

# The Brontë Birthplace 7 Year Business Plan

Brontë Birthplace Limited

8th October 2023

## Executive Summary

The birthplace of the three famous Brontë sisters and their brother is on Market St in Thornton, Bradford. Most people are not aware of its existence. It is a small 2\* listed terraced house with 3 bedrooms that has been sadly neglected by a variety of different private owners. Brontë Birthplace Limited is a Community Benefit Society that has been set up to ensure that this missing piece of the Brontë story is opened to the public and can take its place as a prime heritage asset in Bradford, along with Brontë Bell Chapel down the road and the world famous Brontë Parsonage in Haworth.

The plan is to convert 4 rooms to ensuite bedrooms to attract national and international tourists, to open a community café, and to organise cultural and heritage events and activities targeting deprived communities in Bradford district. The income from the room rental ensures the financial sustainability of the project.

The building is for sale, and a range of funding streams have been identified for the acquisition of the building, including community shares, the Bradford Capital Culture and Arts Fund, the Community Ownership Fund, the Rural Prosperity Fund, the National Lottery Heritage Fund, the Architectural Heritage Fund and others. £59,500 has already been raised from grants and fundraisers to support feasibility studies and go towards the purchase. Planning and listed building consent was awarded on 19<sup>th</sup> September.

The financial forecast demonstrates a sustainable model, and the cashflow is strong rising to £107,323 at the end of the 7 year period. With reference to the Profit and Loss Account the project starts to produce an annual profit after tax in year 4 (2026).

Bradford is the 5<sup>th</sup> most income-deprived and the 6<sup>th</sup> most employment deprived local authority in England with 22% of children living below the poverty line (2029 Index of Deprivation). One of the key areas of focus for our project is working with schools in the more deprived areas of Bradford, inspiring children with the Brontë story and providing an impetus to their reading. Bradford is also very ethnically diverse with the largest proportion of people of Pakistani ethnic origin in England. For all young people the Brontë sisters will provide role models for people with protected characteristics, and for underprivileged sectors of the population living in areas with high deprivation indices. The Brontë sisters are an example of how to succeed even in a world that is not supportive of them achieving their goals and desires, that it is possible to succeed even if you are in some way or other disadvantaged. Such groups will be specifically targeted and will have the opportunity for creative involvement with reading, writing and arts, aiding literacy, empowering creativity, building pride and forming a “cultural habit”. Brontë trails will help fitness and wellbeing and bringing people together under the Brontë roof will help overcome isolation thus aiding mental health.

Key outcomes from the project will therefore be: opening up a heritage asset to the public; making Thornton a better place to work, live and visit; giving Bradfordians new ambitions and a sense of pride; creating a flourishing cultural, arts and heritage space; economic and social regeneration of the high street; and increased national and international tourism.

The timeline envisages property purchase in October/November 2023, refurbishment in 2024, testing the facilities in Q4 2024, ready for a full launch in concert with Bradford City of Culture 2025. Bradford 2025 vision is to use arts and culture to fuel the social, economic and creative renaissance of our

district; to make Bradford one of the most welcoming places in the UK where artists, producers, audiences and creative entrepreneurs can flourish. What better exemplification of this vision than this Brontë Birthplace Project.

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## 1. Vision for the Brontë Birthplace

More than two centuries ago in just four years three sisters and their brother were born in front of the fire in a small terraced house in Thornton on the outskirts of Bradford. The girls were to become the world's most famous literary family. They were the Brontës.

In their books Charlotte, Emily and Anne tackled the social issues of the day which remain as relevant now as then: class, race and gender. They are without doubt the most important female writers of their generation. And they are ours.

Today their home on Market Street stands forlorn, empty and in need of urgent repair, a sad reminder that for most of the citizens of Bradford, Thornton remains a largely forgotten piece of the city's cultural jigsaw. Largely unknown and rarely visited by the thousands who travel each year to Haworth it is just as important to their story. Indeed Thornton, Patrick Brontë said, was where they spent their 'happiest days'.

Now thanks to a dedicated group of passionate and knowledgeable locals there is a move to save the Brontë birthplace and to save it for our city, for Yorkshire and for the nation. What is more by 2025 when Bradford is crowned the UK's City of Culture their ambitious, but well thought out plan will see the little terraced house ring once again to the sound of happy voices as Brontë enthusiasts use the reopened, educational space to sit, to contemplate, and to learn just how these three Thornton girls were extraordinary in their courage and their talent. They will be able to spend time in front of the very same fire, sharing coffee and food with friends and discover more about their legacy or even book an overnight stay in the very bedrooms in which the Brontës slept and dreamed their ambitious dreams. Our guests will quite literally be invited to walk in their footsteps and be inspired by their story.

The Brontë Birthplace Management Committee and the Community Benefit Society, Brontë Birthplace Limited have been set up to achieve this. They are made up of Brontë experts, community representatives and business people who already have the community behind them. Within ten days the £20,000 they needed to launch the project was raised through crowd funding. Thousands more has been raised since and as a result their vision will be achieved by an innovative share scheme which will see those who love the sisters play an active part in preserving their legacy.

And they WILL succeed in putting Thornton on the Brontë map. They have done so before. Twenty years ago the Old Bell Chapel where Patrick Brontë preached in front of his family and his congregation was also derelict. It was overgrown and its history hidden. Now it has been rescued, reborn and is open to those who wish to discover more about this incredible family. Meanwhile across the road is the first permanent exhibition and Brontë experience outside Haworth in the church that was built to replace Patrick's chapel. This exhibition contains original artefacts, including the girls' birth certificates and their father's well-worn desk, and has already become an important space for people who love the Brontës to learn more. Management Committee members were responsible for these innovations, and so much more, to keep the Thornton connection alive. Kipping House where the family stayed in the days before their long walk across the moors to Haworth is now preserved by another Management Committee member. We know what we are doing.

The Brontë Birthplace is an important part of the whole Brontë story and, as Bradford approaches its momentous time in our country's cultural journey, what family were ever more an example of what

can be achieved with belief, Yorkshire grit and determination than the Brontës? The Management Committee has the same ethos and is determined to reclaim Thornton and its Brontë connection by providing a living, vibrant space for creativity and debate just as it was in their day, when it was the hub of the village thanks to a remarkable vicar and his remarkable children.

All we ask is for support to save part of our past to help shape part of our future. The lesson the Brontë sisters gave to the world that no matter who you are, or where you are born you can succeed, rings as true today as it did then for young people in Bradford. We have already told the girls' story to schools and visitors who had no idea that it all began in Thornton. And now we look forward to welcoming people the world over to this unique hands-on experience by reclaiming their birthplace before it is lost forever. The sisters and their father would never forgive us for letting that happen. Let us do so for them and for future generations who will forever be in debt to three sisters who believed they could. And so did.

## **2. Introduction**

This business plan provides a summary of the plans for the community acquisition, refurbishment and operation of the Brontë birthplace in Thornton, Bradford. The campaign to save the Brontë Birthplace from being sold on the open market to a private buyer was launched in July 2022, led by local community members.

**Lisa Singleton** was a founding member of the campaign. Tragically she died in September. The success of this share offer would be a fitting memorial for her huge contributions to Thornton and to the Brontë Birthplace Project.

The Birthplace has had a chequered recent history, with ownership frequently changing hands, and it has an unreliable future. The building has served many uses in its history including a butchers, a small museum, residential flats and most recently had been a popular café. The café did not reopen after Covid in 2020 and the property is now empty. There is a short window of opportunity to bring this unique heritage asset into community ownership. The current owner of the birthplace has moved out and intends to sell it. The property is on the open market so the clock is ticking to generate funds in time to purchase the property. In order to give us further time to secure funding we have registered the Brontë Birthplace as an Asset of Community Value.

The Brontë Birthplace has the potential to put Thornton, Bradford, more prominently onto the tourist map with the concomitant additional benefits to the local economy. The heritage property is located at 72-74 Market St Thornton, BD13 3HF, and is the site at which Charlotte, Emily, Anne and Branwell Brontë were born between 1816-1820. The Brontë sisters' literature is famous internationally and their writing has inspired many artists including music, art, writing, film and theatre productions. The site complements the Brontë Bell Chapel, another monument in Thornton, where Patrick Brontë gave his sermons, and St James Church which holds the font where the sisters were baptised, as well as a Brontë exhibition.

The proposal is for the Birthplace to be renovated and reopened as a heritage site, offering experiential holiday accommodation, a café, and a venue to host events and outreach projects, celebrating the Brontë legacy. (See Architect's drawings in Appendix 4). The refurbishment of the Brontë Birthplace would significantly increase the attractiveness of Market Street (previously a bustling shopping street) to new investment, adding to recent ventures such as Thornton Furnishings, Thornton Village Antiques and The Apothecary Gallery. For visitors and local people it will add another

dimension to the story of the Brontë family in the Bradford District, presenting their early lives and building connections between the birthplace and the Brontë Bell Chapel both in Thornton, and the Brontë Parsonage in Howarth where they grew up. This provides an opportunity to contribute to building an appealing tourist offer for visitors to Bradford, offering rich “bookable products” to international and national tourists. At the same time the events space will offer children in Bradford, the youngest city in the UK, to engage in culture, as well as being inspired by the Brontë legacy. All of this will contribute to the government’s levelling up agenda in one of the most deprived cities in the UK. It is an opportune moment to activate this heritage building as Bradford readies itself to become the UK City of Culture in 2025. The Brontë experience will create additional opportunities for Thornton and Bradford District as a whole to participate in Bradford 2025.

Under community ownership we intend that the birthplace and its surrounding area will thrive and offer valuable experiences for heritage tourists, for children, young people and adults. The asset will enhance the local sense of heritage. Events and workshops for Bradford school children will help to increase their aspirations.

We will open a café/small restaurant/events space downstairs, expanding slightly the scope and size of the former café (Emily’s). Upstairs the rooms will be decorated in the style of furnishings at the time of the Brontës. We aim to work closely with the Brontë Parsonage Museum, taking guidance from them to create a full Brontë experience. The rooms will be holiday lets offering experiential nights for national and international tourists some of whom may enjoy starting their journey at the birthplace and taking one of the four Brontë walking routes, experiencing the moors and fells that inspired the Brontë novels as they travel from Thornton to the Brontë Parsonage in Haworth. Rooms could also be let to an artists, writers or academics in residence.

The income generated from room hire and lettings will create a sustainable income for the maintenance of the building and for investment in the local community. This will include writing workshops, activities for schools across the Bradford district, artist commissions and residencies and other activities with a Brontë and local heritage focus. The project will reach out to the broader Bradford community, working with a variety of schools and academies to access children in the most deprived areas of the city and with community organisations involving participants with a range of protected characteristics.

We have received £25,000 in our initial [crowdfunding campaign](#). We were awarded £10,000 from the Architectural Heritage Fund, £9,000 from Bradford Council for feasibility studies and £10,000 from the Co-operatives UK/Power to Change Booster Development Fund to support our community share offer. These funds, together with a range of community fundraising events, have enabled us to produce architectural drawings for a range of options, condition and a quantity survey and to increase our community engagement. As described in section 19 below our final options analysis demonstrated the value of a four ensuite bedroom configuration of the holiday accommodation rather than the original two suites envisaged. This will allow more people to immerse themselves in the Brontë experience.

This business plan focuses on the first seven years of the project which aims to make a step-change in the attractiveness of Thornton village to tourists and enhance access to the Brontë Birthplace for diverse audiences across Bradford via events and workshops.

### 3. Governance

The Brontë Birthplace Steering Group was set up in July 2022. Early on a decision was made to work in partnership with the Thornton and Allerton Community Association Ltd (TACA – Charity no. 1122128) because of their long track record since their creation in 1982 of work in the arts and heritage sector and the grants received from Architectural Heritage and Gainshare were received in their name on behalf of the Brontë Birthplace. On June 19<sup>th</sup> 2023 Brontë Birthplace Limited (**BBL**) was registered with the Financial Conduct Authority as a Community Benefit Society (CBS) no. 9088. The Steering Group thus became the Management Committee which has grown in numbers and range of skills enabling Brontë Birthplace Limited to act independently of TACA going forward (See Figure 1 below for a Skills Audit of the Management Committee and Supporters). In accordance with its Rules, BBL currently has 10 Directors (and 4 supporters) who will remain in position until the first Annual Members Meeting elects a new Committee. Short bios of the members of BBL Management Committee and Supporters are in **Appendix 1**.

The staffing structure is described in section 17 below. The Business Manager will report into the Management Committee initially on a monthly basis, and after the first year this will drop to every two months. The Business Manager will be line managed by the Chair and one to one meetings will be arranged in advance of each Management Committee meeting.

In order to ensure that the whole staff team understand and implement members’ agreed targets, objectives, vision and values there will be at least two meetings per year between the Management Committee and all staff. It is expected that during the first 2-3 years the Management Committee will continue to be involved in some of the day-to-day operations, thus facilitating mutual understanding of the objects of the organisation. The Business Manager should also attend all Management Committee Meetings.

The Business Manager and any of the staff may themselves purchase shares to become Members.

**Figure 1 Management Committee and Supporters Skills Audit (See Appendix 1 for Bios and Photos of Management Committee)**

Expertise						
Business mgt./development	Mazhar	Sarah	Jenny	Adrian	Sue G.	
Project management.	Mazhar	Sarah	Christa	Adrian	Lorraine	
Fundraising	Cathy	Sarah	Sue H	Ann		
Marketing & comms	Heather	Christa	Thomas			
Brand development. & mgt.	Christa	Thomas				
Finance	Mazhar	Jenny	Sarah			
Legal & governance	Mazhar	Cathy	Sarah	Sue G.		
Policies & procedures	Mazhar	Cathy	Sarah	Jess		
Strategy & planning	Sarah					
Community engagement	Jenny	Sue D.	Lorraine	Cathy		
Heritage management	Ann	Christa				
Property devt./construction	Adrian					
Creative arts	Jess	Christa	Heather	Steve	Sue G	Sue H
Education	Sue D.	Jess	Steve	Christa	Heather	Lorraine
Local government	Sue D.					
Tour guide	Steve	Christa				
Employability	Lorraine	Cath				
Administration	Sue G	Jess				

## **Society Purpose, Objects, Values and Aims**

**Purpose:** The Society exists in order to carry on business for the benefit of the community.

**Objects:** shall be to utilise the Brontë Birthplace and any business that is run from there to support the historical, cultural, artistic, economic, social and health development of a broad range of communities both locally within Thornton and more widely within the Bradford District.

### **Values:**

- that our heritage, the Brontë Birthplace building, is our main focus and we will continue to maximise its effective use and people's engagement with it
- that we will utilise the building to provide inspiration to underprivileged groups in Bradford District, demonstrating that it is possible to succeed as the Brontë sisters did, however unfavourable the environment appears to be
- that culture and heritage has the ability to increase pride in Thornton, Bradford and Bradford District and is a driver for social change and place-making
- that creativity and art activity promote wellbeing
- that everyone deserves the right to participate in culture and have a say in shaping what culture is
- that everyone deserves the right to access and be involved in literature, art and heritage and pursue creative careers, whether in those sectors or not
- that the Brontë Birthplace should support the development of a sustainable ecosystem to include economic regeneration.
- that everyone should have access to this part of the Brontë story via national and international tourism.

### **Aim:**

The aim of the project is to create a full Brontë experience for the community and for visitors to Bradford for Bradford 2025 and years to come. We will purchase and adapt the Brontë Birthplace for community, national and international use.

We intend that this community project will increase feelings of pride in Bradford, improve social cohesion and sense of belonging, extend participation in arts and culture to children in deprived areas, increase economic outcomes by encouraging tourism and boosting the local high street and improve social and wellbeing outcomes in the district by creating a shared experience of heritage.

## **4. Heritage and Cultural Context**

The Brontë birthplace is located on Market St, formerly the main shopping thoroughfare, and situated within the Thornton Village Conservation Area. It is part of Bradford District in West Yorkshire. The building is Grade II\* listed and situated in the Thornton Village Conservation Area. It is famous worldwide as the birthplace of the three Brontë sisters - Charlotte, Emily, and Anne, and their brother Branwell, who were all born between 1816-1820. The sisters had a passion for writing from an early age, Charlotte wrote her first poem aged 13 and would go on to write over 200. The Brontë Sisters famously were first published under male pseudonyms; Acton, Currer and Ellis Bell in order to be

recognised by London publishers. An English Heritage blue plaque for the Brontë sisters was installed at the Birthplace in June 2021, recognising the home and is the 1st blue plaque in the historic village. Other heritage connections in Thornton include the Brontë Bell Chapel, where Patrick Brontë preached, now managed by a community group and St James Church, that contains the font where the sisters were christened as well as some Brontë artefacts in the Brontë Exhibition. The Brontë Parsonage Museum, which holds extensive collections on the Brontë sisters and celebrates their lives and work, is not far away over the moors in Haworth.

## **5. Wider Context**

Thornton Village is located in West Bradford and our project has a strong link to the City of Bradford priorities:

- Need for more and better-quality hotel rooms. Looking for "experiential nights" (i.e. staying where Brontës born and lived).
- Need for more "bookable cultural products" i.e. packages - Birthplace, Parsonage, walks, curry, theatre etc
- Increased focus on national and international tourism
- Participation in Bradford City of Culture 2025
- The birthplace has been added to Bradford Council's Cultural Asset List and our plans will be included in future discussions at the Culture-Place Partnership Group.

Bradford is one of the most deprived and one of the most diverse cities in the UK and has the youngest population. The plans for the Birthplace include events and outreach to this diverse population, increasing knowledge about and pride in Bradford's heritage, and supporting education in literature and the arts.

## **6. Need & Demand Audiences and Users**

As one of the most deprived cities in the UK, Bradford is in need of more cultural and educational support across a variety of audiences in the district. Diverse groups in the wider Bradford District community will be reached via intermediaries running local groups who will be invited to use the asset to deliver themed workshops or programmes. National and international participation will be achieved by strong marketing in collaboration with the Brontë Society and Bradford Council's Place Marketing and Inward Investment Department.

The asset can be booked for events by anybody and we anticipate many intermediaries will help vulnerable, diverse and underrepresented communities in deprived areas of Bradford to benefit from activities and events. For example Café West, Low Moor ESOL group, Girls Hang Out, schools across the District, and New Dawn entrepreneurship group. In all cases the Brontë sisters will provide role models for people with characteristics that are not mainstream. They are an example of how to succeed even in a world that is not supportive of them achieving their goals and desires, and prove that it is possible to succeed even if you are in some way or other disadvantaged. Such groups will be specifically targeted and will be instrumental in co-creation of arts and heritage activities including creative involvement with reading, writing and arts and showing the role of women in our heritage – aiding literacy, empowering creativity, building pride and building a "cultural habit". Brontë trails will help fitness and wellbeing and bringing people together under the Brontë roof will help overcome isolation thus aiding mental health.

An important KPI of the project is the level of support for people living in the more deprived areas of the Bradford District with the objective of enhancing pride in place, confidence in writing or other skills, and hence wellbeing.

The café and events will also be popular with local residents, the Birthplace becoming a favoured location for social gatherings and meetings. Locals can meet up with international and national tourists.

The holiday lets are available for international and national tourists who would like the full Brontë experience, as well as local people whose friends or relatives might be visiting. We are working with the University of Bradford on 3D imaging aiming to create an interactive virtual museum widening the reach to a national and international audience.

It is intended that breakfast should be offered by the café, with a baseload provided by the holiday lets, and in addition to daytime opening, the café could offer evening meals on specific days. We do not intend to run the café, but will charge a rental fee and offer it as a business opportunity for a local business or start up.

The Brontë Birthplace Project exemplifies the ‘can-do’ attitude called for in Bradford’s Cultural Strategy, we contribute to distinctive place-making, using culture as a key tourism driver, whilst our inclusive programming and emphasis on hands-on participation helps to build strong social capital.

Bradford has been named as UK City of Culture 2025. Bradford 2025 vision is to use arts and culture to fuel the social, economic and creative renaissance of our district; to make Bradford one of the most welcoming places in the UK where artists, producers, audiences and creative entrepreneurs can flourish. The Brontë birthplace project exemplifies this vision.

## **7. Community Engagement and Consultation**

The Brontë Birthplace will join a vibrant ecology of businesses, charities and local groups in Thornton. These include South Square Arts Centre, Thornton Community Centre, Brontë Bell Chapel, Sapgate Gardens, Top Royd Allotments, Thornton Antiquarians, Thornton Library, Thornton in Bloom, Thornton Open Gardens, Thornton Community Choir, Great Northern Rail Trail, Antiquarian Society etc. all of which are run by volunteers.

The energy to take the Brontë Birthplace into community ownership has come directly from the community. A steering group of local residents self-organised in June 2022 to drive this idea forward and make it a reality. There have been a range of local engagement events and participation in the project planning aiming to build support and take into account a wide range of interests and views. Please refer to our Community Engagement Plan in **Appendix 2** for full details.

Community engagement in the Bradford District is ongoing and survey data about acceptability of our plans and user interest has been collected. There is overwhelming support for the project. For example one survey found:

- 100% in favour of community ownership of Birthplace
- 68% would be interested in being part of a birthplace membership scheme

- 30% said they would be happy to volunteer on the project
- 100% think the project would have a positive impact and will help increase visitor numbers to the district.

Feedback on activities that people would like to see included: food events, film screenings and clubs for families / school children.

Whether locals or visitors to Thornton, whether friends or colleagues from living in the UK or abroad, when asked the question – is it a good idea to open the Brontë birthplace to the public? The answer is consistently yes.

All businesses and residents on Market St, where the Birthplace is located, were canvassed in 2022 and a total of 39 responses were received out of 50 distributed. Of those 100% of the businesses (all independent small businesses) were in favour of the project and numerous homeowners have offered their help. All of the responses have been positive and the only concerns raised have been regarding increased traffic and parked cars. The following are comments from our survey:

*“The Brontë House building has been shamefully neglected by previous owners and it would be lovely to see the building secured for the Community and future generations.”*

*“I hope that if this is successful it will bring life to Market St and the village”.*

The launch of the Crowdfunder on 15<sup>th</sup> August reached its target of £20,000 in less than 2 weeks. Some of the comments from donors:

*“This will be the last chance to save the Brontë Birthplace from potential unsympathetic private ownership. It will be a community, regional and national asset.”*

*“I lived on the outskirts of Thornton for the two happiest years of my childhood. Seeing the (then) brass plaque on our regular trips to the nearby bakery inspired me to read Jane Eyre for the first time - and ask for a typewriter for my 8th birthday. I got one. It was only much later I discovered my surname in Wuthering Heights and wished I'd been named Catherine! After years spent in journalism and then business I am now a writer and a poet. I have never understood why this property has not been more celebrated. Fingers crossed its time is now. I have visited the cafe and it's sad to see a venture close but perhaps this little house is at last going to become the literary shrine it should be.”*

*“This is such a brilliant idea. It would be wonderful to have this historical (asset) community owned...a real boost to Market St”*

Open meetings, Facebook posts, a survey conducted at the Christmas market at the Community Centre, promoting the project at a Mindfulness event at South Square, articles in the Yorkshire Post and the Telegraph and Argus have all contributed to community engagement.

We have a letters of support from a variety of sources including the Brontë Society (Brontë Parsonage Museum in Haworth), Bradford Literature Festival, Bradford Museums, Bradford University Dept of Archaeological and Forensic Science and St Oswalds Primary Academy, part of Bradford Diocesan Academies Trust. The latter are already regular visitors to the Brontë Bell Chapel in Thornton taking advantage of the Brontë education pack produced by one of our Management Committee members.

Various community groups have organised fundraising events for the project raising £5,500 to date. For example the Methodist Church organised a pancakes and poetry event, Thornton Community Choir participated in a joint event with our local band, the 309s at St James Church. A quarter of the proceeds from Thornton Open Gardens 2022 and all the proceeds in 2023 were donated to the project. A very successful Brontë Birthplace Afternoon Tea, together with a performance by Heathcliff, was held in August 2023 at Kipping House, the home of Elizabeth Firth who was a friend of the Brontës.

Going forward, as well as the existing schools' collaborations, we are setting up partnerships with a range of community organisations in Bradford to gain access to a variety of community groups in the wards with the highest indices of deprivation.

Our community engagement plan in Appendix 2 provides further details of how we are expanding our activities into our target areas of Bradford district, as well as national and international markets.

## **8. Rivals/Competition**

The Brontë birthplace, as the birthplace of the Brontë sisters, is a unique heritage asset. The only place to rival it is the Brontë Parsonage Museum in Haworth, where they grew up and created their literary masterpieces. However, rather than rivalry, the development of the Brontë Birthplace Project will add a new dimension to the Brontë story in the Bradford district. It will not seek to emulate the Parsonage as a museum but intends to create value in other ways: firstly to provide a unique venue for heritage events, writing workshops, activities in the arts for children and adults from across Bradford, helping to build pride and a sense of belonging to this great city; secondly to provide experiential holiday accommodation for national and international Brontë enthusiasts who would like to absorb the atmosphere of the home where the Brontës were born, thirdly to provide accommodation for artists or writers in residence, and fourthly to open a café where local residents, as well as other visitors, can relax and socialise. The Brontë Society, that runs the Brontë Parsonage Museum, gives its support to our venture, including joint events and marketing and Ann Dinsdale, the Principal Curator, is a member of our Management Committee.

## **9. Outcomes and Impact**

The outcomes and impact measures will vary according to constituency, but in general our project will have the following key areas of impact:

- a better place to work, live & visit
- new ambitions and sense of pride
- a flourishing creative space
- high street regeneration
- increased wellbeing

The outcomes we will achieve are:

**A wider range of people will engage with heritage and the arts** - our extensive programme of activities and events will engage a diverse range of people, with a specific focus on engaging BAME communities, migrants and refugees, LGBTQi groups, disadvantaged white boys, as well as families

with young children, school age children, isolated older people and older people groups and residents impacted by long term health conditions and disability, including mental health.

**Heritage asset will be in better condition** - the Brontë Birthplace will be refurbished and open to the public.

**Participants and volunteers will gain skills, confidence and personal satisfaction** in the role they have played in preserving, promoting and celebrating local heritage. They will have had a good time, making new friends and feeling more socially connected, with an increased feeling of personal wellbeing.

**Our local area will be a better place to live, work and visit** - the project will increase local pride of place, sense of community and social connectivity. The rich mix of events we deliver will contribute significantly to local placemaking - local people will feel that Thornton is a better place to live, work and visit. The programme will impact positively on people's attitudes and behaviours stimulating increased pride of place, sense of community and social connectivity, contributing to greater sense of health and well-being.

**Our local economy will be boosted** - national and international tourism to Thornton will be boosted by people staying in the holiday accommodation, generating income for local businesses. Increased footfall will help to alleviate anti-social behaviour and make the area more attractive for investment. The Birthplace will offer employment to three part time staff, apprenticeships and volunteering roles. We will work towards ensuring that lower-paid roles will receive the Living Wage Foundation's real living wage as a minimum. The café also offers an opportunity for a new business.

Some quantitative outcomes of the project are shown in the figure below.

#### **Projected Quantitative Outcomes of the Project**

No. of Bradford residents engaged in cultural activity as a direct result of project	2000
Increase in visitors from outside Bradford District	3,500
No. of new venues created (Birthplace plus 3 new businesses on Market St by 2029)	4
Number of jobs created at Birthplace	3
Training and work experience opportunities	10

#### **10. Equality, Diversity and Inclusion**

Bradford is the 5<sup>th</sup> most income-deprived and the 6<sup>th</sup> most employment deprived local authority in England with 22% of children living below the poverty line (2029 Index of Deprivation). One of the key areas of focus for our project is working with schools in the more deprived areas of Bradford, inspiring children with the Brontë story and providing an impetus to their reading.

Bradford District is ethnically diverse with the largest proportion of people of Pakistani ethnic origin in England. One on four people living in the District describe themselves as Asian / Asian British ethnic origin, compared to under 1 in 10 people on average for England as a whole.

In all cases the Brontë sisters will provide role models for people with protected characteristics, whether that be disability, race, religion, sexual orientation or any other protected characteristic. The

sisters are an example of how to succeed even in a world that is not supportive of them achieving their goals and desires, that it is possible to succeed even if you are in some way or other disadvantaged. Such groups will be specifically targeted and will have the opportunity for creative involvement with reading, writing and arts and showing the role of women in our heritage – aiding literacy, empowering creativity, building pride and building a “cultural habit”. Brontë trails will help fitness and wellbeing and bringing people together under the Brontë roof will help overcome isolation thus aiding mental health.

## **11. Marketing and Audience Development Strategy**

We will work with a variety of participants from younger people, older people, families, vulnerable and groups with protected characteristics. The Birthplace of the Brontë sisters provides an opportunity to raise the profile and visibility of Bradford District heritage and arts regionally and nationally.

The use of social media is critical for reaching our audience, especially overseas. We will use Facebook, Instagram and LinkedIn and we have set up our website: [www.Brontëbirthplace.com](http://www.Brontëbirthplace.com). WhatsApp is also a useful communication tool. Our first Open Meeting highlighted concerns about reaching audiences not using social media. Therefore we are also using posters, leaflets and print as well as open meetings to spread the word. We have used Christmas and Summer Street markets and Brontë tours to raise awareness of the project as well as events at South Square (e.g. the Mindfulness event in June 2023) and this year Thornton Open Gardens promoted the project and all the proceeds will be donated to the Brontë Birthplace project. Thornton Community Centre now has a part time manager, also on the Management Committee, who can be available 3 days a week to answer questions and field offers for volunteering.

In 2022 Thornton won Gold and Best in Category in Thornton in Bloom. Thornton’s selection as one of only 44 national and 3 Yorkshire participants to go forward to the Royal Horticultural Society’s (RHS) 2023 Britain in Bloom competition provides a further opportunity to raise the profile of the Brontë birthplace to a wider British audience. One of the RHS judging criteria is ‘sense of place’ and the Brontë connections are key.

Collaboration with the Brontë Society and the Brontë Parsonage in Haworth helps widen our national and international audience. Articles about the Brontë birthplace are published in the Brontë Society Gazette and ongoing events are organised in collaboration with the Parsonage.

Please refer to **Appendix 3** for our Marketing Plan giving details of how we intend to reach out to our targeted population segments and our different geographic constituencies: Thornton, Bradford District, West Yorkshire, UK and international.

### **Macro-environmental Trends**

The following key issues and trends in the macro-environment form the context to the Project.

The economic climate affects people’s everyday lives

- Household and personal budgets are under pressure
- Deprivation in a city that is already one of the most deprived is increasing

#### The political climate

- The UK government's "levelling up" strategy should benefit Bradford
- The number of refugees is increasing

#### An increased reliance on the charitable and social enterprise sectors for service delivery

- Public funding is declining and costs are rising
- Public sector services continue to be under pressure

#### The social environment

- Post Covid loneliness and children falling behind in their education
- Cultural barriers are particularly prominent in Bradford
- Bradford City of Culture 2025 offers a great opportunity to increase creativity and pride

#### Environmental issues are becoming more prominent

- Zero carbon target
- Ethical and sustainable outcomes
- More open to recycling, up-cycling and buying local and ethical goods and services
- Cycling becoming more popular and cycle lane improvements in Bradford

#### Consumer engagement and expectations are changing

- Communication is changing with more reliance on social media activity
- Customers are expecting an "experience"

The above external trends demonstrate that there is a need for an organisation that can provide social space and offer educational and other events. To fund these it is important to have a sustainable source of income, which is not dependent on public funding – this will be provided in the main by holiday let income. A vibrant Brontë Birthplace will help to improve Market St and encourage other businesses thus bringing economic benefits.

## 12. SWOT Analysis

The SWOT analysis below demonstrates the great strengths of this project and the many opportunities for development that it provides. Details of how to mitigate the weaknesses and threats are provided in the Risk Analysis in section 23 below.

### SWOT Analysis

<p><b><u>Strengths</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unique asset with strong tourist attraction and cultural benefits for Bradford communities</li> <li>• New dimension to Brontë story – partnership with Brontë Parsonage Museum, Bell Chapel and St James Church Brontë Exhibition</li> <li>• Strong link to Bradford City of Culture 2025</li> <li>• Strong Management Committee and Advisors with a broad range of relevant experience</li> <li>• Grass roots initiative with strong community support</li> <li>• Sustainable business model – holiday let income supports community events</li> <li>• Already strong school support from across Bradford</li> <li>• Strong BMDC and local councillor support</li> </ul>	<p><b><u>Weaknesses</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Market St is rundown with many properties boarded up.</li> <li>• Parking spaces are limited on Market St</li> <li>• New staff team, new enterprise may take time to get established</li> <li>• Birthplace not widely known to be in Thornton</li> <li>• Hospitality offer needs development</li> <li>• Local anti-social behaviour</li> <li>• Haworth heavily promoted over Thornton re Brontës</li> <li>• Fundraising for asset purchase is very slow</li> <li>• Current owner may not wait until we have raised the funding</li> </ul>
<p><b><u>Opportunities</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cultural/literary phenomenon Brontë sisters will attract tourists, increase economic prosperity</li> <li>• Brontë sisters’ success will inspire young people from all backgrounds in Bradford</li> <li>• Bradford 2025 City of Culture will bring many more visitors to Bradford and provide options for cultural collaborations and events.</li> <li>• Provides inspiring background for literacy classes</li> <li>• Holiday let rooms can be furnished with antiques of the Brontë era</li> <li>• Holiday lets help to address shortage of hotel rooms in Bradford</li> <li>• Create cultural package tours to include all Brontë sites, curry, theatre, Little Germany etc.</li> <li>• New large car park could be built off Thornton road if visitor numbers increase (cf Haworth), which would also benefit the local community</li> </ul>	<p><b><u>Threats</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unable to secure funding in time for sale deadline</li> <li>• Unable to secure sufficient funding for refurbishment and early years’ operating costs</li> <li>• Building refurbishment takes longer than planned</li> <li>• Possible pandemic travel restrictions</li> <li>• Energy bill and general inflation increases</li> <li>• Refurbishment cost too high</li> <li>• Cost of living crisis reducing footfall</li> <li>• Weak marketing reach reduces sales</li> <li>• Unable to recruit appropriate staff</li> <li>• Unable to attract sufficient tourism to generate the income required from bed and breakfast accommodation</li> <li>• Planning permission and listed building consent not granted</li> <li>• Purchase price is more than 10% above the valuation price</li> <li>• Key members of Management Committee leave</li> </ul>

## 15. Project Timeline

Starting in Oct 2022 we have completed a project viability study which has included initial building surveys (asbestos, structural, fire risk assessment) and independent valuation. We have worked with Bauman Lyons Architects to draw up initial options for RIBA Stage 0-2, as well as Chris Eyres Architect who has completed a Listed Building Consent Application and taken the project through to the Planning Permission stage. Local property developer Adrian Tingle, a member of the Management Committee, has assisted in historical research on the property to uncover its previous uses and modification as well as past attempts to purchase the building for community ownership.

The key milestones for the project are illustrated in the figure below. Our most important target is the launch of the Brontë Birthplace in time for Bradford 2025 City of Culture. We have developed four versions of our funding plan (see section 20 below). The key milestones below are generic the All Shares version. The most critical points are the success of the community shares offer and the Capital Arts and Culture Grant; agreeing the purchase of the building with the owner; completing the refurbishment; agreeing lease for the café; and hiring staff; full launch as part of 2025.

### Key Milestones

Key Milestones Bronte Birthplace														
Milestones	2023					2024				2025	2026	2027	2028	2029
	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4					
Bradford Capital Grant result announced														
Finalise share offer, bus plan, finances														
Apply Rural England Prosperity Fund														
Launch share marketing campaign														
Planning & listed building consent rec'd														
Asset of Community Value moratorium start & Finish														
Apply COF														
Launch Community Shares														
Purchase Birthplace														
Apply building regs														
Initial Repairs to secure building integrity														
Initial 3D rendering														
Appoint contractors														
Pop up cultural events/open days														
building refurb start														
Prepare tourist packages														
Building refurb finish														
Decoration, furnishings														
Seek caterer for café rental														
Build partner relations in high IMD wards														
Marketing campaign for tourists														
Seek Artist in Residence														
Pre-Launch Bronte Birthplace														
Start cultural events/activities														
Café opens														
Holiday accommodation available														
Trialling tourist "package tours"														
Full launch as part of Bradford 2025														
Full events/activities programmes														
Tourist packages launched														
Review outcomes														
New businesses open on Market St														
Business sustainable without activity grants														

## 16. Capital Project Delivery

Fundraising for the building and its refurbishment and agreeing a price with the current owner are critical aspects of the capital project. The building has been valued between £280,000 to £295,000 by two separate estate agents. We anticipate having to pay £300,000 since the owner has previously rejected lower offers. In addition to community fundraising efforts and a community share offer we

have set targets for grant income which are shown in the Sources and Uses of Funding in section 20 below. Three members of our Management Committee s have grant application experience – Sue Hayton, Cathy Boyden and Sarah Dixon. With reference to the building refurbishment – our Management Committee member Adrian Tingle has outstanding property development and construction expertise and he has appointed our architect, Chris Ayres, who has extensive experience of planning and building regulations for listed buildings.

In order to keep to our timeline, we applied for planning and listed building permission in August 2023, ahead of the purchase of the building (See Appendix 4 for plans). We received planning and listed building permission 18<sup>th</sup> September 2023. We also applied to list the building as an Asset of Community Value and a 6 month moratorium was initiated by Bradford Council running up till 4<sup>th</sup> March 2024 to prevent any sale until we can generate sufficient funding.

Adrian Tingle, our Management Committee member, and Chris Eyres, our architect, have an extensive network of reliable builders and professionals with heritage listing experience which will ensure the refurbishment is completed employing local labour, to a high standard and within time and budget.

Ann Dinsdale (Principal Curator, Brontë Parsonage Museum) and Christa Ackroyd (journalist and broadcaster), both Management Committee members, are Brontë experts and will ensure that furnishings are completed consistent with the period when the Brontës lived in the house.

## **17. Operational Project Delivery**

### **Staffing**

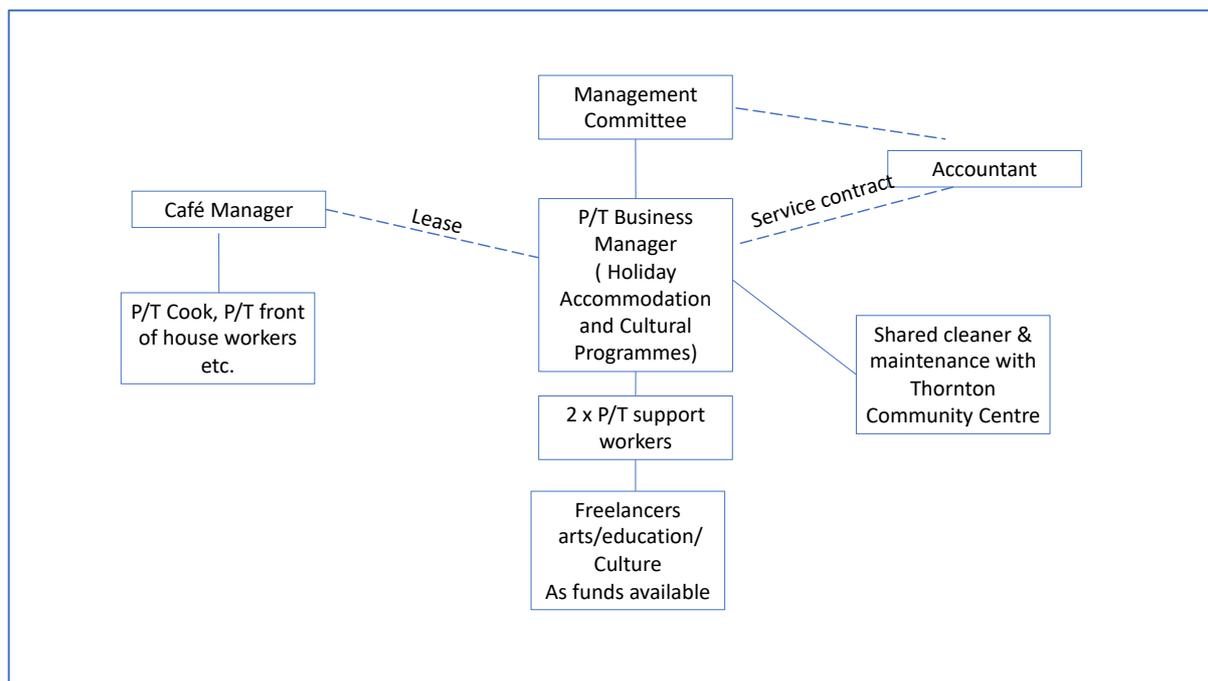
In the period prior to completion of the refurbishment we will advertise a part-time (0.5 FTE @£30,000 p.a. equivalent) role of Business Manager with experience of arts programme management, contract negotiation, customer service and managing resources, both staff and finances. The Business Manager, with the support of the Management Committee, will be responsible for locating a suitable partner to lease and run the café. Decisions will be made about the café opening hours, ensuring that breakfast will always be available for guests. Ideally the café would be open all day to include evening meals both for staying guests and for other customers but would seek to respond to local needs.

We will also utilise 2 part time programme managers to manage and run the arts and culture activities. Our preference is that these should be shared resources with other local community operations or freelancers. This will help to support cross community engagement and collaboration on facility utilisation. It may also enable full time roles across two or more community organisations in the neighbourhood providing convenience for the employee and cross fertilisation of ideas.

We will encourage volunteers to take over cleaning, laundry and general maintenance activities. However we have included the cost of a cleaner in the financials.

Brontë Birthplace Limited will therefore offer employment in the cultural sector to at least four part-time members of staff as well as freelance producers and artists. We will build a managed volunteer programme and aim to offer an apprenticeship once the enterprise is established.

## Staffing Structure



## Staffing Pay and Hours

Job role	Hours	Pay
Business Manager	0.5 FTE	£30,000 p.a. equivalent
Support worker 1	0.5 FTE	£11/hr
Support worker 2	0.5 FTE	£11/hr
Cleaner	1 day a week (8 hours)	£14/hr

### Notes:

- Salaries will be at least at Living Wage Foundation's Living Wage for the lower paid staff
- The café is leased, but is likely to also employ 2-3 people
- Support workers can focus on accommodation management and/or arts & culture events
- Maintenance includes security, pest control, fire alarm, safety and is costed @ around £2,100/mth.

## Partnerships

As soon as the building is purchased and made safe we will start to engage with partners by organising pop up events until the major building works begin. The schools partnership with St Oswald's will continue, but be supplemented by other schools within the academy and as well as other academies. Discussions will be progressed with organisations engaged with our target groups of people with protected characteristics. We will collaborate closely with Thornton Community Centre while building works are taking place to continue our activities and events a stone's throw away from the Birthplace. We will start to develop relationships with freelancers in the arts and culture sphere organise these activities. This will ensure that once the building renovation and refurbishment is complete that we are already delivering a full programme of community events.

## **Tourism, Hospitality and Artists in Residence**

Whilst the building is being made ready we will start to pre-market the facilities using 3-D rendering to illustrate the rooms. We will establish an account with an accommodation booking organisation such as Booking.com and will also register with AirBnB just for last minute bookings to improve occupancy levels. We will work with entrepreneurs at the local college, university or in community groups to develop tourist packages, which might comprise walking tours in Brontë country, full Bradford 2025 cultural experience, special offers such as hampers for the superior rooms etc.

The opportunity to take up residence in the building for artists or writers will be promoted via appropriate channels.

### **18. Key Success Factors and Performance Indicators**

**Key Success Factors (KSF)** include the following:

- Planning and listed building consents secured (planning consent received 18<sup>th</sup> September 2023)
- The successful purchase of the Brontë Birthplace in time and within budget.
- Requisite funds raised for the project including initial years of operation
- Refurbishment carried out in time and within budget – using local building companies and materials when possible to support the local economy.
- Appropriate partnerships established to ensure reach into high deprivation sectors in Bradford
- Professional marketing campaign
- Birthplace launch to coincide with Bradford 2025.
- Increased online engagement and reach.
- Number and profile of partners and their level of engagement.

**Key Performance Indicators (KPI)** are:

- Increase in cultural participation locally and in the Bradford District
- Positive feedback from equality groups and participants from deprived wards
- Number of jobs created
- Increased overnight stays
- Increased footfall and visitor spend
- Improved economic outputs and built environment
- Legacy and sustainability
- Self financing

### **19. Options Analysis (See Table and Figures below)**

In February 2023 we conducted a detailed options analysis to arrive at our current preferred option of four letting rooms: a full Brontë experience superior suite, a superior double, a smaller double/twin room for people on a budget, walkers etc and a double/twin room at the back of the house downstairs targeting cyclists since there is a back entrance to bring in bikes. One or two of the rooms could also be allocated to artists in residence, providing more flexibility. This analysis was based on the main income source for the Birthplace coming from the rental of these rooms, with a small additional income from leasing out the café and room rental. The ground floor will be used as a community café and events space. The analysis covered operational income and costs only. All income (grants and

donations) and costs associated with the purchase and refurbishment of the property were stripped out in this analysis in order to assess the financial viability of the ongoing business model.

<b>4 Room Rental</b>					
	<b>yr 1</b>	<b>yr 2</b>	<b>yr 3</b>	<b>yr 4</b>	<b>yr 5</b>
<b>Revenues</b>					
Rental	10,800	13,368	15,342	15,879	16,435
Accommodation	45,260	52,700	60,535	68,767	77,395
<b>Total Revenues</b>	<b>56,060</b>	<b>66,068</b>	<b>75,877</b>	<b>84,646</b>	<b>93,829</b>
<b>Costs</b>					
Operating Costs	17,537	17,608	17,961	19,736	21,835
Salaries	20,882	21,979	23,117	24,294	25,512
Overheads	17,950	18,335	19,733	20,146	20,573
<b>Total Costs</b>	<b>56,369</b>	<b>57,923</b>	<b>60,811</b>	<b>64,176</b>	<b>67,920</b>
<b>Surplus/Deficit</b>	<b>-309</b>	<b>8,145</b>	<b>15,066</b>	<b>20,469</b>	<b>25,909</b>
bf		-309	7,836	22,903	43,372
cf	-309	7,836	22,903	43,372	69,281
<b>2 Room Rental</b>					
	<b>yr 1</b>	<b>yr 2</b>	<b>yr 3</b>	<b>yr 4</b>	<b>yr 5</b>
<b>Revenues</b>					
Rental	10,800	13,368	15,342	15,879	16,435
Accommodation	36,500	41,810	47,286	57,739	58,736
<b>Total Revenues</b>	<b>47,300</b>	<b>55,178</b>	<b>62,628</b>	<b>73,618</b>	<b>75,170</b>
<b>Costs</b>					
Operating Costs	14,931	14,737	14,562	16,538	17,626
Salaries	17,356	18,230	19,136	20,073	21,042
Overheads	19,450	19,835	21,233	21,646	22,073
<b>Total Costs</b>	<b>51,737</b>	<b>52,802</b>	<b>54,932</b>	<b>58,257</b>	<b>60,741</b>
<b>Surplus/Deficit</b>	<b>-4,437</b>	<b>2,375</b>	<b>7,696</b>	<b>15,361</b>	<b>14,429</b>
bf		-4,437	-2,062	5,634	20,995
cf	-4,437	-2,062	5,634	20,995	35,425
<b>Artists' Rental</b>					
	<b>yr 1</b>	<b>yr 2</b>	<b>yr 3</b>	<b>yr 4</b>	<b>yr 5</b>
<b>Revenues</b>					
Rental	10,800	13,368	15,342	15,879	16,435
Artists rental	21,170	23,516	25,982	28,568	36,113
<b>Total Revenues</b>	<b>31,970</b>	<b>36,884</b>	<b>41,324</b>	<b>44,447</b>	<b>52,548</b>
<b>Costs</b>					
Operating Costs	2,248	2,285	2,324	2,364	2,405
Salaries	1,248	1,285	1,324	1,364	1,405
Overheads	18,950	19,353	20,769	21,200	21,647
<b>Total Costs</b>	<b>22,446</b>	<b>22,923</b>	<b>24,417</b>	<b>24,928</b>	<b>25,456</b>
<b>Surplus/Deficit</b>	<b>9,524</b>	<b>13,961</b>	<b>16,907</b>	<b>19,519</b>	<b>27,092</b>
bf		9,524	23,485	40,392	59,911
cf	9,524	23,485	40,392	59,911	87,003

Criteria	Two Room	Four Room	Artists' Rentals/Residence
<b>SUITABILITY</b>			
<b>Community reach</b>	Less, Restricted to fewer well off Brontë enthusiasts and holidaymakers	Good, Brontë enthusiasts, holidaymakers, walkers, cyclists, low budget	Indirect through community engagement activities
<b>Take account of cultural &amp; political context</b>	Bradford 2025 Yes , rooms, package tours, souvenirs, heritage, economic uplift	Bradford 2025 Yes , rooms, package tours, souvenirs, heritage, economic uplift	Yes -a commitment to have artist on every street corner
<b>Attract more tourists/economic development</b>	Yes	Yes	Indirect through exhibitions improvements in environment with public art
<b>Flexibility</b>	No	Yes, could be let as 4 rooms, as a whole, as two suites, and as artists rental	Yes, No need to alter building. Flexibility to change later.
<b>Support café revenues</b>	Less (self-catering options)	Yes breakfast & dinner	Use work of artists as a draw. Artists buy coffee!
<b>Provide local employment</b>	Some opportunities	Yes	Yes Fund local and international artists.
<b>Provide volunteering and training opportunities</b>	Some opportunities	More opportunities (more jobs to do)	Some opportunities
<b>Potential noise issue</b>	Yes	Yes	Yes, if videographer, musician
<b>Attract international visitors</b>	Yes	Yes	Yes
<b>Create competitive advantage</b>	Yes, Unique Brontë offer to stay in birthplace	Yes, Unique Brontë offer to stay in birthplace	Yes, Unique Brontë connection
<b>FEASIBILITY</b>			
<b>Grant access</b>	Limited number of funders but strong heritage and community case	Limited number of funders but strong heritage and community case	Limited number of funders but strong heritage and community case. Arts grants easier?
<b>Resources &amp; skills</b>	New skills required (hospitality)	New skills required (hospitality)	Skills available
<b>New market access</b>	District wide, national, international	District wide, national, international	Existing market
<b>Potential Return</b>	Good, many add-ons, occupancy and room rates increase over time	High, many add-ons, occupancy and room rates increase over time	Medium rental rates may plateau compared to increased brand awareness of holiday accommodation
<b>ACCEPTABILITY</b>			
<b>Operating Costs</b>	Lower	Highest	Lowest
<b>Breakeven</b>	Year 3	Year 2	Year 1
<b>Risks</b>	High -is there enough demand for high-end stays? Less flexible model. Current Market St unattractive to wealthier visitors	Medium - a range of options, likelihood of regular weekly income, occupancy and room rates will continue to increase	Medium– demand exists plus existing contacts and networks through South Square, however revenue growth likely to be less long term and potentially insufficient to maintain building
<b>Risk mitigation</b>	Leverage Brontë Connection/Bradford 2025	Leverage Brontë Connection/Bradford 2025 Can be hybrid artist/bed option if needed in early days	Leverage Brontë Connection/Bradford 2025
<b>Stakeholders</b>	Strong fit with Bradford 2025 and BMDC's economic, heritage and arts objectives	Strong fit with Bradford 2025 and BMDC's economic, heritage and arts objectives	Strong fit with South Square activities and Bradford 2025 economic, heritage and arts objectives
<b>Sustainability</b>	Sustainable model, rental income funds maintenance and events.	Sustainable model, rental income funds maintenance and events.	May be unsustainable over time due to limits on revenue growth and reliance on arts grants

The conclusions from the above options analysis and the results of the cashflow are that all three options are viable, however the 4-bedroom option is the one that we recommend for the following main reasons:

**Suitability:**

- It gives access for a wider variety of people to a unique Brontë experience (competitive advantage)
- It has the greatest potential to support Bradford 2025 with additional bedspaces and potential for add-on packaged experiences
- The marketing configurations will be flexible, as single/double rooms, as suites, as the whole accommodation, or in combination with an artist's residence

**Feasibility**

- It will give access to new international and national markets, especially with a Brontë Society link.
- The longer-term returns will be higher than the artists' rental option due to improved brand awareness and reputation and marketing add-ons facilitating higher prices and occupancy

**Acceptability**

- The 4 bedroom plan makes a small loss in year 1 and breaks even in year 2
- It is an excellent fit with Bradford 2025 and BMDC strategic objectives with respect to economic development, attraction of tourists and highlighting a unique heritage asset.
- Risks are moderate and mitigated by the flexibility of the model, the Brontë competitive advantage and the likelihood of improved occupancy and pricing in the medium to long term
- It will enhance the appearance and economic development of Market Street and Thornton
- It provides a sustainable financial model which will support the preservation and maintenance of the building and for the provision of events, workshops and training for the broader Bradford district even if grants become harder to get.

Note: The figures for the four room option do not correlate exactly with the later version of the finances in section 21 below as further details were added subsequently.

**20. Sources and Uses of Funds**

Our preferred funding option is All Community Shares, however for contingency purposes we have modelled 3 other versions – shares plus Bradford Arts & Culture Grant (A&C); shares plus Community Ownership Fund (COF); and shares plus A&C and COF. See below. Each table has 3 sections: property acquisition, building refurbishment, and revenue funding to support the start-up years of the business. Property acquisition funding also includes all the start-up costs including feasibility funding, planning and building regulations, share offer support, Crowdfunder fees, conveyancing and one year's basic running costs such as insurance and utilities. We have already received £29,000 feasibility and share offer support funding from Bradford Gainshare, Architectural Heritage Fund and the Co-operatives UK/Power to Change Booster Development Fund and £30,500 from community and Crowdfunder donations. Depending on the outcome of the share offer we will also apply for other funding e.g. National Lottery Heritage Fund, Arts Council and capital match funding from the Booster Fund.

In more detail, the contingencies relating to not achieving the minimum, optimum and maximum levels of funding are as follows:

**Fail to meet minimum target:** we have selected the 'all or nothing' minimum target on Crowdfunder, therefore if we fail to meet this target all money will be returned to the investors

**Fail to meet optimum target:** if we fail to meet this target we will a) extend the running time of the Crowdfunder and if we still do not reach the target we will b) contact all our investors with the request that we keep the money and use it to start on the refurbishment whilst we continue fundraising to make up the difference. As we mention under Contingency Arrangements below, if we fail to meet are target we will utilise a range of other grants such as Community Ownership Fund, National Lottery Heritage Fund, Rural Prosperity Fund, Booster Equity Match, Bradford Guild of Help, Arts Council. A Community Ownership Fund grant application will already be under review at that time.

**Fail to meet maximum target:** If we are above the optimum and below the maximum target we will do the same as above i.e. a) extend the running time of the Crowdfunder and if we still do not reach the target we will b) contact all our investors with the request that we keep the money and use it to cover our operating costs whilst we continue fundraising as above to make up the difference.

Note: For the All Shares version we have rounded up the figure calculated from our detailed spreadsheet from £796,849 to £800,000 as our maximum target because this is a clearer figure to aim for. If we raise more the £796,849 in shares this will go towards working capital.

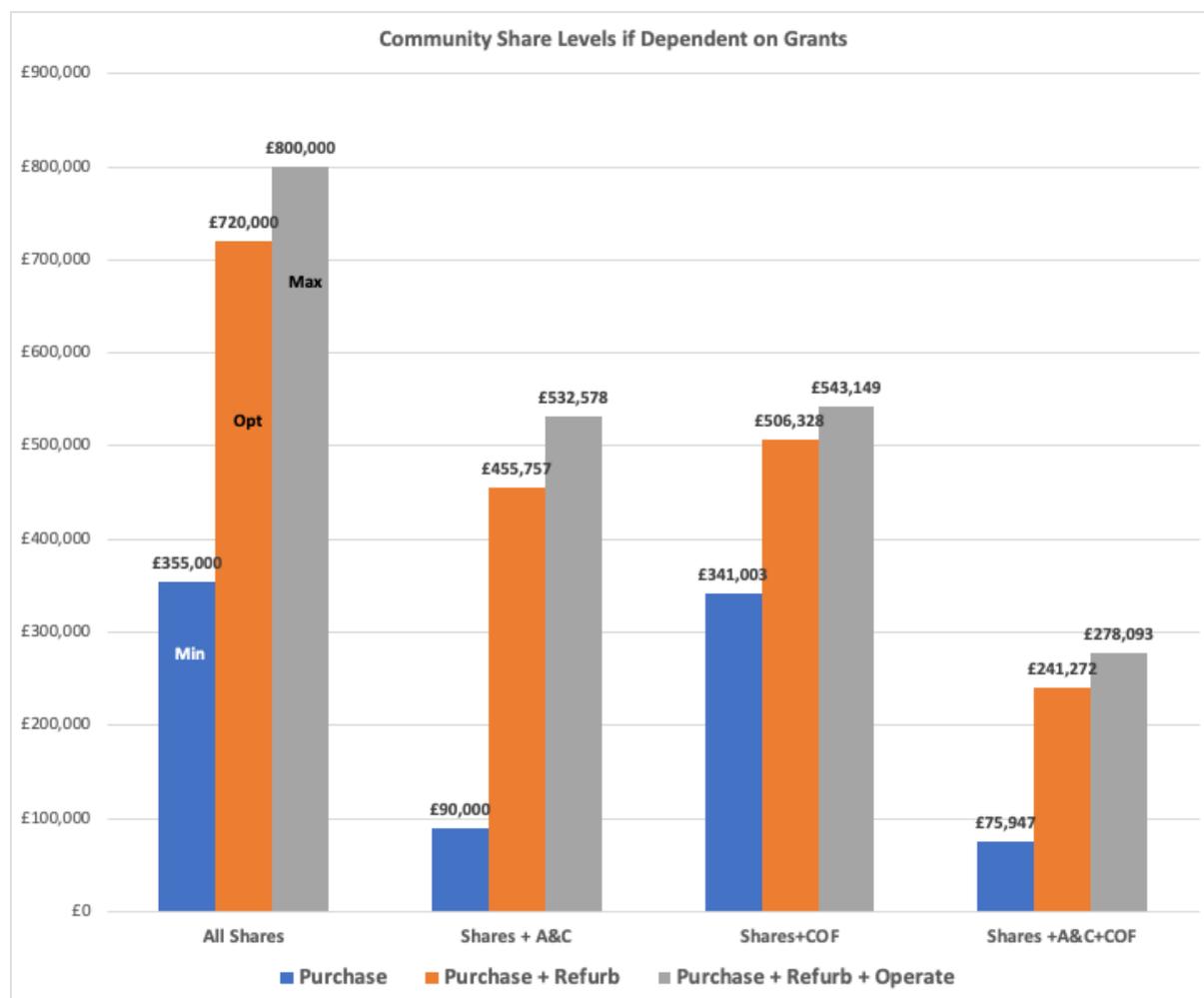
Brontë Birthplace Uses and Sources of Funds 2023-2025 Maximum Shares Version				
	USES		SOURCES	
Capital Purchase 2023	Purchase	(£300,000)	Community Shares	£354,703
	Start-up costs (feasibility, legal, surveys)	(£108,281)	Crowdfunder donations (Received)	£25,000
	Overheads Year 1	(£5,922)	Local fundraising (Received)	£5,500
			Booster Development Fund (Received)	£10,000
			BMDC Gainshare (Feasibility) (Received)	£9,000
		Architectural Heritage Fund (Feasibility) (Received)	£10,000	
	<b>Total Capital Building Purchase</b>	<b>(£414,203)</b>		<b>£414,203</b>
<b>Capital Renovation Q42023-Q32024</b>				
	Refurbishment Costs	(£274,975)	Community Shares	£365,325
	Furnishings and equipment total	(£90,350)		
	<b>Total Capital Refurbishment, Furnishings &amp; Equipment</b>	<b>(£365,325)</b>		<b>£365,325</b>
<b>Revenue Funding 2024-2025</b>				
	Overheads Years 2 and 3	(£45,821)	Community Shares	£76,821
	Community Events/Services	(£31,000)		
	<b>Total Revenue/Operating Costs</b>	<b>(£76,821)</b>		<b>£76,821</b>
	<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>(£856,349)</b>		<b>£856,349</b>
	<b>Community Shares Total</b>			<b>£796,849</b>
Brontë Birthplace Uses and Sources of Funds 2023-2025 Art & Culture Grant Version				
	USES		SOURCES	
Capital Purchase 2023	Purchase	(£300,000)	Arts and Culture Capital Grant	£250,000
	Start-up costs (feasibility, legal, etc)	(£94,010)	Crowdfunder donations (Received)	£25,000
	Overheads Year 1	(£5,922)	Local fundraising (Received)	£5,500
			Community Shares	£90,432
			Booster Development Fund (Received)	£10,000
		BMDC Gainshare (Feasibility) (Received)	£9,000	
		Architectural Heritage Fund (Feasibility) (Received)	£10,000	
	<b>Total Capital Building Purchase</b>	<b>(£399,932)</b>		<b>£399,932</b>
<b>Capital Renovation Q42023-Q32024</b>				
	Refurbishment Costs	(£274,975)	Community Shares	£365,325
	Furnishings and equipment total	(£90,350)		
	<b>Total Capital Refurbishment, Furnishings &amp; Equipment</b>	<b>(£365,325)</b>		<b>£365,325</b>
<b>Revenue Funding 2024-2025</b>				
	Overheads Years 2 and 3	(£45,821)	Community Shares	£76,821
	Community Events/Services	(£31,000)		
	<b>Total Revenue/Operating Costs</b>	<b>(£76,821)</b>		<b>£76,821</b>
	<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>(£842,078)</b>		<b>£842,078</b>
	<b>Community Shares Total</b>			<b>£532,578</b>

Brontë Birthplace Uses and Sources of Funds 2023-2025 Community Ownership Fund Version			
	USES		SOURCES
<b>Capital Purchase 2023</b>	Purchase	(£300,000)	<b>Community Shares</b> £341,003
	Start-up costs (feasibility, legal, surveys)	(£94,581)	Crowdfunder (Received) £25,000
	Overheads Year 1	(£5,922)	Local fundraising (Received) £5,500
			Booster Development Fund (Received) £10,000
			BMDC Gainshare (Feasibility) (Received) £9,000
		Architectural Heritage Fund (Feasibility) (Received) £10,000	
	<b>Total Capital</b>	<b>(£400,503)</b>	<b>£400,503</b>
<b>Capital Renovation Q4 2023-Q3 2024</b>	Refurbishment Costs	(£274,975)	Community Ownership Fund Capital Grant £200,000
	Furnishings and equipment total	(£90,350)	<b>Community Shares</b> £165,325
	<b>Total Refurbishment</b>	<b>(£365,325)</b>	<b>£365,325</b>
<b>Revenue Funding 2024-2025</b>	Overheads Years 2 and 3	(£45,821)	Community Ownership Fund revenue grant £40,000
	Community Events/Services	(£31,000)	<b>Community Shares</b> £36,821
	<b>Total Operating Costs</b>	<b>(£76,821)</b>	<b>£76,821</b>
	Grand Total	(£842,649)	£842,649
	<b>Community Shares Total</b>		<b>£543,149</b>
<b>Capital Purchase 2023</b>	Purchase	(£300,000)	<b>Community Shares</b> £75,947
	Start-up costs (feasibility, legal, surveys)	(£79,525)	Art & Culture Capital Grant £250,000
	Overheads Year 1	(£5,922)	Crowdfunder + Local fundraising (Received) £30,500
			Booster Development Fund (Received) £10,000
			BMDC Gainshare (Feasibility) (Received) £9,000
		Architectural Heritage Fund (Feasibility) (Received) £10,000	
	<b>Total Capital</b>	<b>(£385,447)</b>	<b>£385,447</b>
<b>Capital Renovation Q4 2023-Q3 2024</b>	Refurbishment Costs	(£274,975)	Community Ownership Fund Capital Grant £200,000
	Furnishings and equipment total	(£90,350)	<b>Community Shares</b> £165,325
	<b>Total Refurbishment</b>	<b>(£365,325)</b>	<b>£365,325</b>
<b>Revenue Funding 2024-2025</b>	Overheads Years 2 and 3	(£45,821)	Community Ownership Fund revenue grant £40,000
	Community Events/Services	(£31,000)	<b>Community Shares</b> £36,821
	<b>Total Operating Costs</b>	<b>(£76,821)</b>	<b>£76,821</b>
	Grand Total	(£827,593)	£827,593
	<b>Community Shares Total</b>		<b>£278,093</b>

The All Shares version has higher start up costs than the others, due to the Crowdfunder fees. The four versions provide a variety of ways to secure the necessary funding for each development phase - building purchase, refurbishment and operations. It should be noted that due to the urgency of buying the building this can only be done via community shares or via the Arts and Culture grant plus community shares because they will be received quickly. The COF funding will only be used for refurbishment because it will not be received until December 2023 at the earliest.

The graph below shows the number of shares for each option and development phase. The All Shares version shows our minimum (£355,000), optimum (£720,000) and maximum (£800,000) levels for the share offer. These targets take account of the Crowdfunder and other donations already received (£30,500) and feasibility funding received (£29,000) and, together with these sums, will enable us to buy the property, refurbish the property and operate the property for the first 2 years until the business is established.

The shares + A&C + COF version shows a total share requirement below the minimum target we have set (£355,000). In all cases, if our grant applications are successful and, dependent on timing, we would halt the share offer and/or return any excess funds in proportion to share ownership.



## 21. Purchase Price and Valuation

We expect the purchase price to be £300,000. This is the price the owner has consistently offered and he has already refused two lower price offers. We have received two property valuations from Walker Singleton (property value £280,000) and from Whitney’s (property value £285-295,000 with possible additional heritage value). Assuming the purchase price is £300,000 this is within a 10% range normally allowed by funders.

### Conservation deficit

Walker Singleton (a RICS registered surveyor) provided a post refurbishment value of £350,000. This effectively means that the total of the purchase price of £300,000 plus refurbishment costs of £365,000 i.e. £665,000 exceeds the post refurbishment valuation of £350,000 by £315,000. This is called the conservation deficit.

**Conservation deficit:** the amount by which the cost of repair (and conversion to optimum viable use if appropriate) of a heritage asset exceeds its market value on completion of repair and conversion, allowing for all appropriate development costs. (Source: Historic England).

This is why funders such as National Lottery Heritage Fund and Architectural Heritage Fund will consider applications for funding on the basis of a conservation deficit provided the viability and development appraisal is conducted by a RICS (Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors) registered surveyor. It is also why community shares are suitable for funding heritage assets – because communities often put a higher value on saving our heritage than the commercial market. However it also means that should Brontë Birthplace be unsuccessful, and the financial projections are not met, then the Management Committee will prioritise paying creditors and investing in the building/the business over share withdrawals. If the business has to close, and the property sold, then creditors must be repaid before shareholder members so people may lose their money. However, we have taken a conservative view in our cashflow and believe that our business model is sound.

## **22. Financial Forecasts**

Four financial forecasts have been produced reflecting the four funding options above. The detailed cashflow, profit and loss and balance sheet are given below for the All Shares version. Those for the other versions are available on request from [hello@brontebirthplace.com](mailto:hello@brontebirthplace.com)

### ***Key Assumptions***

1. Purchase price of the Brontë Birthplace of £300,000
2. Start up costs higher for the All Shares version due to Crowdfunder fees
3. Refurbishment cost of £275,000
4. Furnishings cost of £90,000
5. Share issue of £800,000 for All Shares option
6. Grant funding is modelled using a) Bradford Arts and Culture Grant for building purchase plus shares b) COF grant plus shares for refurbishment and operating costs and c) A&C, COF and shares. In the first two grant scenarios the minimum shares required are similar, £533,000 and £543,000. For A&C, COF plus shares version the minimum shares are £278,000. If we fail to achieve these minimum levels of shares we will utilise a range of other grants such as Heritage Lottery Fund, Rural Prosperity Fund, Booster Equity Match, Bradford Guild of Help, Arts Council.
7. Launch in time for Bradford City of Culture 2025
8. Operating profit(EBITDA) £22,410 year 3 (2025) rising to £34,786 Year 7 (2029)
9. Profit after tax from year 4
10. Grant income £10,000/year may be required years 4-7 to fund arts and culture events and activities but the intention thereafter is for these to be funded from operating surpluses.
11. Share withdrawals commence in year 5
12. Interest payments of average 1% due to shareholders from year 6 (payable one year later) once the business generates sufficient surplus.

### **Funding Sources**

- The first 3 years rely heavily on community shares and grants for the purchase and refurbishment of the building and initial revenue costs as demonstrated in Sources and Uses of Funds (Section 20).

### **Operations**

- The holiday lets and café are forecast to open autumn 2024 and a conservative view of income is taken for that year.

- Extensive local Thornton, Haworth, Bradford and North of England market research was conducted into holiday accommodation pricing. Pricing for the two superior rooms (one suite and one double) is set conservatively, but towards the premium end of the market due to its Brontë connection, using Landmark property in the North of England as a guide. The other two rooms are available at lower prices, targeting cyclists, walkers and people on a small budget. All the accommodation can be rented as one unit if required providing accommodation for maximum 8 adults and 2 children (the latter in the suite).
- Occupancy rates are expected to be 65% in 2025 due to Bradford City of Culture, but drop back to 59% in 2026 rising then back to 65% by 2028 once reputation has been built.
- Café rental has been set at a rate equivalent to another local café. Event space rental has been estimated conservatively at 20 hours/mth@ £10 and 10 hrs/mth @£20.
- Inflation rate for costs is 3% pa and for accommodation sales is 3.5% which includes an element for price increases due to brand recognition.
- Holiday let company commission is taken at an average of 6% between Booking.com 15%, Airbnb 3% and direct 0%.
- Staffing costs have been explained in section 17 above. Other significant operating costs are marketing and promotion particularly for the first three years and laundry costs. The main overhead costs are utilities; accounts, bookkeeping and payroll; and maintenance (incl security, pest control, fire alarm, safety). A contingency of £2500 is included every year.
- It is anticipated that many volunteers will help to run the business.
- The last three months of 2024 will be used to trial tourist offers and packages that have not been including in the cashflow.
- As Bradford City of Culture 2025 commences we expect to be fully operational and we will be offering an extensive programme of activities and events, as well as packages for tourists.
- Cultural and arts events and activities are funded by grant income, however it is the objective of BBL to generate sufficient surplus in future to fund all events without recourse to grant funding.
- All operating surpluses are used to fund building maintenance and community events and outreach for Thornton and the Bradford district as a whole. There is a provisional line of costs for this in the cashflow, which may be increased to utilise more of the carried forward amounts if the risks below do not materialise.
- We have considered the merits and demerits of registering for VAT at this stage, and have decided that since our operational income will not reach the VAT threshold of £85,000 until year 3 at the earliest we should wait until then to register and in the meantime we will take professional advice whether to register earlier.

#### **Members**

- Share withdrawals are forecast starting from year 5 (2027) at a rate of 2% per year both for members
- Interest payments commence in year 6 (2028). They appear in the P&L in that year because they are based on performance in that year. They actually leave the bank account in year 7 after the AMM and are shown as a short term liability in the balance sheet.
- Members can elect to receive 0%, 1% or 2%, therefore we took an average rate of 1%.

#### **Assets**

- Building and refurbishment depreciated over 50 years; furnishings and equipment over 15 years (straight line depreciation method)

- Grants for capital purchase and refurbishment amortised at the same rate as the depreciation rate of the assets which they purchased.

### **Banking**

- From year 6 (2028) for the All Shares option, with an expected closing cash balance of £96,123, an additional bank account will be required due to the limit of £85,000 protected by the FSCS.

### **Reserves**

- At the beginning of the operational period (Year 3 2025) our reserves policy will provide for 3 months' salaries and overheads if operations fail (£15,000)
- As cash balances increase we will increase our reserves to cover other contingencies
- By 2029 (year 7) when the closing balance is £107,323 (All Shares) we will keep reserves as follows:
  - £20,000 for 3 months' salaries and overheads if operations fail
  - £40,000 to cover ongoing maintenance\*, building improvements and other contingencies
- Other contingencies may include:
  - Uncertainties around income – travel bans may affect holiday lets; it may take more time to reach target customer numbers for holiday lets and café; some of the grants may not materialise; refurbishment problems may delay opening of holiday lets and café.
  - Uncertainties around costs – refurbishment costs may be higher than expected; utility costs are vulnerable to higher price increases; inflation may be higher than the forecast 3%.

**\*Note:** Maintenance costs are incurred for items that need ongoing care and attention, e.g. heating repairs, boiler/s replaced every 12 years or so, painting windows externally every 4 years, internal decoration maybe every 2 years in heavy traffic areas, less in low traffic areas but total redecoration at least every 5 years. Ongoing care of the roof over time. General maintenance/replacement of all bathroom and kitchen fittings, ovens, fridges, dishwasher etc. Laundry items, sheets, towels. Carpets. Curtains. Cutlery, crockery, pots, pans. Bedding, mattresses, towels etc, Door handles, locks, fire alarm system etc. Wear and tear in a place where there will be so many visitors, often children, is likely to be high.

### **All Shares Cashflow, Profit and Loss and Balance Sheet Forecasts**

The forecasts in the spreadsheets below assume that the maximum level of funding (£800,000) is achieved from community shares. However we have retained (with £0) in the spreadsheets the names of grant funders who will be our back-up if the share offer does not provide the full funding required. Applications are already underway to three of these funders – Community Ownership Fund (COF), Arts and Culture Capital Grant (A&C) and the Rural Prosperity Fund. Detailed financials have been completed for all community shares; a combination of community shares plus COF; community shares plus A&C ; and community share plus COF & A&C.

## All Shares Maximum Cashflow Forecast

Cash Flow Forecast - All Shares Maximum	Year 1 2023	Year 2 2024	Year 3 2025	Year 4 2026	Year 5 2027	Year 6 2028	Year 7 2029
Opening balance	£0	£442,146	£51,179	£47,589	£67,619	£78,579	£96,123
<b>INCOME</b>							
<b>Purchase and start-up funds</b>							
Arts and Culture Capital Grant	£0						
Crowdfunder donations (Received)	£25,000						
Local fundraising (Received)	£5,500						
Community Shares	£354,703						
Booster Development Fund (Received)	£10,000						
BMDC Gainshare (Feasibility) (Received)	£9,000						
Architectural Heritage Fund (Feasibility) (Received)	£10,000						
<b>Refurbishment funds</b>							
Community Shares	£365,325						
Booster Equity Match	£0						
Community Ownership Fund Capital Grant		£0					
<b>Revenue funds</b>							
Community Ownership Fund revenue grant		£0					
Bradford Guild of Help							
National Lottery Heritage Fund							
Arts Council revenue grant							
Other revenue funding (culture/arts events)				£10,000	£10,000	£10,000	£10,000
Community Shares	£76,821						
<b>Sales</b>							
Holiday accommodation		£10,000	£83,038	£78,011	£82,016	£91,756	£94,663
Café rental income (bistro/breakfast/lunch/dinner provision)		£500	£8,400	£8,400	£10,200	£10,557	£10,926
Event space rental (20hrs/mth@£10 and 10 hrs/mth @£20)		£500	£4,800	£4,968	£5,142	£5,322	£5,508
Educational events		£300	£3,500	£3,605	£3,713	£3,825	£3,939
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>£856,349</b>	<b>£11,300</b>	<b>£99,738</b>	<b>£104,984</b>	<b>£111,071</b>	<b>£121,460</b>	<b>£125,037</b>
<b>EXPENDITURE</b>							
<b>Capital purchase costs</b>							
Capital purchase - Building	-£300,000						
Start-up costs (feasibility, legal fees, surveys, stamp duty etc)	-£108,281						
<b>Refurbishment costs</b>							
Refurbishment - Renovation, construction and decorating		-£274,975					
Refurbishment - Furnishings and equipment		-£90,350					
<b>Cost of sales</b>							
Operating costs for holiday accommodation	£0	-£6,000	-£24,730	-£22,587	-£21,355	-£23,264	-£24,085
Operating costs for culture/arts events	£0	-£5,000	-£26,000	-£10,000	-£10,000	-£10,000	-£10,000
Operating costs for educational events	£0	-£240	-£2,800	-£2,800	-£2,800	-£2,800	-£2,800
<b>Salaries</b>	£0	-£6,780	-£22,899	-£23,020	-£23,803	-£25,006	-£25,740
<b>Overheads</b>	-£5,922	-£18,922	-£26,899	-£26,546	-£26,215	-£26,908	-£27,626
Share withdrawals - members @ 2% of original shareholding					-£15,937	-£15,937	-£15,937
Share withdrawals - Booster Equity @ 2% of original shareholding					£0	£0	£0
Share interest for members at average rate of 1%	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	-£7,650
Share interest for Booster fund at maximum rate of 2%	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0
Donations to community organisations	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0
Corporation tax at 19%	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0
<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURE</b>	<b>-£414,203</b>	<b>-£402,267</b>	<b>-£103,328</b>	<b>-£84,954</b>	<b>-£100,111</b>	<b>-£103,915</b>	<b>-£113,837</b>
<b>Closing balance</b>	<b>£442,146</b>	<b>£51,179</b>	<b>£47,589</b>	<b>£67,619</b>	<b>£78,579</b>	<b>£96,123</b>	<b>£107,323</b>

The share income in year 1 funds the house purchase in Year 1 and the refurbishment in year 2, covers operating costs in years 1 and 2 and makes a contribution to operating costs in year 3. The business is cash positive in all years (with a closing cash in bank balance of £107,323 in year 7).

The last quarter of 2024 is the business start up, low income is projected in case of construction delays and due to the start up of operations. The full launch of the business takes place in 2025. The holiday accommodation sales figures for 2025 are expected to be high (£83,000) at a forecast occupancy rate of 65% due to visitor numbers for Bradford City of Culture. This drops back down to 59% in 2026, increasing to 60% in 2027, then plateau-ing at 65% from 2028. Both the prices and the occupancy are conservative estimates. As the Birthplace becomes more well known, we expect both occupancy and room rates to increase further.

## All Shares Maximum Profit and Loss

Profit and Loss Forecast - All Shares Maximum	Year 1 2023	Year 2 2024	Year 3 2025	Year 4 2026	Year 5 2027	Year 6 2028	Year 7 2029
<b>Operating income/sales</b>							
Holiday accommodation	£0	£10,000	£83,038	£78,011	£82,016	£91,756	£94,663
Café rental income (bistro/breakfast/lunch/dinner provision)	£0	£500	£8,400	£8,400	£10,200	£10,557	£10,926
Event space rental (20hrs/mth@£10 and 10 hrs/mth @£20)	£0	£500	£4,800	£4,968	£5,142	£5,322	£5,508
Educational events	£0	£300	£3,500	£3,605	£3,713	£3,825	£3,939
<b>Total operating income/sales</b>	<b>£0</b>	<b>£11,300</b>	<b>£99,738</b>	<b>£94,984</b>	<b>£101,071</b>	<b>£111,460</b>	<b>£115,037</b>
<b>Operating costs/cost of sales</b>							
Operating costs for holiday accommodation	£0	-£6,000	-£24,730	-£22,587	-£21,355	-£23,264	-£24,085
Operating costs for educational events	£0	-£240	-£2,800	-£2,800	-£2,800	-£2,800	-£2,800
<b>Total operating costs/cost of sales</b>	<b>£0</b>	<b>-£6,240</b>	<b>-£27,530</b>	<b>-£25,387</b>	<b>-£24,155</b>	<b>-£26,064</b>	<b>-£26,885</b>
<b>Gross profit</b>	<b>£0</b>	<b>£5,060</b>	<b>£72,208</b>	<b>£69,596</b>	<b>£76,915</b>	<b>£85,396</b>	<b>£88,152</b>
<b>Less overheads</b>							
Salaries	£0	-£6,780	-£22,899	-£23,020	-£23,803	-£25,006	-£25,740
Overheads	-£5,922	-£18,922	-£26,899	-£26,546	-£26,215	-£26,908	-£27,626
<b>Total overheads</b>	<b>-£5,922</b>	<b>-£25,702</b>	<b>-£49,798</b>	<b>-£49,566</b>	<b>-£50,018</b>	<b>-£51,914</b>	<b>-£53,366</b>
<b>Operating profit EBITDA</b>	<b>-£5,922</b>	<b>-£20,642</b>	<b>£22,410</b>	<b>£20,030</b>	<b>£26,897</b>	<b>£33,481</b>	<b>£34,786</b>
<b>Other income</b>							
Crowdfunder donations (Received)	£25,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0
Local fundraising (Received)	£5,500	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0
<b>Revenue funding</b>							
Booster Development Fund (Received)	£10,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0
BMDC Gainshare (Feasibility) (Received)	£9,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0
Architectural Heritage Fund (Feasibility) (Received)	£10,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0
Community Ownership Fund revenue grant	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0
Bradford Guild of Help	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0
National Lottery Heritage Fund	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0
Arts Council revenue grant	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0
Other revenue funding (culture/arts events)	£0	£0	£0	£10,000	£10,000	£10,000	£10,000
<b>Capital funding</b>							
Arts and Culture Capital Grant	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0
Community Ownership Fund Capital Grant	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0
<b>Total other income</b>	<b>£59,500</b>	<b>£0</b>	<b>£0</b>	<b>£10,000</b>	<b>£10,000</b>	<b>£10,000</b>	<b>£10,000</b>
<b>Other expenses</b>							
Start-up costs (feasibility, legal fees, surveys, stamp duty etc)	-£108,281	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0
Operating costs for culture/arts events	£0	-£5,000	-£26,000	-£10,000	-£10,000	-£10,000	-£10,000
Depreciation	-£6,000	-£17,523	-£17,523	-£17,523	-£17,523	-£17,523	-£17,523
Share interest for members at average rate of 1%	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	-£7,650	-£7,490
Share interest for Booster fund at maximum rate of 2%	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0
Donations to community organisations	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0
<b>Total other expenses</b>	<b>-£114,281</b>	<b>-£22,523</b>	<b>-£43,523</b>	<b>-£27,523</b>	<b>-£27,523</b>	<b>-£35,173</b>	<b>-£35,013</b>
<b>Profit/loss before tax</b>	<b>-£60,703</b>	<b>-£43,165</b>	<b>-£21,113</b>	<b>£2,507</b>	<b>£9,374</b>	<b>£8,309</b>	<b>£9,773</b>
<b>Taxable profit</b>	<b>-£54,703</b>	<b>-£25,642</b>	<b>-£3,590</b>	<b>£20,030</b>	<b>£26,897</b>	<b>£25,832</b>	<b>£27,296</b>
Corporation tax at 19%	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0
<b>Profit/loss after tax</b>	<b>-£60,703</b>	<b>-£43,165</b>	<b>-£21,113</b>	<b>£2,507</b>	<b>£9,374</b>	<b>£8,309</b>	<b>£9,773</b>
<b>Retained profit/loss</b>	<b>-£60,703</b>	<b>-£103,868</b>	<b>-£124,981</b>	<b>-£122,474</b>	<b>-£113,100</b>	<b>-£104,791</b>	<b>-£95,018</b>

Limited trading commences in Q4 2024 (see Time Constraints below re possible slippage into 2025). EBITDA (Earnings before interest, tax, depreciation and amortisation) is positive from 2025 and after a slight dip in 2026 (without the Bradford 2025 City of Culture effect) it increases year on year. Profit after tax starts in year 4. Start up costs are high, because in addition to legal, professional and planning costs the Crowdfunder fees are £47,000. From year 6 (2028) we start paying interest to shareholder Members who elect to receive it. This appears in the cashflow in year 7 as it is paid the year after. Profit after tax is positive from year 4.

## All Shares Maximum Balance Sheet Forecast

Balance Sheet Forecast - All Shares Maximum	Year 1 2023	Year 2 2024	Year 3 2025	Year 4 2026	Year 5 2027	Year 6 2028	Year 7 2029
<b>ASSETS</b>							
<b>Fixed assets</b>							
Building	£300,000	£294,000	£288,000	£282,000	£276,000	£270,000	£264,000
Depreciation (50 years)	-£6,000	-£6,000	-£6,000	-£6,000	-£6,000	-£6,000	-£6,000
Refurbishment - Renovation, construction and decorating	£0	£274,975	£269,476	£263,976	£258,477	£252,977	£247,478
Depreciation (50 years)	£0	-£5,500	-£5,500	-£5,500	-£5,500	-£5,500	-£5,500
Refurbishment - Furnishings and equipment	£0	£90,350	£84,327	£78,303	£72,280	£66,257	£60,233
Depreciation (15 years)	£0	-£6,023	-£6,023	-£6,023	-£6,023	-£6,023	-£6,023
<b>Total fixed assets</b>	£294,000	£641,802	£624,279	£606,757	£589,234	£571,711	£554,188
<b>Current assets</b>							
Cash at bank	£442,146	£51,179	£47,589	£67,619	£78,579	£96,123	£107,323
<b>Total current assets</b>	£442,146	£51,179	£47,589	£67,619	£78,579	£96,123	£107,323
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>	<b>£736,146</b>	<b>£692,981</b>	<b>£671,868</b>	<b>£674,375</b>	<b>£667,812</b>	<b>£667,834</b>	<b>£661,511</b>
<b>LIABILITIES</b>							
<b>Long term liabilities</b>							
Arts and Culture Capital Grant	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0
Amortisation (50 years)	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0
Community Ownership Fund Capital Grant	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0
Amortisation (50 years)	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0
<b>Total long term liabilities</b>	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0
<b>Current liabilities</b>							
Interest to members at 1% owed	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	-£7,650	-£7,490
Interest to Booster Fund at 2% owed	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0
Corporation tax owed	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0
<b>Total current liabilities</b>	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	-£7,650	-£7,490
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES</b>	<b>£0</b>	<b>£0</b>	<b>£0</b>	<b>£0</b>	<b>£0</b>	<b>-£7,650</b>	<b>-£7,490</b>
<b>NET WORTH</b>	<b>£736,146</b>	<b>£692,981</b>	<b>£671,868</b>	<b>£674,375</b>	<b>£667,812</b>	<b>£660,184</b>	<b>£654,020</b>
<b>Made up of</b>							
Members' shares	£796,849	£796,849	£796,849	£796,849	£780,912	£764,975	£749,038
Booster shares	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0
Retained profit/loss	-£60,703	-£103,868	-£124,981	-£122,474	-£113,100	-£104,791	-£95,018
	<b>£736,146</b>	<b>£692,981</b>	<b>£671,868</b>	<b>£674,375</b>	<b>£667,812</b>	<b>£660,184</b>	<b>£654,020</b>

The book asset value increases from £300,000 to £641,802 following refurbishment. However the forecast market value post refurbishment has been assessed as only £350,000, the difference being the conservation deficit. Therefore the building is depreciated over 50 years.

Cash shows annual increases from year 3. There are no long term liabilities as the funding comes 100% from Members' shares.

### Contingency Arrangements

Since we may not succeed in raising the full £800,000 from community shares we produced financials for three other cases 1) a mix of community shares with the Bradford Arts and Culture Capital Grant (A&C); 2) a mix of shares with the Community Ownership Fund (COF); 3) a mix of shares with A&C and COF. The table below compares some of the key financial data. If we fail to achieve these minimum levels of shares we will utilise a range of other grants such as National Lottery Heritage Fund, Rural Prosperity Fund, Booster Equity Match, Bradford Guild of Help, Arts Council.

### Comparison of All Shares with Contingency Versions – Key Financial Data

Year 7 Results	All Shares	Shares + A&C	Shares+ COF	Shares + A&C+COF
Retained Profit Yr 7	-£95,018	-£40,726	-£12,498	£30,627
Cash Yr 7	£107,323	£126,715	£124,980	£137,573
Net worth Yr 7	£654,020	£459,897	£498,062	£292,035
No of Shares	(Max) 796,849	532,578	543,149	(Min) 278,093

Note: For the All Shares version we have rounded up the figure calculated from our detailed spreadsheet from £796,849 to £800,000 as our maximum target as this is a clearer figure to aim for. If we raise more the £796,849 in shares this will go towards working capital.

The All Shares version has the strongest balance sheet, but lags the other options significantly on retained profit, cash and net worth in year 7. In terms of retained profit and cash, the combination of shares, A&C and COF gives the best results. The shares plus A&C and shares plus COF are similar to each other.

The poorer performance of the All Shares version is due to a) Crowdfunder fees b) higher share withdrawals because of the higher number of shareholders and c) higher interest payments. The main point to note is that all versions are viable. If the share offer does not reach its maximum, there are many other grant options in addition to A&C and COF, as shown in the tables above, so that we are confident that we will achieve the required funding either solely by share funding, or by a mixture of shares and grants.

One of the main reasons for going for the All Shares option is community engagement and ownership and if the maximum target is achieved in the 6 week offer period, all uncertainty about future funding is removed. We considered the expense of the Crowdfunder, but decided their brand, technology and professionalism was far superior to what we could provide.

The result of the Arts and Capital Grant is expected to be announced by the end of October. If this is successful we will have a community meeting to agree on closing the share offer at £532,578, or rounded up to £535,000. The COF application deadline is 10th October, but we do not expect to hear the result till December. If the result is positive and we have more money than required, we will return a proportionate amount to shareholders.

### **Time constraints**

The Asset of Community Value Moratorium lasts until March 4th 2024 (prevents sale of property to third party)

The Arts and Capital Grant is expected to be announced by the end of October 2023 and we assume that the money could be paid to us by end November latest. This coincides with the closure of the community share offer. We are therefore forecasting the purchase of the building by December 2023.

Our application to the Community Ownership Fund will be submitted for the 11<sup>th</sup> October 2023 deadline and if successful we hope to receive the money by December 2023. This grant targets the refurbishment costs and revenue funding.

Planning permission and listed building consent has been received in September 2023. Therefore refurbishment could start in January 2024 as soon as we have purchased the building and received building regulations approval. By then we will know whether we have achieved our minimum, optimum or maximum sales of community shares and expect also to have heard by the end of that month the outcome of our Community Ownership Fund application.

If our expectations here have not been fully met, we will in the meantime have been applying for other funding, namely the Rural Prosperity Fund, and the National Lottery Heritage Fund. It is critical for us to receive the refurbishment and furnishings and equipment funding in time so that we can do a full launch in concert with Bradford 2025.

We are projecting completion of refurbishment end quarter 3 2024, with pilot operations starting in quarter 4 2024. This gives us a possible 3-month leeway for delays in refurbishment if we go straight into launch in 2025.

### **23. Risk Analysis**

The risk register below is based on the weaknesses and threats identified in the SWOT analysis in section 14 above. The risks are assessed according to the likelihood of occurrence and level of impact on the project should they occur. A mitigation strategy is provided for each risk, aiming either to avoid or reduce its impact on the project. The residual risks are thereby reduced to medium or low.

The risks with the highest impact are:

- Owner sells property/unable to secure funding in time to buy property leading to project failure
- Unable to secure funding for, or delays in refurbishment leading to missing Bradford 2025
- Departure of Management Committee members with key skills leading to project delay or failure.

The risks with both high likelihood and high impact are as follows:

- Energy costs and inflation increase costs leading to reduction in operating surplus or losses
- Cost of living crisis leads to lower footfall
- Birthplace not widely known to be in Thornton leading to reduced income
- Departure of key members of Management Committee with key skills leading to delays or failure of project

## Brontë Birthplace Risk Register

Risk	Risk Likelihood	Impact	Impact Level	Mitigation	Residual Risk
Owner sells property/ Unable to secure funding in time for sale	Medium	Project fails	High	Secured Asset of Community Value registration	Medium
Unable to secure funding for refurb	Medium	Project delay/ adverse effect on finances/possible bankruptcy	High	Detailed planning for grant funding applications People on Management Committee with good funding bid experience Community shares offer	Medium
Building refurb takes longer than planned	Medium	Delays opening, miss Bradford 2025, negative effect on finances	High	Careful management of building project by Adrian. Prioritise refurb items relating to income generation. Interim fundraising and events/activities in Bradford 2025	Medium
Refurb cost overruns	Medium	Negative effect on finances	High	Additional grant funding/share issues	Medium
Energy costs and inflation increases costs	High	Operating surplus reduced or loss	High	Increase sales prices, Energy saving measures	Medium
Cost of living crisis	High	Reduced footfall	High	Increase marketing reach	Medium
Weak marketing	Medium	Reduced sales	High	Attract more volunteers with professional qualifications and relevant experience	Medium
New staff team, enterprise startup takes time to get established	Medium	Delays in achieving sales and activities targets	Medium	Recruit experienced staff. Share staff resources with partners. Advice from partners	Low
Birthplace not widely known to be in Thornton	High	Reduced income	High	Increase marketing	Medium
Haworth heavily promoted over Thornton for tourists	Medium	Lower footfall, reduced income	Medium	Collaboration with Brontë Parsonage in Haworth. Bradford 2025 promotion. Different 'offer'	Low
Hospitality offer needs development	Medium	Dissatisfied customers, bad reputation	High	Employ manager with hospitality expertise	Low
Market Street is run down/anti-social behaviour	Medium	Dissatisfied customers	High	Work with community centre and Thornton in Bloom to enhance appearance, litter pick etc	Low
Parking spaces are limited on Market St	Medium	Perception of difficult access; may cause difficulties with planning approval	Medium	Parking available nearby on Thornton Rd. Some parking lots available for accommodation guests	Medium
Departure of members / key skills within the Management Committee	High	Delays or failure of project	High	Seek more volunteers with required skillset. Employ someone or an organisation with relevant experience	Medium

## 24. Community Shares

Community shares represent a major source of funding. Our community shares offer has the following target constituencies:

**Geographical:** Thornton; Bradford District; West Yorkshire; Other UK; International.

**Social:** Local Thornton residents and businesses; disadvantaged and minority groups in Bradford (via Pay it Forward); young people up to 35 years; tourists and visitors; Brontë enthusiasts.

Given the worldwide popularity of the Brontë sisters we are confident that we will be able to raise our target sums: £355,000 minimum, £720,000 optimum, £800,000 maximum. A local, national and international marketing campaign will be launched with the help of the Brontë Society (a reach of 1,555 members) and the Bradford Literature Festival (a reach of 8,500 people). The Brontë Parsonage in Haworth receives 65,000 visitors a year and some of these will see our share offer advertised. Details of the share offer marketing campaign are in the Marketing Plan attached as Appendix 3. We hope to achieve strong media coverage, including press and TV, as well as Facebook, Instagram and other social media.

As well as national and international Brontë enthusiasts and tourists, we are targeting young people (up to age 35) and disadvantaged and minority groups in Bradford not only for our cultural and educational events once we are open, but also to buy shares. We want people from an early age to have pride in the city and a part share of the ownership of the birthplace. And we want people with a variety of protected characteristics and/or from economically and socially disadvantaged backgrounds to acknowledge the power of the role models of the three sisters and to want to be associated with this heritage asset. In this connection we are also launching a Pay it Forward scheme to secure funds to enable these people to own shares.

## 25. Working with our Members

Brontë Birthplace Limited is a Community Benefit Society: a community-led, democratic social enterprise. As such, our Members, as shareholders, will own and control the organisation. Members will contribute to setting the strategic direction and they will elect the Management Committee who will work with staff to implement strategic decisions in accordance with our vision, using this Business Plan as a guide.

We are already engaging effectively with our community as described above and in our Community Engagement Plan and Marketing Plan (Appendices 2 and 3). These plans describe the actions we will take as part of the share offer to promote, advertise and communicate with our local community and wider interested parties, and to offer them the chance to become shareholders and join us in this exciting venture. If we are successful in raising minimum amount of £355,000 we will have a ready-made, engaged base of Member shareholders who will have an interest in seeing the success of the project. Through our Annual Members Meeting, members will advise the Management Committee on the strategic direction to ensure that it remains both inclusive and competitive. We will establish a culture of open communications among Members to ensure that their ideas and thoughts for the running of their Society can shape and mould our plans. Members will be encouraged to support the strategic and operational side of the business in many ways, for example:

- attending and actively participating in Annual Members' Meetings
- standing for election to the Management Committee. Elections will ensure that Members can make clear what they want from their Society
- supporting as a volunteer through the established scheme
- supporting other specific groups, projects or outreach programmes as planned by the Management Committee
- ongoing consultation to explain what opportunities there are and to find out what Members want
- liaising with community groups and schools in the Bradford District to assess their needs and wants
- seeking feedback on the current offering

As we develop our wider engagement plans, we will liaise with our wider community stakeholders, especially local community groups, who we hope will be well represented as Members, local schools, and Bradford University and Bradford College. We are already building community links with a range of local partners in the Bradford District and we will continue to develop new ones. We will foster a climate so that these links can flourish further, with additional links brought by our new Members.

## **26. Conclusion**

This business plan has presented a strong case for the acquisition, refurbishment and operation of the Brontë Birthplace. The project is financially sustainable, utilising the income from holiday lets and the café to fund cultural and heritage events and workshops. Our target audiences are local residents, diverse communities in the Bradford District, young people and national and international tourists. The project will help to regenerate Market Street and bring economic and social benefits to Thornton.

The acquisition of the Brontë Birthplace would ensure the ongoing protection of an important heritage asset and with its Brontë connections provide an excellent start to Bradford City of Culture 2025.

## **Appendix 1 Brontë Birthplace Limited Management Committee and Advisors**

### **Mazhar Ellahi** (Treasurer Management Committee Brontë Birthplace Limited)

Mazhar has a background in finance having worked for the BBC in London The Halifax and both Jewsons and Magnet. In the last ten years he has developed a number of social enterprises working primarily with older people around issues dealing with isolation, loneliness and dementia including Green Communities Network and Bradford Community Cinemas (in partnership with Bradford's Unesco city of film). He is also currently the manager of the Lidget Green Healthy Living centre and a Trustee at South Square Arts Centre.

### **Sue Hayton** (Secretary Management Committee Brontë Birthplace Limited)

Consultant to Centre for Cultural Value at University of Leeds, 30 years' experience in cultural and creative sector. Established the Cultural Institute at University of Leeds. Evaluation of national £ multimillion creative programmes. Helped to secure over £20 million in grants for research and cultural programmes. Thornton resident and volunteer

### **Sarah Dixon** (Chair Management Committee Brontë Birthplace Limited)

Professor of Strategic Management, former Shell International Business Executive, Business School Dean and Pro-Vice Chancellor. Former Chair of Emmaus Bradford and of Sappgate Gardens, Thornton. Thornton resident and volunteer (organised Thornton in Bloom 2022-2023 and Thornton Open Gardens 2020-2023).

**Steve Stanworth** (Vice Chair Management Committee Brontë Birthplace Limited) Tour guide and local historian, Brontë Bell Chapel Site coordinator and fundraiser. Former Chair of Birthplace Trust and Thornton in Bloom

### **Adrian Tingle** (Management Committee Brontë Birthplace Limited)

Adrian Tingle is a property developer with vast experience of the construction industry. He is a Thornton resident. His early career was in corporate finance with positions in Nat West and then Credit Lyonnais. He is a Thornton resident

### **Christa Ackroyd** (Management Committee Brontë Birthplace Limited)

Journalist, broadcaster and Brontë fan.

### **Jenny Horton** (Management Committee Brontë Birthplace Limited)

Jenny has lived in Thornton since birth. Four generations of her family currently reside in the village. Upon leaving school in 1991 she started working for Robinson and Co, Accountants, on Market Street. Over 30 years later she is still there, now as the Senior Partner. Her excitement in the Brontë Birthplace project stems from the community building opportunities she feels it will bring.

**Thomas Haigh (Management Committee Brontë Birthplace Limited)**

Thomas Haigh founded VISCO Agency offering services in marketing, marketing strategy and social media management. He is a resident of Thornton.

**Ann Dinsdale (Management Committee Brontë Birthplace Limited)**

Ann Dinsdale is Principal Curator at the Brontë Parsonage Museum, Haworth. She lectures and writes on aspects of the Brontës' lives and social conditions in mid-nineteenth century Haworth.

**Cathy Boyden (Management Committee Brontë Birthplace Limited)**

Born in Thornton, with two children and two grand children who all still live here, Cathy is the current Centre Manager at the Thornton Village Community Centre. She is the vice president of Thornton in Bloom, a serving Magistrate on the West Yorkshire Family Bench and an active member of the Magistrates in the Community. She formerly ran the Building Traditional Skills programme for the National Heritage Training group, placing young people of traditional building apprenticeship programmes. She brings a host of skills from bid writing to community engagement; she has a passion for improving Market Street and building a brighter community in Thornton.

**Jess Russell (Advisor)**

Jess is a writer and English language teacher. She is creative and engages in a wide range of arts and crafts. She is published author, textile artist, musician. She is a resident of Thornton

**Lorraine Dalton-Thacker (Advisor)**

Lorraine is an Operations Manager at Maximus. She has worked in Welfare to Work for over 30 years and is a resident in Thornton. She is passionate about increasing opportunities for Bradford's residents and helping to transform their lives, giving them skills, confidence and support to be able to engage in sustainable employment.

**Heather Wallis (Advisor)**

Heather Wallis is a writer and educator with a deep-rooted connection to the landscape of Brontë country, where she has lived for 26 years. In her teaching career she worked with film students at Leeds Arts University and The University of Leeds, running short film writing and documentary research and development courses, and mentoring many student films. She has a Masters degree in screenwriting, has worked as a script editor and copywriter and is the co-author of two books on film.

**Sue Gaffney (Advisor)**

Sue has lived in Bradford since 1983, and Thornton since 1987. She worked for and co-owned a local archaeological surveying company for many years and worked as editorial assistant on the journal 'Archaeological Prospection'. She now volunteers in the local community library, at Saggate Gardens, and on the Sustrans trail. She also chairs the Topic Folk Club committee.

**Councillor Sue Duffy (Advisor)**

Lead Portfolio Holder for Children and Families, Bradford Metropolitan District Council. Labour Councillor for Thornton and Allerton

## **Appendix 2 Brontë Birthplace Consultation and Community Engagement Plan**

### **Community Support From the Beginning**

The energy to take the Brontë Birthplace into community ownership has come directly from the community. Starting with a steering group of local residents who self-organised in June 2022 to drive this idea forward and make it a reality that has since been joined by those with connections from the wider Bradford area and those that have a love of the Brontë family and their literary and heritage legacy.

This steering group, now the Management Committee of BBL, and other Supporters that drive the project have a breadth of knowledge and experience and all give their time freely to ensure the plan comes to fruition. Their experience and skills covers specialisms such a business, marketing , media, education, arts and culture, heritage and community engagement experts.

There have been a range of local engagement events and participation with the aim of building support and taking into account a wide range of community interests and views. All have one aim, to save the Brontë Birthplace and establish it as a community asset to celebrate the lives of the Brontës, their association with Thornton and the wider district of Bradford and to give the building a sustainable future that enhances our high street, contributes to our community and enriches the lives of those that will visit and use it.

The idea has been met with overwhelming support from local residents and businesses who we engaged in a variety of ways such as public meetings, face to face canvassing, events and surveys.

### **Support From Neighbours**

All those who live and work in Market Street, where the birthplace is located, were initially canvassed and the responses to our questionnaire were 100 per cent positive. Below are some of the comments we received when we shared our ambition to buy the Brontë Birthplace for the community:

*“Previously the Birthplace has been run down and attracted drug addicts and antisocial behaviour”.*

*“The Brontë House building has been shamefully neglected by previous owners and it would be lovely to see the building secured for the Community and future generations.”*

*“I hope that if this is successful it will bring life to Market St and the village”.*

### **Wider Community Support**

On 11th August 2022 we went on to hold an Open Meeting at South Square, Thornton to introduce it idea of the project to the wider community, receive feedback and enlist support. 44 people attended and none were opposed to the project. The meeting was also attended and supported by Councillors from Thornton and Baildon. After the meeting another 26 feedback forms were filled in. Again all were positive with 15 offering feedback suggestions.

These are some of the feedback and issues raised, all of which were noted and are being considered and addressed as the scheme develops.

Q: How could we address the Zero-Carbon Challenge in an old building?

A: We will consult with our architect, property development expert and surveyors to investigate what measures can be taken, although absolute Zero-Carbon is likely to be difficult.

Q: How would carparking for the property be met?

A: :In the short-term parking will be through allocated parking places on or near Market St, and in the longer we would propose creating a large car park, similar to the one for the Parsonage Museum, a short distance from the Birthplace.

Q: Will there be the opportunity for educational visits and will there be the opportunity to link the Birthplace to the Brontë Bell Chapel?

A: Yes most definitely. The aim is to link the Brontë attractions in Thornton, and beyond to enhance the visitor experience and support our visitor economy. A key objective of the Birthplace is also that it will offer educational opportunities and enrichment and we welcome feedback what people would like to see offered. Educational packs have already been developed and used for school trips by Steve Stanworth at the Brontë Bell Chapel.

Again, all feedback and suggestions are taken into account and will continue to inform the final proposals.

Attendees were mainly from the local community Thornton, but there was also representation from further afield Bradford locations, including a Headteacher from Great Horton. She later provided a letter of support signed by the CEO of Bradford Diocese Academies Trust which describes the great value for the wider Bradford Community of access to the Brontë Birthplace for educational purposes.

In response to requests at the Open Meeting, and to ensure we reached people not on social media, we also designed posters and leaflets raising the profile of the project. More than a thousand leaflets and flyers have been distributed locally and offering people the opportunity to support the project through online and cash donations and collection boxes around the village.

### **Crowdfunding And Fundraising Success**

The Management Committee have set up a Facebook page ([Brontë Birthplace Community Ownership Campaign](#)) alongside our website which have attracted a great deal of attention and positive feedback and has reached more than 2,300 worldwide demonstrating the wider interest and potential for support for the project from the Brontë community nationally and internationally. But the proof of widespread support and community engagement cannot be better demonstrated than by the success of a [Crowdfunding](#) exercise we launched in November 2022 to raise funds to allow us to undertake initial feasibility work on the building. In less than 2 weeks we had reached the target of £20,000!

These are some of the comments the supporters made:

*“ It would be wonderful to have this historical asset community owned.”*

*“ A great opportunity to get hold of a piece of local heritage for the benefit of all.... having this running for Bradford 2925 would be fabulous for Thornton.”*

*“ This will be the last chance to save the Brontë birthplace from potentially unsympathetic private ownership It will be a community, regional and national asset.”*

*“ A great opportunity to get hold of a piece of local heritage for the benefit of all.... having this running for Bradford 2925 would be fabulous for Thornton.”*

We have continued with our local fundraising initiatives, linking them to existing community events and activities. This has allowed us to keep the local community engaged throughout the year:

Thornton Open Gardens 2022	£550
Christmas Tree Festival St James Church	£93
Poetry and Pancakes at the Thornton Methodist Chapel raised	£183

309's and Thornton Community choir event at St James Church raised	£790
Thornton Open Gardens 2023	£1,900
Brontë Birthplace Afternoon Tea at Kipping House	£1,500
Talks at Rotary Club of Bradford West,	£50
Bradford Soup	£100
St James Fellowship	£20
Thornton Antiquarians Society	£15
Wishes Bespoke Balloons	£113
Misc. donations (excluding Crowdfunder)	£111
<b>Total Donations and Fundraising</b>	<b>£5425</b>

### **Growing Media Interest**

Since our Crowdfunder success, and as the project has developed, we have found there has been growing media interest in the project. So far our plans for the Brontë Birthplace have been featured in the Yorkshire Post, the Bradford Telegraph and Argus and the Yorkshire Times website.

Local and media interest is an important way of engaging the community but also of reaching the wider district of Bradford and West Yorkshire. We have ambitions to do this extend our reach nationally and international too through the already engaged Brontë fan audience. We feel we have a story that will appeal and engage paper, radio and TV.

### **Key Community Consultation Findings**

Between September and December 2022 another 160 people were part of the wider community consultation, of these:

- 100% in favour of community ownership of Birthplace
- 100% think the project would have a positive impact and will help increase visitor numbers to the district.
- 68% would be interested in being part of a Birthplace Membership Scheme
- 30% said they would be happy to volunteer on the project
- Feedback on activities that people would like to see included: food events, film screenings and clubs for families / school children.

Feedback highlights included:

*"More investment is needed on Market Street and the village to make it more desirable for visitors."*

*"I would be visiting from Southampton, so would be keen to use the Air BnB. It would also be good to have a café in the downstairs area. I was impressed with the Brontë exhibition in St James Church when I visited last year, so an exhibition area in the Brontë Birthplace would be good as well."*

*"As a local business owner I believe community ownership of the Brontë Birthplace would breathe new life into the village, the birthplace has been overlooked for far too long, the steering group running the campaign know its history and know what would work in the future. I 100% support this"*

*"I live a 5-hour drive away but I would happily pay an annual subscription to be a friend of the Brontë Birthplace. Developing the Brontë Birthplace and making it a visitor attraction would be a great asset to the village".*

### **Educational Engagement**

Steve Stanworth, a member of the Management Committee and director of the Brontë Bell Chapel Community Association has created a Brontë education pack for children and organised 2 very

successful visits for schoolchildren from the centre of Bradford in July 2023, that included a guest appearance of Heathcliff. These visits will be continued and form a key educational engagement offering and will develop alongside the wider educational programme we intend to offer through the project.

### **Wider Organisational Support**

We have also sought to reach out and connect with other stakeholders who would support our project and have letters of support from the following groups.

- Brontë Parsonage Museum/Brontë Society
- Bradford Museums
- Bradford Literature Festival
- Bradford Diocesan Academies Trust
- University of Bradford School of Archaeological and Forensic Sciences

Since Bradford is City of Culture in 2025, it has been important that we reached out to cultural, heritage and educational establishments about our project and the benefits it brings to our area as well as extending the visitor economy offer.

### **Next Stages of Community Engagement**

Our community engagement work will continue as will look to engaging the audiences that we have identified for Brontë Birthplace which are:

- Local community
- Wider Bradford district and West Yorkshire
- Other groups and societies in Thornton and local community
- Businesses
- Education Establishments – primary, secondary school, further education colleges and Universities. This will particularly help with our ambition to engage young people (under 35-year olds)
- Local heritage, literary, arts and cultural organisations
- Those interested in the Brontë family and their legacy
- National supporters – mainly through connection to the area/ Brontë fans  
International supporters – mainly Brontë fans but some may have connection to the area too.

We intend to do this through the following ways.

- High street - the posters for window displays
- Local – ongoing attendance at key community events/talks to key stakeholders
- Wider Bradford/West Yorkshire – through local media avenues, press, radio and TV
- National – through national media avenues, press, radio and TV
- Educational – through schools, colleges and in particular students
- Community Ownership – future community shareholders will be part of the decision making with the community business through their investment – one member one vote
- Community and Stakeholders - Ongoing consultation, such as a further survey, will engage the local community for their suggestions for future events they would like to see in the Birthplace
- Events and activities – that will be offered at the Birthplace
- Compelling stories – such as video footage and increased media presence telling the story so far and plans for the future.
- Social media presence increased to target like-minded groups and individuals on our website and through Facebook, Instagram, TikTok and X (formerly Twitter)
- Reaching Brontë fans - Joining with Bradford Literature Festival and working with the Brontë Society who have offered to promote our work and events with their membership.

An action plan will support these activities which will identify the individual target audiences and the methods by which we will engage them.

## **Appendix 3 Marketing Plan**

This marketing plan is in three sections:

Section 1 Marketing the share offer

Section 2 Marketing the holiday accommodation

Section 3 Marketing the events and activities

### **Section 1 Marketing the share offer**

#### **Financial Target:**

To raise £800,000 to purchase, refurbish and cover the first two years operations of the Brontë Birthplace.

#### **Key Aims:**

To raise awareness that the Brontës were born in Thornton, not Haworth

To create a shareholder member base that has representation of all our constituencies

#### **Target Audiences**

##### **Constituency A**

1) **Thornton** – the location of the birthplace

- People who live and work in Thornton
- Businesses, shops and organisations in Thornton
- Schools in Thornton (adult on behalf of named under 18 year-old).
- Associations and Communities operating in Thornton
- 18-35 year olds

2) **Bradford District**

- Brontë enthusiasts
- Heritage enthusiasts
- Businesses
- Communities, associations and clubs representing disadvantaged sectors of society via Pay it Forward
- Schools and academies especially in wards with highest levels of deprivation via Pay it Forward (adult on behalf of named under 18 year-old)
- 18-35 year-olds

##### **Constituency B**

###### **West Yorkshire**

- Brontë enthusiasts
- Heritage enthusiasts
- People who live and work in West Yorkshire
- Businesses and organisations in West Yorkshire
- 18-35 year-olds

##### **Constituency C**

###### **Other UK and International**

- Brontë enthusiasts
- Tourists
- Visitors to Thornton, Bradford and West Yorkshire for leisure, work or family.
- 18-35 year-olds

#### **Key Messages**

- Threat of loss of public access to historic asset

- A new link in the Brontë story
- Preserving the legacy of the Brontë Sisters – successful despite disadvantages
- Community ownership and a democratic voice in the future of the birthplace
- Fit with Bradford City of Culture 2025 – Our Time is Now
- Sustainable financial model
- Save part of our past, to help shape part of our future
- Economic regeneration and sense of pride

### **Product**

Shares in the Brontë birthplace

Membership of the Community Benefit Society and ability to influence strategic direction and stand for management committee

### **Price**

Minimum £10 blocks. Minimum purchases per constituency as per share offer document

### **Promotion**

**Share offer document** - outlines the vision and the mechanics of the share offer. Attractively designed, bright and eye-catching

**Video** – selection of video shorts relaying core messages and call to action. Information consistent with share offer document. Christa Ackroyd as presenter. Vox pops with key supporters and big names

**Website**– well designed website with regular up to date content. Attractive banner image on homepage linking directly to the community shares Crowdfunder. Banner visible on other pages. Campaign video(s) linked on homepage. Downloadable pdf of share offer document and business plan. Expression of interest forms and response/updates

**Print** - Poster and leaflets

**Media** – Press releases to Bradford Telegraph and Argus, Yorkshire Post, Yorkshiretimes.co.uk, national press.

**Social media** – Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, Twitter

**3-D imaging** - building and interior

**Distribution lists:** Bradford Literature Festival, Brontë Society e.g Brontë Society Gazette, Brontë Afternoon Tea, Whatsapp groups etc.

**Local email marketing**, where we contact local businesses and networks, tell them what we're doing, explain why it's good for Thornton/Bradford and the local community

## **Section 2 Marketing the Holiday Accommodation**

### **Financial Target**

65% + occupancy

To generate enough funds to provide financial sustainability and fund events and activities without recourse to grants

### **Key Aims**

To raise awareness that the Brontës were born in Thornton, not Haworth

To attract national and international tourists

To offer a 'lived Brontë experience'

### **Target Audiences**

National and international Brontë enthusiasts

National and international tourists

Relatives of people in Thornton wanting to visit

Business people wanting somewhere different to stay

Cyclists and walkers

## **Key messages**

Opportunity to stay in the Brontë Birthplace – experiential holiday  
Other Brontë and heritage attractions in Thornton  
Linkages to Brontë Parsonage Museum

## **Product**

A Brontë experience – furnishings, atmosphere etc  
Different experience to a museum  
Premium service holiday accommodation  
Range of heritage/Brontë/cultural/cuisine/activity/Bradford city/Bradford District package tours

## **Price**

Start off middle of the range  
Increase prices to premium according to customer satisfaction ratings and occupancy levels  
Superior suite pricing similar to Landmark in Northern England  
Small twin room and twin downstairs priced to attract walkers and cyclists.

## **Promotion**

Booking .com  
Airbnb  
Distribution lists as for share offer  
Shareholders and donors  
Press releases  
Coordination with Bradford 2025

## **Section 3 Marketing the events and activities**

### **Financial Target**

None

### **Key Aims**

To deliver cultural workshops, events and activities to a range of communities  
To collaborate with other community organisations in Thornton to present the above

### **Target Audiences**

Communities, associations and clubs representing disadvantaged sectors of society  
Schools and academies especially in wards with highest levels of deprivation  
Thornton and Bradford District residents interested in culture, the arts and heritage  
Visitors to Bradford City of Culture 2025

## **Key messages**

Your background should not be a constraint on your creativity  
Reading is fun  
Be proud of Bradford and its heritage

## **Product**

Heritage, literature, arts and culture workshops, events and activities  
Brontë education packs for schoolchildren to encourage a love of reading and history  
Collaborative events with community organisations in Thornton

## **Price**

Pay what you can afford  
Small payments for education services  
Subsidised/paid for by operating surpluses going forward and by grants in the interim.

## **Place**

Brontë Birthplace, Market Street

Thornton Community Centre and South Square Arts Centre for overflow capacity and special collaborative events.

**Promotion**

Via Community Associations, Academies and Schools in Bradford City, especially wards with highest indices of deprivation

In collaboration with Bradford 2025

Posters and leaflets in local community centres in Bradford District

**Proposed Partnerships**

Thornton and Allerton Community Association Ltd

South Square Arts Centre

Brontë Bell Chapel

Brontë Society

Bradford Literature Festival

Bradford Museums