



Volunteer update

Summer 2018

Welcome

This is just a little attempt to keep all of our fantastic volunteers up to date with the fast moving changes and improvements to the Seagull. We know that it can be really hard to keep everyone up to speed and we really appreciate the time and effort everyone gives to keep the place running – so this update is a small step towards more communication.

Hot Water

Thanks to the superb fundraising work over the last year or so we have already been able to fix up the roof and replace a lot of windows. In September we are having a small boiler fitted in the basement so that the downstairs toilets will have hot water again (in the sinks obviously – not the toilets)

We are hoping to eventually extend this to the upstairs sinks as well – but one step at a time !

Rear Windows

As mentioned above, we have already replaced most of the front windows, but we are now preparing to replace some of the rear windows. We may not replace all of them and some may stay boarded or be re-boarded – but there are definite plans to improve the rear.

Studio 3

Many of you may know that studio 3 is being regularly rented out by CEFAS during their renovations, along with some car parking spaces. This income has meant that we have been able to repair the remaining holes in the ceiling. We hope in October to be able to repaint the whole studio !

Upstairs doors

Those of you on facebook will have already seen that we have a programme underway to repaint the upstairs doors to match the lovely blue bannisters which were painted in January. Many of you have already volunteered to paint a door – so thanks ! If anyone wants to join in – just let us know !!!

Health and Safety works....

This is never that interesting but nonetheless important.

Our Tech Co-ordinator Josh has been leading on some important work over the last few months getting H&S stuff upto scratch. We have had a survey of the building for Asbestos and another for Legionella risks completed and the fire extinguishers and alarm have all been serviced.

There is a small amount of asbestos in the studio 1 area – not a risk to anyone - but we hve applied for funds to get it removed in any case and that hopefully will happen in the autumn.

We also put some non slip material on the costume department steps and bought them an emergency escape ladder to keep Janet, Mo and Jan safe !

Plans, Hopes and Desires

We have several other items which we would like to do, but don't currently have the money for... However we have made a number of bids recently to other charities and if we are successful then you may see some of the following also happening in coming months....

- New flooring for the foyer
- New rear doors for the auditorium
- Resurfaced car park with new lines
- Air conditioning for the auditorium and/or Studio 1

Cross your fingers.....

Who runs the Seagull ?

Sometimes people ask about who actually runs the Seagull so here is the run down....

The Seagull is run by something called a Community Interest Company or CIC. Basically that's a company which is run for the benefit of the community, doesn't have share holders and doesn't make money for anyone other than for the company itself. It is not though a charity and does not have a charity number. Its officially listed as a social enterprise but is deemed to be not for profit.

The CIC is called Seagull Lowestoft CIC and has a board of unpaid volunteer Directors who meet monthly to oversee the running of the Theatre.

The Board of Directors are :

- Ian Fosten – Chair
- Malcolm Short – Finance
- Des Reynolds
- Bob Blizzard
- Lee Johnson

Karen also sits on the Board as an observer and participant but is not allowed to be a Director as she is an employee.

Karen Read is the Theatre Manager who does all the hard work organising the day to day running of the Theatre, and Josh Harley is the Tech Co-ordinator who sorts out all the technical stuff and also does a fab job.

Then there are all of you – our fantastic volunteers – without whom the place simply would not exist.

The Seagull Rep

Many of you will be familiar with the Seagull Rep – our group which stages productions including the upcoming Oliver.

We are relaunching the REP in the Autumn when it will become a separate entity in its own right. From September we have a new Board of Trustees for the Rep and it will be set up as a Charity in its own right. This means it will have its own separate accounts and will operate independently (but in co-ordination) with the Seagull Theatre.

The Rep is changing so that the it has two main strands

A Professional Touring Company

A Community Production Group

The touring work of the Rep will now be fully professional, meaning that it operates in a professional arena with people getting paid and productions needing to make a profit.

The productions which the Rep puts on at the Seagull will continue to be community focussed and so will feature a mixture of professional and volunteer participants – this will allow local folk to get a professional experience of Theatre that they might not otherwise get to experience.

Oliver is an excellent example of community Theatre,

How can you help out.....

Many of you already do a fantastic amount to help out at the Seagull. But there are easy ways that you could help us out and enjoy yourself in the process.....

1) Come and see a show !!!!

This sounds obvious – but to be successful we need good audiences and the more shows you come and buy tickets for – the better it is for us. Karen has

to persuade bands, actors and companies to come and put on shows at the Seagull, and that's not easy if they don't think anyone will come and see them ! So the more often we can have big audiences, the better it is for the Theatre and everyone involved. This is especially true of shows you haven't heard of ! We try hard to get new and interesting shows into the Theatre – so if you see something advertised and you don't have a clue what it is Come and give it a try !!

2) Book in Advance

Please Please Please – if you are going to come and see a show – please book your tickets in advance. A lot of theatre groups and bands ring us in the week or so before they are due to come, and ask about advance bookings. Sometimes if too few people have booked in advance they actually cancel the show because they don't think enough people will come. We know that a lot of you show up on the night and buy your tickets on the door, but convincing a band or theatre group of that can be hard. So please – BOOK IN ADVANCE !

3) Share, Post and Like on Social Media

If you are on Facebook – please like our Seagull Theatre page (facebook.com/seagulltheatre), share our posts and write comments. Facebook is one of the main ways we publicise events and we really need your help to make that successful. Everytime you share our posts they get seen by a lot more people. If you write comments then again more people see the posts. The more people who see it the more might come to see a show. So please don't just read it – SHARE IT, LIKE IT and COMMENT

4) Write a review

We are not just on Facebook ! We are also on Tripadvisor. Leaving us a review on TripAdvisor really helps people from outside of Lowestoft find us. It only take a minute or two but it really does make a difference !

5) Make a regular donation

If you are feeling particularly generous you can set up a regular donation to the Seagull. We have a number of regular givers who provide a monthly amount to support the Theatre. This money make a real difference to us and has contributed massively to being able to fix up the roof in particular. If you would like to set up a regular donation, let us know and we will give you the bank details you would require.

6) Offer some time

Most of our volunteers have started out working in the Box office or behind the bar, but inevitably life gets in the way and we're unable to offer any time for a while. Then sometimes you just drop out of the habit.

If that's you and you haven't done a shift for a while or no longer get the texts asking you to volunteer – why not get in touch and get back into it. Even if you only do one shift a month – it would really help.

7) Deliver some programmes

We invest heavily in a brochure three times a year. It has all the details of our shows and is a great resource – but its pretty useless if no one sees it. We try to get as many out as possible – but if you have an afternoon spare and would like to deliver some more for us – just let us know.

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

We can never say a big enough thank you for all the time and effort which is put into the Theatre by all the fantastic volunteers.

Without you there would be no Seagull !!

Sammy the Seagull