

*The Voice of the people shaping and moulding the present into a future of which we can all be proud*

The closure of Broadfield House Glass Museum was declared by the Council due to lack of funding (following brutal Government cuts) and current running costs in January 2009.



- The BGF was formed to be one concerted voice of all the protestors, locally, nationally and internationally to plead for reprise or other alternatives to the collections being taken away from public view – we had no money, no history, no credibility, only the passion of the Trustees.
- BGF negotiates with Council:
  1. Closure date to be extended until agreed alternative site is found.
  2. Any capital proceeds from sale of Broadfield House to be allocated to the new facility.
- BGF researches various alternative sites.
- BGF considers importance of sustainability.
- BGF launches GlassCuts to network across all glass enthusiasts, individuals and societies. Graham Fisher devotes massive time, energy and cost to this and PR generally.
- BGF continues dialogue with Dudley Council – with 4 different Leaders from 2 different political parties and numerous Council Officers.
- BGF starts fundraising – Allister Malcolm particularly successful with commitment from the “glass community” including various glass auctions.

- BGF remains dedicated and focussed on its primary charity objectives i.e. *“The British Glass Foundation is an enabling body bringing together all relevant and independent glass and cultural organisations and private individuals, in our common aim to protect and save the glass, archive and technical collections at Broadfield House Glass Museum and to ensure their future display to the public, access for research and continued growth”* and eventually is seen as a competent and respected partner by the Council. BGF has dialogue with CDP – owner and developer of the White House Cone and becomes the catalyst with the Council for an ERDF bid for £2.1m.
- BGF forms a Museum Trust to be able to take control of the glass collection and the completed White House Cone site.
- BGF in partnership with Council make successful HLF bid for £780,000 for the fit-out of interior of new museum. £147,000 released initially to work up a detailed Business Plan.
- BGF has now negotiated the following:
  - 125 year Loan Agreement for all the Dudley and Stourbridge glass collection at no cost;
  - 125 year Lease of the ex Stuart Crystal listed building at no cost;
  - 125 year loan of the adjoining rental units (or museum space) at no cost;
  - 3 year agreement for CDP the developer to pay £70,000 per annum for unused rental space for 3 years
  - £60,000 contribution over 3 years by Dudley MBC towards the running costs.
- BGF now in a position to make further grant applications – e.g. Arts Council.
- Throughout this the BGF has retained virtually all the donations in trust through the generosity of the Trustees and small grant applications to cover the day to day running costs.

#### **WHY THE WHITE HOUSE CONE SITE?**

- It was available.
- All other sites considered were inadequate e.g. part of Red House Cone (too little space); alongside Ruskin (too little space); greenfield/Broadfield House site (too costly to build) and the existing old building (too costly to run).

White House Cone Site has:

- Location – in the heart of the Glass Quarter
  - historic listed building
  - previously “The New Works” of Stuarts (after the Cone)
  - on a main road
  - Opposite the Red House Cone
  - alongside the canal – another attraction on site
- Specification
  - old building with original features
  - main display area with 2 open floors
  - good car parking for 77 cars and a coach pull-in
  - adjoining building is a new build on two floors – ideal for expansion and ideal as a lecture hall for research and education
  - the hot glass studio has adjoining areas for rental units for glass related craft activities.
  - the architects are able to install a lift and we are adamant that the building will cater for all disabilities with the attraction providing information and enjoyment for everyone – being fully inclusive.
  - adjoins Red House Cone site for any overflow and requirements for storage/offices, etc.

## SQUARE FOOTAGE

- The actual square footage we have been gifted free of charge at the White House Cone site is 1984 sq.mtrs. 3 times the area that Broadfield has.
- The exhibition space at White House Cone will be 428 sq.mtrs. with greater flexibility for displays whereas at Broadfield the area is only 318 sq.mtrs.
- The glass blowing studio at White House will be 118 sq.mtrs. and the one at Broadfield is much smaller at 69 sq.mtrs. The adjoining areas will be rented out to glass related businesses to improve the attraction for visitors.

## CONCLUSION

From the depression and outrage we had when the Council were having to close in 2009 we now have a purpose built building in a perfect location with room for expansion/development with potentially funding to cover all or nearly all the running costs.

Thus giving the collections

1. The fit-out display potential
2. Security through the charity
3. Sustainability through income

We have been instrumental in obtaining £2.1m of European funding and £780,000 of Heritage Lottery funding.

The White House Cone will celebrate the skills of local people and will integrate with the other tourist attractions within the Dudley area, e.g. Black Country Living Museum; Dudley Zoo and Castle; Dudley Canal Trust and Merryhill.

*"The Dream Is Now Becoming A Reality"*

