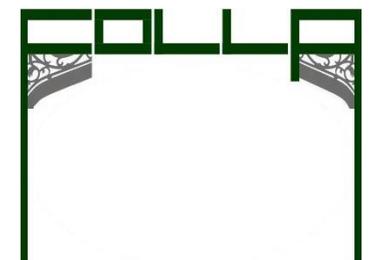
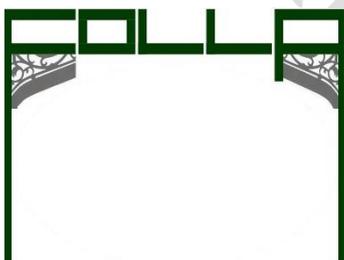


# The Friends of Lapwing Lane Arcade (FOLLA)

## Trustees' Report

Financial year ending 12<sup>th</sup> October 2013



The Trustees present their Annual Report for the year ended 12<sup>th</sup> October 2013 and confirm that they have complied with the Charities Act 1993, as amended by the Charities Act 2006, the Charities SORP 2005 and FOLLA's own Company Articles of Incorporation.

This report is to accompany FOLLA's Statement of Accounts for 2012-13 which is contained in a separate document but whose main figures are referred to section 2 c) below.

This report has been written by Mike Bath, FOLLA's Secretary. It has been published in June 2014.

#### **Reference and Administrative information**

Charity name: **Friend of Lapwing Lane (FOLLA)**

Charity Registration number: **1150884**

Company Registration number: **08255624**

HMRC Reference: **922 21922 12626 A**

Registered address: **22 Longton Avenue  
Withington  
Manchester  
M20 3JN**

Board of Trustees: **Susan Elizabeth Spence  
Mike Bath  
Deborah Stores  
Freda Dennison  
Katie Weeds  
Steve Parle  
Christine Hession (resigned 20/07/2013)**

Accountant: **David Edgar  
Vincent Hayes and Co.  
17 St. George's Terrace  
Millom  
Cumbria  
LA18 4DB**

Solicitor: **Andrew Kwan  
Clear Law Solicitors  
92 Talbot Rd  
Stretford  
Manchester  
M16 0GS**

Bankers: **Royal Bank of Scotland  
467 Wilmslow Road  
Withington  
Manchester  
M20 4AN**

## **1. Structure, Governance and Management**

### **a. Structure**

At the initial Board meeting in October 2012 the following positions of responsibility were agreed:

Chair:

Liz Spence

Treasurer:

Mike Bath

General Secretary & Communications Secretary:

Mike Bath

Social & Events Secretary:

Clare Howarth

Liaison with West Didsbury Residents' Association:

Katie Weeds

Liaison with Didsbury Civic Society:

Steve Parle

During the course of the year Steve Jackson has been co-opted to the Board to manage the tendering process for the restoration work, liaising with FOLLA's architect, Raynes Architecture.

From the outset Clear Law Solicitors were appointed to act 'pro bono' as FOLLA's legal advisors. For specialist advice regarding the licence between the shop owners and FOLLA they were assisted by JMW Solicitors (who were on fees).

David Edgar of Vincent Hayes and Co. was appointed as accountant early in 2014, and has prepared the Statement of Accounts which complements this Trustees' Report.

### **b. Governance**

FOLLA has been governed via a meeting of the Board of Trustees which has been held once a month.

Non-Trustees who have been appointed to carry out specific functions (e.g. managing fund-raising socials) have attended the monthly Trustees meetings as required.

Each Board meeting has received a written update of the financial position of the Trust.

Board meetings have been run according to a published agenda and have been minuted. All minutes are available for inspection from the Chair, Liz Spence.

### **c. Management**

Day-to-day financial affairs have been managed by FOLLA Treasurer, Mike Bath. All cheques have to bear 2 signatures from amongst Trustees Liz Spence, Mike Bath, Deborah Stores and Freda Dennison.

Regular fund-raising events have been organised and managed by Clare Howarth.

Regular communication to all stakeholders has been managed by Mike Bath.

Legal matters have been managed by Andrew Kwan of Clear Law Solicitors.

The process of tendering for building contractors has been managed by Lisa Raynes of Raynes Architecture Ltd. in liaison with Steve Jackson.

## 2. Background, Objectives and Activities

### a. Background

For some years local South Manchester residents who enjoy visiting and shopping at the fine old arcade of shops on Lapwing Lane, where it crosses Palatine Road in West Didsbury, have been worried about the state of the canopy that fronts the shops and shelters the pavement. Over the years this canopy has been the feature of the arcade that marks it out. Built in 1913, it is believed to be the last surviving Edwardian canopy in Manchester. Unless something was done fairly quickly the whole canopy would have become dangerously decayed and have to be demolished. The portion of the canopy outside the end shop (that used to be Blockbusters) had already been destroyed following a vehicle collision.

The landlords and the shopkeepers were not in a position to take sufficient joint action to effect the necessary repair work. It was left to the people who live in the area and treasure this arcade to act. To this end a charitable trust – The Friends of Lapwing Lane Arcade (FOLLA) – was established to restore the canopy and ensure that it was maintained in a reasonable state for generations to come.

### b. Objectives

These were agreed at the outset - and placed in the in the company articles as:

“To restore the Lapwing Lane Arcade canopy – a historical and architecturally important canopy – located in West Didsbury, Manchester, to its original state.

To preserve and maintain the canopy for future generations of members of the public in particular of the local residents of West Didsbury, Manchester and the surrounding areas to enjoy.

To further such other charitable purposes as the directors may from time to time determine.”

Additionally, at the time of the Heritage Lottery Fund Grant application, the objectives were refined and restated as:

“Restore the verandah’s metalwork, reinstate the missing canopy to one shop unit and reglaze the entire verandah.

Install 20 verandah front shop signs and a commemorative plaque naming major donors.

Involve two FOLLA members in researching for and preparing an exhibition for Heritage Open Days.

Deliver two 90 minute heritage learning sessions for a total of 60 children at two local primary schools, based on a timeline already drawn up by FOLLA using local resources from Manchester libraries, about the history and development of the verandah and local area.

Hold a verandah launch event for up to 1,000 local people.”

## c. Activities

### i. Legal

After considering legal advice the Trustees decided that FOLLA should seek to execute its main restoration objectives by gaining a 25-year licence from the owners of the 10 shop units on the Arcade who also own the canopy structure. This licence would make FOLLA responsible for restoring and maintaining the canopy structure during the 25-year period whilst leaving the ownership of the canopy in the hands of the shop unit owners.

The 25-year period was regarded as sufficient to demonstrate that FOLLA's aims were principally charitable and would benefit the local community for a long time to come – despite the immediate commercial benefit the restoration work might provide the Arcade shop owners.

The licence was drawn up by specialist property solicitors JMW under the guidance of Clear Law Solicitors. By March 2013 all the shop unit owners had signed their copies of the licence agreement with FOLLA.

The licence agreements will be signed on behalf of FOLLA immediately prior to the main restoration work commencing (planned for January 2014) – and at that point will become effective.

Nevertheless the fact that all the shop owners had signed in March 2013 allowed FOLLA to proceed with the process of acquiring a building contractor confident in the knowledge that the legal agreement to allow the work to start was in FOLLA's hands.

Throughout the process FOLLA were very clear with all the owners that if any one of them did not agree to the licence then the whole deal would be abandoned. Neither the Board of FOLLA Trustees, nor its supporters, would contemplate a partial restoration.

### ii. Fund-raising

Throughout the course of the year a number of significant fund-raising activities have taken place realising a total revenue of almost £50,000:

#### ***Subscriptions***

Since FOLLA started, 745 (mainly) local people have donated £5 or more to become a FOLLA 'Friend' and receive a monthly bulletin on the campaign's progress. To date this has raised £6,212.

#### ***Grants***

Manchester City Council have awarded FOLLA a £16,000 grant from the Didsbury West ward cash grant scheme.

The Heritage Lottery Fund have agreed to award FOLLA a £25,000 grant when the restoration work starts (this amount is yet to be received).

Unsuccessful grant applications have been made to various bodies during the course of the year including: Manchester Airport Community Trust, The Co-operative Group, Equity Foundation Housing Association, Siemens, BIFFA and United Utilities.

#### ***Events***

Social events (Quiz/Auction evenings, a Concert, a Ceilidh, etc.) and Sponsored Runs have raised £7,500, including some generous donations totalling £1,500 from Barclays Bank. As well as serving to raise funds most of the above activities have enhanced the charitable objectives of FOLLA by bringing the local community within West Didsbury together to tackle a common aim. The sense of shared objectives has been palpable in many of the social evenings.

### ***'Pay for a Pane'***

During the course of the year a scheme has been launched whereby donors of £100 or more towards the cost of the canopy roofing will have a special line inscribed on a commemorative plaque to be installed on the Arcade when the restoration work has been completed. To date this has raised £17,850 for 110 lines of inscription.

### ***Gift Aid***

£2,105 has already been received from HMRC as refunded tax for charitable donations to FOLLA. Well over £1,000 further Gift Aid will be available for claiming during the coming company year.

### **iii. Preparing for the restoration work**

Following a tendering process completed before FOLLA was established as a Charitable Trust, a local building contractor who had undertaken other local heritage conservation was selected for the job. However plans to work with this contractor foundered when the cost estimates for the work spiralled and the contractor was unable to guarantee a fixed cost.

Subsequently a local architect (Raynes Architecture) was hired and a new tendering process was started. After various quotes had been received and assessed this led to the selection of Phil Coppell Ltd (PCL) who guaranteed a fixed price of just under £70,000.

### **iv. Stakeholder communication**

The key stakeholder groups have been:

**FOLLA 'Friends'** – updated via a monthly FOLLA bulletin,

**Arcade shop owners & shop keepers** – updated via the monthly bulletin and by regular visits and emails from one of the Trustees,

**Manchester City Council & the local MP** – updated via the monthly bulletin and via regular contact between the Trustees and the Didsbury East and Didsbury West Councillors and the MP, John Leech,

**The Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF)** – updated via the monthly bulletin and regular contact between the nominated HLF representative and FOLLA's Treasurer,

**Local civic interest groups** (the Didsbury Civic Society and the West Didsbury Residents Association) – attendance at monthly civic group meetings (Steve Parle at the Didsbury Civic Society and Mike Bath/Katie Weeds at the West Didsbury Resident's Association)

### **v. 'Heritage Dividend'**

Throughout the campaign FOLLA Trustees have been researching the history of the Arcade – in particular seeking to establish which businesses occupied each of the 10 Arcade shop units down the years since 1913 when the Arcade was built. Local records

and archives have been scoured and local people have been interviewed and invited to share their memories of shopping on the Arcade.

As a result FOLLA has been able to mount exhibitions during the National Heritage weekends in both September 2012 and September 2013 showing local people how the Arcade has developed, and what shopping on the Arcade has been like down the years.

### **3. Plans for the coming year and beyond**

The Trustees have robust plans in place to complete all the stated restoration objectives by October 2014.....

Revenue is budgeted to top the £90,000 target required to complete the work, with the receipt of the £25,000 Heritage Lottery Grant and over £10,000 further 'Pay for a Pane' donations and other fund raising schemes.

The main restoration work by Coppell's is due to start in January 2014.

Shop signs and a commemorative plaque have been commissioned from local artist, Andy Parle and should be installed during the summer of 2014.

Heritage learning sessions with local primary schoolchildren from Didsbury C of E Primary School and West Didsbury's Cavendish Road Primary School are being planned for June 2014.

A launch event to mark the completion of the canopy restoration work and the unveiling of the commemorative plaque is being planned for late summer 2014 coinciding with the National Heritage Days exhibition.

From October 2014 onwards FOLLA plans to reduce its activities to a minimal level just ensuring the Arcade's canopy is properly maintained during the 25-year licence period.