

Meeting of Westenders Drama Group 8th May 2022 – St David's Church Hall

Present: Ron Cairns (chair), Andrew Murphy (vice-chair), Ewan Walker (secretary/treasurer), Helen Cairns, Sheila Hay, Darren Wilson, Mhairi & Archibald

Apologies: Briar Rose

Ronnie opened the meeting and welcomed Mhairi and Archibald to the group for the first time.

1) Upcoming Show

Following on from our discussions last week, Andrew had spoken to his contacts in Grangemouth about perhaps supporting us at a show in June. He explained that this had received a mixed response, mainly as many of them were fresh off stage, and he could revisit this with them during the week.

However, the group discussed the viability of putting on a show in June and concluded that there were too few community based acts in the area to make a variety show, and time was too short to prepare any kind of play. As a result, it was decided to cancel any plans for a show at the end of June.

Instead, we will focus our energies on making our Christmas pantomime the event of the year, rebounding from Covid with a bang. Helen is in the midst of writing a script for a pantomime. She explained that the basis at the moment is Little Red Riding Hood and the characters she encounters on her way through the forest, although the script is still in its infancy.

We will begin rehearsals for the pantomime in September, with our performance as usual over the first weekend of December (1st, 2nd, 3rd) provisionally.

2) Promotion and Advertising

In the meantime, there needs to be a focus on advertising the group and attracting new members to join us. Ewan has begun preparing a leaflet which can be delivered in the local area. It was agreed we should begin this leafleting campaign in August to begin casting and rehearsals in September.

Ewan and Darren also briefly discussed how best to use social media to our advantage to attract an audience. The group has a Facebook page which is managed by Ewan, although it has been mainly static for a while. Ewan agreed to prepare a series of Facebook advertisements once we know for definite what the Christmas pantomime will be. These can start out as subtle teasers to draw people in, before building up to a big reveal. These adverts will be targeted to those living in the local area.

The group also has a Twitter feed, which has been muted since 2018. Darren suggested we revive this, as well as creating an Instagram profile.

Ewan also manages the website, but this has not been updated since 2018. Over the coming weeks and months, Ewan will look at rectifying this.

We also have a banner, which will be attached to the railings outside the church, in an attempt to attract the attention of passers-by.

Ewan noted that in the past, we have relied on people getting in touch with us when they are interested, and suggested we need to get better at keeping a register of interested people so we can contact them later on and invite them to join us when we begin rehearsals.

3) **Bank Account**

Helen contacted Nationwide during the week to enquire about opening a new bank account and closing the account with TSB. Nationwide have said they don't offer that type of account any more. We may have no choice but to stick with TSB, although it is likely to be a long, drawn out process to add Ewan as a signatory on the account. Ronnie plans to make some enquiries about the community bank at Wester Hailes.

Andrew has a receipt for the purchase of blinds to cover the windows. He agreed to send this to Ewan by email. He had originally requested that the money for the blinds be donated back to the group as recompense for his borrowing of the lights to use with another group. However, the group vetoed this and agreed Andrew's use of the lights was free of charge.

4) **Date of Next Meeting**

We will meet again on Sunday 26th June at 1pm. If any new members are interested, they are to be encouraged to come along. We will discuss final plans for the pantomime and agree on a schedule for leafleting.

There may be a need for a committee meeting in the interim but this will be agreed with the office bearers.