

**Chairman's Report for year ended 31st May 2018**

This year we have hosted and supported various annual festivals and functions in the Town, but our decision last year was to support a strategy proposal for both our building changes and strengthening of our committee.

Looking firstly at our committee membership. We invited current committee members to become Trustees and these places were accepted. We did lose two of our long-standing trustees at the AGM last year. Ted Ellis accepted the Vice-Chair position and Ellie Hubbard became Company Secretary. We also welcomed new committee member Irene.

Our efforts have also gone into our building strategy, which received a positive boost when we were awarded a building Capital Grant of £50,000 from North Hertfordshire District Council. The building strategy was then enhanced and updated to define those areas that can be covered by the grant, where we can also utilise our ring-fenced Section 106 money. We are hoping that work will start in the autumn this year.

So thank you to the Building Heritage panel for the grant, NHDC officer Stuart Izzard who has supported our application and Cllr Muir who has supported us again this year with a grant from his Herts County Council funds.

When the project works are completed the old fire station area will be used for heritage exhibits, with the Baldock Museum deciding how to best utilise the space. The changes will also provide a refurbished toilet area, with an access facility, as well as modernise the area. We will also gain a new coffee / bar area which will enable us to bring the museum exhibits into regular opening times of the building, as well as giving a wider heritage programme to the community.

Other benefits of the refit will be new windows and therefore better energy efficiency and air circulation/ventilation in the Thomas Pryor Hall, as well as heating to the Museum side of the building and dressing rooms, which currently have only a couple of basic wall electric heaters.

Our gallery area has been extremely well supported by local artists and we have had many interested visitors to view the varied artwork. We are very pleased with the increase in footfall from the local community. The gallery is also used to host our monthly 'History in the Afternoon' talks. These talks cover a variety of topics, which have been very well received and supported by the local community.

As always, none of these achievements could be done without our volunteers, so a massive vote of thanks to all for their support in keeping the BAHC on track for yet another year.

Thank you all  
Alison Gentle  
Chairman