

## ***Hebden Bridge Community Association***



### **MEDIA RELEASE**

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### **HEBDEN BRIDGE CREATIVE QUARTER PLANS TO BE UNVEILED**

### **MEETING WILL FOCUS ON STRENGTHENING LOCAL CREATIVE AND DIGITAL BUSINESSES**

Hebden Bridge's growing reputation for creative and digital businesses is set to be enhanced, under plans to create a new Hebden Bridge Creative Quarter as part of the Town Hall development.

Hebden Bridge Community Association, which is overseeing the development, has called a meeting on Thursday January 20<sup>th</sup> aimed at local small businesses engaged in the media and digital sectors to explain the idea behind the concept. When complete, the Creative Quarter will be able to house about thirty small businesses, and will also provide hotdesking and meeting space for home-based workers. The meeting is at 7.30pm in Hebden Bridge Town Hall.

"Hebden Bridge has more than its fair share of very small businesses in cutting-edge sectors associated with digital technology, and we hope that the Creative Quarter will reinforce this important part of our local economy," says Peter Hirst, chair of the Association.

The Creative Quarter is expected to appeal particularly to emerging and growing businesses which are run by one or two people and are engaged in work such as web design and editing, software design, multimedia, graphic design, consultancies and other creative areas of work. The new enterprise units will be well-equipped, for example with high-speed broadband connectivity, but the Creative Quarter will also aim to be more than simply a conventional workspace. Integral to the concept are plans for informal networking events between occupants of the building. Business support workshops and seminars are also being planned.

The Creative Quarter will be an integral part of the extended Town Hall complex, where new community facilities are also being included as part of the development. "Our aim is both to support local community life and to strengthen the local economy, and we think that increasingly public buildings will be designed to combine both roles under one roof," Peter Hirst adds.

The meeting on January 20<sup>th</sup> has been rescheduled as a result of the pre-Christmas snow. Among the guest speakers will be Paul Fallon of Creative Space Management, who will be sharing his company's experience in running the successful Round Foundry media centre in Leeds and the Electric Works in Sheffield and discussing ways in which the Hebden Bridge Creative Quarter can be tailored to meet local needs. Also present will be the Community Association's Leeds-based architects Bauman Lyons.

"Although our plans are well advanced, there is still time for potential users of the Creative Quarter to influence the detailed specifications, and we'll be interested in having comments back at our meeting," Peter Hirst says.

Construction work on the Town Hall development is anticipated to begin in April, with the units ready for occupancy in Spring 2012. Businesses will be able to

reserve particular units from January 20<sup>th</sup> onwards, and Peter Hirst says that the Association is already in discussions with a number of potential tenants.

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Editors' note: More information Andrew Bibby, 01422 844026.

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