

Pembroke 21C Community Association Ltd

Chairman's Report to AGM – 12th March 2008

A full Directors' Report for the last financial year to 31st August 2007 is published with the accounts which will be considered under Item 5 on the agenda. This report covers activities that were carried out during that financial year as well as plans for future development.

During the last year the Directors have been mostly focused on securing the building, appointing an architect and getting planning approval.

Completion of the purchase of Foundry House happened shortly after the last AGM at the end of March. You may remember that I reported last year that the operating budget was short because of having to pay the full asking price for the building. This was miraculously covered by the Welsh Assembly Government CFAP office ringing to ask if we could spend our following year's budget before the end of the financial year – we hesitated only very slightly.

A brief was put together over April and early May and sent out to request tenders from about 13 local architects. Only two tenders were received and in early July we appointed Acanthus Holden Architects who have an office on the Green. They worked closely over the summer with Directors to put together plans which were then displayed here for comments from the user groups and the final plans were submitted in the late autumn for planning approval. This was granted in December.

A quantity surveyor was engaged to estimate costs which, because of the standard of refurbishment we are planning, will be around £700,000 with over £500,000 for the first Phase. We have £100,000 in hand from previous fund raising.

The plans are here for you to view and there is a walk through of the new building on the website. We now propose to take Phase 1 to tender and obtain fixed quotations so that we can approach major funders and sponsors. Elizabeth will talk about the fundraising task at the end of the meeting. So the work will not start quickly but we are confident that we will, in time, have a wonderful state of the art community building here in Pembroke.

Community lettings are continually increasing and letting income is three times our estimated budget, with over 300 adults and children using the building each week in term time.

Staff and Training:

The huge increase in work, especially administration and finance, generated by the building project and other successful projects was clearly taking up most of the Development Officers time and preventing her from getting on with the role she was employed for – developing and funding projects.

An approach was made to the Welsh Assembly Government Community Regeneration Toolkit fund – who already fund the Development Officer post – to provide enough extra to employ a part-time administrator while permanent funding is found. This was approved and Nicky Mallen and then Alison Jones have taken on this role on a temporary basis.

Alison and Pat Hay undertook the Food Hygiene Certificate last Autumn and Pat also successfully completed the First Aid at Work course with the Red Cross.

Elizabeth successfully completed the Certificate in Fundraising Practice and is now a full member of the Institute of Fund Raising. Last summer she also undertook a Training the Trainers OCN course at PAVS.

Training is being arranged through PAVS for Directors/ Trustees in their roles and responsibilities, employment law, understanding charity accounts etc.

Key Projects:

We are pleased that the Mill Ponds LNR enhancement project began in January after many years of planning. For 21C to be able to pull this complex project together and get the funding demonstrates the value of having a dedicated Project Officer in place with funding from Environment Wales..

Holyland Woodland is nearing completion, with signage almost the only remaining issue. There will be a launch event for the project on Saturday 7th June. Volunteers will be needed to monitor and maintain the project. A volunteer warden project is being set up to recruit and train local people to raise public awareness of the Mill Ponds habitats and wildlife, monitor the site for damage or vandalism, monitor species etc.

The Pembroke Story project is awaiting news from the Heritage Lottery Fund whether the application submitted last autumn is successful. The project will then begin in the Court Room of the Town Hall but Linda Asman and Nikki Anderson are still collecting photos and recording memories – if you re interested in the project please speak to them afterwards.

The Farmers Markets will start again on Easter Saturday – 22nd March and will run fortnightly throughout the year. Don't miss the second Pembroke Potato Festival on 31st May.

The Pembroke Festival dates have been brought forward to June with a new group of volunteers planning and running events to coincide with Sea Fair Milford Haven. The Festival will be based mainly around the South Quay and Mill Ponds and will provide a back drop to the visiting flotillas of boats coming into the Castle Pond.

A special large edition of NETWORK will be available to go out from Easter with an outline Festival programme across the centre pages. We are now selling more advertisements to support the printing costs but must ensure that the newsletters are delivered to every house in the town. If you could please deliver just your road or a couple of roads let us know tonight – we are very short of deliverers.

Finally our website continues to improve thanks almost entirely to Linda Asman with assistance from PAVS Circuit Rider Project. If you haven't seen it yet please take a look at www.pembroke21c.org

Partnerships

Pembroke 21C puts working in partnership at the centre of all its project development. We seek to work with other groups in the community as well as local and national organisations where appropriate. Our major partners over the year have been Pembroke Town Council, PAVS, PLANED, Countryside Council for Wales, Environment Agency, Wildlife Trust and Chevron Pembroke Refinery.

Directors/Trustees:

I would like to thank my fellow Directors/Trustees for their support and hard work over the past year. We were, of course, all saddened by the death of Cllr John Allen last July. John was the first Chair of Pembroke 21C and a driving force behind us securing this building. He is much missed by us all. As with Mary Sigley we think it appropriate that,

once the refurbishment of this building is complete, we will dedicate one of the rooms to his memory.

We have over the year taken on four new trustees – Pierce Murphy who is a member of the Pembrokeshire Access group, Katy Murphy as a community trustee, Cllr Rose Blackburn who takes John Allen's place on the board as a representative of the Town Council and Val McNally who has a long association with this building and is a representative of the user groups.

This brings us back up to 10 trustees. We have room for more if anyone is interested. In line with the new Charities Act, Trustees have set in place a policy for recruiting new trustees and there is information available on what is involved and a job description if you feel it may be for you.

Membership:

At their annual review of the Fundraising Strategy in January, Trustees decided to re-think the membership arrangements which have, so far, been rather informal. We have decided that full membership will require a subscription of £5 but we will be more than happy to have associate members who will not need to pay any subscription but who will not be able to vote. Membership of Pembroke 21C is open to all who live or work in Pembroke in any case, and all are welcome to attend our meetings.

We are also going to put in place user group membership so that our user groups can pay an affiliation subscription and appoint a representative to vote at general meetings. Their other members will also be able to attend meetings without voting rights.

New membership forms are available and Elizabeth will talk more about that at the end of the evening.

So on behalf of all the Directors/Trustees of Pembroke 21C we would like to thank you for your support over the past year etc etc.