

WTM

worthing theatres and museum

**Annual
Review**

2022/2023





Our Vision is a community in which everyone's lives are enriched through vibrant, inspiring, creative arts and heritage.



Our Mission is to enable everyone to access arts and heritage by:

- Reaching out into communities, providing accessible pathways to experience creativity.
- Actively contributing to the wellbeing and happiness of our community.
- Creating shared experiences that inspire, challenge, educate and entertain.
- Championing inclusion, supporting the creation and presentation of work that celebrates diversity.
- Creating aspirational opportunities for young people within the cultural industries.
- Delivering a rich and diverse year-round programme of cultural activity.
- Developing opportunities and partnerships with artists and companies.
- Ensuring financial resilience and long term viability whilst providing best value.
- Contributing to Worthing's experience economy, promoting positive place making .



Our Values - In everything we do we will:

- Support and enhance the **wellbeing** of everyone we interact with.
- Nurture a culture of **collaboration, respect and integrity**.
- **Listen** and respond to our community and the sector.
- Commit to **inclusivity** across all aspects of the Charity.
- Promote **excellence**.
- Take responsibility for our **environmental** impact.

Who We Are and What We Do

Worthing Theatres & Museum (WTM) is a unique arts and heritage charity with a large portfolio of distinct venues all positioned within the heart of Worthing in West Sussex.

Our ambitious cultural offer includes a vibrant and entertaining programme of performances (theatre, contemporary circus, dance, comedy, music, family theatre, talks), events, film, exhibitions and workshops.

We also manage a museum collection of national significance (costume, archaeology, fine art, toys), host the work of a diverse range of artists in our gallery spaces, present a free annual outdoor summer festival and collaborate with leading UK producing and touring companies.

We are a place-based cultural charity driving social, cultural and economic transformation across our communities. Collaboration and partnership are at the heart of everything we do. We provide a wide variety of opportunities for people to engage with the arts, culture and heritage which contribute to social cohesion, expand horizons and inspire creativity. Our work aids in making Worthing and the surrounding areas a great place to live and work.

In 2022/23 we welcomed 308K people to the venues, including 83K visitors to the Museum; a huge step towards our pre-pandemic peak of 397K in 2019/20.

- WTM Museum and Gallery
- Connaught Theatre (520 seats)
- Connaught Studio (164 seats)
- Pavilion Theatre (750 seats)
- Pavilion Atrium (creative space with option for 200 seats)
- Assembly Hall (950 seats)

Worthing Theatres & Museum is a Registered Charity (No. 1185189). WTM became a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) (CE018745) on 5th September 2019 and started trading from 1st November 2019, taking over the management and development of Worthing Borough Council's cultural assets.



Scott Marshall

Acting Chair

We have emerged from the pandemic a more creative, resilient and efficient organisation that is much more connected to the people of Worthing. The recovery, whilst not complete, is faster than predicted thanks to the WTM Staff Team and Volunteers, our audiences and our many professional and community partners. The Museum has been a particular success with 83 thousand visitors.

We would particularly like to thank the elected Members and officers at Worthing Borough Council for their continued financial support and close partnership working.

The success of the culture provision as an independent charity is now clear, with reduced costs for the Council compared to an inhouse culture provision, a higher quality, more diverse offer and dramatically increased community engagement and social impact. We also have the added benefit of the talented team of Trustees who bring a range of expert skills to the organisation in their voluntary capacity.

The Charity focused on the wellbeing and happiness of the community, particularly during the difficult times of covid and the economic crisis, offering free tickets to families using food banks, providing cinema tickets as well as a hot drinks as part of the Warm Spaces scheme and offering free activities and tickets for children who receive free school meals as part of the Holiday Activities and Food Programme.

Our economic impact in 2022/23 is estimated to have increased by £1.7m compared to 2021/22 – an increase of 46%. This is back to 69% of the peak pre-pandemic result achieved in 2018/19 and provides a return of £6.02 for every £1 invested in WTM by Worthing Borough Council.

The Business Plan for the next five years will prioritise serving our community and developing the programme of events and activities whilst remaining financially viable. We are also considering our environmental responsibilities and the need to improve access across the venues.

There have been many challenges but Worthing Theatres & Museum is a successful charity which is making a real difference.



Amanda O'Reilly

Creative Director & CEO

Jill Stewart

Executive Director (Company Secretary)

2022/23 has been the Charity's first full year of delivering a rich and diverse programme of cultural activity. There has been a marked improvement in the cultural offer for Worthing with *Othello*, our first performance from the incredible Frantic Assembly, *Henry V* by Headlong coming to Worthing direct from Shakespeare's Globe Theatre, the moving *Kintsugi Women* exhibition and a brilliant summer season of free outdoor performances as part of *Spin Out*.

We have provided a varied high quality programme of performances and events that inspire, challenge, educate and entertain not forgetting the importance of a good night out with a plethora of comedy and music shows.

We have increased our focus on the social impact we can have on the communities living in Worthing Borough, reaching out to provide accessible pathways to experience creativity, embracing initiatives such as the Holiday Activities and Food Programme, *Warm Spaces* and working with local charities including the food bank to provide families who are struggling with tickets to our pantomime. We have continued to support 40 community groups and are delighted that most have survived the challenge of the pandemic and are going from strength to strength. WTM is proud to serve its community and determined to actively contribute to the wellbeing and happiness of the people of Worthing.

We have dramatically increased our participation programme with 66 workshops giving people the opportunity to experience the joy of creativity and a sense of connection. This will be an area of growth over the next three years and we plan to open up more space in the venues, work with additional partners and consult with the community to develop a popular and inspiring range of activities.

We have continued to support artists, makers and companies to develop and exhibit work, providing R&D for seven companies, confirming the long term support of two Associate Companies, hosting the European Aerial Dance Festival and the Theatre of the Funny Creation School as well as presenting the work of nine local artists in the Sussex Contemporaries Exhibition.





Throughout our work we champion inclusion, supporting the creation and presentation of work that celebrates diversity with 12 performances / exhibitions which showcased the work of creatives with protected characteristics as part of our *We Are Here* programme.

Although 2022/23 has been the Charity's most challenging year from a financial perspective, the reserves that we have built up in this short time have allowed us to be resilient in this economic crisis facing the challenges of high inflation, soaring energy costs and the upkeep of five historic buildings. Our reserves have enabled us to invest in the venues this year: the Connaught Theatre now has a fully accessible dressing room and shower room with easy access to the stage for wheelchair performers, the front doors to the Studio Theatre are now automatic to aid access, external electronic signs on the Pavilion Theatre have been installed and we finally managed to raise the funds to place the order for new seats in the Pavilion Theatre.

Finally we would like to thank the WTM Staff Team and Volunteers for their continued hard work and commitment to the organisation and our dedicated Board of Trustees for their continued support and guidance.

Looking Forward

In 2023/24 we will continue to strive for increased financial stability and maximise our income streams, particularly our ticket and venue hires income. We will prioritise our audience development and engagement, increasing our public consultation, evaluating our marketing strategies and procuring a new website.

The Charity is continuing to work in partnership with WBC to redevelop the Museum. We are also exploring the redevelopment of the Connaught Theatre and Studio which lacks circulation space, has an underused first floor bar and needs an extra cinema screen to free up the Main House for both community performances and the professional

programme. We are working with architects to develop a plan to address these issues.

We will continue to make access improvements across the venues including a ramp to allow greater access in the Pavilion auditorium, a number of wider seats in each of the venues, replacement of the hearing loop systems and access videos to support customers who need or prefer to understand the experience of visiting the venues in advance.

In June 2023 Worthing had its first cultural festival with 16 events provided by WTM including two incredible free outdoor aerial pieces (*Wild* by Motionhouse and *Why* by Gravity and Levity). We plan to work with WBC and Time for Worthing to continue the Worthing Festival in 2024 and future years.

We have begun work to review and improve our people policies, starting with our Code of Conduct, as we continue to build on our culture to promote unity and diversity, providing a supportive workplace and environment where both differences and what we have in common are celebrated. We engage with responsible and respectful working practices and empower our team to shape and deliver WTM's key objectives with integrity.

We will develop the WTM team employing a Head of Buildings and Facilities to enable us to fulfil our plans to improve accessibility and to establish a Sustainability Strategy.

We are looking forward to our second fully operational year of our young charity, connecting with even more people in our community and bringing incredible performances and exhibitions to Worthing.





With the economic crisis following hard on the heels of the pandemic we are very aware that people in our community are struggling, making cultural events an unaffordable luxury for many. We worked with Worthing Food Foundation, Storm, Safe in Sussex and West Sussex Mind to put 326 pantomime tickets in the hands of families who would not have been able to attend.

WTM successfully applied for funding from the Holiday Activities and Food Programme and provided free tickets, lunch and workshops for 64 children at Christmas and a further 56 in the February half term.

In January we joined the *Warm Spaces* scheme offering space and hot drinks in both the Connaught Theatre and the Museum. In addition we self-funded 679 cinema tickets as part of the *Warm Spaces* offer.

During July and August we programmed *Spin Out* with 23 free outdoor shows, building on the circus and street arts programming that has been so successful over the last five years. Performances included: Shristi Dance, Scratchworks, Dizzy O'Dare, Half a String, All or Nothing, Brainfools, Stop Gap and the repeat of Joseph Toonga's *Born to Protest*. This work was supported by WBC and Worthing Town Centre Initiative.

We are particularly proud of the *We Are Here* strand of our programming which actively sought work (performances and exhibitions) that included artists with protected characteristics including: *Mapping Gender* - considering the trans experience, *Frozen Light* for young adults with profound and multiple learning disabilities, Victoria Melody's *HeadSet* considering neurodiversity, *Frock* by Stopgap and *Delicate* by Extraordinary Bodies both offered incredibly talented role models for people with a disability, Brainfool's *Happy Pigeon* and the *Kintsugi Women* exhibition both considered homelessness and Shristi Dance brought amazing Indian dance to Worthing's town centre. In response to this work, we engaged with relevant local community organisations and offered subsidised tickets for specific groups to attend. For example Emma Frankland performed *Hearty* which was a visually spectacular performance about her trans journey and we gave 30 subsidised tickets to The Clare Project and 15 to Allsorts Youth.

WTM has worked on projects in partnership with 11 local organisations including a writers workshop as part of Pride, an exhibition with Superstar Arts, working with young people from The Sand Project to redesign our star dressing room and, for the fourth year, the MET College on making props for the pantomime.

We worked with 29 local Educational Establishments offering bespoke visits to the Museum, access to the collections, opportunities to perform on the stage at the Pavilion and the chance to contribute to the film programme. We also supported 40 local community groups including Worthing Philharmonic Orchestra, Worthing Musical Theatre Company, Worthing Musical Comedy Society, Worthing Archaeological Society, Worthing Veterans and St Barnabas. This resulted in 2,976 local people performing on the Worthing Theatres stages in 2022/23

A key focus for WTM is supporting freelance artists and companies to create new work as part of our *Made in Worthing* project. In 2021/22 we supported seven companies including three local professional companies with R&D space and resources to prepare for touring later in the year. We also showcased the work of nine Sussex based artists as part of the Sussex Contemporary exhibition.

Volunteering opportunities have always been important to WTM both for the incredible support they bring to the organisation and for the support we can give to people in our community who may need to build the confidence to get back into the workforce, may be suffering from loneliness or anxiety or simply want an enjoyable way to support a local charity. We are proud to have 71 valued volunteers who support the front of house, help us distribute our marketing materials across the borough and work with our curators and conservators on the Museum collections.



WTM presented an extensive and varied programme of 3,491 events and activities in 2022/23 including a full range of live events (theatre, comedy, dance, music, circus, family shows), the ever popular pantomime, film & live screenings, exhibitions, talks, free outdoor performances, archaeology walks on the South Downs and a growing programme of workshops and classes.

Live Events: We held 326 ticketed live events in the venues with 84K tickets sold. The programme was excellent including: *Jitney* by Headlong, *Othello* by Frantic Assembly and our first performance from our Associate Company A&E Comedy who performed the hilarious *Witch Hunt*.

The “Good Night Out” programming has had the highest sales particularly Comedy (including Jason Manford, Maisie Adam, Henning Wehn, Tom Allen and Jenny Eclair) and Music (*That’ll be the Day*, *A Country Night in Nashville*, Leo Sayer but also more contemporary bands including Metronomy and Rufus Wainwright).

Dance is always a strong genre for WTM with good sales for Giovanni Pernice, Ballet Boyz and *Silent Lines* by Russell Maliphant Dance Company.

Family focused performances have also sold well particularly *Zog*, *Ministry of Science* and *The Queen’s Knickers* that was programmed as part of the Queen’s Jubilee celebrations.

Pantomime: *Jack & the Beanstalk* was extremely successful with 29,465 tickets sold across the 55 performances achieving 86% of the capacity, only 3% less than the record breaking *Cinderella* in 2019.

Film: attendance has been slower to return to pre pandemic numbers due to the increased home screening opportunities provided by Disney, Apple and Netflix. We held 2,893 film screenings selling 89k tickets with an income of £398,863.

The most successful film titles were: *Elvis*, *Glass Onion*, *Matilda*, *Top Gun Maverick* and *Downton Abbey 2*. The most successful Screen Arts: *Prima Facie* and *ROH Nutcracker*.

WTM’s film programme special events included: Q&A with director Phil Grabsky for the Exhibition On Screen film of *Hopper*, *Back To The Future* with a DeLorean from the movie parked outside for customers to sit in and have their photo taken and successfully bidding to screen *Glass Onion*, one of only 50 cinemas in the country permitted to screen it.

Participation: WTM held 66 workshops / classes during the year attended by 621 people and covering a very broad range of activities: willow weaving, printmaking, garden design, upcycled fashion to dance classes with *Strictly Come Dancing* professionals. We also launched weekend workshops for a more indepth experience with corset making and flint knapping. This has been an important area of growth for WTM providing creative opportunities for the community. In addition we launched professional development classes working in partnership with Lila Dance and Spymonkey and hosted the European Aerial Dance Festival.



Museum: Footfall for the Museum has smashed all previous records with 83k of visitors in 2022/23, a 68% increase on the pre pandemic footfall. WTM's success has bucked the national trend with most museums and galleries 2022/23 footfall still 23% lower than their pre pandemic numbers (data from Museum Association).

We have continued the late opening on Thursdays and opening Sundays both of which are very popular. We are closed to the public on Mondays and Tuesdays which gives the opportunity for bespoke schools visits. The Museum hosted 24 school visits in 2022/23.

The curators have hosted talks in the Museum throughout the year giving access to elements of the collections that are not currently on display. The Autumn Lecture Series and the Archaeology Walks on the South Downs both with our curator James Sainsbury were particularly popular, selling out in just a couple of days.

WTM added 111 artefacts to the Museum Collection including: military medals, Roman pot shards, a letter from King George VI, a medieval brooch, as well as various toys, costume items, and art works. We managed the conservation of 74 items already in the collection.

The Costume Research Centre opened in 2019 with the costume collection being carefully moved into its new location over a period of six months. We supported 83 researchers in 2022/23, providing access to the collection and space for the study of historic clothing.

Exhibitions: The Museum held 17 temporary exhibitions, 9 of which incorporated the Worthing collection. These included: *Kintsugi Women* working with women who have experienced homelessness, the extremely popular exhibition celebrating the history of Worthing, *The Bianca Project*, *Teddy Bears & Friends* and *Invisible People* by Henny Beaumont.





During 2022/23 we saw an increase in attendance levels of 83% from 2021/22, with over 300K people attending an event or visiting the museum. The majority of tickets were sold to households within 3km of Worthing town centre. There was a 68% increase in visitors to the museum which continues to offer free entry.

Findings from the Spring 2023 wave of the Cultural Participation Monitor (CPM) indicate arts and culture audiences' slow return post-pandemic is stalling because of cost of living concerns. However, nationally panto sales returned to pre-pandemic levels. WTM sold 29,465 panto tickets in 2022/23, an increase of 7% on 21/22.

It is worth noting that the CPM research findings from the same period indicate higher levels of late booking, a major shift in booking patterns which WTM also experienced.

WTM engaged a relatively diverse audience (age, ethnicity, ability, cultural and economic background) from Worthing, the borough and from the South East during 2022/23. WTM over-performed in attracting attendees from the middle engaged segments of Audience Spectrum. There is room for growth in developing audiences across the lower engaged segments, as well as two of the most engaged segments; Commuterland Culturebuffs and Experience Seekers.

WTM's social media following increased by 6% during 22/23 and its website received 4,554,395 page views, up by 86% on 2021/22. Email subscribers increased by over 4K during the same period.

WTM was covered widely in the local press, mentioned in the nationals as part of previews for touring shows and Flavia Cacace Mistry and Jimi Mistry made a guest appearance on Loose Women to talk about their show, *Our Life At The Barn*.

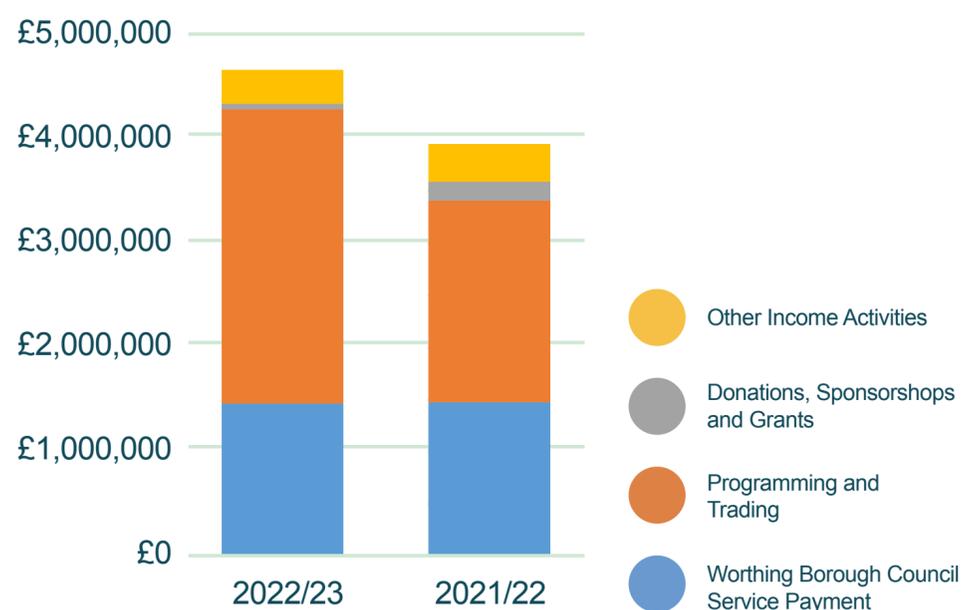
2022/23 was always going to be our most challenging year from a financial perspective without the COVID-19 specific financial support we had received during the previous two years (mainly from the Government, Local Council and Arts Council) to get us through the pandemic and with audience confidence and habits still not fully recovered (particularly with Film). In addition, in line with other organisations UK wide, we faced the added challenges of the cost of living crisis, high inflation and soaring energy costs. Taking all this into consideration, our year end results are much better than we had expected.

Our original forecast for the year was for a trading deficit of £70K before any reserves movements. We finished the year with a smaller deficit of £37K so a £33K improvement. After reserve movements (which include moving our ticket levy income to our Restoration Levy Reserve) we finished with a deficit of £90K compared to an original forecast deficit of £159K - £69K better than expected. After moving £48K to a new reserve for a new website, the final deficit figure for the year was £138K, which is covered by free reserves.

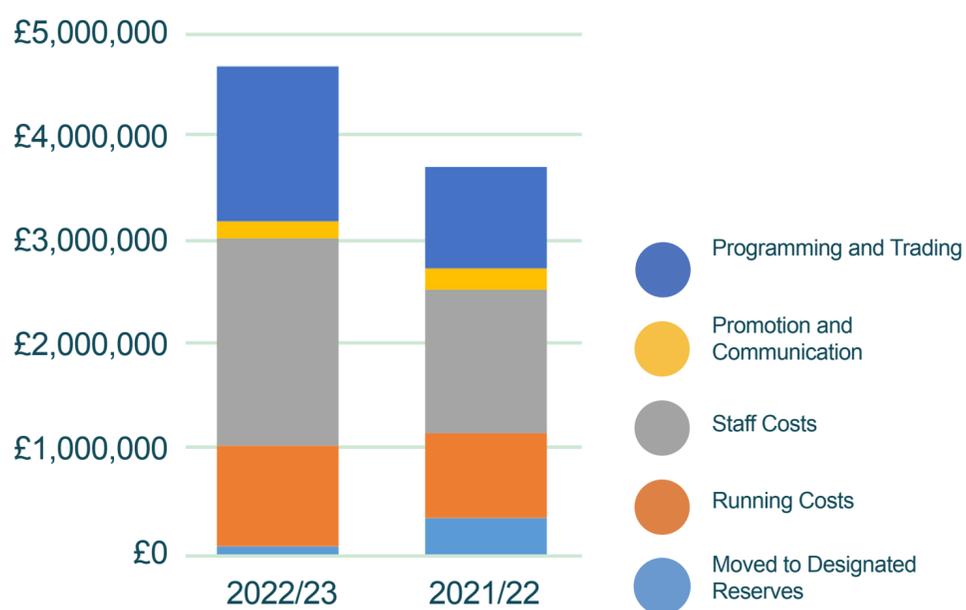
As we move into 2023/24, we are confident that we can finally benefit from a full-strength team and use the momentum from the latter half of 2022/23 to move us forward into a stronger financial position.

The reserves that we have built up in our first 3.5 years have allowed us to be resilient in the current challenging financial climate.

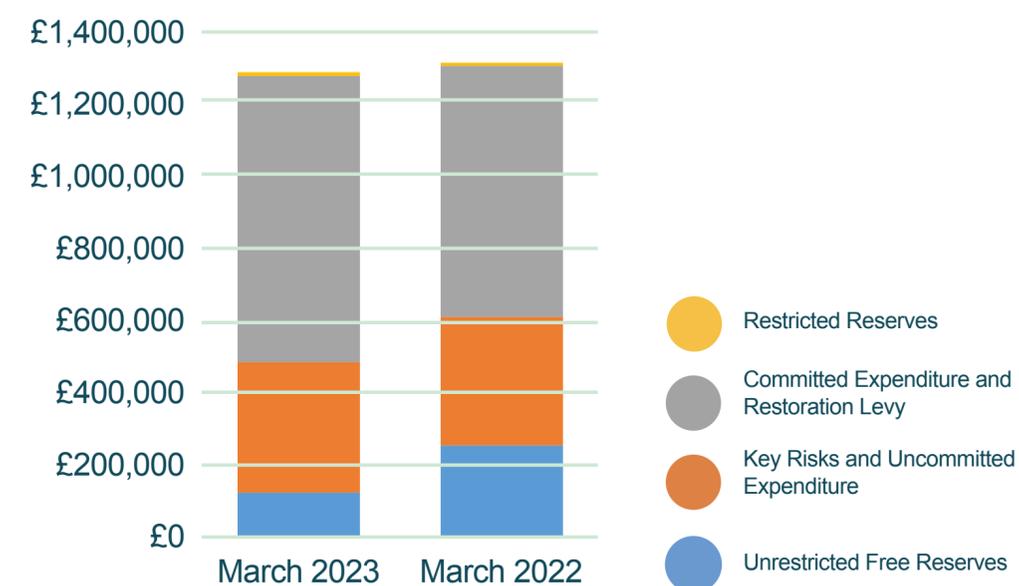
2022/23 Income*



2022/23 Expenditure*



Reserves



*unrestricted



In response to the financial impact of the pandemic and the developing cost of living crisis, 2022/23 was a year in which we started to think seriously and carefully about recovery, change and developing a fundraising strategy that would stabilise and secure the future of WTM.

We are very grateful for the continued support of our donors and members whose generosity enabled us to improve our venues and gave more people in our community the opportunity to enjoy our work and get involved. Our Creative Futures campaign secured £7,699 and supported much-needed improvements, increasing accessibility for our audiences.

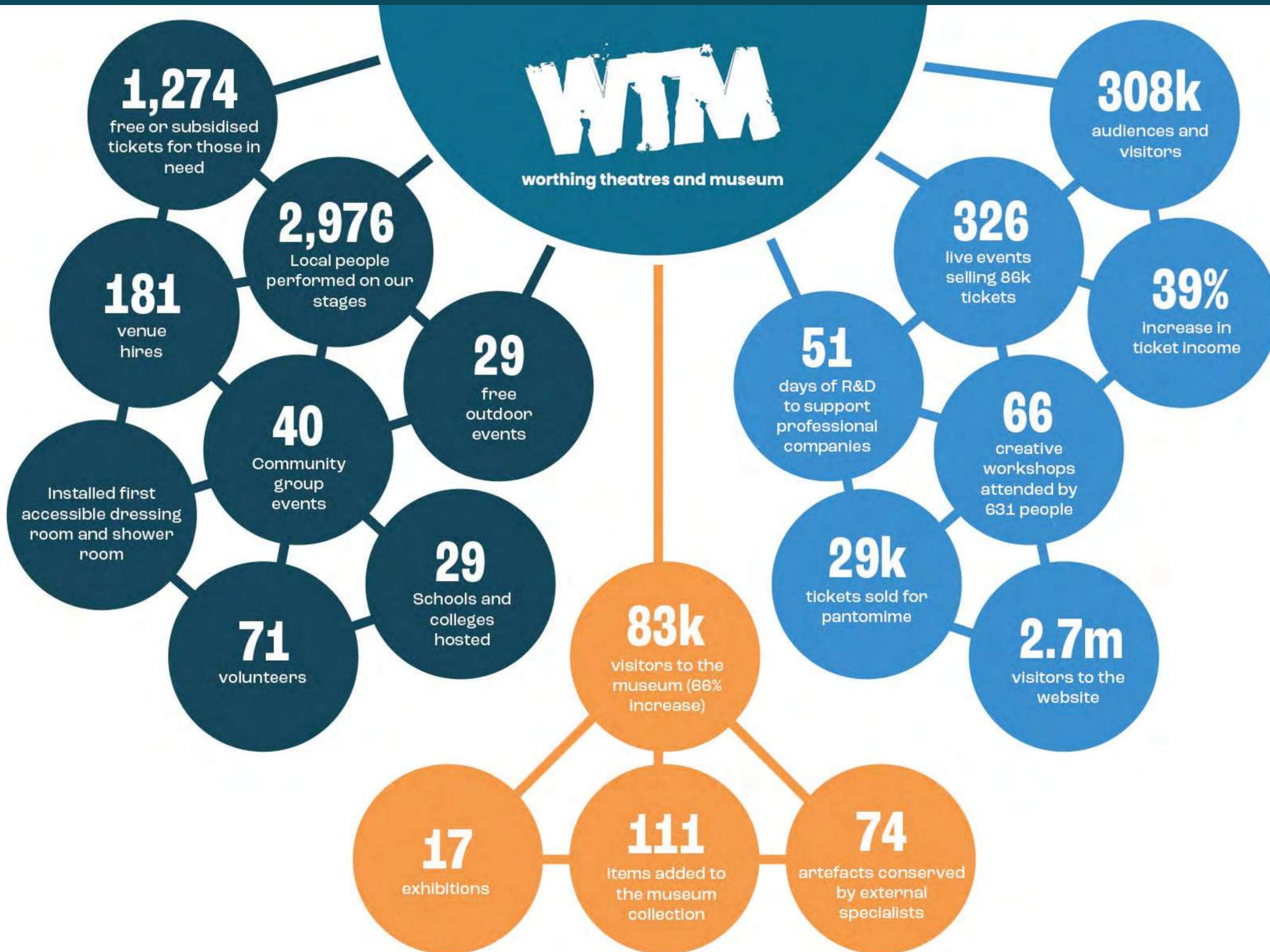
Worthing Museum's multi-million pound capital project, Let the Light In, was our key focus in 2022/23, working closely with our partners, Worthing Borough Council, to develop a robust capital campaign to deliver the necessary funds to restore the Museum to its original heritage, creating a fit for purpose, contemporary space and delivering pioneering engagement and education programmes. This work will continue to be a priority over the next five years.

A successful application, for £2k, to Museum Development South East enabled us to commission the Audience Agency to work with us to review and develop an audience development plan, for both current and potential new audiences. The outcome of this work will inform future audience engagement strategy across WTM and help us strengthen our fundraising.

Successful applications: Warm Spaces (£500); WBC/Worthing Town Centre Initiative for Spin Out 2022 (£6,160); Holiday Activities and Food Programme for Christmas and Easter (£6,191); Royal Pavilion & Museum Trust (£3,000); London Film Festival (£750). We also benefited from £37,839 of free Google Ads during the year.

Sponsorship: We secured £5,800 in sponsorship for our pantomime, Jack and the Beanstalk, from Group 1 Mini, our Headline Sponsor (£4,000); and The Cow Shed/No. 24 (£1,800).

Despite the unstable financial climate and turbulent times in which we live, along with the increased demand to secure funding, there is still lots to be optimistic about and we are confident with the necessary foundations in place we can successfully navigate these challenging times and ensure WTM will thrive long into the future.





The Charity has reinvested in the venues with automatic doors on the Studio, the redesign of the star dressing room at the Pavilion by The Sand Project, digital poster screens at the Pavilion and the £180k funds raised and order finally placed for the new seating for the Pavilion auditorium. These will be installed in July 2023, a long overdue improvement which will resolve our number one customer complaint. This allows us to move the relatively new 300 seats to the Assembly Hall to replace half the stalls seats that were purchased in the 1980s.

We returned the Pavilion main toilets back to separate Ladies and Gents in September 2022 when we no longer needed a one way system. This has been welcomed by our audiences. We have made the foyer toilets gender neutral to make sure we are providing a suitable service to all our customers.

Access and Inclusion

Access for All UK completed the Access Audits for all the buildings and we have begun to make improvements. The Connaught Theatre now has a fully accessible dressing room and shower room with easy access to the stage for wheelchair performers. We have made the front doors to the Studio Theatre automatic to aid access. We are now developing a detailed action plan including a fundraising strategy.

We have increased the number of signed and relaxed performances, held our first captioned pantomime performance and given the staff deaf awareness training. The programme has focused on developing the diversity of events giving the lesser heard sections of our communities a voice and the opportunity to see themselves on stage or film.

WTM is committed to developing an environment action plan with sustainable initiatives that underpin our charitable work. To this end WTM and Worthing Borough Council are working together to become carbon neutral by 2030, one of the biggest projects being the Ground Source Heat Scheme. Worthing Borough Council have also installed solar panels on the Assembly Hall roof. We have replaced 80% of the existing general lighting with environmentally friendly LED bulbs and are determined to change more of the stage lighting to modern LED options as funding becomes available.

We have introduced a programme to monitor the use of heating and electricity which has enabled us to reduce the usage, ensuring there is no unnecessary usage when the venues are dark.

Worthing Borough Council have started the process of replacing the windows in the Connaught which will decrease the amount of heat escaping from the building and mean that the heating in the Connaught can be decreased due to better insulating double glazed windows. This should be in place by autumn 2023

We have installed digital poster screens on the external walls of the Pavilion which reduces the use of paper posters and allows us to scroll through multiple events at each location.

Our Customer Experience Team has introduced reusable plastic cups to help cut down single use plastics across the venues.





WTM has a committed and talented board of Trustees and Trading Subsidiary Directors who are all based in the local area. They bring a wealth of skills and knowledge to the organisation and care passionately about the Worthing community having access to the best arts and heritage.

Board of Trustees

Peter Cadwallader (Chair)

Scott Marshall (Vice Chair)

Dr J D Broomfield - *Resigned 9th Jul 22*

Louise Burgess

Lydia Cassidy - *Appointed 18th May 23*

Andrew Comben

Sarah Fitzgerald - *Appointed 16th May 22/Resigned 15th Feb 23*

Julie Kapsalis

Cepta Kelly

Alison Lapper, MBE - *Appointed 20th Apr 22/Resigned 8th Jun 23*

Yemisi Mokuolu - *Appointed 5th Jun 23*

Simon Parsonage

Helen Persson Swain

Andy Sparsis - *Appointed 19th May 23*

Trading Subsidiary Directors

Andy Sparsis (Chair)

Peter Cadwallader

Polly Child - *Appointed 17th Apr 23*

Executive Team

Amanda O'Reilly (CEO & Creative Director)

Jill Stewart (Executive Director/Company Secretary)

Senior Management Team

Gerry Connolly (Head of Museum & Exhibitions)

Gemma Curtis (Head of Programming)

Bernard Dodds (Head of Finance)

Jackie Friend (Head of Marketing & Audience Development) - *appointed Mar 23*

Pamela Kent (Head of Marketing and Development) - *left Sep 22*

Rachel Madden-Ward (Head of Customer Experience)

Matt Pike (Head of Technical, Production and Buildings)

Thank you:

Worthing Borough Council who continued to support WTM Worthing Borough Council for their continued financial support and partnership working.

WTM members.

Group 1 Mini

The Cow Shed/No. 24

Nationwide

Arts Council England, National Lottery Heritage Fund, London Film Festival, Clothworkers' Foundation, Worthing Town Centre Initiative, Time for Worthing, Royal Pavilion & Museum Trust and Google.

