

Foxlowe set to be watertight as HLF works start



MAJOR maintenance work has begun on the Foxlowe Arts Centre.

Thanks to the Heritage Lottery Fund grant of £100,000, scaffolding is now in place and local contractors from Fullwood Roofing are carrying out much-needed works on a number of the roofs on the Georgian building.

Chairman of the Foxlowe Arts Centre Trust Chris Thompson said: "We are so thankful to the Heritage Lottery Fund for awarding this generous grant for the trust to be able to carry out these much-needed works.

"The re-roofing will ensure that the Foxlowe will be watertight." Works to complete the re-roofing are set to take around eight weeks.

Chris added: "It's great to see this project coming to fruition. "Thanks to fellow trustee David Bell for all his hard work on the bid to HLF."

Even though the trustees are obviously over the moon about gaining this grant from HLF, there's no time to rest on their laurels as there is still so much more work to be done on the Foxlowe building.

Therefore fund-raising avenues are continuously being sought and the trust is encouraging anyone interested in helping to make the community arts centre sustainable for many years to come, to get in touch.

Chris added: "We are always looking out for new pledgers as there is so much more work to do on this beautiful building, as well as its general running costs."

As part of the £100,000 grant; trustees, coordinators and other friends of the Foxlowe are currently working hard to put together a programme of heritage and arts activities designed to tell the story of Foxlowe and its inhabitants over 250 years.

This is being made possible due to an exciting collaboration with the Leek and District Historical Society, Borderland Voices, Buxton and Leek College, and Northern International Theatre. Foxlowe Arts Centre has also recently been awarded a further £8,000 from the Moorlands Partnership Board, which is set to be used for additional much-needed maintenance work on the building.

Pictured having a selfie next to the scaffolding are Foxlowe trustees: Marc Briand, Andy Norton, David Bell, Chris Thompson and Belinda Hargreaves.

Blues Fest keeps on growing

This October will see the seventh Leek Blues & Americana Festival which plays host to a selection of the finest local, national, and international touring artists across a multitude of venues in our historic market town.

The festival has gone from strength to strength over the years with local councils, business and hospitality communities, volunteer groups and the wider general public getting behind the project which aims to boost tourism and highlight the creative spirit found in the many venues of Leek – including at the Foxlowe Arts Centre.

Leek Town Council are at the forefront of this year's support, taking on the lead partnership role with the festival's non profit, volunteer Leek Blues organising committee earlier this year.

Leek Blues has once again teamed up with Foxlowe Films to open the proceedings on Tuesday, October 1, with a showing of the Aretha Franklin concert film, 'Amazing Grace', while the Foxlowe will be the venue for the first of the festival's headline events on Wednesday, October

2 with an appearance from slide guitar supremo, Martin Harley. Martin will be bringing his full band as he tours the country performing songs from his upcoming album 'Rolling with the Punches'.

Saturday (October 5) night features the second headline act at the Foxlowe Arts Centre; Little Victor and his combo supported by Leek's own Dominic Chuck Berry Cooper under his band name 'Red Berryn'.

Co-organiser of the Leek Blues & Americana. Festival, JR Mountford, said: "If you're looking for an authentic night of Memphis Blues and Rock 'n' Roll with real character, then get yourself to the Foxlowe Arts Centre on October 5.

"Little Victor is the real deal. It's been an absolute pleasure to talk with him about the blues over the last few months and we're all looking forward to his visit. Should be a hot ticket."

Saturday, October 5 will also see a Family-friendly festival special event at the Foxlowe with Biscuithead and the Bis-



cuitbadgers at 1pm.

Tickets for Martin Harley, Little Victor and his combo, Foxlowe Films and Biscuithead and the Biscuitbadgers are available from Foxlowe Arts Centre or online at www.foxloweartscentre.org.uk Leek Blues & Americana Festival co-organiser Dave Swarbrook said: "Each year it's a tougher and tougher job to try and match last year's events but with the enthusiasm, whether it's from local businesses, the council, the venues or the surprising response we had to our Crowdfunder campaign pushing us on, we seem to be getting the best out of each other and the town.

For a full festival programme, go online to: www.leekblues.co.uk.