



Registered Charity No. 1156170

www.barrowuponsoar.org.uk

ANNUAL REPORTS AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS 2024

FORWARD PLAN AND BUDGET 2025

Barrow-upon-Soar Community Association is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation

Registered address: Barrow Library, 33, North St, Barrow upon Soar, Loughborough LE12 8PZ

TRUSTEES May 2024

Council Members

Steven Crossley - 3 Station Rd, Cropston	07710 577122
Ceri Fairbrother - 95 Melton Road, Barrow-upon-Soar	01509 413039
Craig Johnstone - 8, The Pingle, Quorn	07540722094
Eluned Webb - 10, Beveridge St, Barrow upon Soar	07801 200 743
David Rodgers - 155 Nottingham Road, Barrow-upon-Soar	07850 471853
Judith Rodgers - 155 Nottingham Road, Barrow-upon-Soar	07718 153117
Helen Sadler - 17, Wycliffe Avenue, Barrow upon Soar	07934660426
Frankie Stone – 2 Hillsdon Avenue Barrow upon Soar LE12 8YY	07719 787752
Sharon Gudger – 8 Cave Road Barrow upon Soar LE12 8NW	07764609783
Roy Bird - Granton, New Street, Barrow upon Soar LE12 8PA	07823580468

Retired trustees during 2024

Fiona Laywood Chair	
14 Huston Close, Barrow-upon-Soar	07896963024
Nicola Noble Vice Chair and Chair Events Committee	
39, Beveridge St, Barrow-upon-Soar	07786 232766

Retired trustees during 2025

Chris Bates - 29 Mill Lane, Barrow upon Soar	01509 413475
Val Gillings - 60 Beaumont Road, Barrow upon Soar	07423 061303

Structure, governance and management

The Charity is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation. The Charity holds an annual general meeting to which the public is invited. The Charity is governed by its Trustees (the Council) who meet on average four times each year. Trustees are typically long serving. They are appointed at the AGM each year and new Trustees are recruited either by self-selection or because they support specific aspects of the work of the Charity. There is a simple induction process and training is typically delivered during meetings of the Council.

A number of sub-committees organise specific activities and report to the Council. Full details of these subcommittees appear in the detailed reports, forward plans and budgets which follow.

The Charity uses the names Barrow Community Association, BUSCA, Barrow Voice, Barrow Arts & Theatre Society, BATS, Barrow Panto Group, Barrow Youth Theatre, Barrow Heritage Group, Barrow upon Soar & District Twinning Association, Library Management Committee.

Aims and Objectives

(a) To promote the benefit of the inhabitants of Barrow-upon-Soar and the neighbourhood ("the area of benefit") without distinction of gender, race, occupation, disability or political, religious or other opinions by associating the local authorities, voluntary organisations and inhabitants in a common effort to advance education and to provide facilities in the interests of social welfare for recreation and leisure time occupation with the object of improving the condition of life for the said inhabitants

(b) To establish or secure the establishment of a Community Centre ("the Centre") and to maintain and manage, or to co-operate with any local statutory authority in the maintenance and management of such a centre for activities promoted by the Association and its constituent bodies in furtherance of the above objects

Reserves policy

The Charity pays its debts as they arise and there were no significant sums due to be paid by the Charity at the end of the year. A large part of the cash assets of the Charity are held as unrestricted reserves and hence are available to meet the liabilities of the Charity. In the short term, therefore, the Charity has little need of reserves.

However, the Charity has potential long-term liabilities. These arise out of:

- a) The employment of two staff in connection with Barrow Community Library. The Charity must take account of the cumulative nature of the employment rights of its employees. At present these are insignificant in the context of the unrestricted reserves of the Charity.
- b) The lease of Barrow Community Library from Leicestershire County Council. As the lease is at a nominal rent and the Charity is not responsible for the fabric of the building, the potential liabilities are limited. However, the Charity has made alterations to the building and the licence authorising these contains a reinstatement clause. While it is unlikely that this clause will be invoked at the end of the contractual term of the lease or at all, the reserves policy of the Charity must, if the work is carried out, recognise this potential liability and take it into account in fixing future reserves policies.

Public benefit statement

The Trustees have referred to the general guidance contained in the Charity Commission's general guidance on public benefit when planning the Association's activities. This report looks at how the activities of the Charity contributed to public benefit in 2024 and how they will do so in 2025.

Signed

Date

Treasurers' Annual Report 2024

Treasurer's Annual Report 2024

The Association has four treasurers;

Roy Bird General

Sally McHale Library

Steven Crossley Barrow Arts and Theatre Society – BATS

James Fuller Barrow upon Soar and District Twinning Association

Thanks go to all the above for each managing their accounts so efficiently.

Overview

Overall, total funds increased by 6.7% in 2024, up £6,036 to £95,739. All four areas made a positive contribution to this number, a very commendable situation after a few difficult years. Each area's financial performance is described in turn below.

General

During 2024, unrestricted, undesignated reserves increased by £3,261, totalling £31,237.

The key reason for this increase was a surplus in Barrow Voice activities of £2,814. Income was down by £1,375 to £11,985 when compared to 2023, but costs were also down by £5,409 to £9,171 – partly due to reduced printing cost per quarterly issue but mainly due to the Winter 2024 invoice not being received until January 2025, worth £3,098. Further, £1,550 for invoices relating to Winter 2024 issue was not paid into our account until January 2025. A detailed true issue by issue income less expenditure analysis For Barrow Voice 2024 shows a surplus of £277 for the four issues which is excellent news after a weaker 2023.

There is still no plan to develop a community building, so in 2024 the annual insurance premium of £1,987 was paid from the Community Building Designated Fund. This included a one-off additional premium for hired in equipment for the presentation of The Wedding Singer worth £137.

Improved interest rates with Loughborough Building Society generated £520 compared to £211 in 2023.

Library

The Community Library's restricted fund increased by £2,021 during the year (£2,678 increase in the previous year).

The following grants were received during the year:

- Barrow-upon-Soar Parish Council £12,000
- Charnwood Borough Council £2,270

We would also like to acknowledge a donation of £50 received from Mr Boardman, a valued library user, which was used to purchase a dementia friendly clock for the library.

On 31 December 2024, the Library's total funds stood at £31,651. Of this, £17,033 represents the funds for the day to day running of the Library (up from £15,512), £3,000 of advanced Parish Council funding to cover January to March 2025 (up from £2,500), and £11,618 is the development fund (no change). There were no unspent grants at the end of the year.

2024 saw the launch of the Library 100 Club as an additional means of raising funds. On 31st December 2024 there were 66 members in the Club. £792 has been raised for the Library, £411 awarded in prizes, and £381 still held in funds towards future prizes.

We must also acknowledge the enthusiasm and effectiveness of our employees and our team of volunteers for keeping the show on the road during a difficult year and thank Barrow Parish Council for their continued support of the library.

Also included in Annual Accounts is the reserve policy:

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Twinning Association

The balance of funds at the beginning of 2024 was £5,218, and at the close £5,984, an increase of £766.

In 2024, it was the turn of members to visit Marans, and the coach to Stanstead airport was paid for fully by those participating.

During the year, there were 2 quiz evenings at the Bishop Beveridge Club. These raised a net income of £463.

Memberships raised £195. Other activities added a net of £301.

Raffle income of £181 was donated to Leicester Hospitals Charity, and in a similar vein, last year's raffle income of £193 was donated to Cancer Research.

BATS

Overall, funds held by BATS have increased from £16,292 at the start of the year to £18,418 on 31st December 2024, an increase of £2,126.

This principally consists of the Wedding Singer Production held in Mountsorrel Memorial Centre generating net proceeds of £2,963 (total production proceeds of £2,283 after allowing for £680 of costs paid out in 2023). This year's murder mystery was also a success, generating net proceeds of £691.

The net proceeds were partially used to fund £1,078 of additional new equipment and £500 for the advance purchase of the script for Shrek, 2025's production.

Other activities added up to £50 net income.

The move to Mountsorrel Memorial Centre has so far been a success, providing the group with the opportunity to perform in a much more professional facility and the relationship will continue with Shrek.

Thanks go to all those who continue to make BATS such a success both those on stage and those who work tirelessly behind the scenes to ensure all performances run as smoothly as possible.

Roy Bird, BUSCA Treasurer.

GROUPS

Annual Reports of 2024 and Forward Plan 2025

1. Barrow Voice

Annual Report 2024

As Barrow Voice begins its 50th year of publication, the editorial team is delighted to be able to show its commitment as part of BUSCA in being able to highlight BUSCA events over 2024.

At the start and end of the year we used photos from BATS for our front covers. We regularly covered previews and reviews of artistic events like the Murder Mysteries and BATS productions; library events and news; village events like the Scarecrow Festival; information from the Heritage Group, BOSCAPS and the village show.

The magazine is often limited by its production deadlines and we trialled a pro-forma sent to all groups to try to encourage as much information as possible to reach us in time. However, this did not appear to be of interest to most groups as we only ever got 2 replies and so it was dropped.

We have been delighted to welcome Frankie Stone to the editorial team who is working alongside Judith to develop and organise the advertising. We're hoping that Frankie will gradually take over from Judith, allowing her a well-earned retirement.

Forward Plan 2025

Barrow Voice is planning to dedicate several pages each issue over 2025 to celebrate its birthday year.

Karisa Krcmar (editor)

2. BATS (Barrow Arts and Theatre Society)

Annual Report 2024

BATS cast and crew took part in the Mountsorrel Revival, to advertise the upcoming production of The Wedding Singer. This was enjoyed by all. BATS were personally thanked by the MMC for always getting involved in community activities.

BATS successfully produced The Wedding Singer in October 2024. The performance was a fully immersive experience, with the audience seated in a 'Wedding reception' venue as the audience. The entire MMC theatre was decorated to give the audience a feel for a real wedding.

We managed to get an external wedding company 'A Pretty Little Wedding' who came and dressed the hall, all tables, chairs and centre pieces, free of charge. A huge thank you goes out to them.

Audience feedback was very positive and feedback gave it as the best show yet. I am massively proud of everyone who is part of BATS, we seem to just keep on growing, and I am excited for what 2025 holds.

- Huge thanks go to Dominic Boston who created the most magical lighting experience.
- Jonathon Doda – Who worked incredibly hard before the performance week to ensure all microphones were working correctly, as there were some issues with mics the previous years. This was a great success, and together with Nic Noble they even managed to keep going and get the power up and running again after a complete power outage happened during one of the show nights.
- Thanks to Elliot Wilkes, who wrote a positive review of the performance. Thank you for your continued support.

In December BATS then took part in the Christmas Light Switch on at the MMC, this was a fantastic experience and had 20 cast members join us to sing on stage some well-known Christmas carols.

Fundraising event

In December 2024, BATS held a fundraising Christmas quiz for members and their families. This was very low key this year, but would like to expand on this next year, making it more open to the people of Barrow. Thanks to everyone invested in this, we made a profit just short of £300.

Forward plan 2025

BATS will be producing *Shrek the musical* at the MMC in September 2025. Tickets priced at £18 each. Producer: Nic Noble, Director: Abi Crossley, Musical Director: James Stevens, Choreographer: Hanna Roberts. The show has now been cast, we have an enormous number of members (37) and two teams of 10 children aged 6-12. Total cast of 57 members. Membership fee is still priced at £60 per show. Costumes for *Shrek* are expensive; therefore we will be charging members an additional costume fee this year.

BATS have organised a group trip to Corby theatre so see a performance of *Shrek* in April. Each member will be paying for themselves, no cost to BATS.

We are planning a pantomime for January 2026. Pantomimes are a great money maker as they are not expensive to produce, and I think everyone is missing them! There has also been talks of a very small cast producing an 'Adult pantomime' as a Christmas fundraiser.

Thanks.

Abi Crossley – BATS director.

Murder Mystery

Annual Report 2024:

Allotted Time by Helen Sadler was performed at Humphrey Perkins School on 5th October 2024. The cast of Jackie Johnstone, Val Gillings, Sharon Gudger, Sue Booles, Abi Crossley, Aaron Parker, Neil Jones, Matt Gudger, Craig Johnstone and Matt Gudger all benefited from two sessions on the stage during the rehearsal period.

Our sound engineer was Tom Smith, occasionally helped by Jonny Doda and Steve Crossley. Rehearsals were held at the Navigation Inn in the village. The management of the Navigation, very generously, did not charge for rehearsal space. This cannot be said of Humphrey Perkins but rental of stage for performance and rehearsal was offset by a grant of £200 given by Barrow Parish Council and a donation of £100 from Charnwood Brewery. As a result of this the Murder Mystery Group was able to raise £690.98 for BATS. Money was raised through tickets and through a raffle. Ticket prices were kept low since this was the first time that the audience was invited to bring their own picnic. We did not make a food offer due to shortage of personnel and the increasing number of food intolerances that make mass catering a hornet's nest.

Forward plan 2025

There are no plans for a murder mystery in 2025 since one of us needs a break from coming up with inventive ways of bumping people off! It has become increasingly difficult to find time in Barrow to fit in a performance so the feeling is it should be offered at a different time of the year. There is a possibility of staging another Murder Mystery in March 2026.

Helen Sadler

3. Events Committee

Annual Report 2024

The village fete was held again this year. Numbers were reduced from the year before. On talking to stallholders, this seemed to be reflected across all events of that particular weekend, due to a football match and the first weekend of good weather.

Forward Plan

The Events Team is now Frankie Stone, Lin Webb, Val Gillings and Helen Sadler following the withdrawal of Fiona Laywood and Nic Noble who stepped away in November 2024.

Planned events include:

An Easter Egg Hunt on 26/04/2025

A Scarecrow Trail to coincide with the Village Show.

Library Tales by Helen Sadler. This is a performance to be held at the Community Library about the value of volunteering.

Helen Sadler

4. Heritage Group

Annual Report 2024

We have continued to meet monthly to share any new discoveries we have made which might tell us more about the history of the village: for example, this month someone brought along a Barrow girl's photographs and memories of her years of membership of the Barrow Guides. Someone else brought along an original copy of the "Act for making and maintaining a Navigable Communication between the Loughborough Canal and the Town of Leicester" found on ABE books. On a lighter note, someone had donated a copy of the Barrow version of the Calendar Girls fund raising calendar.

We enjoyed looking at them but a continual source of frustration is that we do not have a permanent place in the village where these documents can be made available for others to look at. The Parish Council have kindly given us some space in their loft, which is not ideal but is more accessible than my spare bedroom.

Over the last twelve months I have sorted through our documents, listed them and put them in boxes. I know that there are other interesting photographs etc which would be of interest to anyone researching the history of the village.

On a more positive note, we gave a talk to the members of the Beveridge club about the history of the village and one of our group is talking to them later this year about Barrow in the nineteenth century.

We continue, with Keith Butler's help, to add material to the website. We get occasional comments and queries through the Contact facility, which we answer if we can.

Forward Plan

We are looking into a Village Heritage Trail that highlights the history of a building and includes a QR code to take an enquirer to the heritage group webpages.

Kathryn Timmons

Library Management Committee

Annual Report 2024

- Throughout the year, we have continued our core book lending activities and Information Technology provision, and again increased our other services. We now have Monday scrabble sessions, Wednesday morning Craft and Chat, Wednesday afternoon Whist Club, fortnightly Friday morning Rhyme Time sessions, monthly Friday morning Coffee & Chat, Friday afternoon Adult and Children's Chess Clubs, and Saturday afternoon monthly Sewing workshops.
- The monthly Book Lovers' Club continues to meet at the Parish Council office.
- We have successfully launched our 100 Club.
- We have continued with our sales of preserves, cards, gifts, jigsaw puzzles, books, craft items, quizzes, and raffle tickets.
- We have worked with the Loughborough Building Society, and there are now two Barrow upon Soar Library community savings accounts, which bring an annual bonus to our funds.
- With the agreed funding from the Parish Council, income from our regular activities and sales above, the Loughborough Building Society bonus, and the 100 club, we are now on a sound financial footing.
- We have signed up again to the Warm Barrow initiative, and have provided a warm space to anyone needing to keep warm in winter during our normal opening hours. Hot drinks and biscuits are available at our standard prices.
- We have completed the automation of the emergency exit door so that everyone can now access the library from the car park.
- We continue to hire the library space, and we have regular Pilates, Yoga, and Singing classes at the library, along with monthly craft and occasional hiring for meetings etc.
- We have developed lone working and data protection policies, and are continuing with our regular reviews of our policy, governance and risk assessment documents.
- We have agreed with the County Council a draft new ten-year lease agreement from July 2025.
- We continue to work closely with the Parish and County Councils.

Forward Plan 2025

- To continue work with County Council and to sign a new ten-year lease when our existing lease ends in July 2025.

- To ensure the continued functions of the library and its activities.
- To continue with hiring as appropriate and to seek new hirers.
- To continue our existing fund raising and to seek new ways of income generation.
- To continue operating the Warm Barrow initiative during the Winter months.
- To continue regular reviews of our policy, governance and risk assessment documents.
- To continue to seek ways to enhance the building and library space, including conversion of the old boiler house to a store room.
- Recruit and train new volunteers and provide help with job interviews (references) when asked.
- Continue to work closely with the Parish and County Councils.

Keith Butler, Chair Library Management Committee

6. Barrow upon Soar & District Twinning Association

The village of Barrow upon Soar is officially twinned with the community of Marans in the Charente Maritime, region in south west France. The twinning Association was formed at the instigation of, and is recognised by, the Barrow upon Soar Parish Council. We continue to welcome new members and endeavour to expand our range of activities with the community of Marans.

In 2024 the association made a visit to the Little Theatre, had two successful quizzes and sixteen of our members travelled to Marans for an enjoyable five days.

Forward Plan 2025

In 2025 we are having a meal in January at The Soar Bridge Inn. A skittles evening in February, two more quizzes are planned and we are also looking forward to welcoming our friends from Marans to our homes in June.7.

Val Gillings, Chair

Websites

Website administrators for : www.barrowuponsoar.org.uk www.barrowuponsoarheritage.org.uk
www.busca.org.uk www.barrowvoice.co.uk and www.barrowcommunitylibrary.org.uk

Annual Report 2024

- Keith Butler is the sole administrator.
- The village website is ticking over. New High Street Businesses have been added and old ones moved to archive. The local events, local news and village diary pages are getting more hits than most pages, but still virtually no businesses or groups contact us to get their events published. Some groups are still maintaining their own pages, notably Barrow in Bloom, Good Neighbour Scheme, Scouting Groups and the Leicestershire Metal Detecting Society. Photographs for "A Year in Pictures" are no longer being received, so these pages are now only infrequently being updated.
- The BUSCA website has continued to be updated with BUSCA group events, but the site is still underutilised. The new application form to become a BUSCA supporter has been added.
- The Heritage website has been updated with new articles on organisations such as Carnival, Women's Institute, Toc H, Scouts & Cubs, Bishop Beveridge Club, etc.

- The Library website has been kept up-to-date with events and news items. Library documents including policies, governance and reports are also kept up-to-date.
- The Barrow Voice website has been updated with each new issue.

Forward Plan 2025

- Keep on top of requests for updates.
- Keep up with maintenance of the sites.

Keith Butler, site administrator

Miscellaneous Projects and Activities

8. Fossil Trail

Annual Report 2024

- There have been no evident incidents involving the fossils but the area in front of the “Three Organic Forms” has been cleared so the sculptures can be viewed.
- Several of the previous outlets no longer provide space for our dispensers.
- We have researched the prospect of new leaflet dispensers to attach to the new display board outside the library but have been warned that loose leaflets may end up as litter. A digital option may prove more favourable.

Forward plan 2025

- Further consider a digital version of the fossil trail.

10. Special Projects

Annual Report 24

- Underwrite BOSCAPS up to £500: Not requested
- Provide a budget of £700 for the Christmas Lights market and entertainment: Net cost £210
- Provide a budget of £100 for other Events activities: No cost
- Work towards a successful transfer of chairmanship and ensuing changes in direction that may arise: on going

Forward Plan 2025

- Produce a new edition *What is BUSCA*
- Underwrite BOSCAPS up to £500
- Provide a budget of £200 for Events activities
- Produce a new edition of Walks! leaflet: budget £1,000
- Run events as detailed above.
- Work towards a successful transfer of chairmanship, vice chair and minutes secretary as well as Events Team.

List of publications

- Adult Fossil Trail leaflet (new edition)
- Junior Fossil Trail (2nd edition)
- Street Map (New edition)
- Heritage Walks I (“Round the Edge” and “Barrow’s Jitties”) (Currently out of print)
- Heritage Walks II (Miller’s Bridge etc) (new edition)

- Heritage Leaflet III (The Wild life of Millennium Park)
- Places of Historic Interest (new edition)
- The Archaeology of Barrow
- “People and Places” by Arthur Gardner and Chris Bates
- BUSCA website: www.busca.org.uk
- Barrow village website: www.barrowuponsoar.org.uk
- www.barrowuponsoarheritage.org.uk
- <http://www.barrowcommunitylibrary.org.uk/>
- Barrow Voice (quarterly) (with its website www.barrowvoice.co.uk)
- Welcome Pack pocketed wallet
- Barrow websites flier (BUSCA, Village, Heritage, Barrow Voice, Parish Council)
- What is BUSCA leaflet

Social media (Facebook pages)

- BUSCA * Library * Barrow Voice
Frankie Stone has agreed to increase BUSCA’s social media presence by opening accounts on Instagram and TikTok and updating the Facebook pages.