

The Bakelite Design Trust Annual Report

Objectives and Activities

The public benefit objects of the CIO, as set out in its Constitution, are: to establish and maintain a museum to educate the public on the history, evolution and use of plastics from 1850 onwards and their impact on everyday life, by archiving, preserving and exhibiting historic plastics and related items for public viewing.

Further aims are to:

- encourage an appreciation of design;
- provide opportunities for lifelong learning and training;
- stimulate reminiscence, nostalgia and delight;
- advance environmental protection by encouraging future awareness of plastics, especially in regard to ecology, conservation, and re-use.

The CIO will achieve its charitable purposes through the presentation of significant museum collections, with a range of further activities including collaboration, mentoring and events.

The collections, referred to jointly as the Bakelite Museum, continue to be housed in accessible storage, which has enabled a continuous process of maintenance, repair and restoration of the objects.

The building where the collections are stored has been upgraded, with the cooperation of the landlord. The Bakelite Museum collection has been partially unpacked and displayed. With the blessing of the Conservation Officer and the help of the building developer, a set of large 1930s display cabinets were rescued from a shop that was being restructured and brought to the store, where they have been used to display plastics in chronological order, from Victorian precursors of plastic to the brightly coloured plastics of the 1960s. In response both to the charity's public benefit objectives and to public interest in the future of the Bakelite Museum, a number of themed open days were held, which were well attended and much enjoyed. Visitors came from as far afield as Sheffield, Germany and Canada.

We were heartened by the willingness of a loyal group of volunteers to help with our events.

The online profile of the museum was raised by publicising these events on social media and by a series of Guess the Object on Facebook, which enabled the public to interact with objects from the collection, and which garnered up to a thousand page visits a post.

Achievements and Performance

One of the first visitors was a well-known animator, who was excited at the possibility of using the objects in film. He kindly edited the material that had been taken when we packed up the museum in 2018 into a short animated film, and then used the museum as a studio to collaborate with the curator on a

second film, using the objects in Busby Berkeley style. We are in discussions about a further collaboration in 2024.

Meetings were held on the premises with the Community Heritage and Museums Development Officer for Somerset, the South West Heritage Trust, the Portfolio Holder for Culture for Somerset West and Taunton Council and the Director of the Somerset Arts Business Cultural Alliance, all of whom expressed enthusiasm for the idea of the Bakelite Museum evolving into a new museum in the West Country.

The search continued for new premises for a museum, both in the West Country and further afield. It included two separate buildings in Stoke-on-Trent. We had a good deal of correspondence and several meetings with existing local museums, entrepreneurs and the Council. The first option was a building for sale. It would have needed to be adapted slightly for access but was otherwise ideally suited, as it was built as a museum and library in the 1870s. While we were considering how to raise the funds to buy and adapt the building, we were alerted to a large factory site now owned by the Council. They had been granted funds to bring the site into public use and needed a good cultural offering as part of it. Although there was a good deal of enthusiasm for the idea of a Bakelite Museum in Stoke, ultimately the Council decided that it was not sufficiently relevant and that the Bakelite Museum might be in competition for the same limited funds as the arts and cultural organisations already there.

Financial Review

Structure, Governance and Management and Reference and Administrative Details

The Bakelite Design Trust is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation, registered in England as charity number 1193655. It has a Foundation Model Constitution.

In the year April 2022 – April 2023, the Board of Trustees comprised:

Graham Bell, Chairman

Julian Orbach

Valentine Davis

Alan Davis

Its registered office was at The Rivergreen Centre, St Mary's Place, Stannington, Northumberland NE16 6BL.

At the date of this report, the Board of Trustees comprises:

Julian Orbach, Chairman

Valentine Davis

Alan Davis

Imogen Smith

Its registered office is at 42 Church Road, Trull, Taunton, Somerset TA3 7LQ.

BDT Accounts 01/02/22 - 31/01/23

Table 1

| Date | Name | Category | Income | Expenditure |
|---------------|------------------|----------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| 2022/3/15 | J Orbach | donation | 500.00 | |
| 2022/3/16 | I Smith | donation | 300.00 | |
| 2022/3/16 | G Bell | donation | 500.00 | |
| 2022/3/18 | V Davis | donation | 300.00 | |
| 2022/3/31 | P Cook | donation | 300.00 | |
| 2022/3/31 | Unity Bank | service charge | | 18.00 |
| 2022/4/4 | Hoopers Elm Farm | rent | | 2000.00 |
| 2022/4/5 | HMRC | Gift Aid | 400.00 | |
| 2022/6/22 | P Cook | donation | 1000.00 | |
| 2022/6/29 | P Cook | donation | 500.00 | |
| 2022/6/30 | Hoopers Elm Farm | rent | | 2250 |
| 2022/6/30 | Unity Bank | service charge | | 18.00 |
| 2022/9/30 | Unity Bank | service charge | | 18.00 |
| 2022/12/23 | PayPal | donations | 525.01 | |
| 2022/12/31 | Unity Bank | service charge | | 18.00 |
| | | | | |
| Totals | | | 4,325.01 | 4,322.00 |

Start balance £946.00

End balance £1149.01