

Guildford Institute - Strategic Plan



Introduction

For over 170 years, the Guildford Institute has been working for and with the local community. We have been in our beautiful Grade II listed building since 1891. The premises originally opened in 1880 as the Royal Arms Coffee Tavern and Temperance Hotel.

Although the building had, and happily still has, many merits it has been necessary for it to be updated in order to reach current standards and to make it fit for purpose. A great deal of time and effort was expended by trustees and other volunteers, by staff and by members in order to raise the necessary funds and to manage a major refurbishment. In consequence, an important building programme was undertaken in 2013 which has provided us with an attractive and much improved interior with full access for disabled people.

The greater potential of the building has led Trustees and Management to review, update and rewrite the Institute's Strategic Plan for the next ten years to 2026

The objects of the Institute are set out in its Memorandum of Association [Art3]. They may be summarised as follows:

- To promote and advance the education of all members of the community
- To contribute to the educational and cultural life and heritage of Guildford and surrounding area

And to achieve this:

- By providing educational and cultural activities in a social atmosphere
- By making facilities available for individuals and organisations to provide such activities

As an incorporated charity, we have broadly interpreted our mission as seeking to enhance the lives of those living and working in Guildford and its environs by promoting interest in and enjoyment of education, heritage and culture.

This document sets out our plans for the strategic direction that we intend to take over the next five to ten years. The Plan embodies our fundamental values as an organisation and seeks to take account of the changing local and regional context within which we operate and of the community of which we are a part. In setting out what we intend to achieve, the Plan also sets out the strategic objectives from which our detailed work plan is being derived.

The Institute has a distinguished past and we wish to capture and carry forward what is best from that tradition. At the same time, we recognise that the nature of leisure and cultural activity, and of education and its delivery, continue to undergo rapid change. If we are to respond positively to such developments and meet contemporary needs then we too must embrace change and have a bold vision for our future.

Core values

In setting out our strategic objectives, we have identified a set of core values which provide a framework against which the trustees can audit the objectives that they set; staff and volunteers can plan ways in which they will achieve these objectives, and members can assess both the services that they receive and the contributions they make.

A fundamental aim of the Institute is **the pursuit of knowledge for its own sake**. Institute activities should **provide the opportunity for developing and extending social relationships and experiencing a sense of community**.

Our core values are

- **Inclusivity** – we respect people, value diversity and are committed to equality
- **Participation** – we value and recognise the value of volunteers and staff within organisations and community
- **Quality** – we strive to offer services of high quality and to seek continuous improvement
- **Openness** – we are committed to a culture of teamwork and collaboration and an understanding and fair approach towards colleagues and all who use the Institute

Acting according to these values will have implications for trustees, other volunteers and staff in ensuring that:

- We adopt an understanding and fair approach towards colleagues and all who use the Institute
- We demonstrate a positive approach towards problem solving and an encouragement of independent thought
- Our attitudes are flexible and non-bureaucratic
- We regularly evaluate the Board's effectiveness and that of the organisation, and ensure its accountability to our stakeholders
- We are responsive to changes in the external environment, and to the feedback we receive from users

- We are sensitive to the environment, including the efficient and sustainable use of resources, the development of the physical surroundings of the building, and that we maintain an awareness of the aesthetic, cultural and historical heritage of the Institute.
- We employ a prudent approach to financial management,

Vision

Our vision is to provide an educational, cultural and social community hub in the heart of Guildford offering a special place for people of all backgrounds to meet, learn and explore

Strategic Objectives

At our strategic review away day in October 2015, we decided upon 5 key objectives to take forward the work of the Institute as follows:

- 1 Expand an innovative programme of educational, cultural and social activities
- 2 Improve the image of the Institute and promote it to a wider audience
- 3 Support and develop management, systems and staff
- 4 Strengthen the Institute's financial security
- 5 Invest in the physical infrastructure of the building

Work Plan

From each key objective, a set of sub objectives has been derived which will form the work plan for trustees and staff alike. The sub objectives will have dates for start and completion and their financial implications will be fully costed so that these can be budgeted and accounted for within each annual financial plan.

Objectives and sub objectives will be monitored 3 monthly at board and management level so that we can measure our progress against the achievement of our goals. Our progress will be reported to our stakeholders in our Annual Report and at our Annual General Meeting.