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### **Submission in Response to Plan of Management for the Albert Hall, Canberra ACT**

The ACT Embroiderers' Guild hires the Albert Hall for four days for its annual exhibition (the most recent occurring 18 to 21 September 2014). The main areas we use are the entrance foyer, main hall (but not stage), supper room and kitchen, and toilets. Our response to the Plan of Management relates to our use of the facilities.

#### **1.6 Actions**

Objective 1: The heritage aspects of the Albert Hall lend a certain ambiance to the exhibition and visitors (especially interstate ones) comment on the Hall and the way it has been kept up. Ensuring that any developments are undertaken sympathetically is important. For our group improving the surrounding gardens is not as important as the work already done to make the north terrace accessible for people with a disability and for setting up/taking down our exhibition.

Objective 2: Agree with all the operational actions and potential capital works. Public Liability Insurance is not an issue for the Guild because this is needed for other external events but we understand that it would be advantageous for other community organisations.

Objective 3: Adequate storage for furniture is an imperative. It would be nigh impossible to have multiple bookings in a day if each group has to move large quantities of chairs and tables.

We suggest that hirers be required to complete a survey after each booking (or group of bookings) which includes questions on major issues (eg air conditioning in main hall) as well as minor ones (eg light bulb replacement).

We suggest that providing facilities for users to connect their own sound and projection equipment is preferable to actually providing the equipment, given the rapidity of technological change.

Objective 4: While we appreciate that bookings cannot be made years in advance, could some arrangements be made for regular users to be *approached* early and asked for their requirements or a rolling three year booking system put in place. We have been using the Albert Hall for nearly ten years and, except for one three year period, we have always had to take the only vacancy available.

Objective 5: As we have found in the Guild, putting information on-line and on social media is one of the best ways of attracting the younger generations.

Objective 6: We agree with all the dot points except the café. We rely on catering for part of our fund raising and having a café could raise issues if there are any exclusive trade rights. Also, we would not want the kitchen downgraded because there are alternative facilities nearby.

The following comments relate to individual sections of the Plan of Management that are relevant to the Embroiderers' Guild:

### **2.4.3 Comparative venues**

While there may be church halls that are cheaper to hire than the Albert Hall, none allow for our exhibition to be open on Sunday mornings, one of our prime times. It is impossible to hire a church hall for a complete weekend.

Having consecutive hirers in a day is severely compromised by the possible need to shift furniture. As stated above in objective 6, a coffee cart could raise issues with competition with the Guild's catering arrangements.

### **2.5.2/2.5.3 Community engagement outcomes**

Hire rates would have to remain affordable for the Guild to continue using the Albert Hall.

While on-site venue management would be convenient, it is not essential.

The lighting is adequate at the moment but, due to its age, it could easily become an issue – eg there was another light not functioning this year.

The kitchen facilities are much improved (no more mouse holes!) and, except for some maintenance issues that have been reported, are adequate for our needs. In particular the kitchen benches are at the right height.

Air conditioning in the main hall would be an improvement. In addition, would it be possible to have blinds/sun blocking inner curtains, particularly on the south side – heat from sunlight is the real problem we have found with excessive heat. Having some form of sun protection would also provide some protection for the velvet curtains.

Fran Novitski  
President



14 October 2014