

**Theatre managers’ report for AGM 2012**

Dear Members,

Many words have been written already on the situation of the last couple of years, so I will not recycle them here.

From the theatre management aspect it was a period not seen since the building phase of the theatre. To have an empty building for such a long period was strange.

The immediate action was to shut down any systems that weren’t required to simply maintain the building without being detrimental. We didn’t know how long our finite cash savings would be needed.

Secondly we reviewed what advantage we could take of the extended vacancy. As most people were away from the building it allowed primary people to carry out jobs and maintenance in complete safety and isolation.

One of the first and most fortunate jobs was to install a data network and Wi-Fi system throughout the building. Apart from the immediate advantage of Wi-Fi coverage, it allowed data streaming of live streaming events from the auditoriums during lock-down. The second advantage is the foundation for the future to put in network based systems such as CCTV, fire safety, stage monitoring, advertising and signage, as time and resources allow, and any other systems we haven’t even planned for yet.

As touched upon in my Chairman report, there are many people to thank who put a lot of hours in to see us through, such as publicity, artistic management, set and stage crews, producers etc. having to adapt as the situation changed. From the theatre side I would like to thank, just as examples, Liz for a theatre deep-clean including stripping and repolishing the whole of the auditorium floor on hands and knees, and for cleaning the seating module carpet, Christine for a complete bar clean, Keith and Clive for auditorium chair repair. There were many other people and many jobs that also got done, thank you all. All this carried out without committing too much expenditure, not knowing how long our finite pot of money had to see us through.

Thank you also to those, who when we did return to the theatre, carefully cleaned their workspaces before and after use, for the subsequent users. Thank you also to Frank, David and Matt for their guidance and implementation of the Covid and Health and Safety operating guidelines.

Some jobs even occurred through lack of use of the theatre which couldn’t haven’t been predicted beforehand!

Now we can see the return of an income stream we are starting to revive the expenditure-item tasks again that were put on hold.

As a final note it was good to see the return of the use of the Dell this summer and hope this is a sign of support by Hitchin that will see the return of the BPs to the Dell in future. Although we couldn’t participate with our own show we hosted a few of the performers in the dressing rooms for their comfort, and by providing services in future, backstage or front of house it could present a small income stream in future years if we are inclined.

I look forward to seeing you as we return to the theatre for another exciting season of excellent shows planned. Let’s hope it is not interrupted again.

Chris Lane

Theatre manger

Bancroft Players