



Volunteer update

Winter 2018/19

Hello Again

As the year rolls over from 2018 to 2019 we thought this would be a great opportunity to catch up again with all our volunteers.

It was great to see so many of you at our volunteers evening last week, and we hope that you found the sharing of information helpful and useful.

If you have ideas of other things we could be sharing in those meetings please let us know.

Some of the topics from this update were mentioned in the meeting, but are included here with more detail.

More Building improvements

The improvements to the building continue apace.

Here are the main things we have completed since the last update

Rear windows – all of the windows at the rear of the building have either been replaced or freshly covered. This is particularly noticeable in Studio 3 which has been transformed by reinstating the large second window – please pop in for a look.

Skylights – the skylights above the box office and toilet areas have been replaced with nice new ones that don't leak !

Men's loo – has been fully repainted

Disabled loo – fully repainted

Backstage kitchen – thoroughly tidied and woodwork and lower walls repainted

Studio 2 – has new electrical sockets in each corner to give better access

Foyer – has a beautiful new clean floor

Entrance light replaced

Auditorium seats have new numbers on them and the bottoms have been repainted in black

The next steps

The pieces of work you can expect to see in the next few months (hopefully weeks.....

- New curtains are being ordered to cover the new windows in studio 3
- New sockets and new lighting for studio three – this will then complete the refurb of that room
- Re-plastering of holes in studio 1 ceiling
- Replacement/repair of toilet cisterns in ladies loo
- Replacement of entrance mat
- Refurbishment of studio 1 tech area
- Refurbishment of upstairs toilet

Carpet Fitters needed

I know this was mentioned in the previous update – but we would desperately like to replace the soiled carpet on the landings by the studio's. We have carpet to do this – but no one to lay it.

Its probably not a particularly large or time consuming job (if you know what you are doing)

Any volunteers with this ability ????

Volunteers

We have been doing very well with recruiting new volunteers recently, but we still always need more people. So please continue to encourage friends and neighbours to get involved.

We have created a draft induction pack to ensure volunteers get as much info as possible and we are currently revising this.

Many of you also met Barbara last week, who will be taking on a volunteer co-ordinator role, helping to keep you all informed what's happening and helping to make sure your voices are heard.

Bid Success

In the past couple of months we have had some success bidding for additional finance.

We have been awarded

£15,000 from the Arts Council for our Primary School project

£2,500 from Suffolk Community Foundation for a new playwriting workshop

£15,000 from Suffolk County Council for a series of Dementia friendly film screenings

Each of these projects helps to enhance and develop the marvellous work of the Theatre and helps to increase activity and income to the Theatre. We are actively working on additional applications for further funding in the coming months.

Increasing Capacity

As many of you will know, the Seagull currently only has 2 paid members of staff, both part time. We get fantastic support from the volunteer team, but there are certain tasks and responsibilities which are just not fair to ask someone to do unpaid. For a long time we have been aware that even with the massive support of volunteers, we are asking too much of our two part time staff.

Therefore the Board of Directors has taken the decision to trial a third member of paid staff for a year. We will be advertising soon for a new administrative assistant to work with Karen and Josh, primarily to undertake a lot of the paperwork associated with running a theatre. This will be a massive help to Karen and will hopefully mean that we can continue to grow and be successful.

Planning for the Future

In the next few months we will be taking the first tentative steps towards planning for an extension of the seagull building.

This is very early days, but what we are intending to do, is to work with an architect to come up with some designs to reconfigure and extend our space. The basic idea is

To relocate the foyer to the current workshop

To build a new workshop at the rear of the building

To extend behind the current workshop to add new toilets and a lift

The actual nature of the work will depend on the ideas that the architect and the Board come up with. Once we have some solid ideas we intend to present these to you all for comments.

If we get as far as finalising an agreed plan, then we will have the uphill task of raising the money required to do the work. But the last few months have shown us just how much we can achieve – so its time to dream big !

How Can You Help ???

Delivering Posters and Brochures.

If you are driving through Pakefield, Kirkley or other parts of Lowestoft, why not pause on the way and deliver a few flyers for upcoming shows or copies of our brochure. Dropping off flyers for the upcoming shows at various cafes

and doctors surgeries, will boost audiences and increase our income, as well as making the Theatre a popular venue for more acts.

The brochures and flyers are all kept behind the box office, so if you would like to do some delivering – just pop in and ask for some flyers or brochures before you set off.

Plus the extra exercise is an excellent part of a get fit regime !!!

Cleaning

We are very lucky to a volunteer who now comes in regularly to do some hovering around the building, but it would be lovely if there were a couple more to build a little team.

I know this is probably not the most glamorous of volunteer opportunities, but its really helpful. If you have a spare hour any day and fancy popping in and dusting the auditorium or emptying the bins around the building, we would be more than happy to make you welcome.

It's a really simple practical help that you anyone can contribute.

The building is open 11 – 3 every weekday if you fancy helping out.

Facebook Support

Many of you will know that Facebook is now one of the biggest ways we advertise shows and attract audiences. But did you know you can directly help to get our shows more audiences?

Its simple and its free.

If you see a facebook post from us about a show, don't just read it and move on – you can do a couple of simple things to make sure that more people see the advert.

1. Comment – the more people who write comments on a post, the more that Facebook shows it. It doesn't have to be anything elaborate – just a couple of words to say you are looking forward to the show etc will help make our posts more popular
2. Share – use the share button on the post so that all of your friends get to see our advert. This means that more people see the post and so hopefully more will come and see the show
3. Love – don't Like – Facebook judges the popularity of the pages on the site and shows more popular ones more often. If you choose to click "like" that is great – but it helps us much more if you hold down the like button and choose "LOVE" instead of like – this gets our posts shown more.

If all of our volunteers did these three things to our facebook posts we could increase the number of people seeing our facebook adverts by as much as 30%

How to get in touch

There are lots of ways to get in touch – you could

- 1) Message us on Facebook – this is often the quickest way to get a response
- 2) Email us at info@theseagull.co.uk - we check these message most weekdays – but you might have to wait a day or so for a response
- 3) Phone and leave a message – 01502 589726 – again we will get back to you as soon as we can – but it may take a couple of days
- 4) Send us a letter – No one ever does this – but its possible.

Lastly.....

**THANK YOU
THANK YOU
THANK YOU**

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Without you there would be no Seagull !!

Sammy the Seagull