

Ilkley Manor House Trust

Museum - Gallery- Live Venue

Forward Plan 2023 - 2028

Published

This is the heart of Ilkley and it's up to Ilkley to put the heart back into it. We are a part of history. What we do here next week will become history. We need to make this living vibrant history, a fun place to be – sociable, artistic - all those things can come together and we remind ourselves that it has been used for those purposes since Roman times. That's exciting.

Alan Titchmarsh MBE, DL, HonFSE

Patron

Ilkley Manor House Trust

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1 Welcome to our Forward Plan 2023-2028

Welcome to our second Forward Plan, which looks ahead from 2023 to 2028. Our first Forward Plan (2018-2023) was launched following consultation at our first annual general meeting held in December 2018. This updated Plan takes the Trust forward to 2028, which promises to be an exciting period for us. The document has been developed with input from our supporters, volunteers, staff, and trustees and we hope it will give you a sense of how we intend to continue to develop Ilkley Manor House as a creative learning and heritage hub for Ilkley.

Why Ilkley Manor House is an important asset for all

Since the Trust took over the Manor House in 2018, we have all lived through very challenging times with pandemic lockdowns, energy cost increases and reductions in central grant funding.

Throughout this turbulent time, however, the Trust has continued to deliver three varied programmes of programmes of arts, cultural, wellbeing and heritage activities each year.

In the last Forward Plan, we noted that we were operating in an increasingly competitive landscape and the funding horizon is far from secure and this remains the case as we look forward to 2028. Energy costs have quadrupled and, with inflation currently running at over 10%, it is not an easy financial climate to be operating in. We are, however, confident enough, given our track record, to still consider our ambitions both proportionate and realistic.

The most important piece of work, though the least visible, is the work the Trust Board undertook during 2021 and 2022 to redefine our purpose. This work was undertaken with support from the skilled team at Museum Development Yorkshire and the Trust's refreshed mission statement now underpins all that we do.

Meet our Board

Sir Rodney Brooke CBE DL, President

Former Chief Executive of the West Yorkshire County Council. Chair of the Board of the Leeds Playhouse

Sarah Thomas, Chair and Trustee

Former NHS Director. Chair of the Tavistock Institute of Human Relations

John Cockshott, Trustee

A solicitor with 30 years' experience in Building Societies.
Former Chair, Friends of Manor House.

Daisy Johnson AssocRTPI, FIPM, Trustee

Placemaking and regeneration specialist with 20+ years' experience, currently with Historic England.

Roger J Tilbrook MRICS, Trustee

Chartered Building Surveyor in private practice with 40+ years' experience of providing property advice.

Julia Richards CIPD

Learning and Development consultant
Medical Herbalist. Previously an Art and History secondary school teacher

Jenna Holmes

Former curator in arts, museums, and heritage at the Bronte Parsonage.
Currently with the Arts Council

2 Our Mission Statement and Five-Year Goals

Our Mission Statement

Ilkley Manor House is an important historic Grade I listed building that stands on the remains of a Roman fort and is at the heart of Ilkley on the edge of the Yorkshire Dales. We work to preserve the House and gardens for future generations and bring to life the story of Ilkley Manor House, its place in Ilkley, the local landscape, and the wider world.

Through our programmes of arts, cultural, wellbeing and heritage activities we will create connections with the community to explore stories, themes, and objects from the past, present and future to bring the history of Ilkley Manor House to life.

Our hope is that everyone visiting Ilkley Manor House will leave feeling enriched in some way.

Our goals

- i. **Create the Manor House as a ‘must visit’ destination** for our local community, visitors to Ilkley and residents from across the region through providing varied programmes of arts, cultural, wellbeing and heritage activities.
- ii. **Make real progress in developing Ilkley Manor House into a welcoming and accessible venue** for anyone who wishes to visit by providing clear information on our website and in our guides; facilities to support visitors; and ensuring our staff and volunteers are trained to welcome all our visitors.
- iii. **Care for Ilkley Manor House and its collections** today and for future generations by putting in place the team, policies, and procedures to ensure the building and gardens can be kept open to the community.
- iv. **Ensure long-term financial and environmental sustainability of Ilkley Manor House** through prudent management, which means increasing our trading income, taking a focused approach to fundraising and grant getting and making all that we do as sustainable as possible.
- v. **Work in partnership and engage with key partners**, our users and the wider community to nurture Ilkley Manor House to ensure the delivery of arts, cultural, wellbeing and heritage activities that are focused, meaningful and enriching.

3 How we are going to achieve our goals

3.1 Develop Ilkley Manor House as a 'must visit' destination

What we have done so far to deliver this goal

- Welcomed Alan Titchmarsh as our Patron in 2018
- Hosted several significant art exhibitions in the upstairs galleries including Graeme Wilson and Dorothy Bradford.
- Obtained our first Arts Council grant to bring power to our courtyard for performances so that we have been able to increase the use of our outdoor space.
- Launched the Solar Art Gallery in March 2019.
- Used the whole Manor House as an art installation, even when the house is closed for the winter.
- Delivered our *Inside Out* programme during the Covid-19 crisis.
- Created and exhibited our community *Lockdown Quilts*
- Reinstated our popular concert programme once lockdowns had ended.
- Celebrated the opening of our Medieval Garden, created by one of our many volunteers.

Over the next 5 years we will

- Tell the story of the house, the land it sits on and the town it sits within in a way that engages a wide range of visitors, be they residents, day visitors, school pupils or social historians.
- Offer young visitors and families a refreshed, varied, and enhanced experience.
- Market and promote our programme of arts, cultural, wellbeing and heritage activities.

Specifically, by...

- Holding one *statement* art exhibition a year.
- Taking forward the plans set out in the Audience Development Plan.
- Working with Museum Development Yorkshire and expert external support to design and implement a more accessible and engaging interpretation of the history of the House and the land it sits on.
- Improving the guides to the House and the fort to make them more accessible for everyone.

3.2 Make real progress in developing Ilkley Manor House into a welcoming and accessible venue

What we have done so far to deliver this goal

- Installed new **heating** and renovated the **toilets** and kitchen.

- Ensured that **livestreaming** is now routine for our coffee morning talks from the Manor House.
- Introduced **QR codes** to give information about the features of the house.
- Improved information available on our **website**.
- Enhanced **signage** around the house.
- Installed a new additional **handrail** on the stairs to the upstairs galleries.
- Worked with **Kids in Museums** on an audit to highlight where improvements can be made for our work with young people.
- Played our part in and influenced the **Bradford 2025 UK City of Culture** Steering Group.

Over the next 5 years we will

- Decide whether the organisation is sufficiently viable and sustainable to take on a 99-year lease, with the additional responsibilities this entails.
- Carry out a programme of community engagement activity to establish the appetite for future development works to improve accessibility to the site.
- Review and implement agreed changes to our offer to families and young visitors.

Specifically, by...

- Collaborating with partners across the Bradford district and playing our part in the **Bradford 2025 UK City of Culture** celebrations.
- Taking a proactive approach to planning and delivery of arts, cultural, wellbeing and heritage activities with Ilkley Arts.
- Delivering the action plan outlined in the audit by Kids in Museums
- Launching a new family-friendly mascot for the House.

3.3 Care for Ilkley Manor House and its collections

What we have done so far to deliver this goal

- Brought the Verbeia stone and its replica together into the house for the first time.
- Supported our volunteers in the creation of our Medieval and Heritage sensory gardens and invited our patron Alan Titchmarsh to celebrate their openings.
- Negotiated the return of our collection of local artefacts from Bradford Council where they had been in storage since before 2018.
- Agreed our Collections Policy.
- Invested in the stabilisation of our stone window mullions.
- Worked with local blacksmiths to renovate our external copper lantern.
- Installed a new oak floor in the Buttery.
- Commissioned an architectural survey of the building with University of Bradford.
- Collaborated with Ilkley Civic Society to enable the creation of a local archive in the Manor House.

Over the next 5 years we will

- Evidence our commitment to becoming a sustainable, focused, and trusted organisation by becoming an Arts Council accredited museum.
- Continue to care for Ilkley Manor House, which is a great responsibility that frequently throws up unexpected challenges. We depend on the skills and expertise of our staff, volunteers, and trustees to help us fulfil this duty.
- Consider whether it is feasible to extend the opening hours of the Manor House to include Thursday and Friday as well as the weekends.

Specifically by...

- Repairing or replacing some of the damaged window stone mullions if we secure grant funding to undertake this technically complex and expensive work.
- Exploring the installation of sliding glass doors into the *housebody* room from the *cross passage* to conserve heat and permit the front and back doors to be open whenever the house is open to the public, replicating how the house would have looked when it was first built.
- Develop partnerships with relevant organisations to allow different artefacts to be loaned to the Trust for short term exhibitions

3.4 Ensure long-term financial and environmental sustainability

What we have done so far to deliver this goal

- Set up the selling Solar Gallery which provides a source of **income through commission**.
- Became a licenced wedding venue in 2020 which generates **room hire income**.
- Renovated and let out studio space to our eight tenants, providing **regular rental income**.
- Set up Ilkley Manor House **Supporters** scheme, which offers discreet benefits to those able to **donate regularly**.
- Increased the number of **platforms** that can be used to donate to the charity.
- Launched our **legacy** offer (how to leave a gift in your will).
- Reduced energy usage through the installation of more **energy efficient** heating and draught excluders.
- Consulted on our *One Planet Living* policy, which sets out our commitment to **sustainability**.
- Become an **employer** with 5 part time paid members of staff now on the payroll.
- Continued to recruit volunteers to join the team and train and support our current volunteer group
- Implemented **tighter financial monitoring** controls of expenditure.

Over the next 5 years we will

- Further enhance our approach to prudent financial management, increasing our trading income, and taking a **focused approach to fundraising and grant getting**.
- Move away from being grant-dependent towards **generating sufficient revenue** to support the activities delivered by the Manor House.

- Work with our **volunteer team** to ensure they can use their **skills** in the most effective way and develop new roles that may be needed in the House going forward.

Specifically, by...

- Adopting our **One Planet Living** statement and action plan in summer 2023.
- Promoting the Ilkley Manor House **Supporters Scheme** and one-off donations from visitors to Ilkley Manor House.
- Developing a **5-year budget** forecast to take us beyond the start date of the 99-year lease
- Sensitively increasing the number of **weddings and celebratory events** held in the House, with a focus on festive weddings and corporate events when the House is closed to the public.
- Improving and extending our **merchandising offer** as well as enhancing the marketing for the Solar Gallery.
- Developing a **clear succession plan** for key roles in the organisation

3.5 Work in partnership and engage with key partners

What we have done so far to deliver this goal

- Cemented **our creative partnerships** with Ilkley Arts, Solar Gallery, Art School Ilkley, Ilkley Literature Festival, Ilkley Playhouse, Ilkley Town Council, Ilkley Business Improvement District and Nell Bank Outdoor Education Centre.
- Achieved **People Can Make a Difference Kitemark** for the work we do with our volunteers.
- Built a strong and committed team of **staff and volunteers**.
- Set up the **Ilkley Cultural Cooperative** – a consultative group of the main cultural organisations in Ilkley.
- Worked in partnership to launch the **Creative Quarter Weekend**, an annual celebration of the business and community activity along the A65 in Ilkley.
- Developed a new **learning** offer to local primary schools.

Over the next 5 years we will

- Work with local education providers to play a part in the **skills development** of the curators and museum managers of the future.
- Continue to build **creative partnerships** with our close neighbours and tenants including Ilkley Arts.
- Develop our work on the **Creative Quarter Weekend** and use the creative arts more actively in the Manor House to bring the story of our local heritage alive.
- Play a very active role in **Bradford 2025 UK City of Culture** and the legacy that event leaves.

- Work in closer **partnership with Nell Bank Outdoor Education Centre, schools, and educators** to ensure our offer is relevant and to promote our developing education offer to local primary and secondary schools in a sustainable way.

Specifically, by...

- Continuing to offer **placements to MA students** from Leeds University and work with Bradford University students on the archaeological surveying of the House and Roman fort.
- Develop a relationship with at least one **educational advisor** on the activities offered to schools.
- To develop a **website presence about the education offer** so that we can actively promote what we are able to provide to schools.
- To work on at least **one joint project a year with Ilkley Arts**.

4 Our Team

To all our staff, supporters, and volunteers we say *thank you* and we hope you will continue to work and support us as we move to the next stage of Ilkley Manor House's development.

For our volunteers

- *Learning and enjoyment:* We will work with you to find ways for you to develop your skills, offering opportunities to work as learning volunteers as part of the heritage learning and engagement programme, or perhaps another area that interests you.
- *On your terms:* We know your time is precious, so we will find ways to make it easy for you to volunteer as and when you can.

For Supporters:

- *Involved:* We will work with you to ensure you feel involved in new ideas and are instrumental in implementing them if you would like to be.

For our staff:

- *Given opportunities for development:* We will work with you to offer opportunities to develop your skills and experience to equip you to move on in your career.
- *Trained and supported:* We will work with all our staff to ensure that everyone has access to support and training to allow them to undertake their roles to the best of their abilities.
- *Being part of a supportive team:* We will work hard to ensure that the staff feel an active member of a supportive team and that Ilkley Manor House is good place to work.

For you:

- *If you would like to have more information about the work we are doing or would like to become a supporter or volunteer or just make a one-off donation please email admin@ilkleymanorhouse.org*

5 In Summary

We are a small but ambitious organisation that is committed to continuing to develop Ilkley Manor house as a must visit destination for our local community and visitors. We want everyone who chooses to visit us to feel welcome and to find our space inclusive and accessible. We will continue to develop our skills in conservation care to ensure we are fully equipped to care for the building, gardens, and objects in our collection for future generations. Through our careful governance structures and prudent financial management we will help ensure that Ilkley Manor House will remain open to the public as a thriving and vibrant community enterprise that enriches the lives of those who visit.

Sir Rodney Brooke

President, Ilkley Manor House Trust

Sarah Thomas

Chair, Ilkley Manor House Trust

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We work to preserve the house and gardens for future generations and bring to life the story of the Manor House, its place in Ilkley, the local landscape, and the wider world.

Through our programmes of arts, cultural, wellbeing and heritage activities we will create connections with the community to explore stories, themes, and objects from the past, present and future to bring the history of the Manor House to life.

Our overall purpose is that everyone who visits us has their lives enriched in some way.

If you would like this information in an alternative format, please email us at admin@ilkleymanorhouse.org

Registered charity No. 1174051

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www.ilkleymanorhouse.org