

Chairman's report for AGM held 21 March 2024

General

As usual, the past year had been a busy one for the trust. After many years' service, we are saddened to receive the resignation of long-standing trustee, Phil Taylor. Phil has been pivotal in moving the trust forward over a considerable period and his knowledge, experience and enthusiasm for the trust's work will be sorely missed. We wish him well in the future.

Sadly, this past year has seen the loss of another highly experienced and valuable trustee with the passing of Suzette Hibbert. Suzette had a special interest in Middleham Gardens, and her hard work and general wisdom will also be sorely missed, in common with many other local organisations of which she was a part. RIP and thank you, Suzette.

Highlights of the year are as follows:

Market Hall

Under the effective stewardship of Phil and Bob, the Hall has had full take-up with currently Libraries Unlimited, Jonny Bowden Fitness and latterly the Lyn Valley Doghouse being replaced by Jonny's Coffee business, as tenants. We have undertaken a major repair project on the Market Hall under Bob's watchful eye, and further work will be undertaken as we move forward.

Middleham Gardens

Following a review, trustees decided to undertake changes to the way the Gardens are managed. We are delighted to have appointed Laura McDouall as our gardener and Laura has already introduced wonderful new ideas on how to develop and brighten up the gardens for all to enjoy. We also thank Anja Fischbach for many years' service as our gardener.

Walkers are Welcome

Following a review, the trustees determined that the value to the community as part of WAW did not justify the continuation of membership, as the community in general could undertake quite comfortably the activities for which the trust paid. As a result, we resigned from WAW with effect from 31 December 2023.

Lyn in Bloom

We were delighted to have Laura McDouall volunteer to lead on this project and, gradually, ideas have come forward leading to what we are sure will be an exciting period for Lyn in Bloom. A special theme for 2024 has been agreed linking displays to the 125th anniversary of the RNLI. The launch of a new, revitalised social media presence will hopefully lead to more volunteers becoming involved. Fund raising will need to be considered to pay towards the cost of displays.

Affordable Housing

This project has been revitalised with Chris Sleep and John Atherton taking a lead role, with close links with the Town Council and their drive to have Affordable Housing built in the Lyn Valley. A meeting has been arranged with the Chief Planner of ENPA which we hope will clarify a way forward.

Lyn Climate Action Group

The Group has been very active over the year and with Kate and Bob as trustees, we are keen as a trust to assist the Group going forward. The assistance with providing trees in the Valley of Rocks is one example where we have been able to help.

Air Ambulance

Other than to report that we have been in touch with Devon Air Ambulance to clarify who should undertake regular checks of the lighting at Holman Park – possibly ourselves or LLTC – there is nothing more to add about this Project.

Other activities

We were delighted to be able to assist the community in raising funds for the provision of a Riser Chair for Paramedics in the Lyn Valley, using our Charity status to enable Gift Aid to be claimed on donations from individuals. We were also able to help the Lyn Defibrillator fund in their efforts to raise money to replace the various Defibrillators in the Lyn Valley area, and via Gift Aid reclaimed, we were able to add over £600 to the fund raising campaign.

I would like to thank all Trustees for their continued enthusiasm and hard work in undertaking their various activities, all of which are for the benefit of the Lyn Valley in general.

David Wilde

19 March 2024