

Braintree and Witham Times Review

Made in Dagenham was a brave choice for Witham Amateur Operatic Society's return to the stage after two years. Rodgers and Hammerstein it is not. This is a rambunctious irreverent romp of a musical, with rousing ensemble numbers, some excellent individual performances and an all-round good-time feel. The musical follows the film of the same name and tells the story of a fight for equal pay by the women at Ford's motor plant.

It is anchored by a fine lead performance from Amy Pryce, who shows off an excellent singing voice, a nice sense of timing – and a spot-on East London accent.

Kris Tyler brings a touch of poignancy as the put-upon but ultimately sympathetic husband while Emily Smith's dance moves and Sammy-Jo Evans' powerful voice stand out in the company numbers.

The scatological element - audiences were warned in advance that this production 'contains strong language from the factory floor' - belongs mainly to Rhianna Howard, on fine form as the earthy Beryl. She has all the best one-liners, which she delivers with venom.

Edward Groombridge has fun as Tooley extolling the virtues of America, where life is so much better – 'we have Route 66, you have the A13' – while David Slater and Corrina Wilson capture the distinctive vocal traits of Harold Wilson and Barbara Castle.

With a cast of 36, the big productions numbers were a highlight and director Nikki Mundell-Poole, in her 21st year with the society, can be proud of another success.

RON FOSKER