



Brian Carmicle  
By email

Reference: FOI-2015-157

10 June 2015

Dear Mr Carmicle,

Your request was received on 30 May 2015 and I am dealing with it under the terms of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 ('the Act').

You asked:

*I note that in 2009/10 [1], all departments of the University, including the ADC Theatre, submitted planning round submissions. In the case of the ADC Theatre, submitted documents included a "5-10 year capital spending plan" and an "expenditure timetable". If there have been updated versions of these documents since then, I would like to receive those also.*  
[1]: [https://www.whatdotheyknow.com/request/planning\\_round\\_submissions](https://www.whatdotheyknow.com/request/planning_round_submissions)

We assume from your request that you have seen the ADC Theatre's Planning Round submission dated December 2009 (i.e. within the 2009-10 financial year) that covered the expenditure period from 2010-11. This submission encompassed a Five-Year Plan, an Operating Statement for 2010-11, and a 5-10 year capital spending plan with an expenditure timetable. For avoidance of doubt, this information is published within the first few pages of the pdf document available at:

<https://www.whatdotheyknow.com/request/50524/response/149192/attach/2/NSI%20Staff%20Student%20Services.pdf>

The University Planning Round is an annual process. I accordingly attach the ADC Theatre's most recent submission (dated November 2014) that covers the expenditure period from 2015-16. This submission encompassed a narrative overview, including an Operating Statement for 2015-16, and separate tables of figures entitled 'Equipment Schedule' that outlined proposed capital expenditure in the period 2014-15 to 2018-19. As you will see, this documentation is in a similar but not identical format to the documentation from the earlier Planning Round. You will also notice similarities with the information disclosed to you in response to your previous request under the Act (our reference FOI-

The Old Schools  
Trinity Lane  
Cambridge, CB2 1TN

Tel: +44 (0) 1223 764142  
Fax: +44 (0) 1223 332332  
Email: [foi@admin.cam.ac.uk](mailto:foi@admin.cam.ac.uk)  
[www.cam.ac.uk](http://www.cam.ac.uk)



# UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE

Registry's Office

2015-150). Please note that the attached documentation should not be copied, reproduced or used except in accordance with the law of copyright.

If you are unhappy with the service you have received in relation to your request and wish to make a complaint or request an internal review of this decision, you should write to Dr Kirsty Allen, Head of the Registry's Office, quoting the reference above, at The Old Schools, Trinity Lane, Cambridge, CB2 1TN or send an email marked for her attention to [foi@admin.cam.ac.uk](mailto:foi@admin.cam.ac.uk). The University would normally expect to receive your request for an internal review within 40 working days of the date of this letter and reserves the right not to review a decision where there has been undue delay in raising a complaint. If you are not content with the outcome of your review, you may apply directly to the Information Commissioner for a decision. Generally, the Information Commissioner cannot make a decision unless you have exhausted the complaints procedure provided by the University. The Information Commissioner may be contacted at: The Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF (<https://ico.org.uk/>).

Yours sincerely,

James Knapton



## **PLANNING ROUND SUBMISSION 2015-16**

### **The ADC Theatre**

The ADC Theatre, owned by the University of Cambridge Amateur Dramatic Club, has been managed by the University since 1973 in accordance with an agreement set out in *The Reporter* on 1 August 1973. Under these terms, the University undertook the management of the Theatre, securing its long-term stability and ensuring that it remains at the heart of student drama in Cambridge. In October 2011, the University took on the operational management of the Corpus Playroom, which acts as a contrasting studio space to the main Theatre.

### **Mission Statement**

By striving to present professional-standard productions, the ADC Theatre enables students to experience and learn about all aspects of the theatre, supporting the University's mission statement by offering "opportunities for broadening the experience of students and staff through participation in... music, drama, the visual arts, and other cultural activities".

The Theatre shares the University's core value of "freedom of thought and expression" through the willingness of the Executive Committee to take risks on experimental shows and support the wide range of student-led productions across both venues.

The ADC Theatre aims to share its productions with as many people as possible, providing both the staff and students of the University and the wider Cambridge community with a wide selection of drama, music, dance and comedy at affordable prices. Outside of Term time, the Theatre is regularly used by local amateur groups, widening our audience base for student drama and upholding the Theatre's position at the core of amateur theatre in Cambridge.

### **Current position**

2013-14 was a hugely successful year, both artistically and financially. Through the deployment of smart management systems, the restructured staff team delivered a greater selection of shows of consistently high standard, better marketing, bigger audiences and more sold-out productions than in the previous two years.

#### **In summary:**

- 170 productions across the two venues, including 144 student productions;
- 957 students involved, approximately 8% of the total undergraduate student body;
- 63,590 tickets sold for events at the ADC Theatre and Corpus Playroom;
- 12,603 different customers welcomed through our doors;
- 52% of tickets sold were to students.

## Productions

- 97 Productions at the ADC Theatre
- 73 productions at the Corpus Playroom

At both the ADC Theatre and Corpus Playroom, there was a widely varied programme of drama, comedy, musical theatre, pantomime, new writing and, for the first time in a number of years, opera.

### i. **Sell-out shows**

36 productions sold above 90% capacity and a number of these went on to sell out. As usual, Footlights productions were very popular: the CUADC/Footlights Pantomime 2013: *The Princess and the Pea* was seen by over 3,000 people. Sondheim's *Into the Woods* also proved extremely popular, while classic musicals *Guys and Dolls* and *Anything Goes* were amongst the best attended productions. The most popular dramas were Alan Bennett's *The History Boys* and Jessica Swale's *Blue Stockings*, while *The Magic Flute*, presented by Cambridge University Opera Society, sold out every performance and attracted queues for day seats every day at the Box Office.

### ii. **Student New Writing**

The ADC Theatre continued to demonstrate its commitment to new writing with a large number of new plays, musicals and comedy written by students featuring at both venues. There were 48 productions of new student drama or musical theatre. There were 5 new plays performed through *Papercuts*, the Theatre's new-writing programme, and for the first time in three years, a student-written ADC Mainshow was produced: *The Other Line*. The play was a huge success, with extremely positive reviews from student newspapers.

### iii. **Technical ambition**

Technical ambition was as high as ever during 2013-14, with the production team of Sondheim's *Into the Woods* building a large revolve in the centre of the stage, raising the stage to meet it. The backdrop of a fantastic production of Shakespeare's *The Tempest* was a beautifully realistic wrecked ship, complete with mast.

### iv. **New relationships with local groups**

In order to provide the audience with a continuous programme of shows for as much of the year as possible and to increase income from Theatre Hire, new links were forged with a number of local theatre groups who put on productions at the ADC Theatre and Corpus Playroom.

## Student involvement

Over 950 students were involved in productions across both venues, more than ever before. 2013-14 began with another strong campaign to attract new students into the Theatre. Working closely with the CUADC, who were also active at the Freshers Fair, the ADC Theatre hosted 'Freshers Friday' during Week 1, where Freshers were invited to the Theatre for backstage tours, free drinks and a chance to meet and chat to students already involved. Initiatives of this kind are vital to the Theatre's long-term health, bringing new talent into Cambridge drama and sowing the seeds of future continuity and success.

## **Enriching the audience experience and engaging the community**

### **i. Post-show discussions**

As part of the Theatre's wider educational and outreach initiatives, there were 15 post-show discussions, which took place in the Auditorium or Larkum Studio after ADC Mainshows. Chaired by a member of ADC Management who interviewed members of the cast and production team, post-show discussions give audience members a chance to find out about the process of putting on the show and also to discuss the themes of the plays.

### **ii. Backstage Tours**

The Management Team led a number of backstage tours during Open Cambridge and the Alumni Festival, allowing visitors to access parts of the building not usually open to the public and to find out more about the uniquely student-run venue. The Open Cambridge tours in particular were extremely well-attended, with around 100 people in total visiting the Theatre.

### **iii. Work experience**

Two GCSE-stage students from local schools (St Bedes Inter Church School and The King's School Ely) came to the ADC Theatre for a week of work experience in July. Taking into account their individual interests, they spent the week shadowing members of the team, helping with general administration and learning about the running of a venue. The second student was also able to help on the non-student show taking place in the week she was at the Theatre.

## **Providing a service for Cambridge**

### **ADC Ticketing**

- 246 events
- 30,322 tickets sold for productions around Cambridge
- £319,150 of tickets sold

ADC Ticketing continued to provide a secure and affordable Box Office service for events happening in and around Cambridge. Notable clients included Cambridge Literary Festival, Cambridge University Musical Society, City of Cambridge Symphony Orchestra, East Anglia Chamber Orchestra and Camerata Musica. In line with the Theatre's aims to support student drama throughout Cambridge, ADC Ticketing continued to provide a cheap and efficient service to many student groups performing around Cambridge.

### **Hire Business**

Having been suspended for two years, the technical equipment hire business was restarted in October 2013. The provision of "ready-assembled" packages of equipment encouraged hire by those less experienced in technical theatre.

## **Staffing**

2013-14 was the first full year following the restructuring of Management Team responsibilities outlined in the previous Planning Round submission. This reallocation of duties, carefully monitored and overseen by the Theatre Manager throughout the year, created a more collaborative way of working and was fully embraced by the new team.

The Theatre Manager was able to think strategically about programming, securing relationships with new groups and putting together strong and varied student seasons. Not being involved in programming allowed the Production Manager more time to ensure that a strong support system was in place for productions. Financial oversight became a discussion between the Theatre Manager and Operations Manager, who were able to rethink some aspects of financial reporting leading to clearer management of the budget. The Technical Manager shared responsibility for building maintenance issues and Health and Safety with the Operations Manager, again allowing for greater collaboration and support in the team. Finally, the Theatre Manager was able to spend more time assessing the Theatre's marketing, leading to a long overdue redesign of the Theatre's season brochure, an important marketing tool.

Of course, student term time is still demanding for the four full-time staff, however this new division of responsibilities worked extremely well and was certainly part of the reason behind the successful year.

## **Financial performance**

2013-14 generated an operational surplus of £24,000 and an increase in the Theatre's net assets to £441,000. The Executive Committee decided to spend the operating surplus of £24,000 on improving theatrical equipment as well as making various repairs and improvements to the fabric of the building. Purchases will include an intelligent cyclorama lighting fixture which will add flexibility and greatly improve lighting of future productions. Repairs will include refurbishment of some the auditorium seats and a partial refurbishment of the Front of House toilets.

## **Conclusion**

The Management Team and Executive Committee are delighted to report a successful year artistically and financially and aim to build on the achievements of 2013-14, enriching the student and amateur experience by programming varied, challenging and vibrant productions which create great opportunities for involvement and strengthen the ADC Theatre's position at the heart of amateur theatre in Cambridge.

## **Ongoing issues and future plans**

### **Capital investment and estate**

#### **i. General**

Over the past 5-10 years the ADC Theatre has built up a reserve from operational surpluses and, taken with investment growths, its financial assets have increased to £441,000. The Executive Committee continues to identify key equipment purchases which are made on an annual basis in order to maintain and improve the quality of the facilities at the Theatre. For this purpose it actively maintains an on-going Capital Expenditure schedule.

As well as specific equipment, the fabric of the building is under constant review, with the exterior being painted during August 2014, various sections of carpet being replaced and the auditorium seating and Front of House toilets planned to be refurbished. The Executive Committee value highly the condition and appearance of this very public facing University building and hope that the ADC Theatre provides a very pleasant all round experience for audience members.

#### **ii. Auditorium ventilation project**

In the last two submissions to the Planning Round, we gave early notice of the need to undertake significant work in and around the auditorium which would include improvements to the auditorium's ventilation and, possibly as part of the same project, improvements to the stage's lighting power supply ('dimmers') and gantry access. We are pleased to report some progress on this project. During 2013-14, the Management Team worked with Estate Management to assess the level of the problem using CO<sub>2</sub> and temperature monitors. The report which followed suggested that indeed the current situation was not adequate and there was a need for improved ventilation. Currently further monitoring is underway. In 2014-15, particular emphasis will be placed on making progress on this project, in order that it might go ahead in the summer of 2016 or 2017.

A portion of the Theatre's reserves are being maintained as a contribution to the cost of this work, but the Executive Committee of the ADC trusts that the University will be in a position to fund that part of the work, particularly given that the current situation has been deemed a potential health and safety concern.

### **Staffing**

Although the first year following the restructuring of roles was successful, the turnover of staff (by design) at the ADC Theatre is such that each year is different. It is therefore necessary for the Manager and Executive Committee to keep a close eye on the Management Team roles, monitoring the responsibilities of each role to ensure that they are both manageable and also in line with similar venues in order that they act as training positions for the role-holders.

## **Support us**

Towards the end of 2013-14, a number of new initiatives were started as part of a 'Support us' scheme. An ADC Friends scheme was launched, which offered those who signed up various discounts, special offers, backstage tours and Friends only events. At the end of 2013-2014, when the scheme had been running for just 3 months, a small but significant number of Friends had signed up. We are confident that this number will quickly increase.

We also made it extremely easy for generous audience members to donate small amounts of money during the process of buying a ticket, by giving them the option to add a small donation to their order. This has been highly successful, generating between £300 and £800 per month. We have also made it clearer on the website how someone might donate a larger amount to the Theatre through the University of Cambridge.

During the next year, we aim to develop these initiatives, increasing the number of Friends and developing the relationship with have with them and increasing the amount of donations we get by trying out various different amounts to find the best way to encourage donations.

## **Financial forecasts**

### **i. Operational surplus**

It should be noted that although 2013-14 generated an operational surplus of £24,000, in 2012-13, the Theatre recorded an operational deficit of £6,000. The restructuring of Management roles certainly allowed the Theatre Manager to spend more time on programming and marketing, and for more emphasis to be placed on financial monitoring. However, a portion of the surplus was also down to a number of uncontrollable factors, including number of staff opted out of the pension scheme, one member of staff leaving early, the writing back of old customer account credit and a good performance of the CUEF.

The Executive Committee and Management Team remain confident that 2013-14 will prove to be the start of a positive trend, but are cautious in their approach and will build on these new approaches, reinforcing a culture of sound financial management.

### **ii. Chest Income**

It is noted that the ADC Theatre's chest allocation remains suspended.

### **iii. ICC Charge**

During the 2013 Planning Round the ICC charge was again levied though the practice of crediting back to the Theatre the costs of utilities continues as the University recognises the direct cost of these to the Theatre.



## **Conclusion**

The ADC Theatre is a one of the most vibrant and exciting arts venues in Cambridge, presenting a diverse range of productions across both venues, involving a large number of students and local amateurs each year.

The staff and Executive Committee continue each year to build on their understanding of the Theatre's purpose, direction and needs, balancing its clear educational and creative responsibilities with its financial needs. The purpose of the ADC Theatre is to provide an opportunity for students to experience all aspects of theatre in a safe and supportive environment, encouraging student ambition, creativity and artistic risk-taking. The ADC Theatre will continue to be a unique training ground for students, many of whom go on to pursue careers in the arts.

## **Operating Statement 2015-16**

During 2015-16, the Theatre aims to build on the extremely successful previous year, working to continue the positive financial trend. The Theatre's student-centric operation will continue to appeal to a broad range of students across Cambridge. Links with local groups will be strengthened; a huge amount of effort will go into programming and marketing diverse and entertaining seasons and the Theatre's financial management systems will continue to be refined.

As discussed, it is hoped that significant progress can be made in the planning of the ventilation project, so that by the next Planning Round submission there will be an agreed timescale in place for the work.

---

## **Supporting information**

In response to the Planning Guidance, we have commented on those areas requested which we feel are relevant to the operation of the ADC Theatre, which is obviously quite unlike any other University department.

### **a. Carbon**

In the last year, a system known within the Theatre as 'Building on/off' was developed, making it easier to shut down various systems in use through the building, saving power and reducing carbon emission by shutting down as much as possible overnight. Included in this shut-down are a number of systems which had previously been left on overnight, such as computers in the Production Office and paging amps throughout the building. This system allows the Duty Manager to power off as much as possible when locking up, with minimal effort at the end of a long shift. We aim to develop this over the next two to three years, adding the ability to control exterior lighting and to shut down a number of other systems such as the lighting and sound equipment in the bar.

In the next two years, we plan to begin installation of energy saving and motion sensor light bulbs and, following the removal of a small amount of asbestos in January 2015, new insulation will be added to the roof space.

With the current heating system it is relatively difficult to control the temperature in the auditorium, but it is anticipated that with the installation of the new ventilation system, planned for summer 2016, should improve that.

#### **b. Community Engagement**

As outlined above, in the last year we were involved with Open Cambridge and also ran a number of workshops as part of the Festival of Ideas. We continued to provide a venue for non-student groups outside of Term time, allowing a wide range of amateur groups to experience and learn about theatre. Having taking over operational management of the Corpus Playroom, we are now able to provide a studio space for non-student groups in addition to the main theatre.

We plan to continue to be involved in initiatives such as Open Cambridge and build connections with more local theatre groups. We aim to keep our ticket prices low, providing high quality theatre for the wider Cambridge community at affordable prices.

#### **c. Equality and Diversity**

In line with our educational and artistic aims, the various ways for students to get involved in theatre are advertised widely throughout the University, encouraging students with any level of theatrical experience to get involved. In 2013-14, vacancies for permanent positions were advertised more widely than ever before.

#### **d. Information Technology, Systems and Strategy**

Particularly following the small operational deficit of 2012-13, the Management Team and Executive Committee have developed better methods of using Box Office software to track the financial performance of productions, allowing closer monitoring and a better ability to market proactively rather than reactively. The Management Team assess office systems during regular Away Days.

#### **e. International Strategy**

n/a

#### **f. Value for money**

It is noted that the ADC Theatre's chest allocation remains suspended. The Management Team work hard to ensure that items on the Theatre's ongoing equipment replacement schedule are purchased at the best possible price.

## Equipment Schedule 2014-15

Category	Item	Cost		
<b>Priority</b>				
Front of House	Stairs & Corridors Carpet	£800		
Front of House	Exterior Banners	£400		
Stage, Set, Scenery	Stock treads	£500		
Theatrical Equipment	Stage Piano	£1,000		
Theatrical Equipment	RAT Music Stands	£1,000		
Workshop & Maintenance	Panel Saw	£2,000	rolling?	
Workshop & Maintenance	Dust extract	£800	rolling?	
Fixed Theatrical Installation	Infra red camera	£300		
Administration	Phone system	£3,000		
Computing	Production Office Computers	£1,000		
Computing	Administration Computer	£850		
Bar	Furniture (tables and chairs)	£4,000		
Theatrical Equipment	Cloths & Masking Blinder	£600		
		<b>£16,250</b>		
<b>Non-Priority</b>				
Theatrical Equipment	Lanterns - Cyc Floods	£9,000		
Bar	Coffee machine	£3,000		
Theatrical Equipment	Cans Headsets	£400	250	
Theatrical Equipment	Push up stands	£1,100		1000
	<b>Non-priority to total:</b>	<b>£3,000</b>		
	<b>Routine</b>	<b>£2,000</b>		
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£21,250</b>		

## Equipment Schedule 2015-16

Category	Item	Cost	
Computing	Servers	£	1,200.00
Computing	Box Office Computers	£	1,800.00
Computing	Microserver	£	250.00
Estate	UPS (lift)	£	5,000.00
Fixed Theatrical Installation	Cans Base Station	£	1,000.00
Front of House	Foyer Display lights	£	400.00
Larkum Studio	Chairs	£	800.00
Playroom - Admin	Box Office Computer	£	600.00
Playroom - Admin	Phone	£	100.00
Theatrical Equipment Cloths & Masking	Tormentors & hardmaskers	£	500.00
Theatrical Equipment - Control	LX desk	£	6,000.00
Workshop & Maintenance	Compressor & air install	£	1,800.00
Workshop & Maintenance	Radial Arm Saw	£	1,000.00
<b>Routine &amp; Contingency</b>		£	4,000.00
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>£</b>	<b>24,450.00</b>

## Equipment Schedule 2016-17

Category	Item	Cost	
Administration	Laminator	£	1,000.00
Bar	Glass-washer	£	1,000.00
Bar	Fridge (left)	£	600.00
	FoH Speakers and		
Fixed Theatrical Installation	Amps	£	7,500.00
Larkum Studio	Projector	£	1,500.00
Playroom - Admin	Chip and Pin Machine	£	100.00
Stage, Set, Scenery	Stage surface	£	900.00
Theatrical Equipment - Sound	Drumkit	£	2,000.00
Theatrical Equipment - Cloths and M	House Tabs & Track	£	1,200.00
Theatrical Equipment - Control	Studio: Lighting desk	£	1,200.00
Theatrical Equipment - Lighting	Portable dimmers	£	5,400.00
Website Re design	Computing	£	15,000.00
Routine & Contingency		£	4,000.00
<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>£41,400.00</b>

## Equipment Schedule 2017-18

Category	Item	Cost	
Box Office	Ticket Printer	£	1,250.00
Estate	Tumble drier	£	200.00
Estate	Washing machine	£	200.00
Fixed Theatrical Installation	Studio: Sound racked equipment	£	800.00
Fixed Theatrical Installation	Studio: Speakers	£	600.00
Fixed Theatrical Installation	Sound Desk	£	12,000.00
Front of House	A1 Poster frames	£	300.00
Front of House	Auditorium Carpet	£	1,500.00
Playroom - Admin	Ticket Printer	£	1,250.00
Playroom - Technical	Dimming	£	1,500.00
Playroom - Technical	Lighting infrastructure	£	800.00
Playroom - Technical	Lanterns	£	3,000.00
Workshop & Maintenance	Pillar Drill	£	500.00
	<b>Routine &amp; Contingency</b>	£	4,000.00
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>£</b>	<b>27,900.00</b>

## Equipment Schedule 2018-19

Category	Item	Cost
Fixed Theatrical Installation	Hearing loop system	£ 1,210.00
Front of House	Exterior Lights	£ 2,150.00
Computing	Mac Mini (sound & video source)	£ 1,500.00
Theatrical Equipment	Lanterns - Backlight	£ 9,000.00
Theatrical Equipment	Drumkit Screen	£ 400.00
Computing	Server Licences	£400
Computing	Microsoft Office Licenses	£500
Computing	File-maker	£ 2,500.00
Computing	Adobe Creative suite *	£ 1,800.00
	<b>Routine &amp; Contingency</b>	£ 4,000.00
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>£ 23,460.00</b>