locally relevant and nationally important collections, co curated with our one mile community and Museum Maker volunteers to reflect contemporary Luton. Including the biggest hat & head ware collection outside London. We are custodian of this heritage site and care for the Museum and collection in partnership with Luton Rising and Luton Borough Council.

- **Hat District Creative Cluster**

- A dynamic Creative Industry Cluster of three former industrial hat factory buildings transformed into workspaces and performance venues for the community to grow creative and cultural careers, collaborations and skills. A destination of choice in Luton town Centre offering a network for early career to professional creative industries seeking affordable space and a like-minded community. We are custodian of the Hat Factory Arts Centre in partnership with Luton Rising and Luton Borough Council.

- **Hat Factory Arts Centre –**

An inspiring recently refurbished Arts Centre offering year-round theatre, film, art, dance, music, comedy and festivals in professional spaces including the comedy basement bar, 100 seat studio theatre, 250 capacity live music and events venue, artist's studios, practice rooms, workshops, meeting rooms, café bar and offices.

- **Stockwood Discover Centre –**

A Historic Museum, gardens and visitor centre with sustainability at its core offering free access to wellbeing walks, woodland and walled gardens and the best collection of Ian Hamilton-Finlay public art in England. The historic courtyard Museum tells local stories through collections and the more modern Mossman Gallery provides stories of life, travel and transportation. We are custodian of this heritage site and care for the Museum and collection in partnership with Luton Rising and Luton Borough Council.





5.1 Wardown Museum & Art Gallery

Wardown Museum & Gallery is an enthralling Museum set in a historic Victorian manor house in Wardown Park offering free exhibitions of locally relevant and nationally important collections, co-curated with our one mile community and Museum Maker volunteers to reflect contemporary Luton. Including the biggest hat & headwear collection outside London. Situated in the beautiful landscaped Wardown Park on the outskirts of Luton town centre entry is free, and the House provides inspiring, eclectic and beautifully curated collections for people of all ages. Here we co-curate local stories about travel, exploration, migration, family, fashion and the home and provide a platform for sharing objects, family stories and histories.

Wardown House gives visitors an insight into a 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. We bring this right up to date by co-curating local stories around migration, travel, exploration and home representative of our diverse neighbouring cultures. The Museum also provides a gallery space for emerging and contemporary artists as we seek to find new creative ways to engage with the local community. 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. Our popular and well-used café provides direct access to the park and the Morning Room. Wardown Museum and the Morning Room have a wonderful sunny outlook over the park and as a result it is also used as a venue for events, weddings and functions which is an area we wish to grow in our Commercial plan.

Free to access Museums in Luton: We will continue to provide free access to excellence in museums, curation and community engagement through access, online database, advocacy, networks and presenting case-studies at conferences, national networks and in publications. We will pursue Arts Council Designation for the Hat Industry and Headwear collection, cementing its importance to the cultural life of England. Collections policies and development plans will be reviewed and updated and our accreditation review completed.

Wardown Museum presents a programme of events, performances, talks and workshops and is home to our Arts Council England funded National Portfolio Organisation (NPO) and programme of activity which supports our Hat and Headwear collections development, co-curation and audience growth strategies.

Building on our exemplary work so far, we will raise funds to grow our curatorial knowledge and expertise through our museums, collections, volunteers, teaching and learning teams. We will grow more partnerships to promote our collection and the town's industrial heritage. We will support a millinery school and skills development in Luton working in partnership and extending our relationship with local schools, the 6th form college Morley College, the V&A and University of Bedfordshire in order to make this happen. Our operating model at Wardown reduced during COVID and impacted our recovery to operate with an efficient staff structure that complemented the opening hours of Stockwood Discover Centre. We plan to review the opening hours to be more customer centric at Stockwood and Wardown, which subject to review, we hope will see the re-opening of Wardown Museums and Gallery on Saturdays.



5.1.1 One Mile Community Cultural Programme

The One Mile Community is an innovative audience and programme development initiative designed to reach and engage the diverse populations living within a one mile radius of our Museums. Initially, this focuses on Wardown House, which predominantly sits across Biscot and High Town. We know that the two largest ethnicities in Biscot Ward are Pakistani (35%) and Bangladeshi (24%), and that after Urdu, Polish is the third most spoken language in Luton, with the largest cluster of business, shops, and community activity in High Town Ward. The One-Mile community is a helpful as a focused programming lens; helping us to challenge our assumptions and ensure that our activity is stimulating and relevant to audiences with a wide range of cultural interests and needs.

One mile Community Museums Programme: We will co-producing a programme locally relevant diverse music, immersive theatre, workshops and temporary exhibitions at Wardown House Museum with our one mile community. In collaboration this shall inform the curation of our permanent collection to be more relevant and representative of contemporary Luton. Audience development to Target areas in Luton that currently identified as having low-engagement in our work (EDI action C)

We will engage local businesses, schools, religious and community leaders to develop engagement opportunities and build trust. This two way dialogue will be nurtured and developed through outreach and events, facilitated social and cultural gatherings, and an ambitious and relevant multidisciplinary cultural programme. We will also build on our inaugural 'resident' Norr Ali at Wardown House Museum (2023) to enable wider stories of diversity and global messages to be told through collections and the production of new work. With our one mile community we will showcase creatives 'in residence' at Wardown from any discipline including artists, philosophers, architects, milliners and fashion designers. We will engage our one mile community businesses and donators to support and sponsor events and pay it forward programmes. This is a 'listening and learning' model and we will continually review and monitor progress; working with external agencies to assess impact across visitor numbers, participation in programme, volunteers and staff recruitment. **Here we engage:** Experience Seekers, and Kaleidoscope Creativity Curate a Case.

5.1.2 Curate a Space

We will build on existing community partnerships and developing co-curators with our Afro- Caribbean, Pakistani, Bangladeshi, and Polish communities on curating cases of brought objects and stories for the Museum. Each year, community curators are supported to research, collect, and present relevant stories, objects and artefacts for temporary exhibition. We will co-curate more spaces, as part of our NPO programme, we will commission early careers artists and creatives from underrepresented communities to develop new professional curation skills, working with our expert team to understand key principles and approaches. We work with the developing Curate a Case cohort to forge new international connections and commonalties, exploring Luton's links with the Silk Trade route, Kashmiri and Eastern European communities **Here we engage:** Experience Seekers, and Kaleidoscope Creativity



5.1.3 Museum Makers & Culture Makers

Museum Makers is an award winning volunteer programme offering a unique opportunity for anyone with a passion or interest in museums and volunteering to get involved with the Culture Trust as an active supporter or volunteer at Wardown House, Museum and Gallery as well as venues across the Trust.

The Museum Makers programme has engaged with over 2,000 people since its inception and delivered over 120,000 hours to the Culture Trust through projects and challenges. We currently have just over 933 Museum Makers registered with us. Over the years the Museum Makers have given over 120,000 hours of their time to support our work.

Further development of the Museum and Culture Makers programmes will allow us to:

- Engage audiences through targeted campaigns to generate interest and raise awareness.
- Develop and diversify our volunteering model to increase our actively engaged volunteers.
- Undertake community Engagement – how we can engage with targeted and new audiences through specific projects.
- Develop our programme to engage audiences and increase awareness and participation.
- Diversify our volunteer cohort to ensure that participation reflects our community.
- Support skills development and facilitate on the job learning opportunities. It is hoped that this will enable the volunteers to use their experience with us to gain paid within the Trust or elsewhere.

In addition it is clear that increased volunteer hours, whilst providing valuable opportunities to the participants also has the potential to provide the Trust with significant cost savings (volunteer hours), a visible and friendly welcome and a core section of the community who understand and help to inform the Trust's offer. Our Museum makers act as advocates for the Trust, as we continue to build our relationships with Luton's community leaders and groups in order to increase participation and ensure that our volunteers are more representative of Luton's diverse communities. We will refresh our Museum Maker Programme.



Museum Maker Volunteers:

We will continue to increase our volunteer engagement with high quality and stimulating opportunities offered across the Trust's sites. We will ensure volunteer wellbeing through regular check-ins and social engagement opportunities, training and skills development, meaningful and tailored tasks contributing to each volunteer having a happy and healthy programme of activity.

Left: Nina Lewis, centre: Priestley West, right: Sahar Freemantle. Taken at the Hats Made me exhibition
Image: © Aleksandra Warchol Photography



5.1.4 Museums, Significant Collections: Hat Industry and Headwear

In 2023, we presented the UK's largest exhibition of Hats and Headwear. 'Hats Made me' as an 8-month long exhibition at Stockwood Discovery Centre. This major exhibition and accompanying programme drew an international audience and demonstrated the world wide significance of the Hat Industry and Headwear collection and focused Luton as the centre of English hat making. The exhibition comprised of around 200 pieces, including early Panama hats and straw boaters, through to celebrity culture pieces from Dr Who to headwear worn by Beyoncé. It explored hats that have shaped our everyday lives and featured some of the most exciting millinery in the UK today.

This exemplary curatorial work provided a platform for this business plan to grow and develop new exhibitions, audiences, collection growth and the *Luton Hat Triennial*; a new ambitious international cultural festival inspired by Wardown's world-class Hat and Headwear collection. It will use global fashion as an artistic lens, with Black-Caribbean and Pakistani trends as a key inspiration for its wide ranging multidisciplinary cultural programme and new arts commissions.

Our new international Hat Triennial will be developed through the partnerships established from the exhibition including the Worshipful Company of Felt makers of London, The British Hat Guild, London Hat Week, Morley College of Fashion and leading national and international Milliners.

Leading up to its inaugural presentation in 2026, we will feed ideas and commentary from our ongoing audience development and community programmes into commission briefs and artist calls outs. This will ensure diverse talent from a range of global creative communities can collaborate and bring world-class culture to regional and national audiences. We will also build our international audience access to our collection and develop new income streams to help support our curatorial development and growth. In year one we shall develop an outline plan growing our existing by researching service needs, costs through comparators and testing new areas for commercial growth.

Wardown Museum & Collection exemplar in ACE National Portfolio. Locally relevant and nationally important Hat Industry & Headwear Collection. We will research and develop our Hat and Headwear collection and plan for a significant festival across Luton called the Hat Triennial in 2026 along with our academic and other partnerships, research and develop accompanied by more knowledge sharing. We will apply for designation. Locally relevant heritage stories are told through our Museum collections (EDI Action D) and the hats and headwear theme will weave creatively and imaginatively across all of our sites.

We will also conserve and grow the impact of the Ian Hamilton Finlay collection at Stockwood and continue to commission public art around our venues to animate the public realm. ***Here we engage:*** *Commuter land Culturebuffs, Experience Seekers, Trips & Treats Factory Associates*



Image: © Aleksandra Warchol Photography

5.2 Hat Factory Arts Centre



Image: Marie Kirbyshaw

The Hat District is a dynamic Creative Industry Cluster of three former industrial hat factory buildings transformed into workspaces and performance venues in the heart of Luton. The Hat District consists of: the Hat Factory Arts Centre on Bute Street, and Hat Works and Hat House on Guildford Street and the wider public realm that connects these three former hat factories as outdoor performance space.

The Hat District buildings are within the Plaiters Lea Conservation Area, which is a key location for the future development of Luton. The success and growth of the Hat District cluster plays a key role sustaining the Trust's long-term position as we seek to ensure income generated from the cluster is channelled back into arts, culture, heritage opportunities, promotion and infrastructure. We recognise that growing the Hat District has the greatest growth potential, doing what we do well whilst boosting provision, supporting sector growth and generating sustainable income for the Trust.

The Hat District promotes creativity, performance and participation and provides a platform for creative industry ingenuity, skills development, collaboration and a platform for sharing talent, inspiring arts, theatre, music, film, exhibitions, festival and comedy.



The Hat Factory Arts Centre is one of the region's leading arts venues featuring live music, club nights, theatre, dance, films, comedy, festivals, workshops, talks, networks and exhibitions. The Venue comprises a 105 seat studio theatre, a basement bar and venue with capacity for 80, gallery and flat floor music venue accommodating 230, 13 creative workspaces, meeting rooms, café and offices. We will increase access and attendance to our contemporary cultural programme offering a range of theatre, music, festival, comedy and dance performances from a diverse range of performers who mirror the diversity of our community in line with our EDI statement. Focused on fresh, new and relevant stories from both established and emerging touring companies who are making high quality work in the UK we specifically target young and diverse audiences to engage and co-curate our programmes, but welcome everyone to be inspired by the UK's leading productions and artists in order to develop artistic competencies and talents through skills development and professional practice. Complementing our own programming, we welcome local and regional promoters to the venue; broadening our music offer and at the same time supporting young promoters and their businesses. w box office income and secondary sales in the café/bar.

The Hat District's Creative Industry cluster growth.

Learning from the town's important history of hat making and manufacturing we strategically promote hats in our collections, exhibitions, events, promotions and through the adaptive reuse of former hat factories. We are committed to contributing to the talent development of the town through its Skills & Talent and progression programme and neighbourhood place based projects. We consider our role central to promoting and growing a community of artists, makers, artisans, producers, digital designers and contributors into a strong and resilient Creative Ecosystem.

We plan to grow the ecology. We will undertake marketing campaigns to fill commercially important spaces, generate new spaces and match local need with provision. We will build the case (and demand) to re-use more industrial heritage buildings for contemporary creative uses building provision to double our existing workspace provision. We recognize that our existing investments in the Hat District is making a significant contribution to the regeneration of the town center and the creative community who live, work, collaborate and perform here. We will better use existing spaces and animate the streetscape for maximum creative and cultural occupation through partnership projects, investments, one-mile community engagement, better data-driven marketing and fundraising.

Hat District Creative Industry Workspace growth. We will enable more creative industries to use more space across our estate through hires, partnerships and programmes. We will undertake marketing campaigns to fill commercially important spaces, generate new spaces and match local need with provision. We recognise that growing the Hat District has the greatest growth potential, doing what we do well whilst boosting provision, supporting sector growth and generating sustainable income for the Trust. We aim to re-use more industrial heritage buildings for contemporary creative uses building provision to grow our existing workspace provision in response to needs, demand and anchor tenants.



Image: Shaun Armstrong



5.3 Hat District & Heritage Development Trust

Heritage Development Trust

(HDT): In 2023 we were awarded three year funding to join the Heritage Development Trust network in the UK funded by the Architectural Heritage Fund and National Lottery Heritage Fund. This funding of £210K over three years will enable us to recruit a dedicated professional to lead the development and re-use of more heritage buildings at risk, establishing deeper community partnerships across the Hat District and leveraging more funding and inward investment into the Plaiters Lea Conservation area. In the short term (year 1) we will galvanize the community from Guildford Street, Bute Street and Cheapside to map our needs and establish micro-grants for the re-use of empty or underused shopfronts, encouraging the creativity of artists to animate space.

Hat District Creative Cluster and Town Centre Cultural Regeneration:

We will promote the Hat District Creative Cluster for the benefit of growing the economy. We will balance this with our long-term vision for a cost-neutral creative ecology whereby all rents and incomes received are balanced against costs, operations activity and cultural investments. The Heritage Development Trust programme acts as a catalyst to this vision with a three year regeneration programme in Luton's Plaiters Lea Conservation Area.



Our longer term HDT goal is to refurbish more hat industry buildings to create a sustainable creative community, facilitate progression and development space for practitioners and generate commercial income to cover costs (and create a surplus for re-investment). We will amplify our position as cultural leaders and contribute demonstrably and as a good partner to support and delivery Local strategic objectives, whilst supporting the economy and regeneration.



5.4 Stockwood Discovery Centre

Stockwood Discovery Centre is a Historic Museum, gardens and visitor centre with sustainability at its core offering free access to wellbeing walks, woodland and walled gardens and the best collection of Ian Hamilton-Finlay public art in England. The historic courtyard Museum tells local stories through collections and the more modern Mossman Gallery provides stories of life, travel and transportation.

Here we promote discovery, togetherness and wellbeing and presents a platform for learning about energy, movement, transportation and life's-journeys through museum objects, cultural activities, healthy walks and creative events. Stockwood Discovery Centre is located in the Georgian Grade II listed stable block and walled garden of the former Stockwood House. It 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 also encompasses a strong horticultural offer of walled gardens, woodland, historic greenhouses, beautifully designed formal gardens and an array of specialist plants, shrubs and trees. The garden is listed and has the best collection of public art in England by acclaimed artist Ian Hamilton Finlay. The site is free to access and is very popular with people of all ages throughout the year.

Stockwood Discovery Centre Community Engagement: Working directly with our one mile community schools, children and families we will widen engagement to free Museums and heritage. We will promote the wellbeing benefits of heritage environments, rest, gardens, social activation and cultural play. We will create places of active 'rest' to practice calm and wellbeing including programmes of tai-chi, yoga, meditation. Our programme shall celebrate of human stories of journeys and movement.

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. We are bringing this right up to date through future site developments called Sustainable Stockwood, we are developing contemporary stories around energy, movement, transportation and life's journeys; the Vauxhall Industry story, sustainability and decarbonisation. These are the themes we plan to develop into our future site developments, visitor experiences and museum collection stories.

Outline drawings working on a Stage 1 funded project have been designed into RIBA stage 1 designs by Buttress Architects. We will, through this plan raise funding to further develop these assumptions with users, the local community, stakeholders and the Council and aim to collaboratively take these plans forward into a capital development programme.



5.5 Site Leadership, Digitisation & Technology

We will implement a significant change in how we approach our sites through the introduction of a site leadership. We have identified that dedicated leadership presence at each site would improve performance, presentation, customer knowledge and visitor welcome.

We will allocate responsibility for each site to a site leader who will drive implementation of operational, commercial and customer centric improvements, including visitor welcome, site care and income generation. We will develop smart technologies and digitisation of our current site operating systems will enable us to work more efficiently and to embrace new ways for presenting heritage, arts, culture and museum collections.

As part of the process we will also collate and report regularly on the financial performance of each site enabling us to better manage progress and be agile and responsive in making changes when required. Our site leaders will identify change, harness new technological opportunities to operate our sites more cost efficiently and they shall pioneer new ways to connect with customers and gather data to enable us to better develop relationships with them. Our IT and digital policies shall be developed as part of this operational review.

5.6 Environment and Sustainability

Environment and Sustainability

In 2023 we have worked with Zerogram and Buttress Architects to identify environmental improvements at Stockwood and our other venues, which can be delivered through smarter use of energy at all sites. This will be overseen by the site leaders and progress will form part of the site reporting matrix, which the new system will deliver. In the first instance these efficiencies can be achieved through being more vigilant about energy use, while in the longer term (beyond the period of this plan) through larger scale capital improvements (Sustainable Stockwood in section above). During this period we are confident that environmental efficiencies will at least enable us to maintain running costs at their current levels in the face of an inflationary environment. We plan to take this learning to our other sites.

Sustainable Stockwood: This business plan promotes the development of Stockwood as a center pioneering conversation, collections and curiosity about sustainability. From Vauxhall cars and Airport planes to growing vegetables and recycling water – this site shall be a place to demonstrate traditional and new sustainable practices, engage young p During this time, we will also work on the development of a broader capital programme at Stockwood to combine our strategy with the town-wide ambition to repatriate the Vauxhall collection with Luton

Stockwood Discovery Centre

Capital Project: We will collaboratively plan to make capital improvement to Stockwood DC which could become a net-zero site with fundraised capital investment and redevelopment focussed mainly on the Mossman Museum and customer services. Early modelling indicates a significant commercial venue space and expanded catering are needed to support the site's financial sustainability. This aligns with the partnership project seeking to repatriate the Vauxhall car collection to Luton.

6. ENTERPRISE & MARKETING STRATEGY



Hat Factory Cafe Bar, Evening event
Image: Shaun Armstrong

Enterprise growth & Marketing Strategy will grow incomes and trading, by developing more frequent commercial cultural events with a focus on live music, great hospitality and entertainment at the Hat factory and across all sites ensure effective marketing for audience growth leading to customer satisfaction and repeat use.

We are an enterprising Charity and our commercial activity is embedded in all that we do in order to contribute to our long-term financial sustainability. Our work to grow audiences and customers aligns with our need to grow tickets sales, deliver high quality customer services, increase our commercial hires, events and ceremonies, improve our catering offer, and maximise our rents. To grow incomes and trading surplus, by developing new commercial cultural events with a focus on live music and entertainment at the Hat factory and to marketing for audience growth and ensuring customer satisfaction and exemplary hospitality. Here, we describe how we offer high quality customer services to our thousands of regular users and visitors at our three sites and how we commercially generate income through our trading company, hires and rentals as an ethical landlord to generate sustainable incomes to support the charity.

6.1 Customer Relationship & Audience Development

We currently have a very good understanding and relationship with our ticketed audiences (mostly at the Hat Factory). However our free venues (Stockwood Discovery Centre and Wardown House Museum & Gallery) are not currently ticketed, and we do not track our audiences at these sites as effectively as we would like. To address this we will introduce an accessible membership scheme with free tickets to all museum sites. This will enable us to

- Better understand our visitor use and patterns of engagement
- Better track visit numbers and (via postcode analysis) visitor demographics and origin.
- Provide us with data to directly contact visitors to our free sites with information about offers and events.
- Provide us with face-to-face contact with all visitors to provide information, direction and interaction opportunities, improving the visitor welcome.

Working with the Audience Agency we will create a strategic framework for how we communicate, monitor and develop our audiences. This regular interaction with our audience will help us continue to tailor our offer to our local populous. Consistent observation of patterns and trends will be fed back into our yearly programming, education and commercial plans to ensure we are as relevant and appealing to audiences as we can be.

We undertook our first Annual Survey in February 2023. These will run annually and the data gathered in 2023 has provided us with a baseline from which subsequent years will be measured against. This will give us an understanding of how our audience engages with us, what are their main drivers for purchasing tickets and visiting our venues. Using the methodology of the annual survey we will update our post show surveys to improve the service we offer our customers. The 2023 survey will serve as the baseline for this and we will monitor performance on a monthly basis.

The Hat Factory Studio Theatre





Our website needs to work harder for us, for many this is their first interaction with The Culture Trust and is the gateway to our customer journey. We have made modest changes to the purchase path over the last 12 months however we need a much more robust overhaul of the main interface so that it displays the breadth and depth of our activity in a way that enables us to continue to drive increased sales, improve our donations and act as an advocacy tool for our work with our community.

Cultural Venue Customer welcome and 24/7 digital services: We will allocate responsibility for each site to a site leader who will drive implementation of operational, commercial and customer centric improvements, including visitor welcome, site care and income generation. We will develop smart technologies and digitisation of our current site operating systems to understand more about who and how heritage, arts, culture and museums are used and a new Membership Scheme.

We will research and develop a membership scheme aimed at increasing loyalty to The Culture Trust brand. Using the knowledge we gather from the annual and post show surveys we will start with a free entry level option that is about us gathering more data on our audiences. Museums and Stockwood Discovery Centre shall remain free to enter for the community. We are going to scope two paid levels that offer greater access to The Culture Trusts activities and events such as priority booking periods, discounts on exhibitions and ticketed events, opportunities to attend privately curated events, discounts in our bars and shops and special member events across the sites.

6.2 Commercial Events

We know that live music and comedy brings increased audiences, higher booking fees and greater spend per head as evidenced by the success of our music and comedy programme in 2023/24. Working with local and national promoters the 2024-28 programme continues to grow and increase featuring artists just starting their musical and comedy careers, some established smaller acts and those towards the end of their careers looking for smaller more intimate venues. We will raise the profile of the Hat Factory as a music and comedy venue making it a must visit destination for touring artists.

Live Music and Comedy at the Hat Factory. We will programme more intensively our live music and comedy and will reflect our momentous months programme so that all events are representative of the diverse communities of Luton. We will increase the number of live music events we host at The Hat Factory (Factory Floor). This will grow to until most Thursday/Friday/Saturdays are programmed with popular commercial activity. Working with local and national promoters, the programme will feature artists just starting their musical and comedy careers, some established smaller acts and those towards the end of their careers looking for smaller more intimate venues. To help ease any pressure on the main bar we will create a popup bottle only bar in the Beacon Lounge that can be operated on days when we have additional audiences in the building.

Commercial partnerships events and hires. We are presenting more large scale music events and popular comedy and events by building on great partnerships and our organisational skills and knowledge. This will help us grow box office income and secondary sales in the café/bar. We will balance a commercial need to increase the number of smaller more intimate Weddings and Ceremonies we host each year at Wardown House Museum and larger ceremonies at Stockwood with our core cultural free access museum offer



Stockwood Illuminated

In addition to the commercial activity at The Hat Factory we will look at how we begin to animate Stockwood Discovery Centre differently to drive additional footfall. Building on the 2023/24 programme we will continue to enhance the outdoor offer over the Summer. We will present at least one piece of outdoor theatre each year and continue to see work from the Momentous Months performed at Stockwood in February, July and October. Our yearly light trail will continue to grow in 2024 we will introduce dynamic pricing to help maximise revenue with ambitions to by 2028 have extended the route into the woods so that it covers the whole site.

Discovery Club: We will create a programme of outdoor activities linked to the health and wellbeing agenda including, groups walks, Yoga and Tai-chi on the lawns during the Spring and Summer months. We will also build on our horticulture partnerships and volunteering to grow our community gardening initiative designed to drive additional footfall, upskill our community and grow more healthy food for consumption. A meet the Gardener series of events coupled with talks about the natural world will continue to add value and help drive income.



Stockwood Live: Looking further ahead Stockwood Live Music would be a series of outdoor concerts taking place at The Discovery Centre in late Summer early Autumn. These events would drive significant footfall (up to 6,000 audience members) to the site over a weekend and would achieve high levels of secondary spend as well as generating healthy income from booking fees. These mass market events appeal to our most engaged audiences (Dormitory Dependable and Trips & Treats as categorised by the Audience Agency) in continuing to enhance this are of the programme we will aim to increase the numbers on our database.

Stockwood Illuminated is a community event for all the family set in the Discovery grounds with light, sounds and visual effects. Whilst an accessibly priced activity with subsidies and pay it forward free access for certain groups, we ensure our incomes can be boosted with products, food and beverages and add-ons for those that can afford it. This means that we can ensure access and inclusion where cost is not prohibitive, but we can also generated commercial incomes from those who can afford it.

Partnership and town-wide Box office services In year 2, once we have an engaged regular audience who to swell our data base we will explore running an external box office function to other arts and entertainment organisations across a wider geography – such as Bedfordshire. Taking inspiration from Tickets Oxford and other community lead ticketing platforms we would offer a sensibly priced and administered function that would be a central place for a variety of events across the county, void of over inflated booking and administration fees it will be a suitable platform for local groups, emerging artists and large scale community events.



6.3 Catering & Retail

Our trading service provides a critical surplus into the charity. In 2023 we introduced an in-house menu of sustainably sourced, healthy and well balanced hot and cold food at Stockwood where our catering function is based. The kitchen at Stockwood provides centralised food preparation transported to The Hat Factory and Wardown. We will invest in an electric van to sustainably transport goods around our portfolio. Where possible we seek to use produce from the gardens to supplement external ordering. As we increase the programme of events at Stockwood we will invest in a number of kiosks that can be placed strategically around the site these will enable us to sell a smaller range of refreshments. We will also utilise underused buildings across the site. This will help us to increase our income and reduce costs and waste.

Healthy Heritage gardens and skills programmes at Stockwood:

We will grow more food to prepare in our kitchens with and for our community at Stockwood, engaging in wellbeing, healthy eating, outdoor activities and greenhouse productivity. This boosts community engagement, promotes sustainability at Stockwood and generates fresh produce for sale in our cafes that can generate an income for the Trust.



Image: Shaun Armstrong

Hat Factory café bar represents a key area for growth, and we are targeting an increase in Hat Factory café bar income by 25% each year. The Hat Factory Café will benefit from the pipeline of audiences with the enhanced live music and large events programme in the Arts Centre which will generate significant bar and catering sales. We are confident we can deliver this based on past performance and increased use of the building. To begin with we are refreshing the Hat Factory Café Bar with food being prepared at Stockwood and delivered fresh on site each day. Following on from this, café bar income will be driven in part by diverse community programming of the space – as set out in our Creative and Cultural Strategy and the development of our commercial programme offer which will drive footfall from higher spending groups.

In order to monitor progress and be more responsive, we will track our 'spend per head' using figures pulled from our EPOS system and we will model against specific genres, and seasons. This will more accurately track and predict how audiences are spending and what it is they are spending on.

Ethical and locally sources products for retail:

We will sell more high quality, locally sourced and produced products linked to our cultural sites, offer and programmes. We will refit Stockwood Shop and develop more garden essentials, outdoor accessories, toys and games, books, clothing and a selection of locally produced food and drink and linking them to our museums and collections.



6.4 Ceremonies

We recognise that we are not fully tapping into the available market in terms of utilising our sites fully for weddings and ceremonies, this is partly because we need to balance public access and cultural programmes with commercial events. Wardown is our prime site for ceremonies and was designed in the refurbishment of 2017 to accommodate small events to a very high quality. This enables us to offer full commercial rates for ceremonies and hires at this venue.

We will enable more weddings and ceremonies to be booked into Wardown Museum and Stockwood DC. We will focus our efforts on increasing the number of smaller more intimate Weddings and Ceremonies we host each year at Wardown House Museum and larger ceremonies at Stockwood.

We have recently renewed the licences for both Wardown and Stockwood for three years with a view to accommodating larger scale ceremonies to taking place at Stockwood Discovery Centre over the Summer months. We will seek potential partners in helping us deliver these and will keep under constant review our strategy for marketing and promoting this facility through our website and other external sites. We will ensure the ceremonies focus on days closed to the public, and will balance this with our review on opening hours.



Images: Shaun Armstrong

6.5 Creative Industry Workspace

We will maximise rental income from our Hat District properties by ensuring that all spaces are let out to 90% (with a 10% churn). We will ensure that all available spaces in Hat House are long-leased to established creative industry tenants who meet our criteria and who are able to provide a reliable and regular source of income to support our financial resilience so that we can re-invest back into the creative ecology. In Hat House and the Hat Factory we will support a mix of creatives from emerging practitioners to established companies. We already have a pipeline of tenancy interests for the Hat District building evidence of need for expansion.

More of our under-used spaces, offices and studios shall be used by cultural organisations, artists and local groups. This plan advocates for a complete review of all our gap spaces across our heritage estate, measuring lettings potential in these gaps and undertake a marketing campaign in to fill them. This is a priority focus for the Trust as we recognise that this function has the greatest growth potential, doing what we do well whilst boosting provision, supporting sector growth and generating sustainable income for the Trust.

We will introduce a new Creative Industry Network as a digital and physical resource. This shall be for any creative in Luton, and for for tenants who can meet monthly, enhancing the exchange of ideas in the district and creating wider business opportunities for gaining new tenants. We will explore options to fill available space at Stockwood Discovery Centre with crafters and artisans that can add to the experience on site. We will launch a paid for business club aiming to attract new members a year across three tiers (of researched prices). Offering specific benefits for each tier aimed at attracting small, medium and large organisations to support our activity. The benefits will focus on marketing and distribution opportunities but will also offer members the option to entertaining clients, and incentivise staff. This will enhance our links with the local business community, help in developing philanthropic links and opening opportunity to new audiences.

6.6 Marketing, Communications & Promotions



Our internal and external communication flow is critical to how we present what we do, listen to our customers and audience and respond by developing what is locally relevant and of value. We will better demonstrate how we listen and take action through our community communications, feedback and through our marketing material.

What's on. Visitor information. We improve customer information about what's on and how to access our venues. We improve customer digital access through increased website functionality. We will ensure our digital communications provide progression routes to engage in more people in more culture. We will seek quality marks on family friendly, breast feeding, dementia friendly, Halal foods, prayer rooms, quiet spaces and LGBTQI safe.

We are listening to our customers and in 2023 re-introduced runs of physical print for our programmes 'what's on' and we have started physical posting and flyers to widen reach.

We commit to producing three brochures per annum to drive key sales across our programmes. We plan to have a greater outdoor presence across the period of this plan as well as increasing our digital reach. We will increase the numbers on our database. Digitally, we will continue to refine how we communicate to our audiences through our weekly and monthly emails, and look to enhance our links with local media including the BBC and ITV.



Energy Reduction & Net Zero: Work is underway to map our path to a net-zero heritage listed garden site and Museum with refreshed customer experiences with heritage and growth in our site commercial offer. Our plans include better communicating stories of energy, movement, transportation and life's journeys through the collection and developing more ways for our community and visitors to Luton can engage with the site. Our ambition is to significantly improve and refresh the visitor experience in partnership with the Council, funders and local groups. This will take us beyond the period of this plan however we will follow our decarbonization route map towards greater environmental sustainability and develop a capital programme that will enable the site to be net Zero by project.

Our roadmap towards Net Zero will enable us to reduce energy costs across our heritage estate with support from LBC. This plan advocates for further work across all our sites. In year one we will apply for energy grants and work with Council on smart contracting to implement capital decarbonise infrastructure changes across all sites to reduce consumption and cost. We will also change cultural habits of staff, visitors and site users to ensure we can contribute towards Luton's Net Zero targets and make demonstrable progress towards efficiency. We will play our part in delivering Luton 2040 ambitions with Luton Borough Council.

Our budget for future years does not show an increase in energy costs, it shows a stand still budget from year 1. We will fine-tune our knowledge on energy consumption to monitor how we are delivering towards this goal.

Recycling, re-use and efficient operations. Our operation and administration will be resourceful and minimise waste. We will decommission the use of plastics and non-recyclable consumables. We will re-visit our ambition to be paperless and we will review our office systems and administration processes with a view to reduce wastage and unnecessary costs whilst supporting a greener environment and organisation culture. Team awareness training, championing and leadership.

Greener connections, walking & wellbeing: We will reduce travel costs by promoting greener travel, walking and wellbeing for our team and customers. We will develop more walking maps, trails and healthy activities that encourage walking to, from and between our sites. Working with local partners we will promote sustainable e-car use and public transport through the developments of our policies and practices. We will monitor our carbon footprint and reduce our impacts.

7. ORGANISATIONAL RESILIENCE STRATEGY

Organisational & Resilience Strategy will ensure we are financially resilient by promoting the impact of our work, investing in effective and efficient resources to maintain high quality delivery and generate credible and sustained increases in commercial incomes, grants and donations and to fundraise for additionality

Here we describe how we ensure effective operations provide good value and how we are working towards future financially sustainable as a leading Cultural Charity to Luton. We are an anchor institute funded by Luton Rising and we are a National Portfolio Organisation funded by Arts Council England, we are also a Heritage Development Trust funded by National Lottery Heritage and Architectural Heritage Funded.

It is our strategic aim to achieve long-term financial sustainability. For us this means that we use our skills and resources to generate over 50% of our costs through trading, fundraising and cultural activities and other enterprises. This will enable us to maximise value from our Luton Rising donation and Arts Council funding by doubling their investment through our income generation, resulting in more funding for arts and culture in Luton and value for money.

7.1 Financial Resilience

In 2020, the Trust adopted a five year recovery plan in response to the global pandemic COVID. During 2020 and 2021 and the cost of living pressures in 2022/3 the Trust experienced significant financial challenges. Financially and organisationally recovery is still taking place. This journey has relied on the support from Luton Rising, Luton Borough Council and Arts Council England, DCMS, National Lottery Heritage Fund, the Charity Bank and the Coop bank and many other funders who underpin our work. We have also benefited from COVID recovery funding and SIB to help us through this time by supporting us with critically needed organisational development funds.

Our ability to generate larger incomes from our ticket sales, trading services and hires has been slow to recover post COVID and we recognise that as we are recovering so too was Luton as a community, our audience, partners and tenants and funders who have less money to spend. We recognise our responsibility to

support our community and deliver our commitments, but we also need to address our organisational financial challenges head on. As such, in 2023/4 we implemented a year of planning for change so that we could reset our income and expenditure and sustainability plan for future years.

During 2023, the board and leadership team worked extensively with consultants Counterculture. We considered options and plans and the board visited other Trusts and organisations to learn about different and similar models. We also wanted to ensure we took a prudent and credible approach, involving discussions with our funder and partners along this journey. It was evident that change was necessary and that we needed to reduce our overheads and operational costs in order to remain viable.

Our journey towards sustainability requires a methodical approach to change. We know that in order to develop a sustainable arts and cultural charity offer in Luton that this will take time. This plan advocates for incremental and considered change that prioritises what we do, maximises value for money and delivers results that benefit the community, our funders and stakeholders.

We will map progress on our pathway from recovery towards resilience. We will produce an annual review and demonstrate impacts, we will publish our progress, celebrate success and outline our plans for continual improvement as we strive towards resilience.

This Business Plan will reposition the organisation towards sustainability. We will do this with our partners, funders and team and our regrowth shall be carefully managed and monitored to ensure it is inclusive and culturally diverse.

Over the next four years, commercial incomes shall grow and this shall be invested back into the organisational development and resilience and reserve. With business disruptions created by COVID, its aftermath and the economic challenges of the past two years we have been below our reserves policy sum which has meant that cash-flow at times has been challenging. A steady growth to reach our reserve policy should be realistic and grounded. Our priority shall be to invest in our reserve.

7.2 Efficient and Effective Operation

We will develop a more cost efficient and effective operation by undertaking an operational review in year one that informs change in year and future years. Over the course of this business plan we shall seek to ensure;

- **Customer research:** We will research how our current offer meets customer needs, to what extent it is fit for purpose and how our opening hours, customer services and programmes can balance public and business needs with affordability. We will undertake surveys, focus groups and user/non-user groups to identify what is most and least valued at each site, our programmes and services and we will identify what is popular, what is not and where there are gaps in provision/expectation. We will consider how we can build continual knowledge around use and flow through exploring digital access/free membership systems. We will also review our use of out of hour access, staff access, office use and volunteer access. We will undertake a data review all sites to understand patterns of use, and how we can develop an affordable and highly functional operation. We will also review our back office operations to understand how they could be more cost efficient and fit for purpose, with a particular focus on data collection and processing, finance systems and functions, box office and audience data management, stock controls and sales management.

- **Operational Review.** A two-year operational transformation programme with a phased approach to implementation starting in 2024. Our building overhead costs shall need to demonstrably reduce by introducing more sustainability solutions, energy efficiencies and technology that will enable us to contribute towards Net Zero. Our IT systems currently sit with LBC, we will seek a longer term plan and affordable solution with the Council during the course of this business plan. Our staff costs shall need to be affordable and enable us to invest in expertise, skills and training.

Operational review for resilience. Organisationally, as we continue to recover financially from the last four years of COVID, recession and cost of living rises, we will map progression towards resilience. To ensure our resources are fit for purpose and that we can deliver our strategic aims we will undertake an operational review in year one and implementing a first stage of changes followed by further operational change in year 2. The review will lead to improved site-based and online customer services, opening hours, skills development and fit-for-purpose roles and functions. Our operational review will also ensure an affordable, flexible charity and trading workforce.



7.3 Fundraising

We recognise that we will require additional income to add value to our core offer. Additional income shall be raised to build upon and develop the impacts of our work. Fundraising shall be a collective and team pursuit, centred around our fundraising strategy. The team shall research best matches for grants against the business plan to maximise time, effort in results. Grant funding shall add value to the core offer of the trust.

We will target our fundraising on additionally to growth the following areas;

- Organisational resilience and expertise to review our work and operations.
- Audience engagement targeting under-represented demographics.
- Supporting and growing our team, expertise, skills and training;
- Marketing and promoting our impacts through research, data collection and publications.
- Capital growth of the Hat District and Stockwood Discovery Centre.

Revenue: To build our programme and the impact of our NPO funding and Luton Rising Donation we will seek to harness funding opportunities to grow our arts programme, our children and young people's skills programmes and our Museum and Curatorial activities, events and collections care.

Capital: We will fundraise to grow the Hat District ecology, freeholds and heritage regeneration and conservation as part of Heritage Development Trust in partnership with the Architectural Heritage Fund and National Lottery Heritage Fund, Luton Borough Council and Luton BID. We will also fundraise to grow capital development funding for Stockwood Discovery Centre with an application to National Lottery Heritage Funding, MEND Arts Council and other funders in partnership with Luton Borough Council.

Donations: To date our donations have been low in relation to potential. This is because our charitable status is not prominent enough, we are still considered to be Council facilities and we don't provide sufficient communication and options to donate for specific purposes. Luton is a benevolent town, those that can give generally do it they are clear of the purpose and who will gain. This was demonstrated in a recent report by JustGiving which highlighted Luton & Bedfordshire in the top three most generous areas in the UK when it comes to charitable giving, the report published in the Independent highlighted the generosity of Lutonians even during the cost of living crisis.



Growing cultural inward investment, fundraising & donations: We will target our fundraising towards; Organisational resilience; Audience development; team development & promotions and Capital growth of the Hat District and Stockwood Discovery Centre. We will also increasing donations by better messaging through our print and digital marketing and onsite information. We will make it easier to give by providing better access to digital and site-based pay points. Our team will communicating our charitable work to our customers. Long term Luton Rising funding agreement secured.

We will amend the purchase path on the website to present customers with a more formal donations page and digital donations to encouraging them to donate to support the work we do. We will monitor and amend the messaging and denominations on this page at regular intervals. In addition to this we will amend our digital donation points, placing these at significantly important or emotionally relevant places across our sites with relevant messaging supporting our charitable aims.

7.4 Team Development

We will ensure our team and their skills meet the needs of the organisation going forwards. We will develop our current performance management system to have greater connection to the business plan, common goals and individual actions that prioritise the delivery of this plan.

We will also develop new programmes in mentoring and one to one development plans to support every member of staff so that we can enable everyone to flourish, meet their best potential and know the part they play in delivering this plan with pride, confidence and skill.

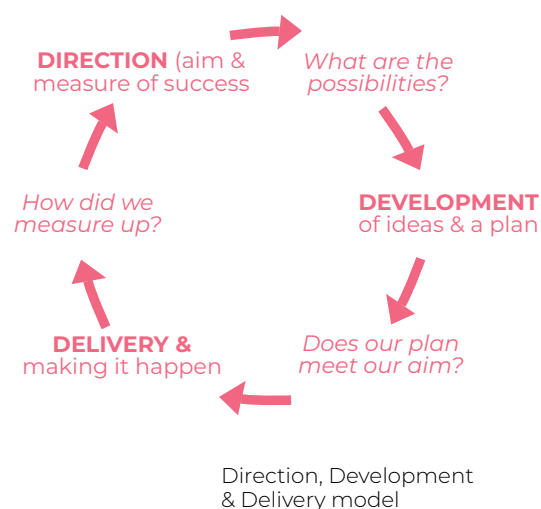
We shall strengthen our audience reach and grow our internal communications whereby our one-team become ambassadors of all that we do, help promote our programmes and advocate for our work. We will also seek to grow our wellbeing activities and awareness, staff led activity and training.

Team Culture Trust, Luton: Our people mirror the place we serve (EDI action F) and we will recruit through local networks. We will look at how we can bring about a greater sharing of responsibility with core staff and volunteers. We will review how we work with casual members of staff, particularly in supporting our evening and weekend programmes. Our operational review will ensure an affordable, flexible charity and trading workforce. We will develop effective performance management systems and training and we will seek more opportunities to celebrate success and team achievement.

Change will be necessary as we continue to ensure our workforce meets our operational needs within our budget envelope. We have seen staff costs rise faster than our income and our substantive funding from Arts Council England and Luton Rising does not include inflation or indexation. We are entrepreneurial in how we raise funds to support our core staffing and all projects include core costs (at least 10%). Our staff are our greatest asset and therefore our greatest investment, but we need to ensure a affordability into the long-term.

7.5 Evaluation & Continual Improvement framework

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. During the period of this plan we will pay particular attention to our delivery – through our site leadership and improved welcome and data collections – to ensure that customer feedback and evaluation feeds into improvement. Through our annual survey, co-commission groups, non-user surveys we will develop and evolve our programmes and services to be tailored around what is needed, wanted, valued and cost effective. Evaluation and review shall form a part of our meeting cycle and communications. (Illustration of DDD model) The DDD model, as a consistent cycle of improvement shall be monitored through internally and external meetings with the collaborative programme boards, funders, project and programme boards, leadership team and the Culture trust board of Trustees. We will ensure that project evaluations, customer feedback and data feed into and provide direction for future plan development and delivery. We will promote our activity through regular case-studies, promotions, presentations, publications and papers to disseminate our work, our learning and our cultural leadership.



Luton

**Luton
Rising**



Supported using public funding by

**ARTS COUNCIL
ENGLAND**

7.6 Reporting, transparency and accountability

The team connection and reporting flow (section 2.5) shows how we report, monitor and review information, evaluation (see section 7.5) customer feedback and manage performance. We produce quarterly finance and activity reports to our funders and investment partners (Luton Rising, Luton Borough Council, Arts Council England, the Charity Bank and other project funders). We ensure reporting is consistent with board reports where all our charity and governance decisions are made. Going forwards we plan to collaboratively develop and implement a local evaluation framework in Luton that sets to embed a consistency in how cultural organisations (Arts & Cultural strategy group) report. In 2025 we will develop, publish and present a new annual report for our stakeholders that demonstrate, how we are delivering against this plan, outline and promote our work, partnerships and progress and report on next steps.

We will share positive stories about our work, impacts and partnerships.

Good news and great opportunities shared: We will strengthen audience reach and grow our internal and external communications. We will do this through improving our website, promotions, publications and regular news to stakeholders (partners, staff and volunteers, funders, users and neighbours). We will ensure effective internal and external communications and launch a new Creative Industry network portal. We will produce an annual review to demonstrate impacts, progress, celebrate success and outline plans for continual improvement. We will collaborate with LBC to jointly promote our innovative partnership locally and nationally.

8. BUSINESS PLAN ACTIONS & KPIS

The 26 actions outlined in this Business Plan are gathered below. Delivery plans for these actions are developed annually with teams. Progress is monitored through KPIs which are reported on quarterly to the board of Trustees and funders.

ACTION	KPI	BASELINE 2024
<p>1 Regular Multidisciplinary Programme at the Hat Factory: We are developing more regularly programmes at the Hat Factory tailored to meet local demand whilst providing a platforms for emerging and grass-roots artists. Our regular live music, comedy, theatre and mixed performances aim to attract maximum audiences and venue use. We are listening to community needs and monitoring audience use and adapting offer programmes to meet public demand and needs.</p>	<p>Hat Factory Arts Centre arts and cultural visits</p>	<p>75,815</p>
<p>2 Culturally Momentous Months Community co-production: We grow our partnerships, discussion (and listening) groups and forums from the South Asian, Black and LGBTQ+ communities to collaborate in a shared mission to develop momentous month events with a view to diversify our regular public programmes and museum collections year round (EDI Action A)</p>	<p>Diverse artists % of programme</p>	<p>34%</p>
<p>3 Cultural Venue Activity Partnerships: We are working with networks, panel groups, organisations and cultural groups/agencies on sharing our resources. We are open to ideas, collaborations and partnerships to ensure our venues are fully used when we are already open – thus maximising the cost of running and operating this building. We are presenting more large scale, popular and commercial events by building on great partnerships. This will help us grow box office income and secondary sales in the café/bar.</p>	<p>Free arts and cultural activities, events and performance sessions offered</p>	<p>53</p>
<p>4 Free to access Museums in Luton: We will continue to provide free access to excellence in museums, curation and community engagement through access, online database, advocacy, networks and presenting case-studies at conferences, national networks and in publications. We will pursue Arts Council Designation for the Hat Industry and Headwear collection, cementing its importance to the cultural life of England. Collections polices and development plans will be reviewed and updated and our accreditation review completed.</p>	<p>Cultural visits to Wardown & Stockwood Museums and heritage site</p>	<p>166,056</p>
<p>5 Creative Industry Network: Through our Talent, Alumni and Progression programme (TAP) we offer training, mentoring and skills for creative industry and start-ups. We promote Luton's creatives and cultural talent and support the creative industry growth economy. We will also produce a new online creative industry directory and provide funded opportunities for artists, trainees and start-ups. The Factory Associate Artists will benefit local and under-represented artists seeking a platform.</p>	<p>Creative Industry Members engaged in the Creative Industry Network</p>	<p>74</p>

ACTION		KPI	BASELINE 2024
6	Cultural training programmes and networks for Young people: We offer cultural career opportunities for young people (17-30 yrs) and target under-represented individuals and groups in recruitment (EDI action B). We will also expand and publish training and network programmes and opportunities for artists and creative industries as a source of information a refreshed Hat District Website. This will include two new Factory Associates at the Factory and a Curate as space early career training for artists and creatives at Wardown Museum.	Young people engaged in creative and cultural learning and skills	14,050
7	Hat District Creative Cluster and Town Centre Cultural Regeneration: We will promote the Hat District Creative Cluster for the benefit of growing the economy. We will balance this with our long-term vision for a cost-neutral creative ecology whereby all rents and incomes received are balanced against costs, operations activity and cultural investments. The Heritage Development Trust programme acts as a catalyst to this vision with a three year regeneration programme in Luton's Plaiters Lea Conservation Area.	Hat District Creative Cluster managed work and practice space (square feet occupied)	10,517
8	Hat District Creative Industry Workspace growth. We will enable more creative industries to use more space across our estate through hires, partnerships and programmes. We will undertake marketing campaigns to fill commercially important spaces, generate new spaces and match local need with provision. We recognise that growing the Hat District has the greatest growth potential, doing what we do well whilst boosting provision, supporting sector growth and generating sustainable income for the Trust. We aim to re-use more industrial heritage buildings for contemporary creative uses building provision to grow our existing workspace provision in response to needs, demand and anchor tenants.	Regular and salaried Creative and Cultural Jobs supported	94
9	Healthy Heritage gardens and skills programmes at Stockwood: We will grow more food to prepare in our kitchens with and for our community at Stockwood, engaging in wellbeing, healthy eating, outdoor activities and greenhouse productivity. This boosts community engagement, promotes sustainability at Stockwood and generates fresh produce for sale in our cafes that can generate an income for the Trust.	Stockwood Volunteers (local)	Case-studies
10	One mile Community Museums Programme: We will co-producing a programme locally relevant diverse music, immersive theatre, workshops and temporary exhibitions at Wardown House Museum with our one mile community. In collaboration this shall inform the curation of our permanent collection to be more relevant and representative of contemporary Luton. Audience development to Target areas in Luton that currently identified as having low-engagement in our work (a specific EDI action C)	Global majority engaged in outreach & Wardown House Museum	Baseline from Illuminate (system)
11	Museum Maker Volunteers Activities: We will continue to increase our volunteer engagement with high quality and stimulating opportunities offered across the Trust's sites. We will ensure volunteer wellbeing through regular check-ins and social engagement opportunities, training and skills development, meaningful and tailored tasks contributing to each volunteer having a happy and healthy programme of activity.	Museum Maker volunteers	958

ACTION		KPI	BASELINE 2024
12	Wardown Museum & Collection exemplar in ACE National Portfolio: Locally relevant and nationally important Hat Industry & Headwear Collection. We will research and develop our Hat and Headwear collection and plan for a significant festival across Luton called the Hat Triennial in 2026 along with our academic and other partnerships, research and more knowledge sharing. We will apply for designation. Locally relevant heritage stories are told through our Museum collections (specific EDI Action D) and the hats and headwear theme will weave creatively and imaginatively across all of our sites.	People involved in in-depth Museum collections and research	552
13	Greener connections, walking & wellbeing: We will reduce travel costs by promoting greener travel, walking and wellbeing for our team and customers. We will develop more walking maps, trails and healthy activities that encourage walking to, from and between our sites. Working with local partners we will promote sustainable e-car use and public transport through the developments of our policies and practices. We will monitor our carbon footprint and reduce our impacts.	Promotion of walking between and around sites	New
14	Family Arts programmes: We are building on and enhancing our family seasonal and holiday programmes, with a focus on half-terms, Easter, Summer and Winter holiday activity, as well as culturally relevant and National Celebration. During these periods we will continue to offer a mix of free and ticketed activity that will animate our venues with family friendly regular activities and special holiday programmes.	Number of Ticketholders for Low cost, high quality arts performances for children & families.	14,729
15	Schools, skills and cultural career progression: We will develop clear progression routes through our creative and cultural talent pipeline for young people (specifically 16+). We will promote pathways to develop creative skills and talents into careers, start-ups and jobs. In partnership with cultural agencies, educational partners, the local authority and the business sector we will support and track progression.	Number of Luton Primary Schools engaged	30
16	Cultural Venue Customer welcome and 24/7 digital services: We will allocate responsibility for each site to a site leader who will drive implementation of operational, commercial and customer centric improvements, including visitor welcome, site care and income generation. We will develop smart technologies and digitisation of our current site operating systems to understand more about who and how heritage, arts, culture and museums are used and a new Membership Scheme.	Free Museum Access to public (days from 365)	353
17	What's on Visitor information: We improve customer information about what's on and how to access our venues. We improve customer digital access through increased website functionality. We will ensure our digital communications provide progression routes to engage in more people in more culture. We will seek quality marks on family friendly, breast feeding, dementia friendly, Halal foods, prayer rooms, quiet spaces and LGBTQI safe.	Visits to the website (per annum)	84,933
18	Stockwood Discovery Centre community Engagement: Working directly with our one mile community schools, children and families we will widen engagement to free Museums and heritage. We will promote the wellbeing benefits of heritage environments, rest, gardens, social activation and cultural play. We will create places of active 'rest' to practice calm and wellbeing including programmes of tai-chi, yoga, meditation. Our programme shall celebrate of human stories of journeys and movement.	Stockwood Visits from locality	123,10

ACTION		KPI	BASELINE 2024
19	Stockwood Discovery Centre Capital Project: We will collaboratively plan to make capital improvement to Stockwood DC which could become a net-zero site with fundraised capital investment and redevelopment focussed mainly on the Mossman Museum and customer services. Early modelling indicates a significant commercial venue space and expanded catering are needed to support the site's financial sustainability. This aligns with the partnership project seeking to repatriate the Vauxhall car collection to Luton.	Capital project plans for Stockwood DC as future Net Zero Museum	RIBA 1
20	Ethical and locally sources products for retail: We will sell more high quality, locally sourced and produced products linked to our cultural sites, offer and programmes. We will refit Stockwood Shop and develop more garden essentials, outdoor accessories, toys and games, books, clothing and a selection of locally produced food and drink and linking them to our museums and collections.	Annual investment in locally sourced products and services (Luton post codes 1-4)	£1,260,365
21	Recycling, re-use and efficient operations: Our operation and administration will be resourceful and minimise waste. We will decommission the use of plastics and non-recyclable consumables. We will re-visit our ambition to be paperless and we will review our office systems and administration processes with a view to reduce wastage and unnecessary costs whilst supporting a greener environment and organisation culture. Team awareness training, championing and leadership.	Operational efficiencies benchmarked	Case-studies
22	Operational review for resilience: Organisationally, as we continue to recover financially from the last four years of COVID pandemic, recession and cost of living rises, we will map progression towards resilience. To ensure our resources are fit for purpose and that we can deliver our strategic aims we will undertaking an operational review in year one and implementing a first stage of changes followed by further operational change in year 2. The review will lead to improved site-based and online customer services, opening hours, skills development and fit-for-purpose roles and functions. Our operational review will ensure an affordable, flexible charity and trading workforce.	Cost Savings and Financial performance as planned.	Land sale achieved
23	Team Culture Trust, Luton: Our people mirror the place we serve (EDI action F) and we will recruit through local networks. We will look at how we can bring about a greater sharing of responsibility with core staff and volunteers. Our operational review will ensure an affordable, flexible charity and trading workforce. We will develop effective performance management systems and training and we will seek more opportunities to celebrate success and team achievement.	Affordable HR and efficient team	Reduction in Management team saving £100k pa
24	Commercial partnerships, events and hires: We are presenting more large scale music events and popular comedy and events by building on great partnerships and our organisational skills and knowledge. This will help us grow box office income and secondary sales in the café/bar. We will balance a commercial need to increase the number of smaller more intimate Weddings and Ceremonies we host each year at Wardown House Museum and larger ceremonies at Stockwood with our core cultural free access museum offer.	Commercial income achieved as planned	£474,045 (pre-audit)

ACTION	KPI	BASELINE 2024
<p>25 Good news and great opportunities shared: We will strengthen audience reach and grow our internal and external communications. We will do this through improving our website, promotions, publications and regular news to stakeholders (partners, staff and volunteers, funders, users and neighbours). We will ensure effective internal and external communications and launch a new Creative Industry network portal. We will produce an annual review to demonstrate impacts, progress, celebrate success and outline plans for continual improvement. We will collaborate with LBC to jointly promote our innovative partnership locally and nationally. Our social impact, values and inclusive culture is promoted (EDI action G).</p>	<p>Positive Press/ Media comms</p>	<p>Case-studies</p>
<p>26 Growing cultural inward investment, fundraising & donations: We will target our fundraising towards; Organisational resilience; Audience development; team development & promotions and Capital growth of the Hat District and Stockwood Discovery Centre. We will also increasing donations by better messaging through our print and digital marketing and onsite information. We will make it easier to give by providing better access to digital and site-based pay points. Our team will communicating our charitable work to our customers. Long term Luton Rising funding agreement secured.</p>	<p>Additional inward investment fundraised for arts, culture & heritage</p>	<p>£392,000</p>



THE
CULTURE
TRUST
LUTON

Proudly funded and supported by:



Supported using public funding by

**ARTS COUNCIL
ENGLAND**