

Norton Community Trust

Newsletter No 7

March 2021

Hello all, we hope you're all staying well and positive. Here is the latest update on the project to adapt the former church of St Andrew as a community hub.

Since the last Newsletter we have made great progress on improving the planning applications (which you may remember had been temporarily withdrawn for that purpose). We've had expert architectural support on this from Trevor Hewett RIBA, who has a wide range of professional experience in planning the conversion of listed buildings. The applications have now been resubmitted to Powys CC Planning, and we hope to have a formal response within 4 - 6 weeks - a very exciting time! It's important to demonstrate that we have community support for the project, and so it will be really helpful if you, as a Norton resident, could post an expression of support - you can email planning.representations@powys.gov.uk quoting the planning references 21/0361/FUL and 21/0362/LBC. You don't have to say anything fancy or technical (well, you can if you want to!) - the main thing is to just let them know that you support the project to develop the new community hub. You can also view the plans and supporting papers on the Powys Planning Portal powys.gov.uk and quoting the same reference numbers.

Having resubmitted the applications, we were pleased to see the project reported on the BBC Wales news website - a really nice article, have a look if you haven't already seen it - www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-wales-56337813

Meanwhile, we have started work on detailed project planning and we're hoping to finalise the details of the lease for the building with the Church in Wales by the end of March.

The next major part of the project is to start putting together a plan to raise funds for the work to renovate and adapt the former church building. Given the scale of the project (you will recall we have a notional budget of £100,000), work has already begun to identify organisations who will consider major grant funding for the planned renovations, in addition to smaller grants for specific projects such as chairs and furniture and the installation of a new heating system. Discussions with the following funding agencies are all at an early stage: Powys Community Regeneration Fund, National Lottery Community Fund, Ashley Family Foundation, Architectural Heritage Fund (Wales).

The effects of the pandemic have understandably caused difficulties for developing fundraising plans within the local community. However, as life hopefully begins to return to normal through 2021 (fingers firmly crossed!), this should become easier. In order to launch our local fundraising efforts, we hope to organise a Norton Fundraising Day, aiming for Saturday 4th September. This may compensate in small part for the loss of the Norton Show again this year, and we hope that the great team who make the Show such a success each year can be redeployed to organise a special day for Norton residents - assuming that social gatherings are able to take something like their familiar form by then. Obviously, the event will depend on the planning application being successful and any Covid rules still in force at that time, so a final decision will be made in early June, but please put the date in your diary - something to tentatively look forward to!

And of course if you have any fundraising ideas and/or you are able to help on the day, we will be delighted to hear from you - just reply to this email nortoncommunitytrust@gmail.com

Finally, just for clarification, the NCT steering group which is guiding the project consists of Brian Price (Chair), Maggie James, Gillian Tennant-Eyles, Tony Morgan, John Wilding and John Refaussé. As we anticipated, the project has been adopted by the

Presteigne and Norton Community Trust which works in conjunction with the Town Council and which will supervise the project, make funding representations and act as the appropriate legal entity on behalf of the NCT as appropriate. Two members of the steering group, John Wilding and John Refaussé, are also Directors of the PNCT, thus ensuring continuity between the two bodies.

That's all for now - keep your fingers crossed with us for a successful outcome to the planning application!

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