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## **THE REGAL THEATRE RECEIVES THE QUEEN'S AWARD FOR VOLUNTARY SERVICE**

The Regal Theatre's volunteers have been honoured by being awarded the Queen's Award for Voluntary Service, the highest award a voluntary group can receive in the UK and equivalent to the MBE.

At the Regal Theatre more than 200 volunteers provide all the drive and skills not only to sustain a 90-year old building with a 400-seat auditorium as fit for modern purpose, but to run every aspect of its busy calendar of richly varied events. The theatre is entirely run by volunteers who work a total of 70,000 hours a year – equating to a contribution worth around £200,000 – in pursuit of their ethos 'For the Community, By the Community'. Their work enables the Regal to present 150 events to audiences totalling some 25,000 a year, in a varied programme which including theatre, ballet, opera, concerts, films and live screenings.

Volunteers manage, maintain and run the Regal building to meet rigorous security and health and safety standards and operate the advanced technology of a new GDPR compliant ticketing system on the box office. They administer the Friends of the Regal scheme, with more than 1,500 members, and the Regal Film Society, which is one of the largest film societies in the country with nearly 600 members, and produce and distribute regular publicity material and newsletters.

Volunteers operate complex light and sound equipment for stage productions and a digital cinema package of the type installed in commercial cinemas for film performances and live screenings and design and build complex stage sets. On performance nights they provide a highly-trained theatre manager, a front of house team and run a full bar.

‘The Regal Theatre volunteers are immensely proud to receive the Queen’s Award for Voluntary Service,’ says Regal Theatre chair Victoria Thomas. ‘This really is a great honour and comes at a time when it is most needed. Under the lockdown the theatre has now been shut for nearly three months and, although we have been doing a lot of work behind the scenes, it will be an immense challenge finding our way back to operating at the level where we left off. We will need all the goodwill and support of this special community to help us get back on our feet and the Queen’s Award will undoubtedly give us a terrific boost.’

The Queen’s Award for Voluntary Service aims to recognise outstanding work by volunteer groups to benefit their local communities. It was created in 2002 to celebrate the Queen’s Golden Jubilee. Recipients are announced each year on 2<sup>nd</sup> June, the anniversary of the Queen’s Coronation.

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