

18 November 2022

Deputy Moz Scott
Economic and International Affairs Scrutiny Panel
Scrutiny Office
States Greffe
Morier House
St Helier
Jersey JE1 1DD



Dear Deputy Scott

REVIEW OF THE GOVERNMENT PLAN: 2023 - 2026

In response to your request on 9 November with regard to the above, please find detailed below our initial thoughts, and experience, in relation to the proposed Government Plan, revenue and capital funding for Jersey Arts Centre and the Creative Island Arts Strategy: 2022-2027.

The Association has always expressed its gratitude to the Government of Jersey, and its officers, for the continued revenue grant support it has enjoyed since its inception. Jersey Arts Centre has always been open and transparent with all parties and will continue to be creative, resourceful and positive in all that it does and in all communications.

We are also grateful for the recently announced ex-gratia payment of £150,000 (for 2023) to start to address the mechanical, electrical, structural and other capital issues at Phillips Street. These capital issues have been identified for a number of years, and featured in the 2019 condition reports, including: £518,500 for Electrical Services, £663,850 towards Mechanical Services and £229,011 towards Building Maintenance Repair and Reinstatement Works. They were detailed in the original Fiscal Stimulus application of February 2021, as a result of which we were awarded £2.9 million to complete those works together with other areas of refurbishment. Due to a lack of progress on advancing those works that funding has now been withdrawn.

As the need and scale of these works is well known, it was puzzling to learn on 4 October 2022 that Jersey Arts Centre's critical renovations were not mentioned in the Proposed Government Plan: 2023-2026. We understand the process of prioritisation but given the dialogue these past three years, and the fact that we are under additional pressures as the only permanently available public theatrical space in the Island, to be omitted entirely was concerning. However, we have subsequently been assured by our Minister, and his officers, that a full bid will be made for this project for the 2024 budget.

The time lost to us with regard to repairs and maintenance these past three years cannot now be allowed to extend further and so there remains a concern – a fear – that Jersey Arts Centre may find itself in a not too dissimilar position to other closed venues in the

Island if the capital needs are not wholly addressed and met. The issue of repairs and maintenance is now urgent.

This was expressed in our letter to the Minister on 5 October 2022 which prompted the £150,000 ex-gratia payment to enable the commissioning of new condition reports, designs and planning applications, as three years have now passed since the 2019 condition reports.

We consider Deputy Montfort Tadier's 1% proposition in The States in May 2019 to be one of the most influential pieces of arts and cultural legislation in the past two decades, enabling a developed investment in arts and culture, and we hope that Jersey Arts Centre will continue to benefit from this. We have followed all GoJ grant procedures, meeting with officers on a regular basis to informally review the operation, and on a formal quarterly basis. We have also met our requested KPIs in often challenging circumstances, and our track record for financial management and transparency speaks for itself.

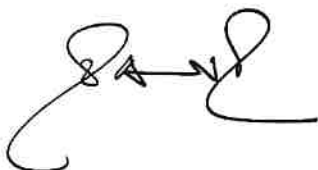
Despite the various challenges, we intend to continue to fulfil our purpose: *to educate, to inspire and to encourage debate* for future generations. For your convenience, overleaf is a summary of our achievements throughout 2021. We anticipate that that our KPI targets for 2022 will be reached, thus matching (even exceeding) pre-pandemic activities.

We believe that our delivery these past 40+ years – but especially these past three years – has been exemplary, unparalleled, inspired, visionary, progressive, tenacious and positive. Since 2020, we have continued to develop and offer a programme of participatory activities, to create and commission new work and to animate important Island events, having navigated some of the most incredible challenges.

On the subject of the Creative Island Arts Strategy, we think that all relevant agencies and stakeholders would benefit from greater clarity as to how this will function. The Creative Island Partnership, whilst being a network, has yet to convene the Reference Board as detailed in the strategy. The eight work streams that were identified after the two-hour workshop on 6 October 2021, whilst being of great value and benefit, seem not to have been fully rationalised against all the suggestions communicated during the session. The delivery mechanism, including the identification of delivery agents and the cost of delivery, is also unclear.

Many thanks.

With best wishes

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'D. Austin', with a stylized flourish at the end.

DANIEL AUSTIN
Director

Jersey Arts Centre

delivered the following events,
activities and experiences throughout 2021

- 168 ticketed performances
- 9,759 attendances between April – December (with reduced capacities)
- 572 activities + 1,430 social media posts between January – April
- Total: 2,002 communications over 15 weeks during the second lockdown *
- 13 exhibitions in the Berni Gallery
- 18 exhibitions in the Bar Gallery
- 7 public courses and workshops (40 sessions) with 85 participants
- 16 workshops in 14 schools for Liberation Day with 389 participants
- 1 youththeatre production: *My Father, Odysseus*
- 2 ACT projects: *Sherlock's Women + Fruit Basket*
- Our 19th consecutive year of assisting with the Holocaust Memorial Day ceremony
- The 8th Polish Film Festival
- The 17th Human Rights Festival (BLM theme)
- The hosting of 7 Project Trident students
- JAC's 5 community theatre companies ran including the Brighter Futures Company
- Our first Oddsocks Summer School in Coronation Park with 37 participants
- JAC Advent Calendar online in December
- Our 6th Community Christmas Production: Helen Edmundson's adaptation of Arthur Ransome's *Swallows & Amazons* with 1,281 attendances over 13 ticketed performances with two teams of actors (with a reduced capacity of 125)
- 21 workshops in 15 schools with 511 participants exploring *Swallows & Amazons*

*** Between Friday 8 January and Friday 23 April 2021, and for 15 weeks during the second lockdown, JAC presented:**

- 355 Daily Recommendations
- 66 featured images in *Off the Wall*
- 73 JAC-anories
- 46 *Scenes from a...* from 9 Jersey writers
- 20 Flash! Fiction! featured stories
- 10 *Bathtime for Britain* songs from Dr. Adam Perchard
- 1 *Andy Makes Puppets* video tutorial from Andy Heath
- 1 *Nelly Draws* for the Durrell Virtual Exhibition

There were a total of 572 activities and experiences, plus a further 1,430 communications, across our digital platforms – Grand Total: 2,002

Online participants

- website visits: 69,715
- page views: 258,619
- unique users: 44,743

JAC also planned for a number of other events in 2021 that were either cancelled or postponed due to the coronavirus pandemic including: residencies, a Junior Drama and youththeatre production and Liberation Day.