

EQUITY LONDON SOUTH

June Branch Meeting

16th June 2026
Old Vic Backstage

Attending: Zhu Meng, Claude Starling, Joseph Hardy, Julie Corbett, Lynette Dundas, Neil Kelly, Nerissa Gamboa, **Nicky Goldie**, Rosie Armstrong, **Saudiq Baoku**, **Su Gilroy** [Guest Speaker, Marine Theatre], Tom Benjamin, Zhivila Roche, **Fiona Whitelaw**, **Jay Lafayette Valentine**, **Amanda Grace**, **Maria Tyminski**, Andrew Beckett [Guest Speaker, Sidmouth Repertory Theatre], **Emily Carpenter**, **Helen Oakleigh**

[NB: Unbolded names RSVPed as requested via Eventbrite; bolded names also registered attendance at opening of Branch Meeting.]

On Zoom: Dawn Spragg, Diane Meaney, John McKenzie, Sally McKenna, Clive Brill [Guest Speaker, Frinton]

Apologies: Annie Fitzmaurice, Issam Al Ghussain, Gerald Dorrity, Tim Block

Agenda

Minutes from Last Meeting

- No Amendmends

Treasurer's Update - via Fiona Whitelaw

- Council has agreed that Committee can adopt Rosie Armstrong to Secretary

Campaign Officers' Update - Maria Tyminski

- Friends of Streatham Hill Theatre
 - link to the website
- New Actors' Centre
 - free membership until 19th June
- Tolpuddle Festival
 - deadline to express interest has passed
- Report from Issam al Ghussain
 - link
- Council Elections
 - send your postal vote by 24th June

Council Report - Fiona Whitelaw

- Officers have met with Universal Credit team
- current union membership as of May: 48,630
- review of Motions remitted to Council, including Midlands' motion re: Equity travelcard
 - response was no due to workability
 - operations report about our data system

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- original system was commissioned 20 years ago, so we are looking for new options
- Rules Review
- discussion on Political Fund motion
 - whatever is decided won't go to vote until the law changes and union ballots can happen online
- Claude requested reminder on Spotlight appeal
 - scheduled for November

Motion

- proposed by Amanda Grace
- seconded Fiona Whitelaw
- CS requested information about why this wasn't proposed by DDMC
- SG spoke about Dan Edge's role in the CBC and the fact the slur was not identified
- discussion around staff who don't know who the DDMC are & expression of frustrations
- No speakers for or against
- Vote
 - 15 in favour, 0 against, 2 on Zoom

Repertory Theatre Guest Speakers

- Su Gilroy, Marine Theatre
 - has been involved in 98 plays in rep as SM, Producer or Director
 - wrote her MA dissertation on commercial rep
 - since 2024, run on an Equity House agreement based on National Minimum Wage
 - Q&A
 - unable to pay subsistence thus far, but most actors are housed by local residents for £25/night
- Andrew Beckett, Sldmouth
 - feels rep died in the 80s because the business model is incredibly tricky
 - Q&A
 - rep actors tend to learn script on the job — usually sitting on the beach together
 - looking for more funding
- Clive Brill, Frinton Summer Theatre
 - 30 June - 30 August, 8 shows in 8 weeks
 - decided to move from rehearsal in day / performance by night to having 10 days' rehearsal before 6-7 performances with different actors arriving every week (50 actors this season)
 - on Equity House agreement - actors are housed rather than given subsidies
 - Q&A
 - stage manager qty: 1 for SM, 1 for LX, 1 for prod management
- General Q&A
 - How many actors do you have?
 - 4-7ish
 - How did rep start?
 - In retaliation to actor-manager companies & stock companies
 - About the play, about the writer's message, about the people
 - How much can you push the taste of local audiences?
 - The 'Thinking Person's Play Slot'
 - Everyone loves Richard Harris
 - How do you cast?

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- balancing calling actors we know & trust with the commitment to bringing in new & representative talent
- 10-Year Repeat Rule

Sheila Mitchell's Obituary from Sarah Ford

- link to MuchGiving
- 24th at Mortlake Cemetery
 - might we be able to bring the W & SW banner to the funeral?
 - maybe Daniel

Tolpuddle Festival

- held in memoriam of the Tolpuddle Martyrs, widely attended by unions
- FREE to attend, we're working with Equity staff to organise chartering a bus
- 19th July

Member Updates

- Su Gilroy has a rep season
- Emily Carpenter has a table read at the end of August
- Zhu Meng has a cabaret performance and a role in Avenue Q at Edinburgh Fringe
 - and is seeking a composer & producer
- Helen Oakleigh facilitate script reads
 - can contact on Instagram
- Amanda Grace has an audiobook
- Claude Starling's Aldi advert is renewed
- Saudiq played a Valerian sailor in the upcoming season of House of the Dragon on 21st June

AOB

- Nicky
 - Some theatre producers are asking for references ahead of offers being made
 - Who are they asking?
 - e.g. would Equity Deps be given negative feedback
 - Requested to forward it to us to take to the West End official
- Claude
 - New mayor of Croyden has launched Crolleywood working group to bring together film industry members to bring opportunities to locals
 - getting that info for maybe potential future events?
- Joseph
 - has started a petition with Emma in the Welfare office against the mandate of commercial software for Making Tax Digital
 - sending us the petition link: Create a Government-Owned, Free Software for Making Tax Digital
 - Making Tax Digital Mailing List