

COCKPIT DEPTFORD FUNDERS REPORT 2023



CONTENTS

- 03 **THANK YOU**
- 04 **WHAT WE SET OUT TO DO**
- 05 **WHAT WE DID**
- 07 **OUR SUCCESSES**
- 09 **FEEDBACK**
- 10 **WHAT WE ARE MOST PROUD OF**
- 11 **HEAD, HEART, HAND**
- 12 **LESSONS LEARNED**
- 13 **FINAL COSTS**
- 14 **NEXT STEPS**



THANK YOU



THANK YOU for supporting our vision to create a thriving hub for craft, providing additional affordable artist studios and space for a rich community programme of workshops, events and training at Cockpit Deptford. We are extremely grateful for your investment and hope that our bi-monthly reports from the front line of the project have brought you on this exciting journey with us.

We couldn't have done it without you!

WHAT WE SET OUT TO DO



In autumn 2023, we completed a £3.24m capital development at Cockpit Deptford that delivers additional studios, a for-purpose woodworking hub, a new public entrance, London's first public Craft Garden and, importantly, a new learning centre.

This is a flagship project in Lewisham's Creative Enterprise Zone. The new spaces are enabling us to expand our services, accommodate and support more makers and, for the first time, open to the public all year round to offer a rich community and youth education programme for local people.

Bringing into active use previously redundant and unused spaces, the Deptford project is a key element in an overarching strategy to unlock Cockpit's tangible and intangible assets (including buildings, knowledge, skills and IP) to support our charitable mission, reach more beneficiaries, and further strengthen our financial sustainability.

Our purpose is to cultivate a thriving, equitable craft sector in which talented individuals from any background can discover their talent, develop their skill and build a creatively and commercially successful craft business.



Over the next three years, 2024-27, we will pursue this mission through three priority areas: our core work of supporting maker businesses to start up and grow; our youth, careers, community and education programme; and our public events programme. We articulate these priorities under the following pillars:

Growing Spaces

Our core mission is to equip talented craftspeople with the affordable space, equipment, specialist training and support needed to start and grow thriving businesses and artistic practices.

Growing Communities

Create opportunities for people of all backgrounds, especially the least advantaged, to discover and enjoy craft. Promote craft careers and provide training and education to protect the future of craft skills, opening pathways into professional practice for more, and more diverse, people.

Growing Audiences

Celebrate and present contemporary craft and design to public audiences through a rich cultural programme of exhibitions, talks, digital content and live events.

Our refurbished Deptford site is key to us achieving our purpose.

WHAT WE DID

A review of the aims for our Deptford development project:

Create additional studio space to support craft practitioners to start-up and grow

ACHIEVED

Create a welcoming ‘social front door’, encouraging a range of communities to use the building

ACHIEVED

Open up enhanced cultural spaces for local community uses

ACHIEVED

Enrich Creekside’s public realm and creative identity

ACHIEVED

Build resilience and foundations for Cockpit’s future as a beacon for craft and making

IN PROGRESS

New studio spaces have been in use since early autumn and our building has been open for limited public-facing activity since October hosting a National Saturday Club that gives local young people aged 13-16 from widening participation backgrounds an in-depth, 30-week experience of making. We were invited to join the National Saturday Club network, which has 15 years’ track record of successful delivery, as one of their first Clubs for Craft & Making. We are the only club hosted in a working maker studio, meaning participants will learn about entrepreneurship as well as making. Cockpit worked with circa 8,000 beneficiaries in the past year, based at our two sites in Bloomsbury and Deptford. Following the official December launch our building will be fully open and operational, transforming our capacity to deliver youth education in craft, careers advice and experiences, as well as a rich programme of community participation workshops.

160-180

independent creative businesses supported at our studios in Deptford and Bloomsbury

6

start-ups per year supported on Make It, our flagship start-up programme for makers aged under 26

40

emerging makers each year supported on bursaries or awards (our studio scholarships)

120

makers supported UK-wide through our professional and business development programmes

1,500

participants in our schools, families, careers and education programme

With dwindling opportunities for young people, especially those from disadvantaged backgrounds, to learn craft skills, we have built a vibrant youth programme. In the new centre, we will host careers visits for local schools, based on a successful model we have run since 2019, linked to our lead role in the national Discover! Creative Careers programme.

For local people we will offer craft workshops, with a mix of one-off experience sessions and short courses in crafts like hand-weaving and paper marbling. As well as classes for families, children and young people, we will also offer workshops for adults in need, such as people experiencing dementia and their carers, or older people experiencing loneliness and isolation.

We have also realised London's first public Craft Garden as an outdoor extension of our learning centre – offering space for larger scale making, as well as being an urban oasis for people to relax and chat.

Your grant has been instrumental in the delivery of our transformational capital project, while we continued to deliver our regular programme of activity throughout 2023.

This included:

2,452

hours of business support to

276

makers in 2022

(22% more than the previous year)

supporting

40

new maker businesses
on bursaries and scholarships

1,500

in-person participants took part in
our youth and community workshops



The major renovation at Cockpit Deptford is also creating more affordable workspace for makers – urgently needed in London, where soaring costs are forcing creatives out of the capital. In 2018, the GLA reported that 67% of all workspaces for artists had permanently closed, with a further 24% of remaining studios likely to shut within five years. With specialist craft studios particularly at risk, as opposed to generic artists' studios, Cockpit is supporting craftspeople when they need it most.

OUR SUCCESSES

01

We did it! The realisation of this project is the result of the hard work of a dedicated project team, as well as committee and board oversight. We managed the project carefully in order to deliver in an inflationary environment, a significant achievement.

02

We have created enormous potential for community use. The new learning centre at Cockpit Deptford is transforming our capacity to deliver youth education in craft, careers advice and experiences, as well as a rich programme of community participation workshops. Inviting the public to our Deptford launch weekend was a key milestone for the project.

What a huge success it was. A truly sparkling celebration with over 1,700 people attending over the weekend. Canapes and drinks were served to our audience as they were addressed by Jules Pipe CBE Deputy Mayor of London for Planning, Regeneration and Skills, Davina Mallinckrodt Cockpit Chair, Kim Powell Lewisham Councillor and Cabinet Member for Business, Jobs and Skills and Cockpit CEO Annie Warburton. Visitors were then able to enjoy a rich programme of craft workshops, our makers' open studios and performances from local stars such as Steam Down presents Shantéh and poet Inua Ellams.

Prior to our official launch The Saturday Club for Craft & Making was already taking place in the new space.

03

We managed relationships with our makers throughout the project to minimise the impact on their studio use. We were able to keep all

studio holders operating on site throughout. As in any building project, there was some inevitable disruption, and we worked hard to mitigate this. We sent weekly emails out detailing any messy or noisy work, and makers were consulted throughout the process to ensure their studio spaces remained viable. Significant rent discounts were also applied in acknowledgement of the short-term impact on studio holders.





“

CONGRATULATIONS ON A WONDERFUL EVENT THIS WEEKEND, THE BUZZ AROUND THE REGENERATION HAS BEEN A FANTASTIC AND WELCOME BOOST! I WANTED TO TAKE THE OPPORTUNITY TO SAY THANK YOU FOR YOUR HARD WORK AND VISIONARY IDEAS OF A BRIGHTER FUTURE FOR COCKPIT! I WANTED TO SHOW MY APPRECIATION AND GRATITUDE FOR THE EXCITING REDEVELOPMENT AND AM VERY MUCH LOOKING FORWARD TO WHAT THE FUTURE HOLDS!

Alicia Rowbotham,

Deptford studio holder
and maker of collectable objects

“

WORKING ON THIS PROJECT HAS CERTAINLY BEEN A CAREER HIGHLIGHT. WE FACED NUMEROUS CHALLENGES ALONG THE WAY, WITH ECONOMIC PRESSURES, A VERY TIGHT DELIVERY TIMEFRAME AND EXECUTING EVERYTHING WHILST KEEPING THE BUILDING OPERATIONAL. I AM GRATEFUL FOR THE PATIENCE OF OUR MAKERS, OF THEIR UNDERSTANDING OF OUR VISION AND HOW THIS PROJECT WILL POSITIVELY IMPACT THOSE WITHIN THE CREATIVE AND CRAFT INDUSTRIES, BUT ALSO OUR LOCAL COMMUNITY.

Fabienne O'Neill,

Head of Operations at Cockpit

“

I REALLY WANT TO SAY THANK YOU TO YOU AND THE TEAM FOR THE VISION YOU HAVE HAD FOR OUR BUILDING AT DEPTFORD. I AM REALLY GRATEFUL THAT THE BUILDING WASN'T SOLD AND INSTEAD HAS BEEN INVESTED INTO. MY STUDIO AT COCKPIT IS AT THE HEART OF MY BUSINESS, SO I AM VERY HAPPY THAT I CAN CONTINUE TO WORK THERE, IT IS A REALLY SPECIAL THING TO HAVE.

Hannah Bedford,

Cockpit Deptford studio holder and jeweller

WHAT WE ARE MOST PROUD OF

As mentioned above our newly launched Saturday Club – the only one based in working studios – started in Autumn 2023 in the new Deptford Learning Centre. Part of the **National Saturday Club** Trust network this national programme gives 13–16 year-olds the opportunity to discover and study subjects they love for free in informal settings outside of the structure of school and college.

We are proud of our **maker-led approach** when plans had to change. When it became evident that our launch date had to shift, we put the new date out to a vote for our Deptford makers to decide what would work for them, and they expressed their preference to combine the launch with Open Studios, which is what we did.

The response to our **Crowdfunder for the Craft Garden** was amazing! With main landscaping complete for launch, and further planting to follow in spring 2024, we will host another moment to formally open the garden and launch the public art commission, a tiled mural by Cockpit maker Amber Khokar. We can't wait to connect with the community a second time and will, of course, keep in touch with you as the plans take shape.



HEAD, HEART, HAND

Following an open competition, we commissioned Cockpit artist Amber Khokhar to design a new public artwork for the building. Featuring 1,300 bespoke tiles, the mural runs along Creekside, spanning the whole of the Cockpit's façade.

Some 100 different hand-drawn illustrations celebrate local people and events, some inspired by local school and community workshops. Writer Carinya Sharples has penned captions and riddles to accompany the illustrations, while a second series of tiles reads 'Head, Heart, Hand' in the 40+ languages most heard in Deptford's streets, from Bengali and Yoruba to Polish and Scots Gaelic. The tiles have been hand-glazed and manufactured by specialists Craven Dunhill Jackfield.

The mural will be installed in spring 2024.

AMBER KHOKHAR, said,

“The Head, Heart, Hand mural celebrates the achievement of the peoples of this place – beautifully diverse Deptford. The combination of Deptford's unique blend of cultures and its historical inheritance provides the community with a common 'prosperity' which money can't buy. The design aims to celebrate and connect our common cultural and historic wealth.



LESSONS LEARNED



With building projects, delays are inevitable. Although only one month behind schedule, it was necessary to push back our grand opening. When a September launch was not possible, we consulted with our studio holders to ensure the delayed launch would deliver the impact and visitors to benefit both Cockpit and our maker community. Our Deptford makers expressed their preference to combine the launch with our flagship bi-annual Open Studios event, which worked out well. This allowed us to grow our audiences beyond those that would traditionally attend our Open Studios event. Running an event of this scale within the new spaces allowed us to learn our limitations but also where there are opportunities to do more in the future within this space. It was incredible to see performances such as spoken word and music working so well in the foyer, we will be sure to run events of this nature again throughout the year. The placement of the café works tremendously, and we will be working in the new year to find an operator for the space. We will also explore community run events within the space.

FINAL COSTS

At project inception in autumn 2021, the total budget was £2.84m, including an anticipated construction cost of £1.91m based on the feasibility designs. As design progressed through the RIBA stages in 2022, the scheme battled rampant inflation in the construction industry, with the team working to keep within budget whilst delivering the vision and outputs. In July 2022, with construction cost now anticipated to be £2.22m, the overall budget was increased to £3.24m. Following some early successes, we increased the remaining fundraising target to £800k.

The scheme was tendered in Autumn 2022, with the contract awarded to Quinn (London) Ltd at a contract value of £1.96m. Enabling works, landscape works and a 10% contingency allowance brought total construction costs to £2.22m. The final total budget of £3.17m is not expected to be exceeded.

We made 39 applications to funders requesting support for the Deptford capital project. Thanks to an excellent success rate of 38 per cent, a total of £2.76m has been raised. The remaining costs being covered by a mortgage to invest in the building, and we were able to significantly reduce our borrowing thanks to fundraising success.



PROJECT FUNDING

This project was made possible by lead funders Stride and the Mayor of London, and major partner Lewisham Council. Additional support comes from funders Garfield Weston Foundation, Foyle Foundation, City Bridge Trust, Thames Water, The Worshipful Company of Turners, The Mila Charitable Organisation, The Leathersellers' Foundation, and all those who backed our crowdfunding campaign on Art Happens with Art Fund. The Public Art commission is supported by Cockayne - Grants for the Arts and The London Community Foundation, with contributions from The Clothworkers' Company, The Drapers' Charitable Fund and The Haberdashers' Company.

Thank you!

We express great thanks to our design and project team:

Cooke Fawcett Architects, New Stages Ltd, Sebastian Cox Ltd, Quinn London Ltd, Max Fordham, Gardiner & Theobald, The Planning Lab, Momentum Engineering, Jane Simpson Access Ltd, T Loughman & Co Ltd, Caneparo Associates, International Fire Consultants and Russell-Cooke.

NEXT STEPS

The building is open and in use. We have welcomed makers into newly created studio spaces and the new Wood Hub is fully operational. The National Saturday Club is up and running, with a full programme of community facing activity, comprising careers visits and public craft workshops, in progress for delivery in 2024. We are working to increase public use of the building and become a community resource on Creekside. In the new year we will launch our venue hire offer, including discounted (and in some cases free), use for local community groups. We will activate the craft garden and the public art commission in Spring 2024.

“ **ANNIE WARBURTON**, Cockpit CEO, said:

Cockpit is a hotbed of creative talent. Without us, many talented makers would have had to abandon their careers in the fragile early stages. Here, they thrive: Cockpit Deptford is home to more than 60 weavers, jewellers, potters and printmakers, from bright new talents to some of the most celebrated makers in the world.

Yet, for too long, we've been tucked away, a hidden gem with run-down, unusable spaces. Now, we have transformed into welcoming place for the whole community to enjoy – a vibrant hub in Deptford's Creative Enterprise Zone.

Importantly, the project is also delivering more workspace for makers – urgently needed in the capital, where soaring costs are forcing creatives out. Without this investment, our studios were in peril, at risk of being taken over by developers. Now, as our vision comes to fruition, Cockpit is here to stay, and our transformed building will enable us to nurture future makers for generations to come. ”



L-R: Jules Pipe CBE Deputy Mayor of London for Planning, Regeneration and Skills, Davina Mallinckrodt Cockpit Chair, Annie Warburton Cockpit CEO and Kim Powell Lewisham Councillor and Cabinet Member for Business, Jobs and Skills

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