



Technical and Safety Information for Visiting Companies to the Tower Theatre

This note is intended to help anyone hiring space in the Tower Theatre's building. It should be read in conjunction with the contract agreed between the hirer and the Tower.

Issued by : Tavistock Repertory Guarantors Ltd.

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Contents

Section 1 – Introduction

Section 2 - Regulations and Staffing

- The Contract
- Music Licenses
- Radio Microphone Licences
- Electrical testing
- Venue staff and other conditions

Section 3 – Planning your production

- Technical Specification
- Risk Assessment
- Covid regulations
- The Auditorium
- Fire Exit Regulations
- The Stage
- Theatre stock drapes
- Firearms

Section 4 – During your hire

- Access to the theatre
- Fire Alarms
- Food and Drink
- Dressing Room Facilities
- Get In
- Rehearsal/Performance Nights
- Get Out

Section 5 – Staff Information and Contacts

Section 1 – Introduction

Welcome to the Tower Theatre. These notes are intended for any company hiring space or mounting productions in the building. We hope they will cover most of your queries, and also set out clearly the requirements that you are obliged to follow. Inevitably we can't anticipate every situation, so please talk to us if you need more information or have any questions.

The Tower Theatre was established at its current site in 2018. The Company was founded in 1932 as the Tavistock Repertory Company and has been a key part of London's non-professional theatre scene since then.

Section 2 - Regulations and Staffing

The Contract

The overall agreement between Tavistock Repertory Guarantors Limited (the Tower) and yourselves (the Hirer) will be set out in the hire contract, which must be signed by both parties and agreed fees paid before access to the building is granted. If there is any conflict between the specific conditions in the contract and the general guidance given in these notes, then the contract conditions override what is written here.

Music Licences

Before any performance of copyright musical works can be given in public, those responsible for the event are required to obtain the permission of the owner of the copyright of the works concerned.

The Theatre has a PRS/PPL licence that covers music used as background during audience entrance, exits and entre-acts, and hirers do not need to apply personally.

For any incidental music (played during the performance but not heard or performed by the characters), interpolated music (heard or performed by the characters) or performances of live music, the Hirer must make their own arrangements with the licensing bodies.

Radio Microphone Licences

The Theatre does not hold a license for the use of radio mics. It is the responsibility of the Hirer to obtain the appropriate licenses if required.

Electrical Testing

The Tower Theatre's own electrical equipment is PAT tested.

All electrical items brought in by Hirers must have been PAT tested.

Venue Staff and other conditions

- Filming, sound recording or taking of photographs are not permitted in the building without written permission from the Tower.
- Animals, birds or insects are not permitted in the building without permission from the Tower.

- Your attention is drawn to the requirement for Hirers to provide technical staff, front-of-house staff, stewards and box office staff, as defined in the contract.
- The Tower operates a no smoking and naked flame policy.

Section 3 – Planning your production

You are advised to arrange a meeting with the Hire Manager to view the space and discuss your project at the earliest opportunity, even if you have performed at the Tower Theatre before.

Technical Specification

The current technical specification and theatre plans are available on the Tower's web site at <https://www.towertheatre.org.uk/technical-information/>

Risk Assessment

All Hirers must complete the Tower's Risk Assessment form, also available on the web site at the link above.

Any aspects of the show which could be considered 'unusual' such as Strobes, Smoke machines, Guns, Adult Content, Nudity or anything else out of the ordinary must be reported on the Risk Assessment form, which must be submitted to the Hire Manager at least one month prior to the get-in. If in doubt about any aspect of the production with regards to this please make the Hire Manager aware so that advice can be sought.

Covid Regulations

The Tower will be implementing various procedures to protect staff, members, audiences and visitors, in line with the current guidance from the government and health authorities. Please check with the Tower's Hire Manager on these new requirements, which you must comply with.

The Auditorium

Audience capacity must be agreed and a seating layout confirmed at time of booking with the Hire Manager. Changes to the seating configuration may incur an additional fee. If Hirers change the seating arrangement they must return them to their original state at the end of their hire.

Fire Exit Regulations

There are two designated fire escape routes from the Theatre space and these must not be blocked at any time.

If the route passes through curtains then they must open with a full height [2m] gap in the centre of the escape route and either side of the exit must be clearly marked with white or yellow tape.

The emergency exit lights must be illuminated at all time an audience is in the auditorium.

The Stage

- The stage floor is a wooden beam structure with a 4mm hardboard covering.
- Hirers can lay their own flooring as long as there is no damage to the Tower floor.
- Painting of the stage and surround is only permitted if agreed by the Tower; only emulsion paint is permitted and it may not be sealed with PVA, glaze or any other sealant. The Tower must be notified of all paints proposed
- Re-painting at the end of the hire will be to a specification agreed with the Tower.
- The floor must be returned to the same condition it was found; if damaged then the Hirer will be charged for repair.
- Set and scenery must be inherently non-flammable, or :-

For timber, hardboard, MDF or plywood: **Class 1 or over 18mm thickness**

For fabric: **NDFR (Non Durable Flame Retardant)**

For plastics and other materials: **DFR (Durable flameproof)**

- If a set needs flame proofing, it should be done before it reaches the Theatre.
- Using Class 1 timber is the easiest option as it comes treated and stamped. The timber stamp should be visible for inspection.
- Please retain certificates or invoice / receipts for any materials being used on stage that may be subject to fire retardant testing.
- A Health and Safety Inspection will be carried out, and the show will not be permitted to open if there are any concerns over the safety of a set (see contract for cancellation of show).

Theatre Stock Drapes

A tab track runs around the rear of the stage with black masking drapes. If the Hirer removes these for their production, they must be replaced at the end of the hire.

Firearms

1) Replica or Deactivated (Non-firing) - No License required. A designated person from the Hirer is to be in charge of the gun(s) during the run of the show.

2) Blank Firing - No License required. Defined as, guns that have never been able to fire missiles and the report (or flash) must come from the top or side of the gun and not from the front of the barrel. A designated person from the Hirer is to be in charge of the gun(s) during the run of the show.

3) Real Guns (firing blanks) - By law a licence is required to have a firearm. In order for the firearm to be used at the Tower Theatre the licence must quote the Tower Theatre as the place of use. The person with the licence must obtain permission from the firearms officer in the area where they live to use it at the Tower. The person responsible for the gun(s) must take them away at the end of each performance.

The Tower will require full details of the gun(s) to be used for its records and so that we can pass it on to the Local Police Department.

Section 4 – During your hire

Access to the Theatre

There is no car parking on site.

Loading access to the Theatre is via the rear Fire Exit. The corridor between the fire exit and the theatre is narrow, so large scenic items may need to be delivered in component form. We strongly advise that you come and see / measure for yourself prior to fit-up.

Fire Alarm

If smoke or haze machines are to be used, the theatre's smoke detectors must be disabled. The Hire manger will explain to the Hirer's Stage Manager how this is done. It is the Hirer's Stage manager's responsibility to disable the alarms at the start of each session and reset them at the end.

Food and Drink

Food and drink are not permitted in the auditorium. Refreshments should be consumed in either the foyer/bar or in the dressing room. Please keep all liquids and food stuffs away from any technical equipment.

- Alcoholic drinks are not permitted backstage and in the dressing rooms.
- At the end of each session, all foodstuffs must either be removed or left in sealed containers.

Dressing Room Facilities

The main dressing room is adjacent to the theatre. A second dressing room is available at ground floor level by prior arrangement, subject to an additional fee.

It is the Hirer's responsibility to safeguard all cast valuables during a performance. Cast and crew leaving valuables in the dressing room do so at their own risk. The Tower will not be held responsible for any valuables left in the building.

The Hirer is responsible for making sure that the dressing rooms are left clean and tidy.

Get In

The Stage Manager for the Hirer will be given a set of keys and a handover of the theatre. This will include details of fire precautions and evacuation procedure. The Stage Manager is then responsible for :

- Briefing the Company on Health and Safety
- Briefing the Company on the Tower's Evacuation procedure
- Reporting accidents (to Tower office and to the Hire Manger via Email)
- Opening and closing the Theatre at the start and end of each session including checking that the Theatre, dressing room and foyer are clear before closing.

Rehearsal/Performance Nights

- It is the responsibility of the Hirer's Stage Manager to secure the auditorium after each performance.
- The Company must be made aware that they should remove any personal items from dressing room and Theatre before the Stage Manager locks up (suggested maximum of 30 mins after performance ends).
- Stage Managers should report any technical issues to the Hire Manager.

Get Out

- All areas used by the Hirer must be cleaned, swept and if necessary mopped clean during the get out.
- It is the Stage Manager's responsibility to oversee the get out to completion and the Stage Manager should be the last one to leave the theatre on the night of the Get Out.
- Technical Get Out requirements:
 - All hired LX to be removed; including all LX tape used (if not, then the Hirer will be charged an additional fee to complete this task).
 - The lighting and sound rigs to be left in the standard Tower format as described in the Technical Specification.
- All waste from dressing room and FOH must be removed and deposited in the Tower Eurobin outside the Theatre on Northwold Road.
- All materials, set, hire equipment and anything else brought in by the Hirer must be removed on their Get Out
- If items are left by the Hirer, the Tower reserves the right to move or dispose of these items and any cost incurred for moving or disposing of the items will be passed on to the client.
- If the stage has been painted, the whole stage area from the back to the front row of the seats must have at least one complete coat of black emulsion

Section 5 – Staff Information and Contacts

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Email : info@towertheatre.org.uk
Website: www.towertheatre.org.uk

Theatre Hire Manager
hire@towertheatre.org.uk

Please provide the Hire Manager with a contact list for your production team.