

Fundraising News

I do want to highlight the success story that is our fundraising team, not only have we organised and run several of our own fundraising events, we have also had fantastic support from other local groups holding their own events on our behalf. During the last month we manned the cafe for a craft fair held in the Community Centre in Lyndhurst. Not only did our volunteers fix the best bacon rolls in town, but they also produced the biggest cake stall you can imagine. It was a very successful day with really good feedback from our customers and outstanding support from our volunteers. We raised just shy of £250 on the day, which was a brilliant result. In addition local supporter Wendy Reynolds, who belongs to the Waterside Ladies Supper Club, planned and organised an event full of fun and fashion. Everyone who attended purchased their outfit from local charity shops, so this was a real win win situation, you may have seen some of the pictures posted on Facebook. The ladies raised the grand total of £303 at this event which was another superb contribution to our fundraising campaign. With these two events and other grants and receipts I can tell you that our fundraising total has now reached just over £14,000, which is an outstanding achievement.



Whilst this won't fix the pier it will help to facilitate some of the early costs we will incur as we set up and prepare for the project.

In the coming months we will be holding more events and one to look out for will be on the 19th August. This will be entitled "Walk the Planks to Save Our Pier". We are planning a day of fun and activity on the pier with entertainment for all the family, it promises to be fun. Watch out for more details.

Pier Condition Survey

I have previously explained our intention to commission a professional survey on the pier. We need to understand the present condition of the whole structure for several reasons. Firstly we have to be



clear on what will be needed to be done to ensure that the pier can be properly protected and preserved, not to mention restored and redeveloped in the future. In addition, before we take responsibility for any operational control of the pier we have to be sure it is fit for purpose. We also have to provide more detailed information to the Charities Commission about the grant funds we anticipate applying for in the future, why they will be needed and how they will be used.

We were contacted by local consultants Ramboll, who are based at Cadnam and have a specialist marine department with experience in pier restoration and wider marine engineering. We met them recently and were very impressed with the level of awareness and so we asked them to advise on a strategy and an initial proposal to help us understand the current condition of the pier. They have recommended a high level inspection in the first instance, this will include an inspection at high water and one at low water so they can look at as much of the structure as possible.

You may not know that during the 1980's the structural deck of the pier was replaced in a major refurbishment project. Many of you will know that it was at this time that the community were involved in supporting the installation of the new planks, lots of you donated money to sponsor a plank and have it engraved with a message or name or in memory of a loved one, this was a great scheme and one we may look to extend in the future. Ramboll at Cadnam were formerly the base of a company of consulting engineers called Gifford & Partners. They were the design engineers for this work and so they have some historical association and access to the records which may prove to be useful. The works were undertaken by Hythe Marine Services and we also have established a local contact with a former Director of that business who was involved at the time.



We have agreed to appoint Ramboll to undertake this initial condition survey and provide us with a report together with recommendations.



We believe Ramboll will prove to be an important partner in this project and they have provided a £1,000 contribution towards the total cost of the survey which demonstrates their own interest and commitment to support our initiative.

Blue Funnel have also agreed to support us by making a financial contribution towards the cost of the survey and assisting with access by providing a suitable boat to carry out the high water inspection.

We expect the inspection to be carried out in the next few weeks and should have the report a few weeks after that.

This won't be the only survey we have to undertake but it should help to point us in the right direction and give us some really valuable information to work on.

Meeting with Blue Funnel



Two weeks ago we held our first formal discussions with Lee Rayment, managing Director of Blue Funnel who now own and operate the Hythe Ferry together with the pier and its unique train, we discussed arrangements that would form the basis of an agreement setting out the basis of how we could take responsibility to operate the pier and train whilst Blue Funnel Ferries continue to operate the ferry service.

Our discussions were both positive and constructive. Lee reaffirmed his commitment to this community based initiative and put forward a number of good ideas for us to consider. We each agreed to take some time to put together our draft proposals before meeting again to identify common ground.

We are confident that we can now create and agree arrangements that will provide a working model for this project that satisfies both the Charities Commission, major grant funding bodies and will allow us to realise our main objectives.

Our goal from the outset has been to create a new future that will allow the commercial ferry operation to recover and thrive providing a valuable and prosperous public transport link from Hythe to Southampton whilst creating a new charitable organisation to preserve and protect our pier and its unique train for the benefit of the community and wider public.

I am confident we can succeed.

Project Development Coordinator

We will be working hard over the next couple of months to secure the funds necessary to appoint a project development coordinator.

This key worker will help to drive us forward in the key stage of project development, building capacity, coordinating voluntary support, dealing with and building our network of stakeholders and partners that will be essential to the delivery of this project.



With the £15,000 grant being provided by the Parish Council we are already half way to the £30,000 target and last week we agreed to commit £3,000 from our campaign funds towards this, so we are now at £18,000, leaving £12,000 to find. We hope to have further news about this in the coming weeks and will keep you posted as we progress.

We very much hope to have this person in post in the autumn.

Public Meeting

In the autumn we plan to hold a second public meeting when we will be inviting you to become members of the association. As we said from the outset the success of this project will be wholly dependent upon your support and involvement, this is a community initiative and it is therefore right that you have a real opportunity to be a part of it, join the organisation and have your say in how we develop and operate. We will give you plenty of notice about the arrangements and the proposals we have and we look forward to building a strong and active association for the future success of the project.



...and finally

I sometimes need to pinch myself at the progress we have made in the last nine months. Those dark and uncertain times at the end of 2016 have given way to some optimism and we now have a realistic opportunity to make a difference in something that really matters.

It just goes to show that together we can achieve more, together we can make a difference, so please share your ideas, share this update and keep in touch. There is still so much to do, this is not a short term project, it's not a pipe dream either, it is an opportunity to do something of real value and public benefit.

I hope that you will continue to support us as we move forward because...

Together We Can!

Peter King, Chairman
Hythe Pier Heritage Association



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