

Report from The Old Court to RBWM O&S Panel

Monday 8th March 2021

THE OLD COURT Windsor

- The Old Court previously reported to the RBWM O&S panel on Tuesday 3rd November. Since that time The Old Court has been closed.
- The Old Court, Windsor is a historic building that has served many roles in the history of Windsor. The building became listed in 2019. It was extensively refurbished between December 2017 and March 2018. At the end of the financial year 2019-2020 the building closed due to the Covid-19 pandemic.
- From October 2021 RBWM will cease to fund The Old Court with the SLA grant which had been in place, and which was reduced in April 2020. RBWM will continue to take out buildings insurance and maintain a sinking fund for work to the structure of the building which it owns. The Old Court group of “critical friends”, being three Councillors, will remain in operation. The grant cancellation will result in a loss of income (net of VAT) to The Old Court of £28,000 in the year 2021-2022, and £56,000 in the year 2022-2023. The Old Court CIC hopes that RBWM will return to funding the arts and giving a grant to The Old Court after that time.
- The aim of TOC’s is to create a programme that is:
 - Well reputed, of high quality and thorough
 - Allow people of all ages from across the community access to inspiring, quality Arts programmes and practitioners
 - Inspired by and builds upon the unique history of The Old Court via meaningful arts participation for all ages
 - Include a wide range of creative arts including music, dance, photography, cinematography, theatre craft, design, literature etc.
 - Make TOC Arts Centre the recognised community arts HUB in Windsor, Slough, Maidenhead and the wider area.
 - Based upon lasting partnerships and relationships across the community that make the community more cohesive and bring about positive change
 - Utilising the assets of TOC’s facility and staff broad range of skills set.

SWOT Analysis

An external SWOT analysis of the programme identified the following opportunities and areas of need.

Strengths and Opportunities include:	Areas to develop to realise the education ambitions
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• History/Reputation of the building• Existing relationships with local schools Windsor Festival (WF) First Schools• In a short while has already been successfully offering community opportunity• Geographically well placed to be a community HUB• Offers a range of venues: Theatre, Cinema, workshop area, Attic, and exhibition space• Theatre is well equipped and boasts an onsite technician• Technical Theatre staff can offer training to fill the practical gaps in the Windsor College courses.• Enthusiastic staff with a range of skills and commitment to the venue and community• Other local theatre (Theatre Royal) has a different focus, and not as community centred.• Support of the Council• Staff have existing relationships with the school and community via the Windsor Festival work• Systems are in place for community exhibitions• Has been no cinema in the area for 35 years, and the appetite for our cinema has grown	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Review marketing programme and create a strategy• Website needs to be more functional• Integrate aspects of the cinema content and screenings into the strategy• Secure funding for the resources to deliver and develop the education and engagement initiatives

Achievements since November 2020

- Made the building of the highest standard, providing an Arts Centre which can serve the community professionally and to a high standard of performance of all kinds
- Live streaming equipment and technical support hardware installed
- Air Conditioning installed in auditorium
- New Fire Doors fitted throughout the building
- New blinds fitted in auditorium
- Stained glass windows around main entrance door repaired
- Public areas repainted
- Funding applications submitted to British Film Institute to support cinema, and Arts Council England to support the venue, through the Cultural Recovery Fund Round 2. Decisions are pending, but initial grant from the BFI made to support in part the air conditioning work.
- 7 events held and live-streamed, featuring professional musicians working behind closed doors.

Classes and professionals supported during November 2020

Classes and artists
SOTA (School of the Arts): Music Theatre classes for children (November only)
Mummas Village: (November only) Antenatal classes for Mums and Babies, supporting mental health needs
Music classes for babies: (November only)
Teaching by Windsor College (November only)
Circus artist using Auditorium to practice and learn new skills
Video recording by solo songwriter guitarist
Professional percussionist practising and teaching via Zoom
Rehearsal and recording venue for professional (socially distanced) classical orchestra

Plans for 2021

- Re-open building on 17th May at the earliest
- Prior to that opening for children's classes from 12th April, and as a testing centre for Windsor College from 8th March.
- Develop corporate clients, for live-streaming, meetings and hirings
- Focus on building audience
 - Using new website
 - Presentation of events, and linking more closely with the bar provision
 - Marketing, social media, and brochure
- Develop community and education programme through digital work
- Support grass roots musicians, artists and technicians