# Regal Cinema celebrates Christmas with funding win

22/12/2010

The news will be warmly welcomed by Tenbury Town Council and the cinema volunteers, who have campaigned passionately to see the Grade II listed Art Deco building restored and conserved.

Unlike many cinema's of the period which have fallen into disrepair and dereliction, the construction of a community centre at the rear of the building in the 1980s has seen the Regal Cinema act as a focal point for local groups and activities ever since.

Built to replace the New Picture House, which was on the site since 1917, the Regal Cinema was acquired by the Council in 1972. Located on Teme Street in Tenbury town centre it has been cited an excellent example of a 1930s 'super cinema' constructed on miniature scale. Designed by specialist cinema architect Ernest Robert, it is nationally recognised by the Cinema Theatre Association as having 'one of the most astonishing auditorium decorations of 1930s cinemas in Britain' in the form of a painted mural by George Legge - a 'trompe l'oeil' Italian scene around three sides of the interior. Currently in poor condition and suffering from water ingress through its roof and walls, the grant money will ensure that this precious 20th century artwork is conserved and saved for future generations.

Anne Jenkins, Head of the Heritage Lottery Fund for the West Midlands, explained the importance of the award: "The Regal Cinema is a real local community hub and widely used by a variety of groups from amateur dramatics to brass band playing, arts societies and local charity functions among many other uses. The HLF grant will ensure that as well as being able to preserve the interior, the council can now develop further educational activities and interpretation for people of all ages so they can learn about the past of this beautiful building while using it today."

Community activities to be run in conjunction with the project include the recruitment and training of volunteers to carry out research for a booklet, oral histories to be recorded and made into a CD, cinema tours, a teacher/student resource pack called 'Producing the Regal', and a young people's annual film project.

Neville Topping, Project Manager and Grant Administrator, said: "This is a tremendous collective success. The Town Council, local enthusiasts, building users, design consultants, professional advisers and the Heritage Lottery Fund have worked together to ensure the future of the Regal and everyone involved should be proud of their contribution."

The Mayor of Tenbury Wells, Councillor Elizabeth Weston, said: "News of the award has been greeted with absolute delight by Councillors and townsfolk. It is a wonderful Christmas gift for Tenbury Wells to know that part of its heritage will be preserved for future generations."

**Notes to editors:**

* The HLF grant to the project The Regal Cinema is for £681,300 (90% of project costs) and is a confirmed award.

Using money raised through the National Lottery, the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) sustains and transforms a wide range of heritage for present and future generations to take part in, learn from and enjoy. From museums, parks and historic places to archaeology, natural environment and cultural traditions, we invest in every part of our diverse heritage. HLF

has supported more than 33,900 projects, allocating over £4.4billion across the UK, including £319million to projects in the West Midlands alone.

**Further information**

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