



Charity No 1162758

Bingley Pool, Myrtle Place, Bingley BD16 2LF

Bingleypool@gmail.com

Annual Report

1st November 2023 - 30th October 2024

1. Organisational Structure

Trustees: Jagruti Amin, Brendan Murphy,
Fiona Dunne, Maureen Carney, Jeremy
Thackray, Andrew Fenton,
William Gentleman, Veronica (Vicky) Stante,
Juliette Freeman

Co-Chair of Trustees: Fiona Dunne & Jeremy Thackray

Secretary: Maureen Carney

Treasurer: Jagruti Amin

Biathlon Organisers: N/A at present

Former Trustees: Marcus Dearden, Joseph Wheatley, Diane
Fairfax, Andrew Morris, Chris Willetts, Isaac
Wilkinson, David Heseltine, Matthew Mar-
tindale, Richard Holmes, Anna Mdee, Polly
Skerratt, Ros Dawson, Mark Shaw, Jenny
Woodward

2. Chair's Report – Summary of Last Year

2024 has been a year of highs and lows for the Friends of Bingley Pool, largely due to the changing political landscape.

Following a rejection of Bradford Council's Levelling Up Fund bid in early 2023, we reported to last year's AGM that we were looking at other options to save the pool alongside our Bingley Ward Councillors. We also sought to re-new our organisation after a difficult year by appointing new trustees. In February 2024 we welcomed four new trustees: Vicky Stante, Juliette Freeman, and Bingley Town Councillors Andrew Fenton and Bill Gentleman.

In March, we learned in the Conservative government's Spring Budget that they had made the decision to award the Levelling Up Fund grant for Bingley Pool after all. This provided £14.4m of funding to Bradford Council, ring fenced for Bingley Pool. Most of our campaigning this year focused on securing



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this capital investment.

We met with Bradford Council in these early days to discuss moving forward with the project, which needed re-costing due to two years of high inflation. We were informed that costings for three options had been prepared: a 4-lane redevelopment; a 6-lane redevelopment, and a demolition and rebuild of the pool with specification to be determined. The costs were drawn up by a single firm and were much higher than what we believe the true cost to be.

In June we attended Bradford Council's Executive Committee Meeting and spoke in support of the highest quality pool possible. FOBP conducted a survey of residents which showed there was a strong local support for a pool and gym facility. We were also in contact with the Labour candidate for Shipley, Anna Dixon, now our MP. Pre-election, Labour's position was, that if they were to enter Government, they would honour Levelling Up Fund bids awarded by the Conservatives.

In August, we learned that Levelling Up Fund projects that had not reached Phase 2, including Bingley, had been put on hold by the new Labour government during budget preparations. We launched a campaign for constituents to email Anna Dixon and pressure her to lobby for the funds to be retained. We know that Anna cited local pressure when she wrote to ministers arguing for the pool to be kept, and we met with her on 17th September when she expressed support for the project. Our campaign featured in the BBC and Telegraph and Argus.

However, as of the government's Autumn Budget, we now know that Labour is 'minded to cancel' the project as part of cost-saving measures, despite the strength of local feeling. We are greatly disappointed in this, particular given Labour's pre-election promise to honour the funding. We will meet again with Bradford Council officers on 5th December to discuss their position on continuing lobbying for the funds and we will send feedback to our members on the outcome.

We have continued our role in updating the community on events happening via Facebook groups and our own page, attending Bingley Town Council and events such as Eldwick Gala to provide information and launch our latest community survey. We have also provided more regular updates on our website. We hope to improve further on our community visibility throughout 2025.



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3. Chair's Report - Next Steps for FOBP

Much of 2024 has been taken up with the question of the Levelling Up Fund. We expect 2025 to be different. Although the funding has not been definitively withdrawn by government, we do not believe the political will is present, either nationally or locally, to pursue this funding. FOBP will therefore not be prioritising securing this Levelling Up grant in 2025.

We consider it more likely that the pool building will go back onto Bradford Council's list of assets to be sold. As such, our campaigning in 2025 will focus on A) stopping an inappropriate disposal of the site, and B) persuading Bradford Council to hand over the land and building to a suitable body, potentially Bingley Town Council. We are grateful to have three town councillors as FOBP trustees, and we will seek to ensure that the Town Council triggers the Asset of Community Value process should the pool go back on the market. This will give the community 6 months to bid for the facility.

Bringing the pool back into ownership by this community is not a new idea. Bingley Town Council was formed for the purposes of saving the pool, and prior to the pandemic a Community Asset Transfer was in progress, which would have seen FOBP take on the operation of the pool.

The key difference now is that FOBP or the Town Council would not be taking on a functional facility generating an income, but a closed one that will require significant up-front investment. This may be for major repairs, or potentially for a new facility altogether. It will be a financial challenge, but we have reason to believe that a pool can be built more cheaply than Bradford's costings suggest. As an example, nearly £400k was budgeted by Bradford for demolition of the pool building, rising to £500k when budgetary on-costs are considered; whereas we understand that demolition would raise money, as builders would pay to reuse the materials.

Other avenues of campaigning to support these goals include:

liaising with Ilkley Lido and Community Group, who have their own facility to protect from budget cuts, to explore a cross-district approach;

raising 1,500 signatures to get speaking time at a session of full Bradford Council;

submitting freedom of information requests regarding Bradford's Squire Lane leisure centre project, which we believe has a fundamentally flawed business case;



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campaigning for Sport England's Facilities Planning Model in our area to be reviewed, as it currently considers Shipley and Keighley pools to be adequate for Bingley swimmers' needs, which we dispute.

In summary, 2024 saw us engaging more with national government, as that was where the Levelling Up decisions rested. In 2025, we will turn back to local government, and to the body that has historically presented the most obstacles towards Bingley Pool – that being Bradford Council.



Treasurer's Report AGM 2024

Overview

2024 has been a quiet year for FOBP and as a result there has been no fundraising. We have continued with minimal outgoings. We have filed our Charity Commission annual return and received a refund for the HMRC corporation tax fine we disputed. Jagruti Amin will be standing down as a trustee and treasurer on 18th December 2024, allowing a handover period for her successor.

Accounts For Year 01.11.2023 - 31.10.2024

Item	Date	Type	Amount	Balance
Starting Balance	01.11.2023	-	-	£4078.71
Refund of fine HMRC Co Tax	20.11.2023	Bank Transfer	£100.00	£4178.71
Payment for Cardigan House AGM	02.04.2024	Bank Transfer	-£21.88	£4156.83
Eldwick & Gilstead Gala Stall	04.07.2024	Bank Transfer	-£15.00	£4141.83
Trustee reimbursement for sweets for Gala	22.08.2024	Bank Transfer	-£18.99	£4122.84
Single event insurance Illingworth McNair	16.09.2024	Bank Transfer	-£105.00	£4017.84
Closing Balance	31.10.2024	-	-	£4017.84

Total Income = £100.00
Total Outgoings = £160.87

Financial Audit

1. Our Cooperative Bank Account is secure. Access to the bank account is only currently available to Jagruti Amin, Maureen Carney and Fiona Dunne.
2. The process of changing the Cooperative Bank Mandate is ongoing to include the current trustees and to remove Jagruti Amin as treasurer, while providing on line access to Jeremy Thackray and the new treasurer.
3. Access to FOBP's PayPal, HMRC, Gift Aid, Companies House & Charity Commission accounts will be transferred to the new treasurer over the next month.