

Press Release

For immediate release

**GREENWICH THEATRE SECURES LONG TERM FUTURE**

In a historic moment, this week Greenwich Theatre Ltd has signed a long lease with the Royal Borough of Greenwich, securing the future of the south London venue.

At a time when arts budgets are being slashed and companies are facing grant cuts across the country, the agreement with the Council provides the company with security of tenure for the next 24 years, on a peppercorn rent, which equates to an estimated £2million in rent relief over the period.

In return, as a registered charity, the theatre has committed to continue its programme of outreach and engagement activities, from work in schools to festival events and subsidised ticket price initiatives, all offered in parallel with a nationally significant programme of in-house productions, national touring companies, emerging artist support and family theatre.

The company’s annual pantomime, now regularly hailed as one of the finest traditional pantomimes in the country, provides over 10,000 subsided children’s tickets every year. The 2023-24 production of *Snow White* received three prestigious Offie nominations, and plans are now well underway for 2024-25’s production of *Dick Whittington and his Cat* by Anthony Spargo.

The renewed commitment by the Council also offers the charity a more secure basis from which to embark on a long-term programme of fundraising to support improvements to the fabric of the theatre building in Crooms Hill and expand the reach of its activity.

**Chair of Trustees Nigel Fletcher said:**

*“This agreement marks the start of an exciting new era for Greenwich Theatre, and a new relationship with the Royal Borough. There is a bright future ahead, and this long-term lease provides us with the security we need to face future challenges with confidence. I look forward to working with our dedicated staff, supporters and local people across Greenwich as we secure the theatre’s place at the heart of the community for many years to come.”*

**Artistic Director James Haddrell said:**

*“This marks the culmination of years of work by our small and incredibly dedicated staff team and represents the latest stage in the development of the company. In our most ambitious year to date, alongside the signing of the lease, over 1,000 children from Greenwich and beyond are set to perform on our stage this year, while we will also present new productions of work by two acclaimed modern British playwrights, two world premiere family productions, the return of the Greenwich Children’s Theatre Festival and a host of exciting visits from some of the country’s most significant touring companies. With the lease in place we can now look beyond the immediate future and start to make some major long-term plans.”*

**Councillor Adel Khaireh, Cabinet Member for Equality, Culture and Communities, said**:

*“The Greenwich Theatre has a long history hosting live entertainment in the Royal Borough of Greenwich to audiences of all ages and plays an important role not just in our local economy, but as part of our community.*

*“By hosting spaces where people can laugh and escape to faraway lands through the power of storytelling and creativity, these organisations are crucial to encouraging social cohesion and creating a place where people can connect with each other.*

*Renewing this lease with Greenwich Theatre helps ensure we have a strong voluntary and community sector in Royal Greenwich that enhances our town centres and high streets to create vibrant, inclusive and healthy communities, where our residents and businesses can flourish.”*

Ends

For further information, interviews and images, please contact James Haddrell, Artistic Director, at j.haddrell@greenwichtheatre.org.uk

Notes to editors

Greenwich Theatre, owned by the Royal Borough of Greenwich, has been a home for live entertainment since 1855, and has been operated by Greenwich Theatre Ltd on a Tenancy At Will basis since 1969.

The lease includes a ten year programme of building improvements targeting energy efficiency, improved access and enhanced facilities for artists and audiences.

The theatre’s Offie-nominated return to producing led by artistic director James Haddrell has included work by Michael Frayn, Caryl Churchill, Harold Pinter, Philip Ridley and Mike Bartlett, with family work by Russ Tunney, Anthony Clarke, Tracy Power, Sally Cookson, Adam Peck and Le Navet Bete.

An online programme during the pandemic included a string of premieres including work by Caryl Churchill and Steven Berkoff, and an online appearance by Dame Helen Mirren.

Full production listings can be found at [www.greenwichtheatre.org.uk](http://www.greenwichtheatre.org.uk)