

The Backbarrow Ironworks Heritage Trust

Chairman's Report for the AGM April 2022

The Trust has been in existence for over three years and I am pleased to say the original trustees still remain strong in their commitment. This is particularly pleasing in the light of the numerous delays we have encountered. These have continued into the period of this report, which is being presented at the start of April 2022. These delays have proved very frustrating continuing into March 2022. My praise and thanks to all the trustees is even more meaningful in the context of these frustrations, they have worked hard to ensure we have continued our successful life as a heritage trust.

Despite Covid restrictions which have made the Trust's work challenging, we have managed to meet and communicate successfully. This reporting period has included real meetings as well as zoom meetings. Although due essentially to the delays we have met on less occasions. During this period, two of our trustees have resigned as trustees but remain as associate members of the trust. We are aware during this coming year we will have to address continuity of the trust, specifically the need for new Trustees in the future.

The capacity grant was extended for a year and that became even more important as during 2021 no progress was made on completing the lease. Although we still achieved the following, particularly regarding HE milestones.

FINALISE THE 999 YEAR LEASE. BIHT's solicitor, Jonathan Holmes of Thomson Hayton and Winkley, appointed 8/7/19, has been negotiating with Hill Dickinson, solicitors for the owners. The draft contract was agreed in principal well over a year ago, but was delayed due to work on the site not being completed. There was concern re consequential damage from the failed valley gutter. A simple clause in the contract has been suggested by Jonathan, this should cover this problem.

We have put pressure on the owners via Jonathan and directly by email however, the frustration of not yet completing on the lease is huge!

LDNP planning board visited the site last year and to signed it off. The inspection by Charles Blackett Ord took place in this reporting year and proved helpful in identifying a number of small but important issues that needed addressing. This was helpful to the Trust as it gave us support in pushing for the completion of the site. It was also reassuring to have this inspection from a significant third party.

Earlier in the year to speed completion, Ian and I agreed to split the completion work. I organised the painting of metal/iron work which had not been finished and Ian organised the weed-killing. We contracted Glen Sutcliffe to do this work and we were very pleased at how quickly he engaged with the task and the quality of the final result. The weed killing after many delays and emails between us, was eventually completed in September, the result was acceptable to the Trust. Any later it would have been ineffective due to weather/season changes.

Hence, we agreed that the outstanding work was completed and effectively signed off in early September.

Other issues previously highlighted have been resolved, we have worked with the Parish Council on lighting and clarified rights of access through the site with LDNP.

OUR WEBSITE. We reported on setting up the web-site in the last report. This now gives us a good platform for communication as well as being a source of information for the general public re Backbarrow Ironworks.

The photographs taken by Colin Aldred of Aerial Artwork using a drone are of a high quality and give a fascinating dimension to the web-site. We also want to use the photographs taken by the HE photographer.

Although the web-site can be accessed on-line, the dilemma raised in the last report, which is indicated a number of times in this report, between giving information but with no visitor access and therefore no money raising opportunities.

SIGN THE SECTION 17 AGREEMENT As noted above the we are waiting for the draft contract, so we can sign it. The advice from Tamsin on behalf of H.E. is not to sign until any uncertainties re the site are resolved.

As far as we are aware we have resolved all uncertainties, but the draft contract will need to be carefully checked as it is in excess of 18 months since we examined it.

CONTRACTORS RE SECTION 17 MAINTENANCE We were delighted early in 2021 to appoint CAS and hence the services of Glen Sutcliffe as our maintenance contractor, particularly as they are a local firm.

As noted in the last report this was a detailed and lengthy process and we appreciated the support of HE. Due to the delay in completion, we contacted Glenn in early summer to confirm he was still able to undertake the contract and gave him an opportunity to reassess his quote which he did. We involved HE [via Tamsin] in this process.

OBTAIN PUBLIC LIABILITY INSURANCE The company [Towergate] providing the insurance was contacted a number of times this year to ensure their quote was valid, HE have been informed. As with everything this is ready to go as soon as the lease is signed. Towergate are the ideal company as they specialise in our sector.

THE HERITAGE TRUST NETWORK The Trust have been members of the trust for over two years and two trustees [Helen and Richard] attended the on-line virtual conference that took place in November 2020.

Richard attended the November 2021 conference in Coventry.

INTERPRETATION PANELS We still believe that the financial provision for the panels is still available and a payment will be made to the Trust, when the panels are fixed. This will not cover the full cost and the capacity grant has a provision for these boards. The two panels were designed [the designs were agreed at the beginning of 2021] nearly a year ago.

Tamsin on behalf of HE has seen the panels and we have negotiated the appropriate HE logo. The location of these panels remains the same ie at the top of the site so they can be read from the main road and on the lower part of the site near the entrance.

The sign panels have been designed by MTP Media. It was decided that the signs will be fixed as soon as we complete the lease contract. Obviously, we need to make an official application to HE for permission to erect the panels. The application has just been made.

THE HERITAGE OPEN DAYS These, were successfully held in September 2021. We hosted three tours taking 35 people around the site, they thoroughly enjoyed the event and indicated that they would return. We were upfront about delays in the lease but said watch the web-site for an update. The literature made specific reference to the web-site.

RAISING PUBLIC AWARENESS Many of the points above have led to public awareness, specifically the Heritage Open Days and the visit by Cumbria Industrial History Society. Some important links have been made, from these events.

Backbarrow Ironworks has a special feature on the **Cumbria Industrial History Society website** from August 2018, initially as an interim way of raising awareness. This is being maintained with links to our own web-site.

We are trying to forge a relationship with the company developing the storehouses. A number of months ago we identified a stone crusher located near the road, we would love to have it on our site as it is effectively part of the ironworks. We would appreciate the support of HE in this venture? We are also asked by people what is happening to the storehouses, we only have the original plans, we are neighbours and it was an integral part of the ironworks any information about the development would be very helpful.

SITE VISITS As above, but a lot of work has been put into preparing the site for visits, including a full scale risk assessment leading to specific visits to ensure the site was tidy and as safe as possible. This included temporary tape and similar in certain areas.

We have agreements and policy in place as follows: visits policy, charging policy, access policy, health and safety policy, accident policy, visitor protocol. We will review openings and visits policy as and when we know the site is ours.

Apart from a visit by CIHS and the open days no visits have been possible for nearly two years. Likewise, the chairman has not been able to undertake any talks/lectures, we hope this will change in 2022 and regular links with the Whitewater hotel and village can be established.

The update on these issues is the chairman has spoken at the CIHS annual conference and some site visits and talks have now been arranged.

ON SITE LOCATION SIGNAGE Signs have been provisionally designed for the key locations on the site, these include another smaller interpretation panel. We had hoped to have been fully functional so we could learn from taking groups around the site the best locations and the most useful additional information, therefore making this extra information as relevant as possible.

INFORMATION LEAFLETS We have written and designed promotional leaflets and ascertained a number of places where they can be placed, starting with local venues e.g. The Motor Museum and The Haverthwaite Railway.

We have written a two sided A4 leaflet for the recent visits and will be writing and designing a further one for when we fully open!

We will also have written and designed a leaflet which will be part of a package of local information in the holiday apartments. As with the promotional material this will be renegotiated and released as soon as we have completed the lease.

EDUCATIONAL LEAFLETS Final development had been put on hold until schools are back to normal. However, the format has been agreed as follows: A simple folder with outline info and photos as well as title and logo on the cover. This folder will contain ten A4 sheets containing basic information, other information will be available to meet individual school needs.

DETAILED HISTORY OF BACKBARROW IRON FURNACE Research continues, still in line for completion early in 2023.

LOCAL HISTORY TRAIL This will be ready for summer 2022, even if the world is not back to normal, we are yet to decide how to sell it?

LINK WITH THE LAKELAND VILLAGE AND WHITEWATER HOTEL The Chair has links with this group having in the past given talks and led local guided tours. As and when appropriate, these will be offered on a regular basis, hopefully by next Spring

OPENING PUBLICITY Having in mind the delay in the lease completion, this event will be delayed until the near year. We intend to invite the local press and regional TV and radio, we want to work in conjunction with HE and Duff and Phelps. The delay will help us to take account of any Covid restrictions so it should be a positive good news story!

During the year 2021, although there was no progress on taking over the lease as can be seen we achieved a tremendous amount of relevant work as a trust, which meant when the completion finally took place in March we were as far on in preparation as we could be. The frustrations in getting to the final completion of the lease are now legendary and would make a great fiction story.

It should be noted that completion finally took place in mid- March and all our efforts are now focussed on making the Trust viable and thus completing our main charitable aims, to ensure Backbarrow Ironworks are maintained in good condition and we promote the Ironworks to the public in numerous ways. Despite the trials and tribulations of this period, the Trust remains strong and resolute in fulfilling our charitable trust aims to continue leasing the SAM and promote its history in conjunction with making Backbarrow Ironworks an important centre for understanding the iron industry and its place in local history.

Our project has always been making up time, but at least this coming year we have the site!

Richard R W Sanderson
Chair of Backbarrow Ironworks Heritage Trust
31.03.22.



<u>2021 - 2022</u>		<u>In</u>	<u>Out</u>	<u>Balance</u>
Balance brought forward				4293 35
8/4/21	Heritage Trust Network - Invoice 1732			
	Annual Subscription Chq 22		100 00	4193 35
20/4/21	Lights - Richard Sanderson Chq 23		44 97	4148 38
31/3/21	Bank Interest	1 45		4149 83
2/6/21	A2A Advertising Ltd. Chq 24		48 00	4101 83
3/8/21	A2A Advertising Ltd Chq 25		78 00	4023 83
24/9/21	Screwfix chq 26		3 29	4020 54
24/9/21	Home Bargains chq 27		5 46	4015 08
24/9/21	Cumbria Industrial History Society - Tour ①	40 00		4055 08
10/11/21	Zoom Subscription Chq 28		143 88	3911 20
18/11/21	Heritage Open Days - Money from Tours ②	71 00		3982 20
19/11/21	Screwfix chq 29		11 66	3970 54
13/1/22	Solicitors chq 30		2674 80	1295 74
13/1/22	Conference Expenses to Richard Sanderson chq 31		303 49	992 25