

THEATRE  
ROYAL  
VENUE 4  
BATH

YOUR COMMUNITY.  
YOUR THEATRE.  
LET'S MAKE A  
VENUE 4 EVERYONE.

Theatre Royal Bath's capital appeal  
for a dedicated community venue



Yvonne Brunton,  
Engage Elders Company  
Member in Us, 2024



# WE ARE BUILDING A VENUE 4 OPPORTUNITY

Theatre Nisha at  
Elevate Festival, 2023

## BE PART OF THE NEXT ACT IN OUR BUILDING'S HISTORY.

Theatre Royal Bath wants to give local people unfettered access to creative opportunity. We are putting our shoulder behind performers at the grass-roots level. We are carving out new routes to fulfilment and friendship, and creating a launchpad for professional creative endeavours.

We are a nation built on our creative enterprises and no arts organisation is more enterprising than ours.

Theatre Royal Bath (TRB) makes and presents high quality theatre and strives to serve a broad church of tastes and mindsets.

On each of our three stages our programme is packed. From amateur to experienced professional, ages 5 to 105, we set the bar high and it works.

With an utterly unique theatre business structure, TRB can also self-finance original productions that shortcut to the West End – four shows in 2024 alone. Other original shows toured the length and breadth of the UK for 74 weeks.

Our model ensures we are entirely independent, unaffected by arts funding cuts. Income generated by our commercial endeavours funds over £1m of charitable activity each year.

Local performers have always found a home under our roof, but confidence in our model offers a logical next step; we want to empower more people to join this amazing story of creativity. We want to cut more people in on the deal.

It is time to galvanise our expert staff, our building, and our loyal audience behind a clear ambition: make a dedicated space for backing community theatre at Theatre Royal Bath.



# WE ARE BUILDING A VENUE 4 CONNECTION

"WE THRIVE WHEN  
WE KNOW THAT  
SOMEONE BELIEVES  
IN US AND TRUSTS  
US TO TAKE ON A  
NEW CHALLENGE."

Staff of the BSL only Engage production  
of *Seven Deadly Sins*, 2024.



## THE PLAN

What you see on stage is part of a much bigger story. The best work is only possible with a thriving grass-roots scene and a community that loves theatre as much as we do. Venue 4 is a home for this work.

Venue 4 will be a studio theatre for the public – an appealing, accessible street-level space in which to rehearse, perform and present. It will seat an audience of 40 in an intimate venue with its own foyer. It will be a home to Theatre Royal Bath's Engage adult theatre training and participation programme. It is designed for local grass-roots performance of all kinds, local festival support, and more besides.

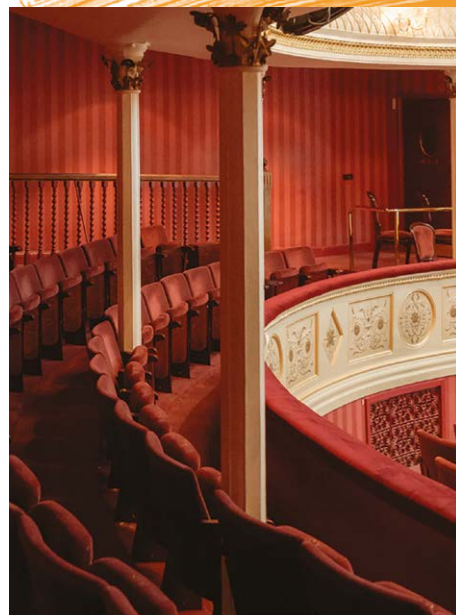
Venue 4 welcomes everyone. The studio features a platform lift and an inclusive dressing room, shower and WC. The studio space will have excellent sound, lighting and production facilities, along with its own dedicated producer. It will be wheelchair friendly and easy to use for everyone.

Engage Together  
Company Member, Zara  
May in rehearsal with  
director Sophie Cottle  
and theatre practitioner  
Rose Wardlaw.

## MAKING IT HAPPEN

Theatre Royal Bath is well positioned to deliver a building and programme that connects more local people with performance. We have the experience, network and resources to make this project happen.

A registered charity and producing house, boasting three venues of international significance and an education programme to be proud of...



### Theatre Royal Bath

Theatre Royal Bath has stood since 1805, but in 1979, local entrepreneur Jeremy Fry stepped into save the vulnerable stage. His ambition was “to establish Bath as a centre of theatrical excellence”. Now, over 216,000 tickets are sold in the Main House each year.



### Ustinov Studio

Opened in 1989 by Sir Peter Ustinov himself, the Ustinov Studio is a “glittering black jewel” (The Times) where international talent comes to play. Most recently, Artistic Director Deborah Warner curated a 3 year programme of award-winning theatre, song and dance.



### Theatre Royal Bath Productions

Theatre Royal Bath Productions is one of the most prolific British theatre producers. Since 1998, it has delivered almost 300 original productions. In 2024, TRBP employed over 490 freelancers and took up residence in the West End for 27 weeks. Our work was also shortlisted for two Olivier Awards.



### The Egg Theatre

An outstanding year-round programme of the best work for young audiences welcomes over 30,000 ticket buyers. The Egg is a thriving centre of theatre education. In 2025, original Egg work is touring France, Ireland, Canada, China and presenting at the Edinburgh Festival Fringe.



### Engage

For over 35 years, TRB's participation programme for adults, Engage, has been dedicated to the power of learning through making. A new high bar will be set in 2026, when 120+ local people will take to the Main Stage in a co-created production of David Copperfield – directed by Sally Cookson.



# WE ARE BUILDING A VENUE 4 TRYING SOMETHING NEW



Left: Engage Acting  
Company Member  
Jieun Lee performing  
in *Love & Information*,  
2024. Right: Zara May  
and fellow Company  
Member Shane Long

## TESTING AND LISTENING

It has taken us three years to get here, talking to local people about how to grow community-led performance. Through interviews, projects, questionnaires and two week-long Elevate Festivals in 2023 and 2024 we learnt that everyone needs....

A **home** for friendship  
and a safe space for learning,  
where everyone is welcome.

A **venue** with professional theatre  
equipment and services that  
everyone can use easily.

**Space** supported by front and back of  
house services that doesn't cost the  
earth, to reduce the risk for first projects.

A **doorway** for advice and opportunity  
to take people from amateur  
performing into professional work.

## EXPERIENCE AND ADVICE

Director Danny Moar and General Manager Eugene Hibbert oversaw the Egg build, and the Ustinov and Main House refurbishments. Supported by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport they commissioned a feasibility study with long-term partners Haworth Tompkins and Buro Happold. Additional heritage (JME Conservation Ltd), access

(HADA), technical (CharcoalBlue) and quantity surveying (CMS) reports were also undertaken. These reports and learning from the stakeholder engagement were used to develop a design for which Arena Global Management Ltd and PHD Project Management achieved the necessary planning permissions in March 25.



Poor quality space shouldn't be a barrier to Zara or other adults living with complex needs to getting up on stage. Zara told us what it was like to be a part of Engage Together's production of 'Seven Deadly Sins':

**"I loved people's costumes; my favourite scene was me wedding to Alan Carter, my favourite actor. I think amazing I loved it all. It was very accessible. I feel happy and proud. First time perform, never before. I was nervous, but I practice, practice, practice."**

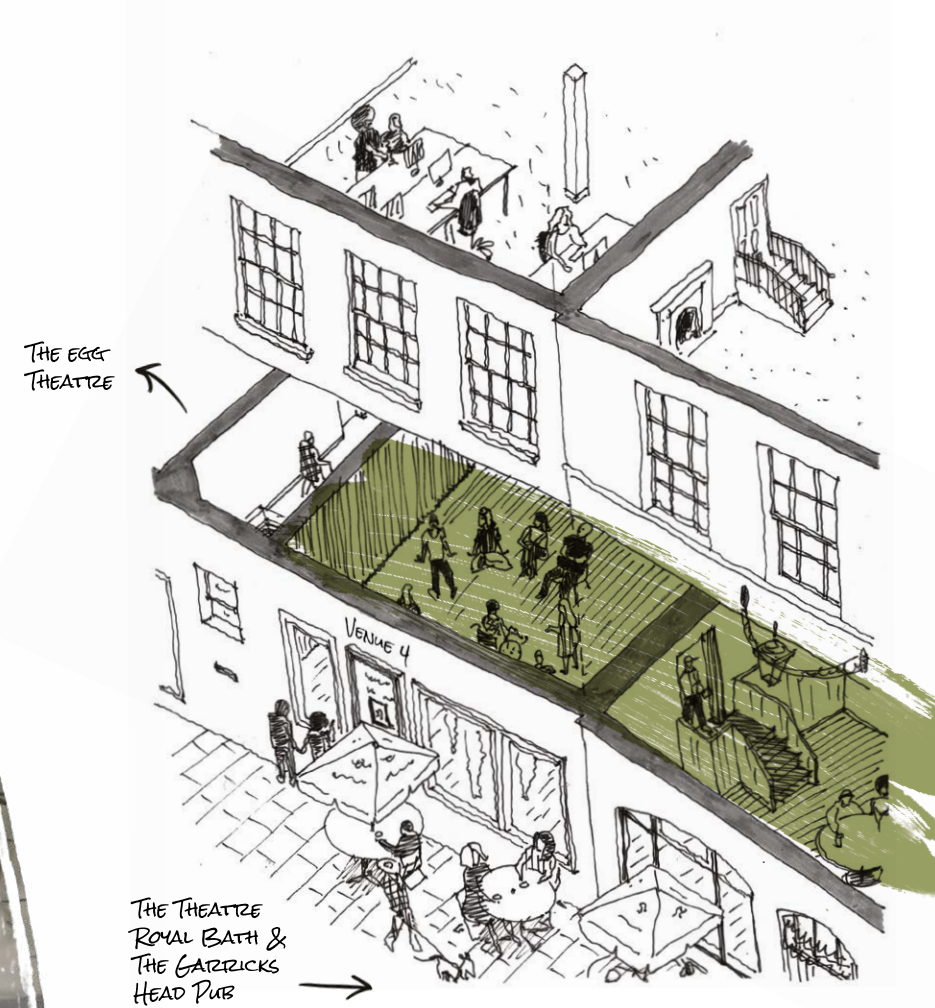


# WE ARE BUILDING A VENUE 4 AMBITION

World-class theatre architects, Haworth Tomkins, previously helped us lend status to children's theatre through its design of The Egg. We have proven the adage 'build it and they will come' there. Venue 4 will achieve this for grown ups!

St Johns Close will be literally transformed into a new theatre district. Passers-by will see the Main House, Garrick's Head pub, Venue 4 and The Egg in one vista.

Far right: Sketch of the space. Right: Artist's impression of the entrance on St John's Close.





# WE ARE BUILDING A VENUE 4 SHARING THE LIMELIGHT

A foyer was always part of our ambitious plan to give local people a stage of their own. Marketing, box office and front of house support are all part of the offer, sharing Theatre Royal Bath's resources, and providing professional venue experience.

Right: Architectural  
visualisation of the foyer.  
Below: Artist's impression  
of the foyer area.







Left: Artist's impression of Venue 4 performance. Below: Architectural visualisation of Venue 4 as a making space.

**"WE ALL NEED TO TELL STORIES. IT'S A BASIC HUMAN NEED, I THINK."**

Sue Sedgwick, Engage Acting Company Member and long-time participant.





# VENUE 4 WILL DELIVER...

## PERFORMANCE SPACE

In-kind or very low cost rehearsal and fringe-style performance space for almost half the year.



## A LEARNING PROGRAMME

A home for Engage, our adult participation programme and artist development opportunities.



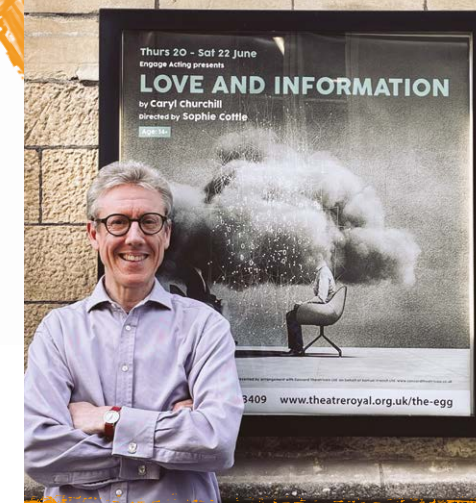
## STATUS

Opportunity for promotion through Theatre Royal Bath's brochure, website and social media, and wider industry exposure.



## COMMERCIAL INCOME

A space for commercial hire, generating revenue and facilitating new opportunities for local business partnerships.



**"Being part of this was another captivating & brilliant experience... not only have I broken through old fears that I had around acting, but it has proved very useful in further informing my work [in] coaching. Really grateful for the learning experience from absolute experts in their field."**

Justin Douglas,  
Engage Participant



# WE ARE BUILDING A VENUE 4...

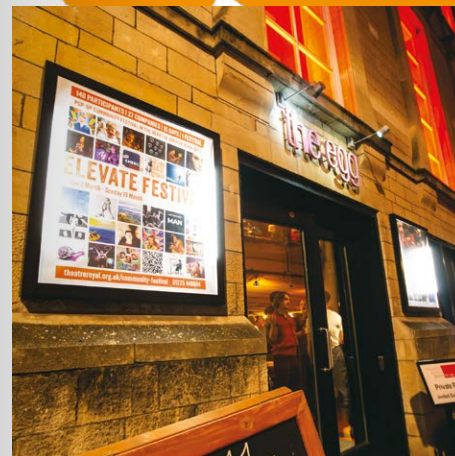
## LOCAL FESTIVALS

We have already shared our commitment to serve as a city festivals base 6 weeks of the year, nurturing local cultural life through partnerships. Wendy Matthews, Artistic Director, Bath Fringe Festival says:

**“Venue 4 will provide a great small scale performance space in the centre of Bath. It’s connection with TRB will make it a perfect fit with Bath Fringe’s mission to present new and experimental theatre work from up and coming performers.”**



Pest Production in  
Royal-Tea at Elevate  
Festival, 2023



## PROFILE

Venue 4 is a gateway to experienced staff and operational resources; boosting contact books, developing industry knowledge and providing in-kind support that can all be used by participants to leverage investment.

**“We felt very lucky to take part and were particularly thrilled by the level of ‘buy in’ from so many depts and members of staff. Thank you TRB!”**



## STARTING OUT

Venue 4 will offer emerging artists low or no cost performance space. Kerry Irvine, Bath Spa Productions Producer and Subject Leader at Bath Spa University works with us to develop their portfolio for future creative careers:

**“This venue could develop practice, become an ally in the city for the community, and inject and invigorate that scene.”**

## GROWING A BUSINESS

Theatre Royal Bath employs over 600 freelance professionals each year. Often those gigs help artists balance a portfolio career that includes their own work. Emile Clarke, Director of LocknLens told us about the impact access to this venue could have:

**“Being able to hold our monthly workshops in Venue 4 will give our participants regularity, quality and a professionalism to match what the workshop is providing.”**



# WE ARE BUILDING A VENUE 4 CONFIDENCE

In 2003, we began the fight to build an ambitious theatre for families many thought there was little need for. We recognised that work for young audiences was overlooked and poorly realised. Likewise, theatre education was disconnected from the industry, with limited opportunities for young people to explore theatre careers.

The Egg is now known worldwide for award-winning, original children's work, and its unparalleled, production-based learning programmes

Likewise, our investment in the Ustinov Studio has directly enabled 15 West End transfers and numerous accolades, since its refurbishment.

We want to repeat success in The Egg and the Ustinov, with a well-designed venue that lends proper prestige, attention and resources to amateur and emerging work by adults.

Director, Sophie Cottle  
and Engage Together  
Company Member  
Charlotte Troop

# ... AND FUTURE STARS

Screen Actors' Guild Award- winning actor, Dominic West understands the importance of being given a break:

**"Having a local space to try things out, rehearse and perform is vital when you are just getting started. Venue 4 will be a brilliant resource for anyone embarking on a career in theatre and for the enthusiastic performers who are 'filling their tank up' by joining the Theatre Royal Bath's theatre groups. What a great idea!"**



# YOU CAN HELP BUILD A VENUE 4 EVERYONE

Our target is £1.8m. With generous pledges already received, and a commitment from our reserves, we have already secured almost £1m.

## Now we need your support.

Helping us to make Venue 4 a reality means more than mere applause. It's about investing in a community and a prestigious, beloved theatre. Becoming part of a successful charity that's been around for over half a century. Keeping an historic Bath landmark alive and thriving. Igniting the creativity of the next generation of theatre makers. And that's a legacy to be proud of.

Get in touch...  
venue4@theatreroyal.org.uk  
01225 823476

## OUR TIMELINE

Spring 2025	Late Spring 2025	Summer 2025	Autumn 2025	Late Spring 2026	End of 2026
Planning Permission	Final Design Phase	Build tender	Public appeal launch	Fit-out	Community venue opens

David Copperfield Community Play Feb 2026

Our Engage adult programme is generously supported by an endowment from successful television and radio actor, Beryl Billings. The Trustees of The Miss Beryl Billings Charitable Trust recognise our unique, organisational capacity to deliver for the local community which has enabled us to grow Engage.

Record box office success and bold leadership from our Trustees has afforded over £1m in building maintenance across our site in 2024/25, without our seeking additional support.

Please speak to us about donor recognition, corporate sponsorship and naming opportunities.

If you are eligible for Gift Aid, we can claim an additional 25% to your donation at no extra cost to you. Higher rate tax payers and corporate donors may be eligible for further tax relief on donations.

Bernard Horn, 1805  
Club Member and  
Venue 4 Supporter



### Theatre Royal Bath Ltd Board of Trustees

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Chair of Trustees  
Paul Heal

Theatre Royal Bath  
Vice Chair of Trustees  
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### Appeal Campaign Founders

The Miss Beryl Billings  
Charitable Trust  
Andrew Fletcher, OBE

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Bath Spa University

Engage Corporate  
Partner  
Kaleidoscope Hotels

Community Partners  
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BEMSCA  
Bath Fringe Festival  
Kilter Theatre  
LocknLens  
Twerton & Whiteway  
Community Network



Corentin Foot,  
Achieve Together  
Company Member

If you would like to see our plans, or discuss  
the project in more detail, please contact:

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01225 823476

[theatreroyal.org.uk/venue4](http://theatreroyal.org.uk/venue4)



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Venue 4 Campaign, Theatre Royal Bath Ltd. Sawclose, Bath, BA11ET.  
Registered Charity Number 277723.

