



ST. GEORGE'S
GUILDHALL

A CULTURAL LANDMARK REBORN

St George's Guildhall & Creative Hub

Preserving the past. Embracing the arts.
Investing in King's Lynn's future.

ST. GEORGES GUILDHALL UPDATE

MEMBER MAJOR PROJECT BOARD
4 NOVEMBER 2026

Guildhall Update November MMPB 2026

Agenda

Welcome & Introduction

Update on progress

Key strategic aspects of the scheme.

- 1. Capital Works**
- 2. Site Progress**
- 3. Fundraising**
- 4. Engagement & Activities**
- 5. Communications Strategy/ Activity Update**
- 6. Vision & Business Plan narrative**
- 7. Next steps & Key Focus**
- 8. Questions**

1.Capital Works



1. Capital Works - Project Progress

Main Contractor Messenger BCR - 11 months into contract Nov 2025 – Jun 2028

Winter 25 - Spring 2026

- Demolitions (Shakespeare Barn)
- Asbestos removal
- Scaffold build across site
- Historic timber roofs, floors, removed as scoped
- Repairs starting to Guildhall, Red Barn
- Scaffold licenses with various neighbours signed/ access underway
- King Street external highways scheme submission for planning

Summer - Autumn 2026

- Groundworks
- New footings, door/ window openings to various locations.
- Brick work and repairs underway.
- Roof tiles to Guildhall starting
- Crown Post Truss install
- Heating and Electrical designs continue, including how the Theatre will support the Shakespeare Visitor Experience design.
- Archaeological excavations to lift pit

1. Capital Works - Project Progress

Commercial Update

- Actuals as of 30th September 2026 are £5.9m, within the current budget of £30.5m.
- Actual spend primarily relates to professional and consulting costs, including project management, quantity surveyor, and architect costs.
- Main contractor costs to date are £2.2m.
- £15.1m funding is secured (of £30.5m), including the £2.5m PiP award.
- £15.4m is the current funding requirement.

Social Value

- Messenger have already exceeded their local economy spend target.
- Engagement Schools/CWA & site Apprentice(s) underway.
- Construction & Design Team employing c.145 people across the project - ahead of target.

IMPACT AT A GLANCE

Social Value & Construction Activity

MCL Local Spend	
Scaffolding	£300,000
Demolition	£75,000
Roofing	£300,000
Structural Steel	£250,000
Groundworks, civils, general building work	£1,150,000
Guttering/ Roofing material	£55,000
Plastering & Dry Lining	£400,000
Total	£2,530,000



145
Jobs Created

SV TARGET £2.5 million

ACHIEVED £2,530,000

£30K OVER target

Social Value Goals Committed in Tender	
Goal	Achieved – Y/N
Apprenticeship	1/2
Heritage Session	1/2
Work Experience	Targeted 2027
Hardhat Tours	Targeted 2027
Hands on Heritage Demonstrations	Targeted 2027
Leave your mark in History	Targeted 2027

2. Site Progress



2. Site Progress – Summer/ Early Autumn 2026



2. Site Progress – Summer/ Early Autumn 2026



2. Site Progress - Summer Early Autumn 2026



2. Site Progress - Summer / Early Autumn 2026



3. Fundraising



3. Fundraising Update

Cause 4 - Funding Consultants

- Prior to the engagement of Cause 4 fundraising consultants the project team were successful in securing in excess of c.£1.5M.
- Cause 4 appointed after successful tender exercise.
- Detailed activity updates reported now monthly into overall Programme.
- New application opportunities continually being progressed.
- Arts Council England advised BC to complete full application end October. Access Improvements opportunities.
- These awards rely upon years of building trust and many hours of cultivating positive views about the opportunities in our region.

4. Engagement & Activities



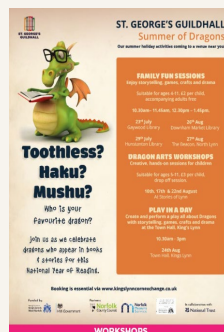
4. Engagement & Activities Update

Family Fun Sessions

- Story Telling, games, crafts, and drama at various locations around the Borough during July and August.
- Sessions in Hunstanton, Downham, Gaywood and North Lynn.
- 50% of sessions are in areas of high socio-economic challenge.
- Committed to delivering access and activities in traditionally hard to reach communities.
- Uptake for activities in these areas has been high, with previous sessions being oversubscribed.

Dragon Arts Workshops

- Creative hands-on sessions for children exploring their favourite dragon.
- The town wide Dragon festival returns on the 7th Nov.



Armin Festival

- Schools' festival held on the 17th Sept. Celebrating Robert Armin

Schools and Visitors to Number 29 King Street.

- Visits to Schools reached over 800 children.
- Minster (end of term play) attracted 200 young people.
- Visitors to No29 King Street as of 24 August 2026 2,751 so far this year.

Heritage Open Day 13 September 2026

- 1,059 members of the public throughout the day
- Collaboration with our contractors Messenger to facilitate this safely

5. Communications Strategy & Activity Update



5. Communications Strategy Update

Objectives

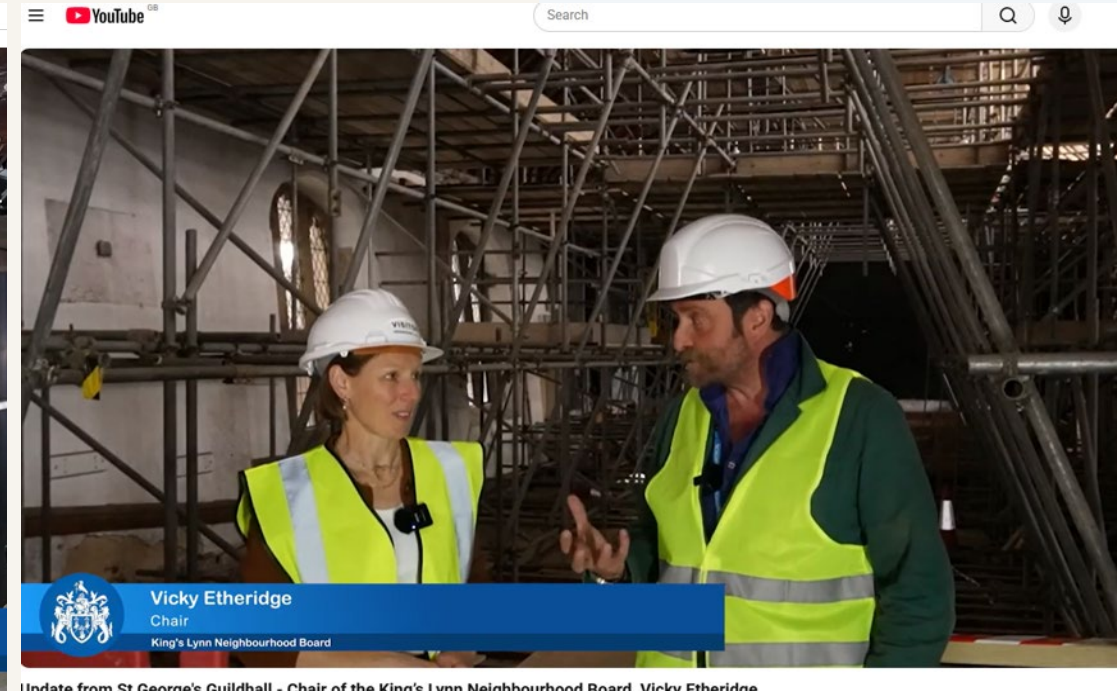
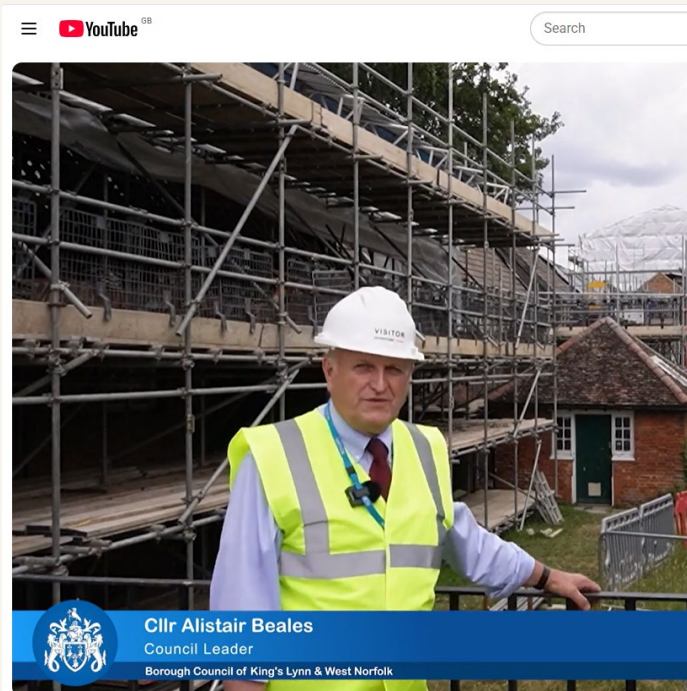
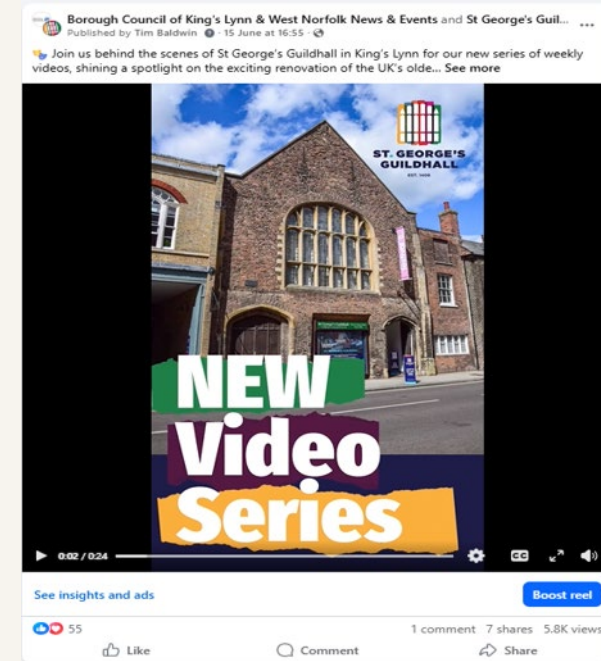
- **Engage the whole community** positively on the St George's Guildhall and Creative Hub project
- **Highlight the value and opportunities the Guildhall project will bring for all** – new facilities, jobs, business, economy, heritage, creativity, learning, sustainability
- **Demonstrate visible progress** across whole site
- **Support fundraising activities** – raise awareness, ensure funders feel involved/ownership.
- **Balance need for people to understand this locally** as a council-led partnership project, while allowing flex for national fundraising efforts.
- **Maintaining the visibility of the Guildhall brand** for future operations

5. Communications Strategy Update

- **Regular multi-channel communications activity** related to on-site activities, making the most of opportunities for proactive, positive engagement with stakeholder groups
- **Highlight ongoing** conservation, Set-piece PR/news “stories”, Operationally important comms, Site visits for key stakeholder groups.
- Dual approach to maximise the opportunities presented by the Project
- Cover and focus on two primary areas of activity
 1. **National/ International** opportunities, demands and stakeholders
 2. **Regional/ Local** opportunities, demands and stakeholders
- **Collectively** those aspects that will share and exploit the same respective content

5. Communications Strategy Update

- Social media Updates – create/maintain excitement locally
- Visually demonstrate on-site progress
- Topics now covered by much wider group of interviewers.
- Forward Plan calendar



35,827

Combined views

35,000

Facebook views

827

YouTube views

12,200

Top video views

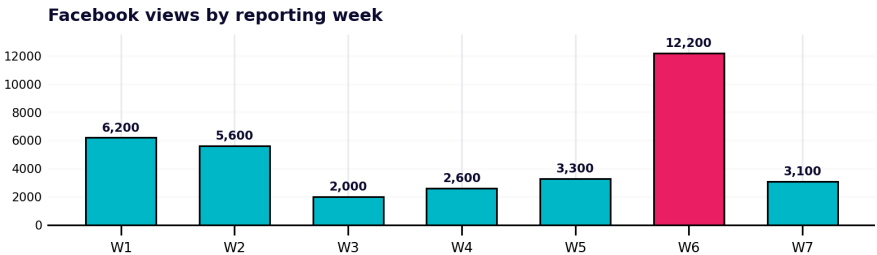
KEY INSIGHT

Facebook delivered over 42x the recorded YouTube views.

PERFORMANCE OVERVIEW

- Across seven videos, **Facebook** generated **35,000 views**, representing **97.7%** of the **35,827 combined total**.
- Week 6, featuring **Shakespeare Barn video 1**, was the **strongest performer** with **12,200 Facebook views**.
- On **YouTube**, **Weeks 1, 2 and 3** jointly **achieved** the highest recorded result at **166 views** each.

FACEBOOK VIEWS BY REPORTING WEEK



WEEKLY DETAIL

Week	Video subject	YouTube	Facebook
1	Introduction with Cllr Ring	166	6,200
2	Guildhall roof update	166	5,600
3	White Barn archaeology	166	2,000
4	Red Barn roof	68	2,600
5	Cllr Beales first video	92	3,300
6	Shakespeare Barn video 1	115	12,200
7	Vicky Etheridge	54	3,100

RECOMMENDED REPORTING APPROACH

1

LEAD MEASURE

Report Facebook and YouTube separately, using Facebook as the lead reach measure.

2

CONSISTENCY

Record results after the same number of live days to support fair comparison.

3

DEEPER INSIGHT

Add reactions, comments, shares, viewing duration and link activity where available.

REPORTING NOTE Week 7 had been live for six days when recorded and is not directly comparable with earlier weeks.

5. Communications Strategy Update

Monthly Newsletters

- Monthly construction e-newsletter 5 out now and shared with key stakeholders
- Regular updates to demonstrate on-site progress
- Shared to councillors, CLT, KL Neighbourhood Board, CIO, project partners, officer team, volunteers
- Branded template
- E-newsletter will also provide some photo content for social media updates for the wider public
- Some content will be included in Your News (residents) and Our News (for staff)



October 2026 – Newsletter 5

Welcome to our October newsletter. This month, we shine a spotlight on some of the conservation works taking place within this remarkable Grade I listed building, continuing the restoration journey and preserving the site's rich heritage which remains at the heart of everything we do.

Restoration of the building's historic brickwork is continuing to make steady progress, with skilled craftspeople carefully repairing areas that have weathered over many centuries. As a Grade I listed building, preserving as much of the original fabric as possible is at the heart of the approach, ensuring that the character and craftsmanship that make the building so special are retained for future generations.

A key part of the work has been the careful selection of materials. Where bricks are beyond repair, replacements are chosen to closely match the original in colour, texture and size, helping to maintain the building's historic appearance. Traditional lime mortar has also been selected to match the original mortar wherever possible, helping to maintain the building's historic character while allowing the brickwork to perform as intended.

The combination of specialist conservation skills and carefully sourced materials will help ensure St Georges Guildhall remains a source of pride for the community for many years to come.



6. Vision & Business Plan Narrative



6. Vision & Narrative Update

Vision Paper – Restated

ST GEORGE'S GUILDHALL & CREATIVE HUB

Vision

To establish St George's Guildhall and surrounding site as one of the UK's most distinctive heritage and cultural destinations – a living theatre, creative hub and community asset where 600 years of history inspires creativity, learning, enterprise and pride in King's Lynn, attracting local people and visitors from across the world. At its heart is the UK's oldest working theatre which is the last theatre left in which Shakespeare performed.

This will allow the site to become a globally recognised cultural destination where heritage, creativity and community come together to celebrate the past, inspire the present and shape the future of King's Lynn.

Delivering the Vision

The operation of St George's Guildhall and Creative Hub will be creatively led and run by a charity.

It is built around three principles for creating a successful and sustainable cultural destination.

- 1 **A Vibrant Culture and Heritage Destination** – St George's Guildhall and Creative Hub will offer people multiple reasons to come to the site, from paid-for heritage and performance experiences to free exhibitions, site-wide interpretation, and educational programmes and attractive creative business studios and retail spaces, food and beverage offer - animating the site day and night.
- 2 **A Globally Significant Identity** – In the town where Shakespeare's comedian Robert Armin was born; this site will be only place in the world where you can take an immersive tour across the boards of an active theatre where Shakespeare and his company performed, watch a performance and experience 600 years of theatrical, royal and social history in one building.
- 3 **A Resilient, Diversified and Flexible Model** – Balancing diverse revenue generating activities that embed flexibility into the business model, allowing the operation to respond to demand and circumstances aided by spaces that are designed to be flexible and easily repurposed which are in line with the charitable purposes of the Charity¹.

Narrative Support



6. Outputs

“One of the UK’s most distinctive heritage and cultural destinations: A living theatre, creative hub and community asset”

- **34 permanent FTE jobs created.**
- **8 improved cultural facilities.**
- **10 heritage buildings renovated or restored**, safeguarding important local assets.
- **6 derelict buildings brought back into use.**
- **10,300 capacity for new or improved training and education facilities.**
- **50 enterprises supported**, helping local businesses to develop and grow.
- **60 potential entrepreneurs supported to become enterprise-ready**, encouraging new business activity.
- **1,572m² of parks, green space and outdoor areas improved.**
- **825m² of new office space created**, resulting in 11-14 flexible creative business spaces.
- **Footfall output increased from 900% to 1,680%**, significantly strengthening the scheme’s anticipated impact on activity in the area.
- **NEW: 350m² of King Street public realm improvements**, subject to planning.
- **55 temporary full-time jobs supported during delivery**, alongside the longer-term employment benefits.

IMPACT AT A GLANCE – CREATE

A cultural investment with measurable reach

Projected outcomes combine economic value, participation and creative opportunity.

£30.8m

projected economic benefit

117

jobs supported or created

c.70,000

annual visitors on average

200

theatre performances
each year

175

additional annual events

50–60

entrepreneurs &
anchor staff supported



Access, learning & participation for all designed in

1

STEP-FREE ACCESS

New lifts and level routes to key public and performance spaces.

3

Schools, workshops, evening classes, volunteering and summer schools.

2

INCLUSIVE FACILITIES

Improved wayfinding, acoustics, toilets and Changing Places provision.

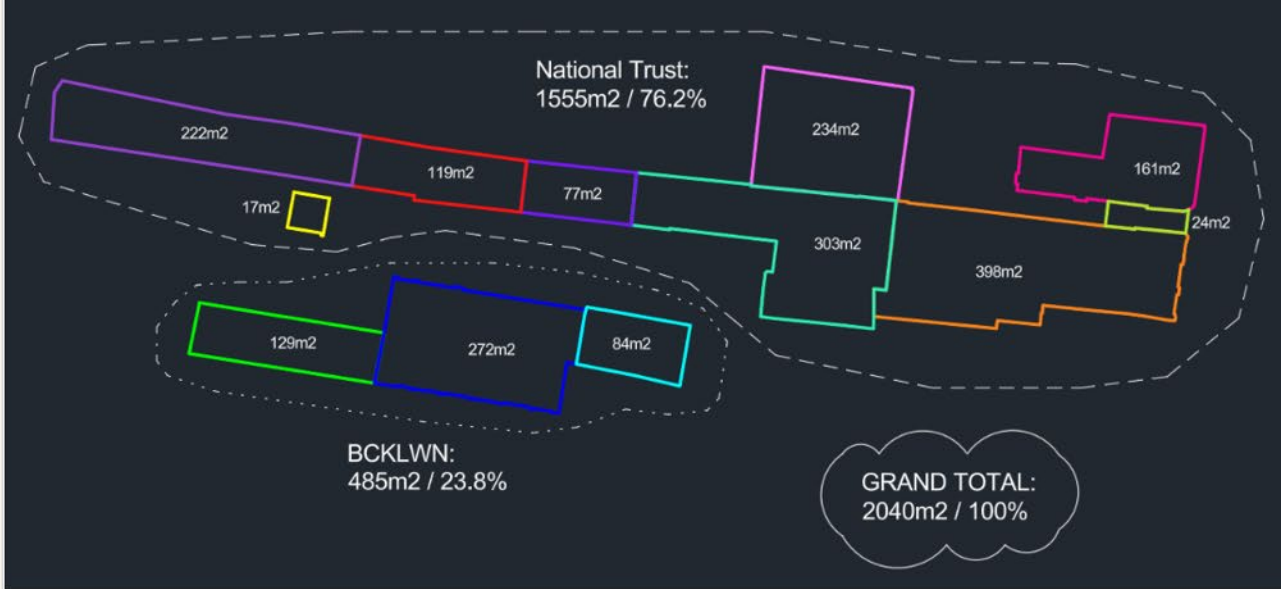
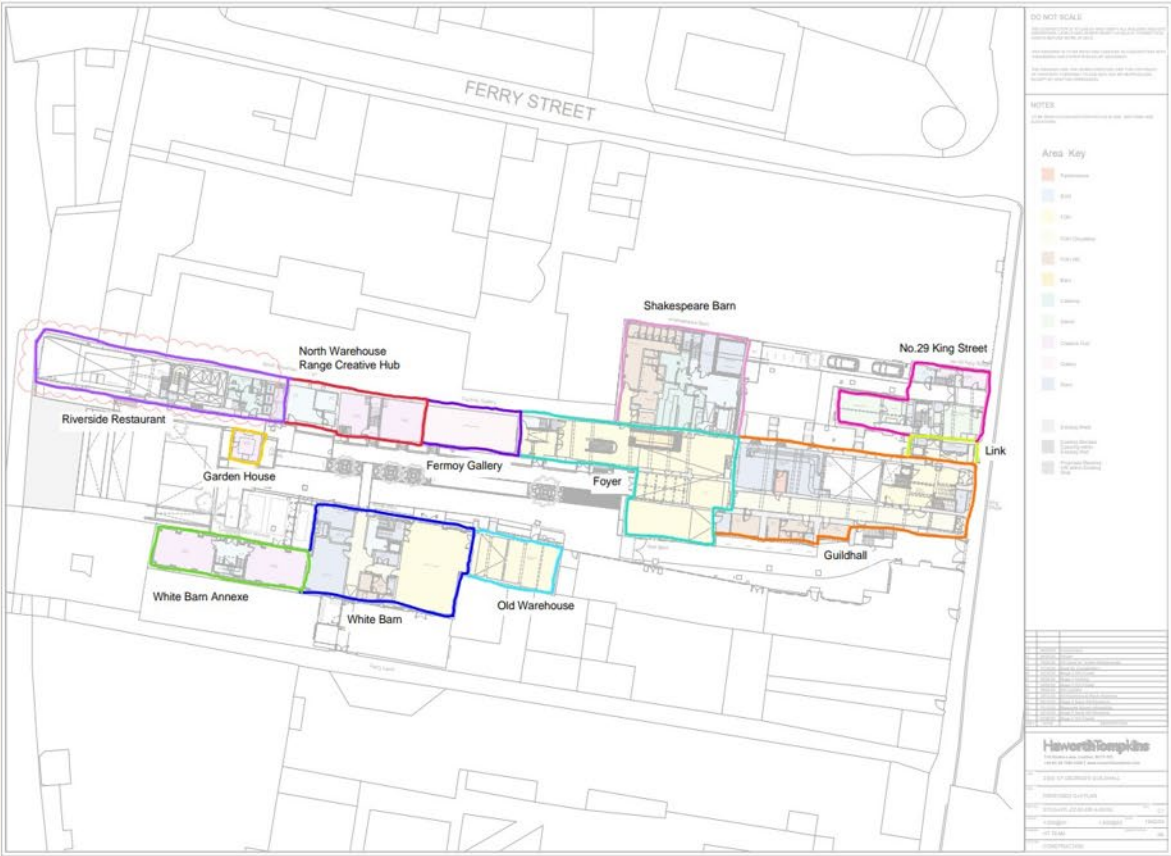
4

COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION

A particular focus on reducing barriers in socio-economically challenged areas.

Figures are drawn from the vision paper and should be presented with the supporting business case and latest funding position.

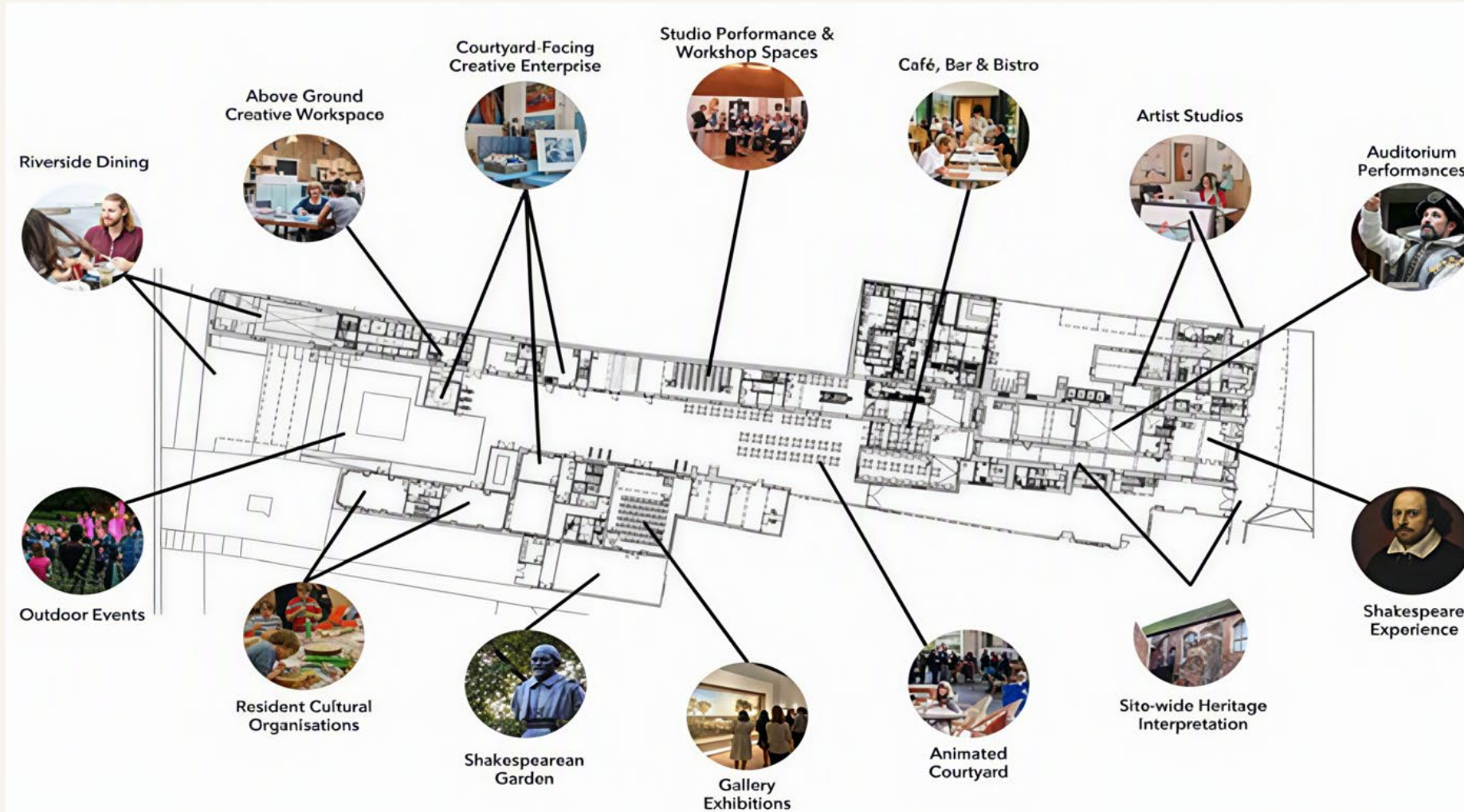
6. The Scale of the project



Organisation	Buildings Included	M2 Measurement	% of Site
National Trust	Buildings sited within boundary	1555m2	76.2%
BCKLWN	Buildings sited within boundary	485m2	23.8%
Total	All buildings	2040m2	

6. Multiple reasons to visit, return, and stay longer.

A balanced mix of culture, heritage, learning, enterprise and hospitality.



7. Next Steps



7. New Recruit – Operations Director.

JOB OPPORTUNITY - BE PART OF THE GUILDHALL’S LEGACY



Robin Lowls, Development Director

As Development Director, I have the privilege of leading the team through the next chapter of the remarkable story of St George’s Guildhall. Together with an exceptional team spanning construction, creative direction and programme delivery we are preparing this world-class venue for an exciting new future.

To support the next phase of the programme, we would like to share the exciting news that we are about to go out for the recruitment of a dedicated **Operations Director** to join our team and play a pivotal role in bringing this nationally significant cultural destination to life. This is a

fantastic opportunity to provide strategic leadership for the operational requirements of **St George’s Guildhall & Creative Hub**, ensuring its successful establishment and the long-term sustainability of this nationally significant cultural heritage and creative destination.

If you are passionate about culture, heritage and creating a legacy for future generations, we would love to hear from you.

Interested? Details of the role will be published in October on the Borough Council of King’s Lynn and West Norfolk and St Georges Guildhall websites.

Borough Council of
King’s Lynn & West Norfolk

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Operations Director
St George’s Guildhall and Creative Hub

Become our Operations Director for St George's Guildhall and Creative Hub

For an ambitious leader from the heritage, arts or cultural sector, we have a rare and exceptional opportunity to help bring one of the UK’s most extraordinary historic places back to life as a leading international heritage and cultural destination.

We are seeking an outstanding Operations Director to join our team for St George’s Guildhall and Creative Hub in King’s Lynn, as it moves towards reopening in autumn 2028, following a major programme of restoration and renewal led by the Borough Council of King’s Lynn and West Norfolk.

In this section

1. **Operations Director, St George’s Guildhall and Creative Hub**
(you are here)

2. St George’s Guildhall and our exciting vision

3. Discover the Operations Director role

4. St George’s Guildhall- a unique Shakespearean history

5. Living and working in King’s Lynn and West Norfolk

Related pages

Current vacancies

Employment monitoring

ST GEORGE’S GUILDHALL & CREATIVE HUB

7. Next Steps - Key Focus

- **Continue to embed Programme Governance.** Roles, resources way of working.
- **Project Vision and Business Plan.** Restated, shared and used to support stakeholders engagement.
- **Complex Construction Project.** Discovery, lead time, archaeology impact.
- **Master Cost/ Budget.** Continue monitoring latest assumptions.
- **Fundraising.** Support delivery of strategy.
- **Operational Readiness.** Planning Workshops continue.
- **Master Programming (3 Phases) .** Contract. Operational Fitout Out, & Launch.
- **Operations Director** in post

8. Questions?

