

WATFORD COLOSSEUM

WATFORD COLOSSEUM ANNUAL REPORT 2017/18 CONTRACT YEAR 7



WATFORD
BOROUGH
COUNCIL

CONTENTS

1. Purpose of Report
2. Introduction & Executive Summary
3. Programme Balance and Range
4. Community Use
5. Key Performance Indicators

6. People and Structure
7. Customer Satisfaction Information
8. Buildings and Health & Safety

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

This report is a summary of Watford Colosseum's seventh full year of activity and sets out the Venue's performance against the indicative performance indicators in the agreement between HQ Theatres & Hospitality (HQT&H) and Watford Borough Council (WBC).

The reporting period is 1st September 2017 to 31st August 2018, inclusive.

The basis of the report is the performance, community and corporate events activity as reported to WBC at the monthly meetings held since the commencement of the contract.

The Venue Director for the Watford Colosseum has presented quarterly summary reports as follows;

- The live programme, including final ticket sales
- Financial Summary for the wider business
- Creative Learning / Community activity
- Marketing activity
- A summary of future programme challenges and opportunities
- Building related issues and health & safety

In addition, the 'live' programme, broken down by genre against the Operator Agreement KPI has been reported at the quarterly review meetings between HQT&H and WBC. This process is concluded each year with the Annual Review Meeting and the presentation of this Annual Report to WBC's Executive and Scrutiny Committees.

2. INTRODUCTION & EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

An encouraging year for many areas of the business; team/fiscal growth, development of business plan/forward planning and achieving targets

Undertaking an annual competitor and SWOT analysis of the venue and surrounding area, we were able to construct a business plan reflective of the venues strengths/ weakness and work within these parameters.

Watford Colosseum's 7th year of operation has seen a continued increase in performance of the majority of areas monitored within the contract, including areas that are not contractual. From programming to financial, KPI's to positive feedback; pleasing results have been achieved.

The venue strategy of concentrating on **Live Comedy** and **Music** continued to achieve great success. This, along with another great year for **Family** product including our Santa show reaching great heights in sales, Peppa Pig did selling over 4,000 tickets over two days and the introduction of the Christmas Ballet showing potential, will form part of our core offering.

The Venue's headline strategic marketing activity has been reported within the monthly meetings with Watford Borough Council and the within the Marketing Annual Report. Significant changes had been made to the marketing strategy of the venue in which the first phase of 'product led digital' programming has achieved great success. Further work is needed on cementing this digital strategy which will allow us to communicate quickly and accurately with our customers.

Watford Colosseum continues to work closely with producers in order to circumnavigate potential challenges concerning programming in Watford. Great strides have been achieved with connecting with new producers and similarly in reconnecting with reluctant returning producers. Key relationships that are of enormous benefit to the Colosseum and Watford include that of Radio X. In May we worked collaboratively with the radio station to present Noel Gallagher. The gig received much positive press and opened the doors to a new audience.

3. PROGRAMME BALANCE AND RANGE – MAIN HALL - Highlights

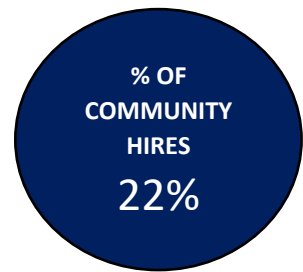
- 40 **hospitality events** were held across the year including our popular *Tropicana Nights*, *Tea Dances* and *Only Fools & Three Courses* dining experiences and introducing Rudolph Rave and increased auditorium Christmas party capacity and attendance.
- **Community hires** have remained a strong arm for the venue. The Colosseum has continued to reach out to new groups and schools whilst continuing the relationship with existing bookers.
- The return of ITV's Coral Snooker Shoot Out was a huge achievement for the venue team and a great support whilst cementing **Live Sporting Events** into our programme. The venue was transformed into a fully-fledged sporting arena, which included Practice Rooms, Players' Lounge, VIP Areas, Main Arena and TV Centre along with Live Streaming.
- **Orchestral Rehearsal Hire** continued to be a strong programming strand for the venue. Alongside the 90 days that the Colosseum is utilised by the BBC Concert Orchestra, we were also hired for an additional 23 days by other world famous Orchestras.
- The **Live Music** programme has sustained growth, building on successful 2016/17. Heavily sold or sell out named acts include Jools Holland, Dr Hook, Noel Gallagher, Lower Than Atlantis and Paul Heaton and Jacqui Abbot.
- **Comedy** continues to be exceptionally popular for both performer and customer alike with healthy sales and sold out shows including Henning Wehn, Jimmy Carr, Paul Chowdhry, Katherine Ryan and Rob Brydon.
- Another great year for **Family** product saw the Christmas Santa show reaching great heights in sales. In addition, Peppa Pig did fantastic business selling over 4,000 tickets over two days. The introduction of a Christmas Ballet showed potential and will form part of our seasonal offering in the future.

TICKETS SOLD
65,181

NUMBER OF
PERFORMANCES
168

NUMBER OF
HOSPITALITY
EVENTS
40

NUMBER OF
CONFERENCE or
MEETING HIRES
91



4. COMMUNITY USE

This year the Colosseum hosted a variety of Community initiatives. 22% have formed 'hires' but additional ticketed events and religious events have been presented including High Holy Days, Birthday Parties, Weddings, Church Fundraisers, Family Fun days and Community award ceremonies.

The venue has continued to push to be involved in local community events and to welcome community projects and initiatives into the building. Some of the internal and external outreach programmes with have been involved with include:

- Croxfest
- #Lobbylive
- Family Fun Open Day
- Watford BID Food & Drink Festival
- Winter In Watford 2017
- Hemel Hempstead Light Switch On
- Love Theatre Day
- Christmas Tree Festival
- Watford Wellness Week July 2018
- Watford Short Film Festival August 2018 and,
- Watford Big Screen August 2018



5. KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS



Increase the percentage of total orders transacted online to an average of 75%

- 2015/16 - 69%
- 2016/17- 76%
- 2017/18 -76.4%



Achieve a Hospitality spend per head of £4.14

- 2015/16 - average achieved £4.50
- 2016/17 - average achieved £4.59
- 2017/18 - average achieved £4.10



Increase the number of database records by a minimum of 5%

- 2015/16 - database 77,764
- 2016/17 - database 85,349 [9.75% increase]
- 2017/2018 - database 90,254 [5.75 % increase]



Community events to make up 20% of total events

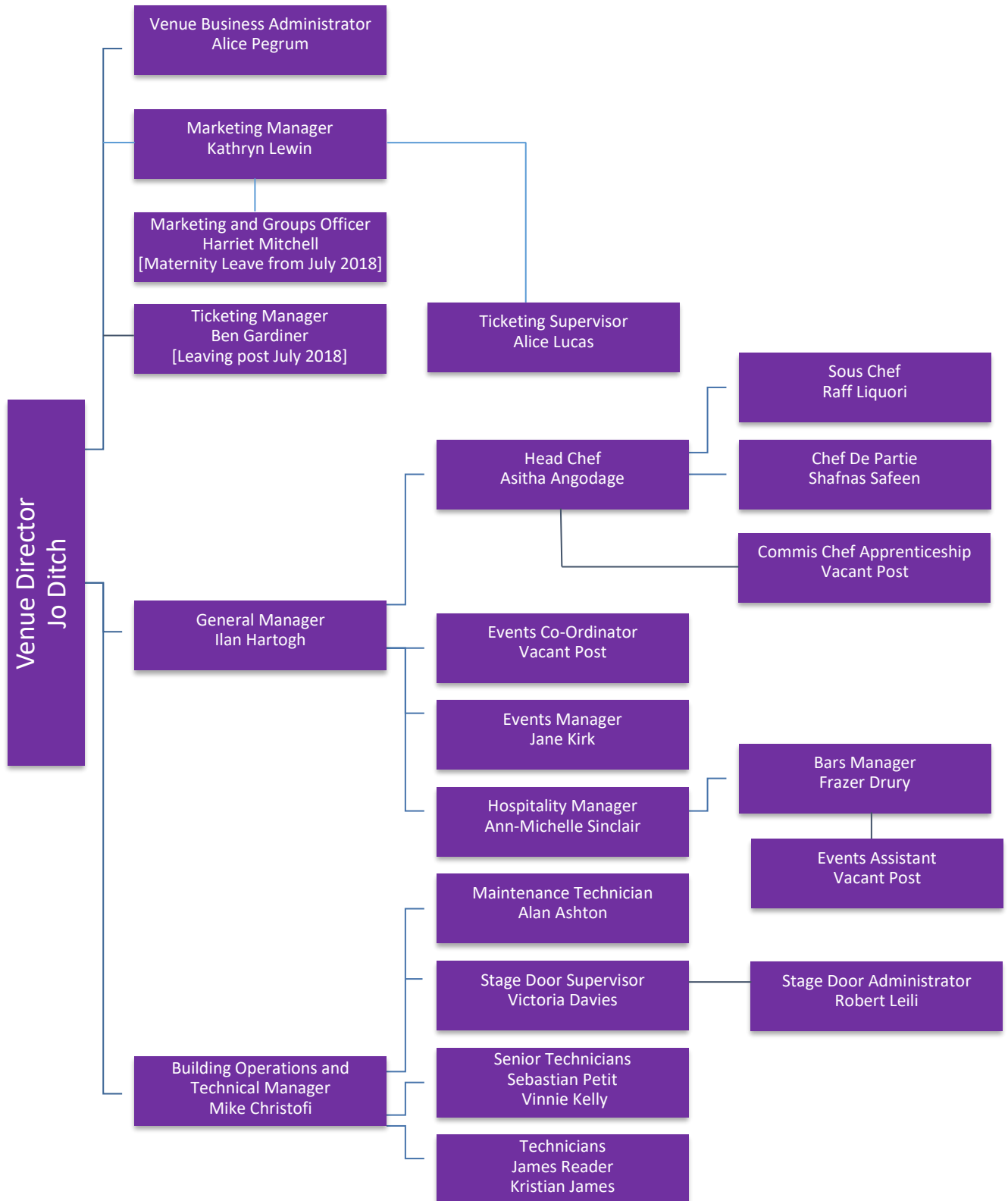
- 2015/16 - 26%
- 2016/17 - 24%
- 2017/18 - 22%



Number of Dark Days not to exceed 84 per year

- 2015/16 - 81
- 2016/17 - 67
- 2017/18 - 72

6. PEOPLE AND STRUCTURE



6. PEOPLE AND STRUCTURE *CONT.*

This year we welcomed the following to our team:

Alison Humphrey as Marketing and Groups Officer
[Maternity Cover]

**This year we congratulated the following promotions
and role changes:**

Kathryn Lewin from Venue Marketing Officer to
Marketing Manager

Victoria Davies from Stage Door Administrator to
Stage Door Supervisor

Employee Highlights

GREAT ORMOND STREET HOSPITAL

For 9 years HQ Theatres, alongside sister company Qdos Entertainment, have been avid fundraisers supporting the GOSH

Last year this level of fundraising led to HQT&H being awarded the highest form of recognition that GOSH can bestow on its supporters; The Friends of Adeona.

This year the Colosseum team continued their support including bake sale competition and various sponsored walks and runs.

WINNERS!

Watford BID

Service Excellence Awards 2018

Live Music Venue Category

7. CUSTOMER SATISFACTION INFORMATION

HQ Theatres & Hospitality is unique amongst UK theatre operators in specialising in Hospitality management alongside Theatre and Venue management.

The Colosseum manages the Hospitality services directly, and its chefs and hospitality team excel in providing the best in first-class food and drink for special events, parties and conferences from the intimate to the large-scale.

Combining venue management with food and drink service on site ensures a seamlessly excellent experience for audiences, guests and delegates

Examples of compliments

"Act was fantastic. What we didn't expect was the friendly and personal attention we received from the staff. From the moment we walked in to the building we were so well treated by the staff so that both of us were able to really enjoy the whole show. A lovely venue, great act and brilliant staff. Thank you."

"I was quite amazed at how sweet and helpful all the people working at the Colosseum that we came into contact with were! Venues in London could learn a lot from the Watford Colosseum! Thank you for a great night!"

"Excellent venue...courteous staff, great atmosphere".

"Good hall and would recommend it to any band I work for - good, very impressed, staff well trained and extremely pleasant, wonderful management down to the ushers"

"Fantastic sounds and the elevated seats are the perfect seats if you want to enjoy the sounds. Very clean and well maintained".

Examples of complaints

"Too hot" or "Too cold"

"Drinks prices too expensive"

"High presence of security"

Categories:	Description:	Performance Measures:	Jul-Sept	Oct-Dec	Jan-Mar	Apr-Jun	Jul-Sep	Total
Policy	All matters relating to Policy issues including Programming	No of compliments	15	1	6	9	2	33
		No of complaints	2	2	2	0	0	6
Service Delivery	Including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Failure to deliver services ➤ Poor quality of service ➤ Delay in the delivery of service 	No of compliments	16	4	13	17	4	54
		No of complaints	9	6	10	8	5	38
Customer Services	Including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Incorrect information given ➤ No response to customer enquiry ➤ Unfair treatment of customer ➤ Staff attitude ➤ Car park 	No of compliments	13	2	6	14	5	40
		No of complaints	2	0	0	4	0	6
		Total no of compliments	44	9	25	40	11	129
		Total no of complaints	13	8	12	12	5	48

***Only compliments with an explanation were included in overall results. Additional 33 compliments Jul-Sep, 16 compliments Oct-Dec, 25 compliments Jan – March, 59 compliments April – June and 25 compliments July - August**

HGEM (Hospitality Great Experience Management) is a mystery shopper report that is a monthly audit of a customer journey. It covers two areas; one being the customer journey from liaising with the box office and booking tickets to their arrival, greeting, venue signage, cleanliness, the show itself and exit flyering. Alongside that is a restaurant report going into further detail of the customer experience when dining with us. From entrance, table set up, ordering, upselling, staff knowledge and food quality and presentation as well as billing and overall experience. HQT&H target score is 95%. HQT&H average score is 88%. The Colosseum score is averaging 90%.

September 2017	91%
October 2017	95%
November 2017	90%
December 2017	92%
January 2018	89%
February 2018	70%
March 2018	86%
April 2018	91%
May 2018	96%
June 2018	92%
July 2018	96%
August 2018	%

The foundation to the Colosseums customer experience strategy is formed from a central HQT&H initiative called the 'Four Pillars programme'. This encourages and empowers our teams to have confidence in the key skills in order to deliver an exceptional experience every time. Alongside this programme runs a 'Reward and Recognition' initiative. This recognition programme is designed to inspire and encourage our leaders and team members to consistently deliver outstanding customer service to our guests.

Always wanting to seek out opportunities to improve, we proactively contact our customers with a post event questionnaire in which they are invited to share their views.

In our most recent annual survey the majority of our customers rated their overall experience of the venue as 'Excellent' or 'Very Good'.

8. BUILDINGS AND HEALTH & SAFETY

Watford Colosseums Building Operations and Technical Manager leads on Health and Safety of the Venue. RB H&S Ltd are our retained external H&S consultants who provide an annual audit, alongside quarterly inspections. Subsequent delivery of a prioritised action plan is then managed and actioned by the local on site.

Within the annual and quarterly inspections, a thorough review is undertaken of all operational areas from staff training records; for example, Manual Handling and First Aid, to documentation held within the HQT&H group H&S portal pertaining to risk assessments and compliance with legislation for Legionella, COSHH, LOLER, Statutory inspections, Accident and Incident reporting and electrical testing etc.

“Good Progress has been made over the past year resulting in an improved audit score of 92%” and “Staff 1-1’s again demonstrated a positive safety culture within the venue

RB H&S Ltd

Building and Plant Machinery updates are provided at the monthly and quarterly meetings. Below is an overview from RB H&S Ltd audits. Column A is the priority order; Column B is the number of actions required; Column C is the number completed; Column D is the number outstanding

Priority Order	Number of Actions Required	Number Completed	Number Outstanding
High – 1 Month	8	7	1 -Ongoing work to external bollards.
Medium – 3 Months	85	85	0
Low – 6 Months	2	2	0

Brief overview of year

September-December 2017					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Venue H+S recommendations complete now working on new Audit finding and then first quarter inspection. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Various minor accidents involving customers or staff – No serious. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Few incidents reported as accidents in error. Staff refresher training has taken place. 	<p>No RIDDORS</p>	<p>Group wide H+S meeting attended – some new training processes in place</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •New Group wide hospitality RB contract rolled out – awaiting first unplanned inspection.

January-March 2018									
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Venue H+S recommendations complete 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •2 x investigations taking place regarding pyrotechnics incidents. MC + SP working with the manufacturer to investigate further – proved to be manufacture fault but working on them accepting liability. No persons or building damage, small VC equipment damage. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •No RIDDORS. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •New H+S Inspection. Very positive with just a handful of recommendations. WBC Bollards still outstanding. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Stage Lift issue where lift is raiding 2 inches above stage. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Fire Alarm fault found and now resolved. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Scaffolding inspections issue. AA doing weekly inspections to stay compliant. Working with WBC and RB Health and Safety. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Structural Engineer raised some ceiling inspection concerns – on going progress. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Fire Brigade came and did a very thorough audit + paperwork check along with walk around – passed with flying colours! 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •No RIDDORS.

April-August 2018

•New H+S Audit. Very positive with just a handful of recommendations. WBC Bollards work still outstanding. WBC passed to HQTH to fix but have since undertake some the work themselves as they had the units. Waiting to hear if WBC want to finish works or hand to HQTH.

•Pyro investigation complete with successful outcome, Le Maitre Settling directly with performer.

•Stage Lift Issue – completely fixed.

•Flowerpot fire due to WBC staff using as smoking area - working with monitoring officer.

•Venue wide PAT testing underway/completed..

Pest Control undertaken due to drain flies in accessible toilet, most likely due to roof leak.

•Needlestick problems discovered due to local homeless community. Working with local police to resolve.

Asbestos work complete and removed from site complete. Sign off given..

Plant & Machinery Maintenance

Ongoing works with WBC regarding BMS, pumps, heaters and roof works. Project has been launched and contractor appointed. Now waiting on a specification and start date. HQ Theatres have now expressed interest in undertaking the works on Watford Borough Councils behalf so works can streamline with our program and cause minimal disruption to the venue.

New online maintenance request portal launched for ongoing management of reactive maintenance.

Brief overview of year:

September-December 2017

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Electrical report has come back with remedial – list still with electrical company – pressure also applied. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Drainage issues – drains heavily blocked and backup around the building – now fixed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •New electric sockets in the kitchen. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Emergency lighting repairs quoted and undertaken. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Disabled alarm repairs undertaken, now resolved. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •FOH windows now operational via button in plant room as a temp fix for now. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Problem with fire alarm working with Aster to fix. Aspirator requires replacement as soon as possible. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •LOLER Inspecting on MEWPS undertaken – passed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Talescope inspection undertaken – passed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •All other PPM up to date.
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January-March 2018

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Electrical report has come back with remedial – list now recoded (Aster contractor uses old coding as flagged previously). Working with contractor to arrange works around time and budget. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Problem with fire alarm working with Aster to fix. Scheduled to be replaced on 12th Feb - now complete. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •PAVA system now fully fixed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Various PPM visits undertaken such as electrical report, pumps, fire alarm, water treatment, Aspirator, Ceiling inspections, 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fire Risk Assessment undertaken. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Legionella Risk Assessment taken place 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Main venue rigging inspection/LOLER certifications took place – all positive. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Gents urinal issues – emergency maintenance needed, now resolved.
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April-August 2018								
•Emergency lighting reported some defects - now complete.	•AHU filter and bag change across venue.	•Loading bay floor failing concrete lifted and relayed in steel.	•Roofspace scaffolding issues - working with WBC.	•Serious flooding ongoing in accessibility toilet.	•Stage Door corridor roof repaired.	•Emergency lighting remedial's now 100% complete.	•Pump bellow failure causing water leak – this has now been resolved.	All other PPM up to date.