



10th June 2019

Chair's Report Progress Report - June 2019

This is the first formal period for the Charity and as I write we are already 6 months into the next financial year.

W@GP was first formed as a "community group in May/June of 2017 and became a fully registered CIO in June 2018. I will briefly summarise the significant steps and events that have occurred, particularly during 2018 but referencing this year 2019, as we move forward .

In the lead up to 2018 it became very clear that the Trustees of Wellbeing At Garon Park needed to best evidence their views and aspirations of what could be developed on site .

To facilitate this an Awards for All grant was successfully awarded and from January to April of 2018 consultations were held with a broad range of stakeholders, culminating with a large community event in late March which attracted over 2,500 people from the local community.

All of the above has contributed to help design and facilitate the plans for the site . This detail and information has helped form our discussions with commissioners and funders leading to a number of funding applications being made as the year progressed.

In June of 2018 Wellbeing At Garon Park finally became fully registered as a CIO. This, in particular, enabled significant bids to be made to the Veolia Environmental Trust, the Big Lottery and other funders. These would not have been possible as a "community group ".

One of the key project ideas that was developed during the consultation process was the "Garon Park Shed ". A number of bids were made for this, without success, however finally funding was secured with a further Awards for All grant, confirmed in January 2019. This has enabled a second-hand building to be purchased which has recently arrived on site and is in the process of being refurbished prior to launch.

The Veolia bid has also been successful. This, with other contributions from

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Southend Borough Council and a pledge for funding from EASST, this will enable circa £95,000 of capital investment.

The National Lottery Reaching Communities bid (value circa £450,000) for a mix of capital works, ongoing development and revenue funding is now at the final stage of consideration.

During 2018 a number of Community organisations have been using the site for various wellbeing activities. These have helped to test out the facilities and develop the site's usage. These organisations include - Trustlinks, Project 49, Porters, Southend Business Partnership.

We have been very fortunate to have had initial and ongoing support funding from Hivedome, a local company. This has been vital to our early development. The Trustees are very grateful for this support. Other funders and financial supporters to date have been SBC and the National Lottery. We have also received a donation from the Round table. Thank you!

There is significant on-going work to do in a range of areas, to develop the plans and the site. Additionally, relationship building is ongoing locally, with national organisations and our partner organisations at Garon Park.

However, in two years I believe a significant amount has been achieved which has put the project on a solid footing going forward.

Our Board is small but hard working. We need to attract further people to the Board with a variety of complementary skills and this should be a priority moving forward. We also need to ensure the board is more reflective of the Southend community.

I'd finally like to finish by thanking my Board colleagues for their hard work and commitment to the project as well as a big thank you to the board support team, Lucy Stanley our secretariat and bid writer.

Stuart Routledge
Chair Wellbeing At Garon Park - June 2019