

PET(4)-07-11 p9a

## **P-03-306 Save Barry Theatre**

### **Petition wording**

We call upon the National Assembly for Wales to urge the Welsh Government to protect and preserve the Theatre Royal, Barry so that it can still be developed and used as a theatre, cinema and Community Arts and Cultural Centre.

**Petition raised by:** Theatre Royal Arts and Cinema Trust

**Number of signatures:** 142

### **Supporting information:**

The Theatre Royal has been central to the community of Barry since 1910. It closed its doors in April 10<sup>th</sup> 2008 when the lease expired and since then has remained empty.

TRACT has campaign tirelessly to reopen the Cinema for the past three years which culminated into a offer at the full market value to purchase the property in 2009. Unfortunately this offer was rejected and the building remains boarded up and empty.

A statement was made on behalf of Hafod Housing regarding redeveloping the site as an Extracare Facility which has met with fierce opposition from the community as a whole however, no planning application has been filed to our knowledge.

The Theatre Royal was opened in 1910 provided an important role to the community firstly as a performing theatre staging a range of entertainment given by touring and local companies. The transition from stage to cinema use was made in the 1930's. In the 1900's the history of the building included visits from General Booth, the leader of the Salvation Army and Samson billed as the strongest man on earth.

Local connections included Victor Sylvestor who was organist and musical director in the late 20's early 30's who is related to a local businessmen working in the town today. In 1910 completion of the Theatre Royal advertising curtain was given to Mr Leon Hook, sign artist. The Hook sign writing business is in its fourth generation in the town.

The Theatre Royal is older than the towns Memorial Hall. Parts of the old theatre still remaining include, the stage, proscenium, dressing rooms,

basement corridors and the possibility of other undiscovered areas as they have been bricked up. When opened the theatre had a room garden on top of the shops to the side of the building. It was agreed to be entered on the Vale of Glamorgan Council County Treasure List in April 2008 and it is also on the at risk list with the Theatres Trust London.

Rather than see a change of use or redevelopment, we believe the buildings 100 year heritage is of a significant value that can be related through its history. In preserving this, it is something the community could fully recognise and appreciate while utilising the amenities it is still capable of providing.