

OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE CHICHESTER DISTRICT COUNCIL

CHICHESTER FESTIVAL THEATRE – 2017/18 Season

INTRODUCTION

Chichester Festival Theatre (CFT) operates as a registered charity and is managed by a Board of voluntary Trustees, including a CDC nominated Trustee, under the Chairmanship of Sir William Castell. This report reflects on the financial year April 2017 to March 2018 (2017/18) and expands on the report submitted by CFT in April 2018. 2017/18 was the first Festival and Winter season presented by the Executive Team of Daniel Evans (Artistic Director) and Rachel Tackley (Executive Director).

CONTEXT

In April 2018, marking the end of the previous Service Level Agreement (SLA) with CDC, CFT submitted a summary of the work that had been undertaken in the financial year April 2017 – March 2018. It felt important at the end of the SLA funding cycle for April's report to be as full as we could achieve at this point in the year. As we are now governed by the new CDC Grant Funding Agreement, and accompanying monitoring framework, in preparing this annual report we find that to further reflect on the financial year 2017/18 leads to some inevitable repetition of CFT's April report. While you will therefore find some of the narrative content of this report to be familiar, we are now able to include greater statistical analysis of the last financial year and our recently published 2017/18 Annual Review.

Appendices to this report are:

- Appendix 1 – Arts Council England feedback to CFT reflecting on 2017/18.
- Appendix 2 – Statistical analysis of sales from within the Chichester District
- Appendix 3 – Statutory Accounts for the Financial Year 2017/18.
- Appendix 4 – Estimate of CFT's Economic Impact on the District, April 2017-March 2018.
- Appendix 5 – Chichester Festival Theatre Annual Review 2017/18 which can be accessed at:
<https://www.cft.org.uk/annual-review-2017-18>

ARTS COUNCIL ENGLAND FUNDING

2017/18 was the final year of a three-year cycle of National Portfolio Organisation (NPO) funding from Arts Council England (ACE). During the year CFT applied for the next round of NPO funding by submitting a new business plan for 2018 – 2022. CFT has been successfully awarded NPO funding, maintained at the previous level of £1,740,214 per annum for the full period.

In June 2018 CFT completed ACE's Annual Survey & Report reflecting on 2017/18, reporting required of all NPOs. ACE provided feedback to CFT, the feedback report can be found at Appendix 1.

THEATRE PROGRAMME

Festival 2017 ran from 21 April to 28 October in the Festival Theatre and to 2 December in the Minerva Theatre with 232,302 people attending the 13 season productions. *Forty Years On* and the summer musical *Fiddler on the Roof*, both directed by Daniel Evans, saw the highest number of tickets ever sold for a single play and musical respectively, *Fiddler on the Roof* in particular played to 99% capacity with 80,300 people attending. CFT continued to attract world-class talent to the district with casts including Richard Wilson, Sharon D. Clarke, Omid Djalili and Sir Ian McKellen.

The Executive Team is committed to making CFT a more diverse environment, both on and off stage. 24% of artists in Festival 2017 were from a BAME background and 4 out of 10 productions were written by women. There were no all-male creative teams in Festival 2017, achieving the commitment that the Executive Team made at the start of their tenure.

The Winter Season of bought-in programmed work continued the successful year at the box office, 30 productions and events were presented with 129,194 visitors attending.

In 2017/18 over a third of CFT's total sales came from residents of the Chichester district, with the number of tickets purchased by residents of the district increasing by 35% since 2015/16. Page 1 of Appendix 2 gives detailed geographical analysis of where sales came from within the district.

CFT's commitment to developing and engaging with younger audiences from our community continued through 2017/18. In 2017 the ticket price for Prologue members – our free membership scheme for 16-25 year olds – was reduced to £5 and over 3,300 tickets were sold, tripling the number of Prologue tickets sold in 2016/17. 32% of audience members across the year were first time bookers to the theatre, an increase from 27% in the previous year. As part of our commitment to developing audiences from low socio-economic backgrounds we continued to keep 10,000 tickets available at our lowest adult ticket price of £10.

There were a number of 'CFT firsts' in the 2017 season including hosting a relaxed performance of the summer musical for the first time and an exclusive free school's matinee performance of *Caroline, or Change* which was attended by 259 school children from 7 local schools. In December 2017 CFT live-streamed a performance of *Beauty and the Beast*, the Chichester Festival Youth Theatre's (CFYT) highly acclaimed Christmas production, into the children's wards at St Richard's and Worthing Hospital, any child in isolation or needing to stay in their hospital bed was given access to an individual i-Pad so that they too could enjoy the performance.

Highlights outside of the season programme included hosting Her Majesty the Queen as part of her visit to the county and the theatre being the setting for Chichester City Council to confer the Honorary Freedom of the City upon Tim Peake followed by him giving a presentation on the European Space Agency's Principia Mission, tickets were free and CFT worked to ensure that as many local young people as possible were able to attend.

CFT was awarded five awards in 2017/18 including two Beautiful South Tourism Gold Awards for Access & Inclusivity and for Tourism Experience and the Sussex Life Entertainment Venue of the Year Award. Three productions from Festival 2017 transferred to London's West End in 2018 – *Quiz*, *King Lear*, which was also broadcast nationally and internationally by NT Live, and most recently *Caroline, or Change* which plays into 2019.

Details of the full Festival 2017 season are included in the CFT Annual Review which can be viewed at the link below, printed copies have been delivered to CDC for committee members:
<https://www.cft.org.uk/annual-review-2017-18>

LEARNING EDUCATION AND PARTICIPATION (LEAP)

Throughout 2017/18, CFT continued to deliver and expand local outreach and partnership activities within LEAP's youth and community programme, highlights of which are detailed below.

Children & Young People

- CFT facilitated two Theatre Days for 200 local primary and secondary school children following their attendance at *The Jungle Book* in the Festival Theatre, for many attending the performance was their first theatre experience.
- LEAP's 8 local trainee young practitioners developed their practical drama skills to facilitate a series of workshops for 128 local school children, exploring themes and characters within Shakespeare's plays, working in partnership with The Weald & Downland Museum.
- LEAP has actively engaged with local partners to identify individuals who might benefit from youth theatre provision whilst extending the geographic and social reach of CYP facing economic/social barriers to their engagement with the arts. CFYT offered 90 bursary places totalling 11% of the total membership, an increase from 8% in the previous year.
- A successful partnership with West Sussex Young Carers has culminated in offering 14 local young carers full bursary CFYT places. An additional 48 local young carers attended workshops, a theatre tour and received complimentary tickets to the CFYT Christmas production.
- CFT hosted the two-day FESTIV-ALL in the Minerva Theatre to celebrate the achievements and talents of local young people with additional needs. Alongside performances, there was a programme of free practical workshops and drop-in activities for local people.
- Over 140 young people were involved in CFYT productions (as performers and in technical roles). An additional 65 local young people were involved in professional CFT productions across 5 different Festival 2017 productions.

- LEAP delivered a six-week creative literacy programme working in partnership with local schools. Six schools, involving 180 underachieving pupils from areas of economic and social deprivation, participated.
- CFT takes a prominent lead in delivering and advocating Arts Award accreditation opportunities for children and young people across the region. CFT was awarded Good Practice Centre status for Arts Award, the only theatre in the UK awarded this status for 2017/18.
- Our early years programme is thriving with 142 participants attending weekly (77 babies and toddlers accompanied by 65 parents/carers) who are enjoying weekly musical movement sessions.
- In early 2018 CFT forged a new partnership with Sanctuary, Chichester. Two young refugees joined CFYT, on bursary supported places, and plans are in place for refugee families to access the wider LEAP programme.
- 70 CFYT members had the honour of performing for HM The Queen who watched a performance in the Festival Theatre, which included a scene from CFYT's production of *Beauty and the Beast*.

Adults Community Programme

- CFT and The Chichester Centre (Graylingwell) were awarded a joint Positive Practice Award from the NHS Foundation Trust, for effective partnership working, crossing professional, clinical or organisational boundaries.
- In 2017/18, over 700 sessions were delivered, reaching over 16,000 participating adults within LEAP's focussed activities. Activities include weekly sessions in singing, devising, acting, playwriting, technical and dance, together with events linked to the artistic programme, volunteering activities and community outreach work focused on promoting social wellbeing.
- In partnership with CDC, CFT hosted a Symposium of Partners platform, to develop partnership-networking opportunities, with the aim of gaining further insight into community service providers in the area.
- Our weekly volunteering programme continues to flourish and we are encouraging local people from a more diverse background to attend. Developing partnerships include The Aldingbourne Trust, The Apuldrum Centre, The HubClub, Youth Action Outset and Possibility People. We have increased our percentage of volunteers who classify as having additional needs from 9% to 14%.
- CFT's Creative Responses project was successfully launched in 2017, engaging with local people living with dementia. CFT provided 6 sessions for 4 local care homes: Barlavington Manor in Petworth, Sussex Grange in Selsey, Hillside Lodge in Pulborough and Cornelius House in Chichester.
- 35 residents from Augusta Court Care Home were part of a weekly dementia-friendly programme. Busy Bees, a pre-school group, joined the group at the Care Home for some of these sessions.
- Following a successful pilot of the CFT Buddies initiative, the scheme will continue throughout Festival 2018. The Buddies provide a companion for local audience members who may not have the necessary carer support, or feel able to attend a theatre performance on their own. Beneficiaries include elderly and socially isolated members of the community and those with learning difficulties or on the autistic spectrum.
- CFT hosted two Get Connected events for local adults with learning disabilities, their carers and other providers, to highlight resources and networking opportunities within the local area.
- CFT facilitated a regional networking and training opportunity for freelance arts practitioners across all disciplines. Through a series of practical workshops and seminars, CFT engaged with over 30 local arts facilitators, some of whom have been approached to deliver LEAP initiatives.

Appendix 2 details the share of total sales associated with LEAP's youth and community events from within the district, along with the geographical spread of Chichester Festival Youth Theatre (CFYT) members.

BUILDINGS

As detailed in April, Christmas eve/day 2017 saw a significant flood in the Minerva as a water main fitting became detached leading to extensive damage to the ground floor ceilings, foyer carpets and lighting. Most remedial works were covered by our insurance and leak protection is now in place in the plant room to mitigate damage should a similar incident occur. While the Minerva benefitted from some cosmetic refurbishment in 2015/16 much of its plant and machinery is ageing, a process of investment is underway which in 2017/18 saw more energy efficient air handling units being installed in the restaurants and kitchen and new water treatment systems being installed to improve water quality.

In the Festival Theatre concrete restoration works commenced in February 2018 and were successfully completed by the end of May 2018 using aggregate sourced locally.

Benchmarks for energy use have been set since 2016/17, in 2017/18 we achieved the following reductions in energy consumption:

In the Festival Theatre:

- Gas use reduction of 15.5%
- Electricity reduction of 8%

These savings are attributable to a successful full year of faultless operation of the ground source heat pump system (reducing the need to run our boilers saving gas and electricity), ongoing transitions to LED lighting and robust energy management.

In the Minerva Theatre:

- Gas reduction of 6%
- Electricity reduction of 1.5%

The flood over Christmas impacted on our Minerva energy savings due to radiators and de-humidifiers running. Without this incident our electricity saving in 2017/18 would have been closer to 3.5%.

CFT continues to explore opportunities to reduce its energy consumption and environmental impact annually. Over the next 5 years investment will be made to replace older incandescent lighting equipment with LED equipment of the best possible energy rating. CFT is committed to ensuring that we improve on our recycling, working in partnership with our waste and recycling partner Veolia.

In 2017 CFT purchased the former “Comme Ca” restaurant building on Broyle Road which had been empty since 2013; the building was successfully converted into an 11-bedroom property to accommodate members of visiting creative teams. Previously CFT had utilised local hotels but such accommodation is costly and we are aware that CFT had come to monopolise some of the hotels in the district. Given that we employ over 400 artists, musicians and creatives in each season there will continue to be high demand for accommodation in Chichester by those associated to the theatre but Broyle Road will ensure that CFT can host visiting creatives in a consistent, sustainable and cost-effective way.

In 2017 CFT invested in a fleet of recycled bicycles from the charity The Bike Project for short term loans to visiting actors and creative team members. The aim is to reduce car journeys to and from the theatre and mitigate some parking issues experienced. CFT applied for, and has since been granted, planning permission to install cycle shelters to help promote and expand this scheme further.

FINANCE

Statutory accounts for 2017/18 are attached at Appendix 3.

Terms of Reference for CFT’s Finance and Audit Committee have been shared with CDC.

In 2015/16 Reading University undertook an Economic Impact Study of CDC. Appendix 4 uses the same model to estimate the economic impact of CFT in 2017/18 (it should be noted that this assumes no change to visitor spending). The Net impact generated for the district increased from £23,590,526 to £26,488,580, reflecting an increase of 11%. CFT intends to undertake a full Economic Impact Study in 2021.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES & FOCUS

The five key strategic objectives identified in CFT’s 2018 – 2022 business plan will ensure that over the next four years CFT will be:

1. Creatively ambitious, dynamic, diverse and relevant.
2. At the heart of the community.
3. At the forefront of UK theatre.
4. Resilient, engaging and environmentally sustainable – planning for the long-term.
5. Constantly monitoring and evaluating.

Particular focuses for 2018/19 were identified as:

- Developing our family focused programming including the first production specifically targeting a family audience in the Festival season – *The Midnight Gang*, to be directed by Dale Rooks.
- Ensuring that CFT is a wholly accessible theatre for all. This will include developing family-friendly policies, the full implementation of our Buddies scheme and the launch of our AGELESS campaign, ensuring that all members of the community can access and engage with CFT's work.
- Continuing to diversify the organisation both in our programming and across the whole organisation.

FESTIVAL 2018

As we reflect on 2017/18 it is impossible to not also reflect on Festival 2018 which, running from April – November 2018, continued to build on the successes of the 2017/18 year with programming of classic musicals and plays alongside more contemporary and new work. Of particular note, *The Midnight Gang* attracted the largest ever numbers of schools for a production at CFT with 59 schools attending from within a 40-mile radius. *The Midnight Gang* was also live-streamed to the children's wards of St. Richards and Worthing Hospitals and to Chestnut Tree House Hospice and Great Ormond Street Hospital. debbie tucker green's *random/generations* and Mike Bartlett's *Cock* particularly attracted new and younger audiences to CFT. Festival 2018 box office targets were met and the upcoming Winter season is currently attracting strong audiences across the season. The Christmas production of *Sleeping Beauty* will once again be a theatrically exciting experience for our youth theatre members.

We were sad to see the departure of Executive Director, Rachel Tackley, at the close of Festival 2018. Recruitment of a new Executive Director is currently being undertaken with an appointment anticipated early in 2019. In the interim, previous Executive Director, Alan Finch, is supporting the theatre two-days per week. Planning for the 2019 Festival season is on schedule and the season will be announced in February 2019.

Daniel Evans
18 December 2018