



Key Decision [~~Yes~~/No]

Ward(s) Affected:
Cabinet Portfolio: N/A

Worthing Theatres and Museum - Annual Review

Report by the Director for the Economy

Executive Summary

1. Purpose

- 1.1. The purpose of this report is to present the Worthing Theatres and Museum Trust Annual Review 2021/22.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1. That the Sub-Committee acknowledge and welcome the achievements of Worthing Theatres and Museum over the year;
- 2.2. That the Sub-Committee refer the report and the accompanying Annual Report to the Joint Overview & Scrutiny Committee for noting.

3. Context

- 3.1. Members of the Sub-Committee will recall that Worthing Theatres & Museum (WTM) was established as an independent charitable trust at the beginning of November 2019 and less than 5 months after it was formed, in March 2020, the Covid-19 Pandemic meant that each of the venues closed and along with it, the opportunity to raise income through its core businesses of shows, events and exhibitions.
- 3.2. 2021/22 began with the venues still partially closed but a process of

rebuilding over the summer as restrictions began to be lifted; followed by a full programme of events without social distancing from October 2021.

- 3.3. The 2021/22 Annual Report is frank in its assessment that without the Borough Council's financial support; the Government's Cultural Recovery Fund; and Job Retention Scheme, it would not have been able to survive financially. Looking forward, Peter Cadwallader, Chair of the Trust, expects 2022/23 to be the most challenging year since the formation of the charity with volatile economic conditions and the absence of the additional grant funding. Peter does however, highlight the resilience that the Trust has developed and remains confident that this will continue.
- 3.4. Over the course of the year, WTM secured £1.3m in ticket income from 273 live events and 1,688 film screenings. The annual pantomime for which Worthing has a huge and loyal following generated 27,504 ticket sales across 56 performances.
- 3.5. Once restrictions were lifted, the Museum and Art Gallery were opened on Thursday evenings and on Sundays; an important commitment that until this point had not been possible. The Annual report highlights the success of this initiative and how positively visitors have responded.
- 3.6. The Creative Programme is central to the Trust's commitment to delivering an improved cultural offer for Worthing. Particular highlights over the year included the international premier of Proteus Theatre's 'The Bloody Chamber' and Rhum and Clay's 'War of the World'. Live performers attracting high audience numbers included Sarah Millican, Jimmy Carr, Jo Whiley and Katherine Ryan.
- 3.7. WTM undertook a significant programme of community engagement during the Pandemic with considerable success. During 2021/22 18 free outdoor shows as part of 'Spin Out 21' attended by more than 3,000 people. The Trust sponsored a series of new works from local artists and commissioned Kapow Dance Company to work with local group Superstar Arts to develop a performance piece reflecting on the impact of the Pandemic.
- 3.8. To assist in the wider recovery, The Trust provided free meeting space to a series of locally based charities and supported a number of local companies by providing research and development space.
- 3.9. Looking forward to next year's Annual Report, the Trust has been working closely with the Council team this year to refine a series of Key Performance Indicators (KPI's) that reflect the key priorities set out in the Contract.
- 3.10. Headline KPI's include income related to audience figures; repeat bookings; Museum footfall; and the number of local community groups

and individuals working in partnership with WTM.

- 3.11. KPI's have also been developed to examine the geographical spread and diversity of audiences and participants; the impact of volunteers; community based performances; and WTM's support for people on low incomes through low-cost and sponsored ticketing initiatives.

4. Financial Implications

- 4.1. The Council's contract payments are set out in the contract and the payment to the Trust for 2022/23 is £1,466,290. This is due to reduce by £42,560 to £1,423,730 in 2023/24.
- 4.2. Contained within the contract is a clause governing how any profits made by the Trust will be treated. The contract allows for the Trust to retain the first £750,000 of any accumulated profits made in a risk reserve to provide the Trust with financial stability in the longer term. At the end of the contract 50% of this reserve will be returned to the Council.
- 4.3. Elsewhere on the agenda is a report concerning the future pension arrangements for the Trusts.

5. Legal Implications

- 5.1. The Council entered into a Management and Operation Agreement with WTM on 19th September 2019. WTM is obliged to provide an annual report to update Members under the terms of that Agreement.
- 5.2. Under Section 111 of the Local Government Act 1972, the Council has the power to do anything that is calculated to facilitate, or which is conducive or incidental to, the discharge of any of their functions.
- 5.3. Section 3(1) of the Local Government Act 1999 (LGA 1999) contains a general duty on a best value authority to make arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the way in which its functions are exercised, having regard to a combination of economy, efficiency and effectiveness.
- 5.4. s1 of the Localism Act 2011 empowers the Council to do anything an individual can do apart from that which is specifically prohibited by pre-existing legislation.
- 5.5. At clause 2.5 of the Scheme of Delegations the Director for the Economy has a delegated authority to manage the relationship between Worthing Borough Council and Worthing Theatres and Museum.

Background Papers

None.

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Sustainability & Risk Assessment

1. Economic

Culture is of vital significance to our local economy, employing a growing number of people across a range of skilled activities. A vibrant cultural offer is a significant consideration for businesses seeking to attract new employees and helps to support our visitor economy.

2. Social

The contractual relationship with the Trust is predicated on a formal expectation of extending the scope and range of work with our local communities. This includes working with our schools and colleges to support the development of new skills valued by the creative sector.

2.1. Equality Issues

The Council's contract with WTM includes a formal commitment to inclusive programming which includes youth theatre; signed and audio described screenings and autism and dementia friendly screenings.

2.2. Community Safety Issues

As is the case with any venue offering public performance and participative programming, careful attention is paid to ensuring that safeguarding remains a priority and that the safety of customers/participants is paramount.

2.3. Human Rights Issues

Matter considered and none identified.

3. Environmental

The Trust is expected to embody a commitment to sustainable procurement and to pay close attention to minimising waste and its use of resources.

4. Governance

WTM is a charitable company limited by guarantee.

WTM

worthing theatres and museum

**Annual
Review**

2021/2022





Vision

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



Mission

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

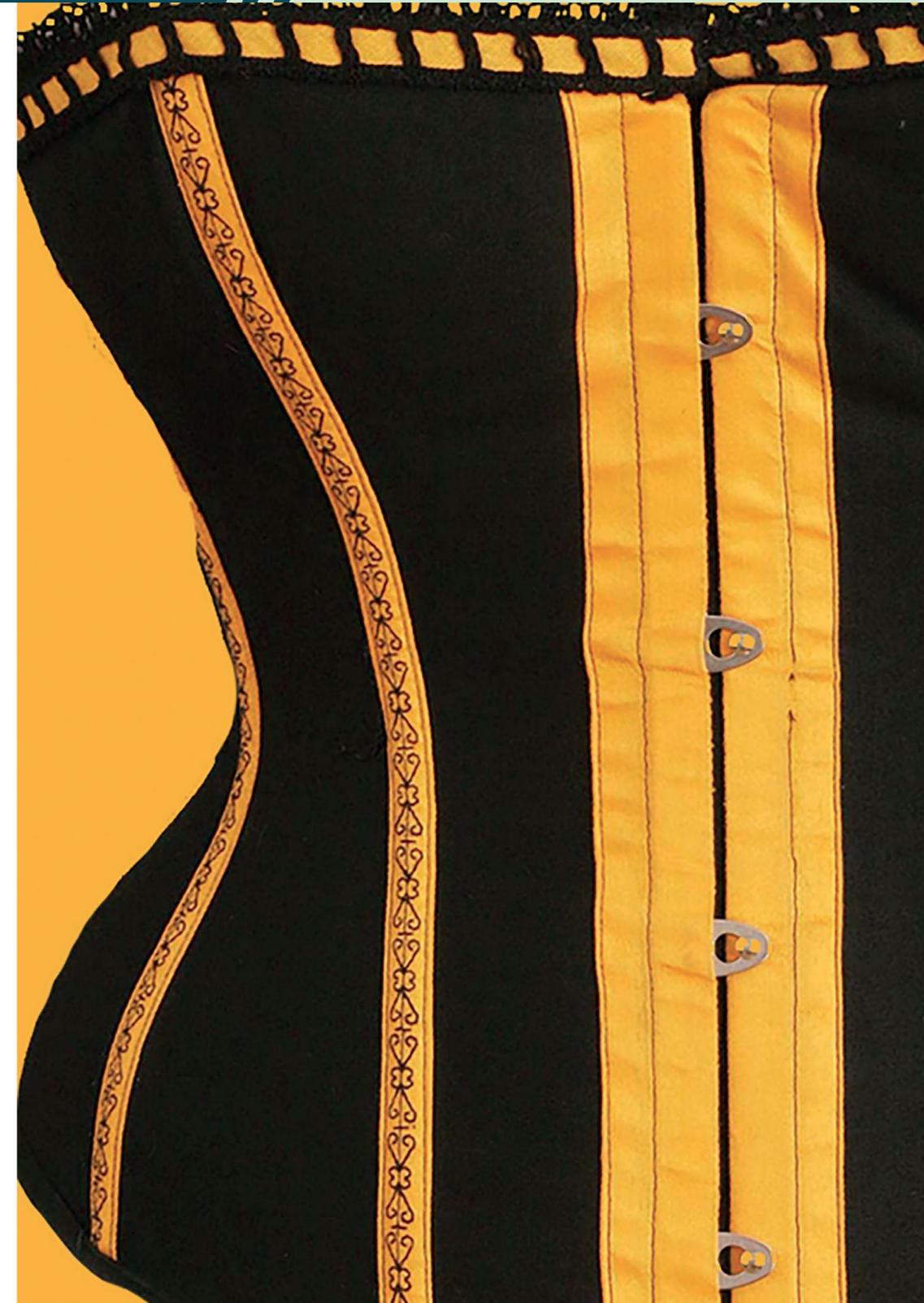
- Delivering a rich and diverse year-round programme of cultural activity
- Creating shared experiences that inspire, challenge, educate and entertain
- Reaching out into communities, providing accessible pathways to experience creativity
- Developing opportunities and partnerships with artists and companies
- Championing inclusion, supporting the creation and presentation of work that celebrates diversity
- Creating aspirational opportunities for young people within the cultural industries



Values

In everything we do we will:

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





Who We Are

Worthing Theatres and Museum (WTM) is a unique arts and heritage charity with a large portfolio of distinct venues: Worthing Museum and Art Gallery (visitors 50K per annum), Connaught Theatre (520 seats), Connaught Studio (164 seats), Pavilion Theatre (750 seats), Pavilion Atrium (creative space with option for 200 seats) and Assembly Hall (950 seats), all positioned within the heart of the borough town of Worthing in West Sussex.

WTM offers an inspiring and supportive workplace that promotes unity and diversity providing an environment where 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. WTM opposes all forms of discrimination.

What We Do

WTM is an ambitious organisation that presents a vibrant, diverse and entertaining programme of performances (theatre, contemporary circus, dance, comedy, music, family theatre, talks), events, film, exhibitions and workshops. We manage a museum collection of national significance (costume, archaeology, fine art, toys), present an annual outdoor summer festival and collaborate with leading UK producing and touring companies. We engage with our local communities through a range of projects, partnerships and venue hires, using art and culture to create opportunities for the benefit of the wider community. WTM engaged with 400,000 people per year pre-pandemic.

Our annual turnover, before the pandemic, was approximately £5.8 million. WTM receives an annual service payment from Worthing Borough Council (WBC) for the management and development of its cultural assets. Income is earned through ticket sales, fundraising and other revenue streams which include a contribution from our secondary trading activities, such as bars & kiosks (through our wholly owned Trading Subsidiary Company).

Peter Cadwallader

Chair

2021/22 was a challenging year for WTM that began with the venues closed due to the pandemic, followed by a summer of slowly rebuilding as restrictions lifted then a full programme of events without social distancing from October to the end of the financial year.

Given the challenges we have faced, I am extremely proud of the Executive Team, Staff and Trustees who have worked tirelessly to achieve the exceptional cultural offer, a dramatic increase in community engagement and positive financial results.

The team focused on opening the doors as soon as restrictions eased, maximised all opportunities for COVID-19 funding and grants, made cost savings where possible and delivered a stronger than expected live events programme, including the very successful pantomime.

It would simply not be possible to continue our work and reach so many without the support of Worthing Borough Council who continue to prioritise culture and the positive effect it has on the people of Worthing. We are also grateful for the support of Arts Council England and the Department of Culture, Media and Sport. We are immensely grateful for the support of our generous members, local business sponsors and all the donations we receive from our audiences. This support enables us to continue to deliver our vision even during the most difficult times.

We expect 2022/23 to be the most challenging year since the formation of the charity on 1st November 2019 with the aftermath of the last two years of the pandemic and the volatile economic climate continuing to affect sales. However, with strong reserves, a commitment to our communities and a proactive, talented and experienced team we are confident we can continue to show resilience.





Amanda O'Reilly

Creative Director & CEO

Jill Stewart

Executive Director (Company Secretary)

WTM opened the venues at each permitted stage of the government roadmap, putting safety first with a detailed COVID-19 Risk Assessment and strict social distancing when required. We launched our new website in April 2021 which attracted 3.3 million visitors in this year, despite only 5 months of full activity for WTM. We utilised this traffic to drive online bookings, share engaging behind-the-scenes content and give crucial updates on our operation status.

In April 2021 all our buildings were closed to the public with the team working hard to prepare to reopen in mid-May on reduced socially distanced seating plans and with limited Museum opening hours. By late June we increased the programme of events with a range of theatre, family shows, comedy and circus and the Museum opened four days a week, including late opening on Thursday evenings and Sunday openings which was a key development to make the Museum more accessible, particularly for people who work 9am - 5pm weekdays. By October we had fully reopened all venues, with a full programme of events, films and activities that has continued to date. By Spring 2022 the Museum had its fullest programme of activities and was exceeding pre-pandemic footfall.

This year presented many challenges, however, we were determined to:

Enable everyone to access arts and heritage by creating shared experiences that entertain, educate and inspire.

Throughout the pandemic, we maintained vital relationships with artists, partners and companies, working flexibly to successfully reschedule the majority of the work that was programmed pre-pandemic whilst supporting the creation and presentation of new work.

The financial outturn for this year was positive including designating £378K to reserves for essential improvements and equipment replacement as we continue to build the long term financial resilience of the charity.

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Without the financial support of WBC, Arts Council England, the Government's Culture Recovery Fund and Job Retention Scheme, WTM would not have been able to survive this year. We have emerged from the pandemic a more creative, resilient and efficient organisation that is much more connected to the people of Worthing.

Looking Forward

Following the Access Audit completed in March 2022 we are now developing an action plan to improve access across our venues and the organisation over the next two years including the creation of more space for customers who are wheelchair users and an accessible backstage dressing room and bathroom.

We have applied for NPO (National Portfolio Organisation) status with Arts Council England which, if successful, would give WTM additional funding for three years specifically to increase our work with young people, continue our summer programme of free outdoor performances, work in partnership with leading cultural providers, expand our programming to focus on the lesser heard voices in our community and digitalise parts of the Museum collection to further increase access.

We are working in partnership with WBC to secure funding for the redevelopment of the Museum which would open up 80% of the building, allow the addition of a coffee shop and the redisplaying of the collections.

Although we expect 2022/23 to be a very challenging year we are excited to be moving these projects forward.





273

live events
selling
73k tickets

1,688

film screenings
selling 42k
tickets

27,504

panto tickets sold
across the 56
performances

13

local
schools
engaged

300

free panto tickets
for families using
the food bank

£1.3m

Total
ticket
income

228

Sussex Artists
showcased in the
Open21

49,918

visitors welcomed at
Worthing Museum
and Art Gallery

9

community
groups given free
space

87

homeless people
had Christmas lunch
in the Pavilion

159

photos of Worthing
heroes exhibited
as part of the We
Are Worthing outdoor
gallery

7

kickstarters now
employed full time in
the cultural
industries

41

active Worthing
Theatres and
Museum
volunteers

18

free outdoor
events as part of
Spin Out 21

7,700

individual donations
received from our
audiences online
thank you

WTM was committed to opening the venues at every point the government restrictions allowed with a creative programme of live events and films from mid-May 2021. The live programme included the international premier of Proteus Theatre's *The Bloody Chamber*, Rhum & Clay's *War of the Worlds* as part of the Brighton Festival, and Hikapee's *The Hidden People* which was created and premiered in Worthing. Happily schools began to rebook making up a third of the sales for *Jekyll & Hyde* by Blackeyed Theatre.

Comedy, talks and music were particularly strong sellers with Sarah Millican, Laura Lexx, Jimmy Carr, John Lydon, Whitney, Josh Widdicombe, Ben Fogle, Henning Wehn, *That'll Be the Day*, Rob Brydon, Suggs, Dick & Angel, *Fascinating Aida*, Jason Fox, Jo Whiley and Katherine Ryan all close to sold out.

Pantomime was back with *Beauty & the Beast* selling just 12% less than the record-breaking *Cinderella* in 2019. Our rigorous safety measures, including strict isolation of the cast and crew, meant we were one of the few venues in the country to have no cancelled shows and a full cast performing for the entire run.

Film audiences were slightly slower to return than our live audiences but James Bond *No Time to Die* in September, was a huge hit selling £43k of tickets.



WTM has significantly increased the workshops for children, families and adults, giving opportunities for local people to get practically involved in creative classes.

The opening exhibitions at the Museum were stunning and all had a local theme: *In Their Shoes* (photography / soundscape celebrating the stories of 14 people in Worthing Borough including nurses, performers, children and refuse collectors); Anthony Bennett (local abstract painter); and Hercule Van Wolfwinkle's *Rubbish Pet Portraits* supported his fundraising of over £100K for Turning Tides, the local homeless charity.

Over the winter months we were delighted to welcome the return of the biennial WTM OPEN to the Museum, which attracted 228 artists from across East and West Sussex who submitted nearly 600 pieces of work to be displayed for the public.

The Museum had a remarkable footfall with 49,918 visitors bucking the national trend.



The COVID-19 Pandemic has been exceptionally challenging for WTM but one positive outcome was the increase in outreach work that has dramatically increased our social impact. We now work with multiple community partners, providing creative opportunities for many different sections of people in Worthing and the surrounding area, balancing our business need for financial resilience with an offer which includes accessible, free and low cost events for all.

In May 2021 we co-commissioned Vamos Theatre Company to create *Love Through Double Glazing*, performed in the gardens of care homes. This was a beautiful and moving project that created an interactive and sensory experience for the residents.

We Are Worthing celebrated the unsung heroes in the local community, nominated by their friends and family. This culminated in the installation of 159 photos of Worthing people displayed in the windows of the Pavilion Theatre.

During the summer WTM held 18 free outdoor shows as part of *Spin Out 21*, building on the circus and street arts programming that has been so successful over the last five years. Performances included Joseph Toonga's *Born to Protest* (including an open conversation about being a black man in the UK), Ockham Razor's *Together*, Kapow's *Grow* (environmental theme), *Strong Enough*, Dizzy O'Dare's *Falconry Dismay* and Inverted Theatre's *Box*.

These events were attended by over 3,200 people and brought vibrancy back to the town centre. \

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Kapow Dance Company worked with local youth group Superstar Arts developing a performance about the struggle that they and their families faced with changes to their daily lives and routines during the COVID-19 pandemic. The show was performed in the Museum and made into a **wonderful film**.



Our summer programme included a series of nine Archaeological Walks including Cissbury Ring and Highdown Hill which were extremely popular and connected with people who were still not confident to attend indoor talks.

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.

In the autumn we commissioned a videographer to work with several of our local amateur theatre and music groups, (Worthing Philharmonic Orchestra, Worthing Musical Comedy Society and Worthing Musical Theatre Company) to provide them with social media content to support their relaunch and the rebuilding of their memberships and audiences.

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We also provided free meeting spaces for nine community groups (Always Possible, One Stop Party Shop, Creative Waves, Dementia Friends, Love Your Hospital, Rachel Sullivan, West Sussex Mind, Worthing Food Foundation and Worthing Storytellers) to hold their first meeting after lockdown, offering a large, safe, sanitised space.

Eleven local companies worked with WTM and Paul Holman Associates to sponsor free tickets to the pantomime for ninety families who were struggling financially. We worked closely with the Worthing Food Foundation, Storm Ministries and Turning Tides to make sure local people with the greatest need could attend.

We opened the Pavilion Atrium on Christmas Day for the first time in order to support the Food Foundation to provide Christmas lunch for 87 homeless people.

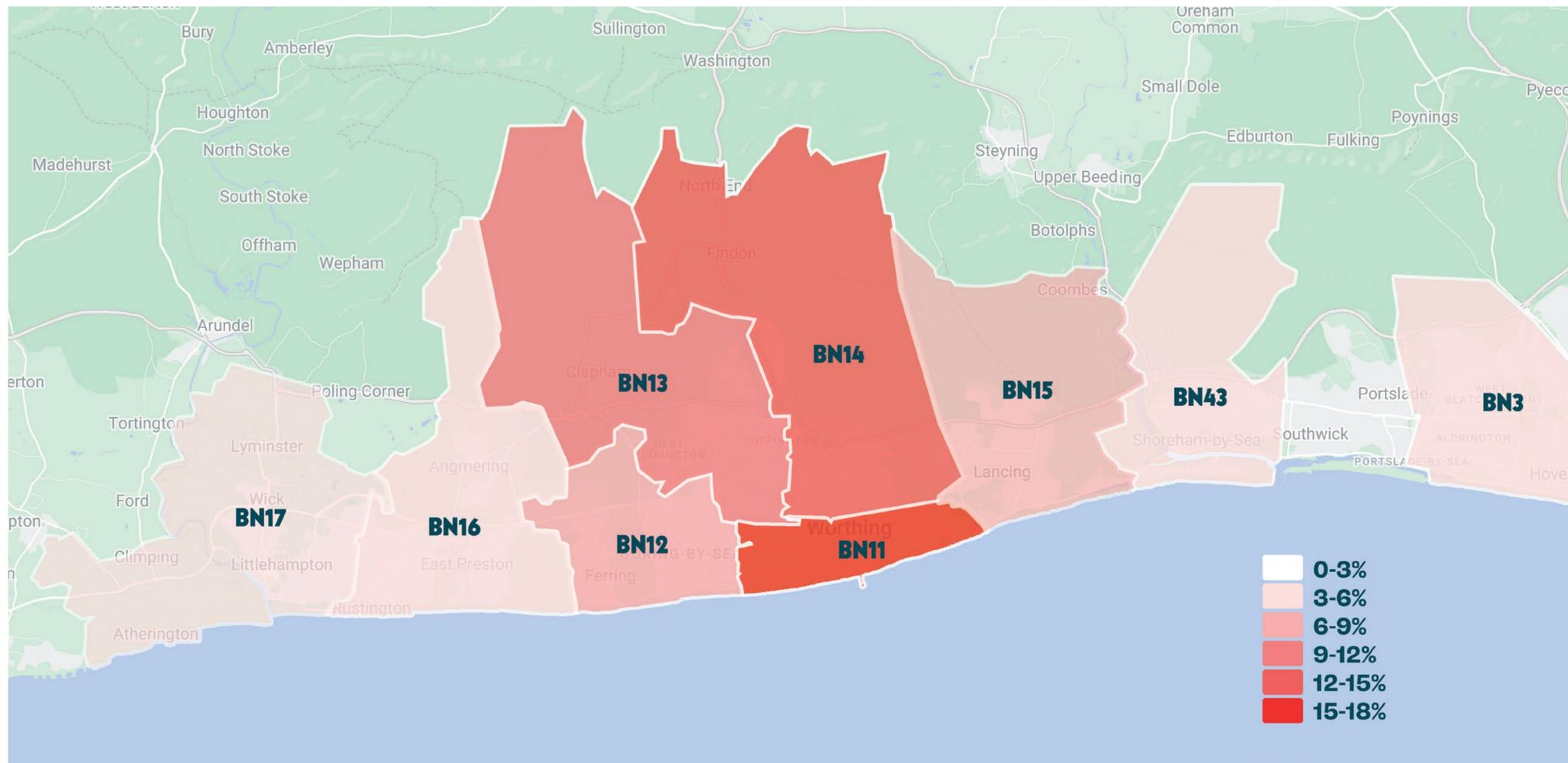
During 2021/22 we engaged with 13 schools and 1,447 pupils as well as supporting 7 young people into employment in the cultural industries through the government Kickstart Scheme.

Volunteering opportunities have always been important to WTM and we worked to stay connected to our Volunteers during the lockdown with our staff organising online socials and video quiz nights. Volunteering is an important social activity and can enable people to build the confidence needed to start or return to work. We are proud to have supported 32 regular Front of House and 9 Museum volunteers, with up to 30 more on an ad-hoc basis.



WTM has focused on delivering a service that engages our audiences, both existing and potential by collecting relevant data about our community to inform our planning and programming. During 2021/22 we had 116k tickets sold, with the majority of our audiences coming from the local area and 50% of our bookers living within a 3km radius of the Connaught Theatre. We reached 48,202 followers across all our social media channels and shared our new website content across an ever wider geographical area, with 3.3million page views this year.

Postcode Map with percentage of 21/22 bookings



The challenges of the pandemic from 20/21 continued into 21/22. Restrictions were lifted in July 2021, so we were able to open our doors earlier than anticipated. As a result of this and a successful pantomime season, we finished the year with £268K more income than budget.

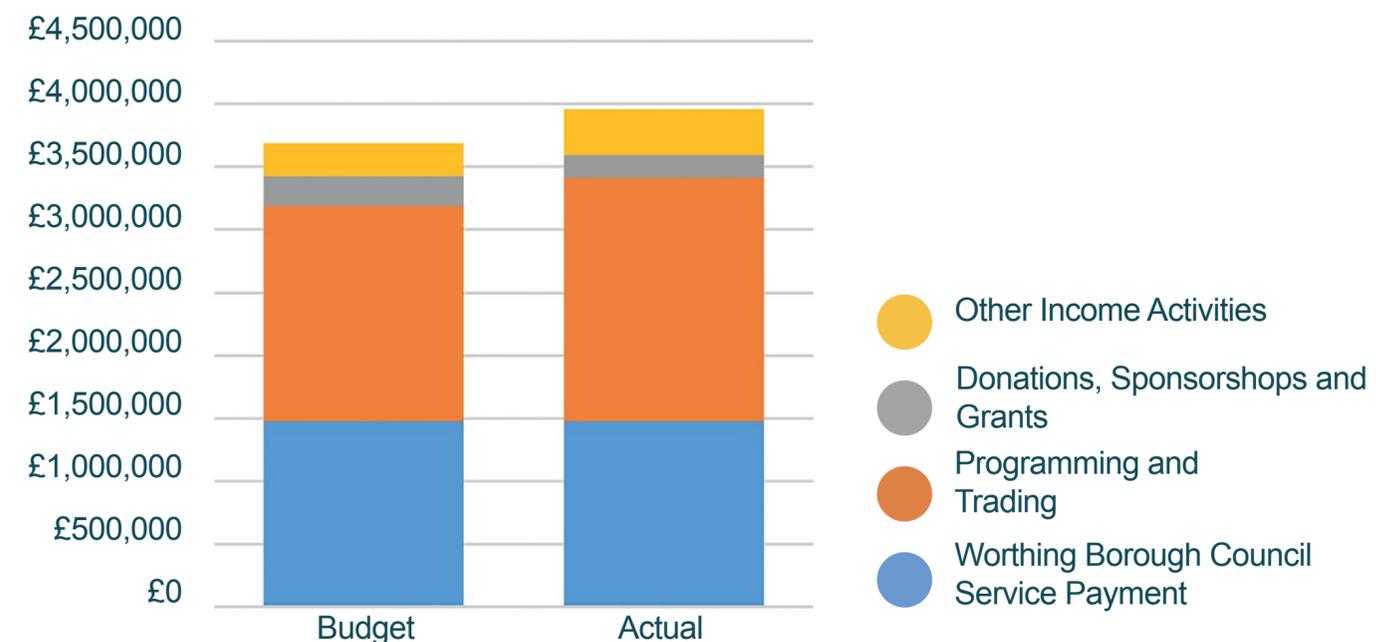
We continued to maximise the benefit of the Job Retention (Furlough) Scheme until September 2021 and also continued to receive Local Authority Hospitality Grants.

In addition to the unrestricted income and expenditure shown, we received and spent Arts Council England (ACE) restricted grants from their Culture Recovery Funds of £196K. These funds allowed us to reopen our venues safely, improve accessibility and increase audience awareness. We also received an ACE grant to support our summer Spin Out programme of £29K.

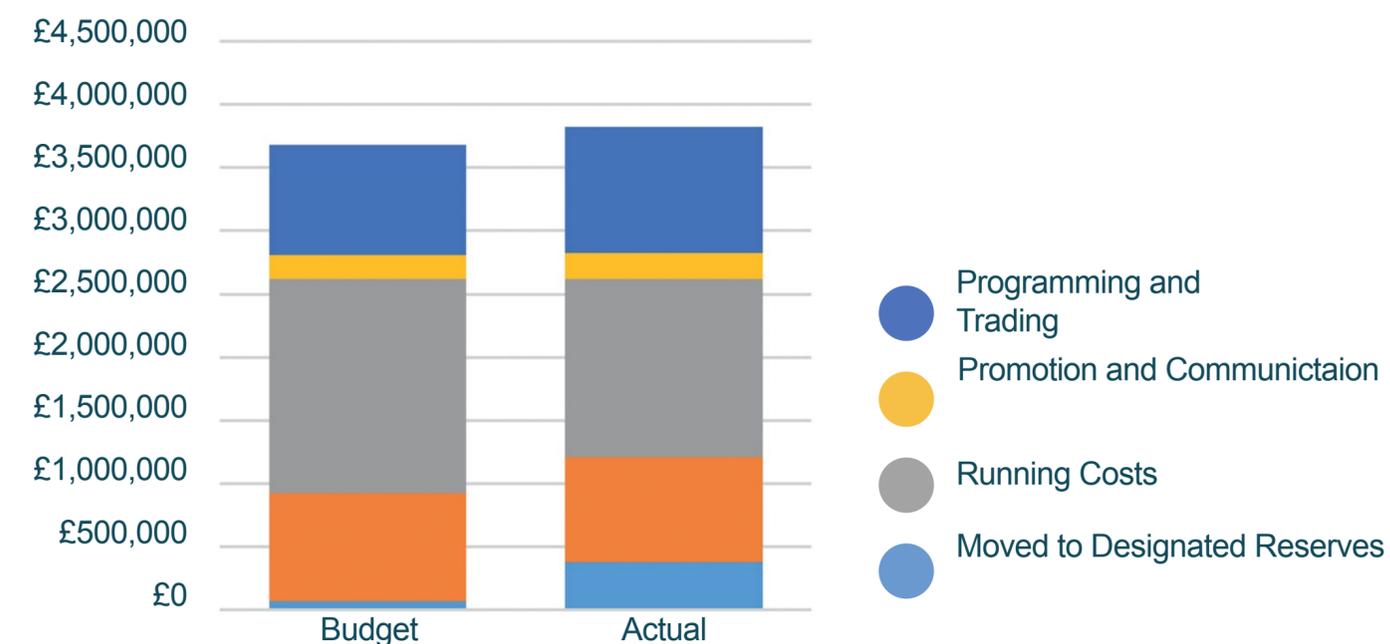
At the end of the financial year, we were able to move £379K to designated reserves and leave a surplus of £148K. This left us with a balance of designated reserves at the year end of £1,044K and a balance of free reserves of £263K.

These reserves will be crucial moving into 2022/23 when we will no longer benefit from pandemic related financial support.

2021/22 Unrestricted Income



2021/22 Unrestricted Expenditure



Thanks to the tireless efforts of the team and the unwavering support of our audiences, donors, members and partners, WTM succeeded and found alternative ways to bring the arts and heritage to our community despite ongoing challenges.

We have once again been overwhelmed by the generosity of our audiences over the past twelve months. We have received support in many ways, including patrons' donations and gift aid, and supporters joining our membership scheme.

We were thrilled to receive support from the government's Culture Recovery Fund rounds 2 & 3. We were also grateful for receiving a grant from Arts Council England towards the annual outdoor season Spin Out.

Our Museum benefitted from grants from the Institute of Conservations and also the Royal Pavilion Innovate to Generate Fund.

We would also like to thank local business partners and individuals who sponsored our initiative to provide tickets for our pantomime to allow low-income families to attend the show. In addition, we secured contributions from WBC and Worthing Town Centre Initiative for Spin Out. Finally, we utilised the contribution received from Worthing Borough Council in 2020/21 in support of the production of *Love Through Double Glazing* which was performed in four local care homes.





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)
Cepta Kelly
Louise Burgess
Andrew Comben
Simon Parsonage
Helen Persson-Swain
Julie Kapsalis
Dr James Broomfield (resigned 9th July 2022)
Tim Hague (resigned 11th January 2022)
Sarah Fitzgerald (Appointed 16th May 2022)
Alison Lapper MBE (Appointed 20th April 2022)

Trading Subsidiary Directors

Andy Sparsis (Chair)
Peter Cadwallader
Tim Hague (resigned 11th January 2022)

Executive Team

Amanda O'Reilly - CEO & Creative Director
Jill Stewart - Executive Director (Company Secretary)

Senior Management Team

Rachel Ward - Head of Customer Experience
Gerry Connolly - Head of Museum and Exhibitions
Gemma Curtis - Head of Programming
Bernard Dodds - Head of Finance
Matthew Pike - Head of Technical, Buildings and Production
Pamela Kent - Head of Marketing and Development

Thank you:

Worthing Borough Council who continued to support WTM throughout the pandemic

The 7,700 people who made an individual donation this year

Our local business sponsors:

Caffyns Audi, Roffey Homes, The Fish Factory, Port Hotel Eastbourne Ltd, Shoreham Port Authority, Nationwide, Lancing College Preparatory School, Jacobs Steel, South Downs Education Trust, Heavy Gretel and Egalite Care, Carpenter Box, Worthing Scouts and Worthing Gin.

Arts Council England, National Lottery Heritage Fund, British Film Institute, Clothworkers' Foundation, Theatres Trust, Worthing Town Centre Initiative, Time for Worthing, Google