

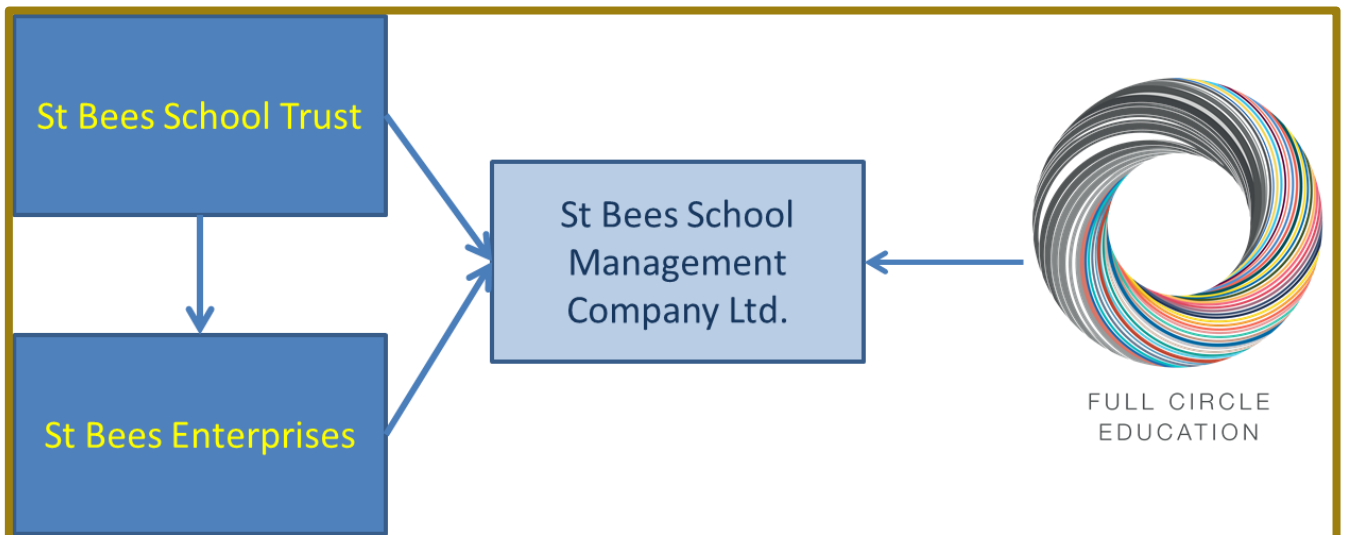


# ST BEES SCHOOL TRUSTEES NEWSLETTER DECEMBER 2017

Dear Friends of St Bees School

Welcome to the Trust's 2017 Christmas newsletter. Much has happened since July and it is fair to say that since we last communicated, our time has been taken up with establishing the foundations for the new school and supporting the new school team. Much of this groundwork has now been done, and both the Trust and the school teams are about to embark on the next exciting phases in the restoration and long term sustainability of the school. We would therefore like to bring you up to date and share with you what will be happening over the coming months.

An overview of St Bees School governance and interrelationship:



## The relationship between the partnership companies

**St Bees School Trust** - this is the charitable body whose purpose is to deliver the vision of Archbishop Grindal when he established the school in 1583. We are the current trustees of that vision which is to provide educational boarding for boys and girls, together with education and associated activities for the benefit of the community.

Everything that the trustees do is guided by this vision; a vision that has seen centuries of children educated in St Bees and which was sadly lost temporarily when the school closed in 2015, but will be restored when the school reopens next September.

The Trust provides 25% of the funding and 50% of the Board members to the Limited Company that runs the school on a day-to-day basis (St Bees Management Company Ltd.).

**St Bees Enterprises Ltd** - this is the commercial arm of the school who, for example, run the Business Management Centre. All income generated by Enterprises is used for the benefit of the Joint Venture or to maintain Trust assets not used by the school.

**Full Circle** - are the education partner with a world vision to educate children across the globe, who have partnered with the Trust to reopen the school. Full Circle bring their unique fusion curriculum which harnesses the best of the East and West.

Their vision is wholly in tune with that of Archbishop Grindal. The synergy with the Trust's vision and mission is remarkable, and long term it will see future generations of students leave the school ready for the modern world and equipped with all the character resilience that requires.

Full Circle want the children they will bring to St Bees School to experience the very best of the character forming and strong academic nature of British public school education. St Bees School will look and feel very similar to how it was prior to closure but it will be much more robustly underpinned.

The plan is clearly to always have a mix of pupils from across the globe, but to ensure that the unique character of the school is maintained by recruiting in excess of 50% of children from the UK. Full Circle are providing 75% of the funding and provide 50% of the board members to limited company.

**St Bees School Management Company Limited** – Using the abbreviation St Bees School, this is the Limited Company who manage and operate the school.

This company employs the staff and will be the entity registered to the Department of Education. Through the school's lead team they have accountability for all day to day operations across the school campus, whether that be educational, sporting activities or other commercial activity.

Ultimately the school will be self-sustaining financially. In the intervening period, that financial input is provided by the Trust and Full Circle

### **St Bees School – A new start:**

The most significant development has been the arrival of the Headmaster and his senior leadership team. The three J's as they quickly became known (Jeremy, Jackie and Jayne) started work full time at the beginning of September, immediately complementing the excellent work that was being undertaken by the existing staff in sustaining the school over the last 2 years.

The school will reopen its doors to the first cohort of pioneering pupils in September 2018. To achieve this, it will be appreciated there is a huge amount of work required. Reopening a school is no mean feat.



### **The St Bees School Team gathered outside the chapel entrance**

This school team photo (left) also includes Stuart Lancaster with his wife on a recent visit to the school to show his continued support, as we head towards opening the school doors again in September 2018

## The areas that have been focussed on as a priority so far:

**Registering the school** - to educate children an establishment needs authority from the Department of Education. When the school closed, its original Registration Number lapsed. Hence Jeremy has developed new policies, new schemes of work to take advantage of this unique opportunity to redefine the school. When we say the scheme of work for mathematics alone runs to 300 pages, you will get a sense of the scale of the task. The DfE are now processing our application, and we expect an inspection early in 2018 to finalise this process.

**Talking to parents** - Jackie Walkom (Director of Marketing and Admissions) has created and is leading a very active marketing campaign, which has involved amongst other things:

- ❖ One-to-one meetings with prospective parents who have registered interest with the school
- ❖ An open day on 4th November which saw 200+ visitors come to the school
- ❖ Visits to 15+ local primary schools
- ❖ Development of a new website. Please have a look [from the link here](#) and let us have any comments. For those reading hard copy, the address is [www.stbeeschool.co.uk](http://www.stbeeschool.co.uk).
- ❖ Visits to Spain and Germany by Jeremy and Jackie

We are delighted with the response that has been received. The concrete interest in places at St Bees School exceeds our original expectations at this point, and gives a very positive start to the admissions process. Full Circle have also held open days, been actively talking to agents and parents, and are confident of securing their part of the plan.

**Refurbishment work begins on St Bees School.  
Scaffolding is erected around  
Foundation building  
(December 2017)**



**Refurbishment Plan** - it is hard to over estimate how much work is required, and Jayne has led an intense process of review, analysis and costing. Refurbishment work will start very shortly working with a local company, Stobbarts, who have been a great support in understanding the scale and nature of refurbishment required across the school estate.

It is unlikely to come as a surprise to anyone that with the nature of the buildings, a pattern of past under investment and the need to reopen with excellent, fit for purpose facilities, the cost of refurbishment over the next 10 years runs into many millions.

The trustees and Full Circle have reviewed all of these costs and are absolutely committed to bring the whole school estate in terms of education facilities, accommodation and IT infrastructure up to modern day standards.

**Chinese relations** - the school team is playing its part in developing the international relationship with China. In Shenzhen, there was a ceremony marking the partnership with St Bees, and it was superb that a message was played from Mike Starkie, Mayor of Copeland, in support of what we are doing.



**Contract Signing attended by MPs and the Vice Premier of China**

In the UK, our contractual signing ceremony (above) was held in London on the 7th December as part of the **China - UK People to People dialogue programme 2017**, where the Chinese Vice Premier and many UK ministers were in attendance. We have had great support from Trudy Harrison, MP, who attended the signing ceremony. This was a high profile event and creates ever more interest in our unique partnership with Full Circle.

**Working with the Community** – The school has played a significant part in the life of the St Bees community throughout the last four centuries. We have every intention of ensuring that this is the case as we move forward into this exciting new era, and will keep lines of communication open and accessible.

A fully operational school brings many contingent benefits directly to the village and to the area. There will be new employment opportunities for local people at many different levels. This will also bring new families to the area. Already, we have agreed a major construction contract with Stobbarts, a well-respected local firm that will secure jobs and incomes for many of their employees and sub-contractors. Our catering and supply operations will enhance the profile of other local companies.

International pupils will bring revenue directly into the operational life of the school which will facilitate further investment in the infrastructure.

We are keen to ensure that the character of West Cumbria is evident in the educational experience we deliver, and also through the values and attitudes of the people we employ. Our admission's criteria will ensure a balance that fits the ethos of the school, and creates an appropriate balance of boarding and day pupils.

We are committed to ensuring strong engagement with the local community by the staff and pupils of the school. In early 2018, we will be working on development of a strong community and environmental programme which will demonstrate both the opportunities and support provided to the people of St Bees, and ensure that all pupils understand that they are as much a part of the Parish as they are of St Bees School. The two will remain closely allied and interlinked.

There have been so many other activities in the last 5 months that there really are too many to specify here. We just would like to say that sincere thanks are due to everyone who has helped and contributed to all we do, and in particular to the staff who have all been brilliant. We stand on target to achieve our objective of opening the doors of the school again in September 2018, and restoring secondary education to the village with all the many benefits that brings.

## **Fundraising – the 25%+ commitment!**

The Trust, of which we are the current trustees, now has significant financial obligations in order to achieve the objective of reopening the school, and the attendant benefits this will bring to the area in terms of employment and international education that has been missing since the school closed. These financial obligations also extend to ongoing maintenance of the assets, and to ensure we can satisfy all our legal financial charitable obligations.

The trustees wish to make clear that it is the Trust that is responsible for finding the funding and **NOT** Jeremy, Jayne, Jackie and the school operational team. Their job is initially reopening and then running the school. It is the Trust who have to provide the money until the school is self-sustaining.

The Trust's contribution is to ensure that the relationship with Full Circle is a partnership both financially and contractually. Committing to the Trust's funding requirement gives the Trust a "seat at the table", and is not only welcomed by Full Circle. It is also equitable. The Trust has a responsibility to help correct the significant under investment in the infrastructure over many decades.

**What is the Trust doing on fundraising?** Since the recruitment of a new Board in late 2015, and its first public newsletter in March 2016, the Trust has always made a commitment to be open and transparent in all of its actions, and work in accordance with due regulatory processes set down by legislation and the law. Every month the Trust's chairman or a trustee attends the parish council meeting to update the council on all school development activities.

Since its inception this new Board of Trustees have been faced with two primary options:-

1. Move to a permanent closure of St Bees School.
2. Develop a school reopening strategy using partnerships to share in investment and the ongoing management of the school.

With an annual loss of £250,000 per year the Trust could not continue to run the campus in its current quiescent state. Therefore, inevitably and ultimately, option 1 would result in the sale of all school buildings, sports facilities and pitches, and its land elsewhere in the village.

Option 2 requires the sale of some non-educational assets, probably in the form of land, to fund the investment needed over the next few years. Whilst option 2 may not be applauded by all, we (the trustees) have always believed that it is the best solution for the village as a whole, as well as the School Trust.

Our immediate goal is to produce a twenty five year plan/timeline which shows:-

- ❖ The extensive refurbishment plans of the school's buildings.
- ❖ The necessary development of new facilities if we are to progress the school to operational levels.
- ❖ Any proposed land development opportunities.

To this end we have employed Savills to explore all development options and to produce the plan/timeline.

**Old St Beghian community support** - the OSBs have been a critical support to keep the school intact after closure and to allow us the opportunity to form this partnership with Full Circle. We have already had very welcome one-off donations from individuals, and they have launched the Grindal Society to provide further medium to long term support.

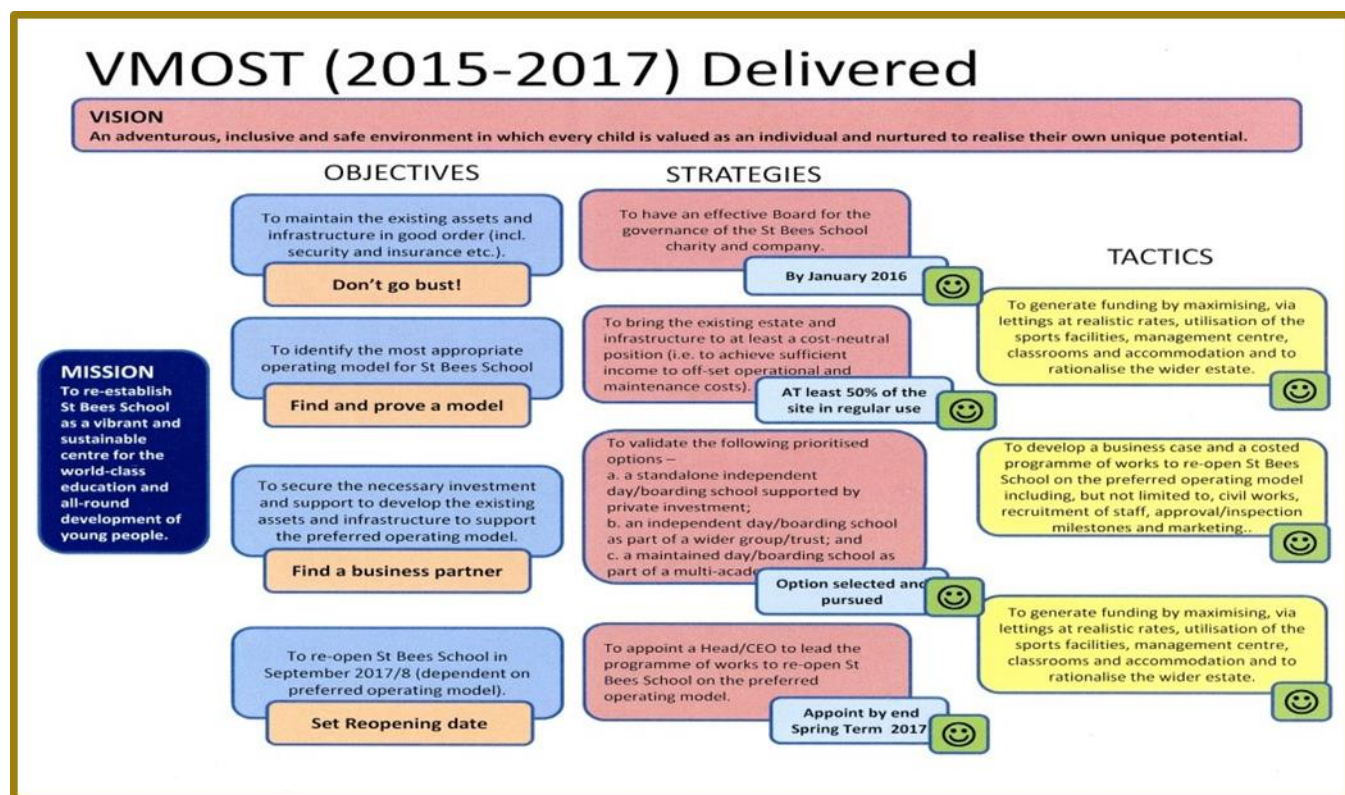
As we have stated earlier, the Trust’s purpose is to see children educated on St Bees School site. The Trust has to look at all options in furtherance of our primary objective - reopening the school. The trustees see liquidation of assets as a last resort, as once those assets are so liquidated they are lost to the Trust.

## Resignations and Appointments:

Kate Wilson recently resigned from the Board of Trustees after 18 months of unstinting commitment to the Trust, especially on the communications front. She has overseen the production of newsletters, Trust website and open days, and has been a great link into the local community. Other obligations in her own life and business have had to take precedence, but Kate is still fully committed to the success of the school, and remains involved from the side-lines. The Trust would like to extend its thanks to Kate for her time and energy and wish her well for the future.

There is a vacancy in the Trust (as with trustees this is not a paid role) for a Clerk to the Trustees as Tom Kelly has been appointed as a trustee. If you are interested, please let Tom know by emailing him on [tom.kelly@stbeeschool.co.uk](mailto:tom.kelly@stbeeschool.co.uk). He can give you more information on what is involved.

## Into 2018 and beyond:



As can be seen by the above diagram, the trustees have achieved the initial objectives they set in 2015 and are now looking forward to the next stage. The pace of activity will continue at the breakneck speed set by the senior leadership team.

## Key activities to watch out for will be:

- ❖ Interviews for the Deputy Head have been held and an appointment is about to be made
- ❖ Recruitment of teaching staff during the Spring Term next year to ensure sufficient time to give notice before the start of the next academic year,
- ❖ Refurbishment will accelerate and continue through the winter months (please take care when you are on site as areas may have limited access while contractors are working),
- ❖ Marketing activities will increase with further open days and initiatives

On the Trust side – we continue our commitment to openness and honesty, and these newsletters will continue to give an oversight of Trust activities and will be supported by a Trust website [www.stbeesschooltrust.co.uk](http://www.stbeesschooltrust.co.uk) and Trust Facebook page (under development).

And finally, 2 years ago the new trustees set out a Vision and Mission statement for the future, and the resulting journey has already been a most amazing, challenging, fulfilling, frustrating and worthwhile project for everyone involved. The dream of reestablishing education on the old school site is being realised and we are preparing for the school to reopen in 8 months time. Like all dreams, it has been realised through the hard work, support and commitment of so many people in the school, the community and across the globe.

There will be inevitable ups and downs over the next few months, but that hard work will continue undiminished until we see our first pioneering pupils start at the school next year.

Thank you for all the support and it only remains for us to once again wish you the compliments of the season, and to hope that you all have a peaceful and prosperous Christmas and New Year.

## *The Trustees*



## Key school dates and contact details:

Saturday 13 January 2018: Open Day from 10am to 1pm – all welcome

Friday 2 February 2018: Closing date for Scholarship and Bursary applications

Friday 9 February 2018: Entry Test Day (pre-registration essential)

Saturday 10 February 2018: Scholarship Assessment Day

Wednesday 28 February 2018: Last date for acceptance of Pioneer scholarships

Saturday 10 March 2018: Open Day from 10am to 1pm – all welcome

## Contact details:

Trustee enquiries: [tom.kelly@stbeesschool.co.uk](mailto:tom.kelly@stbeesschool.co.uk) / School enquiries: [enquiries@stbeesschool.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@stbeesschool.co.uk)

