



Rusthall Community Cinema

Trustees' Annual Report to 31st May 2026

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, 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. Screenings are usually preceded by a short item of educational or cultural interest, and followed by an opportunity for group discussion to exchange views and deepen understanding. Free transport is provided for those with mobility difficulties, and free tickets are made available to individuals experiencing financial hardship.

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 2011.

Financial Review

The charity's financial position is set out in the attached Income and Expenditure Account and Balance Sheet. Although no formal reserves policy has been adopted, the Trustees intend to retain a prudent level of funds to cover periods of low attendance and to meet equipment purchase and maintenance needs.

Comments on the Year

The 2025 - 2026 year marked a monumental milestone for Rusthall Community Cinema as we celebrated our 10th Anniversary in May.

10th Anniversary Celebrations

The decade milestone was marked by two extraordinary weekends of celebration that brought our community together and showcased the vibrant spirit behind our cinema:

- **Afternoon Tea & Retrospective Exhibition:** The opening weekend featured an afternoon tea hosted outside in a marquee alongside a retrospective exhibition displaying still and video images and historical artefacts from our first decade. Behind the scenes, volunteers managed a veritable production line indoors - frantic buttering, sandwich preparation, and assembling three-tier cake stands, alongside sourcing an array of teapots, jugs, teas, jams, cream, and cakes.
- **Film Quiz:** The following weekend, a packed hall enjoyed a bespoke film quiz, ably led and hosted by our regular discussion group facilitator who travelled from London to set the questions and host in person. The quiz generated a fantastic team spirit and lively atmosphere. We also welcomed a guest host for our discussion group during this celebratory month.
- **Community & Volunteer Spirit:** Beyond the festivities, the year was highlighted by a welcome influx of new attendees. The anniversary provided an opportunity to celebrate the dedication of everyone involved, including the extensive technical preparations and hard work behind the scenes that keep our screenings running smoothly.

Screening Technology & AV Quality

Significant investments in technology and infrastructure brought a substantial leap forward in our screening and audio-visual quality:

- **Projection & Media Source:** In January, a new laptop brought immediate improvements to picture quality. This was further enhanced in February with the installation of a new top-quality projector (following our multi-year fundraising drive), followed a month later by a new screen. All films are now presented at the highest quality possible from Blu-ray media, including full 4K resolution where available.
- **Discussion Group Tech:** In January, the discussion group modernized its setup by replacing the traditional camera and microphone with an Owl system - an integrated multi-camera, multi-microphone, and speaker device featuring intelligent software that automatically zooms in on the active speaker.

Venue, Accessibility & Refreshments

- In March, a new display freezer replaced our small chest unit, freeing up volunteer time and improving front-of-house presentation.
- All dogs (beyond service animals) were welcomed to join screenings. While overall numbers remain modest, those canine guests that have attended did so without incident.
- In August, we were pleased to benefit from the installation of a new canopy at the hall, offering queueing patrons protection from the rain.
- We expanded our commitment to accessibility by ensuring subtitles are provided across all films, including both short and main feature films.
- A dedicated parking bay has been established for reduced mobility visitors.

Community Engagement & Programming

- **Volunteer Talent:** We continued encouraging volunteers to share their wider skills, ranging from curating pre-film music playlists and capturing photography to crafting signature alcoholic and non-alcoholic cocktails.
- **Digital Bonus Content:** To complement our pre-film 20-minute slot, we now routinely post related short films within the Facebook Event Discussion for audience enjoyment and enlightenment.
- **Live Music:** Ahead of *The Ballad of Wallis Island*, we were delighted to welcome back John and Di Cullen for a live pre-screening musical performance.

Risk Management

The Trustees periodically review potential risks to the charity, including financial sustainability, equipment reliability, and operational continuity. Appropriate steps are taken to manage these risks and ensure the uninterrupted delivery of our community cinema services.

Safeguarding

The Trustees are committed to safeguarding children, young people, and vulnerable adults who attend our events.

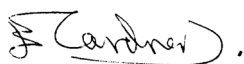
Future Plans & Succession Planning

Following the completion of our 10th Anniversary celebrations and the installation of the new projector, our focus for the coming year turns toward operational stability and long-term sustainability rather than major capital projects.

Our primary governance objective for the 2026–27 period is addressing single-point dependency and planning for succession. Currently, weekly operations rely heavily on the availability and time commitment of a single individual. To mitigate this risk, volunteers will be encouraged to broaden the tasks they undertake. The Trustees will seek to recruit and train volunteers willing to shadow these roles or act as emergency cover to safeguard the future of the cinema.

Acknowledgement of Volunteers and Supporters

The Trustees warmly acknowledge the hard work and dedication of our volunteers, whose contributions across technical support, front-of-house, catering, and numerous between-event tasks make every event possible. We remain equally grateful to our patrons, and the wider Rusthall community for their ongoing enthusiasm and support.



Eugene Gardner 7th October 2026.
On behalf of the Trustees.