



Business Plan 2015-2018



WELCOME



**The Courtyard
2015-18
Business Plan**



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Welcome from the Chairman

As chairman of The Courtyard it gives me great pleasure to present our three- year business plan for the period 2015-18.

The Courtyard has firmly established itself as the primary arts venue in the county of Herefordshire. It is deeply rooted in the community and serves as the hub of cultural life for everyone within the county and the region. The Courtyard is a thriving venue, open seven days a week, where people come to experience and participate in a quality programme of work, both within the building and through our learning, participation and outreach activities.

This plan provides a picture of the company's activities and of what we hope to achieve in the coming three years. It attempts to address the priorities and interests of the board, the company's staff, users and collaborators as well the priorities of its core funders, Herefordshire Council and Arts Council England, as well as the many other funders who also support The Courtyard.

The Courtyard, as will many funded arts organisations, faces difficult and challenging times ahead. However, there are also many opportunities for The Courtyard to develop locally, regionally and nationally. The Courtyard is addressing those challenges through creativity, imagination and entrepreneurship. From 2016/17 our direct funding from Herefordshire Council will come to an end. With this in mind, The Courtyard team are looking at developing The Courtyard into the cultural hub for Herefordshire through an exciting development programme.

The Courtyard's overarching aim is to provide the very best participatory and non-participatory programme of art and culture that endeavours to enrich the lives of everyone in Herefordshire.

I would like to thank the board, staff and our vast team of volunteers drawn from the local community – not to mention our audiences, participants and key financial stakeholders - for all their support past, present and into the future.

I will continue to help, support and challenge The Courtyard in the coming years to ensure that we continue to provide a robust platform from which the arts in Herefordshire will continue to flourish for future generations.

If you have any questions about this business plan you can contact me at chairman@courtyard.org.uk or you can contact our **Chief Executive, Ian Archer**, on 01432 346507 or email: ian.archer@courtyard.org.uk

Dr Roger Morgan
Chairman - The Courtyard Trust

1. Executive Summary

1.1 First Principles

The Courtyard Centre for the Arts is operated by The Courtyard Trust, a charitable company limited by guarantee with a voluntary board of management. The Courtyard Trading Company Limited is a wholly-owned subsidiary which operates the catering and bar functions for the venue.

The Courtyard is a large, fully-accessible, purpose-built theatre and centre for the arts with a main auditorium seating up to 436 in a variety of flexible styles and a standing capacity of 460 (stalls) when flat-floored. The Courtyard also houses a studio theatre with a capacity of 130 (seated) or 220 (standing), a gallery with 2 additional gallery areas, a rehearsal room/dance studio, meeting rooms and an award-winning licensed cafe bar. The theatre is well-served by modern backstage access, well-equipped dressing rooms, workshop, management offices and its own dedicated parking facilities.

The Courtyard is also home to a number of other professional arts organisations which include The Music Pool, 2Faced Dance Company, Dance Fest and Alloy Jewellers, who have a dedicated studio space from which a number of resident jewellers work.

The Courtyard is proud to be a multi-genre, professional presentation and co-producing venue with a loyal and sizeable audience in the West Midlands region and beyond. In terms of our programming ethos there is something for everyone and everything for someone. This lies at the heart of the organisation as it endeavours to engage, serve and provide opportunities for all the communities of the region, from whichever ethnic or social background, to engage in the arts and all its forms of expression. The Courtyard is recognised as a National Portfolio Organisation by Arts Council England.

The Courtyard grew and developed through the needs of the community to express itself artistically. This fact is recognised, respected and translated into a genuine desire for community participation to be at the heart of theatre life with presentations, productions and classes led by many local groups that complement and are supported in turn by the varied professional programme.

The Courtyard was created out of partnership between the National Lottery, Hereford City Council, which subsequently became Herefordshire Council, and Arts Council England, all of which recognised the need for Herefordshire to diversify, regenerate, embrace tourism and create a diverse dynamic local economy where cultural expression deservedly takes its rightful place within the economic mix. The Courtyard was the first Lottery-funded, new-build arts venue in England, opening on September 18 1998. The Courtyard pays tribute to these organisations for supporting this vision and thanks those who continue to invest in its journey. The Courtyard remains a key part of the transformation of Hereford and actively involves itself in regeneration issues within the City and surrounding area, contributing to the debate at both management and board level, where appropriate. The Courtyard harbours capital developmental ambitions of its own, ones that will further embed it in the economy of the City and as a destination of economic choice, artistic expression and enjoyment.

The Courtyard is at the hub of the Herefordshire community and plays a major role as the primary performance venue for the county. It is a resource, a building, a focal point for tourism and a key driver of the local economy. Most importantly, it is a place where the arts are at its heart, where individuals and groups can express themselves, observe and quite simply enjoy the arts. The pleasure and the benefits they can bring are The Courtyard's first and main principle.



1.2 Mission and Vision

Our Mission

The Courtyard will use the Arts to add to the quality of life of the people of Herefordshire as a cultural hub of the county.

Our Vision

The Courtyard is Herefordshire's Centre for the Arts, using the arts to add to the quality of life of the people of Herefordshire. We will build and sustain relationships with the arts community and venues in Herefordshire, acting as the cultural hub of the county.

We will strive to ensure that The Courtyard is sustainable over time through operational efficiency.

We will offer a wide range of artistic experiences and develop specialised focus through "seasons" and festivals (eg comedy, poetry, dance, film, music etc) whilst using our own venue to provide a warm and friendly social space for everyone.

1.3 Strategic Objectives

- Through a programme of participatory and non-participatory arts we will ensure that excellence is thriving and celebrated throughout Herefordshire.
- We will endeavour, through our programming and through the work of our Learning and Participation Department, to ensure that everyone in Herefordshire has the opportunity to experience and to be inspired by the arts.
- Through education and outreach we will ensure that every child and young person in Herefordshire has the opportunity to experience the richness of the arts.

- To increase our national profile and recognition of the work of The Courtyard.
- To increase our in-house productions.
- To achieve long-term sustainability through developing The Courtyard and diversifying income streams which are true to our core objectives.

1.4 Values

The Courtyard is committed to delivering excellence and providing the very best opportunities for everyone to engage with the arts. We believe that, as far as it is economically possible, the rural communities and audiences of the area have equal right to access and experience the very best artistic performances and presentations that are commonly available in areas of greater population density.

We wish to inspire creativity amongst individuals, community groups and the professional artists and companies of Herefordshire and the surrounding region.

We believe in building effective collaborations and partnerships with individuals, organisations, agencies and stakeholders in order to achieve shared goals.

We believe the arts should fundamentally be enjoyable, memorable and enrich people's lives.



1.5 Aims

- A commitment to diversity, quality and excellence.
- To deliver an inspirational, diverse and entertaining programme of memorable and exciting events according to the maxim '*something for everyone, everything for someone*'.
- To be recognised and valued as a vital link between artists and audiences by ensuring that the venue contributes to the joy and excitement of the performing arts by providing the best and most appropriate environment in which to experience them.
- To play an active role in the cultural life of the region by working closely with local professional practitioners and artists and championing their work, whilst also supporting the county's amateur performers and community groups.
- To support the development of talent and skill by working with other organisations to co-produce, collaborate and/or invest in creative enterprise.
- To strive at all times to maintain a culture of entrepreneurship, to be flexible and to embrace new opportunities.
- To continue to develop and seek new partners with whom the venue can achieve its goals of artistic diversity and excellence in order to further develop audiences and maximise the investment it receives.
- To be sustainable by maximising the impact and effectiveness of current funding, seeking out new income streams, and being economically efficient – all whilst maintaining artistic values.
- To further develop the profile regionally and nationally with the view of being considered as cultural ambassador for delivering arts in a rural community.

1.6 Monitoring and Evaluation

The organisation's strategic objectives, plans and overall progress are monitored through:

- Management team meetings
- Quarterly Board meetings
- Bi-monthly Finance and Human Resource Sub-committee meetings
- Quarterly Artistic Policy and Programming Committee meetings
- Trust AGM



2. Organisational Summary

2.1 History

The Courtyard was designed by Birmingham-based Architects Glenn Howells Associates and was the first major new build Arts Council funded National Lottery capital project in England. It opened in September 1998 with additional support from Hereford City Council prior to incorporation into Herefordshire Council.

It was built on the site of the old Nell Gwynne Theatre, which itself was constructed from the original Municipal swimming baths on the same site; the Nell Gwynne opened in 1979.

The Courtyard attracts over 200,000 visitors every year, not just from within the county, but also from the West Midlands and further afield. It was designed to be inspirational and contemporary and lead the way for future architectural developments in the historic City of Hereford. It is constructed to form two separate spaces internally and is enveloped in a large, glass-constructed outer shell which creates a light and airy atmosphere within.

The Courtyard houses a 418-seat main auditorium, a 130-seat Studio, visual arts galleries, meeting and function rooms, a rehearsal studio with sprung floor and café bar and restaurant. The two auditoria can both be transformed from flat floor to traditional raked layouts with a flexibility not seen in many venues. The main auditorium's facilities include both counterweight and hemp flying facilities, orchestra pit and digital projection equipment. Both spaces are also well stocked with lighting and sound equipment and sound systems.

It is an accessible building and offers good, free ease of

access to all front-of-house areas and a passenger lift. Wheelchair users can access all front-of-house areas, and there are also accessible dressing rooms for both auditoria located on the ground floor, each with accessible toilet and shower facilities. The Courtyard is also fitted with an infrared loop system and audio description facilities.

Like many new arts projects, The Courtyard struggled initially to find its operational and trading levels and audience base. After five years, it had an accumulated deficit of £280,000. Since 2005, the organisation has worked proactively to eradicate this deficit and by March 2008 achieved this goal. At the end of the 2013-14 financial year the organisation had established a surplus of just over £325,000. Throughout this period of deficit reduction The Courtyard has consistently grown its operation, presenting a broad, multi-genre, artistically and financially balanced, quality arts programme.

In 2003 The Courtyard became a Regularly Funded Organisation (RFO) of the Arts Council and a recipient of additional revenue support from them as part of the National Theatre Review. From 2012 it became an Arts Council England National Portfolio Organisation.

Whilst directly investing in productions, The Courtyard has offered its facilities to launch productions for touring in return for co-production status, and premiering productions.

The Courtyard combines its presentation programme with an extensive participation programme of events and classes for all sections of the local community. It is also home to the following arts organisations: Music Pool, 2Faced Dance Company, DanceFest and Alloy Jewellery Co-operative. It is also the main presenting venue for Borderlines Film Festival, the largest rural film festival in the UK. The Courtyard also hosts many local

community companies as part of its overall programme of work, including Hereford Musical Theatre Company, Hereford Pantomime Society, Hereford Academy of Dance and the Hereford Gilbert & Sullivan Society.

The Courtyard runs a very successful bar and catering operation providing high-quality, locally-sourced and produced food in an attractive setting. Catering at The Courtyard provides a key element in the overall offering to its customers and contributes significantly to the Courtyard Trust. The quality of the food provided by The Courtyard's catering team was recognised in winning the 2009 category of *Catering in a Visitor Attraction in the Flavours of Herefordshire Awards*.

As a result of these facilities, The Courtyard provides an excellent venue for events, conferences and meetings in Herefordshire, bringing in further valuable revenue for the organisation.

This Business Plan is primarily for the Trust and the overall role of its wholly-owned subsidiary The Courtyard Trading Company. Any subsidiary operation or company will have a Business Plan detailing its operation.

2.2 Snapshot of Current Operation

Inspiring and engaging people in the arts is at the heart of all we do, making sure that The Courtyard provides a medium for everyone who wishes to access participatory and non-participatory activities throughout Herefordshire and the region.

The Courtyard has developed in many ways through the years and is proud to be a successful rural, multi-genre, professional presentation and, more recently, a producing and co-producing venue that has grown with the needs of the community. It is a highly respected and recognised organisation that achieves excellence through its productions, its youth theatre, its nationally-recognised work with arts and older people, community choirs, writing and reading workshops, film and media

clubs, life-drawing classes, schools and colleges drama workshops and its newly created workshop, *Drama Tots*.

The Courtyard is at the heart of the Herefordshire community and plays an important role as the primary arts centre for the county. It is a resource, building and a focal point for tourism and is one of the major contributors to the local economy. Most importantly, The Courtyard is a place where the arts are at its heart.

We inspire passion for the arts and this permeates throughout the organisation and, as such, ensures that everyone experiences the arts at its best. We use the power of the arts to enrich people's lives by inspiration, learning and participation, entertaining and providing a platform to encourage everyone to engage in the arts.

The Courtyard seeks to present a programme of shows through various performance deals, guaranteed fees, box office splits, first calls and hires. Hereford is a small, relatively isolated city with limited transport links, especially in the evening. Visiting companies are therefore not keen to enter financially risky deals in the way they may be prepared to in larger metropolitan cities, or more densely populated areas. In order to secure a quality programme, The Courtyard has to guarantee some of its programme through a fixed fee and this then becomes a financial risk. Thus the choice of programme with the right artistic and financial mix containing the right margins for profit is integral to the success of the business.

Programming is done 12 months in advance. In the current economic times, monitoring the success of the programme and being prepared to adjust the content accordingly for the next season is essential.

In essence, The Courtyard presents as much risky, challenging artistic work as possible in order to develop its audiences and the core arts market for the future, but balances this with work that has merit, but that will also cover the costs of running the organisation.



For a number of years The Courtyard has managed to balance its core professional programme expenditure with increasing the net box office income. The programme choice and balance is always high quality, but also pragmatic and realistic from a business perspective. Genuine risks are taken on a high-quality artistic programme that both develop the artform and audiences; this is then balanced with high-quality commercial work where applicable. However, Arts Council funding allows us to develop our programme for drama, contemporary dance, opera, classical music etc and to develop new audiences for these genres.

The activities on the stage are complemented by a large learning and participation programme with many enthusiastic participants of all ages, a busy outreach and education programme, and an extensive catering operation, plus meetings and conferences on a weekly basis.

2.3 Courtyard Trading Company

We strive to provide a complete experience at The Courtyard for all of our customers with the Trading operation providing quality, locally-sourced and produced food and drink to complement a visit to the venue.



The Courtyard Trading Company is a company limited by guarantee with a voluntary board of management. This is a wholly-owned subsidiary of The Courtyard Trust, with the primary function of operating the catering functions for the venue.

The Courtyard Trust is paid an annual management fee from the Trading Company and any profits, after the management fee, from the Trading Company are covenanted to The Courtyard Trust.

2.4 Stakeholders

The two key financial stakeholders in The Courtyard's ongoing success are:

Arts Council England

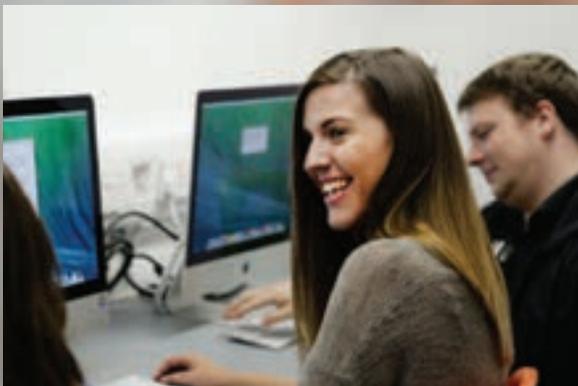
Revenue funders

Herefordshire Council

Owners of the building freehold and revenue funders until 2016

The Courtyard's operation currently remains reliant on ongoing public investment. We maintain strong relationships with our key stakeholders and the company works hard to maintain this through regular contact and performance reporting.

From 2016, it is envisaged that Herefordshire Council will no longer revenue fund The Courtyard. The Courtyard Trust Board and CEO are currently negotiating with the Council for alternative ways of funding and income generation.



***Other key stakeholders
(listed alphabetically) are:***

- Audiences (participatory and non participatory)
- Business community
- Other community-based arts organisations that use The Courtyard
- Local community
- Partners with whom we share our venue, which include the Music Pool, 2Faced Dance Company, Alloy Jewellers
- Partners with whom we co-produce
- Staff
- The Board of Trustees
- Touring companies which rely on The Courtyard to reach Herefordshire audiences



3. Artistic Plan

3.1 Equality and Diversity in Programming

As the primary provider of performing arts activities in the County, The Courtyard is committed to providing a balanced programme to the communities of Herefordshire and beyond.

At the heart of our approach is a commitment to valuing diversity, treating people with dignity and respect, eliminating discrimination and promoting social cohesion through our organisation and programming.

We value the individual contribution made by all people in our communities and are committed to eliminating discrimination on the grounds of:

- Age
- Disability
- Ethnic or national origins/race
- Colour
- Nationality
- Religion or Belief
- Gender
- Gender re-assignment status
- Sexual orientation
- Marriage and civil partner status
- Being a single parent
- Pregnancy and maternity

Our Aims

The Courtyard aims to:

- Promote equality of opportunity in all that we do and promote good relations between people in our diverse communities
- Ensure that the needs of our diverse communities are identified and taken into account in the planning and delivery of our work and services
- Work towards increasing the representation of residents from hard-to-reach groups in customer initiatives to develop new audiences
- Ensure that the information we provide is accessible to users of The Courtyard in languages or formats that they can understand
- Ensure that membership of the Board and its committees adequately reflects the local community
- Provide an accessible service by removing or altering any physical barriers to access wherever feasible

The Courtyard strives to achieve a balanced programme for the local and wider market, with a view to: selling more tickets, attracting new audiences and increasing the regularity of existing patrons with the overall aim of selling out all performances.

Whilst we appreciate that this may not be achievable for all events, it is a goal for the venue to aspire to. To succeed, the programme needs to maintain its variety and high quality, but it is also accepted that it needs to take risks and present the very best artists and companies available and to achieve a diverse range of product.



The Courtyard's approach to Diversity is a conscious ingredient in our artistic programming and audience development strategy. We will build on our core values to underpin all we do through diversity of skills, people and organisations. Diversity for us means that we curate as many different voices into The Courtyard and to our programming and projects as we can.

3.2 Artistic Policy & Programming 2015-2018

As an organisation, it is our key objective to ensure that everyone within the county and region has the opportunity to experience quality within everything that we do. We believe that from the moment that they arrive or book a ticket at The Courtyard, our customers experience excellence. Audience feedback, both qualitative and quantitative, is invaluable in assisting us in our future audience development programmes.

We inspire passion for the arts and this permeates throughout the organisation and, as such, ensures that everyone experiences the arts at its best. We use the power of the arts to enrich people's lives by inspiration, learning and participation, entertaining and providing a platform to encourage everyone to engage in the arts.

In addition to our presented and produced work, we will continue to provide a comprehensive programme of work through our Learning and Participation Department. We will continue to develop our already successful work in nurturing new talent through our Youth Theatre programme and Outreach projects.

We believe that the arts are inclusive and our programme of live events will reflect the diversity of modern England whilst understanding Herefordshire's demographic. We are committed to increasing our

collaborative work with companies such as Afrovibes, Dancefest's Jigsaw and Hereford College of Arts, as well as our work with Arts and Older People. We will continue to develop relationships with other arts-related organisations including Arts Alive, 2Faced Dance, Rural Media Company and Pentabus to support our programme of inclusivity.

We are committed to developing and showcasing new writing through a programme of workshops and performances by developing a new writing festival.

The Courtyard has very strong links with education establishments through its work with local schools and colleges. Our work over 2015-18 will offer access to training schemes, mentoring programmes and internships for working in the arts.

The artistic programme is the core element of our venue and cements trust with our audience. The choice of programme dictates the success of our venue through its box office receipts and through our audience remaining loyal to our endeavours. Our artistic programme is supported, discussed and evaluated by our Artistic Policy and Programming Committee, chaired by Chris Green, and supported by members of The Courtyard Board.

Aims

- To provide a balanced quality programme of entertainment and education.
- To increase Courtyard productions and to introduce an annual Christmas children's production utilising the skills of newly-trained actors in order to enhance their acting ability and experience.
- To ensure quality of programme through measuring customer satisfaction and evaluation.
- To actively encourage participation.
- To work in partnership with other arts organisations, local educational establishments, the community and support organisations.
- To support and encourage artists with their professional development.
- To reach all sectors of the community.

Core Programme

- To provide a core programme of a wide range of arts events and activities.
- The programme strives to be a balance of professional activities of the highest creative excellence and innovation alongside an amateur programme encouraging participation and creativity.
- To provide a quality creative environment to nurture participants enabling them to emerge and grow creatively.
- To provide a well maintained venue in which local groups and societies will participate in their activities.
- To research the market and, through audience development, carefully select the programme, ensuring it is monitored regularly in order to maintain quality and diversity.



Areas of Principal Activity

- Children and young people
- Older people
- Emerging artists
- Diversification through new audiences & audience development
- To research and develop activities based on needs of the community
- To work with sectors of the community that do not presently access The Courtyard

3.3 Visual Arts Policy & Programming 2015-2018

The Courtyard has a dedicated gallery and additional exhibition space. To date, the programming of visual arts has focused on community exhibitions and submissions by emerging artists. We recognise that visual arts plays an important role in developing new audiences, and further development has been identified that will see visual arts integrated and complementing our artistic programming.

From 2015 emphasis will be placed on professional contemporary exhibitions, education, community and supporting new and emerging talent. The Courtyard will develop relationships with other contemporary galleries, such as the Ikon Gallery and seek to collaborate with exhibitions and funding opportunities.

The Courtyard will remain a major venue for H.Art, Hereford Photography Month (formerly Hereford Photography Festival) as well as working closely with other local and regional visual arts organisations such as Meadow Arts.

In addition to our visual arts, The Courtyard, through digital arts, programmes live screenings from the National Theatre, Met Opera, Royal Opera House, RSC, Royal Ballet etc. This forms a significant part of The Courtyard's programme and will continue to play a major part of our programming ethos.

The Courtyard has now implemented a Visual Arts Panel which is made up of Board Members and practitioners. A submission call out is now made for artists to submit samples of their work and this is then assessed by the panel for future exhibition within The Courtyard.

Aims

- To showcase a diverse range of work from local, national and international artists.
- Gallery exhibitions to be selected for their excellence and contemporary qualities.
- To exhibit a broad range of work, ranging from established artists to those at the start of their career.
- To be involved in and show the resulting work from community projects.
- Provide interpretation specifically designed for the target audience.
- Evaluate exhibitions success in reaching the target audience.
- To achieve 3 areas of exhibition space – ground floor (education), 1st floor (community), 2nd floor (professional). The outside area is also to be considered as an optional display area for appropriate sculpture.
- To partner with other contemporary galleries such as Ikon
- To provide a platform for digital arts including Live Screenings.





3.4 Education and Outreach

Since 2004 The Courtyard has extensively developed its Education & Outreach programme. There are five key strands to the department's work.

- Lifelong learning
- Community arts
- Schools & colleges
- Young Courtyard
- Arts & older people

The overarching aim is to implement a creative participatory and non-participatory programme to enhance and enrich the lives of young people in Herefordshire.

Over the past three years our schools and colleges programme mix has diversified greatly and this has led to a substantial increase in the number of participants. This has been important for the organisation in helping the department become more sustainable while being able to work with an extensive younger audience.

Since 2009, we have worked with 73 of the 84 primary schools in the county and 12 of the 18 secondary schools.

Over 2650 young people have participated in workshops in 2013 with an attendance of 10,122.

The Courtyard is committed to its work with schools and our programme for 2015-18 will continue to develop our already successful relationships with them. Our aspirations are to further develop our work with high schools and colleges and create a programme of work around the National Curriculum resulting in the opportunity for pupils to work with a professional artistic and production team.

Our objectives are to develop our work with primary, secondary schools and colleges, particularly Hereford College of Arts and Arts Alive, to create a programme of work around the National Curriculum. We currently have extremely strong relationships with primary schools within Herefordshire and we endeavour to increase our activity with drama-led projects that promote sustained learning and personal development.

Our annual Shakespeare Project has given us the opportunity to work with over 30 primary schools and has engaged over 1000 young people. We will develop the project throughout 2015-18 and seek to work with the majority of schools within Herefordshire and produce an education pack. The education pack will be a resource for schools that will promote sustained learning in the classroom and will include a Shakespeare DVD, presented by The Courtyard's Honorary Patron, Sir Derek Jacobi. From this we will create an arts forum for primary and secondary school teachers, engaging in the arts to equip them with hands-on practical advice to improve literacy through Shakespeare.

We will also create a toolkit specifically based around the Shakespeare Project which will be available to other arts organisations to help them set up similar projects within their locality. This will reinforce the curriculum's creative writing strands and cover a multitude of the attributes that Ofsted look for in Key Stage 1 & 2 pupils, ie willingness, openness, problem solving, seeing things from another person's point of view, resilience and perseverance.

In addition to our Shakespeare Project, we will further develop our Roald Dahl Literacy Project which forms a large part of our current schools activity. This endeavours to improve literacy and creative writing through a performance-led project. This will be developed as part of our work with younger people



throughout 2015-18 and will promote creativity in the classroom and enhance young people's confidence through the power of drama and performance.

We currently work with 425 young people participating in classes each week at The Courtyard. Our work with young people is a combination of youth theatre, dance classes, film-making clubs and Family Music Makers in association with the Music Pool. All our courses run for 36 weeks of the year.

We also work in areas of least engagement and facilitate community youth theatre programmes in rural market towns such as Bromyard, Kington and Peterchurch. We will develop our work in the community by looking at other areas which are in need of arts activities and programme a series of classes for young people in Wigmore, Ledbury and Ross on Wye.

From 2015-18 we will increase the frequency of productions to an annual staged presented work. We will develop our Shakespeare Project to schools within Herefordshire and meet the needs of the curriculum by creating a week-long Shakespeare Festival to celebrate in performance the work of the young people in schools.

Our Youth Theatre forms a core part of our work with young people from Drama Tots to Senior Youth Theatre. Not only are they our future audience but our work is a training ground for emerging talent and personal development.

As part of our commitment to developing new skills in the arts and for developing future talent we will begin new writing workshops for young people aged 14 - 19. We will work with experienced script writers who will deliver the sessions and equip the young writers with the skills and knowledge to showcase their work at The Courtyard.

courtyard.org.uk

Inspiring and engaging people in the arts is at the heart of all we do, making sure that The Courtyard provides a medium for everyone who wishes to access participatory and non-participatory activities throughout Herefordshire. In addition to our comprehensive learning and education programme, we are renowned for our work with arts and older people.

The programmes we offer build on the existing examples of good practice where artists, arts and cultural organisations are making a real difference to people's lives and providing a bridge between older people and the wider community.

Arts Award

The Courtyard offers the opportunity to enrich children's artistic experience and enliven their list of achievements through Arts Award.

Arts Award inspires young people to grow their arts and leadership talents: it's creative, valuable and accessible. This is an excellent way learn something new about drama and the arts. The Courtyard will continue to offer the opportunity to obtain Bronze, Silver and Gold Awards

Artsmark

The Courtyard works with 87% of schools within Herefordshire. The Courtyard will actively promote and champion Artsmark to schools within the county and work with participating schools to meet the criteria necessary to achieve the award. The Courtyard will work with Arts Connect, Elmley Foundation, Music Pool and arts organisations to enable schools to achieve the award.



Arts & Older People

Our work with arts and older people is a significant part of what we do within the community of Herefordshire and regionally. At the Courtyard we believe in the intrinsic value in engaging older people in the arts. This demographic still have so much to offer and engaging their talent, experience and enthusiasm is vital to our local community. Participatory art is a powerful tool that not only benefits the individuals taking part but can contribute towards challenging and breaking down stigmas of being older. We have been investing in this area since 2010 and have seen the effects this can have on the lives of older people.

We are working with a wide spectrum of partner organisations including Arts Council of England and the Baring Foundation, the University of Worcester, Age UK Hereford & Localities, the Alzheimers Society, Young Demetina Group, Healthwatch, Together Trust and Carers support, The Big Skill. Working effectively in partnerships helps to maximise effectiveness by utilising existing infrastructures and enabling us to attract beneficiaries.

The Courtyard has an established arts and older people's advisory group which supports us in helping decide on the content and structure of our projects. This is made up of people living with dementia, arts practitioners, carers support, representatives from care homes/supported living facilities, and members of The Courtyard Trust Board.

In addition to the external oversight our advisory group offers we have an embedded, creative and relevant evaluation framework which allows us to review individual projects to ensure that we are achieving our outcomes. These are monitored regularly and we work with our arts practitioners to address any issues in a timely fashion.

Children and Young People - Goal 5

Action	The Courtyard, through its Shakespeare and Roald Dahl Projects, provides the opportunity to all school children to develop their skills in literacy and creative writing through project led workshops
Responsible	Associate Director / Education Team
When	Annually from 2015
Measurable	Through attendance and schools records
Purpose	
Outcomes	Success of achieving the Arts Award Record of Achievements Pass on arts skill/knowledge to others



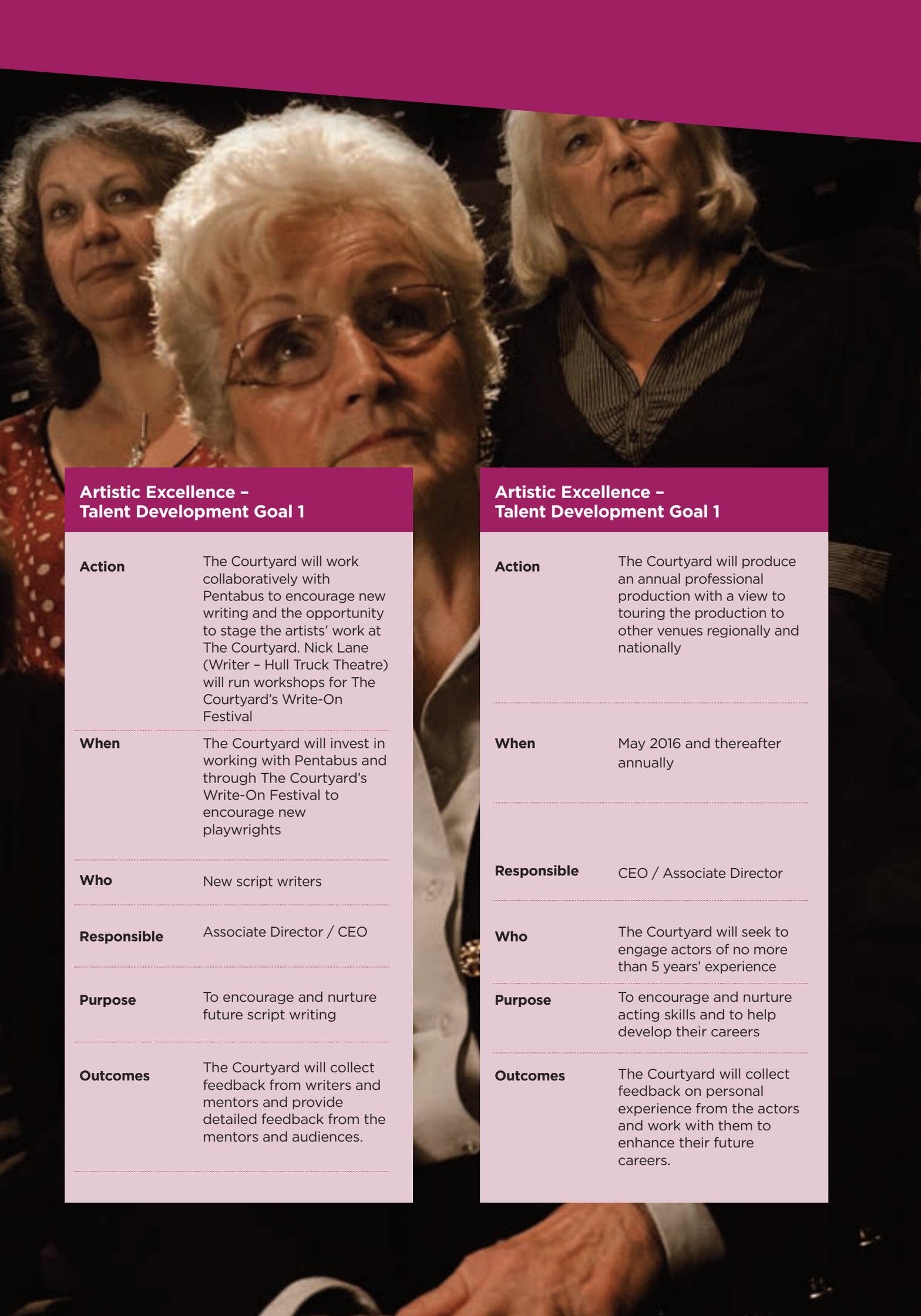
Children and Young People - Goal 5

Action	The Courtyard will provide the opportunity to all children and young people to develop their skills through Arts Award. To increase members to 30 in 2015, 35 in 2016 and 40 in 2017
Responsible	Associate Director / Education Team
When	Ongoing workshops
Measurable	Record of attendance and certification
Purpose	To reinforce the curriculum's creative writing strands and cover a multitude of the attributes that Ofsted look for in Key Stage 1 & 2 pupils, ie willingness, openness, problem solving, seeing things from another person's point of view, resilience and perseverance.
Outcomes	Stage performance on main stage at The Courtyard and Schools (pupils and teachers) feedback forms

Artistic Objective Setting

Artistic Excellence - Talent Development Goal 1

Action	The Courtyard will produce an annual Christmas children's production (Studio) and pantomime (Main House). Actors /dancers will be paid at UK Theatre rates. Musicians paid at MU rates plus subsistence, where applicable.
Responsible	CEO / Associate Director / Director
When	In addition to the annual pantomime, The Courtyard will utilise the Studio to produce an annual Children's Christmas production with a view to touring it in future years.
Who	The Courtyard will audition and cast, when possible, actors, dancers, musicians and designers with no more than three years' experience.
Purpose	To encourage and nurture future talent
Outcomes	A successful production which exceeds its financial and audience satisfaction targets. Actors will be given feedback to aid their personal development.



Artistic Excellence – Talent Development Goal 1

Action	The Courtyard will work collaboratively with Pentabus to encourage new writing and the opportunity to stage the artists' work at The Courtyard. Nick Lane (Writer - Hull Truck Theatre) will run workshops for The Courtyard's Write-On Festival
When	The Courtyard will invest in working with Pentabus and through The Courtyard's Write-On Festival to encourage new playwrights
Who	New script writers
Responsible	Associate Director / CEO
Purpose	To encourage and nurture future script writing
Outcomes	The Courtyard will collect feedback from writers and mentors and provide detailed feedback from the mentors and audiences.

Artistic Excellence – Talent Development Goal 1

Action	The Courtyard will produce an annual professional production with a view to touring the production to other venues regionally and nationally
When	May 2016 and thereafter annually
Responsible	CEO / Associate Director
Who	The Courtyard will seek to engage actors of no more than 5 years' experience
Purpose	To encourage and nurture acting skills and to help develop their careers
Outcomes	The Courtyard will collect feedback on personal experience from the actors and work with them to enhance their future careers.

4. Marketing & Communications (see Audience Development Strategy)

4.1 Audience Development

The Courtyard has a wide and varied programme of events that appear on the main stage and the studio. Programming the shows, exhibitions, films and workshops is not an exact science. The Courtyard's marketing department has been restructured to focus on audience development and to deliver on the strategy. The Courtyard aims to look at the 'weaker' genres and the customers that already attend these genres as a way to find new customers to attend through programming and marketing initiatives.

Stage one of The Courtyard's Audience Development Strategy has been designed to provide a detailed understanding of The Courtyard's audience across six genres of live events;

- Classical Music
- Contemporary Dance
- Folk Music
- Comedy Clubs
- Drama
- Pantomime

The Strategy is an expansion on the previous work and success that has been achieved with our film audience development. The Strategy will look at the following key points:

- Existing audience behaviours
- Programming desires
- Requirements from a venue
- Audience buying patterns

Adding the following attributes:

- Genre crossovers
- Success of different types of marketing across audiences
- Audience crossover with other venues

The Film Audience Development Strategy was launched in November 2013 and the Live Audience Development Strategy in March 2014. Both of these documents will be evaluated and revisited to benchmark improvements and new ways of working. To deliver on the objectives a full time Audience Development Manager has been appointed and will see through changes.

Main objectives from the live audience development plan:

- Increase additional income through ticket sales
- To balance an artistic and commercial programme to generate money from ticket sales
- Encourage customers already associated with The Courtyard to come more often (converting first time bookers to regular attendees)
- Work in partnership with other local providers of all art forms
- Focus on postcode areas cold spots and warm spots
- Trying to penetrate new bookers from cold postcode spots
- Trying to make warm postcode spots hot!
- Finding patterns of attendance to intelligently plan marketing activity
- Focus attention through market research on the following six strands: Classical Music, Contemporary Dance, Comedy/Comedy Clubs, Pantomime, Folk/Nightjar Music and Drama (Contemporary and Classical)



4.2 SWOT Analysis

Strengths

- The past two years have been a very successful time in The Courtyard's history for ticket sales bucking the trend of sales within the arts during a difficult financial time
- The Courtyard has achieved success on co-productions recently, sharing cost and risk of the programme (Vamos & Pentabus)
- The Courtyard currently has a very diverse programme of events to suit the needs of many groups of people
- There is a lot of local support for The Courtyard, and lots of customers will come and support whatever the organisation does
- There is not an 'artform' audience at The Courtyard and a large crossover between film and live events
- A strong database of intelligent data in Box Office system Spektrix going back 18 months

Weaknesses

- Heavily reliant on a high proportion of sales through regular attenders
- Ticket sales have leveled out and have not been increasing year on year – this has not been effectively forecast
- Sometimes there is a strong imbalance when programming for the needs of the customers vs programming to meet the needs of specific funders – these two need to work more effectively together
- Niche programming demands higher resource from the marketing team
- Stretched education team means not exploiting outreach activity to highest effect
- Currently a strong reliance on funding



Opportunities

- This Audience Development plan has raised some new ways of thinking and working a programme to benefit 'quick wins' providing what our customers want and will come and support
- More potential community and partnership work to bring risk and costs down
- More funding opportunities available from external funders, incl. BFI.
- A dedicated Audience Development team can build relationships and bookings with interest groups, businesses etc.
- The Courtyard's strong digital presence allows for expansion of the organisation's profile and is a good starting point for further digital growth.
- Good reputation/brand that can be used to develop and promote education and outreach work incl. Making of Me (national arts & older people project)
- Good brand can be used to develop touring opportunities/new work
- Future thinking and potential development of the building as a Cultural Hub for Herefordshire
- Relaxed performances can be a window to new hard-to-reach audiences

Threats

- Government changes have impacted the arts nationally
- Core funding cuts impending for 2015
- Audiences generally have less disposable income
- There are some big competitors in the region with provision for niche genres (classical music)
- Public perceptions can mean people feel The Courtyard 'is not for them'.
- Stretched resources due to high turnover of events/content can result in missing opportunities
- Ageing Herefordshire population means loyal audiences will start to grow smaller if event culture is not encouraged
- Lack of commercial product means repeat programming

4.3 Communications & PR

The strategic aim of The Courtyard's public communications work is that it reaches a wide external audience via a range of channels using an identifiable style and recognised branding.

The Courtyard has branding guidelines which are monitored and maintained by the marketing team, and which have also been communicated widely to the staff.

Activities that are undertaken by the marketing team are mainly community and customer led, which also aims to try and communicate to Herefordshire's (and the surrounding counties') rural communities and hubs for activities.

The Courtyard's main printed communication is through brochures. These are split into four sections: Live Guide, Film Guide, Education and Participation Guide and the What's On Guide. The Live Guide and the Education Guide are distributed to 7,500 customers three times a year. The Film Guide and What's On Guide are distributed to 4,100 customers six times a year. These publications mainly communicate about shows, films and workshops. Alongside these publications the marketing team produces a newsletter which is a 'behind the scenes' look at The Courtyard through customers' reviews, competitions or staff profiles.

Media coverage is key in shaping the reputation of The Courtyard in the eyes of the public and its stakeholders. The venue takes an open, honest and, at the same time, forthright approach to dealings and relationships with the media and manages all interactions to make the best of all opportunities available.

The venue seeks to enhance its reputation by placing positive stories, features and quotations with local, national and specialist media. The Courtyard has, in general, enjoyed good press relations with excellent

coverage of major events and regular listings. The Courtyard maintains an active press contacts list, which includes local newspapers (Hereford Times, Malvern Gazette, Worcester News, Ledbury Reporter, The Forrester), national newspapers (Daily Mail, Daily Telegraph, The Guardian), national listings, specialist press (The Stage, Arts Professional), local TV & radio, and magazine features.

Typically, around 400 and 500 press releases are issued to the media, and coverage is monitored monthly and averages around 60 printed articles a month (both arts and main news stories) and about 4000cm² column centimetres a month.

Press launches and press nights take place for shows, mainly for Courtyard-produced productions.

Managing media relations is a key part of the communications strategy. Media coverage has a major effect on the venue's reputation in the community. In many ways, its success is dependent on its performance and its reputation. A good reputation helps The Courtyard achieve its goals more effectively (eg to attract external funding and building new audiences).

Our assumptions are that the keys to successful media relations are openness, a willingness to engage with the media on their terms, timeliness, swift responses, clarity, using plain language and relationship-building with key journalists.

The Courtyard takes swift and direct steps to redress inaccurate or ill-informed coverage about its activities.

4.4 Digital and Online Marketing

The Courtyard is very active at communicated with customers through online channels which include email, the website and social media.

Social media channels (Twitter, Facebook, Pinterest, Wordpress, YouTube & Flickr) are mainly updated by the marketing team as and when. Communication and competitions are part of a marketing plan. Twitter is also used by various members of the organisation, with personalised work twitter accounts set up so different departments can communicate what is happening within their world/department.

The marketing team trains new staff on the Digital Marketing Strategy, with training on how to use social media, good case studies and bad (what to do or not to do).

The website use has been rising year on year with activity and click rates. The 'new look' website was launched at a similar time to the new branding, so there is a consistent feel to how The Courtyard communicates.

On average *courtyard.org.uk* gets about 1,000,000 page views to the website a year (which has risen by 300,000 in the last two years), and 289,000 visits (which has risen by 70,000 visits in the last two years). Online sales have improved for the customer with the introduction of Spektrix ticketing system, with the average online booking rate of 24% (online sales have risen by 11% within the last year).

Weekly emails are sent out in a targeted fashion, depending on the customers registered interest or booking behaviour. The average open rate for the emails is currently 26%.

4.5 Strategic Objectives

The Courtyard has seen a significant growth in ticket sales and within our outreach and education work. It is important that we formulate a plan to retain and nurture existing customers, as well as attracting new ones. Although The Courtyard has a very high profile within the county and is considered to be a major cultural asset, it is important that we keep building on our profile locally, regionally and nationally.

The following key points will be at the heart of the Marketing and Audience Development Strategy:

1. Increase additional income through ticket sales
2. To balance an artistic and commercial programme to generate money from ticket sales
3. To balance an artistic and commercial programme to generate more engagement with existing customers, and new audiences
4. Increase communication with diverse and hard-to-reach audiences and the organisation's depth of knowledge
5. Increase the depth of experiences for audiences
6. Encourage customers already associated with The Courtyard to come more often (converting first time bookers to regular attendees)
7. Work in partnership with other local providers of all art forms and museums
8. Finding patterns of attendance to intelligently plan education, marketing and programming activity
9. Finding new events/activities to try and attract a new audience
10. Breaking down all The Courtyard offers and prioritise risk based on financial income and expenditure, attendance figures and community focus
11. Regularly analysing audiences and benchmarking the analysis



Marketing - Objectives

GOAL 1

Leading by example and learning through others. The Courtyard aims to lead on and set up meetings with other local (West Midlands and Wales) arts organisations, community venues, museums and galleries to share 'best practise' and insights into who are we all engaging with.

Some organisations to approach include: Theatre Severn in Shrewsbury, Malvern Theatres, Artrix in Bromsgrove, Conquest Theatre in Bromyard, Worcester Swan Theatre, Phoenix in Ross, Ludlow Assembly Rooms, Hereford Cathedral, Market Theatre in Ledbury, Vamos Theatre Company, Hereford Library and Museum, Cider Museum, Berrington Hall, Croft Castle.

Measurable

The group will consist of about 8 to 12 organisations. Each venue will be asked to provide existing information about their audiences in initial discussions, then each organisation will take a lead role in their area. From this a mission will be communicated, which could be to find out what our customers want and any parallels through an arts venue and a museum.

Achievable

Each of the interested parties will be encouraged to try something new within their organisation to try and benchmark against other parties. All agreeing to survey with one consistent survey and then share the data at the end of the project.

Who

Curtis Fulcher / Marketing Customer and Audience Feedback

Outcomes

which will determine future collaborative marketing.

OBJECTIVE:
to collaborate with community partners to build The Courtyard and Herefordshire's reputation as a place for families by running a family fun day during October half-term 2015, resulting in 5% increase of family attendance.



GOAL 2

Family Fun Day! Creation of an event around the audience, encouraging engagement with new audiences as well as existing ones. Aiming to give more people the opportunity to experience and participate in free of charge entertainment.

The specific audience targeted will be families.

Measurable

The Courtyard knows from initial findings that there has been a lack of engagement with families apart from the annual pantomime.

This event will involve other external community groups to both provide activities but also to bring along with them their contacts/customers. The overall event will be free with some paid- for elements but data will be captured from attendees to free and paid workshops and events as well as via more creative data capture techniques.

Who

Marketing / Associate Director

Achievable

The Courtyard will ensure that activities and programming are inclusive and relevant to audiences. Herefordshire families already engaging with the venue are loyal and happy to cross artforms and participate. However, this project would also help to engage harder-to-reach communities in Herefordshire and make the Courtyard 'a place for them' as well as ensuring growth of family audiences across the board, particularly in light of the new Odeon which has seemingly impacted family film attendance.

When

To fit in with the Family Arts Festival the event will aim to take place on a day in October Half Term 2015 and, subject to the success of the event, annually thereafter.

Outcomes

Customer and Audience Feedback and data analysis to inform future projects to increase family audiences

5. Finance

5.1 Key Budget Assumptions

The key assumptions for the period 2015 – 2018 are that The Courtyard will continue to receive funding from its core funders until 2016 and thereafter will continue to be funded by Arts Council England and supported through development by Herefordshire Council.

The funding for 2015-18 from the Arts Council has been agreed at a rate of £212k per annum as a National Portfolio Organisation. This Business Plan assumes such success with funding and through alternative fundraising and commercial enterprises over the planned period.

As a consequence of reduced funding, the organisation will be required to increase its earned income in order to maintain current levels of operation.

In order to maintain our current levels of operation, the organisation will increase:

- a) its earned income through increased commercial activity and increase in profit margins from shows
- b) from 2017, develop The Courtyard by creating a cultural Hub for the County (see Risk Assessment)
- c) income from its trading subsidiary will increase commensurately with increased commercial activity and through an increase in ticket buyers
- d) additional fundraising income, including corporate, individual and fundraising events, across the three years of the plan.

5.2 Risk Assessment

The Courtyard's operation is inherently risky. Each season, large sums of money are committed to risk as the theatre invests in productions and develops arts provision/audiences. The organisation is therefore comfortable with, and has great experience of, cash-flow forecasting, the management of risk and the uncertainty of outcomes on a daily, weekly, quarterly and annual basis.

The key is to ensure that such risk is well managed risk. It recognises that there are opportunities and benefits to be had from risk but that this must be balanced where possible by a safety net.

The Courtyard's Finance & Human Resources Committee meets regularly to review the monthly Management Accounts and provide a financial health check on behalf of the Board.

The Courtyard's Risk Register is regularly updated and reviewed to ensure that risk is managed within the organisation.

The Courtyard considers its request for additional funding to be realistic. However, it accepts the constraints faced by the public sector both now and in the future with an uncertainty of Herefordshire Council funding from April 2016. It is an organisation that operates very efficiently as demonstrated by industry-recognised benchmarks. Over the past seven years, The Courtyard has demonstrated the financial management capability of its current team through its elimination of the accumulated deficit of £280,000 in 2005 to the current position of surplus in the reserves.

However, The Courtyard recognises that future funding is uncertain and is now seeking to develop The Courtyard by extending its current operations and

building an extension to the existing building to create a 'Cultural Hub' for Herefordshire. This, when built, would be home to other arts and cultural organisations within the region. Herefordshire Council is committed to working with The Courtyard by transferring the asset of the building (subject to Secretary of State approval) and ensuring that The Courtyard remains Herefordshire's Centre for the Arts for generations to come.

The currently anticipated reduction in support from Herefordshire Council from 1st April 2016 may be ameliorated by decisions made by the incoming majority party following May 2015 elections. In the event that The Courtyard is unsuccessful in creating its Cultural Hub development and Herefordshire Council does not provide funding from April 2016 we remain confident that The Courtyard will still be financially resilient.

5.3 Fundraising

Fundraising is co-ordinated by the Business Development Department and fundraising is, in essence, divided into two areas, one being *Corporate* and the other *Individual Giving and Trusts & Foundations*. The Corporate side encompasses The Courtyard's Business Club, advertising and sponsorship, with Individual Giving incorporating the Friends scheme, legacies, donations, charity partnerships and applications to trusts & foundations.

Much of the department's success in the last few years has been due to the initiation and development of key, high-level relationships within the wider community (eg businesses and other charities). These are crucial to the ongoing success of the department and to the growth of revenues for The Courtyard in the future.

One of our key aims is to raise the profile of The Courtyard as a charity in its own right, in order to engage with local communities and maximise giving opportunities at all levels.

Courtyard New Development

The Courtyard Trust Board, in the event of the loss of Herefordshire Council funding, is committed to replacing the current revenue funding from Herefordshire Council by undertaking a capital programme to extend the building and to receive income from rents and ancillary activities.

The Trust will set up a new, wholly-owned subsidiary 'Courtyard Development Ltd' which would be responsible for raising the capital funds, managing the project and the income from the development. Board members of the subsidiary would be the existing members of the Development sub-committee in the first instance.

The Board will set up a Development Fundraising Committee with the aim to raise the required sums needed for the capital programme.

Corporate

The current strategy is focussed on attending and hosting range of local and regional networking events for and with the business community, enabling us to present these key messages:

- As a registered charity, we welcome opportunities to work with businesses to secure commercial support
- We can offer a range of direct marketing and branding for businesses to reach their target markets via our audiences
- We undertake a wide range of successful activities both in the building but also in the wider community, eg education and outreach work

Given that Herefordshire is not a major business centre, we have spent the last 12 years cultivating and developing our links with the business community at all levels.

We currently have 29 Business Club members and aim to maintain and grow this over the next three years. We will continue to promote and develop our staff incentive scheme for staff of Business Club members which, in turn, encourages new audiences to develop.

Show sponsorship remains a key objective and we will encourage businesses to sponsor specific shows and events and to sponsor activities based in their own communities, with the longer term view of engaging them with the venue itself.

We will maximise all current advertising opportunities and explore a range of new advertising vehicles and current sales remain good. We aim to positively promote the need for businesses to 'try something different' with their limited marketing spend. The Business Development Department continually explores

new income streams; a recent is the installation of a plasma screen (with advertising and show information) in the cafe bar, launched two years ago. New opportunities are being identified in other areas of the building. Product placement also continues to provide an additional source of income, for example, car dealerships placing vehicles outside the building for patrons to view.

It is vital for The Courtyard to maximise opportunities to celebrate our success in the corporate sector, whenever possible, and at a regional and national level too; with nominations being made to schemes such as the Arts & Business West Midlands Cultural Champions and The Prince of Wales Philanthropy Medal. Opportunities for us to provide these high-profile networking events for local businesses to meet Ministers and other significant figures add to the value of the relationships that we develop with them, at the same time as demonstrating the benefits the arts can bring to their business too.

Individual Giving

Individual giving continues to grow and it is anticipated that steady growth will continue in the foreseeable future. The current strategy is therefore to develop our donor giving at all levels. Over the next three years we aim to maximise a range of individual giving opportunities through the development of relationships with a wider range of donors, and through the identification and targeting of different market segments with appropriate asks. This will involve tapping into our current supporters as well as developing new philanthropic supporters who have never donated before. Key areas for development will include creating a detailed strategy, developing our donor database, legacy programme and initiating a range of relevant campaigns that will generate financial support for The Courtyard.

The Friends of The Courtyard scheme, with an ongoing membership of over 1,000, is a vital tool in developing core supporters for the venue, as well as bringing in regular membership revenues. Much work has been done to ensure that members feel part of The Courtyard, with the result that many of them actively support the organisation in many ways, whether through volunteering their time or giving donations. A steady growth area is in our Patrons membership scheme and this will be a major focus for the next three years, through personalised targeting and creation of specific Patrons' events.

In recent years, The Courtyard has also built up a programme of partnerships with a range of local charities, resulting in a variety of community fundraising events. One of the objectives of these events is to help us raise our charity profile through PR opportunities, as well as tap into the resources and skills of other charitable organisations.

A particularly good example of this is an annual Christmas Appeal running alongside our pantomime, which partners each year with a selected local charity. During the Christmas period, Courtyard patrons are encouraged to donate at the end of performances or via

the Box Office to jointly support our work and that of the nominated charity. This raises an average of £8,000 each year which is then split equally between the two charities.

We also co-ordinate a number of other events and performances during the year which also act as fundraisers. Some of these are fundraisers exclusively for The Courtyard, such as 'an audience with' style evenings. Evening performances and private receptions with Honorary Patrons Jo Brand and Sir Derek Jacobi have also raised income for the organisation.

Targeted, finite campaigns relating to specific needs within the venue, such as encouraging donations to support the refurbishment of the Studio, or to support our community work, will also be orchestrated regularly. These have been run on an ad hoc 'needs-must' basis, as opportunities arise - such as our 10th Anniversary in 2008 - with considerable success.

Trusts & Foundations

This is a growing area of work within the Business Development Department and one which is becoming vitally important for us to develop. More time will be

dedicated to the submission of substantial bids focusing on the development of our education and outreach activities, whilst at the same time continuing to develop funding streams to support both project and capital appeals for other areas of The Courtyard.

Summary

With the Government's desire to see a more philanthropic approach being taken by arts organisations over the coming years The Courtyard recognises how important fundraising of all types and at all levels will be in helping to close the funding gap left by reducing public subsidy.

6. Environmental Policy

The Courtyard is an iconic building in Hereford and having a high profile means that we must ensure we set a good example to the community to inspire others to follow. We aim to provide 'green leadership' in the arts, seeking a model of operation that minimises our environmental impact whilst maximising our cultural opportunities. Aside from any moral obligations, there is also a strong business case to reduce waste and energy use, especially with energy and waste costs increasing well above inflation and future levels of public funding uncertain.

Our Impacts

The nature of our business means that our activities have a negative impact on the environment due to the resources we use and the waste we produce. We are committed to reducing this negative impact by reviewing and adjusting our approach to our activities. In particular we will focus on the following areas:

- Our building: energy consumption, water use and waste generation/disposal
- Our activities: energy use, water use, waste generation, materials (stage sets, marketing print, office materials)
- Procurement: choice of materials and products, energy efficiency of new electrical equipment, food and drink procurement and transport efficiency/wastage
- Business travel: staff commute to work and impact of staff travel for work activities
- Customer travel: impact of customer travel to our events and activities

Our Commitments

The Courtyard is committed to understanding and gathering information about its energy use and environmental impact. Using this information, we will put in place initiatives to improve and communicate our environmental performance, engaging with management, staff and our stakeholders as part of this process. The key areas that we aim to focus on to reduce our environmental impact will include:

- Identifying actions to reduce building energy consumption and water use, reduce waste generation and increase recycling
- Identifying actions to minimise waste and maximise recycling for our own productions and marketing activities
- When procuring equipment and supplies, to consider the environmental effect of what we are sourcing and how it is supplied. Also to consider the ongoing environmental impact during the life of the equipment and the effect of disposal at the end of its life. This approach is relevant to everything we procure, from the daily milk delivery or supply of stationery to a significant capital purchase
- Encouraging staff to use the most environmentally efficient form of travel to work. When travelling for work, to minimise this where possible and to encourage the most efficient form (for example, walking, use of public transport or car sharing)
- To publicise and encourage our customers to use efficient transport methods to reduce or eliminate carbon emissions



The main aim of our approach is to reduce our environmental impact by reducing waste, energy and water use. However, we will also seek to explore options to help offset our environmental impact where this is feasible, such as through onsite solar power generation.

We are committed to embedding a culture of environmental awareness amongst our staff and the people that we work with. We will work with our Board, senior management team, staff, suppliers and stakeholders to communicate our environmental performance and progress in reducing our environmental impact.





7. Long-Term Vision

The long-term vision for The Courtyard is to have sufficient resources to maximise its artistic output, whilst ensuring that the whole community has access to a thriving programme, where all performances achieve maximum capacity.

From a financial perspective The Courtyard will have a reserve equivalent to three months' operating costs and an ongoing capital investment programme to renew and replace ageing equipment.

The Courtyard is currently looking to extend and develop the building in order to realise the aspirations of the Board, staff and the public as a cultural hub for Herefordshire recognised locally, regionally and nationally as a model of best practise in delivering arts in a rural community.





