

Committee(s)	Dated:
Barbican Centre Board	24 th January 2024
Subject: CEO Report by the Barbican's Directors	Public
Which outcomes in the City Corporation's Corporate Plan does this proposal aim to impact directly?	1,2,3,4,5,7,8,9,10,12
Does this proposal require extra revenue and/or capital spending?	N
If so, how much?	n/a
What is the source of Funding?	n/a
Has this Funding Source been agreed with the Chamberlain's Department?	n/a
Report of: Claire Spencer, Chief Executive Officer	For Information
Report authors: Chief Executive Officer and Directors, Barbican Centre	

Summary

The CEO Report comprises current updates from across the Centre.

Recommendation

Members are asked to:

NOTE the Report and ENDORSE Management's approach to future activities.

Introductory Comments

As we come to the end of the calendar year, it is pleasing to reflect back on the year and see the Barbican slowly starting to lean into the Strategic Framework that we created in 2023, and that it is being implemented consistently in accordance with our values and purpose that we launched barely a year ago. This transformational change should begin to accelerate in 2024, with new Directors and strategic appointments at Head of Department level. In the first half of 2024 we have the following roles joining us:

- Director for Audiences – name to be announced January 2024
- Director for Building and Renewal – name to be announced January 2024
- Director for Arts and Participation – offer planned for February 2024
- Head of Music – Helen Wallace, joining February 2024
- Strategy Lead – Harriet Usher, joining January 2024

Other areas of people change are outlined in the report, but include new expertise in Occupational Health and Safety, HR Business partnering, Organisational Development and Learning and Creative Collaborations.

I am also pleased to report that a number of our programmes have really benefited from cross organisation working – as the benefit of working across silos (with a view to dismantling them) becomes more prevalent.

As usual, a call out of recognition for the Barbican Team who continue to work through many challenges – both physical and cultural – in pursuit of our purpose.

Claire Spencer

CEO January 2024

Excite and Engage Audiences and Communities

Headline Visitor Numbers:

For the period 1st January 2023 –30th November 2023 overall visitor numbers (based on ticket sales) continue to track at 8% up on the same time last year with footfall (based on footfall counters) up 16%. Both of these outcomes are very pleasing.

Throughout October and November *My Neighbour Totoro* has driven a great uplift as have visitors to the Centre for Graduations and Conservatory Openings attendance.

Continued strong uplift across Cinema and Classical Music with new release titles Barbie, Tar and Oppenheimer as well as our resident orchestras, LSO and BBC all performing well. Gallery has been impacted negatively this year as it is comparing against the *Our Time On Earth* Barbican Immersive Exhibition in 2022 which performed well. BI will return to the Curve in 2025.

Ticket Sales	2022	2023	
Art Gallery	156,957	106,619	-32%
Cinema	116,986	154,243	32%
Classical Music	166,202	201,246	21%
Contemporary Music	126,605	136,553	8%
Creative Collaborative	-	1,892	
Membership	1,805	2,972	65%
Other	198,429	216,228	9%
Theatre	258,633	285,627	10%
Total	1,025,617	1,105,380	8%
Overall Footfall	1,023,531	1,187,234	16%

Note:

Other includes non-artform events e.g., Conservatory, graduations, tours, etc

Audience Strategy:

The Audience Strategy was presented to the organisation in the November Town Hall, generating further excitement and momentum in this space ahead of our Director for Audience's appointment. We continue the implementation of foundational data collection elements of our Audience Strategy. As part of building up a diversity monitoring baseline, we have conducted a pilot incentive scheme in effort to increase our survey response rate. Full analysis to come however early data indicates the pilot exceeded our projections, including among younger audiences.

Our campaign strategies will begin to evolve to support our audience strategy and a good case study of this was seen in November. Creative Collaborations ran their first club night *Bootylicious* in December following the success of the GreenTea Peng gig. This legendary night created for Black and POC queer Londoners has been running for over 20 years in Vauxhall and was an excellent audience development opportunity for the Barbican.

The supporting campaign was highly targeted to reach the primary audience of Black and POC queer and trans people. This involved making strategic decisions about limiting marketing from our CRM data in order to focus on potential new audiences. We worked with key influencers including DJ's and choreographer Claudimar Neto to build buzz ahead of the event. Collaborative posts from the headline performer, rapper and soca artist Alicai Harley were negotiated with her agent. Resident DJ Randall Watson curated a bespoke Spotify playlist for us that was shared with audiences on both Bootylicious and Barbican social media channels.

Physical manifestations of welcome have also popped up. A new Welcome Desk was built outside the shop to provide a focal point for audiences entering the building. Designed by the Ticket Sales Managers collaboration with Development and Marketing, the new desk has an integrated donations point, a 'welcome point' and built with comfort and safety in mind for the users.

And our onsite audience experience has performed well during a recent Mystery Shopping exercise. The survey was completed the last week of November with overall score of 97% across all service areas. Examples of feedback: *Always efficient, friendly and proactive team. If only every company treated members with such care and love as the Barbican. Always very prompt replies, always courteous and helpful. Consistently the best customer service from an arts venue I've ever encountered :)*

Audience Experience Training for all front facing teams, mostly casual workers across the organisation, is delivered by the AEX team and since summer, over 120 staff have been trained in Customer Interactions that includes handling difficult situations that could lead to Zero Tolerance situations.

The work with security to provide a customer focussed experience while delivering a safe environment continues – and was demonstrated through the successful close collaboration for the London Palestine Film Festival. The intelligence briefings from ISS contract providers were thorough and support from the security team at Guildhall & police provided reassurance while the delivery of the security service balanced and appropriate. Building on this success, the providers continue to recruit teams with higher levels of customer focus and in January will introduce an alternative uniform that presents a more relaxed feel.

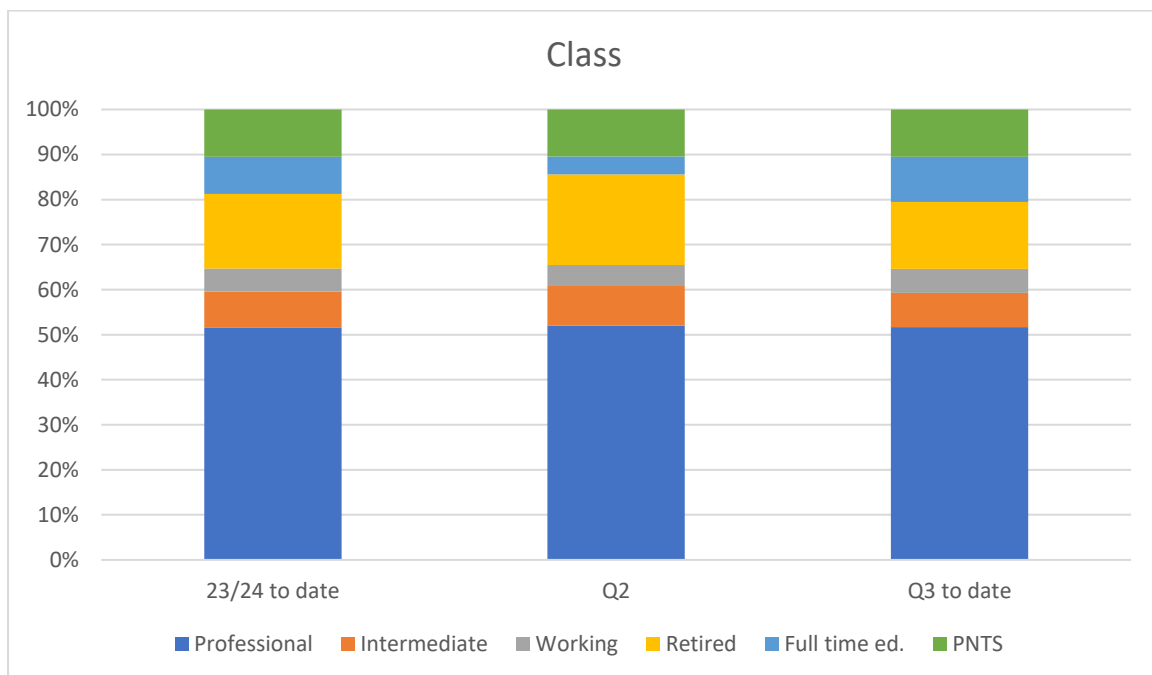
A workshop across the EDI, Digital Products and Creative Collaboration department was held in mid-December to generate further feedback on the beta audience data dashboard currently in development. This will not in itself meet all of our data analysis needs, but will greatly improve access and transparency around our audience data and enable more evidence-informed decision-making in real time. We anticipate roll out across the organisation along with training and workshops in Spring 2024.

We are implementing quarterly monitoring of our audience diversity in line with our Audience Strategy. Once developed, the audience diversity dashboard and baseline will enable us to more efficiently understand why we are observing this data., trends over time and how we can apply insights into our future planning. A reminder that our target audiences within the strategy are:

- Young People (16-29)
- Global Ethnic Majority
- D/disabled and/or D/deaf people and/or those with long-term conditions
- Working class

Quarter 3 to date has seen an increase in Young People and the Global Ethnic Majority compared to Quarter 2 and increasing the year-to-date averages. The survey incentive pilot may be contributing to this; however, more analysis will need to be done at event level, a review of the incentive pilot and monitoring for the duration of the current quarter to establish a driving reason for this. There has been a slight decrease in disabled audiences. Class breakdown has remained relatively consistent though there is a noticeable decrease in retired individuals and increase of those in full time education. Both of these are likely to be a correlation to engaging younger audiences this quarter.

The collection of data from audiences was assisted by the ticketing team, with audiences incentivised by a £10 offer to complete the survey. The fulfilment of the offer was a manual process completed by the team with 7280 completed.



Brand, Marketing and Communications:

The first brand campaign for the Barbican since Covid launched in December. This campaign was a joint initiative with the Communications team and highlighted the diverse range of festive events taking place at the Barbican, as well as highlighting retail, bars & restaurants as well as membership messaging.

All major marketing touchpoints across the Centre featured campaign branding, including the lightbox, plasmas screens, welcome screens. A wide-ranging digital awareness campaign utilised digital ad platforms including the Meta (Facebook and

Instagram) platforms, YouTube and Global's Out of Home networks at key sites across London and a communications campaign targeting listings.

The next brand campaign Bitsesize Barbican starts in January 2024 and highlights easy, quick and affordable things to do across the whole Barbican Centre including Architecture Tours, hour-long shows, catering/retail offers, free exhibitions and money saving schemes including *Pay what You Can*, *Magic Mondays* and *Young Barbican*. The campaign is specifically designed to target younger audiences and will feature prominently throughout the centre, on social media and email marketing. External media will include digital, Time Out, flyposting and communications campaign targeting listings. In addition to this social media influencer campaign will challenge key social media influencers to document a day at the Barbican for £20.

2023 has demonstrated the need for us to have a highly tuned crisis communications approach and this programme has been reviewed and tuned ahead of 2024. Following a training day that included the marketing and comms teams (no silos!) we have updated our protocols that dictate information flows and decision making through the organisation. Next steps will include:

- Develop training on the marcomms protocol for team members (plus key individuals from other teams) who haven't been involved in detail so far
- Develop an internal comms campaign for the whole organisation on their role in communicating during crises (including, importantly, what to do if you're the first to know). Also including specific information for Management Team
- Also to consider internal comms about how staff can stay informed during crisis – I expect not many people know the emergency staff helpline number, for example

We have also been watching the situation at the British Library (cyber-attack which took out all their systems over an extended period and data theft) and in the new year will sharpen our plans for such an occurrence should it occur at the Barbican.

Deepening Impact, Engagement and Legacy

In November, we distributed our 2023 Patrons report to all donors in this important cohort. As someone very wise once said to me – people don't give because they are rich, they give because they care. Sharing this kind of report with those who are already engaged is important. The report is included as the NON-PUBLIC Appendix 1.

On 15 November we launched the Barbican Annual Report for 2022-23, which is again in the form of a video – this year featuring a number of staff talking about their highlights – plus additional supporting information on the Barbican website. We sent the report to around 550 stakeholders. Subject to approval from the Board, the report will be forwarded, for information, to the Court of Common Council's March meeting.

We have also reviewed and updated a number of areas of our website, including information about the Barbican itself, careers, our leadership (including photos and biographies of the Board, Trust and Directorate for the first time), our feedback procedures, and works to improve our toilets. Always room to mention the toilets.

Fuel Creative Ambition

Purposeful Programming:

In November, Barbican Cinema hosted the London Palestine Film Festival including its opening event. This long-lasting partnership was subjected to scrutiny in the context of 7 October events in Israel and the War in Gaza. Following an extensive risk assessment and focused effort across several Barbican teams, all festival screenings including festival opening event went smoothly and boasted full houses across the board. We were proud to offer this rare space for audiences to engage with some of the most burning issues of our day through the art of cinema.

November and early December also saw Barbican Cinema host a number of other key partner festivals. Doc N Roll, curated Jazz on Screen for the EFG London Jazz Festival and we were the exclusive venue for the London International Animation Festival. All these screenings were well attended with many selling out and attracted positive press coverage.

Our New Release programme included numerous ScreenTalks with film directors for titles as diverse as Palme D'Or winner *Anatomy of a Fall*, *American Fiction*, *The Eternal Daughter*, *Saltburn*, *Chicken Run: Dawn of the Nugget* and *Orlando: My Political Biography*, all selling out. The *Sapphires* one of the 3 annual free cultivation events for our Senior Community Screenings programme sold out in record time.

Although we didn't win, the nomination of Barbican's Outdoor Cinema for a Big Screen Award was met with much positivity on this high-profile award ceremony.

The RSC arrived in the Theatre on 23 October working towards the first preview of *My Neighbour Totoro* on 21 November, with an official opening night on 30 November. The advance on box office sales has been one of the largest in the UK this year. It has been our main focus for Tickets Sales. It is the highest grossing show ever at the Barbican with current sales as £10.75m. Working with agencies and the RSC box office to maximise income and manage the agency booking data and customer experience has been an intense exercise for our ticketing team.

We are delighted to be hosting the return of this wonderful show and welcoming audiences right through to 23 March 2024 and excited to be working with the company's two new co-artistic directors, Daniel Evans and Tamara Harvey, who have some really interesting future productions for us in the pipeline.

In the Pit we welcomed back Rhiannon Faith, one of our open lab alumni. The Pit was transformed into a traditional pub for her latest dance theatre show, *Lay Down Your Burdens!* We ended the year with the return of a show we co-commissioned a few years back – *Get Happy* created by Told by an Idiot - a perfect show for the festive season designed for all ages.

On the 7 November we launched our Theatre Spring 2024 season which includes the return to our stage of iconic French star, Isabelle Huppert, and world premieres by Boy Blue and Ballet Black, plus 4 extraordinary puppet shows as part of the rebranded MimeLondon.

RE/SISTERS: A lens on gender and ecology continues in the main gallery with a lively public programme which included relaxed viewings and a conference on 7 and 8 Dec with the Paul Mellon Centre for Studies in British Art which used the themes of *RE/SISTERS* to explore the bonds between gender and environmental justice. Visitor numbers for *#RE/SISTERS: A lens on gender and ecology* are currently under target.

Ranjani Shettar's site-specific commission (in partnership with the Kiran Nadar Museum of Art) – *Cloud Songs on the Horizon* continues in the Conservatory and is a key part of the Barbican's Unwrapped offer and free offer into the new year. The team are currently exploring the potential of extending the exhibition run until end of July 2024. A mid-term review has been conducted to address internal friction in the delivery of this project across teams, with changes implemented for the remainder of the run. This approach to in-flight analysis of issues with quick course correction is a leadership practice we need to develop further in 2024.

Julianknxx continues in the Curve gallery. On 30 November we programmed a successful dance, music and poetry performance in the space with thyroneisaacstuart and Victoria Adukwei Bulley.

In Music, as ever, November means the London Jazz Festival. This year we presented – in partnership with our Associate Producer Serious – 11 concerts over the festival period in the Barbican Hall and Milton Court as well as offering numerous free performances in the Barbican foyers. Attendance was high throughout with most shows selling out. The LSO also participated, presenting a concert with Abel Selacoe (who featured in a Barbican Spotlight artist residency earlier in 2024).

In December we celebrate the 80th birthday of composer Gavin Bryars while the LSO welcomed Gianandrea Noseda to conduct a series of concerts. And, of course, Raymond Gubbay returned to present their annual Christmas season.

The Creative Collaboration team delivered two pilot Club Stage events, a new strand of music programming aimed at a younger and more culturally diverse demographic. These late-night club events created a standalone informal gig space on Level -1 between 10pm – 3am. *Greentea Selecta* took place on Saturday 4 November and was well received by the audience who were surprised that the Barbican had staged such an event with the gig selling out in three days attracting a demographic of under 30s which was a key measure of success. On Saturday 9 December we partnered with Bootylicious the longest running Black LGBTQ+ club night in the country to create a Bootylicious *Love and Legacy Party* with live performance from rapper & songwriter *Alicai Harley*.

Once again, the event sold out and attracted the Global Majority LGBTQ+ audience bringing 72% new bookers to the Barbican. The partnership with Bootylicious is important for building credibility with this audience going forward, as it is a trusted brand within the community. These events are central to the new approach of the department and the future series. We are grateful for the audience experience team and security for supporting the CC department to create a welcoming and safe celebratory event for a community that we have taken much care to build trust with.

The club night pilot on 4 November attracted some complaints from Barbican residents regarding sub-base noise travelling from Level -1 through the concrete to flats in Frobisher Crescent despite similar style afterparty events happening in this space in previous years. For the second event on 9 December, the decibel output was restricted so we could deliver an event that demonstrated our commitment to our community partner Bootylicious and responded to the concerns and well-being of the residents. However, in order to continue with an important area of programming which aligns with the Barbican's audience strategy an agreement on 'reasonableness' must be made so that the integrity of these events is not compromised, and which will allow us to continue to build and welcome new audiences. There were issues with audience egress and neighbour disturbance, which we will consider further in 2024.

In January and February 2024, Cinema will present *Artists in Residence a curated season* using artist's film and archive material to explore the unstable relationship between London's space, art-making, and everyday life.

Spotlight moment – Barbican Theatre - A Strange Loop - Summer 2023

Barbican Theatre's popular summer musical this year was Michael R Jackson's Pulitzer Prize and Tony Award winning *A Strange Loop*. Brought direct to London from Broadway by producers Trafalgar Entertainment it played for 96 performances from June to September to 79,671 attendees representing 74% capacity. The production attracted a diverse audience and received a high level of media attention, while making a significant financial contribution to the Barbican budget through rental and ancillary income. *A Strange Loop's* London season has so far been nominated for The Stage Debut Awards, and the Evening Standard Theatre Awards. A tribute to all those who worked on it and made it a terrific success. For more information, please refer to the NON-PUBLIC Appendix 2, *Barbican A Strange Loop 2023 Evaluation* paper in the Information Pack.

Artistic Talent Development:

The autumn has seen 4 Open Lab alumni presenting their work as part of our public programming – Julene Robinson, Emma+PJ, PappyShow and Rhiannon Faith have all played to full, enthusiastic houses. They are all testament to the impact our Open Lab can have on experimenting with and creating new forms of theatre making. Our Open Lab artist development initiative is currently on pause while we seek different funding sources to replace the past ACE support.

On 29 November, Music welcomed the artist-in-residence at Milton Court in 2023-4, American clarinettist Anthony McGill who performed music by Anthony Davis with the Britten Sinfonia and gave a masterclass to GSMD students – he returns in Spring 2024. We also presented (in Milton Court) the first ever UK performance by American saxophonist Sam Gendel, an artist we plan to work with again in future.

Creative Collaborations is delivering two annual Young Barbican programmes - Barbican Young Poets and Emerging Film Curators which started in November. Both programmes are well-respected in the industry and have secured diverse cohorts of participants. Young Changemakers year two programme is due to start in spring 2024.

For the Emerging Film Curators a cohort of 15 candidates was given training on how to run a cinema event, the marketing team has started working with the four groups of programmers on their screening events. Given the highly specialised nature of each event, we have agreed to create a poster for each screening, rather than a generic poster promoting them all separately and in January, the Emerging Film Curators have been invited to take part in a filming day, where we will create a trailer for each of their films.

Intellectual Property Development and Content Leverage:

The Visual Arts team is collaborating with ARoS Aarhus Kunstmuseum in Denmark to show Soheila Sokhanvari's Rebel Rebel exhibition from opening 12 January 2024 and co-curating Unravel: The Power and Politics of Textiles in Art (opening at the Barbican on 14 February 2024) with the Stedelijk, Amsterdam where it will open in September 2024. Planning continues for RE/SISTERS at FOMU, Antwerp 29 March – 18 August 2024.

Barbican Immersive's *Our Time on Earth* exhibition has now received over 82,000 visitors as it enters its final months at the Musee de la Civilisation in Quebec City, Canada. Preparations are under way for the next venue on the tour, which will be The Peabody Essex Museum in Salem. Discussions are underway for potential partners in Portugal and China for the further tour. A new version of one of the installations from *Our Time on Earth*, will also be staged at the Electric Dreams Festival as part of Adelaide Fringe in February 2024.

The *Ai: More than Human* exhibition has had a fantastic start to its run at CCCB in Barcelona, with over 20,000 visitors in the first month and positive press coverage. The exhibition tour would be due to end in 2024 after 5 years but due to demand we will extend the exhibition for a further 2 years. There is strong interest in both Canada and Australia for the continued tour.

Mangasia: Wonderlands of Asian Comics will make its North American debut as - Asian Comics: Evolution of An Art Form. At the Bowers Museum, Santa Ana in March 2024. Extensive work has been carried out by the team to confirm new loans for the upcoming exhibition and develop new content.

Work has continued to bring *Game On 1 & 2* together and final preparations are underway for *Game On* to open in January at Doncaster Dome before it will continue its tour to the National Museum of Scotland in the summer of 2024.

Project development continues at pace for the *Fundamentals of Music* exhibition with the Co-Producers in Japan. This will launch at Barbican in 2025 across the centre. *Virtual Realms* is in discussions for updating content for potential exhibition in China.

Invest in our People and Culture

People and Leadership:

Alongside overseeing the recruitment to the three director roles, recruitment has started to two roles in the HR Team, in the form of a Head of HR Business Partnering and Operations and a Head of Organisational Development and Design. Both are critical roles in supporting the Director of People, Culture and Inclusion.

A full update on Director recruitment will be given at the meeting. Our Communications and Marketing teams worked together to develop a high-quality microsite to support the recruitment of our three new Directors, including a video featuring Claire Spencer and rich information about the Barbican's purpose, values, programme and projects.

The Head of Organisational Development and Design will have two prime areas of focus. The first around building organisational capability (leadership and management development, talent management, apprenticeships, employer brand and conventional L&D). The second around advising on operating models and organisational design.

The Head of Business Partnering and Operations will have an extended brief managing day-to-day HR operations and overseeing the people aspects of the changes linked to new ways of working and the people implementation of the strategic framework.

We will be working with a recruitment consultancy to help us with this key search and an informative candidate pack has been developed for the two roles with a view to attracting a strong field of experienced candidates. We plan to make appointments early in the new year.

Our new EDI Business Partner will be joining the team in January. This role will be focused on a full strategic review of our offer for audiences and staff in terms of mental health, wellbeing, reasonable adjustments, and access.

Members will recall that, whilst a paper had been prepared for discussion at Corporate Services Committee, it was decided that some further internal discussions should take place, with the CoLC CPO assigned to move this forward.

In the meantime, and until it has been possible to obtain more freedoms, discussions are planned to seek more of a focus by the CoLC on the work required by the Barbican, including on leadership/management development, analytics and engagement (and in particular an engagement survey).

We are also liaising with the CoLC on the touchpoints and opportunities afforded by the development of the People Strategy, the 'My Contribution – My Reward' project (see above) and the set-up/delivery of the work that will be required around the rollout of the ERP solution.

Casuals and Freelancers:

We are aware that the current model, whilst providing flexibility for some colleagues, does not provide the level of stability and consistency that others desire. It also presents challenges around management and an on-going feeling of 'Us' (Permanent Employees) v 'Them' (Casuals). Whilst there is no 'one-model' that will alleviate challenges for all, there are options to be considered.

The CoLC has appointed an external consultancy, Evolving Solutions, to carry out a review of the casual workforce across the Corporation, including that of the Barbican. The review will initially analyse the payroll data on the current workforce to clarify current working arrangements, patterns, and costs. Following this, a workforce planning exercise will be undertaken, with proposals for future working models and associated costs. These are likely to require an increase on the current budget. It is expected that a final report and recommendations will be presented to Corporate Services Committee in April 2024 and Members will be kept informed of developments.

The Casual Team have been provided relevant information on access to Pensions which is administered by the Pensions Team at the CoLC. If they wish to access this benefit they are required to 'enrol'. This is different to our permanent colleagues who 'auto-enrol' on joining the Barbican as a CoLC employee.

We are liaising with the Pensions and CoLC Chamberlains team around any backdated entitlements for any casual members.

In September, we had the first Host Forum run by hosts who wished to engage with the Management team on issues such as pensions and employment models. This proved successful with a follow up to the meeting planned in January 2024. This will be for pensions awareness and updates to issue raised along with progress on employment models. The new London Living Wage uplift was applied in December backdated to November.

Revitalise our Place

Building Renewal, Development and Operation

Advocacy

We have developed an advocacy strategy for Renewal. This is included in the NON-PUBLIC Appendix 3.

Design Development

Design development for potential early phase Barbican Renewal projects continues to progress well, with the aim of submitting RIBA Stage 2 reports for these projects in May 2024.

Survey work to build a clearer understanding of the building is nearing completion onsite, incorporating measured and condition surveys and an inclusive design audit. These will inform both design development and prioritisation and phasing discussions due to take place over the coming months.

Research being undertaken to develop a long term vision for the Barbican's F&B offer is due to report in Q1 of 2024, with the same consultant also being used to advise on the tendering of the Centre's catering and restaurant contracts.

A planning consultant has been appointed (The Planning Lab) following a competitive tender process and has begun work with the team to begin to develop an early planning strategy.

Detailed design briefs are being drafted and finessed for the projects being taken to RIBA Stage 2, with the internal project groups set up at the beginning of the current phase of work playing a key role in the development of requirements. Business case development is also underway for these projects, again in close collaboration with Barbican project groups.

Reviewing our Operational Support of Guildhall Music and Drama

The Guildhall School Board of Governors met in October. There was a considerable discussion on the Alliance, cost, value for money and appropriateness of the services. The Board were keen to see a review progressed as quickly as possible, in the hope that a more bespoke service can be designed and achieved at a reduced cost. The School, the Centre and the City Surveyor are all involved in the early stages of the review. A progress statement should be ready for the next Board meeting.

Building an Enterprising Business

Growing our Income Streams

Individual Giving

The team delivered a very successful Patron event for My Neighbour Totoro aimed at families, which saw a number of joyous children experimenting with puppets from the show.

We were proud to release the first-ever Patrons Report, highlighting the past Financial Year for donors and showcasing what their support has enabled around the Centre, including community and schools work, subsidised ticket schemes, and more.

After consultation with our Trustees and key donors, we have refreshed Patron benefits and are in the process of updating our collateral for the new year.

We have updated onsite and online donation messaging in advance of December for the season to deliver festive giving campaign across Centre.

Corporate

On 11 December we launched a new partnership with Disney Searchlight and the Film Poor Things. The partnership comprises of an exclusive exhibition of original costumes from *Poor Things*, the new film from director Yorgos Lanthimos, starring Emma Stone. The exhibition is open to visitors until 19 January 2024 and on the evening on Thursday 14 December the Barbican hosted a special red carpet gala screening of the film with stars Emma Stone, Mark Ruffalo and Willem Dafoe in attendance. From 12 January 2024 visitors will be able to see special 35mm print screenings in all Barbican cinemas.

The partnership has been promoted in a range of high-profile marketing activations across the Centre, including the lightbox, festive poster takeover and plasma screens as well we have worked closely with the Searchlight marketing team, to produce high quality social media assets to promote the partnership online.

We are delighted to welcome BMO as a new Corporate Member and we are looking forward to engaging their staff with the Barbican's varied artist programme across the coming year.

Trusts and Grants

We have secured grants from Arts Scholars Charity, African Arts Trust and the Ampersand Foundation.

Business Events

The team attended 3 trade events which yielded £2.2m worth of enquiries primarily for 2024 onwards.

This period has continued to see high levels of business events activity in all areas of operation.

A total of eight Hall dates allocated to Business Events have been sold with a mixture of events, including Fane, producing another two sell out talks with author Dolly Alderton. Author, adventurer, and documentary filmmaker Simon Reeve also enjoyed the comfort of a sell-out audience during the conclusion of the 'To the Ends of the Earth' tour. In addition, there were two graduation ceremonies and a corporate conference in December and a further two graduation ceremonies in January. In total welcoming over 19,000 visitors to the Barbican.

Continuing with the 'joyful' theme, we have delivered a record number of 'festive party events' this year, with a total of 12 events hosted in the Garden Room and Conservatory, mostly for new clients, with a few long-standing repeat events in the mix.

During the period, we have received much positive praise from event organisers about the wider Barbican team and Searcys, our events catering partner including 'delicious food, best party ever, nothing was too much trouble, absolute pleasure working with you, and you are an extension to our team'.

Overall, a very productive period for Business Events and activity levels are continuing to stay high heading through the winter months.

Retail

Seasonal gifting and festive buying has been the focus over the past few months. Our Foyer Shop transformed in November ready for the holiday season. The theme in our windows and featuring on level G is 'Boogie Wonderland', this was driven by retail trends this year with a prominence of 70's inspired textiles, ceramics, colours and patterns. On the lower floor we are embracing the return of My Neighbour Totoro, with woodland themed decorations and gifts, alongside Totoro licensed products and theatre merch. To maximise our theatre merchandise sales we have also opened our Totoro lodge at Silk St and a further pop up on the level G foyer. And to add to our offer this year we have collaborated with The Japanese Gallery to offer a selection of rare and original anime and manga posters and film cels. The Japanese Gallery curated the selection which has proven to be very popular with our audiences.

We also ran a successful online shopping event from the 22 November to 28 November, offering online purchasers 20% off and free delivery over £75. Compared to the same weeks last year, when we ran the same promotion, we saw an increase in net sales (£) of 30% and an increase in total orders of 40%, with our seasonal team picking and packing over 630 orders during the promotional period.

Looking ahead, we are already in the middle of our buying and product development plans for the next gallery exhibition, and we will be looking at Christmas decorations ready for the 2024 festive season as early as January.

Retail also had their highest sales week ever in the lead up to Christmas. The team are to be congratulated on the strategic approach to Christmas that we signed off back in February (including our little Totoro chalet at the Silk Street entrance). The retail approach to My Neighbour Totoro has also been very well received by

audiences and the RSC – some lovely correspondence from the company below following Press Night:

Well, what a night and what a HUGELY impressive merchandise offer we have at the Barbican for *My Neighbour Totoro*.

The kiosks, the merchandise itself, the lighting, signage, displays and the staff make the whole place look and feel incredible.

Brilliant, brilliant work. I can't thank you all enough.

Here's to a very successful run for us all.

Restaurants & Cafes

The rebrand and refresh of the Level 1 restaurant from 'Bonfire' to 'Barbican Bar & Grill' took place in early November. Early indications that the refreshed menu with a greater focus on plant-based dishes, a more comfortable bar area with new furniture and refreshed interior has made the impact we were hoping for. Anecdotally, the diversity and demographic of guests has widened, which as one of the prime motivations for the change, the bar is now being utilised by a drinking crowd and spend per transaction is up around £4. With the Totoro audience making good use of the space, it has been a positive start to the venture.

The *Cinema Cafe & Bar* offer continues to improve under the Barbican Bars team. In November we launched a Lunch Menu offering made to order salads and filled sandwiches. Sales are continuing to grow and now averaging double the daily income from when we first took over. We are now seeking HR support to grow the permanent team (specifically an assistant manager and chef), as now we are busier it is proving challenging to operate with only casual staff.

Barbican Bars

The *Martini Bar* has been dressed for the holiday festive season, making it the focus, along with the shop, of the Barbican's activity. A new range of festively inspired cocktails curated by our mixologist and Martini Bar Manager, Harvey Macaraig, have been introduced and selling well. Watch out for the picture of him making one of the cocktails on the big lightbox at the Silk Street entrance.

Car Parks

Our EV charging points operator (Qwello) have been on site to undertake further electrical surveys to upgrade the existing charging points and add additional chargers in Car Park 3. The new EV chargers will have capability to charge a fee for use and the expectation is to then increase the number of EV charging points into Car Park 4 in due course.

Food and Beverage Tender

We are now well into our planning for the Food and Beverage Tender, with consultation underway with interested stakeholder groups (including Residents and the LSO) and a detailed timeline devised. The expiry of the current Searcy's and Benugo's contract are not ideal when considered against performance activity (summer musical) and also the fact they both expire at the same time – which means

we could potentially be facing venue closer and onboarding of new operators across all venues at the same time. We have therefore decided to initiate short extensions on both, to reduce the impact on both revenue and audience experience. Recommendations of such are due to go to the relevant procurement committee in February.

Dynamic Pricing

Dynamic pricing 2.0 continues as a manual process delivered by the ticket sales team in collaboration with art forms and marketing to assess its effectiveness against Digonex algorithms with provided an uplift of 8%. The manual process is more ambitious at onsales and towards the dates when sale pick up again rather than micro changes to price bands that is adopted by the automatic process. This stage two process will continue until June when a further assessment will be made in July 2024.

Corporation Diagnostic on Income Streams

The Corporation have commissioned an organisation called Human Engine to complete a diagnostic across the City. In City words they are 'looking at developing governance/ process and prioritisation to income generation across the Departments and Institutions'.

As an institution that generates 60% of its own revenues, we are very alive to the need to grow revenues and we have flagged with the City Team that we have a strategic programme dedicated to growing our income streams. We will of course be collaborative and curious as to any additional insights that Human Engine can gather. We will be alert to any new reporting, governance or accountability requirements that may divert us from our purpose, but remain optimistic (as is our way) that there may be some value add to gather. Previously revenue generating ideas that we have submitted into City processes (events, tours) have not lead to any changes.

Customer Conversion

The box office continues to have the majority of its business online with other customer interactions largely via e-mail with over 22000 e-mails responded to by staff since 1st September. Work continues to maximise the phone/in person bookings with a 8% conversion target, particularly for donations and ticket sales teams have been working closely with colleagues in Development to position the donations campaigns. This continues with the current conversion topping 9.86% with the aim to consistently deliver 10% conversion overall. Top performers reach up to 46% which is communicated to incentivise others.

Sales points have been reintroduced to capitalise on the sales for Totoro with trials of different sweets, drinks and snacks. Our onsales upsales were tardy for this show which will be corrected for the summer show selling a range of packages including entry level items of ice creams and programmes. A stretch target for the winter show is £115k with current sales at just over £50k, we are on target for the end of the run. We are proud to continue to offer exclusively vegan ice creams which received excellent feedback.

Working in Line with Our Values

Sitting alongside the work to progress the programme goals strategic framework, we have instigated some work on translating our core values into behaviours. This represents an important piece of work as it will be possible to reflect and measure them through different parts of the employee lifecycle (e.g. recruitment and performance management).

The next steps to bring the Values to life will be a session on the Behaviours Framework with the Management Team, followed by workshops, inviting colleagues across the organisation to participate and contribute. The aim is to incorporate the Behaviours into performance management, and recruitment and selection processes during the 2024/25 performance cycle.

Equity Diversity and Inclusion

A full EDI report was provided to the People, Culture and Inclusion Sub Committee in January. Progress continues to move in the right direction. Our Head of EDI has continued to support the broader EDI programme in the Corporation, though this will change early in 2024 with a new interim Director engaged.

A successful collaboration with music and theatre colleagues on various forms of business continuity incidents has resulted in the addressing of Zero Tolerance issues in the music team along with stronger 'show stop' plans that support the overall business continuity. This was presented at the last All Team Meeting and was well received.

Ethical and Transparent Business with Appropriate Governance

The main output from this programme of work for 2024 is the Ethics Code. Developed over the course of 2023, this is presented to the Board for approval at this meeting. Once approved, training will be rolled out for all relevant areas – starting with Programming and Development. Tools for implementing the code are also under development.

Staff Culture, Engagement and Wellbeing

We held a well-attended Town Hall meeting on 28 November for all staff, with three agenda items all intended to demonstrate progress towards the delivery of our strategic framework and in line with our values: an update on new procedures to deal with backstage Zero Tolerance incidents ahead of live events; an update on the Audience Strategy; and a review of August's successful Outdoor Cinema

We held a Festive Breakfast for staff on 5 December, with a number of Board and Trust Members in attendance (thank you Jane Roscoe for saying a few words on behalf of the Board).

We continued our new series of 'Barbican AMA' sessions – at which individuals or teams talk through a project they've been working on, to increase staff understanding of different parts of the organisation and break down silos – with Bars and Music featuring

We continued to issue weekly internal staff Barbican Bulletins e-newsletters full of news, updates, and useful information.

Planning, Budgeting and Risk Management

Our internal audit programme for 2024 will cover Health and Safety, Safeguarding and Fire Safety, with all reports going to the Finance and Risk Committee.

We have redesigned our engagement with Corporation Risk Management – to ensure that we have the correct representation on the Chief Officer Risk Management Group (CEO) and the Risk Management Group (Head of Finance). We have also completed a comprehensive review of Risk Register – sharpening up our narrative particularly around Building Risk (with Renewal being the mitigation), downgrading some risks which have new control frameworks in place around them (Safeguarding) and combining others into more logical categories. These revisions will sharpen our risk management practices and increase our focus on appropriate mitigation. For 2024, we will fully engage in the risk appetite proposed by the Corporation – work which we believe if done well will really highlight our risk areas and where we are already out of appetite.

In January, we will commence our own discovery of Health and Safety management – to ensure that we meeting our obligations to our people and ahead of the arrival of an interim Head of OHSE (permanent appointment to be made by the Director for Building and Renewal and Director for Audiences once they commence).

Five years ago, the Barbican joined the DCMS Museums & Galleries media buying framework (led by the British Library) and featuring 18 large cultural organisations) to procure a new media agency. Over the latter part of 2023 we have been part of a new process to find a lead, full-service media agency and a number of specialist and media agencies that we could call of on. We have been working with Havas media for over 12 years but, from 1 March will be working with a new agency <https://aip.media/>. Anything is Possible impressed us from the outset with their approach and case studies, and they also offered very competitive rates. We are already starting to work with them on the onboarding process and are discussing how we can take a new, more strategic, approach to our media buying going forward.

Claire Spencer

Chief Executive Officer

Appendix 1: *Patrons Report (NON-PUBLIC)*

Appendix 2: *A Strange Loop Report (NON-PUBLIC)*

Appendix 3: *Advocacy Strategy for Barbican Renewal (NON-PUBLIC)*