



## **UK CINEMA ASSOCIATION CRITICISES COVID PASS PLANS IN WALES**

**London: Friday 29 October - The UK Cinema Association has strongly criticised plans to be announced today which will see cinemas in Wales required to demand COVID passes of audiences from next month, calling these 'potentially hugely damaging'.**

While the detail of the proposals remains to be confirmed, it is understood that from Monday 15 November cinemas in Wales – along with theatres and concert halls – will require customers to show a COVID pass, indicating that they have been fully vaccinated, carry COVID antibodies or have had a recent negative lateral flow test.

Reacting to the news, UK Cinema Association Chief Executive Phil Clapp said:

“As a sector we have worked extremely hard to remain COVID-safe and there seems to be no evidence that our members’ sites are a source of transmission – we are aware of no instance of an outbreak of COVID being traced back to a cinema in Wales or indeed anywhere in the UK. The success of our efforts is underlined by the exceptionally high levels of customer satisfaction with standards of safety seen in a wide range of independent surveys of returning cinema-goers.

In contrast to many other leisure and hospitality sectors, for the vast majority of their visit our customers are sat all facing the same way and not speaking in what are highly-ventilated auditoriums.

For cinemas therefore to be singled out for this new measure seems not only illogical but also potentially hugely damaging.

Introducing this barrier to cinema-going at a time when the sector is looking to recover from the impact of the pandemic could call into question the survival of many smaller cinema sites. This is not scare-mongering – where similar schemes have been introduced in other European territories, we have seen admissions drop by as much as 50 per cent. It will also require cinemas to employ significant additional staff resources in enforcement at a time when recruitment issues are to the fore, and finances already stretched.

Already we are hearing of older and disabled customers telling our members that this move means that they will not now want to return. This is especially concerning when for many of these groups in particular, cinemas are a vital source of community connection and mental well-being.

We ask the Welsh Government to present the evidence that cinemas are a ‘high risk’ environment or to withdraw this illogical and potentially damaging measure.”

### **Notes to the editor**

For further press information and interviews please contact:  
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### **UK Cinema Association**

The UK Cinema Association (UKCA) represents the interests of well over 90 per cent of UK cinema operators. Its members range from the largest cinema circuits to a wide range of single site owner-operated companies. The UKCA advocates on behalf of the UK cinema sector at international, national, regional and local level as well as working with other sectors of the industry, particularly colleagues in film distribution, to promote the value of cinema to the wider public and identify and share best practice.

### **Cinema safety during COVID**

Throughout the pandemic, the UKCA has worked with government across the four UK nations to develop and implement guidelines to ensure that the cinema environment remains as safe as possible. The latest documents can be found here: <https://www.cinemauk.org.uk/coronavirus-covid-19/guidance-for-cinemas/>

It remains the case that the UKCA is unaware of any outbreak of COVID having been traced back to a UK cinema.

Levels of satisfaction with standards of safety amongst returning cinema-goers remain extraordinarily high. The most recent independent survey of returning audiences undertaken by MetrixLab (fieldwork 18-24 October 2021) showed that **97 per cent** of respondents had been ‘satisfied’ or ‘very satisfied’ with standards of safety on their return.