**Sustainability and 11 High Baxter Street – A Future Guided by The Past**

Throughout its history the Bury St Edmunds Town Trust has championed the preservation of the built heritage of the town by purchasing and restoring a variety of neglected buildings, repurposing, and enhancing them. The trust’s latest purchase, 11 High Baxter Street, has proved to be one of its most challenging projects yet, but one where it has been possible to demonstrate how to put into practice sustainable principles when repairing an historic building.

The last 60 years were unkind ones for 11 High Baxter Street; a common story for so many similar buildings. A decline in its status coupled with a succession of ill-judged and poorly executed interventions using inappropriate modern materials, hastened its decay. Fundamentally however, the historic fabric was salvageable and could be repaired by unpicking the recent damaging works and renewing elements utilizing the traditional methods and materials.

During the repair programme, each element of improvement to the building has been carefully considered; wherever possible existing joinery has been preserved, retained existing windows have been restored and draught proofed. Insulation, made of natural breathable materials have been introduced, improving the thermal efficiency, whilst also reducing the condensation risks. Lime plaster and renders have been returned, replacing modern plasterboard and cement-based renders.

To provide No.11 with the facilities that our current lives require, a small derelict conservatory extension to the rear of the house was replaced with a larger brick and timber framed single storey extension with a South facing mono pitched roof, all to a contemporary design. The highly insulated fabric minimizes heat loss and solar panels were installed on the extensions roof. To further reduce the carbon footprint of the house, the heating is proposed to be changed from a gas boiler system to an Air Source Heat Pump.

The whole of the house has, in effect been re-balanced, returning it to an equilibrium that will sustain and extend its useful life for further centuries, using principles and techniques the original craftsman who created it understood, combined with new cutting-edge technologies that will substantially reduce its energy consumption. It is a marriage of the best of the past with the best of the present, acting as beacon for a sustainable future for our historic buildings.