



**N** Norwich  
Theatre

Strategy 2026 - 2032

**Creative  
Intent**



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**Tom Sleight**  
Chair of Trustees



**Stephen Crocker**  
Chief Executive and Creative Director

# Introduction

We are delighted to share **Creative Intent, Norwich Theatre's strategy for 2026-2032.**

Norwich Theatre is entering a new chapter shaped by positive change. Over recent years, we have grown and developed as an organisation, and with that growth has come a shift in what our audiences, communities, and partners expect from us, and what we expect of ourselves. At the same time, the social and economic pressures facing the communities we serve have intensified. We must respond and use creativity as a force for connection, confidence and positive change like never before.

**Creative Intent** builds on the foundations of the past four years, carrying forward what we have learned while responding to the challenges and opportunities ahead. The strategy has been shaped through extensive consultation with communities, artists, partners, and audiences, whose experiences, insights, and ambitions have helped define both our direction and the values that guide how we deliver it.

Fundamentally this strategy is rooted in Norwich Theatre's core purpose: to provide creative experiences, and to ensure those experiences have wide-reaching positive impact. It is shaped by our place, our responsibilities and our belief that culture matters - not only in what it brings to our stages, but in what it makes possible for people, communities and the region as a whole.

By 2032, it is our intent that Norwich Theatre should be known not only for the quality of its work, but for its impact and public value: as a creative force helping people, places and ideas to thrive.

## Our Core Purpose

We provide **creative experiences**.

## Our Vision

To make all of our creative experiences have **wide reaching positive impact**.

## Our Mission

We deliver creative experiences through **Bold Theatre** that speaks loud and clear, driving **Social Impact** that touches lives and communities, underpinned by **Creative Endeavour** that sees growth and change.

## Our Values

### Creativity

We nurture our own creativity, apply our creative skills to everything we do and respect the value of all forms of creative experience.

### Impactfulness

We deliver our work focused on achieving positive impacts for the people and places with which we engage.

### Honesty

We are open and honest with ourselves and all those with whom we work.

### Kindness

We lead with kindness when working together and with others.

### Inclusivity

We listen carefully and always strive to co-create to ensure that we hear the most diverse range of voices and actively break down real and perceived barriers.

### Bravery

We are not afraid to challenge ourselves and actively embrace experimentation and innovation in pursuit of our vision.





# Our Delivery Principles

At Norwich Theatre, how we work matters as much as what we deliver. Our approach is grounded in fairness, long term responsibility, and careful listening, ensuring our work remains relevant, resilient, and accountable to the people and places we serve.

Our delivery principles describe how we will bring this strategy to life. They are the link between our values and our strategic priorities, shaping the way we make decisions, work together, build partnerships, and create meaningful impact.

## A just and fair organisation

We want Norwich Theatre to be a place where fairness, dignity, belonging and opportunity are felt in practice. This means being open and accountable in how we make decisions, removing barriers where we can, and creating an environment where people feel respected, supported and able to contribute.

- We will report openly on progress, including where further work is needed and how we will respond.

## A sustainable and resilient organisation

We want Norwich Theatre to thrive for the long term - artistically, socially, environmentally and financially. This means making thoughtful choices that strengthen our future, investing in our people and infrastructure, caring for our resources, and building the flexibility to respond well to change.

- We will demonstrate progress through clear planning, responsible use of resources, and measurable action to reduce our environmental impact.

## A listening and responsive organisation

We want Norwich Theatre to be an organisation that listens carefully and responds with purpose. Listening will be an ongoing part of how we work, shaping both what we do and how we make decisions.

- We will create meaningful opportunities to listen, respond visibly to what we hear, and use evidence and learning to strengthen our work over time.

# Our Strategic Priorities

This strategy is shaped around three strategic priorities, each of which is broken down into a set of work strands. Together, these priorities set out what we will do, the impact we aim to have, and the ways we sustain that work.

**Bold Theatre**  
that speaks loud and clear

**Social Impact**  
that touches lives and communities

**Creative Endeavour**  
that sees growth and change



# Bold Theatre

that speaks loud and clear

**This strategic priority ensures that we deliver creative experiences that matter.**

We will programme, produce and platform theatre that is ambitious, relevant and distinctive - rooted in place, resonant nationally, and meaningful to audiences and communities.

## Platforming, Presenting & Partnering

Programming with  
purpose and clarity

- Continue to use our self-subsidy model to fund new work and reach new audiences
- Build access, sustainability and learning into every partnership
- Deepen partnerships with UK and international producers

## Creation & Co-Creation

Embedding producing  
at the centre of our  
identity

- Reimagine community theatre through co-creation and long-term partnerships
- Create a flexible producing and touring model that doesn't put artists or ideas in boxes
- Commission new work, host residencies and support new talent

## Norwich Theatre Beyond & Place-Based Work

Leading creatively  
across Norfolk and  
Suffolk

- Deliver a new hub-and-spoke model for co-creation, skills and touring in the region
- Expand City as Stage: our immersive and site-specific work
- Create a flagship, innovative programme that celebrates Norfolk

## Our Voice, Role & Influence

Telling our story with  
confidence and  
growing our influence  
as a cultural leader

- Be a strong collaborator and play our fullest role in the region
- Measure and tell our impact story clearly and regularly
- Champion Norwich Theatre's unique voice nationally



Image: 3 Migrant Women, © Richard Jarmy

# Social Impact

that touches lives and communities

**This strategic priority ensures that our work is focussed on generating maximum impact.**

We will place justice, inclusion, wellbeing and sustainability at the heart of Norwich Theatre - ensuring creativity actively contributes to a fairer, healthier and more connected society.



Image: RSC Playmaking Festival, © Richard Jarmy

## Social Justice & Community Voice

**Strengthening community voice and civic relevance through creativity**

- Maintain and deepen trust through regular Creative Conversations and open community discussions shaped by lived experience
- Further embed active listening across programmes, public engagement, and organisational leadership
- Review progress annually, with clear midpoint and end-of-strategy assessments

## Equity, Access & Belonging

**Widening impact through our creative, civic and organisational work**

- Develop a new framework for the consistent application of principles of Equity, Diversity, Justice, Inclusion and Belonging (EDJIB)
- Strengthen commitments to Ramps on the Moon and as a Theatre of Sanctuary
- Design Access provision into programmes from the start

## Our Future Climate Story

**Championing environmental responsibility**

- Set a carbon baseline and targets and publish annual sustainability reports
- Use low-waste production standards and aim for zero waste to landfill
- Work towards carbon neutrality by 2035 through steady, planned change

## Social Impact-Led Creative Programmes

**Using creativity to improve wellbeing, connection and opportunity**

- Expand creative health, learning and engagement programmes
- Strengthen and build new partnerships with health, education and community organisations
- Ensure clear opportunities to progress from participation into audiences, training and employment

## Impact, Insight & Influence

**Understanding our impact and amplifying our voice**

- Build regular reflection and learning into every project we deliver
- Develop our own shared framework to measure artistic, social, economic and environmental impact
- Publish annual Impact Reports to support advocacy, fundraising and partnerships

# Creative Endeavour

that sees growth and change

**This strategic priority ensures we have the tools, infrastructure and capabilities that enable everything else.**

We will build a resilient, inclusive and future-ready organisation that invests in people, partnerships, infrastructure and financial sustainability - ensuring Norwich Theatre can thrive artistically, socially and economically.



Image: Open Day 2024, © Alex Guest

## Sector Skills Development

Strengthening the regional and national theatre workforce

- Build career pathways through targeted programmes with schools, colleges, and universities.
- Establish Norwich Theatre as a key contributor to supporting national creative production skills pipelines
- Embed green, digital, and future-skills training across all workforce programmes

## People, Skills & Creative Careers

Investing in people, skills and careers

- Support lifelong learning, leadership development, and reflective practice for all staff
- Put fair pay, access, wellbeing, and transparency in place through a new Fair Freelance Charter
- Develop a Freelance Artists and Creatives Network with mentoring and peer learning

## Business Model Development & Growth

Strengthening financial resilience through innovation

- Link programming, income, and investment through a new multi-year business planning model
- Grow sustainable earned income through a refreshed and relaunched commercial trading company
- Coordinate fundraising, commercial activity, and social investment through a new delivery framework

## Long-Term Strategic Partnerships

Building long-term impactful partnerships

- Formalise partnerships with regional and local authorities, universities, and anchor organisations through clear agreements
- Establish new strategic partnerships aligned to skills
- Live out Norwich Theatre's role as a trusted civic anchor institution

## Capital & Infrastructure Development

Building a world-class, future-ready theatre campus

- Deliver a six-year capital investment strategy with clear priorities, milestones, accountability and oversight
- Develop a new production centre to support making, touring, and skills development
- Upgrade venues to improve access, sustainability, and creative flexibility

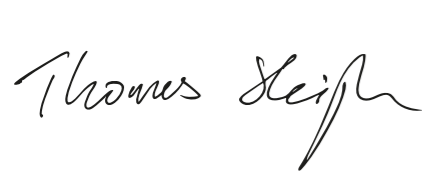
# Working towards 2032

This strategy sets a long-term direction for Norwich Theatre, but its success will be shaped by the choices we make, the relationships we build and the progress we sustain year by year. We will use the outcomes set out under each strategic priority to help us understand the difference we are making, and our Annual Delivery Plans will translate that long-term ambition into clear actions, responsibilities and measures set against clear Delivery Principles. In this way, the strategy gives us a shared sense of purpose and direction, while annual planning helps us stay responsive, focused and accountable as we move towards 2032.


Working towards 2032 will also mean continuing to listen carefully to the people who shape and experience Norwich Theatre. Consultation will remain an ongoing part of how we work, not a one-off stage in developing the strategy. We will continue to learn from our audiences, communities, artists, freelancers, volunteers, staff and partners, and we will use what we hear to inform delivery, strengthen decision-making and respond to changing ongoing social, cultural, environmental and economic circumstances.

We are committed to being open about progress: sharing what is working well, where more work is needed, and what we will do differently as a result. Regular reporting and review points across the life of the strategy will help us measure progress, reflect on learning and hold ourselves accountable to the ambitions we have set out. Just as importantly, they will also give us opportunities to recognise and celebrate success along the way - whether that is creative achievement, stronger partnerships, positive impact in our communities, or the growth and resilience of the organisation itself.

By 2032, we want to be able to look back not only on what Norwich Theatre has delivered, but on how it has grown: with purpose, with openness, and with a clear sense of responsibility to the people and places we serve.



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Chair of Trustees



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Image: Carlos Acosta's Nutcracker in Havana, © Tristram Kenton