

## ESSENTIAL COMPANION SCHEME

The Harlequin Theatre & Cinema and Reigate & Banstead Borough Council are committed to making your theatre visit an accessible and enjoyable experience. The Harlequin Theatre & Cinema would like everyone to enjoy all the services that we offer and in order to further this commitment, have adopted the **Essential Companion Scheme**. Under the Disability Discrimination Act (1995), a person with a 'disability' is defined as anyone who has a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities. The **Essential Companion Scheme** is offered to those who need somebody to be present in order to assist them to readily access the theatre and its services through the means of mobility or guidance. The scheme is open to both individuals and organisations.

The Essential Companion should familiarise themselves with the layout of The Harlequin and the location of its services. Where necessary they should liaise with staff if the person with a disability requires assistance and take instructions should there be a need to evacuate the building. The Essential Companion is required to attend to the needs of the person with a disability at all times whilst at The Harlequin. It is not the duty of our staff to provide assistance beyond the remit of their job profile due to legal and health & safety reasons.

### How The Scheme Works

Our **Essential Companion Scheme** allows members a complimentary ticket, so that they can bring along a companion with them, at no additional cost. To join the scheme, the person with the disability, or their appointed representative, must complete and sign an application form and return it to the Box Office at The Harlequin. The details should be that of the individual with the disability, not of the Essential Companion. The **Essential Companion Scheme** is not open to, or intended for those who simply require a companion/friend to assist them with transportation to and from venue. The scheme is not offered to individuals who are able to cope independently in a public venue. As we are a publicly funded organisation, we require a signature to declare that the benefits of membership will be used within the terms set out in this document.

### Enjoyable Visit

The information that you provide us with will help ensure that we provide the best service for you. There is space on the form to tell us about your needs. For example, is your mobility equipment of an unusual size? Is it motorised? The information you provide will enable us to allocate the correct amount of space for you. It is protected by the Data Protection Act 1998 and it will only be used for the purpose set out in this document.

The Harlequin Theatre & Cinema cannot provide unlimited access for its shows and events. The allocation of complimentary places will be determined by the 'capacity' for each event and provided on a 'first come, first served' basis. Please note that hirer shows may not wish to be part of the scheme or offer a limited number of places, any concerns will need to be raised with them directly. All professional shows, put on through The Harlequin will offer this scheme.

It is accepted that a wheelchair may be used to assist in access to and around The Harlequin and we accept that it may be preferred for you to transfer to a theatre seat. However, if you are transferring to a theatre seat, you will need to be independently capable of leaving The Harlequin in the event of an evacuation, without access to your wheelchair. If you are unable to fulfil this, in line with Risk Assessments, Health and Safety and the Fire Safety Officer, we insist that you remain in your wheelchair and if available we will relocate you to a wheelchair position.

### Contact Us

If you have any queries or difficulties in completing the application form, please contact a member of our Box Office on 01737 276500.

**SCHEME**

**ORGANISATIONAL MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION FORM**

STATUS: Charity  Local/Health Authority  Private

ESSENTIAL COMPANIONS: 1:1  1:2  1:4  Other: .....

*(Ratio of Essential Companion: Companions)*

ORGANISATION NAME: .....

CONTACT NAME: .....

ADDRESS:

.....  
 .....  
 .....  
 ..... POSTCODE: .....

TEL NO

DAYTIME: ..... EVENING: .....

EMAIL ADDRESS: .....

Which of the following preferences would you like us to assist you with in future bookings?

Aisle Seat  Wheelchair Space  Large Wheelchair Space

Stalls Seat  Infra-red Hearing Loop System  Other

Why do the members of your group require an Essential Companion?

(Please give as much information as possible):

.....  
 .....  
 .....  
 .....  
 .....

The person with a disability (as defined by the Disability Discrimination Act (1995), or their appointed representative, is required to sign below, that the person concerned requires a companion to access the facilities at The Harlequin.

Signed: ..... Date: .....

Print Name (if representative): .....

Completed forms should be returned to:

**The Harlequin Theatre & Cinema, Warwick Quadrant, Redhill, Surrey, RH1 1NN**

The Harlequin Theatre & Cinema reserves the right to review a member's eligibility and to revoke membership following review. A false application could lead to Court action. It is the scheme member's responsibility to communicate any changes in circumstances to The Harlequin.