

## **Chair's Notes Trustee Weekend 7-9th February 2020 Hilfield Franciscan Friary Nr Dorchester**

We were warmly welcomed by the Community at Hilfield Friary, which consists of brothers and lay members, men, women and children. It was good to have our community hosted by another community. Conversations around the meal table allowed us to compare and contrast our experiences. They too have solar panels and a biomass boiler. They have family camps in the summer and a programme of hosted events throughout the year.

All 8 Trustees, our Community Secretary, a potential new Trustee, both Wardens and 2 resident team members from OWD attended. Team members from Bradwell were not able to attend due to pressures of the building work, the arrival of new resident volunteers and severe weather conditions.

Our agenda for the weekend was a blend of operational management issues and a review of all that been good and of value in the past year. Both centres have major building works in progress, hence the necessity to find an outside venue for our weekend meeting.

### **Othona West Dorset**

At OWD the Four Seasons Studio (4SS) building is nearly water tight. The project is running on time and on budget. The renewal of the washrooms is also on schedule - thanks go to the hard work and expertise of the project team overseeing this. These projects represent a significant upgrade to the facilities at OWD. The launch of 4SS is 24th May, to coincide with the first weekend of Dorset Arts Weeks, Jan Marshall will do the official opening. There will be music, cream teas and an evening concert.

OWD are also modifying the residential accommodation for the core team, allowing for personal space and a small kitchen for those who are longer term residents (>1yr). The hope is that improved conditions will mean that team members want to stay with us for longer.

Trustees received the annual Health and Safety Audit report and action plan for 2020. Trustees are pleased with the progress made, acknowledging the work that underpins this. The core team has had training in H&S, First Aid, Food Hygiene and Fire Warden training.

OWD are looking to recruit a caterer.

### **Othona Essex**

Othona Essex is in the throes of a major building project, the whole energy generation infrastructure is being serviced, renewed and expanded. There will be additional solar panels, another larger wind turbine and a biomass boiler. The rationale for this very large capital investment is to allow conversion to green energy generation, with very low CO2 emissions and increased capacity to meet current and future needs. During the project various things have been uncovered that have required rectification. All works will now be compliant with building regulations and H&S legislation. Planning permission for the wind turbine has been delayed, due to environmental sensitivities. The project is overspent and running beyond its predicted finish time. The size of the overspend was not completely known at the time of the Trustees

meeting, the Treasurer, energy project board chair and project manager were tasked with an urgent investigation of the financial position. The financial planning for the energy project was predicated on recovery of the capital expenditure over 20 years. This will be a combination of the Renewable Heating Initiative (RHI) payments from the government, significant savings on fuel costs (LPG) and increased income from the centre as a consequence of being open for more weeks in the year.

Trustees are very conscious that we stand on the shoulders of those who have gone before.

The energy project has allowed a refit of the kitchen with the removal of all gas appliances.

Training is scheduled for the use of the new equipment.

All these changes necessitate revision of the H&S procedures, work on this will begin as soon as the building project manager hands over the site to the Warden and his team.

### **Values and Our Value**

Saturday afternoon was devoted to hearing about the work done at both centres and learning about the groups and individuals that have been impacted. We spent some time identifying the values that underpin our efforts and trying to understand what our value to the wider world might be. See separate posting of our underpinning values and behaviours, coming soon on the websites.

We wondered if one of our special contributions to the world is that we make the space and time to listen to one another's stories. This allows us to make meaning of our lives, as we accompany, and allow ourselves to be accompanied by others, in community.

The strategic question for consideration is; what do we need to do in order to be relevant to the needs of younger generations, so that they can make meaning in their lives?

Trustees next meet for a business 26th June in London.

The AGM is scheduled for 26th September 2020 at the same venue as last year.

A small group will be formed to plan the 75th anniversary celebration in London in September 2021.