Welcome to the public consultation around Colston Hall's transformation of the main hall and historic foyer. We're looking for your views to help develop our proposals. This is a pre-planning consultation to get feedback before a full planning application is submitted.
Colston Hall is the South West’s biggest concert hall and has been entertaining the people of Bristol since 1867. The Hall presents an eclectic programme of rock and pop, classical, comedy, world, folk and electronic music, alongside nationally recognised education programme Bristol Plays Music.

In 2009, the Hall saw the opening of the new foyer building, which significantly improved the customer experience of visiting the venue. However, the current hall was last updated in 1951 and is no longer fit for purpose for audiences or performers. Now Bristol Music Trust, who run Colston Hall, and Bristol City Council, want to transform the Hall to become one of the best arts and learning facilities in the country.

We want to:
- Provide the very best audience experience in terms of seating, high quality acoustic and sight lines
- Attract the highest quality performers
- Inspire and support creativity
- Be accessible for all audiences, performers and staff alike
- Increase environmental and financial sustainability through increased flexibility of use

Delivery and funding
Bristol Music Trust and Bristol City Council are working together to deliver the project. Costing £48.8 million, the Trust are working with a range of funders including Arts Council England and Heritage Lottery Fund to reach this total.

To get to the planning stage, the project has had investment from:
- Bristol City Council - £1.6m
- Arts Council England - £0.4m
- Heritage Lottery Fund - £117,900
### Heritage and History of Colston Hall

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1867</td>
<td>The first Great Hall was designed by Foster &amp; Wood in the Bristol Byzantine style.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1873</td>
<td>The Great Hall was followed in 1873 by the new entrance into the historic foyer on Colston Street.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1898</td>
<td>Fire destroyed the Great Hall, a competition was launched to rebuild.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1900</td>
<td>Colston Hall was reopened with the typical shoe box interior of the time and was purchased by the Bristol Corporation in 1919.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1936</td>
<td>The hall was closed for remodelling and was reopened with its third interior design the following year.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1945</td>
<td>Fire destroyed the main hall, although The Lantern and historic foyer were largely unscathed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1951</td>
<td>The hall was reconstructed and reopened as we see it today.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>The new foyer building was opened, improving the customer experience of visiting the hall.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The older parts of Colston Hall are Grade II listed and comprise a patchwork of Victorian and various twentieth century alterations; some of these have more historic importance than others. Of most importance is the Colston Street entrance colonnade, The Lantern venue and its foyer. The Victorian cellars below the main hall are reminders of Bristol’s history and have a special industrial character distinct from the public areas. Another element key to the building’s character is the 1950s concert hall interior. Finally, the much altered backstage areas are of limited architectural interest.
Key Improvements

**Main hall**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Format</th>
<th>Existing Capacity</th>
<th>Proposed Capacity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Standing (stalls) &amp; seated (balconies)</td>
<td>1932</td>
<td>2174</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seated in front of stage</td>
<td>1820</td>
<td>1712</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seated (orchestras)</td>
<td>2055</td>
<td>1792</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**The Lantern**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Format</th>
<th>Existing Capacity</th>
<th>Proposed Capacity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Seated</td>
<td>239</td>
<td>300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Standing</td>
<td>350</td>
<td>500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Banquet</td>
<td>120</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Buffet</td>
<td></td>
<td>275</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**New cellar venue and education spaces**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Format</th>
<th>Proposed capacity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cabaret style</td>
<td>70 seated + 20 standing + 50 in bar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>End-stage</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Club space (standing/dancing)</td>
<td>250</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rehearsal (class room)</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Catering/breakout (seated)</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Catering/breakout (standing)</td>
<td>150-200</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Key improvements:**

- Remodel the existing main hall, equipping it with international standards of acoustics, comfort and flexibility
- Redevelop The Lantern into an elegant and versatile venue
- Restore the historic Victorian foyer and create a restaurant within the colonnade on Colston Street
- Opening the historic cellars for the first time in 100 years to create a third performance space and a dedicated music centre for Bristol Plays Music
- Improving the stage and get-in for artists so disabled artists can access our main stage for the first time
- Solving current problems: installing new comfortable seating, air conditioning, toilets and improving access throughout the building
- Improving the public realm outside the building on Colston Street including restoration of the external fabric of the building
- Refurbishment and extension of the backstage areas
Design Principles and Concepts

Project architect Levitt Bernstein’s designs will raise the standards to those of the best halls in Europe while maintaining a style that is unique to Colston Hall and to Bristol. Furthermore, restoration of the earliest Victorian parts will reveal the full beauty and grandeur of the original architects’ vision.

The designs aim to celebrate the highly significant Bristol Byzantine style, optimise the use of space, vastly improve the acoustics and add new distinctive, high quality contemporary elements to improve the look, accessibility and sustainability of the hall.
Proposals for The Main Hall

The new designs for the main hall are inspired by the character of Bristol’s Harbourside, something that is already present in the listed building with its rope, ship and other maritime motifs. Themes of hulls, masts, decks, sails and rigging inform a dynamic new design for the main hall that will replace the current 1951 interior.

Key improvements:
- Comfortable, flexible and accessible seating throughout
- Flexible and accessible staging
- High quality acoustics to rival the best UK concert halls
- Addition of a second balcony to improve the acoustic
- Installation of a new ventilation and cooling system

To create modern standards of comfort, flexibility and acoustics, the interior needs to be entirely reconstructed within the original Victorian walls. This is because the current balcony overhang compromises the acoustics below it, and the stage is too small and inflexible. Additionally, the shaping of the existing side balconies means that the leg room can’t be increased and the shape of the ceiling causes unpleasant echoes. Replacement of the balconies will also enable a new ventilation and cooling system to be installed.

In comparison to the current main hall, the new interior will respond to customer feedback so far and improve the listening experience for the whole audience; be more comfortable and accessible, accommodate large international orchestras and choirs and popular music equally well, and be more readily adaptable between rock/pop and orchestral concerts.
Proposals for The Lantern and Historic Foyer

This part of the building retains its original form and attractive Victorian features. It is the part of the building that is most capable of restoration and would benefit greatly from it.

Key improvements:
- Restoring and reinstating the historic plasterwork
- New windows in the original openings in The Lantern overlooking Colston Street
- Retractable seating and staging
- Restoration of the glazed Victorian rooflight

- Creation of a new bar area to serve The Lantern
- Installation of a feature spiral staircase from the lower foyer to The Lantern level
- New lift from the historic foyer ground floor to The Lantern

A new double-height day-lit space will be created beneath the glazed Victorian rooflight featuring a modern staircase in homage to the original grand staircase present in the 1873 building. Historical architectural details will be conserved throughout.

The Lantern will have flexible technical infrastructure and acoustics to enable a wide range of music, education, comedy, community, conferences, weddings, banqueting and other events.
Proposals for Cellar Performance and Education Spaces

The currently underused cellar spaces will be made into an intimate and flexible new performance space as well as meeting the need for increased and dedicated spaces for music education, emphasising the importance of Bristol Plays Music’s vital education work.

Key improvements:
- Creation of a new cellar performance space for club nights, more intimate performances, conferences and breakout
- Creation of a self-contained suite of spaces for music education and creativity comprising practice rooms, social space and a recording studio
- New glazed entrance from the plaza on Colston Street
- New ‘Changing Places’ accessible toilet

The new education spaces will be fully accessible and will house the first National Centre in the country for Advanced Training for young musicians with Special Education Needs and Disabilities (SEND).
The proposal is to repair and restore the beautiful Bristol Byzantine style historic foyer building and reanimate the Colston Street façades with a new public restaurant and new windows to The Lantern above.

Key improvements:
- New restaurant in the historic foyer colonnade and old Box Office area
- Improving the Colston Street façade
- Improving the public realm with new outdoor eating spaces
- Creating a new entrance into the cellar venue and studio spaces from the plaza on Colston Street

The ground floor former entrance area will be converted to become the Hall’s main restaurant. This new location has independent access from Colston Street and can be accessed from within the Hall. Internally, the restaurant will feature retained Victorian arches and columns that will be stripped back to their original brick and stone finish.

New physical and visual connections will be created between Colston Hall, its restaurant and the public realm that will encourage public use of the plaza and lower Colston Street.
Accessibility and Performance areas

Throughout the design process building-in accessibility has been a primary consideration. The proposals aim to ensure that the refurbished Colston Hall will meet or exceed UK and international accessibility standards. The key improvement is the level access to all the public spaces from the new foyer.

Key improvements to accessibility for our customers:
• Level access to all public spaces across both buildings including the main hall, The Lantern and its new bar area from the new foyer building
• Improvements to wayfinding and signage
• Addition of a Changing Places accessible toilet
• Increased accessible seating locations in all venues
• High quality audio enhancement systems
• Level access to the new restaurant
• New lift within The Lantern foyer

Key improvements to accessibility for our performers:
• Level access to all principal performers’ spaces for the first time, including backstage areas
• An accessible entrance and lift for performers and staff
• Accessible toilet and shower facilities for performers

We are working closely with access charity Attitude is Everything to ensure the building is as accessible as it can be. We are aiming for their Gold standard, which they only award to the most accessible venues.

The proposed building layout enables each of the 3 flexible venues to operate independently or together, giving great flexibility in use. The plans opposite show the main hall, lantern and cellar performance zones. The Lantern and cellar space can be accessed independently from the foyer and have access to their own toilets and bars.
The refurbishment of Colston Hall presents an opportunity for the inclusion of environmentally conscious design not only to minimise energy consumption and carbon emissions but also to adapt the building for a lifetime of sustainable use.

The sustainability of Colston Hall can be split into two aspects:

1. **Sustainable buildings**

As part of the refurbishment ambitious sustainability targets have been set, this includes achieving certification against the Building Research Establishment's Environmental Assessment Method (BREEAM).

BREEAM is a national sustainability rating tool that is being used at Colston Hall to evaluate its specification, design, construction and operation, over a broad range of categories.

- Management processes
- Health and well-being
- Energy use
- Transport
- Water use
- Materials
- Waste
- Land use and ecology
- Pollution

The outcome of the assessment is expressed as a single certified BREEAM rating, ranging from a one star Pass to five stars 'Outstanding'. The sustainability measures included at Colston Hall mean it is forecast to achieve three stars also known as a 'Very Good' rating.

2. **Sustainable operations**

At Colston Hall there is also a commitment to reduce the negative environmental impacts of its activities, in particular those relating to:

- Business premises: energy use, water use and waste;
- Business travel and staff commuting
- Communications materials
- Events: energy use, water use, food, waste, transport and travel; the goods and services chosen for its offices, the business services used.
The Planning Process

The Planning and listed building application for Phase 1 (new foyer) was approved in 2006 and included the aspiration for ‘Phase 2/3’ improvements. These previous permissions help to set the principle for the current proposals.

Key planning factors that will form part of the applications that will be submitted to Bristol City Council, as the local planning authority, are the impact of the design on:

- Heritage
- Transportation
- Sustainability
- Amenity

The heritage implications of the proposed work and its impact on the fabric and integrity of this Grade II listed building, together with the visual impact of the St Michaels Hill and Christmas Steps Conservation Area, will be key planning considerations.

Decisions relating to planning have to be made in accordance with Bristol City Council’s Development Plan comprising:

- Core Strategy (Adopted June 2011)
- Site Allocations and Development Management Policies (Adopted July 2014)
- Bristol Central Area Plan (Adopted March 2015)

We will also need to refer to Bristol City Council’s Supplementary Planning Document relating to the Colston Hall area.
Temporary Closure Period and Next Steps

The closure period
Colston Hall’s main hall and The Lantern will be closed from early summer 2018 to Easter 2020 to allow for the construction works. Bristol Music Trust is currently working up plans to present music in alternative spaces across the city as well as utilising the new foyer building for music performances.

Have your say
We’re looking for your views to help develop our proposals. This is a pre-planning consultation to get feedback before a full planning application is submitted for the redeveloped hall and historic areas. All comments will be considered and will feed into the ‘Community Involvement Statement’ that will accompany the future planning submissions, and form part of consideration by Bristol City Council.

Please fill in the questionnaire online at colstonhall.org/transformation/public-consultation
To tell us what you think of our plans. Take a postcard to remind you of the web address.

The consultation runs from Monday 6th – Friday 24th February

The planning application will be made in May/June 2017.