

Annual Report 2016

Constitution and Personnel

This is our second year as a registered charity (we are officially a Charitable Incorporated Organisation – or CIO) and our trustees remain the same apart from one change in that Helen Anglum, our previous Treasurer, resigned and we have welcomed Neil Jacques as a new trustee. Neil recently retired as Cultural Services Officer with North Lincolnshire Council and his experience will be invaluable to Better Barrow. Nigel Catley has taken over the duties of Treasurer.

As a CIO our official objectives remain the same as they have been since the formation of Better Barrow, namely:

..... to improve and enhance the environment of the Market Place and surrounding area and advance the understanding and appreciation of the village's history. It aims to restore and maintain the area as a space for public events, create an attractive area of public amenity and mark the importance of John Harrison through celebrating and interpreting his life and work.

The Committee, made up of all the Trustees, meets once a month and our sub-committees – Funding, Events, Market Place Development – meet as necessary.

Communication and Publicity

It is important to us that we keep both the Barrow community and our wider group of friends informed of all our activities. We reach the wider community through our website, our busy Facebook pages (420 likes), Missing Link articles and our Notice Board. We also directly inform our supporters via email; we have over 160 on our email list and would welcome any new supporters: please email us if you would like to be added. In addition we have begun a quarterly newsletter which is mailed to our 'high-profile' supporters such as the Maritime Museum, the Lord Lieutenant of Lincolnshire and others. Our publicity officer, Ann Boulton, sends regular updates to the local media. We have printed a number of leaflets to introduce our organization, especially for people who are new to our village. If you know anyone who would like one, they are available in the newsagents.

Contacts and Collaboration

Promoting social cohesion within the village is an important part of our aims and over the year we have worked with, or contributed to, activities involving Barrow Meridian Rotary Club, Barrow in Bloom, John Harrison School, Holy Trinity Church and the Methodist Chapel. We have also established good contacts with a number of Barrow shops and businesses, many of whom have supported us directly by contributing prizes for some of our events. We are very pleased that Barrow Costcutter has selected BBCP, along with John Harrison School, as the recipient of their Local Pride Charity for 2016 – donating to our cause when specific items are purchased from their shop (see their regular fliers for details).

We continue to receive strong support from North Lincolnshire Council which has helped us in a number of areas when addressing our aim. We have regular Joint meetings, chaired by Susan Hopkinson of North Lincolnshire Council, and which include ourselves, the local councillors, representatives from relevant NLC departments (Environment, Highways, etc.) and representatives of the Parish Council.

Progress

In spite of approaches to major funders by mid-2015 we were no closer to achieving the large amounts of money required for the major landscaping of the Market Place. This, in large part, seems to be because the

project falls between many stools and we do not easily fit into categories recognised by those funders we have approached. Therefore, about six months ago we undertook a major reassessment of how to achieve our objectives.

Rather than wait for an ideal solution, we decided to do what we could in smaller steps. Given that Better Barrow began when some dying trees were removed from the Market Place and were not replaced, and that public responses and opinion surveys strongly supported tree replacement, we made this a priority.

As a result of discussions with North Lincolnshire Council and successful bids for community grants, we are part way to achieving this part of our vision for the Market Place. As well as tree planting (at the time of writing, two have been planted in the soft areas and we are awaiting two more in the hard standing near the bus stop) we hope to see areas of unsightly tarmac replaced with paving more in keeping with the surroundings. There will also be one or more information boards about the village and its history attached to the rear of the bus shelter.

None of this will affect future improvements. We still have a vision of a wider make-over for the Market Place which would include repair and enhancement of the market cross, a statue of Harrison, the relocation of some parking and some attractive repaving of the area. No firm plans have been made regarding these as yet and we are still actively seeking the funds required to fulfil our vision.

Our other major endeavour, to celebrate the village's heritage, especially the life and work of John Harrison, through the establishment of a Heritage Centre, has also had a change of tack. Again, rather than waiting for one particular idea to be realised, we have started to look for alternatives. Enterprise Inns have remained silent about their plans for the Royal Oak, if any, where we were hoping to acquire a building in which to site the centre, so we have begun to discuss the possibility of sharing some space in a remodelled Village Hall. These discussions are at an early stage but we will keep the community informed.

Fund-raising

In addition to much work in researching major funders (with help from NLC) we have continued to raise money for our running costs and to fund minor projects. We have two bids awaiting a decision at present. One is for LEADER funding for a Village Trail with accompanying notice boards and website and the other with the European Social Development Fund for tree-seats in the Market Place incorporating designs referring to Barrow's heritage, especially John Harrison's work.

Events

The John Harrison Prize was established in collaboration with John Harrison School and has been supported for the past two years by Hull Trains. Last summer two pupils from the school travelled to Greenwich to see the Harrison clocks, courtesy of Hull Trains and the Maritime Museum. We intend this to be an ongoing annual award.

We have tried to put the fun into fund-raising through a series of Three Voices cabarets, hosted at Harrisons restaurant, the Ropewalk and one outdoors on the Humber Bank. We have had two very successful talks: the story of the making of the film 'Longitude' by Andrew King and the presentation by John Thompson, *Barrow Then and Now* showing photos of the village past and present. BBCP participated in the Rotary Christmas Fair where we ran a tombola and cake stall, helped out at the Rotary Hallowe'en Bake Off and contributed a decorated Christmas Tree to the Methodist event. Members also helped out at the John Harrison School Summer Fair. We have reprinted the Barrow Civic Society booklet *Barrow Then and Now* and copies are available on request for £4.

The Wheelbarrow and Open Garden Weekend is of course our main event of the year. Last year we had over 90 decorated wheelbarrows as well as many open gardens and entertainments in the Market Place. Barrow is becoming increasingly recognised as the place to be on the first weekend in June!

We should also mention here that we arranged a visit from the Lord Lieutenant of Lincolnshire, Toby Denis and two Deputies from North Lincolnshire, Sir Reginald Tyrwhitt and Veronica Pettifer during which we explained the Project and showed them the Harrison display in the church. Another interesting contact was made with the Maritime Museum at Mystic, Connecticut which I was able to visit, while on holiday in the US, during the time that the Longitude Exhibition, *Ships Clocks and Stars*, was sited there. These and other, more informal connections, serve to raise the profile of Barrow far beyond the village.

Summary – what have we achieved over the last 4 years?

- Established an annual event – the Wheelbarrow Weekend - which brings the whole village together
- Established the annual John Harrison Prize
- Raised the profile of Barrow and of John Harrison locally and nationally, through talks and visits
- Worked with Barrow in Bloom to improve the village environment, including a row of decorative trees opposite the church bank
- Worked with North Lincolnshire Council to improve the Market Place, starting with trees to replace those lost in 2012
- Gained a substantial grant from Heritage Lottery Fund to organise a major celebration of the tercentenary of the Act of Longitude in association with John Harrison School
- Renewed the John Harrison display in Holy Trinity Church, designing and supplying 21 new professional exhibition boards

Finally

Thanks to our hard-working committee of trustees, without which none of this could be achieved and to all the folk in Barrow – and beyond – for all their support.

Trevor Millum

12.4.16

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