

HARBORNE ROYALTY TRUST NEWS

Published by the HARBORNE ROYALTY TRUST Steering Committee.

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ISSUE 003

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Coming together is a beginning;
Keeping together is progress;
Working together is success.

Henry Ford



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TRUSTS OFFER FOR ROYALTY REFUSED!

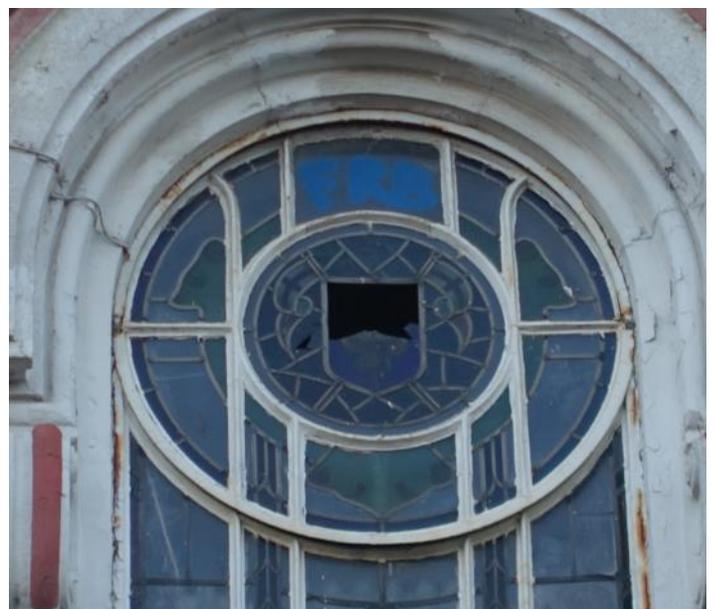
Dear Reader,

Our first offer for the Royalty has been turned down and that's probably not unexpected as these things go. At least it shows we didn't offer too much! Disappointingly, the offer of discussions was not taken up before the offer was rejected. We could at least have discussed our offer and other options if it wasn't acceptable. We will have to think about how to put some more money on the table. Part of our consultation process will be to look at other options for bringing the site back to life and funding streams that would be available. The location of the Royalty provides a real opportunity. Meanwhile our current commercial partner remains committed to the project.

Rob Sutton. Chair. Harborne Royalty Trust
chair@theroyaltyharborne.co.uk

City Council Inaction?

We have been in contact with the Planning Department over several months now. Firstly, we asked that action was taken to remove the pile of bricks which were the result of a wall being removed to accommodate the car wash. These were left for weeks and provided a ready supply of ammunition to smash windows. Wasn't that obviously going to happen next to an empty building? We have asked that the building was secured properly and took the initiative ourselves to get the advice of a professional security company used by a local Council. We asked that the damage to the building be put right and restored to the condition at the time of listing by English Heritage but the Council are not interested in ensuring this. Opposite are the beautiful stained glass windows which have been left completely unprotected and the consequences of the inaction on the part of the local authority to protect the Royalty. It's not really difficult to put some protective mesh across these windows is it? Many churches have it, but then they value their property don't they?



The Royalty Trust Website

The website has a number of links to other projects around the country. These come in many shapes and sizes, from single screen to multi screen and with and without other facilities. Take a moment to visit these other sites and see how local interest has brought back to life what were often derelict or run down buildings. These include 'The Deco' in Northampton and the Stockton Globe Theatre, but there are many more. Most interesting are those with restaurants, cafes and community space, all of which could be incorporated at the Royalty.

Planning permission has been granted for a car wash on the Royalty car park. The planning condition states this car wash has to be removed by 15.6.2020 and ceases if the Royalty building is re-occupied, or in our case brought back into operation.

NEW BOARD MEMBER JOINS THE ROYALTY TRUST

The Board are pleased to welcome a new Board member, Alison Solomon, expanding our skill base still further. Alison has worked in a producing theatre alongside A list and jobbing actors; MD's; international directors; casting directors from the RSC, Royal Court, The National and West End, and works with some of the top names in theatre, writers and creatives. Alison also has community arts training / experience and current practice with leading and multicultural organisation nationally delivering arts and crafts to the youth, elderly, mentally ill, Dementia & Alzheimer's patients and culturally diverse people.

There are many ways to help the Trust, from being a supporter, delivering newsletters like these, advising the Committee, to joining the Committee itself and many more. If you would like to know more, then please contact the Trust at:
chair@theroyaltyharborne.co.uk

TRUST GIVES TALKS TO LOCAL GROUPS

Would you like the Trust to come and give a talk on the Royalty to your group? We are happy to come along and give an insight into this historic building.

To arrange a talk simply email Rob Sutton.

The circle seating still remains ready to be restored and used by the next Royalty audience.



The Royalty History

The Royalty Cinema opened on Harborne High Street on 20th October 1930, in the early years of cinema exhibition with sound. The Cinematograph Act of 1927 had attempted to support British filmmaking in the face of the aggressive influence of Hollywood. Musicals and epics became increasingly popular in the 1920s, and evermore opulent and grand theatres were constructed for their exhibition. The Royalty was designed by Horace G. Bradley for Selly Oak Pictures Limited, and could accommodate almost 1,500 patrons. It was taken over by ABC Cinemas in March 1935, as part of the organisation's expansion in the West Midlands. The site had been the location of a terraced row of dwellings from at least 1890, as shown on the First Edition Ordnance Survey Map of that year. The row was demolished to make way for the cinema by 1930, and the new building, set back from the road edge, is shown on the Fourth Edition Ordnance Survey Map of 1938. The cinema closed in 1963 and became a bingo hall. Some internal modifications have been made to the building in the later twentieth century, including the insertion of a false ceiling in the foyer, the introduction of a staircase to the balcony in the auditorium, and the replacement of the equipment in the projection box. In 2011 it continued to operate as a bingo hall.



The first floor balcony with false ceiling over entrance vestibule.

TRUST STEERING COMMITTEE

The Trust steering committee comprises:
Rob Sutton. Former Chair of the Moor Pool Heritage Trust.
Adam Fraise.
Bob Boucher.
Simon Coghlan.
Katie Ross.
Lizzie Hayes
Alison Solomon

We are also grateful to the various individuals and companies who are providing support, including Paul Mountain, Trowers Hamlins and Greenwoods Projects, and those who have offered help when we are ready in the future.