

The Mill Arts Centre Trust Trustee Recruitment Pack 2025

The Mill is a multi-art form venue with big ambitions. Situated in the North Oxfordshire market town of Banbury, it is the focus of cultural life as the only public arts and performance venue in the Cherwell District.

Our 237-seat theatre plays host to high quality professional theatre, dance, comedy and music productions, whilst supporting opportunities for local community arts organisations to work and perform in a professional space.



Our studio facilities offer a packed creative learning and participation programme focusing on both the visual and performing arts, covering everything from jewellery making to yoga, watercolour painting to creative writing and much more in between. In addition, our café/bar and gallery area offers opportunities for local artists to meet, exhibit and sell their work.

Increasingly we are working outside of our building and in partnership with a wide range of artists and organisations both in Banbury and Bicester to ensure that all in our communities can experience the evidential health and wellbeing benefits of seeing, and taking part in, professionally led creative and cultural activities.

Successive business plans have charted the strategic objectives of the organisation. Great strides have been taken, increasing the level of income received through fundraising, whilst consolidating growth in earned income from core activities through growth in audiences, building strong brand awareness and reputation locally, regionally and nationally through increasingly ambitious project delivery. This paved the way for a successful application to Arts Council England (ACE), with The Mill becoming a National Portfolio Organisation in the 2023 – 2026 (2027) Investment Round.

NPO status has enabled The Mill to take a strategic cultural lead, not least as a key contributor and enabler of the development of a Cultural Strategy for Banbury.

The Mill continues to play an essential part in the life of the town, making Banbury a more vibrant place to live, work and play.



History & Timeline

Previously operated by Oxfordshire County Council (OCC) through an 'arms length' Management Committee, the Mill Arts Centre Trust was established as a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) in 2016 gaining full autonomy from the local authority.

The Mill building remains in the ownership of OCC, and is leased to Trust for a peppercorn rent. However, since the expiry of the lease agreement in March 2017, the Trust have continued to occupy the building on a holding over arrangement, whilst conversations have progressed to identify a long term premises solution.

In 2023 MACT were awarded National Portfolio Organisation status by Arts Council England, the only organisation in Cherwell to achieve this prestigious status. This further demonstrated confidence in the way that MACT has developed its audiences and established its reputation.

As a former working Mill, the location between the river Cherwell and Oxford Canal regularly places the premises at high risk of flooding. Major flood events were experienced in 2007, 2016, 2019, 2020 and 2024 with climate change seemingly only serving to contribute to increasing the regularity and disruption.

It is therefore the clear aim of the Trust to work with partners to relocate The Mill to alternate premises, both to mitigate the risks presented by the current location, but above all to allow The Mill to realise its full potential, with premises that support an ambitious vision for Banbury and surrounding communities.

The Mill Arts Centre Vision, Mission & Values

Connecting You to the Arts

We are here for everyone to experience the arts in whatever way they choose, discovering moments that connect us and bring us together.

We believe in the transformative power of the arts; not only to uplift individuals and communities, but also to entertain, support well-being, and, above all, bring happiness.

We will ensure that everyone in our communities can benefit through delivery of our 5 missions:

Nurturing your creativity

Providing opportunities to be creative at every stage in life

Your venue for arts and entertainment

Banbury's creative hub and the home for live performance

Celebrating your stories

Exploring what connects us through culture

Your home for Dance

Supporting a thriving community of dance artists and audiences to shine a vibrant light on Banbury

Bringing creativity and culture to you

Reaching new audiences in unexpected places

We are guided by our Organisational Values:

Trust

Taking our responsibilities seriously: to our environment, our people and communities

For All

We will nurture a tolerant, respectful and open-minded culture of acceptance where everyone can belong

Aspirational

Dreaming big: Ambitious in the scale of our vision for the communities we serve

Vibrant

Bringing colour, creativity and life to the places where we live, work and play

The Role of a Trustee

Trustees are actively involved with the management team in:

- Developing our strategy and focus
- Extending our reach
- Ensuring our long-term sustainability

Holding the management team to account and making sure that the organisation is governed responsibly, with reasonable care and skill in MACT's best interests in carrying out its purposes for public benefit.

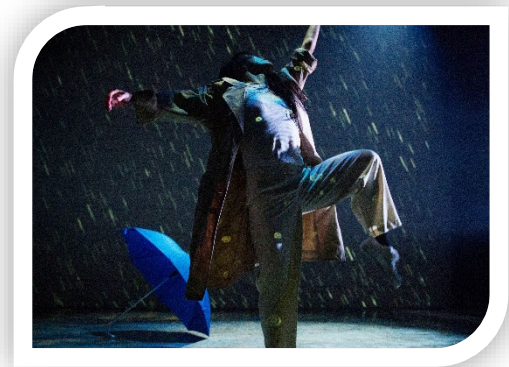
Quarterly Board meetings take place at The Mill in the early evening for around 2 hours. Preparation time is needed to read and understand the board papers.

Trustees will be expected to become a member of one of the sub-committees, which meet monthly, currently during the day.

There are extraordinary Board meetings when circumstances require or workshops to develop strategies

There is always the opportunity to join meetings by Teams

The role is unremunerated but out of pocket expenses will be reimbursed. The role is for an initial term of 3 years and can be extended for a further 2 terms of 3 years



Who would make a good Trustee?

We are looking for Trustees with a passion for the contribution that Culture can make to the community and can contribute from experience gained in one or more of the following areas;

- Those active in local businesses and communities with strong connections in Banbury and Bicester
- Specialist skills, knowledge or experience in:
 - The Arts / Creative Industries / Dance
 - Community engagement
 - Corporate/commercial Law
 - Health & Safety
 - Environmental Sustainability
 - Marketing & Communications

Trustees should have the capacity to be able to commit half a day per month to the organisation.

Current Board Members

Barbara Baseley-Smith (*Chair*)

Karen Warren (*Vice Chair | Resources Committee Chair*)

Louise Norton (*Programme, Audiences and Communities Committee Chair*)

Katy Snelling

Andrew McHugh

Cllr Rob Pattenden (*Cherwell District Council nominee*)

Andrew Lister (*Ex-officio Trustee and Chief Executive*)

HOW TO APPLY

Please apply by sending the following to Andrew Lister, Chief Executive (andrew.lister@themillartscentre.co.uk):

- a short letter expressing your interest in the position, and why you would make a good Trustee

If you have any questions, require assistance, or would like to arrange an informal conversation to find out more about becoming Trustee, please contact andrew.lister@themillartscentre.co.uk.

If you require this document in an alternative format, such as large print or a coloured background, or have any other access requirements, please contact Andrew Lister by email andrew.lister@themillartscentre.co.uk or by telephone on 01295 227175