

PRESS RELEASE

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Inclusive Cinema Screenings

The Ministry of Equality, in partnership with the Ministry of Culture and Leisure Cinemas, is pleased to announce that Leisure Cinemas will be making available Entertainment Captioning Glasses and headphones to improve the entertainment experience of deaf, hard of hearing, blind or visually impaired audience members. This is part of the Ministry's wider campaign to make Gibraltar an inclusive society, and relevant stakeholders and interest groups have been consulted throughout the process.

Specially designed eyewear, coupled with a receiver, will enable deaf and hard of hearing audience members to view closed captioned text in their direct line of sight. The subtitles appear as if they are on the screen. For the blind and visually impaired, Assistance Headphones provide descriptive audio tracks where a narrator describes what is happening on screen. The introduction of this equipment addresses the needs of the deaf, hard of hearing, blind and visually impaired audiences.

Furthermore, the Ministry of Equality is also pleased to announce that Leisure Cinemas will be also holding sensory-friendly screenings. This will provide a sensory-friendly environment for individuals with autism spectrum disorder. These screenings will be presented in a light up, sound down environment. For many families going to watch a movie is an entertaining way to spend time together. For children with autism the traditional movie experience can be overwhelming. The loud sounds and the dark can be overpowering and the need to watch the movie in silence can be a challenge for these children. For many families with children with autism, going to the cinema is simply not an option. Sensory-friendly screenings will allow families with children with autism to enjoy a movie without the worry of disturbing other cinemagoers in the auditorium and allow these families to enjoy the cinema experience. These screenings will also benefit young children and the elderly.

Minister for Equality, the Hon Samantha Sacramento, said: "Providing the best experience for all cinemagoers has been made possible as a result of a partnership between my Ministry for Equality, the Ministry for Culture and Leisure Cinemas who have incorporated new technology to provide the deaf, hard of hearing, blind and visually impaired with a more convenient and natural way to enjoy movies at the cinema with as much freedom as possible. It shows an excellent example of collaboration between the public and private sectors to achieve a positive outcome.

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The introduction of sensory friendly screenings will allow families with children with autism spectrum disorder to enjoy the cinema experience. This initiative will have a real and meaningful impact for these children and their families.”

Director of Leisure Cinemas, Odette Benatar, said: “We believe very strongly that the cinema should be accessible for all. Anyone with a disability should be able to enjoy a newly released movie with as much freedom as possible.”

Notes to Editors:

Leisure Cinemas will announce in due course the dates and times for sensory friendly screenings and which films the Entertainment Access Glasses and headphones are available for together with the arrangements to book a pair of access glasses.

Headphone assistance for the hard of hearing: Providing the full soundtrack during trailers & the main feature. Available for all screenings

Headphone assistance for the visually impaired: Providing an audio description of events during the main feature. Available only for certain screenings.

Captioning glasses for the hard of hearing: Providing personal subtitling & event description during the main feature. Available only for certain screenings.