

Leeds
Heritage
Theatres



Trustee Information Pack

Photo: John Wilkie



Welcome

Thank you for your interest in becoming a Trustee at Leeds Heritage Theatres.



Since 1865, we have been bringing the people of Leeds together in our three iconic venues, City Varieties Music Hall, Leeds Grand Theatre and Hyde Park Picture House, to celebrate the work of local, national and international artists. We work with a huge array of leading artists from a cross-section of artistic disciplines from the worlds of theatre, opera, dance, film, music, comedy and creative learning. Our venues play a vital role in enriching the cultural landscape of Leeds and its surrounding areas, contributing artistically, educationally, and economically.



We have a Board of 12 Trustees who help steer our organisation towards a sustainable future by adopting sound, ethical, and legal governance and financial management policies, as well as by making sure the Charity has adequate resources to advance its mission and vision. As custodians of the charity's vision, Trustees are responsible for ensuring that we remain focused on our objectives, operate transparently, and use our resources effectively. They provide both challenge and support to the CEO and senior leadership team, fostering a culture of innovation and accountability.

The Board is also instrumental in broadening and strengthening our reach and networks, using their connections to unlock new opportunities and partnerships. This commitment and oversight helps to ensure the charity's resilience and relevance both in our city and nationally.

We hope this information pack provides you with the information you need but if you have further questions, please do contact us for an informal conversation.

We look forward to hearing from you.

Alan Gay OBE
Chair, Board of Trustees
chair@leedsheritagetheatres.com

Vicky Cheetham
Chief Executive Officer
vicky.cheetham@leedsheritagetheatres.com



CITY VARIETIES
MUSIC HALL · LEEDS

The **GRAND**
Theatre & Opera House Leeds



Leeds Heritage Theatres; where creativity thrives, and stories unfold

Our Purpose Where creativity thrives, and stories unfold.		
Our Mission <p>We bring people together through vibrant, creative experiences that cross artforms, spark ideas and celebrate shared stories. Across our historic venues, we welcome artists and communities to create, collaborate and discover new possibilities.</p> <p>At our core is a commitment to developing skills, widening access and a sustainable future. With openness, care and curiosity, we champion work that is inclusive, adventurous, and rooted in the cultural heartbeat of Leeds. Our programmes resonate locally, across the UK and around the world.</p>	Our Vision <p>Leeds Heritage Theatres will be a hub of creativity, celebrating the work of local, national and international artists and the human connection of arts and culture.</p> <p>Our work will be underpinned by excellence, skill, inclusivity, collaboration, learning and generosity, and will be visible at home in Leeds but also regionally, nationally and virtually. Our physical and digital sites will be places of congregation, engagement, excitement and welcome. We will always be future-facing and outwards-facing, whilst recognising our heritage and our history.</p>	Our Values <p>Creativity We push boundaries, embrace imagination, and spark new ideas to inspire and transform every aspect of our work.</p> <p>Integrity We act with honesty and accountability. We make ethical decisions, maintain transparency, and build trust in every action and interaction.</p> <p>Inclusivity We remove barriers and create spaces where all voices are heard, valued, and empowered to create, lead and belong.</p> <p>Passion We have energy, commitment, and a deep love for the arts. It's the driving force behind all our work, igniting creativity and inspiring action.</p>

Leeds Heritage Theatres (LHT) manages three unique historic venues in the city of Leeds and delivers a world-class cultural programme that is diverse and wide-ranging.

Leeds Grand Theatre hosts touring productions from major West End and international producers including large-scale musicals, hit plays, stand-up comedians and one-off concerts. The venue is home to Opera North who are resident at the theatre for three seasons a year. The Grand is also home to Northern Ballet who present two or three seasons a year including a hugely successful annual festive ballet.

Established in 1865 as a room above a pub, City Varieties Music Hall is Leeds' hidden gem – and the Guinness World Record holder for the nation's longest running music hall. Today, the venue is regarded as one of the UK's finest venues for live comedy, music, variety, and is where LHT produces Leeds' favourite Rock 'n' Roll Panto.

Recently re-opened (June 2023) after a major restoration, the Picture House shows a range of cultural cinema spanning family-friendly films, documentaries, classic movies, and new releases.

Learning & Engagement

Alongside performance and film, Leeds Heritage Theatres delivers an ambitious and far-reaching Learning & Engagement programme, providing opportunities for thousands of people to be involved each year. Activities include school partnerships, work experience weeks, after school clubs, tours, animation workshops, technical skills training with Leeds City College, Leeds Grand Youth Theatre, and the vocational Leeds Actors in Training programme.



“I got creative and independent. It was a different experience and something I haven’t done before.”

Grand Academy Participant

“Thanks to this week... I have become more confident with applying for a job and I know how to go to an interview.”

Work Experience Student



Photo: Kerry Maule

April 2024 – March 2025

Learning & Engagement

ENGAGEMENT

Over the last year, we have made **4,610** engagements with young people



ATTENDANCE

72 regular participants* living across 21 wards in Leeds

* LGYT and LAIT members

REACH

Our Learning social media posts had **3,458** engagements this year



UNWRAPPED (HOLIDAY ACTIVITIES)

Our new series of holiday activities in 2024-25 resulted in **267** engagements with young people



25% of holiday participants live in areas of multiple deprivation across the city

We provided **23** free places to make the holiday activities more accessible to families in Leeds

SCHOOL PARTNERS THIS YEAR

346 sessions run



48%

schools engaged study in areas of multiple deprivation



80%

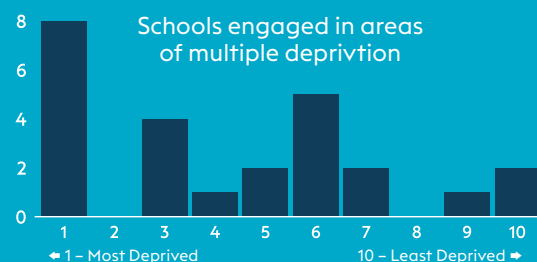
have above-average* Free School Meal entitlement

* Based on Leeds average



56%

have above-average* entitlement to SEN support



“The workshops were a really great experience and I have already noticed a confidence boost in the students.”

Teacher at Partner School

Leeds Heritage Theatres } 2024 – 2025

1

LEEDS GRAND THEATRE*

- 159 performances
- Attendance 213,794



2

CITY VARIETIES MUSIC HALL

- 203 performances
- Attendance 95,395



3

HYDE PARK PICTURE HOUSE

- 1,787 screenings
- Attendance 80,083



4

LEARNING & ENGAGEMENT

ACROSS OUR VENUES

- 346 sessions
- Participants 4,610



5

IN TOTAL

2,495

screenings, sessions and events have been staged and hosted during this year

Attendances

393,882



* Leeds Grand Theatre was closed for maintenance works for three months



City Varieties Rock 'n' Roll Panto
Photo: Ant Robling

Whilst the post-Covid years have been challenging for everyone in the sector, we are seeing a steady recovery in our audience numbers. We are now looking to improve our reach within the city and beyond and are committed to ensuring that both our artistic programme and our audiences reflect the vibrant diversity of our city and of our region.



Fantastically Great Women who Changed the World
Photo: Pamela Raith Photography

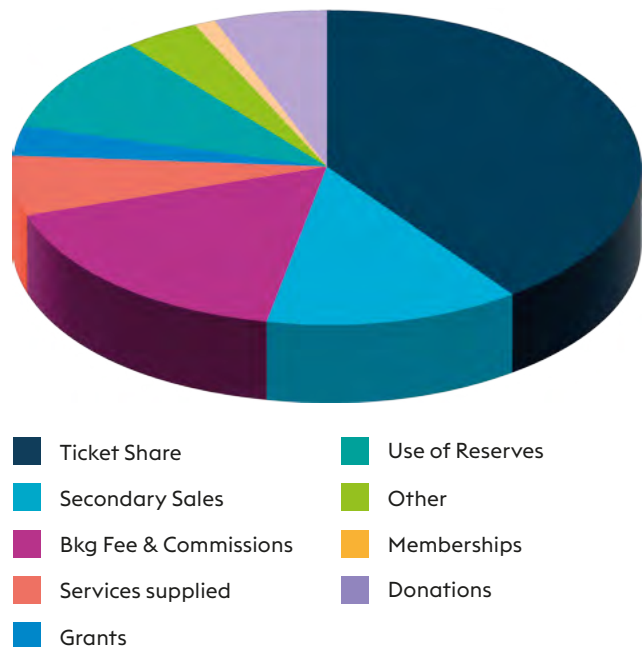
Financial Overview

Leeds Heritage Theatres is a registered charity and a Limited Company. The majority of the organisation's income is self-generated through performances, screenings and ancilliary sales.

Leeds Heritage Theatres has a close working relationship with Leeds City Council from whom it leases Leeds Grand Theatre on a peppercorn rent. City Varieties Music Hall and Hyde Park Picture House are owned by the charity. In addition, Leeds Heritage Theatres applies for funding from the Council and supports city-wide objectives to engage the whole community in culture, provide routes for young people into employment, and grow the visitor economy.

Some of our major funders include The Keith Howard Foundation, the National Lottery Heritage Fund, The Garfield Weston Foundation, and the Theatres Trust, as well as sizeable gifts from private donors.

**Leeds Heritage Theatres
Income Sources 2024/25**



Our Future

We have ambitious plans for Leeds Heritage Theatres and we know that there are a lot of opportunities we can grasp in the coming years.

Our five strategic aims are as follows;

A Thriving Future

Leeds Heritage Theatres has a financially sustainable future with growth in sales and income, having a positive economic and skills impact on Leeds and the cultural sector.

Actions

- Develop a sustainable business model that has the flexibility for us to be bold and innovative
- Be entrepreneurial and brave with commercial enterprise

Responsible Growth

Leeds Heritage Theatres engages with the climate emergency and makes changes to ensure a sustainable future, internally and externally.

Actions

- Develop the physical, digital, technical and environmental infrastructure to support our artistic ambitions
- Maximise partnerships regionally and nationally to advance research, digital development and increase fundraising



Photo: Chris Coote



Photo: LHT team

Extraordinary Stories

Leeds Heritage Theatres tells relevant and meaningful stories that are enjoyed by audiences, inspire participants and are admired by the industry.

Actions

- Share our stages with others and work in partnership with many more
- Deepen our relationships with audiences and offer bespoke visitor experiences

Proud to Belong

Everyone feels they matter and are inspired to reach their potential through a fantastic experience with Leeds Heritage Theatres which makes them want to keep engaging with us.

Actions

- Advocate for the importance of creative learning and for access to the arts for young people
- Support the next generation of actors, singers, musicians, creatives and technicians

Rooted in Leeds

Staff, artists, audiences, participants and visitors are representative of Leeds. All of Leeds knows about us and most of them have engaged with us.

Actions

- Be a home to communities and public participation
- Enable our people to thrive so that they can do their best possible work



Photo: Kerry Maule



Photo: Kerry Maule

The Board of Leeds Heritage Theatres

The Board is chaired by Alan Gay OBE and consists of a group of 12 dedicated individuals with a wide range of skills and experience from the business sector, the creative sector, commercial, marketing, fundraising, the law and local government.

The role of the Board is to:

- Be accountable for the strategic direction of Leeds Heritage Theatres.
- Protect the financial stability of the organisation.
- Ensure compliance with governance legislation and strive for best practice to safeguard the reputation and values of Leeds Heritage Theatres.
- Guide and challenge the decision-making of the senior leadership team.
- Support the artistic and learning vision of the organisation.

The Role of Trustee

Role Purpose

- Provide support and guidance in your specific area of expertise.
- Translate the risks and opportunities of your specific area for other Trustees, to enable the Board as a whole to engage in an informed way.
- Take the lead in evaluating proposals for your area of expertise.
- Contribute to the work of the relevant Board sub-committees.
- Draw on your networks to support our work.

We ask all our Trustees to act according to the [Nolan Principles of Public Life](#).



Photo: Chris Coote

Time Commitment

The Board meets four times a year in Leeds or virtually at times mutually agreed by Trustees. Trustees are expected to have read the papers for each meeting, and to contribute to discussions.

Trustees may also be asked to join at least one sub-committee. Sub-committees meet four times a year, for approximately two hours.

Board members are invited to attend performances, screenings and events throughout the year, and we estimate that the commitment required, including preparation time, for a Trustee role is 1 day a month.

Board positions are voluntary, but reasonable out-of-pocket expenses can be paid on request.

Terms of Office

Trustees will be appointed for a three-year term of office with an option for renewal for a further two terms to a maximum of nine years subject to the following;

- Review of skills and diversity matrix to identify opportunities as Trustees reach the end of their term of office.
- Annual Trustee appraisal in which consideration will be given to attendance, commitment and contribution.

Working with us

Leeds Heritage Theatres is an Equal Opportunities employer and actively welcomes and encourages applications from everyone regardless of their age, sex, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation, gender identity, ethnicity, disability or nationality.

Leeds Heritage Theatres is a PiPA (Parents and Carers in Performing Arts) partner. PiPA enables and empowers parents, carers and employers to achieve sustainable change in attitudes and practices in order to attract, support and retain a more diverse and flexible workforce.

Leeds Heritage Theatres encourages Access Riders (used by disabled employees to ensure that their access needs are met so they can do their job) and Carer Passports (recognising that combining work with caring can be challenging).

We recognise the important role Unions play in maintaining a strong organisation and work with UK Theatres and BECTU to negotiate terms and conditions for our workforce based on a mixture of national and local agreements in line with our sector.



Photo: Lee Brown



Photo: Aaron Cawood

Your skills

We are looking for a Trustee who brings experience and insight in one or more of the following areas:

- Leadership in the **education sector**, including schools, FE/HE institutions or youth services
- Knowledge of **arts-based pedagogy** and creative learning methodologies
- Experience with **education and culture policy**, or involvement in cultural learning partnerships.

This Trustee will also serve as our **Board Safeguarding Lead**, helping to ensure that our work with young people and vulnerable groups is safe, inclusive and aligned with best practice.

All candidates should demonstrate:

- A strategic mindset, with the ability to contribute to the development of learning and participation programmes that reflect the charity's mission and values
- Awareness of governance and risk, including the ability to review and question policies, procedures, and training related to safeguarding and learning
- A passion for widening access to the arts and a belief in the importance of equity, inclusion, and lifelong learning
- The ability to offer constructive challenge and support to the Executive Team, especially in areas like programme design, evaluation, and community impact
- Confidence in acting as an advocate for Leeds Heritage Theatres and representing the organisation in education, cultural and community networks.



LGYT The Addam's Family
Photo: Chris Coote

Application

To apply

Please send a CV and a letter outlining why you're interested and what experience you think you can bring to our board.

You should make reference to how you would fulfil the Role Purpose and Trustee Responsibilities. If you'd prefer to send a video or recording, please do.

Applications should be sent to:

trusteerecruitment@leedsheritagetheatres.com

**Closing date for applications
for the Trustee is
Fri 12 September 2025**



Photo: Kerry Maule



Photo: Kerry Maule



CITY VARIETIES
MUSIC HALL • LEEDS



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leedsheritagetheatres.com

Leeds Heritage Theatres (978161),
Registered Educational Charity No 500408