

Update from the Barlow Chair of Trustees 13.02.19

Here is another update on what is happening at the Barlow. In December we earned over £6,800 in volunteer led activity. Again, a great achievement. As always, the trustees wish to express their continuing gratitude to everyone for their hard work and dedication.

The Reading Room Coffee Shop

We have a new coffee machine to replace the very expensive machine we had before. The coffee is reported to be just as good! New regular 'specials' and monthly music at lunchtime are just a couple of ways the Reading Room is making its mark. We have also had the Reading Room piano re-tuned and are hopeful that anyone who would like to 'tinkle the ivories' will do so. We were criticised for closing the Reading Room over Christmas, but in spite of that, footfall has picked up again and we are confident that overall the Reading Room provides an important meeting place and venue for the village and the wider community.

Funding

We have now appointed *Proffitts: Investing in Communities* to make preliminary bids to selected funders over the next three months. Alongside that we have approached Blackburn with Darwen about a public works loan to help fund the roof refurbishment. This has been approved in principle. We now need to enter into serious discussions with the Parish Council as to how that might be implemented.

New Development proposal from the Cricket Club

The Cricket Club has been offered funds by the charitable arm of *ao.com*, specifically to develop a five-a-side artificial football pitch at the back of the Barlow. This is an important venture. Although instigated by the Cricket Club, it has implications for the village and also for the Charity as a whole. If the proposal finds favour the donation will come to the Barlow Charity and the new pitch will be on charitable land. Because of this the Barlow will be hosting a consultation process in partnership with the Cricket Club so that the village and interested parties can express their opinion before the trustees make any decision whether to accept the proposal.

The plans will be available for the public to view on Saturday 23rd February in the Main Hall of the Barlow. Cricket Club representatives will be on hand to explain the plans and to answer any queries

Roof

We are also considering engaging a professional consultant to help our negotiations with the planners and conservation officers regarding the refurbishment of the roof. This negotiation will take place over the next three months and will inform the basis of the specifications and quotations for the roof.

New Trustees

We have one new Trustee. Katie Hopkins lives in Edgworth and is a well known face in the Saturday cafe. She has a professional background in medicine and medical research and we look forward to her joining the trustees.

Barlow Constitution/Legal Liability Steering Group

The story so far: You will remember that a working group was set up after the AGM to investigate legal entities and their implications for the future development of the Barlow. The group's report and its recommendations are now informing the questions the trustees are currently asking of our financial and legal advisors. When we are satisfied that we have all the necessary information we will set out a consultation period for everyone to have their say about the options available. This is likely to be March

Cosmetic Changes

You may have noticed that the Barlow doors and porch have been beautifully painted. What a transformation! Our heartfelt thanks to Liz Waller for organising the work and to Andrew Waller and Paul Allen for doing it! Liz is planning to organise the painting of the hall later in the year.

Volunteer Recruitment

A recruitment day for volunteers is planned for the 23rd March. If you do not already work your socks off for the Barlow, why not come along?

Christine Waring
Chair of the Trustees

www.thebarlow.co.uk

