

LEWES THEATRE CLUB
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING - SATURDAY 30 OCTOBER 2021, 10.30 am

NOTICE OF MEETING

Notice is hereby given that the Annual General Meeting of Lewes Theatre Club will be held on **Saturday 30 October 2021 at 10.30 am**. The agenda and related documents are attached.

The meeting will be conducted on-line via Zoom.

The meeting is open to all current members of Lewes Theatre Club. Please note that, as this is an on-line meeting, you will not be able to renew your membership on the day. In order to participate you must have access to a laptop or desktop computer fitted with a webcam and microphone, or a smartphone.

If you wish to participate in the meeting, you will need to register your wish to attend. Please do so by no later than **Friday 15 October 2021**. Registrations received after that date will not be accepted. Please register by copying the link below into your browser:

https://us06web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_CxFRJF-hRhyGvSyfPwRwfQ

Those who register successfully will be sent an exclusive, non-transferrable link to the meeting.

N.B. If you have a joint membership and wish to vote individually, you will need to register on separate devices, using individual email addresses.

Notes

1. Sue Tait reaches the end of her current period of office as a Trustee and is unable to continue for a further term due to the six year rule. **This post is therefore available for nomination for a new period of three years in the first instance.**

The post of Trustee formerly held by Kristy Howell was not filled at the last AGM. Over the last business year, the post has been held by Chris Spinks, on co-option by the Board. **This post is now also available for nomination for a new period of three years in the first instance.** Chris Spinks has indicated that he is prepared to accept nomination.

Nominations from members for both positions of Trustee are therefore invited.

Nominations may be submitted either by post, or on line. Postal nominations should be submitted using the enclosed forms. On line nominations will be accepted by email, giving the names of the nominee, proposer and seconder, in lieu of signatures.

Please submit nominations by no later than **Friday 15 October 2021**. (Nominations received after that date will not be accepted).

The email address for on line nominations is: [**agm@lewestheatre.org**](mailto:agm@lewestheatre.org)

The address for postal nomination forms is:

The Premises Manager (AGM), Lewes Little Theatre, Lancaster Street, Lewes BN7 2PX

2. Members are invited to submit written questions in advance of the meeting, either on line or by post. If you wish to submit a question, please do so by no later than **Friday 15 October 2021**, using the addresses given above. The submission of written questions is open to all members, whether or not they attend the meeting.

LEWES THEATRE CLUB

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING - SATURDAY 30 OCTOBER 2021 10.30 am

AGENDA

1. Apologies for absence
2. To receive the minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on 31 October 2020 (attached)
3. To receive the Accounts for 2020/21 (attached)
4. To receive the report of the Board of Trustees for 2020/21 (attached)
5. Address by the Artistic Director
6. To consider any written questions submitted by the closing date given in the Notice of Meeting
7. To elect two members to the Board of Trustees

LEWES THEATRE CLUB

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING - SATURDAY 31 OCTOBER 2020

Minutes

Virtual meeting, conducted via Zoom webinar

In attendance: Jo Cull, President, Shaun Hughes, Artistic Director, Ian Edwards, Treasurer
35 current members
Meeting chaired by Tony Bannister, coopted Executive Committee member.

1. Introduction and welcome

Jo Cull welcomed delegates and asked for a few moments to remember those who had passed during the last year, including Derek Watts, former General Secretary.

2. Minutes of the last meeting

The minutes of the last meeting held on 5 October 2019 were approved.

3. Accounts for 2019/20

The financial report for 2019/20 was adopted. Ian Edwards was thanked on his retirement for his years of service as Treasurer. It was reported that Bob Leeds would take over the management of the Club's finances on an interim basis until the Board of Trustees makes a permanent appointment.

The appointment of Roger Dixon as auditor for the year 2020/21 was approved.

4. Board of Trustees Report

The report of the Board of Trustees for 2019/20 was approved.

5. Amendments to the Constitution

The amendments recommended by the Board of Trustees to clauses 4,16 and 17 of the Constitution were approved.

6. Appointment of Trustees

The following were appointed to the Board of Trustees for a three year period of office ending in 2023:

Estelle Carpenter	<i>Nominated by Sue Tait, seconded by Jo Cull</i>
David Rankin	<i>Nominated by Geoff Parker, seconded by Tony Bannister</i>

Kristy Howell, who was retiring as a Trustee, was thanked for her three years of service.

7. Address by Artistic Director

Shaun Hughes, Artistic Director, spoke about his immediate plans for the reopening of the theatre after lockdown, and his vision for the ongoing growth and development of the theatre.

Signed: _____

Date: _____

LEWES THEATRE CLUB
BOARD REPORT 2021

	Last Elected	Term Expires	6-Year Rule	Attendance
Estelle Carpenter	October 2020	2023	2023	8/8
James Meikle	October 2019	2022	2022	5/8
Mike Palmer	October 2019	2022	2025	8/8
David Rankin	October 2020	2023	2023	4/8
Sue Tait	September 2018	2021	2021	8/8
Chris Spinks	Coopted for 2021			6/7

Since the last AGM held on 31 October 2020, the Board has met on eight occasions, with Sue Tait as Chair. All meetings have been conducted on line. Lewes Theatre Club President Joanne Cull is invited to attend all Board meetings, but has no voting powers.

At the last AGM on 31 October 2020, Estelle Carpenter and David Rankin were appointed as Trustees for a further three year term ending in 2023. Kristy Howell decided not to stand for election for a further term. No nominations were received, and the year therefore started with a vacancy. In accordance with the powers available to them, the Board co-opted Chris Spinks to the vacant post for the remainder of the business year. Chris has extensive professional experience in the area of building regulation and, particularly, fire prevention, and his expertise has been of considerable benefit to the theatre. The position on the Board that he currently occupies is available for election at this meeting for a new three year term, together with a second vacancy, created by the departure of Sue Tait under the six year rule.

Shaun Hughes has continued to serve as Artistic Director. However, Ian Edwards was unable to continue as Treasurer, and former Treasurer Bob Leeds has assumed responsibility for managing the Club's accounts.

Day to day management of the theatre continues to be undertaken by the Executive Committee comprising Shaun Hughes (Artistic Director), Mike Palmer, David Rankin and Chris Spinks (Trustees), and Tony Bannister (co-opted). They meet at least fortnightly, and are directly accountable to the Board.

Throughout the last year, the Board have continued to maintain the post of Premises Manager, at the reduced rate of 10 hours per week. The post holder, James Carmichael, recently resigned from this position, and the duties have been covered by David Rankin.

At an Extraordinary General Meeting on 31 July, members voted to approve a new Constitution, enabling Lewes Theatre Club to apply to the Charity Commission to become an Association Charitable Incorporated Organisation. The new Constitution, dated 1 June 2021, is available for inspection on the theatre website, and will take effect when the Club's application to become a CIO has been approved.

The theatre remained closed to the public until 10 July 2021, when we reopened for a production of *Jeeves and Wooster in Perfect Nonsense*. Audiences numbers were restricted to a maximum of 50% capacity with social distancing, and a COVID-secure environment was provided throughout the theatre, conforming to government guidelines.

Although closed to the public for nearly eighteen months, the theatre was far from inactive. The Board of Trustees and the Executive Committee continued to meet regularly on line. HMG guidelines were systematically reviewed, and a fully COVID-secure regime was developed to ensure that the theatre would be ready to readmit volunteers, and then the public, when the guidelines allowed. Mike Palmer was chiefly responsible for coordinating this programme of work.

A substantial programme of fire safety work was undertaken to fulfil the recommendations of a fire safety audit completed in March 2020, and also to address a number of matters outstanding from an earlier survey. The programme was wide ranging, including a full review of the storage of flammable materials and items, the removal of flammable surfaces and materials, the repair and/or replacement of all fire doors and a review and upgrade of fire extinguishers. From now on, fire safety audits will be conducted every two years, subject to ongoing changes in the regulations. Thanks are due in particular to David Rankin and Chris Spinks for taking a lead on this work, with the support of Darren Heather.

A full review of Health and Safety procedures has also been undertaken, and detailed risk assessments drafted for all areas of the theatre. These will be kept under constant review, and updated as required. In June 2021, a series of basic health and safety awareness training courses was delivered on line for volunteers in all departments. We are very grateful to Darren Heather for the support he has given to the theatre.

The unauthorised use of the theatre car park has been an issue for many years, and the position deteriorated significantly during closure. The Board decided that, when not required exclusively for theatre use, we should explore the possibility of working with a contractor to enable the car park to be used as a paid public car park. A scheme has been agreed subject to planning permission. An application has been lodged.

The level of audience take up for *Jeeves and Wooster* in July was high, suggesting that future audience demand will be strong. Artistic Director Shaun Hughes has put together a varied and exciting programme between October 2021 and July 2022. All six productions have been planned on the basis of unrestricted audience numbers, but we intend to continue with enhanced cleaning and sanitation. The experience gained during *Jeeves and Wooster* will enable us to adapt our arrangements if restrictions are reintroduced at any future time.

A new enterprise during lockdown was a programme of on-line drama, including anthologies from the works of Charles Dickens and William Shakespeare compiled and directed by Shaun Hughes, and an original play, *Our Little Surprise*, written specifically for performance on line, also directed by Shaun. All three productions were performed live by companies of actors, and transmitted via zoom. They were complemented by an adaptation by Chris Bowers of the Bernard Shaw play *Press Cuttings*, recorded and broadcast as a radio play, and a live Q&A session with playwright Philip Ayckbourn. The on-line season proved very popular, attracting audiences from around the world, and earned much-needed revenue.

A significant number of members did not renew their membership during 2020 when the theatre was closed, and the pre-lockdown membership list was maintained to enable as many as possible to continue to receive information. It is hoped that everyone who did not renew last year will wish to do so now that we are open once again. The cost of membership remains the same as last year. Tickets prices have been increased for the coming season to £10 for members and £15 for non-members. We believe this still represents excellent value for money, and offers a substantial discount for members. Certainly, the benefits of being a member of Lewes Theatre Club have never been greater, both for members and for the theatre itself.

**LEWES THEATRE CLUB
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 30 OCTOBER 2021**

NOMINATION FORM: TRUSTEE

The following is nominated for election to the position of Trustee of Lewes Theatre Club:

_____ *name of nominee*

Nominated by: _____
(name)

Signed: _____ **Date:** _____

Seconded by: _____
(name)

Signed: _____ **Date:** _____

Signature of Nominee: _____

Date: _____

Nominees, proposers and seconders must all be current members of Lewes Theatre Club

