



Rusthall Community Cinema

Trustees' Annual Report to 31st May 2022

Charity registration No. 1171282

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

Trustees: Mrs Anne Goldstein, Eugene Gardner, Mrs Karen Gardner, Kevin Mullery, Peter Kemp, Miss Rachel Bain, Mrs Rosemary Romano, Mrs Irene Heskett, Alain Lewis

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

Our first post-Covid year saw us recover interest, although audience numbers remain at 72% of typical pre-Covid levels. This reflects the, presumed long term, accustomization of our typical demographic (middle aged and above) with staying at home and away from potential infection. This coincides with a burgeoning of subscription services offering films at home on large screen televisions.

The changes forced on us by Covid have largely remained – we enjoy vastly improved ventilation, our discussion group remains a hybrid of hall and remote attendees, seating remains well spaced, card payment for catering and raffle sales is encouraged, and pre-show online ticket sales are now the norm.

Despite the drop in audience sizes, excess of income over expenditure was only marginally lower than pre-Covid levels thanks to slightly increased income from catering, a reduction of administrative expenses, and many donations. This allows us to maintain a healthy bank balance as a defence against the time when equipment fails. However, we remain a long way short of having sufficient funds to allow us to move from current technology to the way we will probably be forced to screen films in a few years: digitally.

Of the 26 films screened in the year, the average attendance at the 7 films released in the previous 2 years was 56, whereas that of the 7 oldest films was 37. We remain keen to retain the system of film selection: with audience members nominating and then voting to indicate the most popular.

Our volunteer numbers remain steady, although we remain exposed by having a paucity of technical and administratively experienced backup support.

The only equipment purchases of note were speakers and microphone used to enhance the discussion group experience, and a headset microphone for the MC that eliminates feedback and delivers comfort.

We received some positive media coverage in the year which included two West Kent Radio interviews and articles in the Times of Tunbridge Wells. Of course, it is hard to measure impact on audience numbers but it does raise awareness.

Toward the end of the year we screened two films that focus on Dementia. For the regular prefeature film entertainment we made our own short film of local experiences around the topic which was shown ahead of Still Alice (2014); and welcomed a Dementia Ambassador from Dementia UK to speak before we showed The Father (2020). Collections and raffle donations raised almost £200 for Dementia UK.

At the end of the year we initiated our first international short film festival. The initial aim was to encourage young local residents to get into film creation; also, to possibly contribute to our regular short film slot before each Saturday fortnight's screening. It is expected that this will be revenue neutral, the entry fees covering advertising and prizes.