



Theatres Trust protects and promotes theatres in the post-pandemic world

Theatres Trust, the national public advisory body for theatres, has set out the key issues for the theatre sector post-pandemic and how it will continue to support all the UK's theatres. Following the toughest two years in living memory for theatres, the sector remains in a precarious position, with theatres facing a range of challenges including depleted reserves, the need to modernise buildings and to respond to the climate emergency.

Research for Theatres Trust by leading consultancies AECOM, Avison Young, Bristow Consulting and Buro Happold revealed that more than £1bn is needed to make the UK's theatre buildings resilient, sustainable and suitable for modern and future audiences. Theatres face difficulties in modernising buildings with depleted reserves following lockdowns and theatre closures, funding shortfalls and increasing operating costs. Theatres Trust is advocating for further investment in theatre capital projects to help theatres make changes to their buildings and ensure buildings are fit for purpose.

Responding to the climate emergency is imperative for the theatre sector. Theatres Trust is a lead partner on the innovative Theatre Green Book project, along with the Association of British Theatre Technicians (ABTT) and Buro Happold, led by architect Paddy Dillon. Beta versions of all three volumes – Productions, Buildings and Operations – have now been published and Theatres Trust will continue to promote the project across the sector. The Theatre Green Book sets common standards for theatre sustainability, and many theatres including National Theatre, National Theatre of Scotland and National Theatre Wales have all committed to making their shows to the Theatre Green Book standards for sustainability.

Theatres Trust has welcomed the government's Levelling Up agenda, which aligns with Theatres Trust's arguments that culture can be a catalyst for regeneration and reignite civic pride. Of the 41 theatres on its Theatres at Risk list in 2022, three-quarters are either located in the 20% most deprived areas in the country or in the top priority areas (band 1) for Levelling Up. Putting these buildings at the heart of Levelling Up plans could have a hugely positive impact for those communities. Theatres Trust is engaging with national and local government on Levelling

Up and cultural place-making, and will continue to make the case for the cultural, social and economic value of theatre buildings in all parts of the UK in a way that protects the theatre ecosystem.

Local authorities are the biggest funder of culture in the UK, contributing £1bn a year in England alone according to Local Government Association (LGA) figures, but with increasing demands on their budgets, many are reducing their spending in this area, a trend that has worsened since the pandemic. Theatres Trust helps local authorities to appreciate the long-term value of their theatre buildings as cultural and community spaces and as drivers of vibrant local economies. The Trust is working closely with the LGA, including contributing to its Commission on Culture and Local Government to promote the role of theatres in the pandemic recovery and in levelling up communities across the country.

Alongside these issues Theatres Trust continues its ongoing work as the only charity that supports every theatre in the UK, historic or modern, commercial, subsidised or voluntary. This includes:

- A free advice service to promote the best use of theatre buildings, including advice on capital projects, planning applications, building maintenance, business planning and fundraising.
- Responding to all planning applications involving or impacting a theatre building in its role as a statutory consultee in the planning system.
- Commenting on local planning and culture policies to ensure they safeguard and promote culture and sustainable theatre.
- Running two grant schemes offering funding to improve theatres' resilience, sustainability or accessibility.
- Assisting community groups campaigning to save or revive their local theatres, particularly those on the Theatres at Risk Register.
- Publishing advice notes to support theatre owners, operators, campaign groups and local authorities with common issues relating to theatre buildings.
- Submitting and supporting heritage listing applications for buildings of particular architectural and cultural merit to give them greater protection.

Theatres Trust Director Jon Morgan says, *Theatres can play a significant role in supporting their local communities' economic and social wellbeing. Unfortunately, Covid is casting a long shadow over the theatre sector and its full recovery is by no means guaranteed. As well as supporting individual theatres, Theatres Trust's work to advocate for the long-term value of theatres and importance of investment in theatre buildings is now more crucial than ever before.*

Notes to Editors

Title	Theatres Trust
Website	http://www.theatrestrust.org.uk
Twitter	@TheatresTrust
Photograph	Richmond Theatre Royal, credit Ian Grundy
Interviews	<p>Jon Morgan, Theatres Trust Director, is available for interview about:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Levelling Up agenda and how it relates to theatres.2. Impact of local authority funding cuts on theatres.3. Need for capital investment in existing theatres.4. Sustainability – why this is an issue for theatres and how the sector is responding.5. Theatres’ value for regeneration and reviving high streets and local communities.6. Ongoing impact of Covid on theatres.7. The Theatres at Risk Register.8. Building back better – how the theatre sector can and needs to develop post-Covid.9. Planning policy – protections and threats to theatres.10. Making theatres more inclusive and accessible.11. Making theatres more resilient.

Theatres Trust

Theatres Trust is the national advisory public body for theatres. They believe that current and future generations should have access to good quality theatre buildings where they can be inspired by, and enjoy, live performance. They champion the future of live performance by protecting and supporting excellent theatre buildings which meet the needs of their communities. They do this by providing advice on the design, planning, development and sustainability of theatres, campaigning on behalf of theatres old and new and offering financial assistance through grants.

All enquiries, high res images and further information:

Isobel Jaffray, Chloé Nelkin Consulting

E: isobel@chloenelkinconsulting.com, M: 07772 643 959

W: www.chloenelkinconsulting.com