

| Variety Officer Report | | | |
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| Branch Meeting Date: | 14/04/2025 | Report Date: | 14/04/2025 |
| Branch: | London South | Prepared by: | Belle Fin |
| | | Role: | Variety Officer |
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| Key dates: | Comedians' Network Meeting | 11/06/2025 @2pm | |
| | Branch Variety Officers Meeting | 15/10/2025 @2pm | |
| | VO Training | TBC | |
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| General matters: | | | |
| Branch Variety Officers Meeting | | | |
| <p>Fair Play Cabaret: Also discussed at the Comedians's network. See link below for more information</p> | | | |
| <p>Edinburgh Fringe 2025: Much of the discussion was around the Edinburgh Fringe and how Equity should support performers. There was some discussion around the possibility of Equity working more closely with organisations such as Fringe Connect (separate from the Fringe Society) and the Live Comedy Association as a way to promote Equity membership. The Fringe Society has lots to offer performers to support them during their time at the Fringe, such as networking, tutorials as well as everything on offer from Fringe Central, such as the general question drop-in station and mental health drop-in centre.</p> | | | |

Other comedy events for 2025:a) Leicester Comedy FestivalEquity sponsored a Circuit Breaker event for new comedians at the festival and we held an event about 'How to get paid in comedy and ensuring that you don't get ripped off'. We'll look to do something similar next year.b) Glasgow Comedy FestivalWas covered by our regional staff based in Glasgow.c) Brighton FringeWe always have a presence along with regional staff in the South East and we have an active Equity branch there. It was raised by members present that it feels that the city council doesn't work in tandem with the festival unfortunately and it would be great if they did more to improve this.d) Camden Comedy Festival is growing every year, as is Bath Comedy Festival which is run by Nick Steel.

Social Media:

Elise Harris is the admin of the Comedian's Network Facebook page.

VEC Campaigns:

The campaign to save the BGWMC was raising money to save this venue and it reached its initial target of £12k in 8 days. It's now exceeded its stretch target of £18k and hence can pay to develop a full business plan with financial projections and cover all consultancy and accountancy costs.

Links:

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| Comedian's Charter | https://www.equity.org.uk/advice-and-support/know-your-rights/comedians-charter |
| Liz Guterbock's article in Chortle about how comedians can support each other: | https://www.chortle.co.uk/correspondents/2023/07/10/53486/sometimes_the_only_thing_comedians_have_is_one_another |
| Comedian's Network | https://www.equity.org.uk/get-involved/networks/comedians-network |
| Crowd Fund to save BGWC | https://www.crowdfunder.co.uk/p/save-bgwmc |
| Guide to Edinburgh Fringe | https://www.equity.org.uk/advice-and-support/know-your-rights/a-guide-to-the-Edinburgh-fringe |
| Drag Network | https://www.equity.org.uk/get-involved/networks/drag-network |
| Fair Play Cabaret | https://www.equity.org.uk/get-involved/events/fair-play-cabaret |
| Circus Network | https://www.equity.org.uk/get-involved/networks/circus-network |

My actions and news:

I'm currently liaising with some professional comedians to see if they will come and talk to us later in the year. I am also exploring the possibility of setting up a one day drag taster course.

What you can do:

Tell us when you hear of performance venues being at risk. The earlier Equity hears about a potential closure, it may be possible to assist in keeping the venue open.

Support @equitycomedians on Instagram

Tell me how I can support you or VEC in general. My contact details are below.

Contact Mark if you want to be part of the Fair Play Cabaret. His email is: markkelly24@hotmail.com

Acronyms:

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| BGWMC | Bethnal Green Working Men's Club |
| VO | Variety Officer |
| VEC | Variety, Entertainment and Circus |
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Belle's Contact Details:

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