

Making Burslem a great place for people to live

work and visit

# The 'mother town' and Burslem Regeneration Trust

The town of Burslem, 'mother town' of the Potteries and one of the 6 towns of the city of Stoke-on-Trent has the motto 'Ready' engrained on its coat of arms.

Burslem's fortunes over recent centuries exemplifies the strengths and challenges of manufacturing areas across the UK. Having driven the industrial revolution and benefited from the prosperity and local pride and municipal investment that resulted, Burslem was not prepared for the aftermath of globalisation from the 1980s onwards and the rising unemployment, degradation and abandonment that resulted.

Despite this, however, fierce local pride has ensured that a number of committed individuals, groups, businesses and elected representatives have kept their faith in their determination that Burslem would reinvent itself for the future as a place of quality for people to live, work and visit.

The role of the **Burslem Regeneration Trust**, with a strap line of 'Transforming Burslem', is to bring together each and every interest group in Burslem to create a shared vision and to facilitate the delivery of a long term strategy.

## **Our History**

Burslem lost a significant amount of jobs following decisions by leading businesses to outsource manufacturing production. This globalisation was not unique to Burslem, but the viability of the town was severely undermined. Cumulative effects of job losses, impact on the supply chain and wider implications for local traders in the town led to economic decline with social consequences and an apparent void in strategic policy making.

In an attempt to counter this decline, various groups set about revitalising the town centre with mixed measures of success at the end of the Twentieth Century. These included the still thriving Burslem School of Art, the Burslem Community Development Trust, and the Ceramica Trust.

From these initiatives came the initial renovation of the iconic Burslem School of Art building (previously in disrepair) and the use of Millennium Lottery Funding to convert the Old Town Hall into a centre to celebrate the history of ceramics. The ensuing grant was conditional upon the construction of a new building to commemorate the new century. Unfortunately public opinion against the controversial design of this new building was so strong that 'Ceramica' as it became known, was never given a chance and condemned often by people who had never even visited the attraction, believing it (wrongly) to have been simply an eyesore.

The lowest point in Burslem's decline was perhaps the closure of the Royal Doulton Nile Street factory with no meaningful consultation about the impact this would have on the wellbeing of the town, its workforce and residents. Efforts by the then MP led to a government task force to consider what Government and European support there could be for those who lost their jobs, and what could be done to start to reverse the fortunes of the town centre. By this time trade was drastically reduced, and Burslem had effectively lost its role as a local shopping centre.

Meanwhile as footfall into the town floundered and perceptions of Burslem as a 'ghost town' grew, communicating to local people the fact that a longer term approach was finally underway was difficult in an environment where 'seeing by believing' would be the only mark of success . The 'seeing' was always going to take time and need a step by step approach regardless of the clamour for instant results.

Just about all of the town's once proud buildings and institutions came under the spotlight as proof that Burslem wasn't working. The Victorian heritage Burslem Park had become a place renowned only for anti-social behaviour. So it was critical that when determined local volunteers insisted that something be done, positive partnership working secured Heritage Lottery Funding for the full scale renewal of the Park. The reopening of Burslem Park in 2013, with a re-enactment of the original opening of the Park (a parade of townspeople and all involved from Swan Bank to the refurbished park and a day of events) was proof that Burslem was reversing its fortunes.

Another issue which had come to symbolise the extent of Burslem's declining fortunes was the neglect and finally abandonment of the indoor market. This was made worse by the protracted legal battles between Stoke on Trent City Council and Port Vale Football Club over its successful outdoor market. As well as providing evidence of a successful trading area in Burslem, the Port Vale outdoor market brought in much needed income into the Club. The decision to

take enforcement action against Port Vale's market and to introduce a council run market did not achieve the desired outcome for the town in respect of increased footfall and trade. Moreover the loss of income to the football club from the market destabilised its financial health and although this was by no means the only factor, it contributed to the financial instability which led to not one but two successive administrations for the club. The significance of a thriving League 1 Port Vale Football Club, integral to the local community, was and remains a significant factor in the future success and viability of the town

It was the closure of Royal Doulton and loss of jobs that brought things to a head. The then department of Trade and Industry via the then Regional Development Agency, Advantage West Midlands, responded to calls from the then MP for there to be a memorandum of understanding between SOT Council, business and community to set up a body to bring all partners together to involve stakeholders in the regeneration of Burslem.

The subsequent Burslem Regeneration Company variously chaired by Ed Yorke, Hugh Edwards and Joan Walley agreed a remit to make Burslem a place of quality for people to live, work and visit. Various funding packages were secured, ranging from the completion of the by now unfinished Ceramica project to the securing of £millions from three successive Townscape Heritage (THI) funding packages to begin the long term task of bringing abandoned buildings in the town centre back into use.

It was recognised that only a step by step approach could work and that the first priority was to seek funding to repair and renew empty and derelict buildings in the town centre to give a new lease of life.

The Burslem Regeneration Company was instrumental in creating the context in which European (ERDF), Heritage Lottery (HLF) and match funding for renovation of a number of buildings across the town were secured. Stoke on Trent City Council provided invaluable support by backing this programme and also providing a dedicated professional and administrative support team based in Burslem.

Despite very limited resources, various newsletters were put out to explain what progress was being made to revitalise Burslem. Meanwhile the rich assortment of local groups and business continued with the efforts of their own organisations to invest in community events keeping alive the traditions of the town. The interest of The Prince of Wales and his Prince's Charities in seeing Burslem as a positive example of 'Place Regeneration' from 2011 supported ongoing initiatives.

## Successes in Burslem

The consequential momentum contributed to many positive changes too numerous to mention, but include:

- the rescue and regeneration of the Middleport Pottery by a joint venture between the Princes Regeneration
  Trust and Denby Ware now venue to BBC's Great Pottery Throwdown and location for SMEs boosting
  entrepreneurship and art and craft related small industries,
- major expansion and investment at Steelite International,
- consolidation of Titanic Brewery in Burslem and continuing success of Bulls Head,
- success and job creation at Autonet Insurance,
- the decision by Synectics Solutions to relocate to Burslem,
- the Queens Award for community services at Swan Bank Mission,
- Ladsandads covering Trubshaw cross,
- opening of coffee lounge at Swan Bank and enhanced voluntary offer including community library, social care, homelessness support and food bank,
- the creation of the Haywood Sixth Form College at The Old Town Hall, pioneering work based learning and apprenticeships and the phase 2 at Burslem School of Art whilst retaining community use at both venues,
- the continuation of the work of the Burslem School of Art trust,
- the survival from administration of Port Vale Football Club and creation of a Port Vale Community Foundation,
- continued presence in the square of historic Royal Stafford Tableware and a visitor outlet shop,
- a thriving night time economy in Burslem of local pubs and eating places including the recent opening of an Italian restaurant and the Market Place café serving the new student clientele,
- the leading role and extension of Barewall Gallery promoting art and local culture and boosting interest in local artists e.g. Geoffrey Wynne and the late Arthur Berry,
- numerous small businesses committing to Burslem e.g. Hobbygoblin,
- a huge variety of voluntary organisations including the Volunteers in Burslem Park enhancing the role of the historic Victorian park for local recreation, the Root and Fruit Project and Community Allotment involving local people in food related projects,

- numerous residents groups and local societies such as Middleport Matters seeking to connect local residents with the town and Burslem History Society with programmed events
- the Arnold Bennet Society keeping alive the work of Burslem's most cherished author
- the inspirational Our Burslem which is a community social media based forum promoting, orchestrating and delivering successful festivals and events in the town,
- investment in the local canal network by the Canal Regeneration trust,
- the appointment of a Town Crier

Many proposals for new initiatives are also already in the pipeline for consideration

- The Burslem Trust Proposals to open up the abandoned Burslem arm of the Trent and Mersey Canal (Burslem Port)
- The longstanding goal of bringing the Wedgwood Institute back into use following the Princes Regeneration Trust's current temporary use of it working with partners to establish community uses in this iconic building
- Ongoing commitment of Burslem Community Development Trust to redefine its future role

This record of relative success over recent decades is made up of many of those individuals who have worked with, and in partnership with, the team who have made up The Burslem Regeneration Company / Trust. We are now formally at the stage where The Burslem Regeneration Company set up at the initial request of government with designated support from the SOT Council has successfully adapted itself to changing circumstances and has re-established itself as a Trust to act as an umbrella multi sector group with senior and local level championing of the initiatives that continue to be needed for Burslem's long term future.



## The Future

Local elected representatives and city wide bodies such as the Stoke-on-Trent city council and Staffordshire Chamber are looking to reassess their policies in a way that extends their interconnection with the work underway in Burslem

The Stoke-on-Trent city coalition council, established after the 2015 elections, quickly developed a clear and positive relationship with BRT. Elected members have supported the BRT through their positive approach to Burslem, all within the paradigm of the six towns of Stoke-on Trent engaged as a cohesive unit supporting one another. This relationship has included a dialogue of collectively promoting the towns through a vision of optimal location (centrality between Birmingham and Manchester), excellent road and rail links, along with exceptionally attractive land and property prices.

The question for The Burslem Regeneration Trust now is how to maintain the momentum that has been created in the Town, and to reestablish its vision and objectives for the long term and the period 2016-2020.

# **Guiding message**

The Burslem Regeneration Trust (BRT) guiding message declares our purpose and vision, along with the values that steer all of our decisions and behaviours.

The three elements of purpose, vision and values, coalesce to provide our focus and a route forward to make Burslem a great place for people to live, work, visit and invest in.



## **Our Purpose**

Our purpose defines why we exist and our higher benefit on the society of Burslem. It defines why we do what we do.

Burslem Regeneration Trust is a not-for-profit organisation that aims to make Burslem an even better place for people to live, work, visit and invest in.



## **Our Vision**

Our vision defines an ambitious outcome, not the action that will bring us there. It outlines how we will leave Burslem and Stoke-on-Trent as better places.

Within Burslem, we will be recognised as contributing to the renewal of heritage buildings, supporting existing and new businesses, seeking investment in local infrastructure, promoting world class education and lifelong learning, and ensuring the cultural opportunities and events within Burslem are nurtured and accessible to everyone.

We will also contribute to the wider success of a Stoke-on-Trent as a healthy, sustainable and viable city. A city where all, individually and collectively, can achieve their potential, where inequality is progressively reduced, where wider cultural initiatives are supported, and where cooperative effort underpins the transformation that is required.



## **Our Values**

Our values influence our behaviours and guide our decision making and judgement. They are not simply a list to publish, but are embedded in everything we do where all members are role models for our commitment to these values.

Partnership: Working with partner organisations within Burslem is at the core of how we work. We build multi-sector associations made up of separate partners, each committed through their own organisations

and groups to cooperative working in Burslem. Moving forward together yields the most benefit for Burslem.

**Economic growth and prosperity:** We celebrate the successful and leading edge businesses in the town, working with them to advocate sustainability, economic growth, and prosperity. We champion and embrace a shared dialogue that brings together commercial and community expertise for the benefit of both the town and our businesses.

Heritage and culture: Our historic built heritage combined with our creative industries is the platform from which our activities are guided. We do everything within our control to continuously improve and nurture this unique culture.

Strategic thinking and sustainable development: We strive to achieve our vision in a sustainable way through activities that create a long-term legacy within Burslem. This requires strategic thinking, where we anticipate what lies ahead, think critically and act decisively. Broader sustainable development mechanisms, such as the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, are also important to our decision making through components that include the decarbonisation of our economy.

Being ready: Being ready reflects our connection to the motto engrained on the coat of arms for Burslem. It also reflects our understanding that to be successful we need to adjust to changes throughout the UK and global economy, and anchor our ability to respond to these changes for the benefit of Burslem.

**Action centric:** We balance our partnership and facilitation activities with an action centric orientation that enables the BRT to make a real difference in the community. We do this by establishing project groups that are assigned to specific objectives.

Lifelong learning: Lifelong learning is about creating and maintaining a positive attitude to learning for both personal and professional development. This value represents our partnership work with wide-ranging learning organisations and sustainability for the culture and people of Burslem.

**Accountability:** Our internal controls and governance ensure that we effectively direct our resources to the needs of the community and the vision of the BRT.

# **Our Priorities and Objectives**

Our objectives determine the actions that the BRT will take to attain our vision. They are based on SMART principles (specific, measurable, attainable, relevant, time-bund) in order that our combined efforts result in real benefits to Burslem.

We also recognise that we are a small not-for-profit organisation with finite people and capital resources and must be prudent and strategic in our prioritisation of objectives. We seek to become the oil in the machine, not the machine itself.



The below five objectives set out the priorities for the period 2016-2020.

BRT Objectives (2016-2020)				
Renewal of heritage buildings	Supporting existing and new businesses	Seeking investment in local infrastructure	Promoting world class education and lifelong learning	Accessibility and growth of cultural opportunities and events

#### Renewal of heritage buildings

- We will seek funding for the renewal of heritage buildings
- We will promote the re-use of vacant sites and buildings and seek to nurture partnerships with owners and developers
- We will promote Burslem's internationally important built heritage and the cultural differentiators that make Burslem stand-out
- · We will engage with the wider community to understand their priorities and challenges for renewal

#### Supporting existing and new businesses

- We will work with local businesses to understand what they need from the community and what they can give to it
  to ensure long term sustainability for them. We will also encourage these existing businesses to contribute and
  help us deliver on our vision for the local community, whilst ensuring our leading edge businesses are included,
  nurtured, welcomed, and embraced by the local community
- Our communication strategy will seek to promote the town through a vision of optimal location, excellent road and rail links, and exceptionally attractive land and property prices. This promotion is intended to create employment opportunities and economic growth within the town
- We will leverage the commercial expertise from local businesses to provide insight, guidance and strategic thinking for the benefit of the whole community
- We will encourage new businesses to locate in the town to ensure the long term economic viability in the area

#### Seeking investment in local infrastructure

- · We will work with partners to encourage, champion and promote investment in local infrastructure
- We will utilise our broad membership base within the community to promote improvements to public spaces, seeking to improve usability, accessibility and quality

## Promoting world class education and lifelong learning

- We will support the continued development of our existing and new high quality education settings
- We will utilise our broad membership to include business and other partners in encouraging educational programmes
- We will leverage our capabilities to promote Burslem's educational establishments to a wide audience
- We will promote accessibility to lifelong learning, advocating the learning economy in Burslem through our partners

### Accessibility and growth of cultural opportunities and events

- We will build partnerships with community organisations
- We will engage with partners and the wider community to develop solutions that improve access to cultural
  opportunities
- We will promote Burslem's social, industrial and literary heritage
- We will endorse and champion the creative industries and encourage a thriving commercial core

# Project groups designed to achieve our objectives

The achievement of these objectives is assigned to project groups where delegated accountability is provided in-line with our governance structure. These project groups are both objective specific and cross-functional. The cross-functional groups are designed to work on delivering goals across each of the five objectives. The diagram below outlines how this structure works. Cross-functional project groups are provided as examples only as they are formed and disbanded based on the work required to achieve the five objectives.

Project Groups ⇒	Renewal of heritage buildings	Supporting existing and new businesses	Seeking investment in local infrastructure	Promoting world class education and lifelong learning	Accessibility and growth of cultural opportunities and events
Governance	<u></u>				
Communications	<u> </u>				$\rightarrow$
Education	<u></u>				$\rightarrow$
Funding	<u></u>				
Partnerships	<u></u>				

# Organisational framework and governance

The organisational framework within the BRT provisions for a governance structure that ensures our systems and processes drive our direction, effectiveness, supervision and accountability. The BRT is privately limited by guarantee without share capital and the company number is 09040164.

Our governance structure has been refined for the period 2016-2010 and is comprised of three tiers:

#### The BRT Executive

- Four people max (all board members)
- •At least three will be available to meet at any one time
- •Set the strategy, agree and review the medium and long-term objectives; and ensure we are on path to achieve our Vision



#### The BRT Board

- Representation from Education (inc HE)/Business/Community/Elected Members/Church
- •Limited to 12 people and elected, each year, at the AGM
- •They will suggest ideas for initiatives; help to set up project groups; promote the Trust; help to grow the Membership; act upon reports from Project Groups, etc.
- Project leads and other appropriate people will be invited to attend as/when appropriate
- •There will also be a number of(appropriate) Critical Friends who will be invited to attend (e.g. from SOTCC; Police; MP; Chamber; PRT: Round Table etc).

#### **BRT Project Groups**

- Including finance; governance; comms; marketing; and membership
- •Each one to be led by (or at least run with the involvement of) a linked Member of the Board.
- Membership of these Project Groups will be comprised of Directors, Members and other interested parties
- The lead for each will report back to the BRT Board as/when appropriate.



# **Appendix 1 - Our governance Principles**

BRT governance is based on the principles outlined in the code for the voluntary and community sector by the Association of Chief Executives of Voluntary Organisations. This code sets our 6 principles that underpin sound governance within our organisation, and which are tailored to the specific structure and way in which we operate.

The 6 principles are:

## Principle 1: Understanding the role of the BRT executive, Board and Project Groups

Governance is the responsibility of the executive panel. All members of the executive panel understand their role to set and safeguard the BRT's purpose, vision, values and objectives. The panel collectively oversees the work of the organisation, supporting all project groups, volunteers, partners and people engaged with our activities.

The executive panel will be maintained at a level of 4, including the Chair. The panel will include the Secretary and Treasurer.

## Principle 2: Doing what the BRT was set up to do

The executive panel will make sure that the organisation's purpose remains relevant, agree broad strategies that connect our vision and objectives, monitor progress towards these objectives and evaluate the results we achieve.

## Principle 3: The BRT working effectively

The executive panel, board and delegated project groups will work together to ensure that the BRT has all the relevant skills, experience and diversity to work effectively towards the organisation's vision and objectives. This includes maintaining effective relationships, holding regular meetings and assessing our performance.

In addition, composition of the panel and associated working groups will reflect the breadth of the businesses, organisations and resident communities it serves.

## **Principle 4:** Control

The BRT executive panel, board and project groups will comply with all legal and regulatory requirements, ensuring financial controls are effective, major risks are managed and appropriate delegation and supervising is established where necessary.

## **Principle 5:** Behaving with Integrity

The executive panel, board and project groups will protect and promote the organisation's integrity, making decisions based on our core values

## Principle 6: Openness and accountability

The executive panel, board and project groups will communicate openly about the work of the BRT, listening and responding to the views of partners, supporters, stakeholders and the wider Burslem community. Additionally, they will ensure a culture of accountability permeates BRT for those with an interest or stake in the trust

# **Appendix 2 – Detailed governance framework**

The BRT Executive

**Composition** 4 trustees (including chair)

Role Set policy / aims / objectives, check activities of working sub groups meet policies / aims / objectives. Review

finances / financial administration to ensure compliance with appropriate regulations. Determine / ratify external communications on BRT business. Decide trust reps, appoint external advisors as necessary.

**Control** Reports periodically to trustees meetings with all proposed decisions ratified by trustees.

Meetings 8 weekly, prior to trustees meetings and on an ad-hoc basis as and when required in between regular planned

meetings.

Quorum At least 3 panel members to be present to make panel decisions effective.

Rationale Allows consistent direction of effort to avoid 7 year old footballer syndrome i.e. no one working to a strategy.

The BRT Board & critical friends

Composition 12 board members, plus critical friends

Role Representation from Education (inc HE)/Business/Community/Elected Members/Church. Limited to 12 people

and elected, each year, at the AGM. They will suggest ideas for initiatives; help to set up project groups; promote the Trust; help to grow the Membership; act upon reports from Project Groups etc. Project leads and other appropriate people will be invited to attend as/when appropriate. There will also be a number of (appropriate) Critical Friends who will be invited to attend (e.g. from SOTCC; Police; MP; Chamber; PRT: Round

Table etc.).

**Meetings** Monthly meetings

Quorum At least four board members at any meeting to make decisions effective.

Rationale Wider board related decisioning, actions and updates with the involvement of critical friends

Finance Group

**Composition** Board member plus affiliates

Role Provide relevant financial data to executive panel. Keep accounts under review on regular basis, ensure

financial stability of BRT. Draft for agreement financial governance to enable BRT to successfully bid for and distribute publicly sourced grant funding. Make funding bids on behalf of BRT utilising information provided

from relevant working groups. Appoint and manage accountants / auditors.

Meetings 8 weekly, prior to trustees meetings and on an ad-hoc basis as and when required in between regular planned

meetings. Attend executive panel meetings as necessary.

Quorum At least two trustees at any meeting to make decisions effective.

Rationale Ensures BRT remains solvent, controls and sources funding consistently and able to demonstrate suitable

financial structures in place to secure funding from external agencies.

**Communications Group** 

**Composition** Board member plus affiliates

Role Specific working group with remit to develop and manage all BRT means of communication including

magazine, website, Facebook, twitter etc. to promote BRT in a positive / favourable manner. Day to day activities handled by comms group but any major announcements / external exposure to be agreed with executive panel. All content in issues of the Angel or its equivalent to be agreed with exec / trustees by

electronic circulation prior to publication.

Meetings 4 weekly & prior to trustees meetings. Attend executive panel meetings as necessary

Rationale Acts as external face of BRT so needs to have quality products, appear professional and communicate

effectively to all external stakeholders what BRT is about at any time.

Governance Group

**Composition** Board member plus affiliates

Role 6 month transitionary group to design and embed updated governance structure. This includes considering

elected representation, executive members, and BRT wider membership

Meetings 4 weekly & prior to trustees meetings. Attend executive panel meetings as necessary

Rationale 2016-2020 strategy recommendation to refine governance to optimize the effectiveness of the BRT, expedite

decision making, and allow us to achieve our vision

Partnership and Community Group

Composition Board member plus affiliates

Role
Identify and develop effective working relationships with partners with whom the BRT can work in tandem for the benefit of Burslem. This may include the CLT, Princes Trust, School of Art, Local groups such as 'Our Burslem', Staffs University and religious groups.

Meetings
4 weekly & prior to trustees meetings. Attend executive panel meetings as necessary
Acts as external face of BRT so needs to have quality products, appear professional and communicate effectively to all external stakeholders what BRT is about at any time.

	Education Group
Composition	Board member plus affiliates
Role	TBC
Meetings	4 weekly & prior to trustees meetings. Attend executive panel meetings as necessary
Rationale	Acts as external face of BRT so needs to have quality products, appear professional and communicate
	effectively to all external stakeholders what BRT is about at any time.

	Funding Group
Composition	Board member plus affiliates
Role	Responsible for identifying, applying and orchestrating funding programmes that facilitate the delivery of our vision. Example includes seeking funding as part of the Great Place Scheme
Meetings	4 weekly & prior to trustees meetings. Attend executive panel meetings as necessary
Rationale	Acts as external face of BRT so needs to have quality products, appear professional and communicate effectively to all external stakeholders what BRT is about at any time.

	Additional Working Groups
Composition Role	Board member plus others as appropriate, co-opted to join group for special knowledge / expertise To consider specific issues / topics in furtherance of BRT policy / aims / objectives as agreed either in trustee meetings or by request of the executive panel. Aim to represent BRT on particular topics, formulate any necessary proposals / briefing papers for ratification by executive panel and subsequent presentation to trustee meeting for agreement of trustees to proceed. Responsible for ongoing progress reporting and providing feedback to trustees at regular trustee meetings.
Meetings	at least 8 weekly, prior to trustees meetings and on an ad-hoc basis as and when required in between regular planned meetings. Attend executive panel meetings as necessary. Hold meetings with external groups as necessary.
Quorum	At least two trustees at any meeting to make decisions effective.
Rationale	Required to research, evaluate, facilitate and progress all appropriate opportunities for BRT to fulfil its policies / aims and objectives.

	Meeting Action Reviews
Composition	Secretary
Role	Progress Chase parties with actions on a 4 weekly cycle including immediately prior to each trustee meeting to ensure positive reporting as far as possible at all meetings. Ensure that meeting notes are published to all
	trustees two weeks after all meetings to allow sufficient time for trustees to follow up on actions. Agenda's to be published at least two days prior to meetings by agreement with Chair.
Rationale	Seeks to ensure actions are dealt with effectively and to report progress at all trustee meetings to ensure effective decision making is possible at trustee meetings.

# **Burslem Regeneration Trust**

Making Burstem a great place for people to live, work and visit

Burslem Regeneration Trust is a not-for-profit organisation that aims to make Burslem an even better place for people to live, work, visit and invest in.

# Our Strategy 2016 - 2020

http://burslemregen.co.uk/

info@burslemregen.co.uk

We are privately limited by guarantee without share capital and the company number is 09040164.





Working, supporting and collaborating with partner organisations within Burslem is at the core of how we work. Moving forward together yields the most benefit for Burslem.

Joan Walley, Chair of the BRT



D. Williams

JOAN WALLEY.

JAY GARDINER

JOY GARNER.

ALAS CHRISTIAN' STEPHEN FAMILER

DAVID WILLIAMS

KEITH BOTT