



Show Report

Showstoppers Theatre Group

Grease

26 June 2026

PRODUCTION INFORMATION

PRODUCTION	Grease
SOCIETY	Showstoppers Theatre Group
VENUE	Hyde Festival Theatre
GENRE	Musical
CAST SIZE	35
DIRECTORS	Rachel Bunting & Victoria Husband
CHOREOGRAPHER	Megan Husband
ASSISTANT CHOREOGRAPHERS	Victoria Husband & Katie Wilkins
COSTUMES	Victoria Husband
MARKETING	Megan Husband
MUSICAL DIRECTOR	Katie Wilkins
STAGE MANAGER	Rachel Bunting
ASSISTANT STAGE MANAGER	Victoria Husband
STAGE CREW	Dave Husband & Sean Crossley
SET DESIGN & PROPS	Rachel Bunting & Victoria Husband
LIGHTING & SOUND	Steven Oliver-Grant, Daniel Oliver-Grant & Kelly Holder
TICKET PROVIDER	Sparks Theatre Management
PROGRAMME DESIGN	Rachel Bunting
VIDEOGRAPHER	JHC Video Services - Phil Steels
LEAD CHAPERONE	Megan Husband
CHAPERONES	Katie Wilkins, Katie Dearnaley, Becci Alberti-King, Sally Morgan, Sheila Gooding, Ann Croke, Carley Baddeley, Tracey Hall, Elizabeth Adamson, Michelle Wright, Tina Swinyard, Emily Hill, Tanya Shaw, Lucy Green, Romona Travis
FRONT OF HOUSE	Hyde Festival Theatre Volunteers

PRINCIPAL CAST

Danny	Leo Husband
Sandy	Evie Etches
Kenickie	Michael Brickell
Rizzo	Chloe Ann Croke
Frenchy	Bella Bunting
Jan	Libby Hall
Marty	Poppy Adamson
Roger	Albie Nightingale

Sonny	Benjamin Cruden
Doody	Max France
Eugene	Joshua Toop
Patty Simcox	Emelia Green
Cha Cha	Elisha Harrison
Vince Fontaine	Xander Harrison
Miss Lynch	Erin Kay
Johnny Casino	Evelyn Dentith
Teen Angel	Lexi-Marie Shaw

ENSEMBLE

	Amelia Crossley
	Amelia Hughes
	Anna Davies
	Ava Bamford
	Camilla Batchelor
	Elodie Carter
	Finn Heathcote
	Freya Collins
	Joshua O'Neil
	Lily-Mai Waite
	Lily-May Baguley
	Nyla Robinson
	Samantha Newberry
	Sophia Moussa
	Sophia Wright
	Stephen Hoey
	Tabitha Arrowsmith
	Zoe Swinyard

DATE OF PERFORMANCE	Friday 26th June 2026
DATE REPORT PUBLISHED	Sunday 28th June 2026
ADJUDICATOR ID	NSA1001
NSA LOGO ON POSTER	Yes
NSA IN PROGRAMME	Yes
PROGRAMME CLASS	Best Licensed Design

THE REVIEW

REVIEW WORD COUNT

2138

STRONGEST ELEMENTS

Powerful Performance

- **Albie Nightingale** playing Roger demonstrated a clear growth in confidence and character throughout the performance. The progression reached its peak during his rendition of 'Mooning', where he showcased his vocal tone and strength well.
- **Elisha Harrison's** portrayal of Cha Cha transformed what could easily have been perceived as a minor role into one that left a lasting impression. Her characterisation remained consistent throughout, and her confidence and presence on the stage was particularly notable.

Outstanding Choreography

- The choreography created by **Megan Husband** with assistance from **Victoria Husband** and **Katie Wilkins** captured the energy and atmosphere of a high school setting, successfully transporting the audience into the world of Rydell High. The inclusion of complex lifts was an ambitious choice for a youth group, but these moments were executed effectively and safely, demonstrating strong preparation and teamwork from all involved.

I have seen many an amateur version of **Grease the Musical** but have never seen a youth version so I was unsure what to expect arriving at Hyde Festival Theatre to see **Showstoppers Theatre Group's** version of the iconic classic. After being warmly welcomed by **Megan Husband** and **Katie Wilkins**, we discussed about how prior to this production most of the cast weren't familiar with this musical however, made sure to do their homework and fully immersed themselves into the show. Megan and Katie also explained to me that, this year, Showstoppers decided that for their musical they would split the group into a younger and older cast. This meant that this group, aged 12 to 18, were able to explore the high school related themes in this musical which were more suited to their age bracket.

As the curtains opened, I was instantly transported to Rydell High School with a large rostrum at the back of the stage made to look like the schools' bleachers. Stood atop the bleachers were the leather clad group of boys known as the T-Birds. Next up to the stage came the Pink Ladies and the ensemble which were then led by Miss Lynch, played by **Erin Kay**, in singing the Rydell High School "Alma Mater". This song was performed with clear diction and great strength from all cast members and made sure to capture the audience's attention from the beginning. Erin Kay played the school's teacher confidently, with clear diction and she performed a mature character well, which can be difficult for someone so young.

We then started getting to know the two groups in which the musical is centred around (the T-birds and the Pink Ladies) during Summer Loving. The staging for this song was set up to look like there were two different scenes happening on either side of the stage and lighting was used to shift focus between the different scenes as the different groups sing. The song is fronted by our lead characters Danny (played by **Leo Husband**) and Sandy (played by **Evie Etches**) and introduces us to their complicated love story.

Leo Husband took on the role of Danny with great confidence and was able to make eye contact and connect well with the audience which shows performance confidence beyond his years. This was not surprising as I was made aware that Leo has been involved in theatre through Showstoppers Theatre Group for most of his life, showing a real passion for theatre not only from performing, but also by dedicating his time to the group in any way he can. I was also informed that this will be his final performance with Showstoppers Theatre Group and what a way to close this chapter. Leo plays Danny's 'too cool for school' attitude well but he also showed a more delicate nature and the audience genuinely felt sorry for him during the number 'Sandy'. You could tell that he really enjoyed this role especially during 'Hand Jive' which was one of the songs where Leo performed lifts during the choreography with some of the female cast. I am looking forward to seeing Leo develop his confidence even further as he embarks on his adult life and even though he will be missed by Showstoppers Theatre Group, I don't think this will be the last we see of him on the stage.

Evie Etches played the leading lady Sandy. Throughout the musical, Sandy goes through lots of different emotions as, not only is she starting a new school, but she is also given mixed signals after a summer romance with Danny and seems to be peer pressured by the Pink Ladies. Evie was able to play the coy nature of Sandy well, but we saw emotional range from her, especially in a moment of anger following finding Rizzo mocking her. Throughout the musical, there are some very difficult vocal challenges that, even the most seasoned of performers, would find challenging. Evie displayed a sweet singing voice, though at times her pitch wavered, she continued to put her all into everything she sang. Her solo during "Hopelessly Devoted" was emoted especially well and I particularly enjoyed her vocals in "Look at me, I'm Sandra Dee (Reprise)" as I feel this suited her vocal style very well.

Michael Brickell played Danny's best friend, Kenickie. Michael held strong consistency in his 'tough guy' performance and his interaction with the other characters was certainly noticed. He gave a confident vocal performance during "Greased Lightning" where the backing vocals began quite tentatively, but Michael's strength carried the beginning of the song. We then saw an increase in confidence in the backing vocals following Michael's strong performance which helped the song grow. **Benjamin Cruden**, who played Sonny, gave the character good pitch variation which helped develop comedic moments throughout the musical and he also worked effectively with the other T-Birds. **Albie Nightingale** played the role of Roger. We initially saw Albie play Roger quite hesitantly, but it was noticed how the role grew throughout the musical. His confidence appeared to peak during "Mooning" where he displayed his vocal tone and strength. Albie also displayed further skill whilst harmonising with Doody, played by **Max France**, during "Rock N' Roll Party Queen" and they even followed this up with an acapella section of the song which was impressive considering the young age of the performers. Max also displayed his vocal talent further during "Those Magic Changes" and had the audience laughing from the

beginning of the song and displayed good comedic timing. I feel as though Max could've pushed the vocal even further as he carried this song with ease. His comic portrayal of Doody helped to bring lighter hearted notes throughout the show and was a joy to watch.

The leader of the Pink Ladies, Rizzo was played by **Chloe Ann Croke**. Chloe never wavered in her 'bad girl' demeanour and no matter what was going on around her, she consistently displayed a 'bad attitude' which suited the role very well. She also showcased the characters 'sharp-tongued' nature whilst mocking the leading lady in "Look at me, I'm Sandra Dee".

Another of the Pink Ladies, played by **Bella Bunting**, was Frenchy. Bella was one of the most strongest cast members at maintaining her accent throughout the performance. **Poppy Adamson** played Marty's sophisticated character consistently throughout with good characterisation, presence and mannerisms. The last of the Pink Ladies was Jan, played by **Libby Hall**. Libby's portrayal of Jan was over the top, sickly sweet and it was clear which role she was playing from the moment she hit the stage. This role was clearly well suited to Libby, and it was apparent that she enjoyed taking on this challenge. She also displayed strong harmony skills when singing alongside Roger later in the performance.

Joshua Toop played the eager to please geek of the school, Eugene. His characterisation was overexaggerated for comedic effect. He lived up to being used as the running joke of any girl's consolidation prize and played the role well with confidence. Towards the end of the production, there was a sweet moment where Eugene seemed to be accepted by the T-Birds and had an embroidered T-Bird leather jacket of his own. **Emelia Green** used her sweet voice to display the preppy nature of Patty Simcox. She remained consistent within the role and had great projection. **Elisha Harrison** played another of Sandy's antagonists and rivals, Cha Cha. Although the role of Cha Cha is not present in many scenes, as soon as Elisha entered the stage for the school dance, her cocky confidence was evident. She also displayed great dance skill whilst dancing with Danny as they navigated complex choreography, including lifts, with an effortless flaw. During the dance, we see Johnny Casino, played by **Evelyn Dentith**, who clearly sang the fast-paced song "Born to Hand Jive". Our resident radio presenter, Vince Fontaine, was played by **Xander Harrison**. He played a stereotypical radio presenter and during act one, he would've been more clearly understood if he had slowed his monologue sections down so the audience had further time to appreciate his characterisation. Although, it seemed that during act two, he was able to calm his nerves further and he slowed down his dialogue which helped his character develop more and I am certain with some more experience, his confidence will shine even brighter. Another fleeting character was Teen Angel, played by **Lexi-Marie Shaw**. She grabbed the audience's attention with her depiction of the guardian angel and was able to confidently use her vocal range during "Beauty School Drop Out".

I often find that the use of an ensemble can sometimes feel desultory and lacking purpose, however, the ensemble cast in this production were directed with great care and were never simply placed into scenes without a clear intention. Each member of the ensemble created individual characters rather than simply appearing as background performers, and their reactions and interactions helped build a convincing and vibrant scene around the principal characters. The ensemble consisted of **Amelia Crossley, Amelia Hughes, Anna Davies, Camilla**

Batchelor, Elodie Carter, Freya Collins, Joshua O'Neil, Lily-Mai Waite, Nyla Robinson, Samantha Newberry, Sophia Moussa, Sophia Wright, Stephen Hoey, Tabatha Arrowsmith and Zoe Swinyard. Special mention goes to **Finn Heathcote**, who I was surprised to find out that it is his stage debut as he caught my eye in the different scenes he was present in and he seemed confident and had a genuine likeability on the stage. Another ensemble member that drew my eye throughout the production was **Lily-May Baguley** as she knew the choreography well and I could tell that her confidence meant that the other ensemble members could look to her as someone to follow if needed. **Ava Bamford** also performed with such joy that her smile could be seen even if she was at the back of the stage. She was constantly reacting and proved that no matter what part someone has or where they are positioned on stage, there is always someone watching and her love for performing shone through and created a memorable performance.

Rachel Bunting, Victoria Husband, Megan Husband and **Katie Wilkins** all wore many hats, as they always do for Showstoppers Theatre Group, including; Directors, Choreographers, Costumes, Set design and props, marketing, musical direction, and stage management. The staging in this production was complex and well designed which suited the production well. They were assisted by their stage crew, **Dave Husband** and **Sean Crossley**, Sean, who is currently in his first season stage crewing for the group. They used the front quarter of the stage with the black tabs covering the rear three quarters to cover some of the lengthier scene changes as well as utilising the T-Birds walking through the audience with torches. They also made good use of the ashtrays at Hyde Festival Theatre, using one for Vince Fontaine's radio show and the other to display moments where Sandy was alone and experiencing emotional turmoil in what looked like her bedroom. I was made aware that the car in the production was made by the team which was impressive. The car also had added headlights which shone into the audience, creating a strong effect. There was also a nod to the original Grease: The Musical as a vinyl from the original casting was displayed next to a record player during one of the scenes. The costumes were all sourced by the group and were fitting for the production as well as its time-period.

Lighting and sound were provided by **Steven Oliver-Grant, Daniel Oliver-Grant** and **Kelly Holder**. The lighting was used effectively throughout the production as either ways to pull focus to different areas of stage or ashtrays using different spotlights and also warm dimmed lights used on areas of the stage when they wanted the audience's focus to be directed elsewhere. There were minimal microphone interruptions and the levels between vocals and backing music were well balanced and the cast were heard very well.

So, to say that most of the cast had never taken part in choreography that involved mixed-gender dancing, they took this on with good energy and confidence. For all the cast involved in such an iconic musical, they should all be proud especially in the scorching heat on the night that I visited as well as during the rest of their performances. The heat made it difficult as an audience member as we had temperatures that were the hottest of the year so for the cast to still perform with such energy, they should be applauded.

Thank you so much to Showstoppers Theatre Group for their warm hospitality and to the Hyde Festival Theatre volunteers who worked smoothly alongside the group to create a pleasant experience for all of their audience members. I very much look forward to visiting again.

PHOTOGRAPHS





PROGRAMME

HYDE Festival THEATRE

Show Stoppers
THEATRE GROUP

WE GO TOGETHER
GREASE
THE MUSICAL

SOUVENIR PROGRAMME

act

Hyde Festival Theatre
25th - 27th June 2026
7.15p.m. With an Additional 2p.m. Saturday Matinee
Concession £10 / Adult £12

Northern Stage AWARDS

Sparks

Tickets available from: www.sparksem.co.uk

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