

Annual Report of the Loughborough Bellfoundry Trust

1. Achievements and performance

The Trust is currently engaged in the building restoration phase of the major project "Saving the Last Bellfoundry in the UK." The building work is due to be completed by May 2024 and the re-fit of the Museum is scheduled to follow. A major programme of activities is in preparation to celebrate the re-opening of the restored facilities. Fundraising has continued but the main future sources of income will be through the visitor and educational activities planned post re-opening.

2. Principle risks and uncertainties and how risk is managed

The principle current uncertainty is the actual completion date of the building works. This is carefully managed by a project team of highly experienced built heritage professions who keep this under review with all parties. Cashflow problems caused by the slow payment by the National Lottery and HMRC VAT refund processes cause problems for the contractors which have to be managed by the Trust.

3. Future plans

The Trust is currently served by a team of trustees with backgrounds and skills relevant to the building restoration and development phase of the archives and other facilities. Their focus is to physically shape the Bellfoundry as the national centre for education and research in the bell related world. Post restoration the Trustees focus will shift towards delivering those objectives and

4. Organisational Structure and recruitment and appointment of new Trustees

The Trust has already recruited one new Trustee from the world of academia and is actively seeking further skilled support for delivering its future objectives.

5. Related parties

The Trust's tenant, John Taylor & Co Bellfounders, has managed to deliver considerable growth during the year despite massive disruption to its operations by the building work. The growth was a necessary response to the economic shocks of Covid, and the Russian war provoked energy and materials cost inflation and enabled the company



to break even. The prospects for 2024 remain positive although the growing financial problems of

the C of E are of increasing concern as they are the principal client.

6. Engagement with suppliers, customers, neighbours and others.

The Trust and John Taylor & Co continue to support activities within the local community and also nationally, for example through delivering free youth and schools programmes, supporting an extensive volunteer programme for local people, and sponsoring the national 12-bell ringing competition. Agreement has been reached with the Central Council of Church Bell Ringers to house its Library and Archive within the Trust's new archive facility. This Library is of international significance and its location in Loughborough will support the Trust's objectives. The Trust is also in negotiation to support and administer the Central Council's initiative to manage a nationwide fleet of mobile mini-rings which will be part of a nationwide educational programme on the subject of bells and bellringing.