

Chair's Report 2021-2022

Introduction

Firstly, a thanks to all our Members for their continued support and also my fellow directors who have invested an incredible amount of time and energy, to enable the project to move forward.

Membership

Since last year's AGM we have increased our membership from 100 to 156. We would like to increase this further and with your support and some further membership drives we're confident we can, and need to, build on existing numbers.

Planning Permission

Our initial proposals were rejected by Planning and Conservation, mainly around the sizing and roofline construction to the rear extension and covered walkway. After several discussions and communications, we submitted revised plans which were accepted with Planning Permission being granted on 30th March 2022, subject to several conditions.

Property Conversion Works

It would have been great to think we could have appointed one contractor to undertake all the works to transform the building from what it was into what we want it to be. But it became very apparent, very quickly, that this wouldn't work with the finances available. Instead, we've taken on the task of bringing in individual contractors to undertake different aspects of the work. This has meant more hands on management but has significantly reduced costs.

But if I can give you an idea of some of the work, we, as a team, have undertaken, I would mention discussion and progress with the following:

Structural Engineers	Crappers (Grant)	Contractors & Sourcing Materials
Sound Proofing Consultants	National Lottery (Grant)	Kassoon Construction
Electrical Service Providers	Designers – Queen Elizabeth Walkway	Kaspars Joncausks
Water Companies	Printers	Matt & Stirling Machin
British Telecom	Accountants	Cornerstone Electrico
EDF	Solicitors	Newjax Groundworks
British Gas	HMRC	Pinnacle Construction
Building Regulations	Street Naming	A-Grade Timber
Planning & Conservation		Roofing Superstore
Archaeological Firms		Malmesbury Windows
		Alimax
		Clearway Doors and Windows
		Renderers – AEB Plastering & Tiling

91 High Street

The building has been transformed from what it was. The upper floor has been stripped back with walls removed and two new one-bedroom flats created. As we stand, we're completing the plaster boarding and plastering. First fix electrics have been completed with second fix to begin in the next month or so and kitchens and bathrooms being fitted shortly after.

At ground level internal walls have been removed and replaced with structural steels, a major chimney has been fully removed and the roof fixed, floors have been taken up, insulation laid and floors reappplied; the 3 steps at the front have been removed and the internal walkway excavated and re-laid to provide a slope for disabled access. Services have been brought in; Electric, Water, Fibre.

At the rear, the new extension has been built and roofed including two rooflights, the walkway is now covered and again includes two rooflights adding daylight and the toilet block roof has been stripped back and renewed.

Changes to the front of the building have proved to be more problematic. As a part of our planning permission, we were 'conditioned' on the windows, doors, bifold and rendering. We were required to submit detailed specifications, including proposed materials, design, and colour. Unfortunately, our proposals have not been accepted by Conservation. We have recently submitted revised proposals – as usual this means we'll have to pay more for these windows, doors and bifold – fingers crossed we'll get a positive response this time.

Volunteers

We can't thank our volunteers enough; they've saved us a significant amount. They've helped internally and externally, just look at the 3,500+ cleaned bricks and the broken rubble forming the base of the car parking area at the rear and things not so easily visible now, from stripping the building of all existing plumbing and wiring and from the painstaking ripping up and replacing of and sealing of floorboards, from digging holes on the pavement to allow for utility services. Thank you for all the help – you've been great.

Working with Other Groups

We continue to work with Cricklade Town Council, particularly on the overall strategy for the High Street to keep the High Street vibrant and a great community benefit for all. We've had help with an Environmental Policy from CCAN and some of their members have offered to give ideas for the design of the garden. For another year the White Hart Hotel have accommodated our weekly director meeting. Our thanks go to all groups who have helped us so much.

Looking Ahead

This is the year the Police Station will be finished, and new businesses opened on the ground floor plus two new flats available for the benefit of locally connected people. The ugly facade of the Old Police Station will be no more and replaced with one more in keeping with the High Street and the Conservation Area.

Moving new businesses and residents into the Old Police Station will create additional interest and footfall that will benefit other High Street businesses. The property will continue to be a focal point for community events such as the Christmas Lights Switch On. This is important as all this activity helps to generate the footfall needed for our lovely High Street to survive and thrive.

Our Queen Elizabeth II Walkway will be finished creating the new front to rear pedestrian link providing access to the garden/community area at the rear. It will be a lasting legacy of the Queen's life and document Cricklade's

history during the period of her reign. This will further encourage visitors to Cricklade and help to reinforce our sense of pride as a community.

With the legacy of up to four commercial/retail spaces, two one-bedroom flats and a great community space we should all feel, we will have done justice to the little used police station and given something much better and long-lasting to the High Street and everyone that uses it - something we can all be proud of on our High Street - not just for now but into the future.



Ruth Szybiak

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Chair – Cricklade Development Foundation Limited

March 2023

