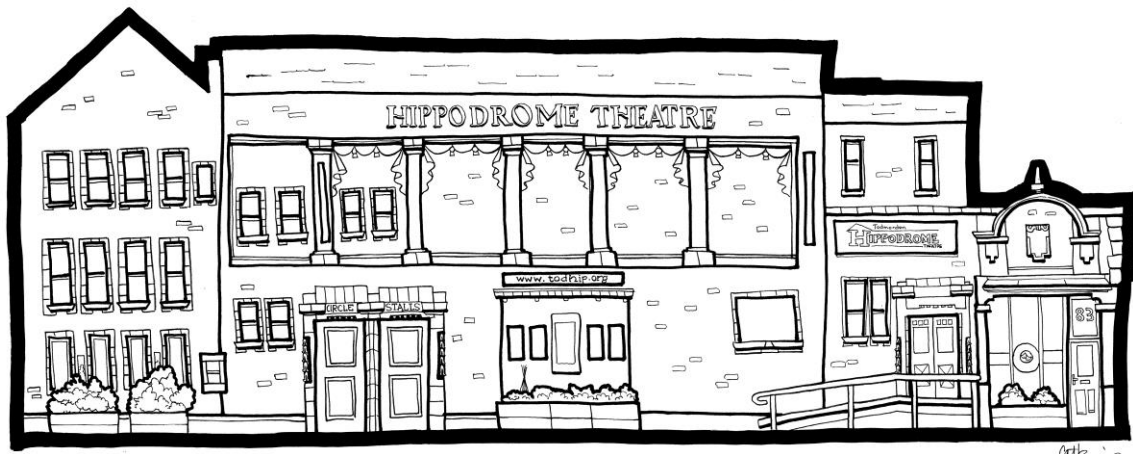


The Todmorden
HIPPODROME
THEATRE

About TAODS



One of the
UK's largest
volunteer
run theatres



The first and most important thing to know about TAODS is that we are one big theatre family, both figuratively and in some cases literally. We often refer to our theatre family, and many of the testimonials you may read from members on the site will reflect that for many the Hippodrome is a home from home. Many of our members are multi-generational and it isn't that uncommon to find third or even fourth generation families involved at the Hippodrome - A true testament to the welcoming, caring and inspiring place this is. The Hippodrome is unique, it is special.

Of course, our members are also our volunteers, and the Hippodrome exists and operates entirely because of the voluntary work that our members provide. In 2023, people gave over **73,000 hours of time to run our community theatre.** This includes members and regular volunteers but also members who now work professionally in the arts and have returned to train the next generation of volunteers.

We simply cannot thank you enough for all that you do.



2. About the Todmorden Amateur Operatic and Dramatic Society

- **MISSION:** To educate and entertain people in all aspects of the performing arts. To protect and secure the future of the Edwardian Hippodrome Theatre for the wider community.
- **VISION:** To create a space for the entire community to come together and create access to the performing and creative arts for all, where time and turnover is no limiting factor.
- **VALUES:** Our values give our charity and its volunteers, focus and a greater sense of purpose and engagement, reinforcing our broader goals and feeding into our decisions and work. Our values act as one of the building blocks of our culture, giving a consistent reference point, even in times of change. Our values are:

**Educate : Entertain : Access : Youth :
Community**

7. Who are the Todmorden Amateur Operatic and Dramatic Society?

The formal answer is that TAODS are the registered charity that own and run the Edwardian Hippodrome Theatre in Todmorden. But there's so much more to us than that!

We're a group of dedicated volunteers that saved the Hippodrome from closure in 1956, taking on a full repairing lease from the cinema firm that owned the Hippodrome. Initially formed of multiple societies, our volunteers have been running the theatre ever since that date. Our volunteer and membership base has expanded every year since then and were proud to say we still have volunteers from that date in 1956!

The Hippodrome had suffered from a lack of investment in previous years, so TAODS took on many repair jobs and started the long task of restoring the Edwardian Baroque interior. Money was tight, but fundraising meant repairs could start.

In 1986 TAODS were given first refusal to buy the Hippodrome and leapt at the chance, in full knowledge of the enormous amount of work required to restore and refurbish the Hippodrome.

For us, the members of TAODS, it has always been more than just putting on shows, it has been a long-term commitment to securing the future of the Hippodrome Theatre. So many small mill towns have lost their theatres and cinemas over the years, but here in Todmorden we're still going strong. We often joke that it's more like being part of an extended family than a hobby.

Producing plays and musicals, screening films, supporting other groups to stage their events at the theatre, we've gone from strength to strength. The COVID Lockdowns were a difficult time but our volunteers and our commitment to never having taken on debt saw us through and since reopening our audiences have flooded back in larger numbers than ever before. In October 2023, our Youth Theatre production of Joseph and the Technicolor Dreamcoat saw our largest audiences and income in our history for a Youth Theatre production, with sold out performances.

The strong community support, our increasing membership numbers and oversubscribed Youth Theatre show the desire and passion there is in our community for the Hippodrome and TAODS is proud to have looked after the Hippodrome for almost 70 years. Now we're looking to the next 70 years.....





Our volunteers are

One in a £Million

Our volunteers are not just a strength in our organisation; they are its very heart and soul.

In 2023, people gave over 73,000 hours of time to run our community theatre. This includes members and regular volunteers but also members who now work professionally in the arts and have returned to train the next generation of volunteers.

That equates to £1,000,000 of time volunteered to our charity



The King's Award for Voluntary Service

**In 2023, we received a nomination for the
Kings Award for Voluntary Service**

Created in 2002 to celebrate Queen Elizabeth II's Golden Jubilee and previously known as The Queen's Award for Voluntary Service (QAVS), the Award has been shining a light on the fantastic work of voluntary groups from across the UK for many years.

Equivalent to an MBE, KAVS is the highest Award given to local voluntary groups in the UK, and they are awarded for life.

As part of the assessment process, we were visited by the local Deputy Lord-Lieutenant and her team in January 2024 and hope to hear if we've been successful in November 2024, the very month that our Raise The Roof Project will start construction work.

What our supporters and members think of us

Public comments made after our Youth Theatre production of Joseph and The Technicolor Dreamcoat:

"The show was brilliant. All who took part on either the stage or behind the scenes should be so proud of themselves. The Hippodrome theatre has such a wonderful future."

"It was fantastic!! Felt so proud and lucky to have this theatre in our little town xx"

"Such a great show. Am so proud of them all. Thank you for providing such a great opportunity"

"Absolutely brilliant performance when we came on Weds with school. Credit to themselves and credit to the town. Well done everyone"

"I have only one word, Wow!! Such a fabulous production in every way - the cast, the staging (loved it) and the costumes (well done ladies they were so clever!) It is lovely to see young people working hard, enjoying themselves and absolutely shining! Seeing them fall in love with performing is wonderful- in my opinion, one of the best hobbies to follow! Well done to all those who have worked so hard to give all those young people an experience they will talk about for years! Xx"

Comments from members and volunteers

"The Hippodrome Theatre is a massive asset to Todmorden, not only putting on shows, but hosting other functions from weddings to funerals. It also keeps several young people off the streets, as our youth section is always active. All workers are volunteers. We do it for love. Having been involved for 26 years, it is my "second" home, and my lifeline. Being House Manager for many years I have met so many local people who have enriched my life."

"After playing Annie at the age of 11 at the Hippodrome, the theatre became a huge part of my life and also an amazing place to learn. I performed in many shows there with TOADS over the years and it gave me the bug to want to perform as a professional. It was always a welcoming, friendly, inspiring place and a wonderful place for the whole community to share their love for the theatre. I made many friends during my time at the Hippodrome, many of whom are still in my life now. I am still performing professionally nearly 40 years after playing Annie at the theatre, I am currently in the 25th Anniversary No. 1 UK Tour of The Full Monty for Mark Goucher Productions and have just appeared on BBC1's Doctors playing guest lead Tina Hanson. The Hippodrome will always have a special place in my heart for being the place where my dreams began to take reality!!"

"Todmorden Hippodrome occupies a special place in the heart of our town, serving as cultural and historical gem that plays a pivotal role in shaping Todmorden's unique place identity. Supporting the ongoing improvements project for this beloved institution is an endeavour of the utmost importance.

As a dedicated member of the Hippodrome community, I actively engage with its varied productions and take pride in promoting the society's activities and events, as well as supporting the day to day activity of TAODs. By investing in these much needed improvements, we are safeguarding this invaluable piece of our heritage, ensuring it continues to inspire generations to come"

"Being a member of the Todmorden Hippodrome from a very young age undoubtedly shaped my career path. When I was born both my parents and some of my grandparents were members, meaning I was brought up in and around the theatre. I got to watch my Grandpa paint sets, my Nan design wigs, my Dad and Godfather work behind stage and on lights, my Godmother lead the orchestra and my Mum direct. I was exposed to a magical world and saw the beauty of theatre from all angles; and it was clear, from being about 5, that theatre was what I wanted to do with my life. I joined the youth theatre as soon as I could, and learned acting, dancing and singing. Being in the HYT musicals every year are some of my happiest memories even now, and gave me the opportunity to perform in front of hundreds of people on a beautiful stage. I auditioned for drama school at 18 and was lucky enough to get a place, 5 years after graduating and I still go back and visit the Hippodrome as often as possible. Growing up in a working class family, being a member of the Hippodrome meant I was able to access high calibre theatre in a way my parents wouldn't have been able to otherwise provide - trips into Manchester or Leeds to watch large scale shows are very expensive! My talent and passion was nurtured there, and now as a professional actor I owe that building and its members so much"

"Being a volunteer at the Hippodrome has helped me to overcome my fear of isolation and depression. As a widow, I worried that I would struggle to find a new way to exist without my husband. Volunteering at the Hippodrome has introduced me to a warm and welcoming organisation and helped me to discover a new passion within myself"

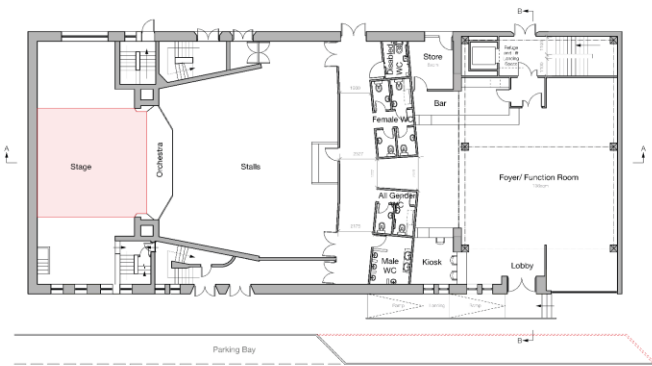
"The Todmorden Hippodrome gives the community a much-needed live performing arts venue. It gives its members a family to share a love of theatre with and a place to express creativity or simply to stay active and feel needed. To me personally, it made what could have been a lonely and very dull period of my life full of creativity, laughter, and friendship"

"The Hippodrome Youth Theatre is something so special to my heart that I really couldn't imagine my life as it is without it. It's helped developed my skills as an actor and as a consequence really opened me up as a much more confident person. As soon as the theatre doors opened again post-lockdown I could see others felt exactly the same. This space is home to extraordinary people, including my closest friends and family and deserves as much attention as possible"

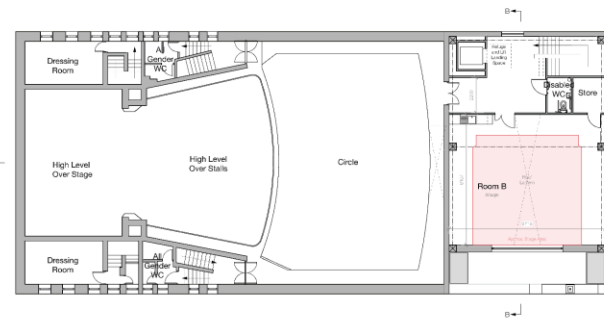
Over the following few pages are letters of support for TAODS. These have been in support of applications for grants and in support of our Raise the Roof Project that will expand the facilities of the current theatre and future proof us for generations to come.



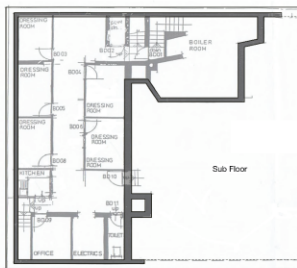
Not for Construction



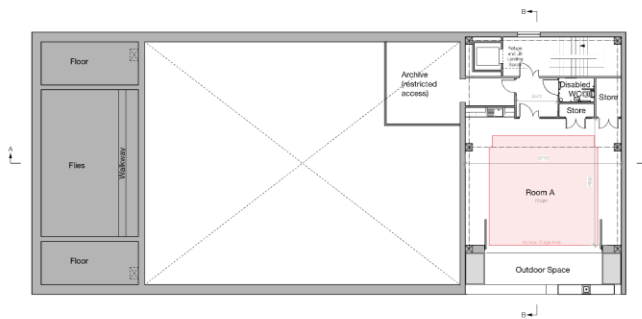
Ground Floor Plan



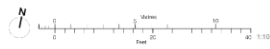
First Floor Plan



Basement Floor Plan

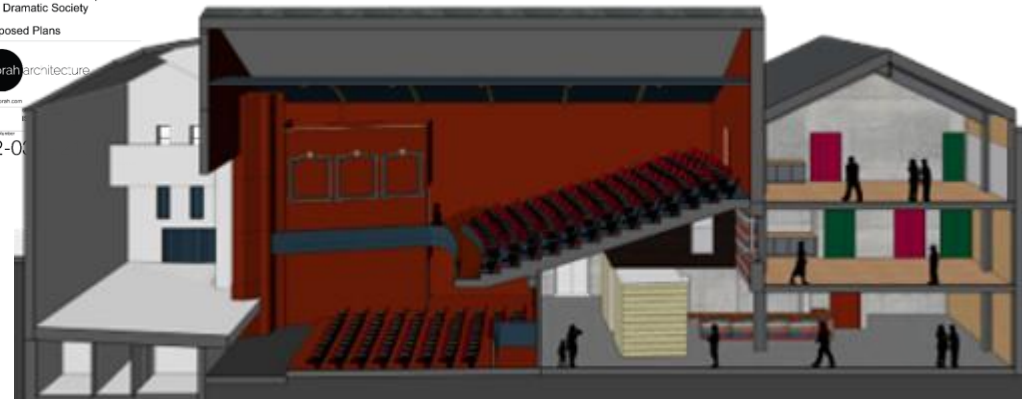


Mezzanine Floor Plan



D 13/06/22 LA Amendments following client comments.
 C 09/06/22 LA Additions to later block layout.
 B 10/05/22 LA Parking bay added.
 A 07/07/22 RM Approved following client discussion.
 Author:
Reordering and Extension
 Address:
Hippodrome Theatre,
Halifax Rd, Todmorden
 Client:
Todmorden Amateur Operatic
and Dramatic Society
 Drawn:
Proposed Plans

storah architecture
 www.storah.com
 Scale:
 1:100
 Drawing No: 22-01





Craig Whittaker MP

Member of Parliament for Calder Valley

Website: www.craigwhittaker.org.uk | Email: craig.whittaker.mp@parliament.uk

To Whom It May Concern

Our Ref: CW40996

13 September 2023

Dear Sir/Madam

Re: Support for Todmorden Hippodrome

I am incredibly excited to be able to offer my full support to the Todmorden Hippodrome in their attempt to raise additional funding to help them fulfil their exciting plans to expand the Theatre and and make this a building fit for the future and accessible to all.

The Hippodrome is one of the largest community run theatres and the Todmorden Amateur Operatic and Dramatic Society has run very successful productions for over 50 years. One of the most moving productions I went to see was the Accrington Pals in 2016 to mark those young soldiers who died in 1916 and never came back.

I would like to ensure that the TAODS remains part of the thriving community within Todmorden, attracting visitors from further a field. The theatre is very much part of the community, and people are extremely passionate about the historic buildings within the town. Vital funding will help and ensure that these buildings continue to be part of our heritage, yet at the same time, ensuring that the space is more accessible to all for the future.

Part of the exciting work includes a community cinema space, which will encourage younger people to use the building and will maximise the use of the building when theatre productions are not in operation.

It is so important that we continue to support the arts, this is not just about a performance, this is so much more, this is about developing young people with talent, providing them with more confidence, its about team work and communication, all of which are vital skills for all.

As well as expanding the theatre, the project will also provide more employment within the area.

I am fully behind the TAODS and would like to wish them all the very best with their funding applications – I would also plea to you that this is worth every penny of your considered investment.

Kind regards,

The Rt. Hon Craig Whittaker MP

Constituency Office:

Ground Floor, Lawson Road, Brighouse, HD6 1NY

Tel: 01484 711260



[craigwhittakermp](https://www.facebook.com/craigwhittakermp) |



[CWhittaker_MP](https://twitter.com/CWhittaker_MP) |



[craigwhittakermp](https://www.instagram.com/craigwhittakermp)

noda

Be inspired by amateur theatre

25th September 2023

Dear Sirs,

I am writing in support of grant application by TAODS (Todmorden Amateur Operatic & Dramatic Society) for their Raise The Roof project.

As National President of NODA (National Operatic & Dramatic Association) we strive to give amateur groups a voice in the wider community. I am an avid supporter of this group, who achieve so much. My relationship with TAODS began 12 years ago, whilst I was the Regional Councillor for NODA and continued when I was made President. As the Regional Councillor, I awarded TAODS (and specifically David Winslow) the Councillors Award for Outstanding Service to Amateur Theatre for their tireless work in the theatre and the youth so making it a real Community Hub.

TAODS are a local amateur society who work tirelessly and achieve stunning results. The group is run entirely by volunteers, who purchased the local theatre, The Todmorden Hippodrome, a 500 seat, Edwardian theatre from the local council, which is the only theatre in Todmorden, is an integral part of the community and has been for 100 years. The team have run the theatre with an operating surplus for 5 out of the last 6 years. Like SO many amateur groups Covid hit the arts, very badly, especially groups who, like TAODS owned their own theatre but were unable to open them or raise money for the upkeep of them.

Prior to Covid this dedicated team began the renovation of the entire building, employing professionals where necessary to ensure strict adhere to all safety regulations concerning theatres. Their aim is now to restructure the interior of the theatre.

The group provide a wide range of entertainment from all genres in an attempt to reach the whole community. An important factor being that the group run a youth group, to educate and entertain which runs with a constant waiting list. During the day the theatre operates as a cinema (The Electric Palace) with an entrance fee of only £1, showing contemporary, good films, meaning it is accessible to all. The importance of a thriving local group cannot be overstated, so many theatres have had to close, denying many young people and adults the opportunity to work together towards a common end, by building sets, rehearsing and performing together, as well as learning how the theatre runs. Some of these young people have gone on to careers in the arts. The sense of achievement has been proved to be highly beneficial in preventing some of the mental pressures which have been so publicised as a direct result of the pandemic.

As a frequent member of the audience for both adult and youth productions, the standard is excellent and hugely diverse, and the enthusiasm and energy is second to none.

I wholeheartedly support their application funding with particular emphasis on the upkeep of a Edwardian Building, the significant involvement of young people, and the proven benefits to mental health and well-being of the community in reducing loneliness and isolation, that such

a venue provides.

Yours faithfully,

Christine Hunter Hughes (Mrs)
NODA National President

Christine Hunter Hughes – NODA President

Llamedos, 2 Pool House Lane, Ingol, Preston PR2 7DQ

christine.hunterhughes@noda.org.uk

01772 728817

07788 512223

National Operatic and Dramatic Association

15 The Metro Centre, Peterborough PE2 7UH

Tel 01733374790 Fax 01733237286 Email info@noda.org.uk

Web www.noda.org.uk Twitter @NODAtweets Facebook

NationalOperaticDramaticAssociation

Registered CIO charity number 1171216 Registered company number 241572 Registered in England and Wales at the above address.

Patrons: The Lord Lloyd Webber and Connie Fisher



London Office
115-119 Shaftesbury Avenue
London
WC2H 8AF

Postal Address
Phoenix Theatre
110 Charing Cross Road
London
WC2H 0JP
020 7438 9600

October 2023

Todmorden Hippodrome Theatre
Letter in support of Grant Application

I am writing this letter of support for Todmorden Hippodrome Theatre, and this Grant Application.

I have been a member of Todmorden Hippodrome Theatre since 1983, when I joined the youth theatre, then called TOYS (*Todmorden Operatic Youth Theatre*). Since my first show in 1984, the theatre has been to me, like many others, home.

It was a chance encounter that resulted in my walking through the theatre doors back in the 80's – I had, by chance, bumped into a friend who was going to the Hippodrome, and he said 'why don't you come along, they're always looking for boys', so I did. **My life changed forever in that moment.**

I performed, directed, produced, lit, stage managed, worked bar, sold ice creams, served on committee, fell in love, married, had children, was embraced by life-long friends, and now, not only do I still perform and direct there when I can, but my children go to youth theatre; like ripples on a pond, the circle grows.

The theatre not only gave me valuable, transferable life skills, but it gave me a role to play in my community, it brings people together, whatever cultural or social background, whatever school, whatever age, sexual orientation, or race, the beating heart of any community is the arts. From festivals to film, musicals to plays, and everything in between, the Hippodrome, through its volunteers, has created it, built it, staged it and performed it.

For me, the Theatre, and just as importantly the people, put down a foundation stone from which I have developed a professional career in the arts.

THE AMBASSADOR THEATRE GROUP LIMITED
2nd Floor Alexander House Church Path Woking Surrey GU21 6EJ

Registered Office: 2nd Floor Alexander House Church Path Woking Surrey GU21 6EJ



In 1999, I applied for a job as General Manager of National and International touring theatre company called Horse + Bamboo. It was a long shot. I'd never worked in the arts at that stage, but I wanted to desperately. I was offered the job, and after a short period of time, I was talking to the Chief Executive and I asked what it was that made them pick me out of all the experienced candidates – He stood up and went into the office, and came back. He slid my reference across the table to me, and it was written by David Winslow, the Chairman of the Hippodrome.

It was such a wonderful and warm reference, written from the heart, and detailed everything he knew I could do, and that they would be lucky to have me. This was the starting point of my professional career in the arts, all thanks to a reference written by the Chairman of my local theatre – he'd known me since I was 11, and he believed in what I could do.

Jump forward 23 years, and two Executive Director roles, a Chair of Board, Three Theatre Director positions, and a regional director post, I am now Director of London and West End Theatres for Ambassador Theatre Group, and my venues include The Lyceum (*Lion King*), Apollo Victoria (*Wicked*), Savoy (*Sunset Boulevard*), Piccadilly (*Moulin Rouge*), Phoenix (*Stranger Things*), Fortune (*Operation Mincemeat*), Harold Pinter (*Dr Semmelweis*), Playhouse (*Cabaret*), Duke of Yorks (*Vanya*), and Ambassadors (*Private Lives*).

Without the theatre, I would not have the life, career and friends that I do – I am very grateful, and I know this grant application will help ensure that the beating heart of our community will continue to bring people together, to create, share, bond and experience.

I support this application fully, and am more than happy to discuss the letter of support if you need any further information

Andrew Rawlinson
Director – London & West End

October 2023

THE AMBASSADOR THEATRE GROUP LIMITED
2nd Floor Alexander House Church Path Woking Surrey GU21 6EJ

Registered Office: 2nd Floor Alexander House Church Path Woking Surrey GU21 6EJ