

Milton Rooms Business Plan

2020-2023

Executive Summary

This Business Plan has been developed to provide a strategic framework for the Milton Rooms proposed development over the next 1-3 years. It incorporates plans to develop and improve the governance, arts and community programming and capital improvements to the building. The Milton Rooms charity is committed to providing a quality arts and community hub for Ryedale.

Covid-19:

It should be noted that the COVID -19 pandemic has and will continue to impact the Milton Rooms and its operations during the duration period this plan represents. Trustees are monitoring the situation constantly and are working to ensure a manageable and sustainable programme which is flexible to changing public health circumstances. This does mean however that some of the proposed activity and targets are a guide only, as changes may have to be introduced to meet changing restrictions and associated national or local guidance.

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1. The Milton Rooms Vision:

We recognise the importance of the Milton Rooms as a community and arts facility which is also a great asset to the prosperity of local restaurants, public houses and hotels. We intend to remain at the cultural heart of life in Malton and Norton and the surrounding villages.

Our revised vision focuses on a modernisation programme which is urgently required to improve the facilities that can be offered to the area of Ryedale as a hub for performing and visual arts with the ambition and potential to attract performers and audiences to enjoy high quality events; also to provide facilities for local organisations for meetings, conferences, workshops etc.

Future possibilities are also being considered where we could extend our opening hours to offer refreshments to those shopping in the town.

2. Governance and Organisation:

During mid-2020 the Milton Rooms has undergone a significant managerial restructure of the trustees and its chair which has led to a refocusing of the organisation's vision.

During 2020, Covid-19 has had a limiting effect on the Venue Manager's capabilities to move the Milton Rooms forward in terms of revenue streaming but the post has proved invaluable when considering the restraints and legislation required for when the venue can again operate at full capacity.

The trustees acknowledge the recommendations made in the Milton Rooms Working Party Report and have incorporated these into the business plan. During these unprecedented Covid-19 times it is becoming more evident that the Arts and cultural venues are more important than ever for the well-being of our community.

2020-2023

Governance area	Objectives
Board of Trustees	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Increase trustee board numbers with new trustees bringing specific expertise in areas such as finance, inclusive arts, marketing, social media and website
Volunteer development and support	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Recruit more volunteers and develop the volunteer community• Develop volunteer policies• Establish regular volunteer/trustee meetings at the venue• Continued recognition and support for the existing and new volunteers who have worked so hard to support the Milton Rooms
Milton Rooms Membership Programme	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Revise the Milton Rooms membership programme and develop a 'friends' group'
Malton Museum	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Mutually agree on the outstanding tenancy issue for the Subscription Rooms• Collaborate on programming museum activity and events in other spaces in the Milton Rooms.• Explore options for a joint funding bid for collaborative heritage project

RDC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to liaise with Ryedale District Council (RDC) and work together to develop opportunities and programming for the site.
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3. Partnerships

The Milton Rooms have a renewed commitment to develop working partnerships with other cultural and arts providers in Ryedale and beyond as well as working with local businesses and community groups. Our objective is to make the Milton Rooms inclusive and accessible to all.

Partnerships opportunities are already being explored with organisations in Ryedale and beyond; including increased collaborative work with Malton Museum.

2020-2023

Area	Objectives
Arts and Culture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explore opportunities and collaborations with organisations in Ryedale and beyond including Helmsley Art Centre, Pocklington Arts Centre, Pickering Memorial Hall, The Wesley Centre, York Theatre Royal and SJT Scarborough and charitable organisations including “Musical Memories” and Malton Museum. Join the Small Venues Network; a partnership of mostly Yorkshire-based arts venues which share news and support joint programming.
Schools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collaborate with local schools who offer media and performing arts on their curriculum enabling students to practice and gain accreditation for units studied in the classroom giving them vocational experience.
Community Groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase the number of community groups using the site. Provide space for and develop revenue from business events and conferencing

4. Main Facilities:

The trustees intend to develop the opportunities for use of the different spaces with the building; including greater promotion of the rooms available for hire.

Room	Capacity	Features
Main Hall	Max 300 (theatre style)	Hall with stage

	60/70 under Covid-19 secure guidelines	
Assembly Rooms	80. 30 under Covid-19	Multipurpose hall space
Subscription Rooms	N/A	The subscriptions rooms are currently occupied by Malton Museum.
Bar	Closed to public – Table service only at this time in Main Hall – (Cabaret Style)	Small bar with seating and adjacent kitchen. Also used for micro performances.

The Assembly Rooms have recently been revamped and the trustees aim to capitalise on this addition to the available room hire over this business plan period. As well as being suitable for workshops, lectures and performances, this space could include events such as weddings, christenings, birthdays and wakes.

5. Programming

The trustees and the Venues Manager are keen to develop a vibrant arts programme for the Milton Rooms, maximising the full potential of what the venue has to offer and providing a rich and vibrant programme for the public to enjoy.

Some successful community programming has taken place already and meetings and discussions are underway with performers, stage acts and various arts development professionals.

Successful events took place in September 2020 including a one-man theatrical show and a sell-out Blues music night. All took place within the Covid-19 safe guidelines.

2020-2023 plans include:

- Continue to provide the traditional and successful acts that have worked in the past.
- Develop a programme of at least 3 x new types of acts/events each year:
- Develop the marketing of the programming with proactive and consistent publicity
- Initiate and consistently evaluate programming; collate the feedback to inform future programmes and ensure the Milton Rooms can be responsive to visitor comments, suggestions and complaints.

6. Beyond Covid-19 - 2023:

The new board of trustees is eager to promote the Milton Rooms as a vibrant Arts Centre within the Ryedale locality. To achieve this aim we believe it is essential to have a strategic plan to work with other likeminded organisations ensuring quality cultural provision is obtained across the region.

The charity is committed to exploring new and creative ways to generate income especially under the current Covid-19 restrictions.

All of this however hinges on the Milton Rooms becoming an attractive, clean, inclusive and accessible building to all which is fit for purpose in the 21st century. If this is to be achieved, we believe we can strengthen and enhance our revenue funding. Please refer to our financial three-year plan which we have made on the conservative side due to possible on-going difficulties with Covid-19. However, with a far more enthusiastic board of trustees we believe there is much scope to have far more diverse events and

performances in the venue which will bring a much healthier revenue stream that will make it financially sustainable.

The new board of trustees takes its responsibilities seriously and has begun an audit of policies and risk assessments to ensure strong governance of the Milton Rooms. We have taken on board the recommendations from the “Working Party Report” and believe this is reflected in our opening statement of intent. We can achieve our vision if RDC support our plan and the capital bid we are requesting which would enable the District Council to leave a legacy for future generations to enjoy.

Capital Improvement Grant Request

Plan:

There is no doubt the overall perception of the Ryedale community is that the Milton Rooms is jaded and has outmoded toilet facilities which are often quoted by the local population as the main reasons for not booking or even entering the building. The Milton Rooms should be seen as an investment opportunity by RDC for the future making the building fit for purpose. If this perception is not changed it becomes difficult to maintain and expand a strong revenue stream which should include:

Dry hire for private or public events; Milton Rooms own funded public events; events which include bar sales; weddings; black tie events; sporting events; funeral wakes; rural arts events; theatre performances both local and professional; charity events; dances/discos; musical events; meeting rooms for external organisations; exercise classes; rehearsal rooms; dance classes; food market; table top sales and so on.

Request for a Capital Improvement Grant:

It is the belief of the newly formed board of trustees that the Milton Rooms requires a capital grant to refurbish and modernise the facilities to bring the building into the 21st century thus making it a desirable venue to hire and fit for public use. After due deliberation the trustees are asking for the following to be considered:

Milton Rooms Business Plan 2020-2023. Revised Costings. 7/10/2020

1. Toilets / Lift –

All new modern toilet facilities to be installed throughout the building to ensure inclusivity and accessibility to all.

Basement –

Completely new Male and Female toilet facilities to include the construction of one unisex disabled toilet with baby changing facilities in the area outside the Female toilet (known as the Powder Room).

Gents**25892.77**

Ladies..... **27763.00**

Foyer to Basement –

A fire resistant wheelchair lift from the foyer to the basement to allow disabled access to the unisex disabled toilet. This would require the removal of the existing accessible toilet positioned in the foyer to allow space for the lift shaft. The present position allows for little dignity to its users.

Lift ...(subject to survey) 18969.74

Unisex Toilet. 7489.34

Strip out disabled toilet in foyer 256.01

Bar Toilets – 5863.49

New unisex toilet facilities.

‘Green Room’ – 7489.34

A new unisex disabled toilet and baby changing facilities.

2. Bar – 1247.52

New sink to bar area.

Currently there is no separate wash hand basin and therefore does not comply with current regulations.

3. Assembly Rooms – 9270.86

New kitchen facilities to room off Assembly Rooms.

4. Main Hall –

Decorating - plus plaster work which needs attention.

A lot of comments from the public indicate that the Main Hall not only needs decorating but also feels gloomy and unwelcoming. As the trustees feel that it should be used much more as a multipurpose space it should be decorated in more neutral welcoming colours that enhance the architecture and style of the building. 9885.00

Floor Cleaning – clean, resurface and varnish. 7195.00

New steps from floor to stage – each side of stage. 1000.00. ESTIMATE ONLY

5. Blackout Blinds /Curtains –

Balcony (blinds to windows)

Entrance (blinds to 6 windows)

Assembly Rooms (blinds to 5 windows)

Main Hall (dress curtains and blinds to 10 windows). 14800.00

6. Kitchen (Bar Area) – 10000.00. ESTIMATE ONLY

Total kitchen refurbishment.

Barista coffee machine

New fridge etc.

7. Foyer – 535.00

Wheelchair ramp with rails on both sides to assist disabled to gain easy access to main hall

ensuring safety, inclusivity and accessibility.

8. Frontage -

Clean frontage – RDC – Trustees believe the Milton Rooms should along with the Old Town Hall and St Michael's Church stand out as one of the main flagship buildings of the Market Place in Malton.

9. Lighting Rig – 20000.00. ESTIMATE ONLY

New lighting rig – to bring up to professional standards

New lanterns

Equip existing Recording Room with sound and lighting.

10. Heating – 25000.00. ESTIMATE ONLY

New heating system/ heaters for Main Hall.

TOTAL 192657.07

The Milton Rooms contribution to the cultural and social activities of the local community remains of major significance. The community is keen to support moves to rejuvenate the building and retain it as an active and viable local resource. For such a small community it is amazing how many local people who have performed on the Milton Rooms stage as amateurs have gone on to the professional world of Performing Arts either as:

Actors; musical theatre actors; dancers; ballet principals; singers; performing arts teachers, theatre and events technicians; stage managers; events managers; production manager; directors. Eg

- **Paul Vesey – RADA trained - Stage Manager of the Yorkshire Play House/York Theatre Royal and Production Manager – now freelance events manager**
- **Laurie Scarth – Musical Theatre actor in the West End**
- **Lauren Hood– Musical Theatre actor in the West End**
- **Pippa Raine – Musical Theatre Performer West End**
- **Scott Garnham – Musical Theatre actor in the West End and Director of the internationally acclaimed Barricade Boys**
- **Dominic Wetherill– Musical Theatre actor in the West End**
- **Rosie Wetherill – Musical Theatre performer**
- **Martha Gosnal – freelance dance**
- **Jolly Gosnall – Director**
- **Mia West – Graduated this year as a Musical Theatre performer**
- **Sophie Robertson – Performing Arts Teacher**
- **Eleanor Aldous – Performing Arts Teacher**
- **Ian Audsley – Stage Manager West End**
- **Sam Raines – Royal Ballet- Principal Ballet Mistress**
- **Hayden Clements – Freelance Events Technician**
- **Scores of dancers and singers who earn their living professionally**
- **Kerry Ennis – Dancer at the Lido de Paris – Company Manager and Dance Captain of dance groups touring worldwide.**

- **Ali Kirkham – Entertainments Manager worldwide**

The list goes on..... Ryedale maybe small but its influence in the sphere of performing arts is genuinely international.

This organisation requires and deserves your support. As leaseholders and representatives of the local community you, as RDC, have an obligation to the upkeep of the Milton Rooms for further generations by being an active stakeholder and landlord in a community asset. This could be RDC's opportunity to leave a lasting legacy.

It is not only an investment for now but for the future generations who will undoubtedly benefit from the opportunities such a joint venture as ours can offer.

Testimonials

I have such happy memories dancing on stage at the Milton Rooms. Dancing with all my friends and performing to an audience. They were very special times being surrounded by passionate and hard working people on stage and off.

Samantha Raine, Senior Ballet Mistress of the Royal Ballet Company

Craft & Chat has now started again. Friendships have been formed and those who live alone appreciate the opportunity to meet up once more. Community groups are so important in this worrying time.

Margaret Lukey, Craft & Chat Co-ordinator

The Milton Rooms holds so many happy childhood memories of performing on stage! It gave me my first taste of theatre, I played my first leading role there and I think I was the first person to ever FLY there! (RYT production of Peter Pan) It was really special for me to come back to Malton and host my first concert in a venue where it all began. The Milton Rooms gave me the thrill of an audience as a child and I was lucky enough to turn my dreams into a career.

Lauren Hood, West End & International Performer

We have had to cancel many events during lockdown including our Pop Up Shop and Dog Show at the Milton Rooms. The team very kindly however, let us use the portico at the front of the building to hold a Saturday stall to raise some money. Hopefully we can do this again soon! Local businesses, venues and charities need to think local, work together and keep everybody safe.

Dianne Illingworth, Ryedale Dog Rescue

May I take this opportunity to thank the Milton Rooms for all their help during COVID-19 to allow us to return to Kirkham Henry safely. When we were given the go ahead to return to the studios, providing that we followed all guidelines to be classed as COVID secure, Lisa at the Milton Rooms came to the rescue by allowing us to hire the Assembly Rooms and a few weeks later the Main Hall. Due to classes having to have the two metre social distance spaces we have had to split classes up and we did not have the studio space and times to accommodate all children. Starting with a two week timetable we were able to accommodate the majority of pupils even though not all classes they attended pre COVID. This has pleased the parents of the children involved due their well being and we have been congratulated by many. This couldn't have been achieved on a Saturday without our second campus 'The Milton Rooms'.

Thanks again for helping us out! As a Community Interest Company our aim is to keep fees as low as possible so as not to exclude anyone from attending, and as we had to fundraise for our recovery, the Milton Rooms have allowed re-opening with their generosity to help the community which is what we, as a CIC aim to do ourselves.

Angela Kirkham, Principal

The Swinton & District Band would like to thank the Milton Rooms for enabling us to get back to a little bit of normality. Due to COVID, back in March we had to suspend our rehearsals and for several months have not been allowed to meet. Following guidance from the Government, the Department of DCMS and Brass Band England, and also following strict guidelines and risk assessments it has become possible for us to get back together again to rehearse.

However in our own band room this was not possible due to the need to be socially distanced. We needed to find a space that would be large enough for up to 30 musicians to be sat 2 metres apart. We contacted a number of local venues and the Milton Rooms came back to us with a very generous offer with regards to hire charges. This provides us with a really safe place to rehearse and it also enabled us to audition for a new Musical Director who we have now been able to appoint. Being able to get back together, even though we are unable to socialise at these practices, is really good for the mental health of our members and it has also helped to ensure the future of our organisation. We feel very fortunate to have a resource like the Milton Rooms in our town.

Tracy Popham, Swinton Brass Band

The Milton Rooms has been 'home' to Ryedale Youth Theatre for our annual shows since our first show in 1991. To see our shows brought to life on the stage at the Milton Rooms is exciting every year and the RYT cast of approximately 70 young people always look forward to performing there. We are very lucky to have this venue in Malton bringing so many different forms of entertainment to the town and its surrounding community.

Teri Aldous, Ryedale Youth Theatre Trustee

I will forever owe a huge debt to the Milton Rooms and the people who work so tirelessly to ensure this wonderful community building is still a key part of Malton and the surrounding area. It was my first experience of 'theatre' being lucky enough to perform with a diverse group of ages, cultures and life experiences. I enjoyed dancing with friends at their many discos and found gifts attending art and craft fairs. I feel lucky to have grown up where a community building, such as the Milton Rooms, played such a vital and important role in mine, and many other people's lives. Long may it continue.

Scott Garnham, Award winning singer, actor and theatrical producer. Creator of The Barricade Boys