



Volunteer update

Winter 2020

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.

Volunteer Meeting

Our first volunteer meeting of 2020 is on

Thursday 16th January 2020 at 7.00pm

This is a great opportunity to catch up with other volunteers and find out what the new year has ahead for us all.

Building Updates

We continue to upgrade the building bit by bit – here are some of the most recent highlights :

Car Park

The car park has had some limited repairs done to the surface and had new lines painted to clearly delineate the spaces.

Stage Comms

The talk back system between backstage and the Tech box has been refurbished and now works again

Backstage Lighting

A new light has been fitted at the very rear of the stage behind the back curtain to light the pathway across the back of the stage.

Lighting Electrics

New 240V sockets have been fitted at the end of the FOH lighting bars to facilitate the use of more modern LED lights.

Foyer Display

A new computer has been installed to run the foyer display

Rear Car Park Lighting

There is now proper lighting for the stage door area at the back of the theatre so that people can see to load and unload.

New Blinds

New blinds have been fitted to the small upper windows in the foyer so that we can fully black out the foyer during matinee performances.

Studio 1 Lighting

The lighting in studio 1 has been totally overhauled and new bright LED lights installed.

Workshop

The workshop has been thoroughly tidied and re-arranged and some new tools bought.

Upcoming Works

In the next few weeks / months we have the following works planned

- Installation bollards at the car park entrance to control access out of hours
- Re-plastering of Studio 2 – this has been delayed from January due to plasterer illness
- Re-plastering of the office area – so that the ceiling doesn't fall on our heads.

The Big Building Project

During the Autumn we have been making slow but steady progress with this project.

The plans have been finalised and the planning application has been prepared. We are now in the process of getting planning permission

Watch this space !!

Projects.....

With continued success getting funding from organisations, we now have several projects up and running...

New Projects

Workshop Mentoring

We have received funds from the Frank Jackson Fund to purchase the new tools in the workshop and to offer some additional mentoring opportunities to vulnerable adults in the workshop. This is a small scale project which will build on the work already begun.

Puppet Workshops

We have been successful in gaining funding from the Harris Fund to run a small series of puppet making workshops this year. These will run later in the year and will be aimed at getting young people more involved in the theatre.

Existing Projects

Dementia Projects

We have a range of different activities running for Families Living with Dementia. These include:

- Memories Café which runs fortnightly
- Sunday Classics Film Club – a monthly classic film with sing along.
- Music Appreciation group – an activity for families with dementia to listen to music and maybe join in.
- Carers Wellbeing group – a professional led supportive group for carers

There is a whole extra brochure full of details of these activities which you can pick up in the foyer. If you know anyone who might benefit from taking part, please pass on a brochure.

Schools Work

This year we have been successful in gaining funding for two school projects. Over the course of the year we will be running our usual Year 6 project working with local primary schools, but we also be working with a second group of Early Years settings to run a project for Year 1 pupils.

Many thanks to the Arts Council and East Suffolk Council who have funded these projects.

Volunteers

We are truly blessed to have such a great team of volunteers, however we have struggled recently to cover all the duties during busy show times.

If you have any friends or acquaintances who may be interested in joining us as a volunteer (especially for Bar duty and Box Office) – please do encourage them to get in touch.

Training Opportunity

For any volunteers who have not already received Safeguarding Training, or who wish to refresh themselves on this vital topic, we shall be running an evening of Safeguarding Training on **Thursday 13th February**.

If you would like a place please let us know.

Parking

Despite having refurbished the car park, there is little we can do to make it much bigger. Sadly we do receive complaints from time to time from our neighbours about our customers parking inconsiderately in Morton Road. We obviously have no control over how people visiting the Seagull choose to park their cars, but we would like to be a good neighbour, so would ask everyone to think carefully about where you park. If you cannot fit into the Seagull car park, there are free and low cost public car parks within a couple minutes walk of the theatre. Its not always necessary to park on Morton Road.

Christmas Success

December 2019 was, as ever, a good month for the Theatre, we had a successful run from “Alice in Wonderland” which brought many new audience members through the door, as well as being a wonderful experience for all involved. Massive congratulations to Annie Marler and her team for creating another stunning Christmas production.

We also had a wonderful run of the Early Years Panto which had another successful year delivering 10 performances to school groups from across the town. Massive congratulations to Josh Pickering, Sharni McDonald and the Early Years Team.

Addams Family Coming Soon

Many of you will already have seen via social media, that we have now announced the next large scale community production by Seagull Rep. In October 2020 we will be staging a production of The Addams Family Musical here at the Seagull.

Keep an eye out for further details in the coming months.....

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. Every time 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