



Rusthall Community Cinema

Trustees' Annual Report to 31st May 2023

Charity registration No. 1171282

Principal office: 21 Manor Road, Rusthall, Tunbridge Wells, TN4 8UD

Trustees: Anne Goldstein, Alain Lewis, Eugene Gardner, Karen Gardner, Kevin Mullery, Lisa Beaumont, Peter Kemp, Rachel Bain, Rosemary Romano

Governing Document: Constitution dated 22nd January 2017

Organisational Structure: Charitable Incorporated Organization

Purpose and Activities

Our purpose is to promote principally cinematic facilities for the occupants of Rusthall and immediate surrounds in the interests of social welfare and with the object of improving the condition of life.

Audiences are invited to suggest films they would like to see then vote to select those that get screened. A short entertainment (perhaps of educational or cultural significance) is provided before the main feature, then a discussion group is initiated for all to exchange views and learn about the films. Free transport is available for the infirm and we charge the bare minimum to enable as many as possible to share the experience.

The Trustees believe that they have complied with their duty to have due regard to the guidance on public benefit published by the Charity Commission as required by section 4 of the Charities Act 2006.

Financial Review

The position of the charity is as described in the attached Income and Expenditure Account. No specific reserve policy is in place although the Trustees intend to maintain a reasonable sum to cushion against poorly attended events and provide for purchase and maintenance of equipment.

Comment on the Year

The highlight of the year has been the introduction of National Theatre Live events. These are filmed theatrical performances where the audience has the best set of perspectives in the house, without the necessity to travel to the West End and pay London ticket prices. After some experimentation we found that Sunday afternoons, the day after our regular scheduled cinema film was the best time to show this as the environment can be put in place and removed just once for both events.

During the year we staged a film festival which culminated in October 2022 with awards being bestowed on 10 of the 250 submitted short films from 47 countries. Watching over 24 hours' of film was a significant task for our 10 judges spanning, as it did, films of very varied qualities. The screening weekend comprised two shows on Saturday, and an Iranian special on Sunday afternoon with invited speakers.

Our average attendance of 53 for the year belies a steady increase over the immediate post-Covid period. Midyear we introduced visitor editable ticket prices with a default of £5 in an attempt to make the Cinema accessible to all irrespective of their financial circumstances. The end of the period under review completes our 6 month experiment and the Trustees are pleased to note that while some 86% of attendees paid the suggested £5 charge, the remainder paid what they could afford and balanced one another out. Therefore beginning next year we will become a donations only cinema with the advanced booking ticket price set at zero. Those leaving it until the doors open to buy a ticket will still be asked for a fixed ticket price – the hope is that this will mitigate against delays getting in.

The technical aspects of the Cinema were enhanced by tuning and refixing the sound system, upgrading the lighting control console, introducing a matrix switcher & auxiliary monitor, as well as an additional card reader. We also bought a laptop computer to replace one of the three loan ones that failed. Steps to minimise light ingress were implemented in preparation for the Sunday afternoon NT Live screenings.

In February some of our regular volunteers enjoyed a busman's holiday to watch The Fabelmans at Hailsham Pavilion by way of thanking them for their efforts.

On the RCC's 7th birthday we launched an appeal to raise funds to replace the current projector which is no longer able to match the quality of image that some more modern top end home televisions offer, and has started showing initial signs of deterioration. The hoped-for replacement will remedy these issues and also, by using cryptographically secured data ingestion, enable us to screen films closer to their release dates and from a wider group of studios.