

SEEND THEATRE CLUB

Report to Annual Parish Meeting 2023

We held our AGM on Tuesday 9th May 2023 in the Irene Usher Memorial Pavilion with 39 attending. That meeting received reports from Chairman and Treasurer, both showing that the Seend Theatre Club was very active in 2022/23. We had arranged a variety of trips to a number of our favourite theatres; eight trips took place in 2022 and a further five trips in the first months of 2023. Our largest trip was with a group of 37 to see "Chicago" at Bristol Hippodrome in April 2022. However there were other trips to Salisbury Playhouse, Bath Theatre Royal, The Watermill near Newbury and to our local theatre, the Wharf in Devizes.

Membership

With 89 members currently, we have increased membership during the year, including from areas outside the parish. Sadly we have lost several members, including our founder member Tony Ewin, Joe Hardstaff (a long-standing member) and a new member Carol Dickinson.

Issues facing the Club:

Transport:

The big issue for us now is the cost of coaches; quotes we are receiving now are twice as high as before the pandemic. Coach operators blame their own rising costs for fuel, drivers and clean air charges. The Committee does seek competitive quotes and we have been fortunate that both Barnes and Beeline have been able to accommodate us with their smaller coaches.

For smaller trips (up to 16 travelling) the Seend Shuttle is ideal. However, it is not available on a Thursday when most of the matinees take place and of course we do have to provide an approved driver.

Theatres

The Watermill Theatre is the only one of our venues that provides the opportunity for supper in their restaurant before the performance. The two course supper now costs £22.50 a head which is on top of seat ticket prices of around £30 a head. For our next two trips to the Watermill we are having one without supper (The Suspicions 18th May) and one with supper (The Lord of the Rings 7th September) and will be monitoring comments from those attending each event.

Access

Another issue is with theatre seat access, particularly for those who have mobility restrictions. There are formal access schemes at each theatre and we can advise members accordingly.

Committee

Currently the Club is organised by a small Committee, including the officers and we welcome Chris Savage, who has volunteered to join us as Membership Secretary.

Finally we are grateful to all of our members for their continued support for the Club through subscriptions and signing up for our theatre trips. We still have room for more members so anyone interested can contact Marion Whitehead (01380 828612) or myself (01380 828511) for information.

Ken Harvey

Chairman

May 2023