



Show Report

Altrincham Little Theatre

Ladies' Day

26 January 2026

PRODUCTION INFORMATION

PRODUCTION	Ladies' Day
SOCIETY	Altrincham Little Theatre
VENUE	Altrincham Little Theatre
GENRE	Drama
CAST SIZE	6
DIRECTOR	Lisa Barker
STAGE MANAGER	Martin Carrick
LIGHTING & SOUND DESIGN	Jan Taylor
LIGHTING & SOUND OPERATOR	Steve Smith
PROPERTIES	Alison Gould & Martin Carrick
WARDROBE	Alt Theatre Wardrobe & Cast Members
CONTINUITY	Josie Stenhouse
SET DESIGN	John Newman and Lisa Barker
SET BUILD	John Newman, Alan Reidsma, Andy Peate, Paul Blackwell, Don Hines, John Newman, John Howe & Martin Carrick
SET BUILD ASSISTED BY	Pauline Glover, Stephen Glover & Lisa Barker

CAST LIST

Pearl	Barbara Steel
Jan	Sharon Copitch
Shelley	Jan Taylor
Linda	Rachel Barrington
Joe / Jim McCormack / Barry	Chris Burton
Fred / Patrick / Kevin	Adam Burton

DATE OF PERFORMANCE	Monday 26th January 2026
DATE REPORT PUBLISHED	Tuesday 27th January 2026
ADJUDICATOR ID	NSA0001
NSA LOGO ON POSTER	Yes
NSA IN PROGRAMME	Logo on Front
PROGRAMME CLASS	Best Essential Information Design

THE REVIEW

REVIEW WORD COUNT

1164

STRONGEST ELEMENTS

Casting

- The casting panel had cast this play brilliantly, matching the characters to suitable actors.

Incidental Scene Change Music

- Specifically chosen music to add to scene changes helped build the atmosphere and nature of the play.

Inclusion of Stage Crew

- The stage crew had their own costume changes and made the scene changes mini-scenes in themselves

It is always a joy and a delight to head off to Altrincham Little Theatre on a cold, tenebrous January evening as you know you will be greeted by the warm hospitality of the ALT volunteers to enjoy an evening of entertainment and this production was no exception.

Set in the noughties, this comedy-drama follows four work colleagues who decide to take a day off and head to York for a day at the races. The curtain rose on a stark, clinical grey set, with both the flats and stage floor painted in matching tones, effectively establishing the opening scene inside the fish plant. Blue LED lighting was projected upstage onto a cloth, adding colour and atmosphere to the production, although this cloth did not reappear during the fish plant scene in Act Two.

The overall design was deliberately minimalist, resembling a black box – or perhaps more accurately, a “grey box”. Props and scenery were rendered in white with black outlines, meaning that colour was introduced almost exclusively through lighting and costumes. This was a very different set design to what Altrincham’s crew can achieve but it was interesting to see them try something more minimal so the actors on stage could shine through.

Taking on the role of Pearl, **Barbara Steel** shone through her elegance, expressive delivery and impeccable posture. Always a pleasure to watch, this role suited her perfectly. She moved seamlessly between stern authority and warm approachability, presenting a character that felt entirely natural – prim and proper on the surface, yet hinting at a devilish edge beneath. Her performance was precise and assured, with careful attention to posture, strong reactive acting when not speaking, and a graceful, gliding presence as she moved around the stage.

Sharon Copitch took on the role of Jan and was thoroughly entertaining throughout. Her facial expressions, discreet eye rolls and well-judged mannerisms were perfectly suited to the character. She demonstrated strong pacing in her delivery, and her performance following one too many champagnes in the Champagne Marquee felt particularly authentic, as she staggered around the stage and convincingly slurred her words. The portrayal was so

believable that one could easily have assumed the champagne was real – though, having briefly seen her after the performance, it was clear she was very much acting.

Chris Burton took on multiple roles, portraying Joe, the fish plant supervisor, Jim, the glitzy television host, and Barry, Pearl's secret lover. He demonstrated strong projection throughout and successfully adopted a distinct persona for each character, clearly differentiating between them. His diction was clear and his stage presence assured. Jim was a particular highlight, shifting effortlessly from soft, polished tones in front of the cameras to a more comedic, flirtatious "jack the lad" persona when off camera.

Lighting and sound were designed by **Jan Taylor** and operated by **Steve Smith**. A warm general wash was effectively paired with a colourful cyc wall to establish the various locations within the play – blue for the fish plant, green for the racecourse and pink for the Champagne Marquee, to name a few. While the lighting was not fully dimmed for scene changes as might traditionally be expected, the fades were well judged, allowing for smooth shifts in colour and stage temperature. Creating effective lighting plots can be particularly challenging when performers are required to wear hats, yet shadows were kept to a minimum, which was greatly appreciated.

Sound cues were well sourced and executed cleanly on cue, and the inclusion of scene-change music that reflected the tone of the production ensured the audience remained engaged and oriented during transitions.

Stepping into the role of Shelley was **Jan Taylor**, and this marked my first opportunity to see her perform on stage – an experience that proved genuinely impressive. She delivered strong projection, well-observed mannerisms and effective use of make-up to support the character. Playing a highly relatable role, she maintained excellent pace and comic timing, embracing the character's deliberately "common" qualities while demonstrating good posture and thoughtful characterisation. Her performance grew in strength as the play progressed, consistently drawing belly laughs from the audience, and she never once broke character – a thoroughly impressive achievement.

Props were also well chosen and kept deliberately minimal. As a near modern-day play, they were entirely appropriate to the scenes. The only minor drawback was the champagne, which appeared to be flat water – a little soda water or fizz would have added an extra layer of authenticity.

Rachel Barrington took on the role of the slow, ditzy and immature Linda, delivering a performance rich in characterisation. She skillfully adjusted her vocal delivery, moving between soft tones and higher-pitched moments, and maintained her character with impressive focus and energy throughout. Having seen Rachel perform on numerous occasions, this was by far my favourite role of hers, as she incorporated subtle physical details – such as shaking and heel tapping when Linda became nervous or emotional – that made the character feel fully realised. She wasn't just playing the role; she was living and breathing it.

The remaining characters of Fred, Patrick and Kevin were portrayed by **Adam Burton**. Much like Chris, Adam took on three distinctly different roles, adopting a separate accent for each. While a small amount of diction was occasionally lost in the energy of his delivery, he maintained strong stage presence and delivered an engaging and entertaining performance. His portrayal of the overbearing and stumbling Kevin was particularly impressive and felt fully authentic, and it is a performance that leaves one keen to see more of him on stage in the future. It was very funny when Adam performed in a hedge to make him look shorter when acting as a Jockey. Naturally, the audience were laughing and yet he didn't break character once – A great job done.

Costumes were well sourced throughout, ranging from Crocs, tracksuits and coats for the fish plant scenes to elegant Ladies' Day outfits at the racecourse. The various male roles were equally well dressed, featuring a jockey's outfit, suits and trench coats. A particularly pleasing surprise was the costuming of the stage crew, whose outfits suited the scene changes impeccably. These transitions felt like mini scenes in their own right, with the crew working in an organised, strategic and entertaining manner. It was especially lovely to see them join the cast for the bows at the end of the show – a thoughtful touch that rightly acknowledged their hard work backstage.

Lisa Barker's vision for the drama was clear and confident. The stripped-back staging allowed the performers to truly shine and elevate the production through their performances. The stage remained busy and well paced throughout, leaving no opportunity for the audience to disengage. Comic lines were delivered effectively and drew frequent laughter from the packed auditorium.

To summarise, the production was an absolute joy, with the humour landing consistently and the cast's clear off-stage camaraderie shining through to the audience, further lifting the piece. Thank you for another thoroughly enjoyable evening – I very much look forward to returning.

PHOTOGRAPHS







PROGRAMME

A funny and heart-warming comedy drama
by Amanda Whittington

ALTRINGHAM LITTLE THEATRE

Oxford Road
Altrincham
WA14 2ED
www.alttheatre.org

Ladies' Day



Four likely lasses swap factory hairnets for fascinators, and wellies for high heels, when they head off to the races for a drink, a flirt and a flutter.



25-31 January 2026

Tickets £12
Tel: 0161 928 1113
ct.tickets@gmail.com

Curtain up 7.40pm



WARNING!
CONTAINS STRONG LANGUAGE



Association of Community Theatre

Charity Registration No: 517914 Amateur production by arrangement with Nick Hern Books