

The WiNSpace News

Issue 2 October 2020



STOP PRESS –well nearly

We said in issue 1 that we had applied for a National Grid grant to support planning application costs. We have been told that the grant application is progressing well and the WCA will be hearing very shortly if we have been successful. The Trustee are poised to press the 'go button' for the full planning application, so fingers crossed and watch this space.

nationalgrid

So what is the way ahead, do you have a plan

Using your feedback, we will be asking the Architects to revise the room layouts. This exercise is going to be difficult as we have several conflicting requests and suggestions. That said we will do what we can to use as many as possible. The plan going forward is for a further public meeting towards the end of November at which we will be able to share the latest site layout plans and the proposed external look of the new building. At that time, we should also have a better idea of our eco credentials such as: heating methods, insulation and building materials. If all goes well and what is shown during that meeting is accepted, a full planning application should be going in by early 2021. It is of course possible that we could hit snags which need further mitigation before submission, such as additional layout issues, biodiversity surveys and Covid restrictions. However, we've now got the bit between our teeth and a momentum behind the project, so we are really keen to get an application in ASAP.



The Business Plan

Being successful in "doing things" generally needs some sort of "plan"; which is why we've been putting one together. Currently the focus of our business plan is to detail:

- Where we are going to get the money from - short of buying lottery tickets.
- Showing those will to give us money that we are serious and know what we are doing.
- And, once our new shiny building is built, that there are people around who can afford and want to book it, so it isn't a white elephant.



Just taking the first and last point.

- For building costs we are broadly looking at 25% to come from local loans, 25% from gifts and local grants, 20% from major grants and already have commitments for the other 30%.
- For the ongoing feasibility we are studying likely users (current and new) and projecting likely running costs. (eg heating, wages, maintenance & loans). We are now getting close to a first issue draft and hope to have a published document by the year end.



Balancing the Rules of Nature

As part of the planning process we need to carry out and act on several surveys. These include ecological, biodiversity, tree and drainage. We had an ecological survey carried out in 2017 but have now updated this, including an initial bat survey. We are really lucky to live in an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty but it comes with responsibilities. The Mendips are internationally protected for Bats and is designated a Special Area of Conservation (SAC) so we need to use the data from the survey to influence our design. During the initial bat survey Common pipistrelle, Soprano pipistrelle, Serotine, Leisler's, Myotis, Brown long-eared and Lesser horseshoe were all found, which is quite normal for this area. We still need to do more surveys but knowing this will assist the designers. The next major survey is all about drainage. We all know that it rains in the Mendips but we need to ensure our feet, and those of our neighbours, stay dry. We now need to consult with drainage experts to ensure we get this right.



Help Needed: Are you good at managing projects, have ideas on raising money or can help with communication, just get in touch.

In the next Issue: By next month we should have instructed the Architects on revising layouts and started to explore possible outside materials such as panelling and roofing, so there will be lots to talk about.