



Support the Arts Centre West London Deserves, in the Heart of Brentford

Watermans' view on the plans for our relocation

For over 30 years, Watermans has been providing a year-round programme of independent cinema, theatre, comedy, cabaret, exhibitions, workshops, festivals and more. We operate as a registered charity and social enterprise and any money we make is ploughed back into the community.

We now have a once-in-a-generation opportunity to make a step change in what we can offer: to create an inspiring artistic and social hub for West London, with Brentford at its beating heart. The proposals for Watermans' relocation are not simply about a new building but about the kind of arts and creative scene we want in this area for the future. And we need your help to do this.

The opportunity is to deliver a world-class arts centre that will put Brentford on the cultural map, ignite its economy and inspire its residents, as well as the visitors we attract from around West London. We have a vision for a venue that will simultaneously present an inspiring world-class artistic programme, and be Brentford's living room, a community hub underpinned by Watermans' continuing ethos of inclusivity, diversity, humanity and a welcome to all.

But we don't simply want to transpose what we do in our current building into a new one. We want people to be inspired the moment they walk through our doors while feeling welcomed and at home. We want them to have an experience that they want to talk about. To do this the building must provide:

- A theatre suitable for world-class touring theatre, circus, live music and dance
- Two cinemas and a larger gallery to enable film festivals, live screenings and larger-scale exhibitions attracting top artists
- Social spaces for people to meet and relax, with fresh and exciting food and drink

And finally we want a Watermans that will be financially self-sufficient so that we can provide our services for many years to come, and continue to operate as a social enterprise meaning that every penny is put back into the community.

What's happening?

We have the opportunity to move into a new building in the centre of Brentford, on the site of the old police station, nearer to transport links and shops and in the heart of the community we serve. We are in discussion with the developer London Green and London Borough of Hounslow to set up an agreement to achieve this.

We know that many have expressed concern over the loss of our riverside location, and of course this has been a major consideration for us too. We have looked carefully at all the options, and consulted widely, and we believe that the gains will far offset this loss. We must look to the future. We need bigger, better, modern facilities to enable us to be the kind of artistic and social hub that this part of West London needs and deserves. The sale of our current site is the only serious option for finding the money to achieve this. And even if this were not the case, a central Brentford location is far superior in terms of footfall, transport and community links than where we are sited now.

But our vision is not assured yet. The plans that have recently been submitted by the developer deliver only a little more than we have in our current space. They do not allow for the size of theatre we need to make a step change to a world-class programme. And as a result, neither do they support the level of catering partners we want to involve. Nor, currently, do they enable us to be financially self-sufficient.

We believe this part of West London deserves more, but to provide the additional facilities we will need to find an extra £6m investment. We are actively looking at ways to raise this money but we need to show that you, the community, are behind us.

You can help make this happen

If you would like to see a world-class artistic programme, a community hub like no other in West London and an independently run social enterprise investing back into the community, please join our campaign for a World Class Watermans and share your support and comments.

Please write to us or post on social media stating your support or point of view:

Email us at WorldClass@watermans.org.uk

Post on social media using the hashtag #WorldClassWatermans @WatermansArts