



# Yeovil Town Council

Town House  
19 Union Street  
Yeovil  
Somerset  
BA20 1PQ

Website : [www.yeovil.gov.uk](http://www.yeovil.gov.uk)

Amanda Card Chief Executive / Town Clerk

Parish/Town Council

D. **Date:** 2<sup>nd</sup> September 2025  
Your Ref:  
E. **Our Ref:**  
**Ask for:**  
**E-mail:** amanda.card@yeovil.gov.uk

Dear Clerk

## Financial Support for the Octagon Theatre Project

We are writing to request your consideration of funding to support the redevelopment of the Octagon Theatre in Yeovil.

As the principal theatre serving Somerset and Dorset, the Octagon has welcomed over 120,000 audience members annually and played a vital role in enriching the cultural life of our communities while contributing significantly to the local economy. We are aware that many residents of your parish value and regularly attend performances at the venue.

The theatre closed in May 2023 in preparation for a major redevelopment project initially budgeted at £29.01 million. Due to the financial constraints faced by Somerset Council, this original scheme has been scaled back. A revised, yet impactful project is now being developed, with a current budget of approximately £15 million, funded through:

- **£10 million** from the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS)
- **£3.75 million** (in principle) from Yeovil Town Council
- **£1.75 million** from other secured or anticipated sources (including fundraising, ticket levies, and Section 106 contributions)

The overarching aim remains to transform the Octagon Theatre into a “**cultural hub**” for Somerset, Dorset, and the wider region. The venue has already been designated as an **Arts Council National Portfolio Organisation** and appointed as the **Music Education Hub Lead Organisation** for Somerset and Dorset, with ongoing funding from Arts Council England and the Department for Education. These developments demonstrate the

significant educational and cultural benefits the theatre will deliver for residents across the region.

Somerset Council will continue to lead and manage the redevelopment project, but as you will be aware, the Council has declared a financial emergency and cannot provide additional funding. Yeovil Town Council has stepped forward to take over the theatre's long-term management once redevelopment is complete, demonstrating its commitment to the theatre's future. YTC's proposed funding is currently subject to public consultation.

As part of this consultation, we have received strong feedback from residents in various parishes expressing support for the theatre and suggesting that their own parish councils might wish to give a one-off capital contribution toward its future, following the framework below:

<b>Council annual precept</b>	<b>Suggested one-off capital contribution</b>
Under £5,000	£1,000
50,000 £250,000	£25,000
£250,000 - £500,000	£50,000
£500,000 - £1million	£100,000
Over £1million	£200,000

We are therefore inviting local parish and town councils to join us in securing the future of the Octagon Theatre. Your support would form part of a broader collaborative effort to sustain and enhance this valuable regional asset.

We would be pleased to attend a future meeting of your council to discuss this proposal in more detail and answer any questions you may have.

Thank you for considering this important opportunity. By working together, we can ensure that the Octagon Theatre continues to serve and inspire our communities for generations to come.

Yours faithfully



**Cllr Andy Soughton**  
**Leader of Yeovil Town Council**  
**Chair of Finance & Policy Executive**



**Amanda Card**  
**Chief Executive / Town Clerk**



**Cllr Graham Oakes**  
**Chair of Culture, Events & Promotions**



**Adam Burgan**  
**Director of Culture, Events & Promotions**

**Letter sent to:**

Barwick and Stoford Parish Council  
Bruton Town Council  
Brympton Parish Council  
Castle Cary Town Council  
Chard Town Council  
Chilthorne Domer Parish Council  
Crewkerne Town Council  
East Coker Parish Council  
Henstridge Parish Council  
Huish Episcopi Parish Council  
Ilchester Parish Council  
Ilminster Town Council  
Langport Town Council  
Martock Parish Council  
Milborne Port Parish Council  
Montacute Parish Council  
Mudford Parish Council  
Norton Sub Hamdon Parish Council  
Somerton Town Council  
South Petherton Parish Council  
Stoke Sub Hamdon Parish Council  
West Coker Parish Council  
Wincanton Town Council  
Yeovil Without Parish Council  
Sherborne Town Council