



Brighton Dome & Brighton Festival

Chair and Trustee Recruitment Pack





Credit: Andy Stagg

Summary & Invitation

Brighton Dome & Brighton Festival is looking to recruit a new Chair and new Trustees to join our Board and drive the governance of the organisation into the next decade. In Autumn 2025 Danny Homan stands down after eleven years as Trustee and six years as a dedicated and brilliant Chair. Alongside him, a number of fellow Trustees are completing their terms.

It's a truly exciting time to consider joining the Board as Brighton Dome & Brighton Festival enters its next phase of growth and impact in a dynamic context. Lucy Davies, previously Executive Director at the Young Vic, joined us as Chief Executive in January 2025, and will be embarking on her vision for the organisation alongside you.

"Please consider joining me as I lead this unique and vital organisation into a sustainable, dynamic and radical future. I'm looking for bold, visionary, inclusive and generous Trustees from all communities and a collaborative, inspiring Chair, to hold me accountable, offer me critical friendship, and to steward the mission of this flagship charity during extraordinary times for the city, the county of Sussex, and our nation."

Lucy Davies, CEO, March 2025

Following a major capital refurbishment project of the Grade I and II listed Corn Exchange and Studio Theatre we have just celebrated our first full year of programming in these spaces which are more accessible and sustainable than ever. The refurbishment has restored and upgraded these venues, introduced a new creative space for artists, new public areas and a restaurant. Within the charity is Create Music, the music hub for the whole of Sussex, reaching over 20,000 young people every year. In 2026 we celebrate the 60th Brighton Festival, England's largest multi-arts festival.



What we are seeking

We are looking for a new Chair to lead, advocate for and drive the strategic mission of the organisation, together with new Trustees to grow and broaden our Board to guide us into the next decade.

On the following pages we explain more about the roles and outline the skills/knowledge and abilities we are looking for.

For our Chair we are keen to hear from committed enthusiastic individuals with a track record in leadership, governance, advocacy, philanthropy and knowledge of the cultural sector.

For the wider Board, we are keen to hear from committed enthusiastic individuals who may have experience in the following areas:

A young trustee, aged 18-28, especially with music experience

Finance and accounting

Digital and technology

Experience as an artist or creative

Leadership and workforce development

Sustainability and environment

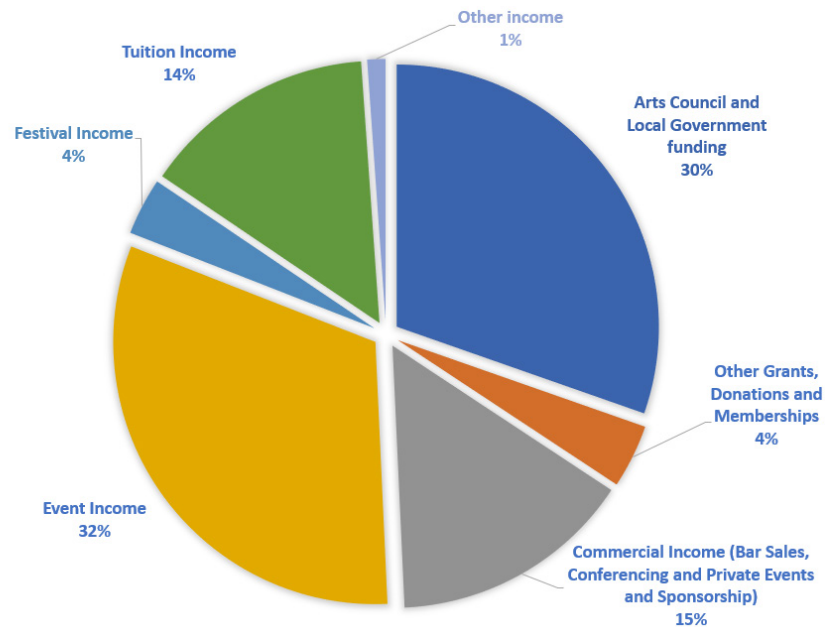
Brighton Dome & Brighton Festival believes that a diverse Board is key to achieving our charitable objectives. We welcome, encourage and will support applications from individuals currently under-represented on our Board.

We look forward to hearing from you.

Funding

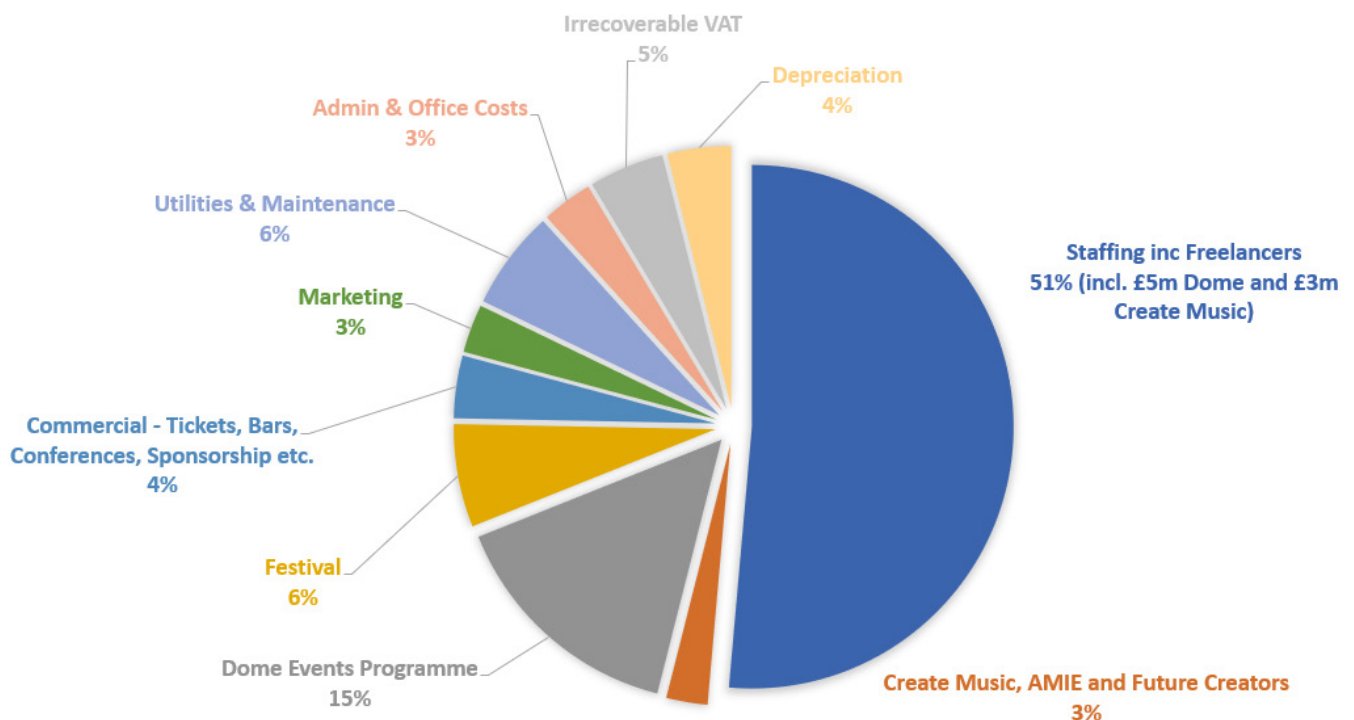
Based on 2023/24 Annual Report and Accounts

Income 23/24



Total income excluding Cap Project Income - £15,160,647

Expenditure 23/24



Total Expenditure excluding Cap Project Expenditure - £15,759.382

Brighton Dome

Concert Hall, Corn Exchange, Studio Theatre

As the south coast's premier multi-arts venue, each year we present over 600 events spanning music, theatre, dance, comedy, literature, spoken word, visual arts, film, digital, community and participatory events.

Our magnificent Grade I listed building situated in the heart of the city forms part of the Royal Pavilion Estate, and has been a beacon for the community for over 200 years. Starting as a grandiose riding stables for Prince Regent and transforming into many guises thereafter; from a place of protest and solidarity for Suffragettes, to a refuge for wartime dances and a temporary hospital in World War I, and even a roller-skating venue. In April last year Brighton Dome celebrated 50 years since Abba won the Eurovision song contest with Waterloo.

Brighton Dome is an extraordinary space in which to bring the arts alive.

Brighton Dome's historic Grade I and Grade II listed Corn Exchange and Studio Theatre officially reopened for live performances in November 2023, following a six-year major capital refurbishment. The project included substantial restoration and upgrades to both venues, conserving vital heritage features for future generations and improving the visitor experience and facilities for artists and audiences alike.

The refurbishment of the Corn Exchange and Studio Theatre is the first phase of a project by Brighton & Hove City Council, who lease us these buildings, in partnership with Brighton Dome & Brighton Festival and Brighton & Hove Museums, to cement the Royal Pavilion Estate as a landmark UK destination for heritage and the arts. The circa £38 million project has been realised with support from Brighton & Hove City



Council, Arts Council England, The National Lottery Heritage Fund and Coast to Capital Local Enterprise Partnership, alongside trusts and foundations and many individual donors. Once all phases of the project are complete, the Royal Pavilion Estate is estimated to welcome over 1.5million visitors, support over 1,200 jobs in the city centre and have an economic impact of £68m, making it a significant cultural landmark in the UK.

These historic buildings now also include Anita's Room, a brand-new dedicated creative space for artists to research, experiment and create bold and courageous new work. It is fully equipped with a lighting grid, mixing desk and the latest 5G technology. The space can accommodate up to 40 people within its main space, office and kitchen areas and is suitable for a range of activities, including: research, development, writing, rehearsals, workshops, retreats, experimentation, music making and community group work. The space is named in memory of activist, entrepreneur and founder of The Body Shop, Dame Anita Roddick.

brightondome.org

Brighton Festival

Each year we produce Brighton Festival, the largest curated annual arts festival in England. A celebration of music, theatre, dance, circus, art, film, literature, debate, outdoor and community events, Brighton Festival takes place in familiar and unusual locations across Brighton & Hove and further afield for three weeks every May.

Renowned for its pioneering and experimental spirit and experimental reputation, our daring programming aims to make the most of the city's distinctive cultural atmosphere and landscape and draws some of the most innovative artists and companies from the UK and around the world.

brightonfestival.org



Credit: Ray Lee - Points of Departure



Credit: Andrew Hasson - Bakktai



Credit: Jamie MacMillan - The Children's Parade

CREATE MUSIC

TRANSFORMING LIVES BY GIVING CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE, AND ADULTS THE LIFELONG GIFT OF MUSIC.

Teaching over 4000 children and young people each week, reaching 19,000 per year and engaging with 270 schools across the region, Create Music is the region's leading provider of high-quality, inclusive music and arts education together with performance opportunities in the South East. Taking in Brighton & Hove, Eastbourne, Hastings, Lewes, Rother, Wealden and the surrounding areas we offer children, young people and adults the chance to explore their passion for music through lessons, ensembles, projects, workshops, orchestras and summer schools.

Brighton & Hove Music & Arts Service transferred from Brighton & Hove City Council to Brighton Dome & Brighton Festival in 2017, subsequently merging East Sussex Music Service with its operation in 2019. Brighton Dome & Brighton Festival is the accountable body to Arts Council England and the Department for Education and facilitates Create Music as the lead organisation for the Music Hub employing 32.44 FTE staff and 69 casual music teachers.

Following a successful application, Create Music, in partnership with West Sussex Music, have been appointed by Arts Council England to deliver music education across Sussex as part of the newly formed Sussex Music Hub.

Our vision is for a future where children and young people's lives are forever transformed by the power of music, the value of belonging and opportunities without barriers.

createmusic.org.uk







The Role

BDBF is looking to grow and broaden its Board membership to support a new CEO. We are seeking new Trustees from a wide range of backgrounds, particularly with experience in the creative industries, ideally living in or near Sussex and with a keen interest in the arts and cultural ecology of the United Kingdom.

You'll be joining an engaged and experienced Board of Trustees, and will be asked to share your skills, perspective and experience to support the charitable aims, strategic vision and rigorous governance of the organisation. This will be through our formal meeting structure and the subcommittees and action groups. You will work closely with a dynamic Executive Team and engage with key issues facing the cultural sector.

The Board's principal role is to uphold vision, mission, policy and governance. This includes maintaining an overview of the organisation's strategy and business planning activities, ensuring compliance with legal and regulatory requirements (particularly employment and health & safety), budget approval and monitoring of financial outcomes, recruitment and accountability of the Chief Executive.

More specifically, Board members are expected to:

- Oversee the charity's strategy, finances, operations and governance, working with the Executive.
- Scrutinise the performance of the Executive to meet agreed objectives and monitor reporting performance in key areas.
- Oversee the integrity of financial information and assess risk management.
- Oversee organisation remuneration and succession planning for senior staff.
- Share a common purpose and enthusiasm for the work of BDBF.
- Act as an ambassador and advocate for the organisation.
- Work as an effective team with, and act as a critical friend of, the executive.
- Draw on experience, knowledge and contacts to actively contribute to the setting of strategic direction.
- Provide advice and expertise that the executive can call upon.
- Undertake Board Champion roles on specific committees as required.
- Volunteer for other working groups if possible.
- Promote a progressive understanding of and commitment to diversity in all forms.
- Support and contribute to the development of fundraising.



The Role

Context

BDBF is an Arts Council National Portfolio Organisation. In the summer of 2025, we will apply for the next portfolio round (2027-2030). This application process will involve the new CEO setting out a strategic vision for this horizon and beyond, in collaboration with the Board and the staff team. 2030 is also our internal target to decarbonise the building and its operations.

Cultural organisations are under increasing pressure to shore up more sustainable business models, in the face of standstill / reduced public and philanthropic funding, depleted reserves, an uncertain and competitive marketplace, and rising operating costs. The longstanding inability to meaningfully invest in the maintenance and renewal of the fabric of our buildings and equipment is also becoming a burning platform.

Despite these pressures, BDBF holds huge potential to occupy a vital and powerful role as a “Big Tent” cultural hub, supporting wider social and economic strategies across the city and region. Brighton and Hove and West and East Sussex have been granted priority devolution which will mean a fast-changing political landscape through 2026.

Our filed accounts for 23/24 can be found [here](#).

Time commitment

- Attendance at Quarterly Board Meetings. Meetings are held in person in March, May, September and December between 5pm – 7pm.
- Attending an Away Day every year (or more frequent if required at key strategic times).
- Potentially joining or leading a sub- committee that focuses on a specific area.
- Attending advocacy events, for example opening nights, Festival launches and events, cultivation and patron evenings.

Length of Term

Trustees are appointed initially for three years and are then normally eligible for two consecutive terms of three years before retirement.

Expenses

- Board members are unpaid but travel and out-of-pocket expenses can be reimbursed.
- Trustees are entitled to 12 complimentary tickets (6 for Brighton Festival events and 6 for Brighton Dome events) per year.



Credit: Chloe Hashemi
- Young Fathers

The Role

Making our Board accessible

If you are not sure you can meet the desired criteria above because of, for example, your working hours, employment status, caring responsibilities, level of experience, socioeconomic or cultural background or access needs, but are still interested in becoming a Trustee - please get in touch anyway. We will do whatever is possible to ensure these things are not barriers to your involvement.

BDBF welcomes applications from everyone regardless of age, gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation, faith or disability. As those with lived experience of a disability and those from an ethnic minority background are currently under-represented on the Board, applications from those individuals would be particularly encouraged. All appointments will be made on merit, following a fair and transparent process. In line with the Equality Act 2010, however, the organisation may employ positive action where candidates from underrepresented groups can demonstrate their ability to perform the role equally well.

How to Apply

To apply please send your CV with a short covering letter (alternatively we are happy to accept a video application of no more than 3 minutes in length) describing the reasons for your interest and the skills you would bring to Brighton Dome & Brighton Festival to Heather Jones, PA to the Chief Executive: heather.jones@brightondome.org.

Closing Date: 30th April 2025

If you would like any further information or an informal conversation with Lucy Davies, Chief Executive, before submitting your application please email lucy.davies@brightondome.org

Please specify if you are interested in being Chair or Trustee.

What happens next

If you are selected to meet with the team, we will get in touch to arrange a conversation with Chair Danny Homan, the CEO Lucy Davies and members of the Trustee selection group.



Brighton Dome is a charity registered in England and Wales No. 249748