

News, Summer 2025

Consultation Feedback

We're pleased to update you on the results of our 2025 consultation. We've been at the heart of our community for 500 years, providing financial support of around £2million annually to local schools, charities and community groups.

To help us achieve our aim of creating a vibrant and connected community in Stratford, in January, we launched our largest ever consultation and invited you to help shape our future, with the survey feeding directly into the Trust's strategy for 2026 -2030.

We'd like to thank all of you who took the time to complete our survey and attend our drop in consultation event for Members. Your feedback has been invaluable, and you can read a summary of the key findings below. We were delighted to receive survey responses from every ward in Stratford-upon-Avon and all age groups were represented from 18- 90 years. We also heard from over 100 people through a range of face-to-face conversations at a variety of events we delivered or attended.

In our 2019 consultation, you asked us to prioritise three key areas and below we highlight the progress made in each of them. We are particularly proud of the creation of Stratford Youth Collective.



Young people

We invited five local organisations Escape Arts, New Meaning Training, ILEAP, Lifespace Trust and Warwickshire Pride to form the Stratford Youth Collective who run youth work, support and activities from their base at the Stratford Youth Hub.



Access to green spaces

We secured designated Town Green status for Rowley Fields, protecting it from any future development, planted a community orchard and wildflower meadow and helped to deliver the Stratford-upon-Avon Local Nature Reserve with Stratford District Council.



Reducing social isolation

Through our Community Hub we provide a place for the community to connect, learn and have fun. We offer a range of activities and workshops throughout the year alongside our Weekly Warm Welcome.

2025 Consultation Feedback

WHAT DO YOU KNOW ABOUT STRATFORD TOWN TRUST?

Respondents were most aware that the Trust provides funding to community groups and charitable organisations, volunteering opportunities and funding for the arts venue and 82% of you agreed that the Trust is important to Stratford-upon-Avon. From the results, we can see that we need to communicate more effectively to showcase the breadth of what we do.

HOW SHOULD WE PRIORITISE OUR FUNDING?

You told us that you would like us to focus our work towards tackling loneliness and social isolation, support for young people, and improving access to outdoor spaces. In addition, you want us to consider our approach to the environment and the climate crisis and how our funding and activities can support people with neurodivergence.

WHAT CHALLENGES DOES THE TOWN FACE?

- Rising isolation, poor mental health and addiction issues
- Stratford town's aging population
- The possibility of one mega-authority.

You also said Stratford Town Trust's Challenges include:

"The town has huge entitlement and privilege which can be a huge barrier to the under-privileged. Some fall through the gaps and miss funding opportunities."

"Challenge for Stratford Town is that other funders are not interested in impoverished groups in an affluent area. It is not a priority for them because it is not a priority area. The Trust is very important to help to support these underserved groups."

2025 Consultation Feedback



OUR VISION IS TO CREATE A VIBRANT AND CONNECTED COMMUNITY WHAT MORE COULD WE DO TO ACHIEVE THIS?

“Have an active community hub where local residents can go for a variety of social activities for all age groups to build up community spirit like the other surrounding villages have.”

“I don’t think there is one single thing. It’s more about funding projects that bring people together.”

“To be as visible and accessible as possible.”

We really value our members and when asked what you like about being a Member of Stratford Town Trust you said:

- ✓ “Being part of an organisation that supports the town.”
- ✓ “Opportunities to volunteer and socialise with local people.”
- ✓ “I feel part of a vibrant and supportive community and the Trust is at the heart of this.”

And you asked for more events, access to volunteering opportunities and more regular communication about our work.

Whether you’re interested in history, the environment, or simply looking for opportunities to meet new people and create a new network of friends, we’re looking for volunteers like you! You can get involved with:

- Weekly Warm Welcome
- The Guild Chapel
- The Repair Cafe
- Nature conservation





What next?

We are currently developing our strategy that will guide our work over the next few years and we look forward to sharing this with you in early 2026. Some of the areas we are addressing as a direct result of what you told us in our consultation are:

Increased visibility and accessibility

Every Wednesday (10am - 4pm) you can drop in to our Community Hub at Venture House to meet our grants team, discuss any issues, have a cuppa and chat and find out more about what goes on at the Hub.

Better communication

From September, if you have opted to receive information about our events and activities, you will receive our weekly 'Community News' e-newsletter to keep you informed of our news and local event and initiatives in the town. If you haven't opted to receive email communication then you can update your options by contacting: admin@stratfordtowntrust.co.uk using opt-in events in the subject line.

UPCOMING EVENTS

You told us that you want more opportunities to hear about our work and meet other members, and we are busy planning our future events programme but here is a taster of what's coming up:

Annual General Meeting

Wednesday 10th September, 7pm

As a member you have the right to attend and vote at our AGM. It's also an opportunity to hear about our work and future plans in more detail, meet the team, Trustees and other members. This year we are holding our AGM at the United Reformed Church on Rother Street and we hope to see you there.

So where does the money come from?

Wednesday 8th October, 6pm – Community Hub

Join our Head of Finance, Rebecca Hampson to learn more about the Trust's property and assets; how they fund our grants and exactly what an endowed charity is.

Anniversary of Stratford Town Trust

2026 marks the 25th anniversary of the formation of Stratford Town Trust – look out for news of our celebrations!





Saturday 4th October, 10am - 2pm

Rother Street Arts House

A Fun Palace is a free, annual event made by local people for their own community, celebrating creativity and culture, and we're taking part! There will be fun activities for all ages to enjoy so do come along!

Rother Street Arts House



Rother Street Arts House, formerly known as the Play House, is set to reopen its doors with a full programme of live entertainment and community events on the horizon — and a new operator at the helm.

Following an open and competitive tender process, a new charity, Rother Street Arts House formed by Catherine Prout, Laura Ashfield, Hattie Human and John-Robert Partridge, has been appointed by Stratford Town Trust to run the much-loved venue on Rother Street. The team will take over from September with a clear remit to deliver a lively and inclusive programme that balances community use with high-quality commercial events.

The search for a new operator was launched in February, with the opportunity advertised and promoted locally and nationally. The process attracted an exceptional nineteen initial expressions of interest and eleven tender submissions, including several strong proposals. These were assessed against a single set of clear criteria including experience, financial sustainability, and — crucially — a commitment to prioritising community access and programming.

Trustee Elections

OUR NEXT TRUSTEE ELECTIONS WILL BE HELD IN SPRING, 2026.

We support people who live, work or study in the town. Guided by our values, we do this through the grants that we award to charities and voluntary organisations, and also through our valuable community assets like our Community Hub, the bandstand, Stratford-upon-Avon Local Nature Reserve, Rowley Fields, the Community Orchard, allotments and the Guild Chapel.

Our Board of Trustees plays an essential role in the success of the charity, and is responsible for its strategic direction, governance and financial accountability, and in Spring 2026, we will be looking for five member Trustees elected by you!

In the new year, we will be sending information about how to stand for election and how to vote. In the meantime, look out for information about the role of our Trustees in November when we celebrate Trustees' Week.

To find out more about our current Trustees and how they help us to achieve a vibrant and connected community, visit our website: www.stratfordtowntrust.co.uk

**LOVE YOUR
COMMUNITY?
BECOME
A TRUSTEE**



HERITAGE OPEN DAYS

**Saturday 20th September, 10.30am or 2pm
at The Guild Chapel**



Enjoy two free talks about the history of this iconic building
Find out more: www.guildchapel.co.uk