



A Report For 2023 From Our Chair Annette Osborne

I am extremely proud to be the Chair of Bristol Children's Help Society and delighted to have this opportunity to report on our achievements during the past year.

As a Board of twelve Trustees, we are governed by the actions outlined in our Strategic Management Plan (SMP). This is a rolling five year document, in which we have collectively identified our vision for BCBS and Barton Camp through to 2027 and beyond, and the strategies that will be required to achieve our goals. The plan is regularly reviewed at Board Meetings to ensure that we are meeting our targets within the designated timeline.

There are seven areas for development within the SMP from buildings to technology, and individual members of the Board have ownership of each target. Needless to say, children are at the core of every area, and their wellbeing and safety are paramount.



Annette Osborne at Thatchers Open Day.

In addition to the SMP, Board members continue to personally promote BCBS at numerous events throughout the year. Our lively, and greatly improved, social media presence has also enabled us to reach new followers outside our normal catchment area, and our recently formed Friends of Barton programme is progressing well.

In line with many other organisations, our operational costs have increased significantly already this year. Our outdoor swimming pool is always the centre of attraction for all our visitors, especially the younger ones, and the costs of filling and heating it have escalated horrendously. We are taking steps to replace the worn out pool cover with a new and insulated one, which will save on heating costs. We have also replaced the surround paving slabs with a soft, rubberised surface, which will increase the comfort and safety of all pool users. In addition, whilst the pool was empty, we took the opportunity to upgrade the lighting.

We are continually striving to improve the facilities at Barton, and are now using more LED lighting where possible. With the help of a number of generous donors, we have installed a new "crocodile swing", which is proving very popular with the children, who have to work together to get the swing moving. The orienteering course has also been upgraded with kind help from Thatchers.

Sadly during 2022 we lost many mature trees through ash die back. However, we intend to replace all of those trees with new and robust native species, as soon as possible.

We are extremely fortunate to have a small, but very hard working, maintenance team. Led by fellow Trustee, Bert Hurditch, they work tirelessly to maintain the site to the highest standard, and to keep us functioning from year to year. Without your kind donations we would not be able to continue our work. That would be to the entire detriment of all those children who visit Barton Camp and leave with such wonderful memories.

A Donation Form is to be found on page 4 for your use and further information is available at www.bartoncamp.org
Registered Charity Number: 1092921

Progress on the construction of the New Greeting Gatehouse

Regular readers of the BCBS Newsletter will have noticed in last year's edition that plans are afoot to build a more secure and welcoming access point to Barton Camp. This project was first considered, in 2021, on the initiative of Nigel Greenhalgh, Vice Chair and Trustee of BCBS.



Most of the seven acre site is fenced and secure, however the vehicle entrances to date have not been controlled, and there has been no visibility of comings and goings by car, or on foot.

Safeguarding of the three thousand or so children, who visit and enjoy Barton each year is our main priority, and so the provision of a secure point of entry, in this day and age, became a very necessary and sensible decision.

An architect was appointed to look at the available options to improve the general security, whilst controlling the access and egress of the site. The new building will also provide proper, open plan office space for Bert Hurditch, the site manager.

Greeting Gate Contd.

In February 2022, therefore, the ground was cleared for the proposed building by a group of volunteers, who hacked their way through a tangle of scrub and brambles, and demolished the old, green painted, corrugated iron " infirmary ", which had stood there for nearly a century.

With planning permission approved, Bert and his trusty assistants set to work laying the foundations. As with all such projects, snags inevitably began to surface ! In this instance it was the discovery of an underground tank and the unforeseen enlargement in the width of the buses that will bring the children to Barton later in the year. This entailed the filling of the tank and the widening of both of the planned entrance gates, and the slight realignment of the kerb and wall foundations.

As can be seen in the two photographs, the building has moved on apace. By early March most of the plumbing, wiring and insulation had been finished ready for the flooring to be laid. When finished, there will be an adequate open plan office, with a small kitchenette and a separate loo facility. It is very much anticipated that this new asset will be up and running by the end of May - Fingers crossed!

A special fundraising effort has been targeted at those charities, which prefer only to donate to specific capital projects, with the result that well over half of the required funds have, so far, been raised. It is heartbreaking, however,



to see the price of timber nearly double during the course of the build. All other requirements have also been similarly affected by the level of inflation. It is a little depressing to see the target inflate as we think we are nearing it. We will, of course greatly welcome any further donations in order to get this exciting project completed and paid for on time. When all the funds have been raised we will be looking at other essential Projects to make the site more efficient, working our way towards Net Zero.

Clifton Classic Car Rally Raises Funds For BCHS

In early September 2022 BCHS became the chosen charity for the Clifton Classic Car Rally. This is an annual event, which attracts a wide variety of classic cars belonging to ardent petrolheads. The owners mainly live in Clifton, Bristol and the surrounding neighbourhoods.

This year the rally attracted just over fifty cars, the oldest being a stunning, pre-WW2 Rolls Royce Phantom 3, and one of the younger ones being a modern day Morgan Plus 4.



The cars foregathered in the ancient quadrangle at Clifton College before setting off south over the Somerset Levels for Barton Camp. There they made a stopover for a welcome coffee, and a look around the site facilities. Their return journey meandered through the Cheddar Gorge and Chew Valley for a well earned barbecue lunch.

Undoubtedly the highlight of the rally was the procession of all of the participating cars through Clifton Village, headed by one of their number playing the bagpipes ! The Village was buzzing with residents and shoppers, who were utterly amazed and delighted at this spectacle, and clapped and cheered the cars as they passed by.

A magnificent total of £ 3,927 was raised for BCHS to go towards the funding of one of the Society's own residential weeks later this year.

Thatchers Open Day

This internationally acclaimed, and very successful family run cider business is located in the very next door village to Barton Camp. In recent years Thatcher's Charitable Foundation has been very helpful in improving many aspects of the Barton site.

On a perfect late summer's day last September, BCHS were invited to have a stand at thatchers Open Day, a major local event in the area.

Our party of Trustees and supporters had time, before the event was officially opened, to erect a gazebo flying flags and bunting at our allotted site, just yards from the marquee dispensing free samples of cider and cheese. It proved to be the ideal spot to show the hordes of passing visitors what BCHS achieves at Barton Camp.



Dick Hyde had taken along a tombola, for which he very successfully sold raffle tickets in support of this charity. Participants were given the opportunity to win one of the beautiful quilts, kindly donated to BCHS by the Clifton Quilters, and by the Worle Thursday Girls.

The event organisers estimated that over 15,000 people had attended, and the day had proved to be the perfect opportunity for the local public to learn more about BCHS and Barton Camp, and how we can help many young people from challenging backgrounds.

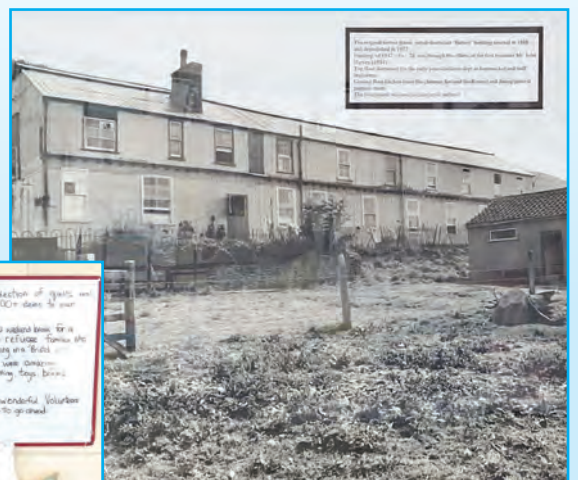
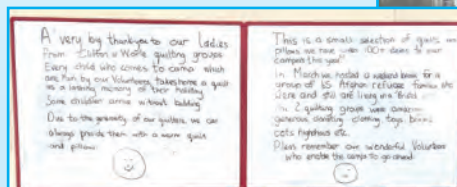
Our grateful thanks go to Thatchers for inviting us to participate on this very successful occasion.

FRIENDS of BARTON DAY

The Friends of Barton Day is a new initiative, first trialed in 2022. We invited friends and family contacts to visit Barton on the appointed day, and to use all the facilities there, including the swimming pool. Many brought a picnic in order to enjoy a full day in the Somerset countryside.

This first Friends of Barton Day took place in September last year and over forty interested parties came to visit us. If you would like to join our next event, please let us know via one of our Social Media sites.

On view at the Friends of Barton Day were a selection of very attractive and colourful quilts that were made for the children by several quilting groups from around the Bristol area. These are given to the most needy children, who are always delighted to take home a memento of their exciting visit to Barton.



Also on view that day were some very old photographs, and diary entries from the Second World War. These, and other memorabilia from our archives are currently being made electronic, and will be available to view on our website later this year.

PLEASE VISIT OUR NEW WEBSITE

The new website has been running for over a year now, providing all the latest information on Barton Camp, and the Bristol Children's Help Society (BCCHS).

On the Homepage we have included our Mission Statement. There is also a promotional video, recently filmed by our President, Tom Hood, showing a bird's-eye view of Barton Camp near Winscombe in Somerset.

There is a Gallery page, which shows a number of photographs of Barton Camp, and some of the needy children, who have recently visited Barton, enjoying some of the extensive facilities on site.

A further page offers an opportunity to make a donation to BCCHS on line. Please visit the website at www.bartoncamp.org to have a look.

Our Social Media sites are a great way for us to provide up to date information to our followers. For example, we can tell you about the progress being made with the new Greeting Gate being built to increase security at the site entrance, and also about the rubberised soft surface being currently installed around the outdoor heated swimming pool, in place of the previous stone coping stones, which will increase the safety of boisterous children.



www.bartoncamp.org
and also our Social Media sites.



Please follow us on
Facebook (Barton Camp)



Instagram (bartoncamp_bchs)



Twitter (@Bartoncamp_bchs)

to stay up to date.



I'd Like To Help Barton Camp

Please tick and return your completed form to: **BCCHS, Barton Camp, Winscombe, N. Somerset, BS25 1DY.**

- I have made a payment direct to the BCCHS bank account of £.....
(Bristol Childrens Help Society sort code- 56-00-05, Account no. 2105 3820).
Please put your name as the payment reference.
- I enclose my cheque made out to The Bristol Childrens Help Society.

My details:

Mr/Mrs/Miss (please delete as appropriate)

First Name..... Surname.....

Organisation Name (if appropriate).....

Address.....

Tel Number..... Email.....

Please Gift Aid my donation to claim 25p from the taxman for every £1 donated
(I am a basic rate UK tax payer)

Signature..... Date.....

Please notify BCCHS if you:

- Wish to cancel this declaration
- Change your name or home address
- No longer pay sufficient tax on your income and/or capital gains

If you pay Income Tax at a higher or additional rate and want to receive the additional tax relief, you must include all Gift Aid donations on your Self-Assessment tax return, or ask HMRC to adjust your tax code.

We will not share your information with third parties but would like to hold your details to keep you updated with our work. If you would prefer us not to, then please tick this box

The BCCHS Newsletter is designed by Alison Designs
www.alisondesigns.co.uk

Registered Charity Number: 1092921