



Britten Pears Arts launches three-year Capital Programme and receives £750,000 from Arts Council England's Capital Investment Programme

Britten Pears Arts today announces the launch of a three-year £13.4 million Capital Programme which will deliver increased activities for the organisation's communities, enhance lives and improve health through creativity. The Capital Programme will ensure Britten Pears Arts' buildings and sites have improved accessibility for everyone, are financially sustainable and help us on our path to net zero carbon.

Following in the footsteps of its founders, Benjamin Britten and Peter Pears and their passion to ensure that the arts were useful and available to everyone, Britten Pears Arts' Capital Programme will mean that existing buildings will be fit for purpose, efficient and help the organisation to achieve its mission.

Capital Programme overview

- Britten Pears Arts to work with the **Alde and Ore Estuary Trust (AOET)** and East Suffolk Water Management Board (ESWMB) to raise the Snape Maltings flood defences.
- Britten Pears Arts appoints **De Matos Ryan Architects**.
- Britten Pears Arts makes key professional appointments to deliver the Capital Programme.
- The modernisation of the **Britten Pears Building** to enable increased levels of community use and the expansion of Britten Pears Arts community and creative health programmes. A new lift will be created to ensure that everyone can use the revamped studios.
- A series of upgrades to **Snape Maltings Concert Hall** to improve access, audience comfort and programming flexibility. There will be auditorium seating improvements, upgraded lighting, an extra passenger lift, refurbished toilets and better kitchen facilities.
- Britten Pears Arts will significantly **lower carbon emissions** by installing roof insulation, use of photovoltaic panels, and by connecting the music buildings to a renewable heating system.
- As well as improvements to existing **artist accommodation** at Snape Maltings and in Aldeburgh, nine new bedrooms will be created at Snape Maltings for visiting musicians, arts practitioners and visitors.
- There will be a **new visitor exhibition** at The Red House and a **Discovery Centre** at Snape Maltings, to tell the fascinating stories about the heritage sites.

Funding

To date £4.8million has been raised and Britten Pears Arts is extremely grateful to **Arts Council England** for its significant award of **£750,000**, thanks to its government funded Capital Investment Programme which is announced today. Britten Pears Arts will benefit from a share of £24.2 million through Arts Council England's Capital Investment Programme which goes towards building works and the purchase of equipment and other assets to improve access, seize on technological opportunities and reduce environmental impact.

In addition, Britten Pears Arts have received vital initial funding from individuals and trusts and foundations, including the Paul Hamlyn Foundation, Foyle Foundation, 29th May 1961 Charitable Trust and the New Anglia Local Enterprise Partnership.

Subject to securing the remaining money, the majority of the works are planned to take place in 2025 and 2026. Although some activities will have to be re-arranged, most regular activity will be able to continue throughout this period. The Aldeburgh Festival and Britten Pears Arts summer performance programme will not be impacted.

Roger Wright, Chief Executive, Britten Pears Arts commented, "This programme will create transformational benefits for Britten Pears Arts, our audiences, communities and musicians. The sensitive improvements to the buildings will resolve access and sustainability challenges which mean everyone will be able to enjoy the activities we present in them. We offer huge thanks to Arts Council England and all the other funders for their vital support. Whilst there remains a big funding challenge which we have to overcome, I am confident that we will meet it, and am proud of what we have achieved so far, as we continue to respect our heritage and protect our future."

Flood Defences

Britten Pears Arts is working closely with the Alde and Ore Estuary Trust (AOET) and the East Suffolk Water Management Board (ESWMB) to ensure that the Snape Maltings site and its world-renowned Concert Hall will be protected. The flood defences will be raised to meet a 1:200-year event. The AOET and the ESWMB have secured funding from the Environment Agency for the Snape Maltings flood defence works. In parallel, landscape architects, Untitled Practice, will design improvements to outdoor public spaces and access routes.

Lead Architect

After a public procurement process, Britten Pears Arts has appointed **De Matos Ryan** as the Lead Architect. De Matos Ryan is an award-winning architectural practice known for creating imaginative and socially responsive buildings, often within historically or culturally sensitive settings. Since 1999, the practice has become highly experienced in finding joyful but effective solutions to complex sites and challenging briefs, which are always sustainable and inclusive. The team's thoughtful interventions prioritise honest materiality, careful craftsmanship and legible detailing. De Matos Ryan has earned a reputation for enabling cultural, educational and community organisations to create lasting value. Recently completed projects include Young V&A (Bethnal Green, London), Borough Theatre (Abergavenny), Wonderlab: The Bramall Gallery at the National Railway Museum (York) and ArtsEd (Chiswick, London). Current projects include BFI (Southbank, London), Oriel Myrddin Gallery (Carmarthen), Ucheldre Arts Centre (Holyhead) and Tullie House Museum (Carlisle). www.dematosryan.co.uk

Angus Morrogh Ryan, Director, De Matos Ryan commented, "We are delighted to have been appointed to help support Britten Pears Arts as they prepare for their next chapter and continue to create a lasting legacy of music that everyone can enjoy and experience at Snape Maltings. We look forward to breathing new life into the wide range of their distinctive buildings and remarkable landscape. We seek to help broaden their creative opportunities, building on the already remarkable artistic experience whilst also improving accessibility and sustainability for future generations. Our driving force is delivering resilient, welcoming and joyful cultural destinations that are loved locally and recognised internationally. As Britten once said, we want our work 'to be of use to people, to please them, to enhance their lives'."

In addition, Britten Pears Art have appointed the following professional teams also through a public procurement process:

- Gardiner & Theobald, Project Manager
- Untitled Practice, Landscape Designer
- Bristow Consulting, Cost Consultant
- Charcoal Blue, Theatre and Acoustic Consultants

- Ingleton Wood, Sustainability Consultant
- Bidwells, Planning and Heritage Consulting

A fundraising public appeal will be launched in early 2026 and there will be naming opportunities for various elements of the project.

Further information about the campaign and how to contribute is available from Emily Stubbs (estubbs@brittenpearsarts.org) and Alison de Zoete (adezoete@brittenpearsarts.org).

For further press information, please contact:

Rebecca Driver Media Relations | Email: rebecca@rdmr.co.uk | Tel: 07989 355446 | web: www.rdmr.co.uk

Press Images are available [here](#).

Notes to Editors

About Britten Pears Arts

Britten Pears Arts is a pioneering music, arts and heritage charity based on the Suffolk coast at two popular, historic visitor destinations: The Red House and Snape Maltings. Britten Pears Arts emerged from the creative partnership of Benjamin Britten, one of the greatest composers of the 20th century, and his professional and personal partner, singer Peter Pears. Britten and Pears shared a progressive vision for music and the arts to be useful, helping people enhance and bring joy into their lives. Britten and Pears' vision inspires all our activity, from work with the local communities to our national leadership roles in the fields of talent development and music, health and wellbeing.

www.brittenpearsarts.org

About Arts Council England

Arts Council England is the national development agency for creativity and culture. We have set out our strategic vision in Let's Create that by 2030 we want England to be a country in which the creativity of each of us is valued and given the chance to flourish and where everyone of us has access to a remarkable range of high-quality cultural experiences. From 2023 to 2026 we will invest over £467 million of public money from Government and an estimated £250 million from The National Lottery each year to help support the sector and to deliver this vision.

www.artscouncil.org.uk