

May 2021

# Summary Report

## Strategic Review Workshop

Prepared for Dunedin Prison Trust

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## Introduction

The Dunedin Prison Trust's current Business Plan was developed in 2018 with a 5 year timeframe. Due to the completion of stages 1 and 2 of the building restoration work and the fact that several new trustees have been appointed since the plan was developed, it was felt that a review of the plan was timely.

The workshop was attended by:

Virginia Nicholls – Chairperson

Mark Cubitt – Trustee

Michael Price – Trustee

Jane Adams – Trustee

Sarah Cross – Trustee

Norcombe Barker – Heritage Advisor

Bronwyn Simes – Heritage Advisor

Trustee Sarah Cross also acted as facilitator for the workshop.

## Workshop Objectives

1. To review progress on the implementation of the 2018-2023 Business Plan.
2. To confirm the Trust's direction and key foci for the next 2 years.

## Workshop Outcomes

### **Purpose and Vision**

It was agreed that the purpose and vision still represented the aims of the Trust. The terminology was updated to reflect the rebranding of the prison to the "Dunedin Gaol" that had occurred following the development of the plan. The updated statements are as follows:

### **Purpose Whaingā**

To be guardians of the Dunedin Gaol's history and architecture, and to honour the building and its stories.

To conserve, restore and revitalise the Dunedin Gaol in a sustainable manner.

*Kia noho hei kaitiaki o te hītori me te hanga o te Whareherehere Tawhito o Ōtepoti. Kia hōnoretia te whare me ōna pūrākau hoki.*

*Kia tiaki, kia whakahou, kia whakaora te Whareherehere Tawhito o Ōtepoti.*

## Vision Kitenga

A vibrant hub that engages communities with our stories and enables an innovative, sustainable future for the Dunedin Gaol.

*He wāhi hei hono atu ki ngā hāpori, hei whakaatū hoki i te hītori me ngā korero kia ora ai te Whareherehere Tawhito o Ōtepoti, ā muri atu nei.*

## Review of Key Result Areas

The current Business Plan contains five Key Result Areas (KRAs). Progress made in each KRA was discussed and a rudimentary scoring system was used on each objective to rate progress on a scale of 0 to 10, with 0 being no progress made and 10 being objective has been achieved.

Goal	Objective	Progress Score /10	Comments
1. A collection that honours our building and its stories.	1.01 To improve the availability and usability of the building's stories	1/10	A lot of work still to do including research on the history of the building.
2. An experience that astounds our visitors.	2.01 To establish and maintain an understanding of our visitor's needs.	2/10	None.
	2.02 To define an experience that meets the needs of our visitors.	2/10	Part of the discussion that occurred later in the workshop.
3. A bold development we can be proud of; the building's authenticity is preserved and its revitalisation is renowned.	3.01 To progress the conservation and restoration of the building.	6/10	The building is now stable, secure and watertight.
	3.02 To establish a property management programme.	3/10	Basic maintenance occurs but is entirely reactive and reliant on a volunteer.
4. Fit-for-purpose business processes.	4.01 To establish and maintain a compliance programme.	2/10	No structured approach to compliance.

	4.02 To ensure our roles and responsibilities enable the delivery of planned work.	4/10	Roles and committee structure need reviewing and refocusing for current needs. All roles still volunteer-based.
	4.03 To establish a stakeholder engagement programme.	3/10	No structured approach. Once again, all volunteer-based.*
5. We have the funds needed to support achievement of our goals and aspirations.	5.01 To improve our ability to generate funds.	8/10	The Trust has sufficient income presently to cover expenses. Its aspiration is still to secure commercial tenant/s that will generate funds to support further development of the building and visitor experience
	5.02 To ensure our fund management system supports achievement of our aspirations.	8/10	Current system is adequate for current state of funds.

\* The Trust thanks the following for their work with key stakeholders: Owen Graham with funders, Lindsay Hall with carpark tenants, Bronwyn Simes with guides.

Following this review, the Trust decided to pursue objective 2.02: "To define an experience that meets the needs of our visitors," as a priority for the next financial year.

## Crucial Decisions

In order to balance the two key aspects of the Trust's purpose, honouring the building and its stories and creating a sustainable future for the Gaol, several key decisions around the visitor experience and possible commercial use needed to be made.

### Visitor Experience

Bronwyn Simes presented four options for a visitor experience (see Appendix I). Each option had different capital expenditure required and ongoing operating costs. It was acknowledged that currently the Gaol's visitor experience is run entirely by volunteers and therefore incurs no operating costs. It is not realistic to continue with this model if the Trust wishes to achieve Goal 2 in the Business Plan: "An experience that astounds our visitors."

A consensus was reached that the next stage in visitor experience would be a version of Option 1. This is similar to the experience offered currently but would include:

- More storyboards
- Paid guides
- Tools to support self-guiding such as QR codes or audio equipment

While the Trust has not defined a specific target audience, it is believed that a visitor experience such as this would appeal to:

- Ex-convicts and their families
- Students at a range of levels interested in law, society, creative writing and the arts etc
- Locals interested in local history (people) and our built heritage
- People looking for a bit of fun and an interesting experience

For this option, capital expenditure would be required for:

- Paid researcher/s on a fixed-term contract
- Story development
- Copywriting
- Voice actor
- Guide training
- Audio equipment

Operating costs would include but may not be limited to:

- Guide wages
- Maintenance and replacement of audio equipment
- Maintenance of storyboards

Moving to this level of visitor experience is seen as a next step on developing the visitor experience. A decision was made to hold a further workshop with Trustees and interested

parties to discuss a staged approach to the development of the visitor experience, including a desired end goal.

The financial expectations of the visitor experience would be to operate within an allocated budget initially, with the goal of becoming break-even.

### Footprint

In order to ensure the Trust's end goal visitor experience is not compromised by any future commercial tenant, a minimum footprint was identified that would provide sufficient access and areas of interest for any future visitor experience offering.

It was proposed that 33% of the floor area of the prison be "ringfenced" for the visitor experience. This area must include the following:

- Entry off car park
- "Drunk tank"
- Processing
- Holding cells
- Some permanent cells
- Courtyard access
- Lock-up and its courtyard
- Laundry
- Some floor area and cells on each floor

Bronwyn Simes will mark these areas on a copy of the Gaol floor plan for future reference.

### Commercial Use

The Trust is seeking commercial tenants to support its vision of *"A vibrant hub that engages communities with our stories and enables an innovative, sustainable future for the Dunedin Gaol."* It is intended that the profits from commercial tenants will financially assist both the visitor experience and the ongoing restoration and revitalisation of the building.

There are other key decisions to be made before the Trust can "go to market" with the building as a potential commercial property. Kenny Lau from NZTE, who is supporting the Trust with finding a commercial tenant or investor, has asked it to provide him with any conditions or preferences regarding commercial activity, public access and lease conditions.

The public access requirements have been defined in the Footprint section above.

An in-depth discussion around which commercial activities the Trust would permit or not permit is required. Decisions on this topic should be guided by the part of the Trust's purpose which is to "honour the building and its stories." A discussion needs to be held

on what constitutes “honouring” in this context and the principles the Trust will apply in determining acceptable commercial activities within the Gaol.

Currently, the Trust has one commercial tenant in the Gaol, Escape Dunedin. The Trust must make a decision on the expiring lease with Escape. The decision will need to consider a potential expanded leased area, term of lease, lease payments and appropriate termination clauses.

## Conclusion

Since the creation of the 5-year Business Plan in 2018, the focus has been on securing the building as a stable and watertight facility. Stages 1 and 2 of the building restoration have been completed. The Trust’s focus is now on growing the visitor experience and securing commercial tenants to ensure the future of the Gaol. Further discussions are required to determine appropriate commercial activities for the building and to develop a staged approach to growing the visitor experience.



## Appendix I – Visitor Experience Options

### Option 1 – General interest in the occupant and the building

The experience would be version of what happens now.

- A brief introduction on the history of the prison
- An introduction to who was in here, why and for how long
- A tour that gave a feel for how you were processed through the building from “reception”, to remand, to your cell were you served your sentence,
- Discussion on what it was like to live here for any period of time.

Delivery could be a guide, self-guided or an audio system, as well as a virtual recorded tour.

It could be the 1 hour duration it is now, and take up more or less space and time.

### Option 2 – Interest and curiosity in the experience of being in prison

Set up a number of cells for different time periods; say 1898, 1950 and 1990.

Use inmates (or a generic person) as a focus to talk about conditions in each time, what daily life in the prison was like and what it was like when you were released.

Each period would focus on a average prisoner from that time ie

- 1898 - a repeat drunk. Talk about lack of support services and understanding of addictions and mental health
- 1950 – gangs and assault. The start of the Maori urban drift and what it was like to be Maori in the city at that time.
- 1990 – someone falling through the cracks of family, health and education. What support is available now to get help them integrated into society.

### Option 3 – Interest in real people and their experience

Visit a cell or part of the building and discuss and explore the life of a prisoner (approx. 3 identities). An actor would take on the identity of a real inmate.

To do this well we would need extensive research about the inmates and permission from descendants. We would also need know about the guards who worked here at that time.

Our research would cover the details of daily life at the specific period in time. Writers would need to develop script that the actor and guide would use. Our guides would need to be expert at managing a discussion and helping visitors explore the issues.

There is an example of this type of experience at the New York Tenement Museum.

#### **Option 4 – Understanding and questioning the justice system in Aotearoa New Zealand**

- A staffed and well equipped research room which hold information about who was in this prison, and went through the justice system through out the country. This could be a partnership with another institution ie Archives or Toitu, and doesn't need to be in our building
- Planned and managed workshops for different education levels discussing the justice system and what might be the way of the future
- Produce lesson plans for primary and secondary schools that have curriculum links to the syllabus, and
- Invite a Masters student from Otago University to undertake a summer project each year