

**The Luton Culture Trust Business Plan 2016-21**

# CONTENTS

Page

		<i>Summary</i>	2
<b>1</b>		<b>CONTEXT</b>	<b>3</b>
	<b>1.1</b>	Background	
	<b>1.2</b>	Operation	
	<b>1.3</b>	Luton	
	<b>1.4</b>	Our users	
	<b>1.5</b>	Our funding	
<b>2</b>		<b>PROGRAMME &amp; AUDIENCES</b>	<b>5</b>
	<b>2.1</b>	What we programme	
	<b>2.2</b>	Where we programme	
	<b>2.3</b>	Our primary Target market	
	<b>2.4</b>	Our secondary target market	
	<b>2.5</b>	International Partnerships	
		<i>PRIORITY 1: Widening Our Reach</i>	6
		<i>PRIORITY 2: Talent Development</i>	7
		<i>PRIORITY 3: Custodians</i>	9
<b>3</b>		<b>PRIORITY PLACES</b>	<b>10</b>
		<i>PRIORITY 4 Cultural Venues &amp; Growth</i>	10
<b>4</b>		<b>PARTNERSHIPS &amp; TEAMWORK</b>	<b>12</b>
		<i>PRIORITY 5: Pride in what we do</i>	12
		<i>PRIORITY 6: Partnerships &amp; Leadership</i>	13
		<i>PRIORITY 7: Fit for purpose</i>	14

## SUMMARY

***Luton Culture* is an arts and cultural charity for the people of Luton and beyond. We provide exceptional and meaningful engagement with museums, arts centres and libraries for thousands of regular users from Luton and further afield throughout the year. We encourage individuals and groups to enjoy and learn about arts and culture, engage with heritage and use their talents and interests to make a difference. We provide opportunities for people of all ages to take part in reading, writing, performing, making, creating, experimenting, discussing, collaborating and presenting culture. We actively support and showcase artistic talent, creativity and skill.**

**Our purpose is to create vibrancy, safeguard heritage and promote distinction through our locally relevant and nationally important arts and cultural programmes, places and resources.**

**Our vision is to be an award winning cultural Trust providing exemplary public engagement with arts and culture.**

**Our 5-year business plan** focuses on our strengths and provides a way in which we can rationalise our operation and reduce our costs by £1m over the coming two years. We will focus on arts, museums and libraries, our three core sites, growing our audiences, strengthening our core team and growing our commercial profits. These areas are outlined in the business plan under three themes:

- **PROGRAMME & PEOPLE**
- **PRIORITY PLACES**
- **PARTNERSHIPS & TEAMWORK**

In the fifth year of this business plan, we will be more independent and well known for being an innovative, creative and caring arts and cultural Trust. We will have fruitful strategic partnerships locally, nationally and internationally and we will have a large following of loyal and proud customers, partners, funders, businesses, ambassadors, staff and volunteers.

**To get to this point our strategic aim is to become more independent by clarifying our purpose, widening impact, broadening horizons and increasing income from activity, services and trade in order to cover at least half of our operating costs. This strategic aim shall be delivered through this plan and evaluated regularly by the *Luton Culture* team and monitored quarterly by the Board of Trustees.**

## 1. CONTEXT

**1.1 Background:** *Luton Culture* is an independent charitable Trust and company limited by guarantee established in 2008 to deliver arts, museums and libraries across Luton. We have over 200 members of staff, nine trustees and hundreds of volunteers. We develop and deliver year-round programmes of activity in our two theatres, museums, arts centre, gardens and grounds and libraries. We deliver and develop library services for *Luton Borough Council* and we also manage the town's heritage collections and archives. We have a collection of over 2 million artefacts, and we are proud to hold the most extensive and complete hat and headwear collection in the UK and the Mossman carriage collection at Stockwood Discovery Centre is the largest in Europe. In addition, we have an incredible resource of over 1.5m local photographs and maps which help us communicate the important history and social change across the Luton area. Luton is a historic, multi-cultural and stimulating place to live, work and visit and we play a key role in improving the quality of life and attractiveness of Luton.

**1.2 Operation:** We operate primarily from three cultural sites which are Wardown House, Museum & Gallery, Stockwood Discovery Centre and the Hat Factory Arts Centre and a network of libraries and community centres across Luton. The three cultural sites are important and attractive heritage buildings and grounds, and they are the main focus for our programmes, activities, commercial operation and audience development. Each site tells a different and important historical story about the people of Luton and they each create a different type of platform to present today's stories. Our library and community centre network enables us to engage with our communities, individuals and groups. The *Luton Culture* team of staff, volunteers and board members specialise in enabling our visitors to engage with our collections, programmes, resources and with each other.

**1.3 Luton:** Luton is a post industrial town, known for its history in manufacturing through *Vauxhall Motors, Electrolux, SKF* and hat factories such as *Olneys, Gurney's, Connors*. Hat making began in Luton during the 16<sup>th</sup> century and this industry dominated the local economy. Luton-made straw and felt hats have been, and still are marketed across the world. Once boasting over a hundred hat factories across the town, Luton now has four. Economically Luton now benefits from the development of *London Luton Airport*, a new enterprise zone, and excellent transport links and infrastructure which places Luton in an enviable position with easy access to national and international travel, trade and recreation. Luton has a population of just over 200,000 (51% are white, 30% Asian, 10% Black and 9% other). The 2011 census identified Luton to be a 'plural' town, where no one ethnic group is in the majority. Luton has a higher than national average population of young people and a lower than national average number of people over the age of 44<sup>1</sup>. Research undertaken through the Active People survey in 2010, found that just 35% of Luton's population engage or participate in cultural activity, placing the town in the bottom 20% of least

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.luton.gov.uk/Environment/Lists/LutonDocuments/PDF/Planning/Census>

culturally engaged places in the UK. This statistic, and the fact that there are no longer any organisation in the town who receive regular funding from *Arts Council England (ACE)*, has led to Luton being a priority place for *ACE* investment programmes. In September 2015 the *Royal Society for the Arts (RSA)* listed Luton as the second worst town (324<sup>th</sup>) for heritage engagement, assets and areas of natural beauty. *Heritage Lottery Fund* has identified Luton as a priority development area.

**1.4 Our users:** We attract 74,000 visits to the Hat Factory Arts Centre, 200,000 to Stockwood Discovery Centre, 40,000 visits to Wardown House, Museum & Gallery and 400,000 to the Central library. We lend over 600,000 books to 21,000 active users in our Libraries and with over 100 languages used in Luton we now draw our library book stock from the *London Consortia* to ensure that we can meet these diversity needs. The majority of our audiences are local with currently 20% of the visitors for the Hat Factory and Wardown House, Museum and Gallery coming from beyond Luton. Based on the *Audience Agency's* segmentation tool *Audience Spectrum*, those attending ticketed events at the Hat Factory and Library Theatre are from the segments that are traditionally 'highly engaged' with the arts, categorised as people who like 'Trips & Treats' (26%), people described as 'Dormitory Dependable' (20%) and Commuter-land Culturebuffs (13%). It could therefore be said that our existing audience is already culturally engaged, so we need to develop programmes, marketing strategies and incentives to better engage non-users. For ticketed events we run on average at 35% capacity; of these bookings 66% are over the counter, 11% over the phone and 23% online. We need to significantly increase attendance at our events.

**1.5 Our funding:** We generate funding through our trading company which operates our catering, retail and hires, the profits of which are returned to the charity or applied in the trading company's property enterprises. We also have a service level agreement with *Luton Borough Council* to deliver statutory library and archive services, and we receive a donation from *London Luton Airport Limited*. We currently generate 30% of our turnover from our own income generating activity and this is planned to grow to at least 50% in five years' time in order to make us more resilient and independent. *Luton Borough Council* remains an important strategic partner who owns the buildings that we occupy and they own *London Luton Airport Limited (LLAL)*. We are managing a reduction of £1m in donations from *LLAL* over the coming two years.

## 2. PROGRAMME & PEOPLE

We will plan and develop our programmes of arts and cultural activity centrally in order to ensure that everything we do is locally relevant and nationally important and of high quality. We will nurture our customers and audiences and we will engage the creativity of artists, curators, writers, performers and producers to make great new work. Through our programmes we will actively promote the value of arts and culture in creating a sense of place, regeneration, wellbeing, community cohesion and in improving the quality of people's lives. We will work with partners to demonstrate the impact of our work, focusing on arts and cultural engagement, collections development and literacy improvement. Across our programme we will provide creative opportunities and activities for young people to inspire them and generate skills for life. We will create transition and progression routes between formal education and successful careers to enable anyone with a skill, interest or passion in arts and culture to meet their full potential. We will target this work through three Priorities: (1) WIDENING OUR REACH (2) TALENT DEVELOPMENT (3) CUSTODIANSHIP

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

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

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

**2.4 Our secondary target market is regional and national:** We will develop incentives and campaigns to attract people from a one hour travel time by car, bus, train or plane to attend our major programmes and events and use/hire our spaces. We will particularly target artists/creative practitioners from London.

**2.5 International partnerships** are also important to us, to connect our work between the Trust and national and international partners who share arts and cultural objectives with us. By flight its one hour to Paris, two hours to Milan and seven hours to New York. Building on our existing cultural links with Lahore, Karachi, Marseille and Berlin.

## PRIORITY 1: WIDENING OUR REACH

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

We will widen our reach by focussing on:

- (1) Developing and delivering high quality arts & cultural programmes
- (2) Growing and diversifying our audiences and users.
- (3) Strengthening and broadening relationships with key our stakeholders

Programmes that will deliver this priority:

- **‘Revoluton Arts’**: A three year programme of community and socially engaged arts practice presented by our creative director Topher Campbell. The programme will engage new audiences, particularly from our primary target group. This programme is being developed with *Luton Creative Hub* and additional artists and arts organisations from across Luton as part of the *Arts Council’s ‘Creative People & Places’ (CPP)*. *Monologue Slam* will bring opportunities for local talent to perform at the Library Theatre. Long-table platform events across Luton will engage communities in programme decisions. *Damba Talka Clash of Drums* will engage over 10,000 people in an energy-infused performance of drumming and pyrotechnics.
- **‘Lutonia’**: We will grow the local and national reputation of this annual festival that celebrates the written and spoken word in all its forms. It is fun, serious and thought provoking and we present a blended programme of local, emerging and international talent through word, performance, film and discussion. The event currently attracts 5,000 people and this shall grow over the five years, whilst retaining an important level of scale to ensure involvement, connection with artists and each other.
- **‘Partition’**: Marking 70 years of the independence of India and Pakistan in 2017, a new *Independence and Division* programme is being developed in partnership with the *University of Cambridge Museums*, leading to a partnership with the *Fitzwilliam Museum* to secure objects for a ‘Partition’ exhibition at Stockwood Discovery Centre. This programme will further develop our international partnerships and will celebrate our diversity, histories and personal stories. Further partnerships will be developed including theatre with *Zero Culture*, film with *Runaway Media* and further engagement with *Lafz Magazine*.
- **‘Star Objects’**: Wardown House, Museum and Gallery will re-open after major refurbishment with a locally made and commissioned display called ‘Star Objects’ from the *British Museum* and co-produced by Luton’s Museum Makers. Heritage talks, events and workshops will accompany this major exhibition which will support our drive to increase visitors numbers and customer satisfaction.
- **‘As you change so do I’**: We shall take the lead in delivering a three year *Arts Council ‘Local Investment Programme’* funded public realm arts project with artist *Mark Titchner* and curators *Matthew Shaul* and *Andrew Hunt*. The programme includes an outdoor curated projection wall, billboard artworks, a project

space for live/changing art to spill outwardly into the street, workshops and symposia. Turner Prize nominee *Mark Titchner* will be commissioned to produce a large-scale, digital artwork for the end wall of the Hat Factory to act as a beacon to engage the 7,000 people who pass by every day.

- **Good life 'South' Festival:** We will establish a new Steve Abbott promoted Good life 'South' music and food family festival at Stockwood Discovery Centre to build on the successful event in North Wales. This festival will build on families coming together to enjoy food from around the world, music, outdoor eating, relaxing and family togetherness.
- **Audience development:** We will improve our management of audience data, develop a new customer satisfaction survey and monitor use, customer needs, identify gaps and reassert the Trust's image and identity, emphasising our charitable and cultural values, independence and locally relevant/nationally important role. Respond to a new regular satisfaction and perception survey for users and non-users.

## **PRIORITY 2: TALENT DEVELOPMENT**

**As talent and skills developers, we will provide support for emerging artists and creative practitioners through studios, bursaries, residencies and partnerships that promote and showcase talent at all stages. We will invest more resources into providing opportunities for people to regularly take part and grow their skills and talents in order to broaden horizons and support creative business/career growth. We will promote young people's engagement in the visual arts, design, theatre, film, drama and production and broker partnerships with professional arts companies and the wider business sector to enable young people to access opportunities and apply their skills.**

**We will develop talent by focusing on:**

- (1) Opportunities for artists and creative practitioners**
- (2) Inspiring and creatively engaging young people**
- (3) Cultural and creative skills development, career progression and professional achievements**
- (4) Helping children and families improve literacy**

Programmes that will deliver this priority:

- **Hat Factory Arts Centre** will be opening up its doors to new partnerships that share a commitment to grow our target audience and support talent. We will support emerging artists and makers through new incubator studios, residencies, bursaries and workspaces to enable them to work alongside professional companies and creative agencies. We will develop a new programme of expanded learning opportunities, performances, youth bursaries and training in partnership with the *Next Generation Youth Theatre*. We will develop a new arts workshop creative space in partnership with *Luton SNAP* on level 1 which will be used by groups such as schools, and targeted groups for classes for drawing, making, photography and mixed media to grow creative skills.

- **Arts Bursaries:** Through our own work and in partnership with others such as the *University of Bedfordshire* and the *Community Foundation*, we will provide new bursary opportunities to support and encourage local talent to flourish and grow. We enable people to fully achieve their potential and make positive career pathways in the arts and culture building on Luton's successful Alumni. We will also provide incubator and start-up opportunities within our creative workspaces, enabling young people to work within a professional environment and local businesses.
- **Cultural Career Progression:** We will lead in developing stronger progression routes for young people and pre-school children interested and skilled in the arts. We will focus on filling the gaps in arts engagement between schools, colleges and universities through clear progression strategies in partnership with *Royal Opera House Bridge Local Cultural Education Partnership*. Our arts and cultural education and literacy development focuses primarily on young people outside formal education; however, we also work with schools, colleges, universities and training providers.
- **'Gear-up-shed':** A literacy programme that encourages reading and writing through creativity, curiosity and innovation, play and learning. It includes 'Read Ahead', 'Book Start' and the Luton 'Summer Reading Challenge' the latter will target over 4,000 children and leads to an awards ceremony at Stockwood Discovery Centre. The programme will grow to engage adults and address the low levels of literacy across Luton through partnerships with local colleges and the *University of Bedfordshire* and ESOL (English for the Speakers of Other Languages). We will also engage with schools to promote our campaign 'every school child as a library member'.
- **Innovation and Research partnerships** will provide live projects for young people in higher education which will in turn provide innovative ideas and thinking into our operations and venues. We also provide for graduate placements, research projects and case-studies working with organisations such as the London *FabLab Innovation centre*.
- **Youth Programmes** including:
  - 'Incubate' including *100% Young Producers*, *ScriptLab*, *How it ended* local theatre company and *Tamasha Theatre Company*, who promote new writing from diverse play writes nationally. These projects will challenge, inform and contribute to our young writers, producers and performers. We will provide mentors and training to enable young people to work alongside the best in the business.
  - Ambassadors will strengthen artistic/curatorial partnerships through the creation of new partnerships that will promote youth ambassadors, volunteering, leadership and learning opportunities in partnership with organisations such as the *Next Generation Youth Theatre* and *Uprising*.
  - *Recreated Youth Forum* will grow and continue to inform, challenge and curate exhibitions in our heritage venues.
  - Summer schools at Stockwood Discovery Centre and the Hat Factory – for fun, talent growth and accreditation (Arts Award) in a range of art and forms.

### **PRIORITY 3: CUSTODIANSHIP**

**As custodians and carers, we deliver statutory library services for *Luton Borough Council* and manage cultural assets and collections in our care, ensuring that we add value and increase access. We will demonstrate the impact that we make in delivering these services and we will develop and grow these areas of activity with local and regional contractors, seeking new opportunities to expand our offer.**

***We will develop our role as custodian by focussing on:***

- (1) Delivering and ensuring exemplary Library and Archive services***
- (2) Increasing access to our locally relevant museum collections and heritage assets.***
- (3) Achieving national recognition for our significant collections.***

Programmes that will deliver this priority:

- **Library Services:** We will develop a new service level agreement with *Luton Borough Council* and maintain the provision to serve the whole of the town with a five year programme to increase library use, customer satisfaction and to improve the library buildings, widen the range of stock available, and improve IT facilities. We will in addition develop a literacy hub, provide access to local studies and broaden the programme of free cultural activities taking place in libraries.
- **Hat and head-ware collection Designation status** will be achieved by 2018, our tenth anniversary. We will celebrate and share the town's collection of Hats and Headware which will be recognised as a nationally important collection. This status will help us secure future investment and we will have a resource that will be used by researchers from around the world. The designated collection will attract public interest from national and international academics and a new audience.
- **Schools' Library Offer:** We will further develop our successful schools' library offer to have a wider reach and impact across the region developing our work and access to our bespoke specialist services. We will broaden our pay as you go model and maximise the income generating potential of this service to new customers.
- **Grow your own specialists:** We will engage 100 new Museum Makers in 25 projects that help grow and develop our collections, interpretation and other co-produced projects. We will be developing a 'grow your own' initiative to broaden the understanding and use of our collections, promote new opportunities for non-curators to get involved in working with collections, learn new skills and promote the merits and extent of our collection to a broader audience. We will also develop strands for libraries and arts looking at professional development which will link with Culture Champions.

### 3. PRIORITY PLACES

We plan to create vibrancy and distinction through our programmes and our three heritage sites. We will focus our activities at Wardown House, Museum and Gallery, Stockwood Discovery Centre and the Hat Factory Arts Centre. We will improve these cultural venues to ensure that they are very well used, locally relevant and nationally important. These venues will remain free entry and there will always be something to see; however events, activities and programmes shall be charged for. We will actively seek donations, sponsorship and external grants to broaden this work. Building on the successful improvements to Wardown House, Museum and Gallery we will focus on capital improvement plans for Stockwood Discovery Centre and the Hat Factory Arts Centre. We seek to take a leading role in developing the cultural quarter as a visitor destination we will develop our property portfolio by transforming under-used old hat factories and other buildings into well used cultural venues and creative workspaces and to bring in a new income for the Trust. We will target this work through priority (4) CULTURAL VENUE IMPROVEMENT & GROWTH

#### PRIORITY 4: CULTURAL VENUE IMPROVEMENT & GROWTH

As cultural venue promoters we will further develop a dynamic cluster of arts and cultural venues in the cultural quarter, across Luton and further afield. We will strengthen our operation as a charity by growing and intensifying the quality and reach of our trading activity. We will provide more great places to eat, drink, hire, party and shop within our core cultural sites.

*We will improve and develop our cultural venues by focussing on:*

- (1) Raising capital investment to improve our Cultural venues and enhance them as visitor destinations*
- (2) Providing more studios and workspaces for creative and cultural businesses in the cultural quarter*
- (3) High profit generating commercial enterprise growth to better fund our arts and cultural programmes*

Programmes that will deliver this priority:

- **Wardown House, Museum and Gallery:** After a £3.5m refurbishment, Wardown House, Museum and Gallery will reopen in late 2016 and our innovative approach to co-production of exhibitions and events will create a museum which is locally relevant and nationally important. Our collections will better celebrate the town's history and diversity. Stories will be told through objects, and the interpretation will be immersive and interactive. New facilities for commercial use will all draw from the unique nature of the house and its setting in Wardown Park and will ensure informative and enjoyable visitor experiences.
- **The Hat Factory Arts Centre:** The Hat Factory Arts Centre will be programmed to provide regular activity every day and at weekends to provide something to see and do and be inspired by. We will re-develop a new basement lounge with the *University of Bedfordshire* Interior Design Students, provide a gallery in partnership with the *Departure Lounge* developing 6 shows a year, seminars and talks. After initial refurbishments over the next two years, we will work with *Luton Borough Council* to develop a visionary architectural design project to re-develop the Arts Centre inner atrium and roof space.

- **Stockwood Discovery Centre Master Plan:** We will attract more visitors to enjoy the gardens, collections, history of Luton museum and increase our commercial enterprise profit-generating activity. In phases:
  - ‘Steam Ahead’ will be developed with the friends of Luton Museum to bring the engines alive with performances, steam, rides and noise near our existing active blacksmith area.
  - ‘Glass-house Link’ – we will create a dedicated and inspiring education room by developing a new glass house link which will provide space for commercial events, meetings and functions.
  - ‘Parkland Play’ – we will develop a new soft-play adventure land for children and a new outdoor adventure park for young people with wood cabins and activity area.
  - ‘Vauxhall Wing’ will be the final phase where we will house the internationally important Vauxhall car heritage collection. This will add value, attract a new and broader audience to Luton.
- **The Cultural Quarter:** We will develop our property portfolio within the cultural quarter and transform under-used old hat factories and other buildings and fill in gap sites with creative workspaces. This will also provide us with a regular and new income into the long-term. We will engage and attract creative practitioners, artists, media companies, makers, producers and designers. Initially, we plan to refurbish one hat factory and then develop a new-build studio complex along Guildford Street. We shall apply for funding from the *Heritage Lottery Fund* and *SEMLEP* as well as seek partners and sponsors.
- **Making and design centre at 47 Guildford Street:** In partnership with *The Mall* shopping centre we seek to safeguard 47 Guildford Street, Luton’s oldest hat factory, and open it up to the public after refurbishment. We will develop it into a design and making centre that promotes the hat making heritage of Luton, millinery skills and collections and incorporates new design technology.
- **Luton Library Central Hub and Theatre:** We will work with *Luton Borough Council* to plan for long-term improvements and developments that will provide an exemplary central library that will meet the specific needs of Luton’s communities and creating a wonderful place to read, find information, make friends, learn new skills and be trained and educated. We will inspire communities from across the town to gather and read/learn together centrally. In the interim, we will refurbish the entrance area to brighten up the approach, inspire and engage more library users and provide a new library café on the ground floor. The Library Theatre programme will further grow it we will develop a new Terrace space.
- **Community Centre Cluster:** We will have a reduced portfolio of community centre buildings which we will manage as a cluster for local hire. We will build our relationship with our anchor tenants and users so that we can maximise usage of these facilities and generate sufficient income to cover their costs and generate income for the Trust. We will aim for community centres to become part of our trading enterprises in three years’ time.
- **Operational Management:** We will develop stronger ecological credentials by reducing our energy consumption and minimise wastage at all our sites by implementing a new ecological mission. We will have clear wastage and efficiency targets and will have reduced our current costs on heating and lighting and our stationary and printing costs across all functions.

## 4. PARTNERSHIPS & TEAMWORK

We are an exceptional team of specialist cultural leaders. We are creatives, historians, librarians, curators, programmers, marketeers, promoters, administrators, welcomers, gardeners, caterers, venue carers, organisers and educators. We are passionate about what we do, care for our customers and want to do our best to involve everyone in our work. Going forward we need to ensure that we are a team that is fully focussed on our purpose and priorities and is one which is operationally flexible enough to respond to changes in funding and seasonal fluctuations in customer use/demand. We will operate and connect as one core team – where our functions cut across the areas of operation in order to avoid duplication and variances in quality and to promote a team approach. Each member of the core team will have a clear purpose, function and specialism and we will all know the part we play in delivering this business plan, our strategic aim and vision. We will target this work through priorities (5) PRIDE IN WHAT WE DO (6) PARTNERSHIPS & LEADERSHIP (7) FIT FOR PURPOSE.

### PRIORITY 5: PRIDE IN WHAT WE DO

As a cultural team we will better demonstrate the pride we feel towards our personal and collective achievements. We will meet our full potential and flourish by harnessing opportunities for our users, partners, colleagues, volunteers and trustees. We will grow and be proud of our excellent reputation as a creative and caring organisation, partner, employer, contractor, landlord, host and commissioner. We will work with others who share our values and pride.

*We will further develop pride in what we do by focussing on:*

- (1) Growing more high quality opportunities for people to volunteer with us*
- (2) Developing and promoting a network of Cultural Champions*
- (3) Strengthening our team of specialists*
- (4) Clarifying as a team and then amplifying our organisational values and ethos*

Programmes that will deliver this priority:

- **Team values:** Together as a team, we will develop our values and ethos with a step-change plan to enable everyone to achieve satisfaction and happiness in their work. This will be developed and led by a cross-team group. We will implement a new 'pride' survey that develops a baseline for assessing the pride that our team feel in their work, and considers ways in which we can further promote self-esteem, build skills and confidences and celebrate exemplars.
- **Culture Champions:** We will gather together the creative Alumni and cultural advocates of Luton to share our values and pride and we will collectively amplify the pride of place felt by an increasing number of residents, workers and visitors to Luton. We will also work with the Alumni to promote arts and cultural careers, success stories and opportunities top our primary target market.

- **Customer Excellence:** Our customer facing/front of house teams across all venues will be brought together to champion customer excellence across the Trust. In doing so, we will ensure consistency of service and customer care and unify our team approach.
- **Volunteering:** We will grow our team of regular volunteers and build on the success of Museum Makers to develop a similar programme called Library Makers. Linking with 'grow your own specialist, we will also implement formal volunteer accreditation and training. We will develop campaigns to recruit volunteers and we will match our volunteers with aspects of our work which we recognise they are passionate about.

#### **PRIORITY 6: PARTNERSHIPS & LEADERSHIP**

**As cultural specialists and leaders, we will actively contribute to strategic cultural partnerships in order to influence the development of arts, heritage, museums, libraries, literacy, regeneration, economic development, health and wellbeing, community cohesion, tourism and the creative industries. This will enable us to inform local and national agendas and ensure that specialisms have a significant impact locally and nationally.**

***We will strengthen our partnerships and role as leaders by focussing on:***

- (1) Taking a strategic approach to the way we work with others and share benefits/risk.***
- (2) Influence, lead and make a difference by applying our professional knowledge, skills and expertise.***

Programmes that will deliver this priority:

- **Library & Literacy Development Partnerships:** We will work and develop new alliances with *Luton Borough Council Schools Improvements Team, Royal Opera House Bridge, National Literacy Trust* and *Local Cultural Education Partnership* to strengthen the impact that we make on literacy development in Luton so that we can demonstrate the real difference we make, particularly to children and their families. We will invest in the development of a longitudinal study that measures the impact of our work and disseminate the findings nationally. We will further develop our leadership role in Libraries by playing an active role in *Chief Librarian Society*, expanding our reach through *London Book Consortia* and exploring possibilities to provide library and literacy development services to other areas with new partners.
- **Museum & Heritage Partnerships:** We will further develop our leadership role in Museums by playing an active role in the *Museums Association*, developing accreditation of our team and curators of the future and participation in *SHARE Museums East* and *Museum East of England* learning and leadership networks. Through working with *Heritage Lottery Fund* and *Historic England* we will further promote Luton's distinctive cultural heritage and develop our collections with communities and Museum Makers and ensure that our work is locally relevant and nationally important.
- **Arts Partnerships & Networks:** Through *Arts Council England, Circus Evolution, House Network, Global Streets Network, Contemporary Visual Arts Network, Arts Development UK, Cultural Learning Network, Luton Creative Hub, Made in Luton* and many others networks, we promote and develop our work. We

also work through the 'Arts Strategy Group' which includes *Luton Borough Council, the University of Bedfordshire, Arts Council England* to develop a 10 year arts and cultural strategy for Luton.

- **Health and wellbeing partnerships:** We work strategically with health professionals on ways in which we can make a real difference and promote arts and culture as a positive tool. In partnership with *Luton Mental Health & Wellbeing Service* we will be developing a new project for artists with mental health conditions to raise awareness of mental health issues through the development and sharing of their work. Over the next five years we will also be growing on our partnership *Luton Dementia Action Alliance (LDAA)* to improve the ways in which our cultural sites and libraries are dementia friendly and fully understand the needs of people and families living with dementia. We will have dementia champion training and take positive action by developing creative and engaging projects with other LDAA partners on this which are *Health Watch Luton, Luton Adult Learning, Age Concern* and the *Alzheimer's society*.
- **Cultural Quarter Partnership:** We will take a lead in promoting and developing Luton's Cultural Quarter by connecting and supporting creative and cultural businesses, students, practitioners and education providers. We will work with the *Luton Business Improvement District, Luton Borough Council* and *South East Midlands Local Enterprise Partnership* to invest in improvement and develop the Luton cultural quarter as a visitor destination with a strong cultural ecology and employment opportunities. We will work cross-regionally and in London with agencies, studio collectives and with the *South East Midlands Creative Workspace Network* to build alliances, knowledge and influence.

#### **PRIORITY 7: FIT FOR PURPOSE**

**As a diligent cultural organisation, we will use our resources effectively and we will demonstrate the value and impact of our charitable work. We will manage a sustained reduction in the environmental impact of our organisation, our activities, processes and systems. We will also develop our IT and digital systems to improve customer services, internal processes, efficiency, access to information and website use.**

***We will become an organisation that is fit for purpose by focussing on:***

- (1) Integrating new technology and more efficient and effective digital processes and practices***
- (2) Evaluating the impact of our core, cultural, commercial and contract functions in delivering our priorities***
- (3) Setting, achieving and maintaining the highest quality standards across all that we do.***

Programmes that will deliver this priority:

- **Digital Culture:** We will invest in new technologies to promote local and international study, research, operational efficiency and to provide access to resources of local interest, for personal development, business growth and education. We will develop a new Customer Relationship Management System to enable an online booking system to move our customer towards 'digital first' access to information. This will also increase our customer intelligence and enable us to target our communications. We will also be implementing our own IT system and equipment, digital expertise and in-house support in year two.

This will require a financial investment and increased management/operational costs but will ensure greater customer satisfaction, an assurance that we can deliver a comprehensive library service.

- **Business Functions:** There are four distinct business functions by which we will focus our different types of work and which interconnect financially. Each function is essential to our success. They are:
  - *Core Function* This is the team and resources necessary to deliver our core operation. This area of operation is where we invest our money and there is no income.
  - *Cultural Programme and Venues Function:* This is how and where we deliver our charitable work. This area of our operation is where we invest our funding and make a proportion back through ticket sales, admissions, box office and commission.
  - *Contract Services Function:* This is where we deliver contracts, services that play to our strengths and specialisms, but that do not generate sufficient profit to enable us to trade off them. Some areas of activity go into strand 3 in order to grow and move into strand 4. Strand 3 activities need to cover their costs and 10% of these costs are core costs.
  - *Commercial Enterprise Function:* This is for areas of activity to make a profit of at least 25% in order to deliver an income to the Trust.
- **Quality:** We only support the highest of quality standards and great performance within our team, our projects, sites, partnerships and through our contractors. Quality assurance will be part of our Direction, Development and Delivery (DDD) model. This model (fig below) outlines the way in which we develop, deliver and measure the success of our work. This process will be developed as part of a new way of working with a team that aligns with these functions. There shall be a team responsible for direction, a team responsible for development and a team responsible for delivery. Evaluation, feedback and ideas for improvement will be everyone's responsibility. Everyone in this model is a specialist and we will all know the part we play in delivering the over-all vision and business plan priorities.

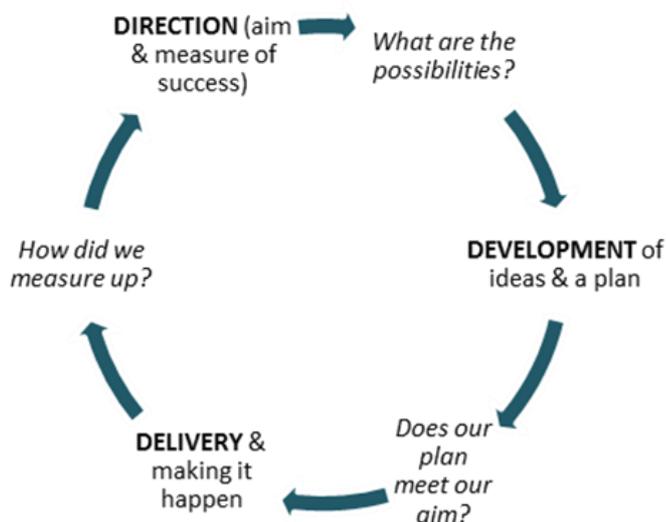


FIG 1 DIRECTION, DEVELOPMENT, DELIVERY MODEL