COMPANY OF TEN

The Company of Ten has been entertaining audiences in St Albans since 1934. Today its membership runs to hundreds. The theatre group is renowned for the quality of its productions and hugely popular Christmas shows which always attract full houses.

They present an annual programme of ten shows with the aim of giving audiences a broad diet of theatre, including classic comedy favourites, modern drama and innovative, cutting-edge theatre pieces.

The Company occupies its own theatre – the Abbey Theatre – which is situated at the bottom of Holywell Hill next to the Westminster Lodge Leisure Centre.

What has Lockdown Life been like for your group?

From the beginning of the first lockdown in March 2020, the Company of Ten was determined that St Albans should still enjoy drama despite the pandemic. When the theatre was closed for the first time, they wrote, recorded and made available via their website 40 short dramas under the title Corona Monologues for audiences to enjoy. And the wardrobe department turned their efforts from costume to mask making for two Hertfordshire hospices and then for anyone who needed them free of charge and delivered to their door. They have produced well over 700 masks.

As theatres opened again in autumn, the Company of Ten ensured their premises were professionally treated to be COVID free and with seating distanced so their patrons could feel safe. Their efforts in scrupulously following government hygiene procedures won them a See It Safely Award. But the Company of Ten didn't want to leave anyone out – especially those self-isolating at home. So, they filmed their productions and streamed them to give audiences the choice of watching from home.

When the theatre had to close again in December 2020 the Company made their premises available to a local foodbank where food could be delivered and bagged up ready for dispatch to families in the city.

**Watch
the *Corona Virus Monologues*
on the <u>Company of Ten's</u>
YouTube Channel**