

## **CVCLT News March 2022**

### **A visit from the Mayor**

“An incredible co-operative housing association” – that’s how the Mayor of West Yorkshire Tracy Brabin described our CLT following a visit she made to Todmorden on March 4<sup>th</sup>. We were pleased to show her Birks Court in Walsden where she met some of the residents, and also to talk to her more generally about what we’re trying to achieve – and what she can do to help us and other West Yorkshire community-led housing organisations.

Tracy has posted a short and rather enjoyable video reporting on her Todmorden visit, which you can find here: <https://t.co/oTnFUVecat>. (So far over 1600 people have viewed it!)

### **Join us (the easy way)**

Nice as it is to have recognition from the Mayor, it’s just as important to us as a community-based organisation to have a very broad membership of local people. 257 of you already are members, but this newsletter goes to many more people who we know support our work but who haven’t yet joined. (You become a member by acquiring a £1 ‘share’).

Our Executive Manager Paul Brannigan has just done something we should have done ages ago – made it possible to sign up as a member online. You’ll find the link four lines down on <https://caldervalleyclt.org.uk/get-involved/>.

### **Our AGM**

And talking of membership, our AGM is the occasion where all members are invited to participate in our running, elect the trustees, quiz the existing trustees on what they’re doing, ask questions and make suggestions. It’s usually an enjoyable and stimulating occasion.

This year the AGM has been fixed for Sat June 18<sup>th</sup> at 11am. We’ll be face-to-face (yes, we surely will!). The venue will be confirmed shortly.

### **Time to be a trustee**

We mentioned in our last newsletter that we are looking to bring one or two new people to our trustee board. Please consider whether you are willing to stand. In the first instance drop our Chair Simon an email at [simon.brearley@caldervalleyclt.org.uk](mailto:simon.brearley@caldervalleyclt.org.uk)

### **Housing for Hebden**

Our plans to bring back much needed affordable homes to High Street are progressing.

Contractors were recently on site digging trenches and bore holes to learn more about the condition of the proposed location; the report is due soon though early indications are promising. We also undertook air quality measuring on the site across last year with the report just in, and the good news is that the air is good where the homes would be. And our architects are working on some design aspects that reflect comments made at the public consultation we held in November.

The situation in the building market is not so promising though, with price inflation and volatility both high. Many developers and housing associations are currently having to postpone their own development plans until (hopefully) the market settles down.

So things remain uncertain. However we know that we definitely need to secure planning consent before funders commit to a firm level of financial support and contractors commit to a price. Only then will we find out for sure if the scheme is financially viable. This is not ideal, given the uncertainty a planning application entails, but it is the necessary next step which we hope shortly to take.

### **Hebden Bridge Signal box**

We are now at the stage where Network Rail have instructed their solicitors to draw up the lease for the Signal Box. We are a little frustrated that the process has taken so long, but it appears that we are nearly there. After we have signed the lease, we will be able to move ahead with the refurbishment work. Fortunately, the National Lottery Heritage Fund and the Railway Heritage Trust have been extremely understanding about the delays, and our grants are still waiting for us.

### **Forging a future at Foundry Street**

Three CVCLT trustees were given a guided tour of the Foundry Street community centre in Sowerby Bridge the other day, where we shared our own experiences informally with the new group that's come together to try to take over the centre in an asset transfer from the council. We also put the group in touch with our friends at Todmorden Community College (TLC), now community-run following a successful asset transfer.

### **Putting the Calder Valley on the map**

People down south may be notoriously vague about northern geography, but at least we were able to put our valley on the map (and talk about our work in the CLT) on March 17 to the hundred or so delegates at the Town & Country Planning Association's conference at the Coin Street centre on London's South Bank. The event was focused on good practice in ensuring long-term stewardship of community assets. We were delighted to be asked to speak. (It was our Secretary Andrew who went down to London, one of his last engagements for the CLT before – as we reported last month - he steps down from our board at the AGM).

### **Working out our social impact**

There's a long tradition of conventions for financial accounting, but there's much less to go on when it comes to trying to measure our social and environmental impact. We produced our first short social impact report last year and we propose to include something similar in this year's Trustees' Report and 2021 Financial Accounts (the document we will bring to members at the June AGM). But longer-term, we want to try to assess the CLT's social and environmental performance as rigorously as possible. If you have expertise in this area or simply are interested in volunteering to help, please let us know. Let Paul our Executive Manager know on [manager@caldervalleyclt.org.uk](mailto:manager@caldervalleyclt.org.uk).