

Constantine Enterprises Company (CEC)

Chairman's Report - AGM April 2020

Due to Coronavirus restrictions I find myself delivering an AGM report from home, to an audience who I hope will receive and read all the information via several online options.

I have been asked by several villagers over the last few weeks, if the Tolmen Centre is coping and if we will survive the present crisis. Let me reassure everyone that as soon as we are able, and it is safe for all activities to restart, the Tolmen will be back, functioning, and enjoying the company of its many audiences.

Thankfully this year we sought to consolidate projects rather than take on any new, and despite living through these unchartered times, due to the careful management of each of the Committees, our projects can safely lie dormant for several months, and as you can see from the Company accounts, we will be able to move forward in a positive financial position. Our thanks to our Treasurer Charlie Pugh, who has successfully applied, on behalf of the CEC, for a Government 'Retail Hospitality and Leisure Grant' meaning that the Tolmen Centre's overheads and loss of income sustained through the shutdown will be covered.

I feel it may be useful to clarify the role of the CEC who own and are therefore, landlords of the Tolmen building. It is an umbrella organisation which has the privilege of overseeing a variety of village projects – The Tolmen Centre, Transition Constantine, Bosahan Woods, Constantine Museum, and the Constantine Literary Pod all come under our remit. What we do as a company is complex as we rely on management committees to deliver the projects, but as a separate board of Trustees we offer the individual committees the following: encouragement, governance, debate, expertise, time, energy, support, guidance, assurances, and insurances. We provide the foundation stones on which the projects are built.

Over the last eighteen months a subgroup of the Constantine Enterprises Company has been raising funds for the Tolmen building which is in need of a new roof, repair or replacement of its 22 windows, and new car park surface. There have been successes, and indeed we have raised just over £52,000 of a £98,000 target and so far have been able to replace the old worn out tarmac car park, for a new concrete impregnated surface. It's a start but there is still a long way to go. Crucially the roof ought to be replaced before another Winter, as the water ingress from blocked downpipes caused by material from the deteriorating cement roof is creating serious damage to particularly, the downstairs west wall. Undoubtedly in this current climate, Capital Grants will be harder to secure, and we must appreciate the priorities for any charity giving, as grant bodies and the general public feel their funds should be directed closer to home and to reducing the financial impact of Covid 19. However, we will continue to research and apply, remaining ever positive that we will achieve an additional £10,000 which will ensure sufficient funds for the new roof before the wet winter months, leaving us to continue to fund window repair/replacement.

The Tolmen garden continues to flourish under the watchful eye and green fingers of Peter Tatham. It adds another dimension to Tolmen Centre life, being used not only for Weddings, parties, Transition Community lunches, but also provides an inspirational backdrop for solitude and quiet reflection. Thank you Peter.

To the many volunteers who give 1000s of hours to all our projects, I cannot thank you enough. The projects happen because of you! It is always sad when we have to say farewell to anyone and this year two longstanding stalwart members of the CEC are stepping down:

James Agnew, appointed in February 2010 - Whilst not strictly a CEC matter James was very involved in the Queen's Golden Jubilee Celebrations when he chaired the organising committee, and afterwards he worked on the Village Pebble Project. James represented the CEC on the Affordable Housing initiative & various other sub group projects most recently 'Tolmen Love Me Restore Me' researching and applying for Capital Grants for the restoration of the building.

Adrian Roberts, appointed in May 2011.- In addition to representing the CEC on the Bosahan Woods management team he has been very involved in the Village Residential Home Project.

As a board we cannot thank them enough for all the hours given to the many projects, for their wise words, unlimited energy, and dedication. We shall miss you.

If you are inspired by the many projects which form part of our organisation, have time, however short, then please consider joining us.

In the words of Kofi Annan

'If our hopes of building a better and safer world are to become more than wishful thinking, we will need the engagement of volunteers more than ever'

I look forward to seeing everyone in the very near future.

Tracey Clowes
Hon Chair