

Hebden Bridge Town Hall development : update 1

You will probably have noticed the building work which has now begun on the land at the side and back of Hebden Bridge Town Hall. Here's what's going on.

Hebden Bridge Community Association has obtained funding for a major new set of buildings. This is what is being built:

- A new public hall and function room
- New meeting rooms of different sizes
- Exhibition space
- A brand-new entrance hall, suitable for displays
- A riverside balcony and courtyard
- Enterprise units for new start-ups and developing businesses
- A modern rehearsal space for the light opera and youth theatre groups
- A lift so that wheelchair users can use all parts of the Town Hall
- A building which generates a lot of its own energy, and is built to be sustainable.



An artist's impression of the finished building. The construction work should be complete by spring next year.



Building contractor: “We want to be considerate”

Brian Fletcher’s the man who’s in charge of the building work and who will be a key part of Hebden Bridge life for the next twelve months or so. He is the Manager for the build for West Yorkshire-based contractors Strategic Team Group (STG), the firm who won the tender for the construction contract. He’s been busy in recent months overseeing house-building for a housing association next to the community centre in Mytholmroyd, but will very shortly be moving in to his new workplace, an office inside the old Town Hall fire station garage opposite the market square.

Brian reflects the new face of the construction industry. Originally from Manchester, he has a degree from the University of Salford in construction project management and since graduating has worked on a full range of construction projects, including some tricky sites in Manchester and Liverpool city centres. He is confident that this experience will stand him in good stead for the task of building right in the heart of Hebden Bridge’s town centre.

“I like to feel that I’m approachable,” he says. “Getting on well with the neighbours is very important, and I encourage people to come over to the office. If there are problems, I’d rather know about them, rather than people struggling on without telling me.”

Site safety is obviously paramount. Permanent hoardings will be going up along Hangingroyd Lane shortly (with windows to allow people to look in on progress). Noise is another concern, although Brian says that his firm has chosen to use much quieter auger drilling technology rather than hammer-driving the foundation piles. STG has signed up for the

‘considerate contractor’ scheme, which includes regular independent assessment of the site. “I don’t want noise and dust. As manager, I personally monitor the site to ensure it’s safe and tidy. To be fair, that’s the way that you have to do it nowadays,” he says.

Deliveries are going to be trickier than they would be on a green-field site with plenty of space. STG has agreed procedures which will see waggons cross St George’s Bridge and turn up Hangingroyd Lane. Banksmen (people positioned at the front and rear) will then control the reversal of the vehicle alongside the site, where materials will be unloaded. “We’ve had a good think about the arrangements, and [Calderdale] Highways have approved the plan. We should still be able to maintain the traffic flow,” Brian says.

The section of the building adjacent to the Hole in the Wall pub is to be constructed of steel frame, and Brian says that this will go up relatively quickly. “Over a few months, the shape of the new building will emerge,” he says. But then the impression may be that work has slowed down. The building’s exterior will be complete but inside there will still be a considerable amount of fitting-out to do.

STG has a policy of offering hard-hat tours whenever possible, especially for local schools, allowing children to understand how the construction process works. Brian suggests that local schoolchildren may want to bury a time capsule under the building, an idea which the Town Hall trustees will definitely follow up.

Where possible, STG tries to employ labour from as close to the area as possible, and STG has also arranged to employ a number of sub-contractors based in the Calderdale area. But STG is also concerned to ensure appropriate behaviour from its workforce towards the public. For example, cat-calling or sexist comments towards women are definitely out, Brian says. “We don’t allow that sort of behaviour. Anyone doing that will be removed from the site,” he says. “Construction sites are very different from the way they were twenty years ago.” As part of being a considerate contractor, STG will be advertising a telephone hotline for problems or complaints. “Anyone can ring me up if they need to,” Brian says.

Come and find out more

The Hebden Bridge Community Association is holding regular informal briefings, you can turn up and find out how the building work is progressing.

Thursday May 19th (market day). 12 noon - 2 pm.

Look out for the stall

Saturday July 2nd, 12 noon, at the Town Hall

Saturday Sep 10th, Hard Hat tours (subject to confirmation).

11am and 12 noon

Become a sponsor

We are looking for sponsors. At the moment, we are raising funds to ensure that the new riverside courtyard can be paved with real York stone, not substitute paving. The total cost is £18,235. We want to raise this by 'selling' stone flags (the equivalent of about 1 metre x 1 metre of courtyard) at £100 to local sponsors. Could you be one of our 182 sponsors? (Names will be added to the sponsors' board which will be put up in the building when it's open.)

You may also want to buy a flag as a gift, perhaps for a child or young person.

We are also asking local businesses, and people who are able to make larger donations, to help furnish particular rooms. We have a list of things we are fundraising for, from £1000 upwards.

Information is available inside the Town Hall or please contact us (Andrew on HB 844026).



Hebden Bridge Community Association Ltd
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