

PRESS RELEASE

FIFTH ROUND OF SMALL GRANTS ANNOUNCED BY THE THEATRES TRUST

1 August 2014, London, UK

The Theatres Trust is pleased to announce its fifth round of small capital grants to theatres across the nation. Among the five successful theatres in this round are the Grade II* listed Trinity Theatre in Tunbridge Wells and the community-owned Shanklin Theatre on the Isle of Wight.

Small Capital Grants have been awarded to:

Shanklin Theatre, Isle of Wight: This Grade II listed theatre receives £5,000 towards its 'Fly tower stabilisation' project to repair the brickwork of its fly-tower.

Theatre Royal Stratford East, London: This Grade II* listed east London theatre by J.G. Buddle and later refurbished by Frank Matcham receives £5,000 towards its 'Repair the stage curtain' project to clean and mend the fabric of its trompe l'oeil curtain.

Players Theatre, Thame: Its 'Building A Better Theatre' project receives £5,000 to install a flexible and moveable stage wall system to improve the size and flexibility of its stage and enable it to complete its stage refurbishment.

Trinity Theatre, Tunbridge Wells: This Grade II* listed converted church receives £5,000 towards its 'Repair work to the exterior of the sandstone theatre' project to fix underlying issues on its East wall.

Blackpool Grand Theatre: This Grade II* listed theatre, by Frank Matcham receives £4,850 towards its 'Refurbishment of carved side entrance doors' project to repair and repaint the accessible doors of the Grand Theatre as part of its 120th Birthday celebrations.

Mhora Samuel, Director of The Theatres Trust said: "I'm delighted that we are able to help five more theatres with small grants from the Theatres Protection Fund. The support we receive from the Andrew Lloyd Webber Foundation and Judy Craymer MBE towards our Small Grants Scheme is once again making a real difference to these theatres."

The Trust's Small Grants Scheme helps theatres in need and at risk address urgent building repairs, improve their operational viability, introduce environmental improvements, and enhance physical accessibility. Trustees of The Theatres Trust will meet again in December 2014 to consider further Small Grants Scheme awards.

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Notes to Editors

Shanklin Theatre, Isle of Wight £5,000

This grant goes towards building repairs to the brickwork of Shanklin Theatre's fly-tower. The Grade II listed Shanklin Theatre is owned and managed by the Shanklin Theatre and Community Trust. The Trust was established in 2010 by local supporters to take over the management of the theatre when the local authority wanted to relinquish control. The building originally opened in 1879 as the Shanklin Institute. The auditorium seats 615 and the Friends of Shanklin Theatre provide volunteers to support staff to run and manage the theatre. As a touring house, it programmes professional and amateur productions, and hosts a children's stage school, the Isle of Wight Dance Festival and workshops for school parties. The Trust receives no grant aid.

Contact: Christopher Quirk, orchardcroft@btinternet.com, 07802 705 831, shanklintheatreandcommunitytrust.co.uk, shanklintheatre.com, @stctrust1, @shanklintheatre

Theatre Royal Stratford East £5,000

This grant goes towards preserving the character of this important listed theatre. The designer of the trompe l'oeil safety curtain, Jenny Tiramani and her team, will clean and repair the safety curtain. It is the first project in a series of works to refurbish the theatre auditorium. The Grade II* Theatre Royal Stratford East, originally designed by James George Buckle, and refurbished by Frank Matcham, is managed by Pioneer Theatres Ltd. It seats 430 and is the only suburban London theatre with a complete pre-cantilever auditorium. Located in the heart of London's East End on the edge of the new Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park, the theatre was the home of Joan Littlewood's Theatre Workshop from the 1950s-1970s and prides itself on creating world class work that reflects the concerns, hopes and dreams of its community. A prolific developer of new work, the theatre has a long-standing commitment to championing new writing and delivering world-class musical theatre.

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Players Theatre, Thame £5,000

This grant goes towards the installation of a flexible and moveable wall system on the stage. It helps to complete a larger capital project which will improve the quality of the theatre and increase the seating capacity from its present 119 to 131. Thame Players Theatre Company, an established non-professional theatre group, has owned the 119-seat Players Theatre since 1997. The Players Theatre is the only theatre and cinema serving the town of Thame and the surrounding area. It presents a variety of theatre productions by Thame Players and other visiting companies and also screens film throughout the year.

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Trinity Theatre, Tunbridge Wells £5,000

This grant goes towards building repairs to the sandstone brickwork of the East wall of the converted church. The Grade II* listed Trinity Theatre is a former church, and has been leased by the Trinity Theatre and Arts Centre Ltd from the diocese of Rochester since 1982. Trinity Theatre is a receiving house and arts centre, with a 279 seat tiered auditorium, studio rooms, foyer with café and bar facilities, gallery meeting room and the gardens. Its programme includes theatre, dance, comedy, music and film, including an innovative programme for young people, which gives many local children their first experience of live theatre.

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Blackpool Grand Theatre £4,850

This grant goes towards repairing the historic side entrance doors and preserving the streetscape character of the Grade II* listed theatre. The works will enhance the visual experience of visitors from the street, and especially that of wheelchair patrons who, after the capital project is complete, may use this as their main entrance. The Grade II* listed Matcham designed Blackpool Grand Theatre has been owned by the Blackpool Grand Theatre Trust Ltd since 1981. The main auditorium of the nationally significant touring house seats 1,053, and the studio seats 80. The Blackpool Grand Theatre has a varied programme of musical, ballet and opera performances and plays a major role in entertainment provision for Blackpool and its region.

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The Theatres Trust is The National Advisory Public Body for theatres. The Trust was established by The Theatres Trust Act 1976, 'to promote the better protection of theatres'. It is a statutory consultee on theatre buildings in the planning system, provides expert advice on the sustainable development of theatre buildings and helps promote awareness and solutions for theatres at risk. It champions all theatres, historic, contemporary and new in theatre use, in other uses or disused. The Theatres Trust's central London Theatreland-based Resource Centre provides access to a specialist theatre buildings Reference Library including books and architectural plans. theatrust.org.uk

Theatres Protection Fund Small Grants Scheme is run by The Theatres Trust and was set up in 2012. It is extremely grateful for the generous support of £125,000 from the Andrew Lloyd Webber Foundation (over five years) and £125,000 from Judy Craymer MBE (over five years).

First round grant recipients: The Royal Court, Liverpool; Soho Theatre, London; Sleaford Playhouse; Wilton's Music Hall, London; Oldham Coliseum; and the Half Moon Young People's Theatre, London.

Second round recipients: Wyeside Arts Centre, Builth Wells, Wales; Bush Theatre, London; Robin Hood Theatre, Averham; Hackney Empire, London; Citadel, St Helens; and the Royal Court Theatre, Bacup.

Third round grants recipients: Mill Theatre, Thurso; Nottingham Malt Cross Music Hall; Wakefield Theatre Royal; Playhouse Preston; and the Tom Thumb Theatre, Margate.

Fourth round grants recipients: Alnwick Playhouse; Beccles Public Hall and Theatre; Hoxton Hall, London; Tara Arts, London; and the Yvonne Arnaud, Guildford.

Andrew Lloyd Webber Foundation

The Andrew Lloyd Webber Foundation's principle objectives are to promote the arts, culture and heritage for public benefit. It was founded by Andrew Lloyd Webber in 1992. In April 2012, The Andrew Lloyd Webber Foundation awarded a grant of £125,000 to The Theatres Trust to help launch its Theatres Protection Fund Small Grants Scheme providing grants of up to £5,000. The Foundation hopes its donation, which is paid over 5 years, will encourage other organisations and individuals to give to the Scheme which will help protect theatres across the country that have significant value within their communities. andrewlloydwebberfoundation.com

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Judy Craymer MBE

Judy Craymer is the creator and global producer of MAMMA MIA!, the smash-hit musical based on the songs of ABBA. In September 2012 Judy Craymer matched the ALWF with her own personal donation £125,000 over five years. "MAMMA MIA!" has already been seen by more than 54 million people in over 400 cities across North America, Australia, Europe and Asia. There have been 39 productions in 14 languages. In 2008 Judy produced the movie adaptation of the musical, which became the highest grossing musical film ever worldwide, with the DVD becoming the biggest selling DVD ever in the UK. MAMMA MIA! is at the Novello Theatre. Further information: mamma-mia.com; Twitter @MammaMiaMusical; [facebook.com/mammamiamusical](https://www.facebook.com/mammamiamusical).

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