

# HEBDEN BRIDGE PICTURE HOUSE

## Annual Report

April 2014 – March 2015



### Town Mayor

Cllr Jonathan Timbers

### Chair of Picture House Committee

Cllr Nigel Yorke

### Picture House Manager

Rebekah Fozard and Richard Brown



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**Hebdens Royd Town Council**

# Report from the Chair of the Picture House Committee

*Cllr Nigel Yorke*



It is now three years since the asset transfer where Hebden Royd Town Council took over its 125 year lease of the magnificent Hebden Bridge Picture House. Much should be celebrated now and the leadership and operational team must be congratulated as the turn over for year ending March 2015 has increased to almost £400,000. Furthermore, retained profit has grown over the three years culminating in significant investments in digital projection, toilets, floor coverings and auditorium lighting and a current available surplus of over £75,000 to make further improvements including a planned refurbishment to the foyer area.

The business has been ably managed by Richard Brown during Rebekah Fozard's maternity leave. I'm pleased to note that Richard and the leadership team took part in an exciting strategic planning workshop in December 2014 and a new three year plan (2015 – 2018) for the continued success of the Picture House has been developed.

With thanks to the local community, our audience whom we are proud to serve, almost all areas of the business have improved and an overview of figures for these three years shows:-

- **Turnover has increased from just over £300k to almost £400k**
- **Trading surplus has increased from £7k to over £55k**
- **Ticket and hire income has increased from £233k to £278k with an audience of almost 52,000**
- **Screen advertising has increased from £5k to £11k**
- **Kiosk and bar sales have increased from £50k to £64k**
- **Shop unit rental has increased from £10k to £15k**

Not only have Hebden Royd Town Council successfully operated the site, proving its sustainability, financial viability and importance to the local community it is also committed to maintaining this unique building and service in the town. In order to achieve this we are focussing on the following three key areas of the business:-

- **Quality programming and quality hires**
- **The fabric of the building and its distinctive atmosphere**
- **Kiosk sales and advertising**

There are many people to thank for this success; the Picture House Committee of which I am chair, Jason Boom and the team at Hebden Royd Town Council, the Friends of the Picture House whose fundraising and guidance is valued by all, the entire team at the Picture House without whom none of this would be possible and last but certainly not least the local community whose support for this unique business goes from strength to strength.

## Report from the Manager

The first three years of a business is an important milestone to pass and I am proud to have continued Rebekah Fozard's success and taken the Hebden Bridge Picture House to new levels of success and sustainability.

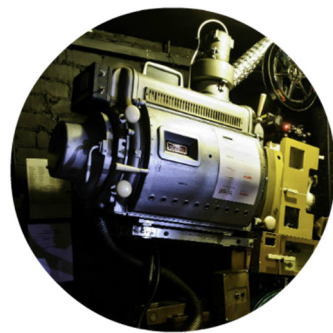
I have thoroughly enjoyed conducting a root and branch review of this much loved business. Many improvements and new services have been identified and will be introduced over the next three years. Some have already started including a review of the Health and Safety of the building; the safety of the staff and the public being absolutely paramount for the business.

We continue to invest in the building and have made a substantial investment in new, more efficient LED lighting in the auditorium and the foyer. The new system uses much less energy and requires far fewer bulb changes.

Plans are well under way for a complete refurbishment of the foyer area of the cinema to guarantee the type of quality experience expected by the loyal audience of the Picture House.

Two other key changes to the business that have without doubt contributed to its current success are working in partnership with The Independent Cinema Office (ICO) as our programming partner and the creation of the new Marketing Officer post.

***Richard Brown, Picture House Manager***



## Report from the Marketing Officer

Since my appointment as the Marketing Officer in summer 2014 I have made great efforts to improve the way we communicate with our audience, making our working practices as efficient as possible and constantly re-evaluating how we work.

We now have a marketing strategy in place identified by a SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats) analysis and current key financial and audience figures. We are working towards our key vision; to establish Hebden Bridge Picture House as the best single screen cinema in the UK.

The following objectives are now in place to ensure current marketing processes and procedures are effective:-

- Creating the monthly brochure within specified deadlines and its effective distribution
- Website is up to date, current and informative with films, live broadcasts and other products
- Newsletters distributed to subscribers throughout the month (Monthly programme, Live broadcasts, Specials and Parent & Baby)
- Increase engagement of social media platforms
- Maximise press coverage in the region and beyond
- Create and distribute all marketing materials ahead of time in-house, and throughout the community and beyond

***Lisa Murdoch, Marketing Officer, Hebden Bridge Picture House***



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**Hebden Royd Town Council**

# Report from the Clerk

Who would have thought that the Town Council would now be custodian of the Hebden Bridge Picture House. Its confidence as a stand-alone business continues to grow while showing appropriate regard for the users and the people of Hebden Royd who own and manage it. We continue to innovate while respecting the history of the service and support all our staff who provide users with the help they need.

After the initial excitement however certain realities are now starting to bite, the business plan is close to being overhauled with strategic thinking forming the core of all deliberations. As has been the case in the past the building needed to be invested in and this year has seen this work continue.

Planning ahead continues and we will give the kiosk the attention it deserves in the fullness of time.

## **2014 - 15 performance summary**

The Picture House has stable income streams now, growing slowly but without a doubt in a sustainable way. The variances in kiosk sales due to the bar being introduced have now stabilised and this new revenue is far more predictable. I continue to believe that the Picture House offers value for money in all areas, the kiosk especially, but we need to continue to support the kiosk to make the Picture House viable.

Costs remain under control with a close eye on the fees we pay to distributing companies, both cinematic and streaming. Staff, our other major cost remains steady and the effect of the Living Wage has been found to reflect expectations and proves to be justifiable.

As mentioned, the Picture House generates a surplus and has reinvested while it continues to serve the whole community.

As a publically accountable body financial information is available to all and should there be an interest to consider this information further it is available from myself at the Hebden Bridge Town Hall.

## Acknowledgements

For their continued support the staff of the Picture House remain invaluable.

ICO for continuing to provide advice and help and for putting together an enjoyable programme for so many, David Sin deserves particular mention.

The Friends of the Picture House for their fundraising, questioning and continued enthusiasm.

...and once again to the many regular visitors to the Picture House who continue to make the Picture House a vibrant venue.

***Jason Boom, Town Clerk, Hebden Royd Town Council***