



Leicester  
City Council

**WARDS AFFECTED**  
City-Wide

## **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, CULTURE AND TOURISM SCRUTINY COMMISSION**

12<sup>th</sup> September 2012

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### **Review of the Council's revenue investment in Curve, Phoenix and De Montfort Hall**

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#### **Report of the Director of Culture and Neighbourhood Services**

##### **1. Purpose of Report**

To provide background information for the scrutiny review of the Council's revenue investment in Curve, Phoenix and De Montfort Hall. It is intended to give a broad overview as the context for the review. Senior staff from each venue have been invited to this meeting and/ or future meetings to answer detailed questions.

##### **2. Summary**

- 2.1 At its meeting on Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup> August 2012 the Economic Development, Culture and Tourism Scrutiny Commission agreed to review the Council's investment in Curve, Phoenix Square and De Montfort Hall (DMH).
- 2.2 The review will research and analyse the benefits and rewards arising from the Council's investment in Curve, Phoenix and DMH, from cultural, social and economic perspectives.
- 2.3 The review is expected:
  - to provide an increased understanding of the economic, cultural and social value of Curve, Phoenix and DMH and a clear rationale for why the Council funds the three venues, and
  - generate recommendations for the City Mayor and Executive on the future level of funding to each venue, the opportunities for increased joint and collaborative working arrangements and identify areas where improvement can be made
- 2.4 Information provided by the Chief Executives of Curve and Phoenix Square is in Appendix 2 and 3 and from the General Manager DMH is in Appendix 4.

### 3. Recommendations

Members of the Economic Development, Culture and Tourism Scrutiny Commission area recommended to:

- i) Note the content of this report.

### 4. Report

#### 4.1 Cultural Ambition for the City of Leicester

- 4.1.1 Information is provided in this section on the Cultural Ambition as this sets the ambition for cultural development in Leicester. The Cultural Ambition for the City of Leicester was developed by the Cultural Partnership and subsequently adopted by the City Mayor as Council policy in July this year. A copy of the Cultural Ambition is included at Appendix 1.
- 4.1.2 The Cultural Ambition is a short, evidence-based statement presenting culture's role in transforming our city. It provides a common flag around which professionals, practitioners, businesses, consumers and the general public can gather.
- 4.1.3 Focusing on three themes – international, original and together – it proposes shared goals, and encourages commitment and new ways of working, whilst securing, strengthening and adding to the city's cultural assets.
- 4.1.4 Leicester's Cultural Ambition is to build on our international connections, magnify our originality and bring people together. It will create a thriving global city where people flourish, where opportunities are created, where 'We Are Leicester'.
- 4.1.5 The Cultural Ambition will specifically aim to ensure that in Leicester:
  - Our communities connect through a sense of pride, place and identity;
  - New work is created, new talent is nurtured and new ways are found for self-expression;
  - Every child and young person will thrive through a rich and adventurous cultural education;
  - Economic growth will flourish through investment, enterprise and business development.

## 4.2 Governance, Management and Operation

The arrangements for the governance, financing, management and operation of Curve, Phoenix Square and De Montfort Hall are set out in the paragraphs below. Leicester City Council is the freehold owner of all three venues. Curve is leased to Leicester Theatre Trust for a 60 year term and the Phoenix (Cinema) is leased to Leicester Arts Centre Ltd for a 60 year term both on a peppercorn (i.e. nil) rent. This arrangement in itself shows a further subsidy to both organisations. If the lease arrangements were to be charged at a market rent, then it could be expected to realise approximately £400k per annum (Curve) and £100k per annum (Phoenix). These rental estimates are based on the existing use of both properties.

### 4.2.1 Curve

Curve is governed, managed and operated by Leicester Theatre Trust Limited (LTT). LTT "The Trust" is a company limited by guarantee and a registered charity and it operates on a not for profit basis. The company is governed by the Board of Trustees who act as Directors of the company. The Board includes two members nominated by the Council (current nominees are Assistant Mayor, Heritage, Leisure, and Sport and the Director of Culture and Neighbourhood Services), one member nominated by Leicestershire County Council and eleven independently appointed members.

### 4.2.2 Phoenix

Phoenix is governed, managed and operated by Leicester Arts Centre Limited (LAC). LAC "The Trust" is a company limited by guarantee and a registered charity and it operates on a not for profit basis. The company is governed by the Board of Trustees who act as Directors of the company. The Board includes two members nominated by the Council, (current nominees are Cllr Bill Shelton and the Strategic Director City Development and Neighbourhoods), two members nominated by De Montfort University and six independently appointed members.

Firebird Trading, a wholly owned subsidiary of LAC was established in 2009 to manage and operate the cafe bar, room hire and conferencing functions within the Phoenix, all taxable profits are covenanted to the parent charity LAC.

Phoenix is responsible for the cinema, digital arts, café and other public spaces at the Phoenix Square development. The building partnership includes LCB Depot, providing accommodation and business support, and Blueprint managing residential and business accommodation. Phoenix operates shared services for the building partnership.

#### 4.2.3 De Montfort Hall

De Montfort Hall (DMH) is governed, managed and operated by the City Council.

### 4.3 **Finance & Budget**

#### 4.3.1 Financial Background

The tables below provide information about the capital and other costs attributable to the development of Curve (Table 1 and 2) and Phoenix Square (Table 3) , including the cost of borrowing, the Haymarket Theatre service charge etc. and for DMH (Table 4) capital employed for the fabric and upkeep of the building and expenditure incurred through the Council's Corporate Maintenance Fund.

#### 4.3.2 Cost of the Council's Capital Investment

With both projects, the Council provided significant capital investment in the form of capital funds and prudential borrowing. Both of these sources of financing attract on-going costs, either through real payments of interest on borrowing or income foregone if cash balances are used as an alternative to borrowing. In order to simplify this quantification and to provide a long-run average the PWLB 25 year borrowing rate for 2007/08 has been applied (4.75%).

4.3.3 As such the tables below show the Council's capital investment as a principal sum, being the amount of capital funds used and the amount of prudential borrowing. Following these figures is a line called "averaged annual cost of capital" which represents the cost of using both the Council's cash and the cost of interest repayments. This is shown as an annual sum which will decline in time as loans are repaid.

**Table 1 Curve**

<b>Curve – Development Cost &amp; sources of partnership funding</b>	
<b>Total Project Cost</b>	<b>£61,600,262</b>
Capital cost to the Council	£36,170,262
<b>Partnership funding</b>	
Arts Council England	£14,480,000
ERDF Objective 2	£2,000,000
ERDF Object 2 (re-direct)	£1,600,000
East Midlands Development Agency / Leicestershire Economic Partnership	£7,260,000
<b>Total Partnership Funding</b>	<b>£25,340,000</b>
<b>How the Council contribution was funded</b>	
Capital Fund	£23,273,262
Prudential Borrowing	£12,897,000
<b>Averaged annual cost of capital</b>	
Interest cost in respect of capital investment (would decline as capital repaid)	£1,718,087

**Table 2 Curve**

<b>Annual costs &amp; expenditure associated with the development of Curve through the Haymarket Theatre</b>	
Haymarket Theatre Annual Service Charge (empty since 2004)	£120,000
Annual Empty Property Rates for Haymarket Theatre	£25,000
Annual Buildings Insurance for Haymarket Theatre	£33,729
<b>Total Haymarket Annual Costs</b>	<b>£178,729</b>

**Table 3 Phoenix Square**

<b>Phoenix Square – Development Cost &amp; sources of partnership funding</b>	
Total Project Cost	£21,448,073
Area of the building used by Phoenix (Cinema etc.)	<b>£5,890,346</b>
Workspaces (operated by the Council)	£4,476,606
<b>Partnership funding</b>	
<b>Direct Partnership funding</b>	
Arts Council England	£190,000
East Midlands Development Agency / Leicestershire Economic Partnership	£2,798,600
European Regional Development Fund	£2,237,654
Other (LSEP, EM Media, Blueprint)	262,479
<b>Indirect Partnership funding</b>	
De Montfort University*	£750,000
<b>Cost and funding of the Housing at Phoenix Square</b>	
Housing: Cost of Apartments and 2 storey studios	£10,844,806
Housing: Funding by Blueprint	£10,844,806
<b>Capital cost to the Council and how the cost was financed</b>	
Capital Fund	£1,928,277
Prudential borrowing	£2,949,942
<b>Averaged annual cost of Capital</b>	
Interest cost in respect of capital investment (would decline as capital repaid)	£231,715
<b>Other non-revenue expenditure associated with the project</b>	
Council Purchase of cinema equipment from LAC (2010/11)	£250,000

*\*De Montfort University funding paid directly to Leicester Arts Centre for the purchase of equipment related to the development of Phoenix Square*

**Table 4 De Montfort Hall**

<b>Capital Expenditure 2004 – 2011/12 (cumulative)</b>	
Maintenance (cyclical) 2004/5 – 2011/12	£103,290
Maintenance (non urgent) 2004/5 – 2011/12	£14,763
Renewal 2004/5 -2011/12	£235,920
Maintenance (urgent) 2004/5 – 2011/12	£609,680
Box Office / ticketing system (2010/11)	£135,000
Carpets & Decoration (2011/12)	£160,000

In addition to the capital items listed above, De Montfort Hall has a maintenance plan to assist it in planning for the replacement of equipment. Examples of items requiring replacement within the next 5 years are the main house dimmers (estimated replacement cost £180k, the Zoom Profile lighting (estimated £50k) and replacing/repairing the flat floor seating (estimated cost 60k).

#### 4.3.3 Leicester City Council – forecast budget for the period to 2014/15

Table 4 below provides a profile of the Council's total revenue contributions to Curve, Phoenix Square and DMH over the period 2009/10 to 2011/12. In order to assist Phoenix with cash flow, the Council has made payments in advance on a temporary basis, ie the table below shows the total amount paid relating to that specific financial year not the timing of when these payments were made. Therefore the first quarter payment for 2012/13 was made in March 2012 – this sum is not reflected in the figures below.

Table 4

	<b>2009/2010</b>	<b>2010/2011</b>	<b>2011/2012</b>
Curve	£839,000	£839,000	£839,000
Phoenix Square	£306,100	£309,800	£309,800
DMH	£1,293,545	£1,028,194	£914,000

Table 5 below provides a profile of the Council's total revenue budget for Curve, Phoenix and DMH over the period 2011/12 – 2014/15

	<b>2011-2012</b>	<b>2012-2013</b>	<b>2013-2014</b>	<b>2014-2015</b>
Leicester City Council	£2,294,000	£2,167,000	£2,049,000	£2,044,000
% change		-5.5	-5.7	-5.7

4.3.4 Curve - forecast funding for the period 2012/13 – 2014/15

<b>Funding</b>	<b>2011 /2012</b>	<b>2012 /2013</b>	<b>2013 /2014</b>	<b>2014/15</b>
Leicester City Council	£839,000	£789,000	£739,000	£739,000
Arts Council England	£1,902,713	£1,903,000	£1,946,769	£1,997,385

4.3.5 Total operating income

<b>Funding</b>	<b>2011 /2012</b>	<b>2012 /2013</b>	<b>2013 /2014</b>	<b>2014/15</b>
Grants	£2,708,000	£2,690,083	£2,706,833	£2,757,634
Ticket sales	£2,940,000	£3,260,479	£3,300,905	£3,343,320
Earned income	£795,000	£840,504	£937,516	£1,089,289
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>£6,443,000</b>	<b>£6,791,066</b>	<b>£6,945,254</b>	<b>£7,190,244</b>

4.3.6 As a percentage of income:

<b>Funding</b>	<b>2011 /2012</b>	<b>2012 /2013</b>	<b>2013 /2014</b>	<b>2014/15</b>
Grants	42.0%	39.6%	39.0%	38.4%
Ticket sales	45.6%	48.0%	47.5%	46.5%
Earned income	12.3%	12.4%	13.5%	15.1%

4.3.7 Phoenix Square – forecast funding for the period 21012/13 – 2014/15

<b>Funding</b>	<b>2011 /2012</b>	<b>2012 /2013</b>	<b>2013 /2014</b>	<b>2014 /2015</b>
Leicester City Council	£309,800	£284,800	£259,800	£259,800
Em-Media via the Phoenix, Broadway and Quad Consortium	£17,000	-	-	-
Arts Council England National Portfolio	-	£80,000	£81,840	£83,968
DMU	£40,000	£20,000	£10,000	£10,000

#### 4.3.8 Total Operating Income

<b>Funding</b>	<b>2011 /2012</b>	<b>2012 /2013</b>	<b>2013 /2014</b>	<b>2014/15</b>
Grants	£401,456	£461,660	£438,500	£440,628
Ticket sales	£333,559	£370,371	£381,482	£392,926
Earned income	£423,101	£427,108	£448,853	£475,949
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>£1,158,116</b>	<b>£1,259,139</b>	<b>£1,268,835</b>	<b>£1,309,503</b>

#### 4.3.9 As a percentage of income:

<b>Funding</b>	<b>2011 /2012</b>	<b>2012 /2013</b>	<b>2013 /2014</b>	<b>2014/15</b>
Grants	35%	37%	35%	34%
Ticket sales	29.%	29%	30%	30%
Earned income	36%	34%	35%	36%

Notes: Figures are for the total organisation including the charity and its trading subsidiary, but exclude a major project that is operated as a subsidiary. Actual results for 2011/12 are given with the budget for 2012/13.

#### 4.3.10 DMH - forecast funding for the period 2012/13 – 2014/15

<b>Funding</b>	<b>2011 /2012 Budgeted</b>	<b>2012/ 2013 Budgeted</b>	<b>2013/2014 Budgeted</b>	<b>2014/2015 Budgeted</b>
Leicester City Council	£1,145,000	£1,095,000	£1,045,000	£1,045,000

#### 4.3.11 Total operating Income

DMH is owned and operated by Leicester City Council (LCC) and is set an annual budget like any other area of the authority; DMH does not receive any other public funding in addition to its LCC budget. This being the case, the annual budget it works to is not considered to be income in the sense of calculating turnover. (However for the purpose of this report the LCC Annual budget has been included to enable comparison).

	<b>2011/12 Budget</b>	<b>2011/12 Out turn</b>	<b>2012/13 Budgeted</b>
LCC Annual subsidy	£1,145,000	£914,000	£1,095,000
Ticket Sales:	£2,786,000	£3,286,573	£2,881,000
Hires and ancillary income:	£186,000	£204,532	£207,500
Total turnover:	£4,117,000	£4,296,961	£4,183,500

*Note: Projected income figures for 2013/14 and beyond have not been included here as they will form part of DMH's forthcoming review of its business plan, the existing plan having recently expired.*

#### 4.3.12 As a percentage of:

<b>Funding</b>	<b>2011 /2012</b>	<b>2012 /2013</b>
LCC annual subsidy	28%	26%
Ticket sales	68%	69%
Earned income	4%	5%

#### 4.4. Maintenance and Equipment replacement

##### 4.4.1 Curve

Leicester Theatre Trust, under the terms of their Lease, are required to maintain the property, fixtures and fittings in accordance with the manufacturers specifications. The Council is responsible, subject to the aforementioned requirement being met, for replacing major items of plant and machinery. The Council is also responsible for the repair of the structural elements of the building, including the roof and walls along with the glazing and louvres. Leicester Theatre Trust have a plan for the replacement of equipment.

##### 4.4.2 Phoenix Square

The Phoenix Square building is managed and maintained by the Council. The cost of maintaining the property is re-couped by a service charge paid by the 3 principal tenants (LAC, Blueprint, LCC – LCB Depot).

##### 4.4.3 DMH

The DMH building is owned by the Council and is maintained through a 'landlord and tenant' agreement between the DMH/Cultural Services and Property Services departments. This agreement details which elements of the building should be maintained through which Council cost centre and budget code.

An asset maintenance plan was put in place in 2010/11 to address the on-going repair, replacement and maintenance of higher value essential operational equipment that cannot normally be accommodated within annual operating budgets.

#### 4.5 VAT & Taxation

Given that the three venues each have their own VAT and taxation regimes careful consideration will need to be given to any contractual arrangement / collaborative working arrangements that may be recommended as a result of this scrutiny review. The Council's VAT & Taxation Officer will need to be consulted on any options that may emerge / develop during the period of the review.

**5. FINANCIAL, LEGAL AND OTHER IMPLICATIONS**

**5.1. Financial Implications**

This report is solely concerned with financial matters.

*Martin Judson, Head of Finance*

**5.2 Legal Implications**

There are no legal implications arising directly from this report.

*Satvinder Bal, Legal Officer.*

**5.3 Climate change and carbon reduction implications**

This report does not contain any significant climate change implications and therefore should not have a detrimental effect on the Council's climate change targets.

*Helen Lansdown, Senior Environmental Consultant - Sustainable Procurement*

**5.4 Equality Impact Assessments**

An Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) has not been undertaken. An EIA will be undertaken recommendations arising from the review as these emerge.

**6. Other Implications**

OTHER IMPLICATIONS	YES/NO	Paragraph References Within Supporting information
Equal Opportunities	No	
Policy	No	
Sustainable and Environmental	No	
Crime and Disorder	No	
Human Rights Act	No	
Elderly/People on Low Income	No	

**7. Background Papers – Local Government Act 1972**

None

**8. Consultations**

Mike Candler, Cultural Quarter Projects Director,  
Sarah Levitt, Head of Arts & Museums,  
Andy Keeling, Chief Operating Officer  
Greg Pollard, Principal Valuer, Property

**9. Report Author**

**Liz Blyth, Director of Culture and Neighbourhoods  
Leicester City Council  
Ext 29 7301**

### The Cultural Ambition for the City of Leicester International, Original, Together

The Cultural Ambition is a short, evidence-based statement presenting culture's role in transforming our city. It provides a common flag around which professionals, practitioners, businesses, consumers and the general public can gather.

Focusing on three themes – international, original and together – it proposes shared goals, and encourages commitment and new ways of working, whilst securing, strengthening and adding to the city's cultural assets.

Leicester's Cultural Ambition is to build on our international connections, magnify our originality and bring people together. It will create a thriving global city where people flourish, where opportunities are created, where 'We Are Leicester'.

#### Culture

Leicester is a city brimful with creative talent and home to world-class heritage, art and festivals. From the Golden Mile to the Comedy Festival, from the world premiere of Dosh to the Jewry Wall, from Sue Townsend to Joe Orton: what happens, and who live and work here, make Leicester a city to celebrate.

There are many stories from across the city where culture has shaped lives, created opportunity and increased Leicester's profile on a UK and World stage. But we can achieve more; culture is a force for economic regeneration, social cohesion, well-being and civic identity.

The Ambition will achieve:

By building on our international connections, our originality and by bringing the city together, our Cultural Ambition will specifically aim to ensure that in Leicester:

- Our communities connect through a sense of pride, place and identity;
- New work is created, new talent is nurtured and new ways are found for self-expression;
- Every child and young person will thrive through a rich and adventurous cultural education;
- Economic growth will flourish through investment, enterprise and business development.

To achieve the Ambition and its goals, the city and those signing-up to the Ambition need to:

- Show their support for culture, promote what's available and celebrate cultural successes;

- Develop new, bold and innovative approaches to culture and reinforcing its role in the city;
- Sustain Leicester's cultural assets and maximise the resources and opportunities that these offer to achieving the Ambition;
- Ensure that communities and individuals are supported and enabled to achieve their own cultural ambitions;
- Operate in ways that are truly sustainable - environmentally, socially and economically.

The Ambition – will you sign up?

Anyone can be involved in helping to realise the Cultural Ambition for the city:

Members of the public can be engaged as creators, consumers, volunteers for projects and acting as ambassadors for our city. Businesses can provide space for cultural activity, advocate for culture to clients and colleagues, demonstrate the link between culture and a city fit for business. Service providers across the city – not just culture, but education, welfare, health – can start to explore how cultural engagement can change lives positively. Cultural organisations and individuals can operate in a new environment of collaboration, ambition, facilitation and delivery.

The Culture Partnership Board, the City Council and our many partners across the city will build partnerships, links and practical projects that work towards these goals: establishing action plans and implementation programmes that will make the Ambition a reality.

But we can only achieve this by all of us working together. If you support the principles of the Leicester Cultural Ambition, register now: [www.yet](http://www.yet) to be confirmed.

Make a statement of Ambition and together we can make it a reality!

**Appendices 2, 3 and 4 are information provided directly by the venues themselves**

Appendix Two

**Curve**

Curve was developed by the City Council working in partnership with Leicester Theatre Trust (LTT). Curve opened to the public in November 2008 and was officially opened in December 2008 by HRH The Queen.

Curve is one of the most distinctive and technologically advanced theatres in the UK. It has two auditoria - a large 800 seat auditorium and a 350 seat studio. These are positioned either side of the stage and are circled by a large public foyer, with a mezzanine to the main elevation of the building. There are also three rehearsal rooms, production workshops, and a large flexible multi-purpose space suitable for a range of conference/hire uses. The mezzanine level rehearsal room also doubles as Curve's third public performance space, and a free stage in the bar brings the total of regularly used performance spaces to four.

LTT's vision is for Curve to have a world-wide reputation for awe-inspiring theatre, from the heart of the United Kingdom, whilst their mission is to be a major producing theatre, creating exceptional and compelling experiences. Using their unique home and talent they entertain, inspire and engage with a modern diverse audience and play a leading role in the development of the industry, the city and the global community.

**Artistic Policy & Programme**

Curve's Artistic Ambition is to:

- expand their reputation as an internationally recognised producing theatre creating and presenting work at the forefront of innovative practice
- develop their capacity and reputation as an incubator of new ideas and new talent
- create strong connections with the community and within their industry to position Curve as a cultural leader

Curve is one of Britain's leading producing theatres offering around 450 ticketed performances each year in its three theatre spaces, in addition to an extensive programme of free performances, exhibitions and talks.

In the last three years, over 300,000 people have seen Curve originated productions outside of Leicester, in venues spanning five continents.

Curve enjoys audience and critical acclaim for its productions. The most recent large scale musical - *Gypsy*, received five star reviews, and people travelled from the USA and Australia to see it. The recent community production of *Oliver!* which involved 80 community performers has exceeded its box office targets and the Leicester Mercury reported '*it is the kind of show which begins to blur the boundaries between amateur and professional.*'

Producing is Curve's core business, differentiating it from other theatres in the city. Since opening in November 2008, highlights have included the European premiere of *The Light in the Piazza*, Martin McDonagh's *The Pillowman*, critically acclaimed revivals of two of Brian Friel's greatest plays, *Molly Sweeney* and *Translations*, critical hit *Gypsy* and sell-out productions of Rodgers and Hammerstein's *The King and I* (now on a national tour) and *42<sup>nd</sup> Street*. Curve also partners with De Montfort University on annual student productions and is committed to developing and promoting Leicester's talent through producing an annual community production.

Previous co-production partners include Headlong, New Perspectives, and most prolifically Akram Khan Company. Co-productions of both Akram Khan's *Vertical Road* and *Desh* had their World Premieres at Curve before embarking on international tours.

To complement Curve's produced programme, Curve curates a programme of visiting work, by working closely with the commercial and subsidised arts sector. This approach has led Curve to secure the world premiere of Harvey Weinstein's new musical, *Finding Neverland*, this September as well as be the opening tour venue for the National Theatre's acclaimed *One Man Two Guvnors* in October/November.

### **Audiences & Users**

In the last full financial year (2010/11) LTT increased audiences by 40% to over 170,000. Following such a significant growth, in 2011/12 LTT aim to consolidate and maintain that audience in the first instance. As LTT draw to the end of their financial year (September to August), and at time of writing, over 180,000 people have attended ticketed performances and events this year and it is anticipated that in excess of 220,000 people in total will have visited Curve by the end of August, for a show, a coffee, for rehearsals, to attend a conference, graduation or meeting.

LTT's ticketed audience, on average across the year, has maintained a 40% City, 40% County and 20% beyond the County split.

2011/12 saw Curve implement their Harder to Reach Strategy. Currently being reviewed and developed, along with the Artistic Team, this year saw 3 of the 4 targets achieved (low income, families with children and under 26's); whilst LTT achieved 82% of a

challenging BME target and their work around access this year has formed the foundations to develop and launch that aspect of the strategy in 2012/13.

Over 16,000 people will have engaged with Curve's Participation and Learning and Community activity in the course of the year. From performing on the stages to engaging in workshops and master-classes, being members of the Curve Young Company or joining the Young Arts Entrepreneurs programme, they are working with people of all ages to enrich their lives, help them develop skills and in some instances forge successful creative careers.

This year saw Curve win regional and national awards for accessibility (Visit England Gold Award) and the work on our stages (DESH, Olivier Award for Best New Dance production and Best Venue in the Dave's Leicester Comedy Festival Awards).

LTT have 77 FTE permanent members of staff.

## **Phoenix**

Phoenix is a rapidly developing organisation that has significant potential to contribute to the cultural and economic development of Leicester. It is emerging from its start-up phase and several reorganisations.

In November 2009, Phoenix opened as a new venue, in a new location, with a different cross-art programme for Leicester. The founding stakeholders, Leicester City Council and De Montfort University work closely with Phoenix on the multi-faceted programme of world cinema, digital arts, education and community development.

Since November 2009:

- Phoenix has developed a cultural film programme of world cinema combined with seasons, festivals and special events, many of which are produced with community partners.
- Box office attendances increased from 50K (old venue) to 67K in the first year and then to 72.7K in the second year (i.e. to October 2011). Cinema audience continued to grow by 10% a year since, better than the national trend.
- Working closely with De Montfort University, Phoenix has produced a credible digital arts programme. In January 2011, Phoenix was successful in its application to become an Arts Council England (ACE) National Portfolio Organisation specialising in the digital arts. As a result, Phoenix will receive £245K over 3 years (April 2012 to March 2015), to strengthen the programme and accelerate progress in becoming a world class centre in the digital arts.
- An estimated further 25,000 people per year were attracted to a variety of other activities including events, the cafe and digital arts programme. Digital arts audiences increased markedly since the Arts Council funded programme began in April 2012.
- Cafe and trading activities have grown steadily, achieving break-even one year after opening, and now comprise 30% of total income. The financial contribution more than doubled in the last two financial years.
- Phoenix has a growing cinema audience as well as a network of local creative businesses and entrepreneurs. Phoenix has already become the “creative hub” for film and digital media that was originally envisaged.

- Operating costs have been reduced through several reorganisations and continuous pressure on supplier arrangements. Shared services are hosted by Phoenix for the Phoenix Square building partnership.
- Phoenix has a staff of 50 (17 FTEs). Many of the casual front-of-house staff are also University students or graduate early career artists and media practitioners.
- Phoenix produced a varied education programme in 2011/12. Activities for all ages were provided with a range of partners. Events for schools attracted 2,400 and nearly 400 people attended film interpretation courses for adults. Overall financial performance had improved. In the first quarter of this year, Phoenix provided 46 education events for 1,079 people and a total number of 1,665 event-attendances.
- Corporate governance and management have been strengthened. Within the last year, 6 independent Trustees have been appointed through a formal selection process that achieved the desired mix of board expertise. A permanent CEO was appointed in August and overhead costs have been reduced through a reorganisation.

## **DMH**

De Montfort Hall (DMH) is Leicester's largest arts venue (currently the 16th largest auditorium in the UK) and has a flexible seating layout that allows its single auditorium to have a capacity ranging from 400 up to 2,400 depending on configuration.

DMH was built by the Corporation of Leicester and was completed in 1913. It cost the Corporation £21,000 and apparently, was initially to be a temporary community hall. However, at some point during the design process this was reconsidered and it was finally built as a permanent concert and recital hall, much as it appears today.

It is a landmark building in the City and in 1975 it was made a grade II listed building by English Heritage.

DMH is also the home of a large concert organ believed to be the only surviving example its type. It has over 6,000 individual pipes and was constructed by the Leicester organ builders, Stephen Taylor & Son Ltd. It was gifted to The Leicester Corporation in 1914 by local industrialist Alfred Corah.

It is wholly owned and funded by Leicester City Council, and is located just outside the City centre within its own gardens which are used for outdoor events and have a capacity of up to 10,000; and has two small suites which act as both bars and as hire venues.

DMH celebrates its centenary year in 2013.

### **Artistic Programme**

DMH is predominantly a receiving theatre (i.e. it presents commercial touring shows rather than creating its own shows in-house) and presents a wide range of entertainment; however it also fully fulfils its remit to the City and region's diverse community groups.

The main strand of programming at DMH is an overtly populist one and is aimed at bringing well known and star names to the City; and at 2000+ seats it is the only venue in the City with the financial and seating capacity to regularly attract the larger commercial West End touring productions and the 'big name' comedy, rock and pop music acts to the City.

This programme is augmented by a regular, and growing, repertoire of well-known Asian artists such as Asha Bhosle, Shujaat Khan, Shreya Ghoshal, Ustad Rahat Fateh Ali Khan, Anuradha Paudwal, Alka Yagnik, Gurdas Maan, Mohit Chauhan, Roop Kumar Rathod, Sunali Rathod and Amit Kumar.

Alongside this main programme, DMH also presents a regular series of classical concerts through its residencies with The Philharmonia Orchestra and local orchestra groups such as The Leicester Philharmonic Choir, Leicester Symphony Orchestra, The Bardic Symphony Orchestra and also recitals by concert organists.

It also plays host to a number of community events such as Leicestershire Schools Music Service (formerly known Leicestershire Arts in Education), The Menphys Carol Concert; Nupur Arts Dance Academy; Raas Garba, Sharad Punam, and Navratri celebrations (with Leicester Hindu Festival Council); The Royal British Legion Festival of Remembrance, Desi Masti Bollywood Dance Academy; and the Leicester University graduation ceremonies.

It also hosts regular concerts on behalf of charities such as Help for Heroes, The Army Benevolent Fund, The Royal Air Force Association (RAFA), LOROS (The Leicestershire & Rutland Hospice), Rainbows (The Childrens Hospice) and also concerts in aid of specific community based one off events such as the unveiling of the statue to Mahatma Gandhi in Belgrave or Memorial events such as the one for Sai Baba in 2011.

### **Audiences & Users**

DMH sold 260,892 tickets in 2011/12 across 252 performances, giving an average of 1035 people per performance.

Its audience comes predominantly from the City (48% of total attendance) and the County (33% of total attendance); but also attracts audiences from further afield (19% of total attendance) - most of which come from the 40 to 60 minute drive time areas just over the Leicestershire County borders with Derbyshire, Nottinghamshire, Northamptonshire, Coventry and Warwickshire.

### **Management & Staffing**

DMH is wholly owned and operated by Leicester City Council and is managed by a General Manager who reports into the Head of Arts and Museums. It is part of Culture and Neighbourhood Services within the City Development and Neighbourhoods Department.

The staff structure has recently been reviewed and Leicester City Council now employs 39 FTE permanent members of staff at DMH.