Chairs AGM Report – February 2023

Comrades,

Here we are once more at our Annual General Meeting. It's testimony to the hard work of our manager and the commitment of our Trustees that we are here and I, as Chairman, have opportunity to review 2022 and outline our appreciation of those who continue to support us and celebrate those who have benefited from us.

We developed our Solar Array a few years ago to generate a surplus revenue for the benefit of local organisations seeking financial support. We named this the Helen Thomas Community Awards Scheme in recognition of Helen's contribution to the Trust and to the wider community.

Approximately £5,000 is generated annually and is distributed on an annual 'theme' basis – Last year we targeted the activity of football – a popular and healthy sport for so many of our young people. Three local clubs benefited – Bedlinog, Trelewis and Treharris clubs each received sums of over a thousand pounds for a variety of initiatives – Ground improvement, new goal posts and new kit are examples of how those grants were utilised. We are looking forward to making 2023's awards in the spring.

Our main income stream is derived from our present business model of leasing our estate to a variety of businesses. They are Rock UK, Gibbons Coach Travel, Hawthorn Tree Surgery, Thornacre Ltd., Step Up Recycling and Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council. We are grateful to them all for their presence at the centre and hope that we can sustain relationships with them for years to come. Bea Fit was also a tenant until recently when the lease was surrendered. We thank them for their time at the centre and wish them all the best for the future.

Following the success of Rock Uk's funding application and associated redevelopment to increase capacity and improve experiences for users at the centre a few years back and the ensuing pandemic it is encouraging to hear from them that the centre had a very busy and

successful year achieving 95% occupancy. We certainly hope that this success can be sustained every year.

We are at present working with Rock UK to resolve some maintenance issues at the Centre and it is hoped that these will be dealt with fairly and appropriately to everyone's satisfaction.

During the year we were engaged in a planning application regarding the East Unit parking facility. Following a great deal of effort and perseverance from Howard and £6,000 investment the planning permission was granted and will secure the Tenancy of Gibbons Coaches for the foreseeable future.

Both of the above will support local employment and demonstrates the Trusts contribution to that security.

Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council supported the Trust's initiative to plant trees around the approaches to the Library car Park in Treharris with a grant of £2,800. Howard successfully secured further support from the Probation Service for the planting of the trees which will surely enhance the area and become an attractive feature in years to come.

Further community benefit was achieved by initiating the safety of an old building on the mountain road above Treharris. The building was a safety hazard and through Howard's diligence the Council ensured remedial repairs to make the dilapidated building safe.

A donation received by the Trust was put to good use by providing funding for local school children to benefit from climbing and archery sessions at the Centre. We are grateful for that donation.

Membership of the Trust continues to grow and we now have over 1700 members. We will continue to grow our membership to demonstrate our inclusion of these communities and to support any future developments.

Trustees will appreciate my concerns over recent years that we are at risk by placing our dependency on Howard. In November we recruited a new member of staff – Sioned Rees, who will be a great support for

Howard and Trustees, providing a level of continuity should Howard be indisposed. Sioned is also quite adept at social media and website management – both of which are so critical in today's techno environment. Welcome on board Sioned.

Trustees are so essential to our organisation – we simply wouldn't be here without you. I extend a huge thank you to you all for remaining involved and helping us over many years to battle our way back from the brink of collapse. Recruiting more trustees will be essential in the near future to maintain and reinforce our standing. This will become a focus for us moving forward.

Our manager Howard continues to deliver on several fronts. From managing Tenants – not an easy job, to promoting and enacting initiatives on behalf of the Trust, whatever they may be. Howard remains a real asset and his efforts to support all things Taff Bargoed are very much appreciated – Thank you Howard.

Thank you.

Finally, I must acknowledge the organisations who continue to value our presence and provide support. TBDT wishes to thank the support provided by MTCBC, the Probation Service, WCVA, Friends of Taff Bargoed Park, VAMT and the Wales Cooperative Centre for the support provided in the past twelve months.