



**BTT Members,**

**The BTT Board hope you will find this first newsletter useful and informative.**

**If you wish to comment or include something in the publication, please contact the Chair on [p.riddington@outlook.com](mailto:p.riddington@outlook.com)**

**Or the Secretary on [gayerynsardbtt@gmail.com](mailto:gayerynsardbtt@gmail.com)**

**The Board values your feedback and contributions.**



## **Chair's Comments**

**Newsletter No 1**

**March 2019**

Since taking over the Chair, I have been determined to improve communication with the members. My other priority was to get more folks involved in our activities. Well, I think we now have an extremely hardworking board who are involved in a wide range of activities and I hope this newsletter will help spread that news and enthusiasm to a wider audience.

We have purchased 11 High Baxter Street and we will be having a meeting to talk about our ambitions for this important building. We are hoping that

Jo Churchill MP, will attend to help raise its profile.

We also propose at that meeting to have a presentation about the Athenaeum Telescope restoration project which we are working on with the Athenaeum Astronomy Association.

Our links with the West Suffolk College now includes working with the National Trust at Ickworth House. This partnership will give students the opportunity to experience building conservation work at first hand.

Finally, our efforts to see the railway station buildings properly repaired continue as does the preparation of a gazetteer of the unlisted buildings in the 'Grid', which nears completion.

These are exciting, if challenging, times but my wonderful colleagues on the Board are working hard to protect and conserve what we value in this remarkable town we so enjoy living in. We welcome involvement from others too, so please do get in touch if you are inspired at all by what you read here.

Enjoy!



## **11 High Baxter Street Purchase**

BTT completed the purchase of this important property in the first week of February.

This Grade II building was once part of a terrace; it now stands alone between two car parks in High Baxter Street.

Through neglect from previous owners, this historic property has fallen into disrepair. It is the Trust's intention to secure and restore the building and bring it back into use.

The Trust will begin an investigation into the building's history. It is believed



Picture: Andy Abbott

to date from the C17th, although already the Trust has found evidence that elements of the building date far earlier.

Early survey work has revealed some previously hidden historical architectural elements and further work will lead to a better understanding of the building's history.

The Trust, supported by the Architectural Heritage Fund, will shortly commence a viability study of potential uses of the building.

**Paul Rynsard**

## Locally Listed Buildings

### Identification and Protection

At the beginning of 2018 the BTT board decided to try and assist the St Edmundsbury Borough Council by preparing lists of 'locally listed' buildings for their use.

The government's policy document, the National Heritage Protection Plan, expects that:

*'Local planning authorities should have up-to-date evidence about the historic environment in their area and use it to assess the significance of heritage assets and the contribution they make to their environment.'*

To comply with this policy, Local Planning Authorities will normally prepare a catalogue of buildings which are of local interest. The motivation for our exercise is principally, due to lack of resources in St Edmundsbury Council, to prepare such a list.

There is a difference in how Locally Listed Buildings are protected. If they are in a conservation area (CA), they would be considered necessarily to make a positive contribution to that CA and, as such, normally, total loss (demolition) would be resisted and their contribution to that CA is protected statutorily. Similar protection is not afforded to LLBs outside of CAs.

We have a small team compiling a gazetteer of LLBs in the Town Centre Conservation Area. They have

started in the 'Grid' and have already completed much of that area.

We hope to upload the results onto our website so it will be available for all to see and to which the Conservation Officers will be able to refer folks when development proposals are being prepared.



## **Bury St Edmunds Railway Station**

As members will be aware BTT has been campaigning to find a solution to the longstanding problem of repairs at the town's important listed railway station since 2015.



*File Pic*

Featured in Simon Jenkins' recent book on *Britain's 100 Best Railway Stations* the design of its principal architect, Sancton Wood, with its free renaissance towers, provides a dramatic entrance to the town – albeit much in need of enhancement. Discussions with Greater Anglia about letting the former station master's

house having failed – not surprisingly in view of an estimated cost of £2m for the proper repair of station fabric a proportion of which is not the franchisee's responsibility – the Trust is currently examining whether a community led project would assist in resolving the difficulty.

But it is not just repairs that need to be addressed. Current passenger footfall at the station is in excess of 650,000 a year and projected to rise to 1m.

With some 56,000 dwellings due to be built in local authority areas between Cambridge and Ipswich, and some 73,000 jobs created, all by 2030, the need to create a true commuter hub at the rail station with good car parking and the enhancement of its setting, combined with a half-hour commuting service to Cambridge and the improvement of access to the town centre, is becoming increasingly urgent.

*John Popham*



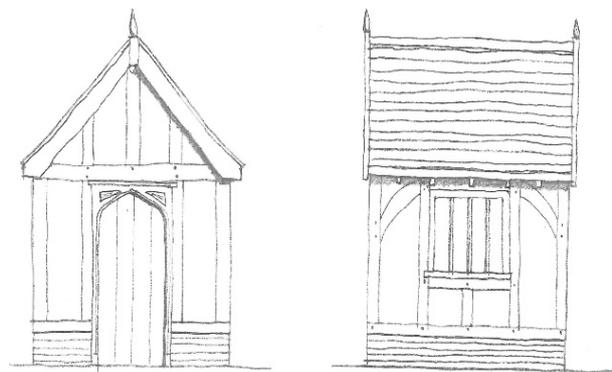
## **BTT and West Suffolk College Historic Building Training Course and Scholarship**

Members may recollect that the College is in the process of establishing its exciting Milburn Innovation Park project which involves the construction by its students of a number of PoDs (Prototypes of Design) – miniature buildings of both modern and historic designs. This will give both trade and professional

students invaluable experience in the entire construction process from design to building completion. BTT is sponsoring two historic PoDs – one with a medieval timber frame, and the other of clay lump.

We have decided to focus on the medieval timber frame PoD this year as the skills required tie in nicely with the Trust's recent acquisition of 11 Higher Baxter Street. The students will be shown around the High Baxter property, and then round a refurbished timber framed building in the town centre.

This will enable them to visualise what the completed scheme will look like, and assist them with the construction of the PoD.



Picture: Whitworth

To begin to get work under way Sarah Bowers, WSC's representative on the BTT Board, has met up with Rick Lewis, Traditional Oak Carpentry, who has been a regular volunteer lecturer and practical demonstrator on previous years' courses, to obtain his advice on tools and materials.

The above activity signals a major change for the BTT/WSC course. Since 2014 historic building

conservation courses have relied to a large extent on lectures and the occasional site visit.

The College's Milburn Innovation Park Project will enable practical training with demonstrations and occasional lectures – giving students invaluable hands-on experience.

*Sarah Bowers/John Popham*



### **Bury St Edmunds Town Centre Masterplan Advisory Group**

The Town Centre Masterplan, on which BTT is represented by John Popham, was adopted in December 2017. Since then the original committee has continued to meet as an Advisory Group and gives advice as a 'critical friend'. The former Post Office project apart (see separate item) a number of other items have recently been discussed. The Council has announced that it is not proposing to provide additional car parking in the town centre in the immediate future – a recent survey indicating a decrease in car park use. The Trust has been pressing for a free electric minibus service to collect visitors from outlying car parks (including Ram Meadow and Olding Road) and take them to the town centre.

A further issue of concern raised by the Trust is the condition of the public realm within the area including paving and highways, disabled access, signage, public toilets, litter, planters etc, in order to ensure that it continues

to be properly maintained and does not appear 'tired'.

In addition to these matters of immediate concern, the plan includes longer term enhancement schemes to parts of the centre including St Andrew's St North and the bus station, and also Cornhill and Buttermarket.

*John Popham*



## **Former Post Office building**

Members will no doubt have noted the attractive plans for the redevelopment of the former Post Office site that have been in the press. These include the enhancement of Market Thoroughfare and a design that includes retail, or other appropriate use, on the ground floor with residential accommodation above.

The Trust has been involved in the project from the outset. Before the site was bought by the Council, BTT had prepared concept plans to illustrate the site's potential.

When it became clear that the Borough was acquiring the property the Trust came to an arrangement that it would not disclose the matter and would work with the Council to achieve the best solution.

The Trust played an advisory role during the architectural competition that was held, and has subsequently commented on the various stages of the design process following the

appointment of Donald Insall Associates as architects.

After completing a full site investigation, it is anticipated that a planning application will shortly be submitted.

The scheme is of real importance to the town centre – not only enhancing Market Thoroughfare by providing a visually strong and attractive link between the Market Place and the Arc, but also by creating a focal point for the enhancement of the east side of St Andrew's Street South in this location.

*John Popham*



## **To all members – please note**

**This first newsletter is being sent to all BTT members, via post and email. However, thereafter the newsletter will be sent to members via email.**

**Please ensure the Membership Secretary has your correct details to ensure you receive the next publication.**

**The newsletter will also be available on the BTT website [burystedmundstowntrust.org.uk](http://burystedmundstowntrust.org.uk).**

**Please inform the BTT Membership Secretary of any change to your contact details**

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