

***From The Trustees***

***Progress Report on the New Museum***



*Artists Impression New Museum*

Although we have been unable to say anything publicly over the last few months we have certainly not been idle or moribund! The Trustees have been working diligently and effectively behind the scenes and have been involved in many and various meetings with both Dudley Council and Complex Developments (the developer). We continue to work very closely with them to progress our vision of a wonderful new museum but as you can image this has not been without some difficulties.

Obviously, the project can only go ahead if suitable funding from Government and European sources is secured for the structure of the new museum and we have been supporting Dudley Council and Complex Developments with their tedious task of making preparations for both ERDF and Heritage Lottery funding (HLF). We have no direct control over this but are supporting wholeheartedly and assisting in any way possible. Government Departments are, as we know, much stretched and there have been additional delays and difficulties caused by regimes changing.

This funding line, when secured, will create the principal building stage of the new museum but to complete the internal fit-out and to develop the whole experience into a visitor attraction the likelihood is that our charity will have to raise additional funding from independent sources. At this stage we are not making any separate applications for major funding as the principal funding for the building itself needs to be in place first, however, we are currently researching what grants and support might be available for the project so that applications can be made without delay once the initial funding for the building has been secured. In the meantime we are looking for nominal funding to cover our day-to-day running costs and any donations for this purpose would be very much appreciated.

Throughout we have remained focused and as a consequence of a recent meeting John Polychronakis, Chief Executive of Dudley Council, has made the following statement:

*“Obtaining grants from ERDF and HLF is never easy or straightforward but, with the support of our partners, we are resolute in trying to secure the necessary funding for this project in order to build a wonderful new Glass Museum for our world famous collection.”*

On a regular basis we are in touch with the developer, who also has regular meetings with Dudley Council officials, and we continue to believe our involvement and influence will be instrumental in making our aspirations a reality.

Since our involvement, which followed the announcement two years ago by the Council that the option of closing Broadfield House Glass Museum was under consideration, we are now in a position when we can see ahead more positively and the Leader of Dudley Council, Cllr Les Jones, has recently stated that he considers the new museum to be one of the key projects on which the Council wish to concentrate and progress.

In our meetings with the Council and Complex Developments over this period we are aware they have both spent enormous amounts of time and costs with consultants, architects and support staff in getting us to the position we are now in which will pay dividends as much of the preparatory work has now been done. We are hopeful therefore that we will soon be in a position to report that funding has been secured for the first phase of the creation of the new museum.

It is a tedious fact of life that such projects inevitably take longer than predicted and unfortunately we can have no control over the speed of progress being made, but be assured we will continue to give support in every way we can.

Following the local May elections Labour have now taken overall control of Dudley Council from the Conservatives and the new administration will formally take office on the 17 May with Cllr David Sparks as the new Leader. The Chief Executive will be briefing him on this issue over the next few weeks and we will arrange to meet up with the new Leader as soon as we can.

The Trustees  
British Glass Foundation

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