

# Farnham Theatre Association Ltd

*Working for a Regional Theatre in Farnham*

4, Nutshell Lane, Upper Hale, Farnham, Surrey GU9 0HG

Tel: 0844 412 5771

Email: [cooperstudio@mac.com](mailto:cooperstudio@mac.com)



Jeremy Hunt MP,  
House of Commons,  
London. SW1A

30 October 2009

Dear Jeremy,

You will remember from our meeting with you on the 18<sup>th</sup> September that we asked whether you would be able to obtain a meeting for us with the Chair of South East Arts, Kentuke Chinyelu-Hope.

Having just read details of Farnham Maltings productions and investments in theatre in their financial statement for the year ending 31 March 2000, I would like to draw to your attention and that of the SEA Chair to how little theatre there is in this for the people of Farnham and the whole of Waverley.

To quote from the Maltings' report: *"It has been a good year for the theatrical companies we support."* The report then outlines some of the successes of these touring companies in developing their futures and then continues *"Our own produced work remains a feature of the organisation – making work for Surrey, Kent and Sussex"*. SE companies had produced 5 new pieces, there had been 2 new in-house productions, circus projects pursued, a national tour of the Polish Play, a collaborative production developed with a foreign company, producers and writers' initiatives, an international exchange for staff and further development of young people's theatre.

There is much to admire in the above, but precious little for the average theatre-goer in Farnham and its environs. As with Waverley's Cultural Strategy, the needs of some theatre makers are being addressed, but not those of the audiences. The people who pay to see theatre are simply being left out and however praiseworthy is the development of a few small theatre companies across the South East and beyond, this is not a fair exchange for the loss of what was a nationally recognised theatre of distinction. It came as a surprise to FTA to see how strong the feeling is in the town against the loss of the Redgrave - around 3,000 objections each time to 4 separate sets of Crest Nicholson Sainsbury planning applications in 2006, 2007 and 2008 – and many of these were not the same people.

I enclose a copy of our recent document "What happened to the Redgrave" which may interest you as it gives a brief outline of the theatre's rise and fall and of the future prospects for a theatre building in the town.

If you can achieve a meeting for us with the SEA Chair, we will be very grateful.

With kind regards,

Anne



[www.farnhamtheatre.co.uk](http://www.farnhamtheatre.co.uk)

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