



Phoenix Cinema seeks sponsor for second screen

By David Gritten

The Phoenix Cinema has submitted plans to build a second screen to widen the range of films it can show and has appealed for a sponsor or major donors to help it get the transformative project under way.

Executive director Oliver Meek told *The Archer* that the cinema was seeking approval from Barnet Council to convert its upstairs café area into a little boutique screen suitable for smaller-scale screenings and as a home for popular films after they have played on the main screen.

sponsor the new screen. We think that person is out there somewhere as we've had some very generous donors in the past."

Alison pointed out: "If we have even a small extra screen, that's a few thousand admissions more a year. It's the extra choice of being able to



Art Deco: The Phoenix's auditorium may soon be joined by a second screen

The idea of a second screen has been mulled over by Phoenix executives for a long time but was put on hold by the profound financial uncertainty of recent years. Audiences have been loyal and appreciative and until 2020 there was a high level of memberships. "But in the wake of Covid, it had shrunk to a really small number," says Alison Gold, chair of the Phoenix Cinema Trust.

Head start donor sought
As a result, the cinema is hoping to find a financial backer for the new screen. The amount of base funding to get the project off the ground is expected to be between £50,000 and £100,000.

Oliver said: "We need someone to help us get a head start who would be prepared to make a larger donation or

have two films on at once, and even a small screening room could create that flexibility. It's been talked about here since the 1980s.

"We've been doing the work to prepare for all this, so our planning application is currently with Barnet Council. All the necessary behind-the-scenes steps have been happening.

"And once we've got the base funding – it could be from a generous individual, but we're also looking at funding sources – we're confident we could fund the rest to make this happen. But it's the missing piece in the jigsaw, really."

The Phoenix Cinema opened in 1912 as The Picture-drome and then redesigned and reopened as The Rex in 1938. It has been run by the Phoenix Cinema Trust since 1985.



On the road: Food Bank Aid volunteers take delivery of their new truck from Tesco representatives

New van gives food bank charity some much-needed va-va-voom

By Ian Cormack

Food Bank Aid (FBA) was presented with a new delivery van by Tesco last month and the organisation has described it as a "game changer".

FBA, based at the Great North Leisure Park in North Finchley, is not a food bank in itself but a hub that donates to 21 north London food banks, has connections with 85 schools and is run by 250 volunteers.

Four Tesco representatives handed over the keys to Naomi Russell, the founder of FBA, their CEO Celia Davis and the trustees, along with some volunteers at the company's Colney Hatch Extra superstore.

Game changer

The 3.5 ton automatic van is fully liveried with FBA's logo, can be driven on an ordinary licence and takes 120 crates. Naomi declared it a game

changer considering that, at present, 24 cars are needed each week to deliver to Tottenham alone.

She said it will be greener, better for the environment and a huge milestone in the growth of the charity. Demand for its services have risen 20% recently and Naomi wishes to raise awareness, get more "amazing" volunteers involved and educate the next generation.

Partnership

Tesco's Fleet Integration Manager Emma Elston stated they were very proud to help their local community, especially when people were struggling with basic food problems.

The company had been surprised when they realised the difference their donation would make and are looking to establish a longer term partnership. A maintenance team may investigate improvements at the hub and possibly assist them to buy in bulk. Tesco are now rolling out electric vehicles countrywide in line with their aims for improving the environment.

The final word was from FBA's hub and general administrator, Richard Adler, who said he found driving the van back to their base surprisingly easy despite shaking with nerves and excitement.

Donate digital devices to help the planet

By Diana Cormack

Did you treat yourself to some new electronic equipment for Christmas or maybe you have some unused desktops, laptops or tablets cluttering up your cupboards? If so, as long as they are working and under eight years old, you can start the year by taking a step towards saving the planet by donating these unwanted machines to 2second Chance.

This not-for-profit Community Interest Company (CIC) based in Hendon re-cycles and refurbishes such electrical goods, saving them from going to landfill and preventing them from being added to this country's huge electrical waste pile.

As well as giving these machines a new lease of life, the company offers free accredited training programmes for people who are not in education, employment or training.

Collected free of charge,

devices undergo secure data destruction before being worked on by a supervised team of trainees. That means your donations will also help to provide people who have learning difficulties and other special needs with meaningful accredited training and employment opportunities.

Additionally, some refurbished machines are sold on at affordable prices to fund the programme. In an attempt to bridge the digital divide, others

are made available to those in the community who need them and can also be passed on by referral. 2secondChance is encouraging schools and businesses to participate in their scheme.

Find out how and where

Equipment can be donated at local libraries, including East Finchley's, but only when library staff are present to deal with any queries or paper work involved. Visit www.2secondChance.co.uk for further details.

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