



PRESS RELEASE FOR IMMEDIATE USE 1 MAY 2020

Your help needed as Streatham Hill Theatre Crowdfund Deadline Looms – it's all or nothing!

Campaigners to save Streatham Hill Theatre are asking for your help for a final push to meet their 25th May crowdfund deadline. If you haven't already pledged, please do what you can. If you have, can you spare a bit more please? Please encourage your family, friends and colleagues to follow your lead and help the campaign. If the target is not met on time, all pledges are lost!

The Friends of Streatham Hill Theatre are campaigning to reawaken Streatham's Grade II listed "sleeping beauty", the former Streatham Hill Theatre and latterly a bingo hall, as an arts/culture and entertainment venue for the community. We have had success in gaining Asset of Community Value status, supported by an amazing turn out of people for a flashmob photocall [\[photo available\]](#), covered by the BBC. We have seen the theatre attracting the help of the Theatres Trust and being placed on their "At Risk" register, and the potential regeneration of the theatre becoming part of Lambeth's "Local Plan" and "Streatham Investment and Growth Strategy" as a catalyst for local growth. We have recently gained help from the GLA's Culture at Risk team too. More widely, the campaign has received help and support from local people, community organisations and businesses, arts industry bodies and associations, and celebrities with a local connection, including Simon Callow and Catherine Russell who recently celebrated the theatre's 90th anniversary. [\[photo and video available\]](#)

The campaign is crowdfunding through Spacehive to fund a viability study to show all the stakeholders that there is a future for the theatre, such as by providing venues and workspaces as a beating heart for Streatham and the surrounding area. We need to raise about £36,000 to cover the costs of the study and report (including variable fees and platform charges) by 25th May. Many of you will have pledged to the fund since we launched in January and helped us meet an initial deadline to qualify for a £15,000 pledge from Mayor of London, Sadiq Khan, and the fund currently stands at around £28,500. We thank everyone for their support to date.

However, due to COVID-19 taking over all our lives and our finances, the pledging has slowed to a trickle and we are becoming concerned that we may not meet the 25th May deadline. If we

don't meet the target on time, we lose all those pledges and will not be able to press forward with the viability study. That will set back the campaign considerably as while we continue to talk to potential users and supporters of the revitalised building, we still need to demonstrate it has a sustainable future. If we can do that, we can hopefully unlock further support for the next phases of the journey. As we are beginning to talk about what happens after COVID-19, a plan involving the former theatre as that catalyst for recovery is even more urgent and important.

To find out more about our crowdfund and to pledge (your money will not be taken until after 25th May), just go to [save.streathamhilltheatre.org](https://www.save.streathamhilltheatre.org). Or if you would like to donate funds directly to us now, you can give by card or PayPal at streathamhilltheatre.org/donate. To get involved in the campaign, find out more at our website www.streathamhilltheatre.org and join our fortnightly online campaign meetings.

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Press enquiries, including photos and video:

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The Friends website www.streathamhilltheatre.org has press resources, including video and photographs of the campaign and the theatre.

Notes for Editors

1. The Save Streatham Hill Theatre crowdfunding campaign was launched on 28th January 2020. The campaign quickly become the most-backed crowdfunding campaign in the UK currently fund-raising on the platform, and received support from Sadiq Khan, Mayor of London. It has gained a huge groundswell of support from the local community, political leaders, and businesses, as well as support from the wider creative and heritage communities. Full details of the campaign are at www.save.streathamhilltheatre.org
2. Streatham Hill Theatre was opened in 1929. It was bombed in WW2 but was repaired and reopened in 1950. It closed to theatre in 1962, becoming a bingo hall. Much of the original theatre and its equipment remain. Small scale theatre returned via Streatham Theatre Company from 2013 to 2016. Bingo ceased in 2017, leaving only a small 24/7 slot machine lounge operated by leaseholders Praesepe plc.
3. The theatre has a stage the size of the London Palladium's stage and was designed by the architect, W.G.R Sprague who designed many of the great West End theatres including the Aldwych, Novello, and Gielgud Theatres.

4. The theatre was granted a Grade 2 listing in 1994 as “*an unusually lavish example of a theatre built in the short-lived revival of building in 1929-30; as a suburban example of this date the building may be unique*”. <https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/listentry/1244564>
5. The theatre was added to the Theatres Trust Theatres at Risk Register in 2017 when the bingo closed, with much of the building unused, and the risk of development or splitting off parts of the building a concern. <http://www.theatretrust.org.uk/how-we-help/theatres-at-risk/484-streatham-hill-theatre>
6. In 2018 Lambeth Council approved The Friends’ nomination of Streatham Hill Theatre as an Asset of Community Value (ACV), which was then appealed by the owners. After a flashmob demonstration of support by over 1000 people in November 2018, ACV status was confirmed in early 2019. More on our website www.streathamhilltheatre.org
7. Simon Callow was born in Streatham and went on to become a famous star of stage and screen, as well as an author. His most recent book is *London’s Great Theatres* with photographer Derry Moore.
8. Catherine Russell was born locally and lives in Streatham. She has extensive stage and screen experience but is currently best known for her role as Serena Campbell in the BBC medical drama *Holby City*.
9. A video of Catherine Russell and Simon Callow CBE speaking about their support for our campaign is here save.streathamhilltheatre.org
10. Crowdfund London is an initiative of the Mayor of London - see “*Mayor boosts local ‘good growth’ projects with £24 million*” at <https://www.london.gov.uk/press-releases/mayoral/mayor-boosts-good-growth-projects-with-24m>