

Luton Time Explorers



Promoting Heritage for
People and Places



Foxdell Schools Federation

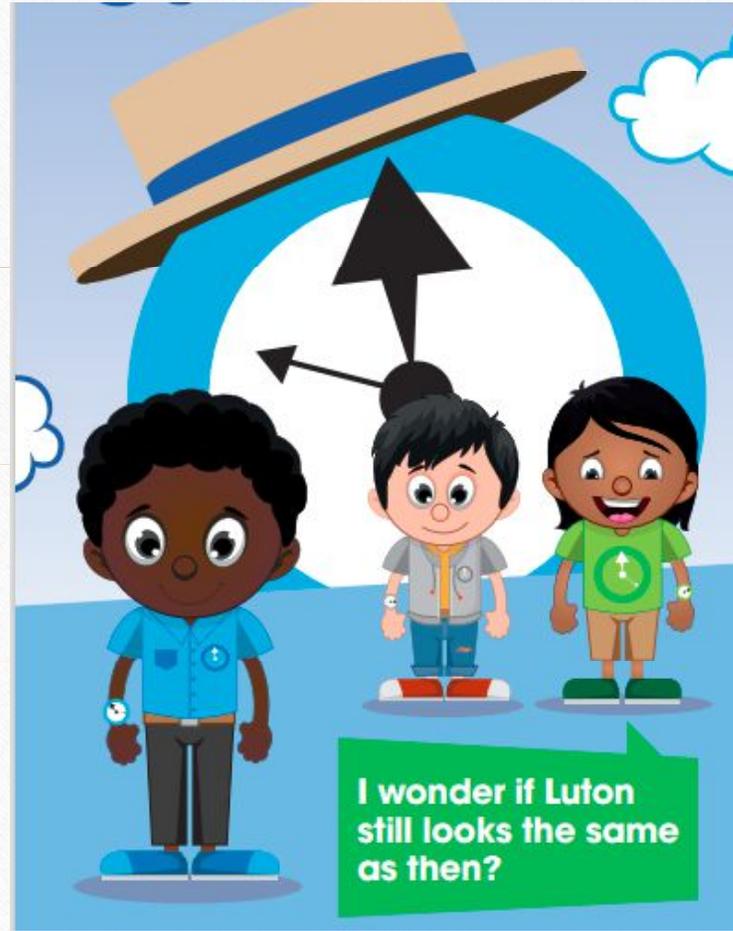
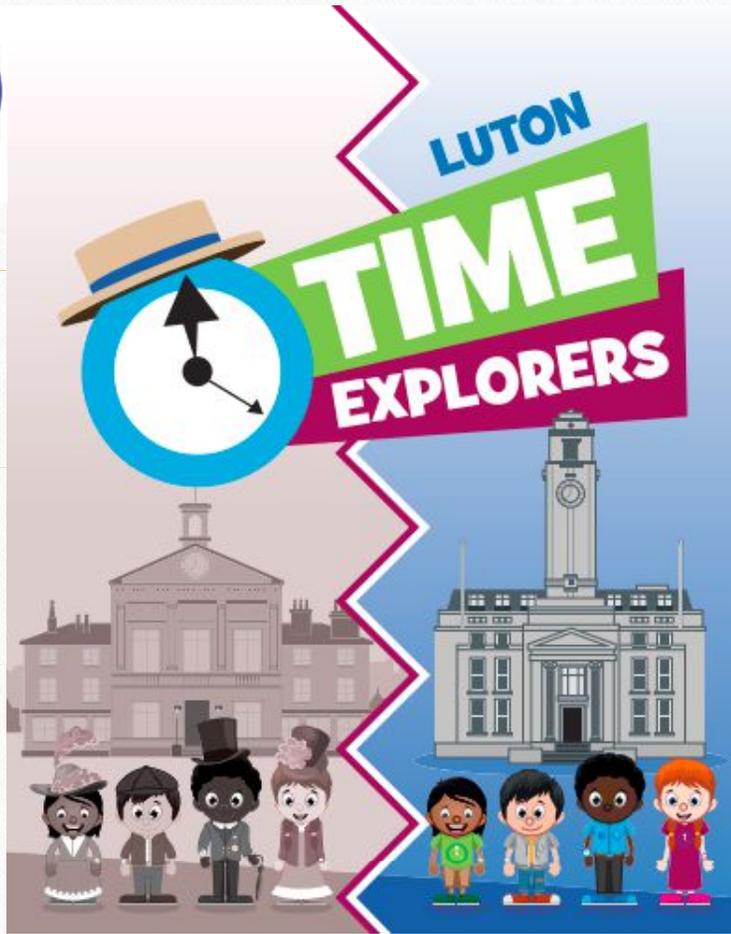
This heritage project has been supported by the Cultural
History Community Interest

Company www.culturalhistories.org

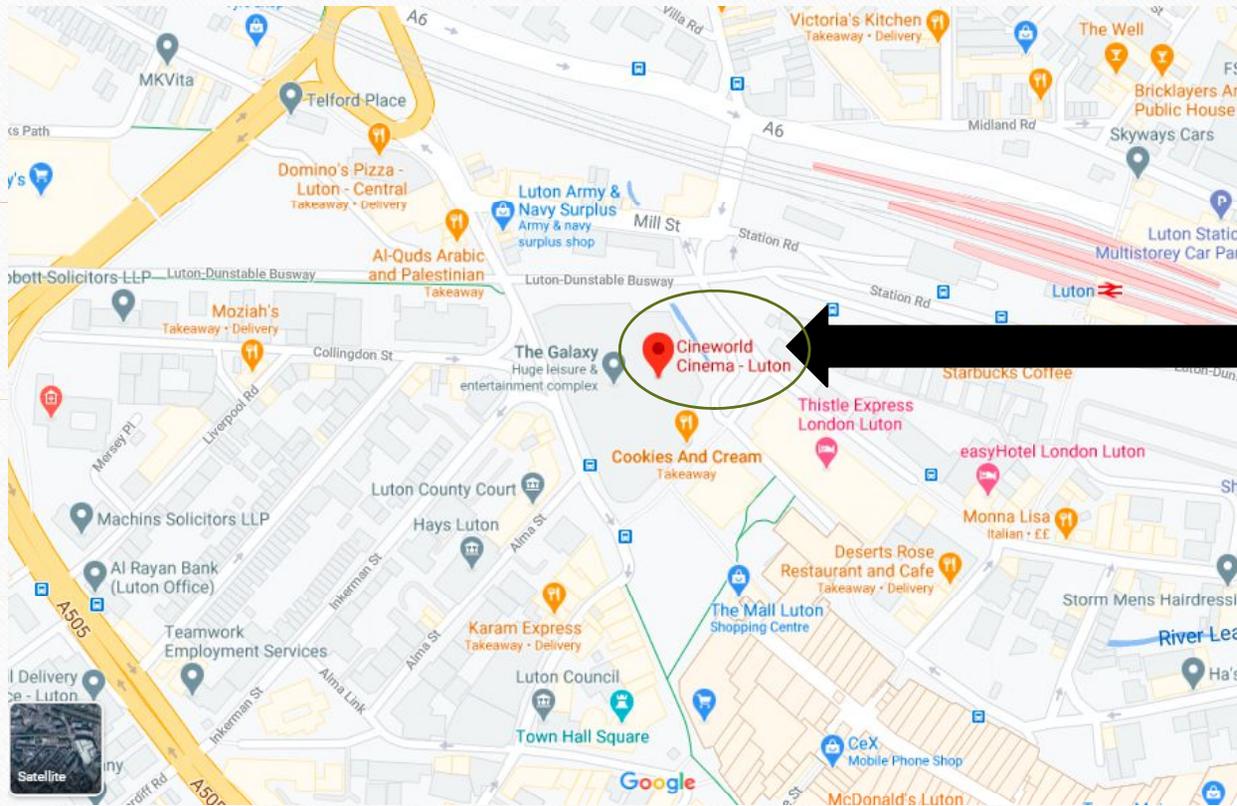
Our aim is to provide benefit to people interested in the
cultural history of their neighbourhoods and families.



Promoting Heritage for People and Places



I wonder if Luton still looks the same as then?



Location of
current cinema on
the map

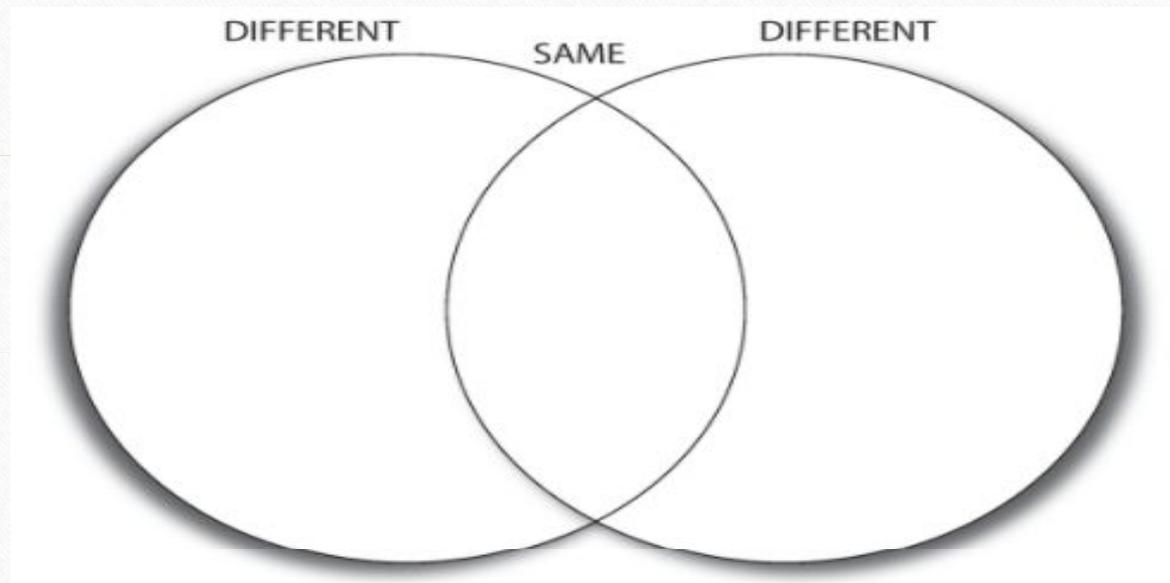
Cinemas Inside –Then and Now



Look at the pictures of two different cinemas' interior. What can you see? How are they different? How are they similar?



Compare the interior of the Empire cinema from the 1920's with the inside of the Galaxy Cinema in Luton from today. Write adjectives into the circles to compare differences and find similarities.



Cinemas – Then and Now



1921

2010



Look at the pictures of two different cinemas. What can you see? How are they different? How are they similar?

Which one is the oldest? Which one is the newest? How can you tell?

Match the dates to the cinemas.

Movie Posters – Then and Now



Look at the pictures of two different posters. What can you see? How are they different? How are they similar?

Which one is older? Which one is newer? How can you tell?

Compare a movie poster from 1921 with the modern one about Aladdin! Which one looks more eye-catching? Why?



Name three things that are different.

1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____

Use the words from the box to describe the posters above.

striking	current	from the present	coloured
noticeable	dated	eye-catching	old
contemporary	bright	entertaining	amusing
from the past	modern	dull	black and white

The Empire Cinema

The Empire Cinema opened in November 1921, with the “Three Men in a Boat” starring Lionelle Howard and H. Manning Haynes. The cinema had been adapted from Mr Barber’s Aeroplane Propeller Factory.

**“a West End cinema
out of London”**

-reports the Luton Newspaper after the first public showing.



A New Design

- The building has been given an attractive exterior. The entrance leads to a striking foyer, where the walls were decorated with busts of a King and Queen, Charlie Chaplin, John Bull, Punch and other busts representing comedy and tragedy. The proscenium was decorated with Japanese designs and included concealed lighting behind tinted glass surrounding the screen.

A New Design

- Remarkable, charming design had been carried out on the grand scale throughout the whole building.
- The Empire was the first purely picture house in Luton to have an orchestra, consisting of piano, violin and cello, under the direction of Mr Reginald Clarke, a well-known local violinist. The cinema has 780 seats.
- In the early days of the cinema Charlie Chaplin films provided most of the humour. In 1929 the picture house became a sound cinema.
- The Empire closed in 1938, and it was never reopened again until it was bought by the Jewish community and became a synagogue.

In the early days **Charlie Chaplin** films provided most of the humour.

During the entertainment customers had some refreshments available.



Japanese Design

No sound?



No problem.

The Empire was the first purely picture house in Luton to have an orchestra with a piano, violin and cello. In 1929 the picture house became a sound cinema.



Look at this sign

**BUY YOUR
CHOCOLATES
AND
CIGARETTES
HERE**

The cinema's capacity was quite massive, it had 780 seats.



The Empire closed in 1938, and it was never reopened again until it was bought by the Jewish community and became a synagogue.