

Dunstable Town Council
Grove House
76 High Street North
Dunstable
Bedfordshire
LU6 1NF

Tel: 01582 513000
E-mail: info@dunstable.gov.uk
Website: www.dunstable.gov.uk



Paul Hodson, Town Clerk and Chief Executive

Date: 19 June 2024

Dear Councillor,

You are hereby summoned to attend a Meeting of Dunstable Town Council which will be held on Monday 24 June 2024 at Grove House in the Council Chamber at 7.00 pm. The meeting will be streamed live, and the recording then made available. To view the meeting live or afterwards use this link: [livestream](#). Members of the public and press are also welcome to attend in person. Members of the public may ask a question during the public session, either in person or online via MS Teams. If you would like to ask a question, please contact the Council via democratic@dunstable.gov.uk or 01582 513000 by 4pm on Friday 21 June 2024.

Please scan the below QR code to find the full agenda online.



This meeting will be filmed by the Council and broadcast live and will be capable of repeated viewing. If you are seated in the Council Chamber, it is likely that the cameras will capture your image. By your presence you are deemed to consent to be filmed, and to the use of those images and sound recordings for webcasting or training purposes.

If you address the committee in person or via Teams, your contribution will be recorded and broadcast, unless this is during a private session, as permitted by the Access to Information provisions.

A G E N D A

1. Apologies for Absence.
2. To agree as a correct record the Minutes of the Council Meeting held on 15 April 2024 (Minutes enclosed - page 4)
3. Specific Declarations of Interest
4. Chair's Remarks including Civic Events and Mayoral Activities - attached is a summary of events the Mayor and Deputy Mayor attended since the Annual Council meeting to date – (see page 7)
5. Public Question Time
6. To receive reports of the following Committees:

<u>Committee</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Page</u>
Community Services	3 June 2024	10
Grounds and Environmental Services	10 June 2024	13
Finance and General Purposes	17 June 2024	18

7. Action Tracker – (see page 23)
8. Market charter - Report – (see page 24)
9. Transparency – Report – (see page 25)
10. To agree a response to Central Bedfordshire Council's Draft Local Transport Plan (<https://cbclocaltransportplan.commonplace.is/>)
11. Annual Governance Statement and Internal Audit Report – Report (see page 30)
 - 11.1. To receive the final internal audit report for 2023/24 (Page 34)
 - 11.2. To approve the Annual Governance Statement for 2023/24 (Page 46)
 - 11.3. To approve the Accounting Statement in the Annual Governance Return (Page 49)
 - 11.4. To approve the appointment of the Internal Auditors for 2024/25
12. To receive the minutes of the Dunstable Joint Committee held on 14 March 2024 (see page 53) and a verbal update from the meeting held on 5 June 2024
13. To agree the Town Council's representatives and substitutes on the Dunstable Joint Committee – Report (see page 59)
14. Referral Report(s) –
 - 14.1. Reference up from Finance and General Purposes Committee (see page 61)
 - 14.2. Others

15. Reports/updates by Members of Central Bedfordshire Council on matters of interest to the Town Council

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Paul Hodson', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Paul Hodson
Town Clerk and Chief Executive

DUNSTABLE TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE COUNCIL

HELD ON MONDAY 15 APRIL 2024 COMMENCING AT 7 pm.

Present: Councillors Liz Jones (Town Mayor), Louise O’Riordan (Deputy Mayor) Trevor Adams; Gregory Alderman; Richard Attwell; Wendy Bater; Robert Blennerhassett; Matthew Brennan; Phillip Crawley; Mark Davis; John Gurney; Peter Hollick; Sally Kimondo; Nicholas Kotarski and Matthew Neall with Becky Wisbey (Head of Community Services), John Crawley (Head of Grounds and Environmental Services), Paul Hodson (Town Clerk and Chief Executive), Georgia Pearson (Democratic Services Manager) and Lisa Scheder (Head of Corporate Services)

Apologies: Councillors Michelle Henderson and Kenson Gurney

Public Attendance: Nil

A minute’s silence was held to mark the death of former Town Mayor Brenda Boatwright.

91/24 MINUTES

The minutes of the meetings of the Council held on 5 February 2024, 4 March 2024 and 26 March 2024 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Town Mayor.

92/24 DECLARATIONS

Councillor Jones declared an interest in item 3 of the agenda due to being a member of the pickleball team who are listed in the Corporate Plan. Councillors Crawley and Gurney also declared an interest in the same item on the agenda as they both donated monies from their Central Bedfordshire Council ward councillor grant scheme to the pickleball team.

93/24 CHAIR’S REMARKS

The Town Mayor presented her final report to Members for her Mayoral Year. Councillor Jones thanked and expressed her gratitude to all officers at Dunstable Town Council especially the Senior Management Team and the Democratic Services Manager and to the Councillors for their ongoing support.

94/24 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

There were no questions put to the meeting.

95/24 COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE

RESOLVED: that the minutes of the meeting of the Community Services Committee held on 4 March 2024 be received.

96/24 GROUNDS AND ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES COMMITTEE

RESOLVED: that the minutes of the meeting of the Grounds and Environmental

Services Committee held on 11 March 2024 be received.

97/24 FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

Councillor Hollick asked if the mobile sign is something which can be looked at for use in the winter months. The Town Clerk and Chief Executive advised that the sign was put away during the extremely cold weather but is now in use again.

RESOLVED: that the minutes of the meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee held on 18 March 2024 be received.

98/24 ACTION TRACKER

The action tracker was noted.

99/24 RESERVES 2024/25

The Head of Corporate Services summarised the key areas of the report to members.

It was proposed, seconded and

RESOLVED: To release the ear-marked reserves listed for expenditure due to be incurred specifically for their purposes.

100/24 NEIGHBOURHOOD PLANNING

The key parts of the report were summarised by the Head of Community Services.

It was proposed, seconded and

RESOLVED: That members agree to spend the £7,000 in the allocated reserve for the scoping exercise to be carried out for the possibility of a Neighbourhood Plan for Dunstable.

101/24 UPDATED CALENDAR OF MEETINGS 2024/25

The Town Mayor summarised the report to members.

Councillor O’Riordan advised members that the Dunstable Joint Committee Venue is confirmed as being at the Hub in Dunstable, and if the calendar can be amended to reflect this.

ACTION: Democratic Services Manager

It was proposed, seconded and

RESOLVED: That members approve to adopt the updated calendar of meetings as presented in Appendix 1.

102/24 TO RECEIVE AND NOTE THE MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL TOWN MEETING HELD ON

25 MARCH 2024

RESOLVED: that the minutes of the meeting of the Annual Town Meeting held on 25 March 2024 be received.

103/24 TO RECEIVE THE MINUTES OF THE DUNSTABLE JOINT COMMITTEE HELD ON 14 DECEMBER 2023

RESOLVED: that the minutes of the meeting of the Dunstable Joint Committee held on 14 December 2023 be received.

104/24 CORPORATE PLAN 2024-27 – TO COMMENT ON THE DRAFT VERSION AND AGREE NEXT STEPS

The Town Clerk and Chief Executive Officer summarised the report to Members.

It was proposed, seconded and

RESOLVED: to amend Action 6 to say, *“to work towards making Dunstable Town Council a carbon neutral organisation by 2030, including by investigating the possibility of installing solar panels on suitable Council venues, beginning with the Cemetery.”*

105/24 HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY

The Head of Corporate Services summarised the report to members.

It was proposed, seconded and

RESOLVED: the approval of the Health and Safety Policy and permission be given to the Chairman and Town Clerk and Chief Executive to sign the Policy.

106/24 REPORTS/UPDATES BY MEMBERS OF CENTRAL BEDFORDSHIRE COUNCIL ON MATTERS OF INTEREST TO THE TOWN COUNCIL

No update.

107/24 TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE AND MAKE ANY RELEVANT DECISIONS REGARDING THE COUNCILS DEPOT

The Town Clerk and Chief Executive informed Members that the Council was continuing to use the depot at Creasey Park and the details of the lease with Central Bedfordshire Council for long term use were being clarified.

The meeting closed at 8:04 pm.

Event	Date	Comments
Dunstable Ladies Choir – Summer Concert	01.06.24	Another outstanding performance and a warm atmosphere of community. This choir practiced hard, and it shows.
Motor Rally Truck Convoy	08.06.24	An absolutely overwhelming experience. To be part of the Truck Convoy was a privilege, this group works extremely hard to raise money for good causes as well as entertaining the towns and villages in their path. Exhilarating experience. The Car Rally was bigger and better than any other year. An impressive array of vehicles, businesses and attractions. Very poignant to continue marking the D-Day celebrations.
Anglia in bloom 2024 film	08.06.24	Exciting to be taking part in the prestigious In Bloom which Dunstable enters with pride. We filmed on a very busy day showing Dunstable at its best.
HM Lord-Lieutenant - Annual Service of Thanksgiving for Voluntary Organisations	09.06.24	A beautiful service with heartfelt words and praise to recognise all that give service in a myriad of ways. It was a great privilege to be Mayor of the town hosting this event for the Lord Lieutenant of Bedfordshire, the Priory Church and Rev. Rachel Phillips did Dunstable proud.
Dunstable Town Council – Big Lunch	11.06.24	A wonderful event of friendships new and old, joy, laughter, singing and dancing. Everyone that attended enjoyed this

		event which was definitely one of the best I have attended. The human connection and love were everywhere
Ardley Hill - MH & Wellbeing Afternoon	12.06.24	Mental Health and Well-being is a topic that is growing in importance continually. This event showcased Ardley Hills' commitment to supporting pupils, family and staff with the array of agencies that are available to signpost to. The school has their own MH & Wellbeing Lead as well as partnerships with CBC, Chums, Carers in Bedfordshire, Snap and others to ensure that all needs are met.
Central Bedfordshire College - End of Year Exhibition 2024	12.06.24	It was an honour to be invited to this event. The students and staff should be so proud of the work produced over the last year. I was impressed and awed at the level of technicality and detail that goes into every project. These students are our stars for sure.
Scouts - AGM	12.06.24	Our Scouts and the leaders and volunteers that run these groups are crucial to our communities. The Teamwork and life skills they help our young to develop are an asset in every area of life. Thank you to all that volunteer to make a difference.
Anglia in bloom 2024 film	13.06.24	It was exciting to be taking part in the prestigious In Bloom which Dunstable

		enters with pride. We filmed on a very busy day showing Dunstable at its best.
Summer Fair at St Augustine's Church	15.06.24	I was delighted to attend this Summer Fair which raised funds for the Church whilst being a fun event for the local community too. It was lovely to have a cuppa and a chat with locals who are passionate about their local community and neighbours. I also bumped into the CBC Leader Cllr Adam Zerny which was a surprise.
Harpenden Town Council – Civic Service	16.06.24	Deputy Mayor Cllr Sally Kimondo and I attended this Civic Event centred on 'Wellbeing' which the Mayor of Harpenden kindly extended an invite to. We met many dignitaries including the Mayors of St Albans, Hertford, Luton and Houghton Regis as well as the High Sheriff of Hertfordshire. It was a sunny afternoon with a wonderful service of thanks to all that help others without gain.
Oaklands college – Fashion Show	19.06.24	Verbal Update
Scouts – AGM	19.06.24	Verbal Update
3rd Dunstable Scouts – AGM	20.06.24	Verbal Update
Army Benevolent Fund Bedfordshire Branch Main Event 2024	22.06.24	Verbal Update

DUNSTABLE TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE

HELD ON MONDAY 3 JUNE 2024 FROM 7:00 pm

Present: Councillors Louise O’Riordan (Town Mayor), Sally Kimondo (Deputy Mayor), Liz Jones (Chair), Matthew Neall (Vice-Chair), Trevor Adams, Robert Blennerhassett, Peter Hollick, Gregory Alderman, Mark Davis, John Gurney, and Nicholas Kotarski.

In Attendance: Gina Thanky (Events Officer), Gill Peck (Youth and Community Manager), Georgia Pearson (Democratic Services Manager) and Paul Hodson (Town Clerk and Chief Executive)

In Attendance: Annette Clynes (Town Centre Manager), Becky Wisbey (Head of Community Services), and Michelle Collings (HSHAZ Manager)
(Remotely)

Apologies: Councillor Wendy Bater

Public: Nil

108/24 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Jones declared an interest in Agenda item 11, Peter Newton Centre due to the centre being named after her late father.

109/24 MINUTES

The minutes of the meetings of the Community Services Committee held on 4 March 2024 and 7 May 2024 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

110/24 GROVE CORNER AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The Youth and Community Manager summarised the report provided to members.

It was proposed, seconded and

RESOLVED: to accept the UKSPF Pilot and Test funding, should the application submitted by the Head of Community Services and the Events Officer be successful, for a youth festival.

111/24 YOUTH WORKER APPRENTICE

The Youth and Community Manager summarised the report provided to members and highlighted the importance that a Youth Worker Apprentice would bring to the Council and wider community.

It was proposed, seconded and

RESOLVED: to approve the hourly rate of £12 for the new Apprentice Youth Worker and the additional budget required for the Apprentice

112/24 OLDER PEOPLES' SERVICES

Members noted the report provided which was summarised by the Youth and Community Manager.

113/24 TOWN CENTRE SERVICES

The Town Centre Manager highlighted the key points of the report to members.

Unfortunately, it was noted that the Ashton Square toilets were vandalised on the previous Thursday and as a result of this it may be necessary to close the men's toilets for one day to re-seal and mend the toilets.

The Town Centre Manager advised that on Thursday coming new bunting was to be put up in Middle Row and that the hats will be coming down and anyone who wishes to collect their hats to please do so.

114/24 EVENTS

The Events Officer summarised the key points in the report. The Events Officer updated members that for the Dunstable Classic Motor Rally on Saturday 8 June 2024, since writing the report, 250 cars have now entered.

16,000 events leaflets which include the Classic Motor Rally, Dunstable Live, Sunday Concerts, Party in the Park, Around the World and Priory Pictures, will be trialled as a leaflet drop to be delivered to households in Dunstable which will commence this week, with the remaining 2,000 being placed throughout the town centre.

115/24 PRIORY HOUSE

The Head of Community Services summarised the report provided to members and highlighted key information.

116/24 UKSPF COMMUNITY FUNDING SECOND ROUND

The HSHAZ Programme Manager summarised the key elements of the report to members.

Since the report was prepared the Cultural Services Manager and the HSHAZ Programme Manager had attended 2 meetings with contractors who provide the technology for the smartphone applications being used at outdoor sites, with avatar based storytelling and quizzes and have also been provided with a ballpark costing from a third contractor.

It was also mentioned that since the report was prepared, 2 contractors have advised that there would be some ongoing charges. One provider has advised that there would be no maintenance charge for the first year however for the ongoing years there would be a cost of £750 per annum. One of the other providers have also advised that there will be an annual charge for hosting and software updates for a cost of £2,000.

It was proposed, seconded and

RESOLVED: to apply for, accept and spend a UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) community grant should the application be successful.

It was proposed, seconded and

RESOLVED: to fund the necessary £8,000 match funding for a UKSPF community grant from existing budgets should the application be successful.

117/24 BEDFORDSHIRE FA, PETER NEWTON CENTRE

The Head of Community Services summarised key points of the report.

118/24 REPORTS FROM OUTSIDE BODIES

South Beds Dial-a-Ride Management Committee – Councillor Peter Hollick

Councillor Hollick advised members that some new local bus services have been taken on very recently.

Dunstable Town Band – Councillor Robert Blennerhassett

No Update.

Men in Sheds – Councillor Richard Attwell

Councillor Jones updated members on behalf of Councillor Attwell that he has not been successful in obtaining any update from the organisation. Councillor John Gurney advised as a trustee of the organisation that he has written to the chairman asking them to explain to Councillor Attwell what they would like him to do as their representative and to also provide him with a summary of their recent trustee meeting.

The meeting closed at 8:17 pm

DUNSTABLE TOWN COUNCIL

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE GROUNDS AND ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES
COMMITTEE**

**HELD AT THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, GROVE HOUSE, HIGH STREET NORTH,
DUNSTABLE**

ON MONDAY 10 JUNE 2024 FROM 7 pm

Present: Councillors Louise O’Riordan (Town Mayor), Sally Kimondo (Deputy Town Mayor), Richard Attwell (Chair), Phillip Crawley (Vice-Chair), Matthew Brennan, Matthew Neall, Kenson Gurney and Mark Davis

In Attendance: Councillors Liz Jones and Peter Hollick with Paul Hodson (Town Clerk and Chief Executive), John Crawley (Head of Grounds and Environmental Services), Dimitrisz Sopisz (Grounds Operations Manager), James Slack (Corporate Performance & Compliance Manager), Lauren Swinnerton (Splash Manager), Mary Dobbs (Cemetery Manager), Katherine Doyle (Parks and Green Space Development Officer) and Georgia Pearson (Democratic Services Manager)

Apologies: Councillor Trevor Adams

Public: 2

119/24 SPECIFIC DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Richard Attwell declared an interest in item 12 of the agenda as the Council’s representative on Men in Sheds.

120/24 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting of Grounds and Environmental Services Committee held on 11 March 2024 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

121/24 PLANS-SUB COMMITTEE

The Town Clerk and Chief Executive updated members regarding the Vernon Place planning application; this application will be reviewed at the Development Management Committee of Central Bedfordshire Council on 26 June 2024. Dunstable Town Council will be having an additional meeting of the Plans-Sub Committee to discuss this application.

It was proposed, seconded and

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the meetings of the Plans Sub-Committee held on 4 March 2024, 26 March 2024, 15 April 2024, 7 May 2024 and 28 May 2024 be approved.

122/24 ACTION TRACKER

Members received and noted the updates on actions from previous meetings.

123/24 BENNETTS SPLASH PARK

The Splash Manager summarised the report provided to members.

The Splash Manager has been in contact with Central Bedfordshire Council's parking enforcement team to ensure plans are in place to work together to respond to pressures regarding parking around the area through the season.

Councillor Hollick suggested selling items from the Priory House shop within the Splash Park as well as advertising each service within both locations. The Splash Manager will explore this.

ACTION: Splash Manager

Councillor Attwell mentioned the signage in the Splash Park's car park. The Head of Grounds and Environmental Services undertook to investigate the quality and visibility of this signage to ensure it is clear for users.

ACTION: Head of Grounds and Environmental Services

124/24 GROUNDS – INFORMATION REPORT

Members received the report circulated.

Cemetery

The Cemetery Manager summarised the report.

The Council were advertising for a full time Cemetery Assistant, with the closing date for applications to be on Monday 17 June 2024.

Allotments

The Cemetery Manager summarised the report.

A request was made to investigate the upkeep of grass at the entrance of Maidenbower Allotments due to overgrowth along the access.

ACTION: Grounds Operations Manager,

The tone of the first warning letter to tenant holders of allotments was raised. The Cemetery Manager offered to review this.

ACTION: Cemetery Manager

The Head of Grounds and Environmental Services mentioned to members that there will be a new tenancy agreement in January 2025 which will include a clearer explanation of the cultivation requirements.

Recreation Grounds – Play Areas

The Grounds Operations Manager summarised the report.

Sports Pitches and General Grounds Maintenance

The Grounds Operations Manager updated members on the key parts of the report. Members discussed the non-mown areas of the Council's recreation grounds and gardens. Members requested that Officers review the communications issued about the Council's approach to see whether any additional information could be provided.

ACTION: Grounds Operation Manager

UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF)

The Grounds Operations Manager summarised the report noting that all works were now completed.

Town Rangers

The Grounds Operations Manager summarised the report.

Green Space Projects

The Parks and Green Space Development Officer summarised the report.

125/24 BIODIVERSITY POLICY

The Head of Grounds and Environmental Services summarised the report to members and highlighted the key points.

Councillor Brennan asked whether the policy could include a preference for using native species, and whether the Council's Procurement Policy can be extended to mention that any procurement contracts must adhere to this biodiversity policy.

The Town Clerk and Chief Executive advised members that the proposed policy includes a reference to Neighbourhood Planning already.

It was proposed, seconded and

RESOLVED: to adopt the proposed Biodiversity Policy and the action plan provided with the amendments discussed.

126/24 SPENDING PROPOSALS

The Grounds Operations Manager summarised the report.

It was proposed, seconded and

RESOLVED: To recommend to the Finance and General Purposes Committee the release of £214,337 from the following reserves:

- Vehicle and Equipment Reserve
£ 92,337
- Developers Contributions Reserve
£ 11,723
- Open Spaces Improvement Plan Reserve
£ 10,277
- Grounds Depot Extension Reserve
£100,000

Total
£214,337.

127/24 REPORTS FROM OUTSIDE ORGANISATIONS

CBC Development Committee – Cllr Nicholas Kotarski

Nothing to report.

128/24 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

It was proposed, seconded and

RESOLVED: in terms of Schedule 12A, Local Government Act 1972, the following item will be likely to disclose exempt information relating to establishment and contractual matters and therefore, pursuant to the provisions of the Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act 1960 the public and press be excluded.

129/24 LEASE OF MEADWAY STORE

It was proposed, seconded and

RESOLVED: to approve the draft lease terms for the lease and to authorise the Town Clerk and Chief Executive to finalise the lease in accordance with the recommendations made.

130/24 PERGOLA AND KNEE RAIL PROJECT

Members raised concern over the possible use of the knee rail by skateboarders and requested that officers investigate the possibility of amending the design to take account of this risk.

ACTION: Head of Grounds and Environmental Services to consult with designer for a suitable solution.

It was proposed, seconded and

RESOLVED: to approve the pergola and knee rail designs and to recommend to the Finance and General Purposes Committee the release of monies from the Open Spaces Improvement Plan reserve for the pergola and knee rail.

The meeting closed at 9:39 pm

DUNSTABLE TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

HELD AT THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, GROVE HOUSE, HIGH STREET NORTH, DUNSTABLE

ON MONDAY 17 JUNE 2024 FROM 7 pm

Present: Councillors Louise O’Riordan (Town Mayor), Sally Kimondo (Deputy Town Mayor), Gregory Alderman (Chair), Nicholas Kotarski (Vice-Chair), Kenson Gurney, Liz Jones, Richard Attwell, Wendy Bater, Peter Hollick, John Gurney, Phillip Crawley, and Johnson Tamara.

In Attendance: Councillor Robert Blennerhassett with Paul Hodson (Town Clerk and Chief Executive), Georgia Pearson (Democratic Services Manager), Lisa Scheder (Head of Corporate Services) James Slack (Corporate Compliance and Performance Manager) and Rachel Connor (Marketing and Communications Officer).

Apologies: Councillors Matthew Brennan and Michelle Henderson

Public: Nil

131/24 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee held on 18 March 2024 were approved as a correct record and were signed by the Chair.

132/24 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no specific declarations of interest.

133/24 ACTIONS FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS

Members received the report provided.

134/24 MARKETING AND COMMUNICATIONS

Councillor Crawley entered the chamber at 7:06 pm.

The Communications and Marketing Officer summarised the report provided to members.

Councillor O’Riordan mentioned that Town, the Talk of the Town had not been issued to certain newer estates and asked officers to double check that this would be resolved in the future.

ACTION: Marketing and Communications Officer

Councillor Jones asked if it would be possible for the Councillor Open Public Meetings (Surgeries) to be advertised earlier in advance to encourage attendance.

135/24 FINANCE

The Head of Corporate Services summarised the reports to members.

The Head of Corporate Services updated Members that following a budgetary forecast carried out in light of the ongoing works at Priory House, it was now estimated that the services would achieve an underspend of approximately £100,000 in the current year, mainly due to the reduction in staffing during works. Although it is too early in this financial year to be certain, it was noted that this underspend may enable the Council to use towards maintaining the required minimum general reserve which had been depleted.

It was proposed, seconded and

RESOLVED:

- i. To note the revenue budgetary control report for the financial year ending 31 March 2024
- ii. To note detail of the Council's year end balances and earmarked reserves as of 31 March 2024
- iii. To note and accept the final Internal Audit Report for financial year 2023/24
- iv. To recommend to Full Council to appoint the Internal Auditor for 2024/25
- v. To approve the updated Treasury Management Policy
- vi. To note the current investments

136/24 COMPLIANCE AND FACILITIES

The Corporate Compliance and Performance Manager summarised the report to Members.

137/24 GROVE HOUSE BUILDING WORKS

The Corporate Compliance and Performance Manager summarised the report and pointed out the key parts.

It was proposed, seconded and

RESOLVED: The defer this agenda item into the confidential section of tonight's meeting in light of commercial considerations.

138/24 REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE ORGANISATIONS

- Citizen's Advice Management Committee – Councillor Richard Attwell

No update

- Dunstable International Town Twinning Association – Councillors Louise O'Riordan, Peter Hollick and Kenson Gurney

Councillor Hollick advised members from their last meeting that it would be good to have more Councillors involved and more members to be a part of the association.

- Hospice at Home Management Committee - Councillor Wendy Bater

Councillor Bater advised members she has not yet attended a meeting however the AGM is on 2 July 2024. Councillor Jones advised that the trustees are all getting together next week to have a discussion regarding finding more funding to continue to deliver the services.

- Ashton Almshouses Charity – Councillors Louise O'Riordan and Gregory Alderman

Councillor O'Riordan advised there was a meeting in May which approved the quote for some new furniture for residents to enjoy the garden more. They are currently at full capacity.

- Ashton Schools Foundation - Councillors Peter Hollick and Gregory Alderman

Works are continuing to be done by both Manshead and Ashton St Peters Primary schools..

- Chew's Foundation - Councillors Matthew Brennan and Kenson Gurney

No update

- Poor's Land Charity - Councillors Kenson Gurney and Liz Jones

Councillor Jones advised that the Maundy Thursday distribution had been carried out successfully.

- Lockington Charity and Marshe Charity - Councillors Kenson Gurney and Liz Jones

Councillor Kenson Gurney updated members that one of the properties is empty and requires various works.

- Dunstable and District Scout Council Executive - Councillor Nicholas Kotarski

Councillor Kotarski updated Members that the AGM is this Wednesday where a new leader will be elected.

139/24 EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

It was proposed, seconded and

RESOLVED: in terms of Schedule 12A, Local Government Act 1972, the following items will be likely to disclose exempt information relating to establishment and contractual matters and therefore, pursuant to the provisions of the Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act 1960 the public and press be excluded.

140/24 GROVE HOUSE BUILDING WORKS REPORT

Members further discussed the report and requested detailed information be circulated before a decision was made.

It was proposed, seconded and

RESOLVED: To defer this matter to Full Council following the circulation of additional information.

141/24 REFERRAL REPORTS – SPENDING RESERVE FROM GROUNDS AND ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES

The Town Clerk and Chief Executive summarised the reports to members.

It was proposed, seconded and

RESOLVED: To release £214,337 from the following reserves:

(a) Vehicle and Equipment Reserve	£ 92,337
(b) Developers Contributions Reserve	£ 11,723
(c) Open Spaces Improvement Plan Reserve	£ 10,277
(d) Grounds Depot Extension Reserve	£100,000
Total	£214,337.

It was proposed, seconded and

RESOLVED: To release the monies proposed from the Open Spaces Improvement Plan Reserve as per the report circulated.

142/24 STAFFING REPORT FOR DECISION

The Town Clerk and Chief Executive summarised the report.

It was proposed, seconded and

RESOLVED: to agree the report recommendation.

The meeting closed at 8:28 pm.

Full	257/23	04/12/2023	Town Centre Services	For Council to Discuss the Market Charter	Council	To be discussed at Full Council on 24 June 2024.	Ongoing
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DUNSTABLE TOWN COUNCIL

FULL COUNCIL

24 JUNE 2024

MARKETS

Purpose of Report	To propose Members form a working group to review the Council's use of the Market Charter
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1. RECOMMENDATION

- 1.1. That the Council forms a Markets Working Group
- 1.2. That Members agree a representative group of 6-8 members to form the Group
- 1.3. That the Group meets approximately twice, once to receive a briefing on the current use of the Charter by the Council and the projected impact of any changes, and then to review options and agree a recommended approach to provide to Full Council

2. BACKGROUND

243/23 TO DISCUSS A REPORT FROM THE TOWN CLERK AND CHIEF EXECUTIVE

- 2.1. At the meeting held on 4 December 2023 the Council received a report regarding the legal basis, recent history and current approach to the Council exercising its market rights under the Market Charter. The Town Clerk and Chief executive summarised the report provided to members and Members received a presentation from Graham Wilson (OBE, Legal and Policy advisor to the National Association of British Markets (NABMA) who explained NABMA's policy and background to exercising market rights.
- 2.2. Members agreed to defer the decision to a future meeting. **(Minute 243/23)**. This was decided partly to enable Members to hear more directly from the Town Centre Manager on the possible operational impacts of any changes to the use of the Charter.
- 2.3. Given the significance of the issue and the information involved, it would be hard to fully examine the options during a Council meeting. It is therefore proposed to establish a Working Group to review the Charter's use fully and then report back to a future meeting of Full Council.

3. AUTHOR

Paul Hodson – Town Clerk and Chief Executive
paul.hodson@dunstable.gov.uk

DUNSTABLE TOWN COUNCIL

FULL COUNCIL

24 JUNE 2024

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

Purpose of Report

To review actions to promote public engagement with the Council in the last 12 months and to agree any appropriate changes to the Council's approach.

1. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1.1. To continue to stream Council and Committee meetings live
- 1.2. To continue to provide social media messages alerting residents when items of particular interest are to be discussed in Council meetings.
- 1.3. To continue to hold monthly surgeries called open public meetings, to be circulated between the five wards.
- 1.4. To include a "public question time" section in the agenda for each committee meeting as well as Full Council.
- 1.5. To amend Standing Orders in regard to public questions at meetings to request rather than require members of the public to submit questions three days in advance, and to allow members of the public to address Full Council on any matter relevant to the Town Council's services and responsibilities.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1. The Finance and General Purposes Committee discussed public engagement with the Council in June 2023. The Committee decided:
 - i. To begin to stream Council and Committee meetings live when suitable technology is in place and for officers to investigate options for enabling the public to engage via chat before or during meetings.
 - ii. The Communications Officer to provide social media messages alerting residents when items of particular interest are to be discussed in Council meetings.
 - iii. All Members to be supported to hold and attend monthly surgeries called open public meetings, to be circulated between the five wards and for an online option to be offered. Branding, agenda and feedback will be consistent. Members in each ward to be invited to provide a time and location for their first surgery, and all members to be invited to each surgery. All Dunstable residents to be welcome to attend each event.

- iv. To include a “public question time” section in the agenda for each committee meeting.
- v. To recommend to Full Council that the Council reviews Standing Orders in regard to public questions at meetings to identify whether members of the public should be able to ask questions about items not on the agenda, and to review the requirement for members of the public to submit questions three days in advance.

3. PROGRESS

3.1. Streaming Meetings

- 3.2. The Council has streamed most meetings live in the last year. The following figures combine live attendees and those who watched the recording of a meeting:

YouTube Viewers September 2023 - 2024

Committee	Date	Views
Grounds and Environmental Services	05/06/2023	24
Finance and General Purposes	12/06/2023	47
Full Council	26/06/2023	28
Community Services	04/09/2023	7
Grounds and Environmental Services	11/09/2023	60
Extra Ordinary Full Council Meeting	13/09/2023	145
Vernon Place Informal Meeting	18/09/2023	31
Finance and General Purposes	18/09/2023	40
Full Council	02/10/2023	23
Community Services	30/10/2023	37
Grounds and Environmental Services	06/11/2023	29
Finance and General Purposes	13/11/2023	75
Full Council	04/12/2023	47
Community Services	08/01/2024	43
Grounds and Environmental Services	15/01/2024	54
Finance and General Purposes	22/01/2024	34
Full Council	05/02/2024	79
Community Services	04/03/2024	17
Grounds and Environmental Services	11/03/2024	30
Annual Town Meeting	25/03/2024	142
Full Council	15/04/2024	66
Annual Council Meeting	20/05/2024	66

1124

Summary of YouTube Viewers September 2023 - 2024

	Total	Average
Full Council	243	48.6
Annual Council Meeting	66	66
Annual Town Meeting	142	142
Extra Ordinary Full Council Meeting	145	145
Community Services	104	26
Grounds and Environmental Services	197	39.4
Finance and General Purposes	196	49
Vernon Place Informal Meeting	31	31
	1124	51.1

- 3.3. The technology used has been somewhat unreliable. The Council recently installed a new, simpler system which is so far performing well. It is proposed to continue with this approach.

3.4. Public Meetings / Surgeries

- 3.5. In the last 12 months the Council has held the following public meetings / surgeries:

Date	Ward	Venue	Cllrs in attendance	Total members of the public
23.09.23	West	Grove Corner	8	12
21.10.23	East	Priory Parish Hall	5	7
18.11.23	North	Beecroft Community Centre	5	6
27.01.24	South	Downside Community Centre	4	7
17.02.24	Central	Bennett's Splash Cafe	3	3
23.03.24	West	Bennett's Splash Cafe	5	9
24.04.24	East	Newland Church	5	6
18.05.24	North	Beecroft Community Centre	2	0

- 3.6. The Council has not explored an online version of these meetings.
- 3.7. Members are invited to comment on the value of the meetings held, and review whether to continue, and if so what changes if any to make to the approach used.

3.8. Promoting Agenda Items

- 3.9. Officers and Members have at times used social media to draw attention to agenda items of particular interest. It is proposed to continue with this approach.

3.10. Public Question Time

- 3.11. Public question time has not been added to the agendas of committees other than Full Council and Plans Sub. This will be rectified for the following round. Members are invited to comment on the value of the current public question time sessions, and whether the Council should seek to promote this opportunity for the public to engage with the Council.

3.12. Standing Order 3 includes the following sections:

- e Members of the public may make representations, answer questions and give evidence at a meeting which they are entitled to attend in respect of the business on the agenda.*
- f Questions and representations from the public at all meetings of the Council or its Committees should be received by the Town Clerk and Chief Executive in writing a minimum of three working days prior to the date of the meeting.*
- g The period of time designated for public participation at a meeting in accordance with standing order 3(e) shall not exceed fifteen minutes unless directed by the Chair of the meeting.*
- h Subject to standing order 3(f), a member of the public shall not speak for more than five minutes.*
- i In accordance with standing order 3(e), a question shall not require a response at the meeting nor start a debate on the question. The Chair of the meeting may direct that a written or oral response be given.*

While members of the public have a legal right to attend meetings, there is no legal obligation to enable members of the public to speak. However, it is common practice for councils to do so. The wording used is taken from the National Association of Local Council's model Standing Orders.

Unlike Councillors, members of the public may already attend and ask questions virtually.

It is proposed to amend Standings Orders to allow members of the public to be requested rather than required to submit questions three days in advance. It is also proposed to amend Standing Orders to allow members of the public to address Full Council on any matter relevant to the Town Council's services and responsibilities.

4. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1. Enabling members of the public to watch and participate in meetings virtually enables those who cannot attend meetings for caring or access reasons to still engage with the Council.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1. The measures discussed are covered by the Council's current budgets.

6. AUTHOR

Paul Hodson – Town Clerk and Chief Executive
paul.hodson@dunstable.gov.uk

Youtube Viewers September 2023 - 2024

Committee	Date	Views
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Finance and General Purposes	196	49
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1124

51.1

DUNSTABLE TOWN COUNCIL

FULL COUNCIL

24 JUNE 2024

ANNUAL GOVERNANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY RETURN 2023/24

Purpose of Report	To:
	i. Present to Members the final Internal Audit Report for financial year 2023/24
	ii. To consider and approve a recommendation made by the Finance and General Purposes Committee on 17 June 2024 on the appointment of the Internal auditor
	iii. To approve the Annual Governance Statement and Accounting Statements
	iv. To authorise the Chair and Clerk to sign the Annual Governance Statement
	v. To authorise the Chair to sign the Accounting Statements
	vi. To note the schedule of Loans and Long-Term Liability

1. ACTIONS RECOMMENDED

- 1.1. To receive and note the Internal Audit Report (Final) 2023/24 at Appendix 1, also presented to the Finance and General Purposes Committee on 17 June 2024.
- 1.2. To approve a recommendation made by the Finance and General Purposes Committee on 17 June 2024 to appoint the internal auditor for financial year 2024/25.
- 1.3. To approve the Annual Governance Statement and the Accounting Statements as part of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return for the year ended 31 March 2024, for submission to the auditor, in compliance with the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 and the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 (S1 2015/234).
- 1.4. To authorise the Chair and Clerk to sign the Annual Governance Statement
- 1.5. To authorise the Chair to sign the Accounting Statements
- 1.6. To note the Council's Loans and Long-Term Liabilities as at 31 March 2024 at Appendix 4.

2. INTERNAL AUDIT

- 2.1. The final Internal Audit for financial year 2023/24 took place on 30 May 2024 and Members will be pleased to note that the report concludes that the Council maintained an adequate and effective system of internal control throughout the

year. The final Internal Audit Report, appended to this report (Appendix 1) was also presented to the Finance and General Purposes Committee on 17 June 2024.

- 2.2. At the meeting of Finance and General Purposes Committee on 17 June 2024, Members approved the recommendation to Council to approve the appointment of the Council's existing Internal Auditors, Auditing Solutions Ltd, for a further one year – for financial year 2024/25, to fulfil the strategic plan received in 2022/23 (found at Appendix 2) for a 3-year period.

3. ACCOUNTS AND AUDIT REGULATIONS 2015

- 3.1. The Regulations mean that Dunstable Town Council qualifies as a “smaller relevant body” being that its gross income or gross expenditure was not more than £6.5 million and can therefore prepare an income and expenditure account and a statement of balances in accordance with, and in the form specified in any Annual Return required by proper practices in relation to accounts, rather than a full set of accounts, prepared under FRSSE (Financial Reporting Standards for Smaller Enterprises).
- 3.2. The Regulations state that “A smaller relevant body must no later than 30th June – to consider the accounting statements by the members meeting as a whole.”

4. ANNUAL GOVERNANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY RETURN FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

- 4.1. The Annual Return comprises:
 - Annual Internal Audit Report 2023/24
 - Annual Governance Statement 2023/24 (Section 1)
 - Accounting Statements 2023/24 (Section 2)
 - External Auditor Report and Certificate (Section 3)
- 4.2. The Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) is enclosed at Appendix 3 and will be submitted to the External Auditor with the requisite supporting information once approved by the Council.

Annual Internal Audit Report

- 4.3. The Council should receive and note the annual internal audit report prior to approving the annual governance statement and before approving the accounts.
- 4.4. The Council's Internal Auditor has duly completed the relevant part of the Annual Return, assigning positive assurances in all areas. Their full report is included at Appendix 1.

Annual Governance Statement

- 4.5. The Council is required to consider and approve the Annual Governance Statement at Section 1 of the Annual Return, in which members acknowledge their responsibility for ensuring that there is a sound system of internal control.

- 4.6. The statement can be evidenced by the Internal Audit Reports provided throughout the year and the final Internal Audit Report, from which it will be noted that there are no issues arising which require Members' attention.
- 4.7. Evidence includes the quarterly Financial Monitoring reports submitted to Finance and General Purposes Committee.
- 4.8. The Town Clerk and Chief Executive produces a Corporate Risk Log each year which is reviewed by the Council. The Risk Log attempts to identify the main strategic risks facing the Council and what interventions are currently in place in order to contain and minimise the risks.
- 4.9. The Council has adopted a Corporate Plan detailing the Council's objectives up until 2027.
- 4.10. If approved, the Annual Governance Statement will be signed by the Chair and Town Clerk and Chief Executive.

External Auditor Report and Certificate

- 4.11. Section 3 of the Annual Return is for completion by the External Auditor on completion of the audit.

5. EXERCISE OF PUBLIC RIGHTS

- 5.1. The Council is required to provide electors with the opportunity to inspect the accounts and other documents for a period of 30 working days which must include the first 10 working days of July.
- 5.2. The exercise of public rights commences on 27 June 2024 and will end on 7 August 2024.
- 5.3. All statements will be published from 27 June 2024 together with a summary of Electors' Rights.
- 5.4. All financial documents will be available for inspection on reasonable notice from that date.

6. SUBMISSION OF ANNUAL RETURN

- 6.1. The Annual Return is to be submitted to the External Auditor by 30 June 2024.
- 6.2. The Council's appointed auditors are Mazars of Durham.

7. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1. These are inherent within the content of this report.

8. APPENDICES

- Appendix 1 - Final Internal Audit Report 2023/24
- Appendix 2 - Internal Audit 3-year Strategic Plan 2022/23 to 2024/25

- Appendix 3 - Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR)
- Appendix 4 - Schedule of Loans and Long-Term Liability at 31 March 2024

9. AUTHORS

Lisa Scheder – Head of Corporate Services (and Responsible Financial Officer)
lisa.scheder@dunstable.gov.uk

Paul Hodson – Town Clerk and Chief Executive
paul.hodson@dunstable.gov.uk



Dunstable Town Council

Internal Audit 2023-24 (Final Update Report)

DRAFT

Stephen Christopher

***For and on behalf of
Auditing Solutions Ltd***

Background

All town and parish councils are required by statute to make arrangements for an independent internal audit examination of their accounting records and system of internal control, and for the conclusions to be reported each year in the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR). Auditing Solutions Ltd were appointed to undertake this function on behalf of Dunstable Town Council for the 2023-24 financial year.

This report sets out the results of our final audit visit in relation to 2023-24, which took place on 30th May 2024. It updates the reports issued following our interim audits, in November 2023 and March 2024. Once again, we wish to thank Council staff for providing the documentation and explanations required to enable us to complete our audit work.

Internal Audit Approach

In carrying out the audit, we have had regard to the materiality of transactions and their susceptibility to potential mis-recording or mis-representation in the year-end Statement of Accounts. We employ a mix of 100% substantive testing or selective sampling techniques, where considered applicable.

Our audit programme is designed to afford assurance that the Council's financial systems and internal control arrangements are robust and operate in a manner which ensures effective probity of transactions and affords a reasonable probability of identifying material errors in, or possible abuse of, the Council's own and the national statutory regulatory framework. The programme is also designed to facilitate our completion of the 'Annual Internal Audit Report' in the AGAR, which requires independent assurance over a number of internal control objectives.

Overall Conclusion

On the basis of the programme of audit work that we have undertaken, we have concluded that the Council maintained an adequate and effective system of internal control throughout the year. The records held in support of the accounting transactions continue to be of a high standard and provide an effective audit trail, with clear cross-referencing of all relevant documentation. We have completed and signed the 'Annual Internal Audit Report' on Page 3 of the 2023-24 AGAR, having concluded that the internal control objectives as set out in that report were being achieved throughout the financial year to a standard adequate to meet the needs of the Council.

In the sections below, we have explained the objectives of each area of our audit, summarising the work we have undertaken and our findings. We are pleased to report that, once again, there are no matters arising that require a formal recommendation for further action. We ask that Members consider the content of this report.

This report has been prepared for the sole use of Dunstable Town Council. To the fullest extent permitted by law, no responsibility or liability is accepted by Auditing Solutions Ltd to any third party who purports to use or rely, for any reason whatsoever, on this report, its contents or conclusions.

Detailed Report

Accounting records and Banking arrangements

Our objective is to confirm that the accounting records are accurate and up to date, with no anomalous entries in the cashbooks or financial ledgers, and that appropriate banking arrangements are in place.

The Council maintains its accounting records using the RBS Rialtas ‘Omega’ software, which is generally acknowledged as a market leader at this tier of local government.

Day-to-day business banking services continue to be provided by NatWest Bank. Two accounts are held, a Current Account and an instant access Business Reserve Account, with an automatic daily transfer between the accounts to retain a balance of £10,000 in the Current Account. In addition to the Business Reserve Account, other funds that are not required for immediate use are held in two Public Sector Deposit Fund accounts with CCLA Investment Management Ltd.

In our audit work for the year, we have:

- Checked and agreed the opening trial balance on Omega for 2023-24 to the closing balances on the 2022-23 AGAR and the detailed accounts;
- Verified that the financial ledgers remained “in balance” throughout the year;
- Confirmed that the accounting code structure remains appropriate for the Council’s budget reporting and control requirements;
- Checked and agreed transactions in the Omega cashbooks for the Current and Business Reserve accounts to the relevant NatWest bank statements for a sample of four months (May and October 2023, plus January and March 2024);
- Checked the bank reconciliations for all active bank account reconciliations, including the CCLA deposits, as at 31st October 2023, 31st January 2024 and 31st March 2024, confirming that there are no long-standing uncleared cheques or other anomalous entries;
- Confirmed that the bank reconciliations continue to be subject to regular independent review by councillors, as part of the quarterly ‘financial Councillor audit’ and that the latest investment position is reported at each Finance & General Purposes Committee (F&GP) committee, as part of the RFO’s financial report;
- Noted that the External Auditors issued their ‘report and certificate’ on the Council’s 2022-23 AGAR on 26th September 2023 and that there were no significant matters arising;
- Confirmed that the overall cash balance has been reported correctly in the draft AGAR (Section 2, Line 8), and
- Confirmed that the Council continues to ensure that its IT systems are regularly backed-up offsite.

Conclusion

There are no matters arising that require a formal comment or recommendation.

Corporate Governance

Our objective is to confirm that the Council has robust corporate governance arrangements in place and that, as far as we may reasonably be expected to ascertain (as we do not attend Council or Committee meetings), all meetings are conducted in accordance with the adopted Standing Orders and no actions of a potentially unlawful nature have been, or are being, considered for implementation.

During the course of our audit work, we confirmed the following:

- Our review of the minutes of the meetings of the Full Council and its standing committees has not identified any issues that we consider might have an adverse effect, through litigation or other causes, on the Council's future financial stability;
- The Council is keeping its governance arrangements under regular review. Updated Financial Regulations were adopted by the F&GP Committee on 20th March 2023, with revised "Constitution, Standing Orders and delegation to committees and officers" approved by the Council on 26th June 2023. Both documents were updated further by the F&GP Committee on 18th March 2024, to reflect changes made to the Council's Procurement Policy;
- A range of other policies and procedures remain in place and are reviewed on a regular basis, and
- The Council continues to exercise the General Power of Competence. This was re-adopted at the first Annual meeting of the new Council on 15th May 2023 and will apply for the 4-year term to May 2027.

Conclusion

There are no matters arising that require a formal comment or recommendation.

Expenditure

Our objective is to confirm that:

- Council resources are released in accordance with approved procedures and budgets;
- Payments are supported by appropriate documentation, either in the form of an original trade invoice or other appropriate form of document confirming the payment as due and/or an acknowledgement of receipt, where no other form of invoice is available;
- Official orders have been raised for purchases, where appropriate;
- Any discounts due on goods and services supplied are identified and appropriate action taken to secure the discount;
- The correct expense codes have been applied to invoices when processed; and
- VAT has been appropriately identified and coded to the control account for periodic recovery.

We have completed our review of the procedures in place in this area. To test compliance with the above criteria, we reviewed a sample of non-pay related payments from across the financial year. Our test sample included all payments in excess of £7,500, together with a more random selection of every 80th payment as recorded in the Omega cashbook. The

overall value of expenditure in our sample totalled £1,958,295, equating to approximately 54% of the gross non-pay related expenditure in 2023-24. There were no matters arising.

The Council makes use of a NatWest Commercial Credit Card, with a monthly limit of £6,000, which is used mainly for items such as internet purchases and subscriptions. There are currently three users, each with a monthly expenditure limit of £2,000. The Card is settled monthly by direct debit. We reviewed the statements for two sample months (November and December 2023), confirming that all purchases were adequately supported by receipts and were appropriate to the Council's business, and that, where appropriate, VAT was accounted for correctly.

A Fuel Card is also in use, for the purchase of fuel for the Council's vehicle fleet. We confirmed that appropriate receipts had been obtained to support the payments made in one sample month (December 2023). We noted that the use of the Fuel Card is now significantly less than in previous years, due to restrictions on the entitlement to use 'red diesel'.

VAT Returns continue to be submitted quarterly in electronic format, as required by extant legislation, with the detail being reconciled to the Omega financial ledger. We confirmed that the VAT Returns for all four quarters of 2023-24 were submitted on a timely basis.

During our first interim audit, we reviewed the approach followed for the tender of work in relation to the High Street Heritage Action Zone (HSHAZ) project. We confirmed that a sound approach was taken to the management of the tender process, including the involvement of specialist external architects in the evaluation of tenders received and that, in accordance with the national regulatory requirements, the tender was published on the Government's Contracts Finder website.

The one matter we noted from our review was that the minutes of the Community Services Committee of 30th October 2023, at which the outcome of the tender process was reported, did not formally confirm Member approval the award of the contract, which is required by the Council's standing orders. We confirmed that committee or Full Council approval (as appropriate) would be formally minuted in respect of all future tender decisions.

At our final audit visit, we reviewed the approach taken for one further tender – IT Support, Infrastructure, Telephony and Connectivity. We confirmed that, once again, the national regulatory requirements had been followed and that, following a detailed evaluation process and presentations by the two highest scoring bidders, the award of the contract was formally approved and minuted at the F&GP Committee meeting on 18th March 2024.

Conclusion

There are no matters arising that require a formal comment or recommendation.

Assessment and Management of Risk

Our objective is to confirm that the Council has put in place appropriate arrangements to identify all potential areas of significant risk of both a financial and health and safety nature, whilst also ensuring that appropriate arrangements exist to monitor and manage those risks in order to minimise the opportunity for their coming to fruition.

There is a requirement for the Council to formally review and approve its risk management arrangements during each financial year. We confirmed that the overall approach to risk management has been updated significantly during 2023-24. At the F&GP meeting on 22nd January 2024, a new Risk Management Policy was formally adopted, together with revisions to the detailed Corporate & Financial Risk Assessment and a Business Continuity Plan.

The Council's primary insurance cover continued to be provided by Zurich Municipal during 2023-24 and we reviewed the schedule for the policy in force up to the year-end to confirm that an appropriate level of cover remained in place. The policy includes Employer's Liability and Public Liability of £10 million, and Fidelity Guarantee cover of £2.0 million, all of which appear to be adequate to meet the current needs of the Council.

As part of its wider health and safety arrangements, a regular programme of reviews of the Council's playgrounds and play equipment is undertaken. This includes daily and weekly inspections by the Council's own staff, with quarterly external inspections by the Play Inspection Company to confirm compliance with national regulatory standards. At our first interim audit, we reviewed the summary of inspection findings provided by the Grounds Operations Manager, which summarised the results of the inspections undertaken in September 2023. We confirmed that no significant risks had been identified and that, where remedial works were required, these were being addressed by the Grounds Maintenance team. At our final audit, we noted that a further round of external inspections had been completed in February 2024 and confirmed that, once again, where necessary, remedial work had been undertaken by the Grounds Maintenance team.

Conclusion

There are no matters arising that require a formal comment or recommendation.

Budget Setting, Budgetary Control and Reserves

Our objective is to confirm that the Council has robust procedures in place for identifying and approving its future budgetary requirements and the level of Precept to be drawn down from Central Bedfordshire Council, and that an effective reporting and monitoring process is in place. We also consider whether the Council retains appropriate funds in earmarked and general reserves to finance its ongoing spending plans, whilst retaining appropriate sums to cover any unplanned expenditure that might arise.

At our first interim audit we considered the information provided to the Council on progress against the 2023-24 budget. We confirmed that the F&GP Committee continued to receive financial monitoring reports at each meeting, with over/under-spends and the level of earmarked reserves the subject of regular review. At our subsequent audit visits, we confirmed that this approach continued throughout the financial year.

In the course of our second interim audit, we reviewed the approach taken by the Council to setting its budget and Precept for 2024-25. As in previous years, the budget process involved detailed consideration by the various committees, in particular F&GP, before the Precept was formally approved by the Full Council at its meeting on 6th February 2024. The Precept has been set at £2,933,469 (£2,791,245 for 2023-24), which represents a £219.93 Council Tax charge per annum for a Band D property, an increase of 4.98% from the previous year.

We are satisfied that Members were provided with an appropriate level of information on which to base the budget decision, with comprehensive supporting documentation within the budget pack produced by the Head of Corporate Services (RFO) and the Town Clerk & Chief Executive. This included detailed consideration of future reserve requirements and the level of fees and charges that will apply in 2024-25.

At 31st March 2024, the Council's overall reserves stood at £2,168,306 (compared to £2,860,550 as at the previous year-end). Of the total reserves, Earmarked Reserves amounted to £1,410,733, compared to £2,305,620. The main reason for the decrease has been expenditure in the year on major capital projects, the most significant being £447,178 on the High Street Heritage Action Zone project and £98,127 on the Luton Road Multi-use Games Area. Other significant changes in the year included the transfer to the General Reserve of £144,000 that had been held in a 'Capital Finance Account' to the General Reserve, of which just over £73,000 was subsequently re-allocated to other Earmarked Reserves.

The Council's remaining funds are held in the General Reserve. At 31st March 2024, the balance of this reserve stood at £757,573, compared to £553,930 at the previous year end. As noted in previous years, the Council's aim, as set out in the Treasury Management Policy, has been to maintain a minimum General Reserve balance equivalent to 25% of the salary budget. The year-end balance is significantly above this target, but we note that, as set out in the budget report, it is the Council's intention to use the surplus to support the 2024-25 revenue budget.

Conclusion

There are no matters arising that require a formal comment or recommendation.

Income

The Council receives income from a wide variety of sources including the Allotments, Cemetery, Creasey Park, Specialist Markets, Priory House, plus bank and deposit interest.

Our objective is to confirm that robust procedures are in place to ensure that all income due to the Council is identified and invoiced (where appropriate), with recovery effected within a reasonable time span, and also that it is banked promptly, in accordance with the Financial Regulations. In the course of our audits, we undertook the following work in relation to income areas:

Fees and charges: We confirmed that the fees and charges for 2023-24 were approved by the Council as part of the annual budget setting process, following detailed consideration by the F&GP Committee. As noted in the previous section, a similar approach has been taken in determining the fees and charges for 2024-25.

Banking of income: As noted earlier in this report, we have checked and agreed three sample months' receipts transactions from the cashbooks to the relevant bank statements, confirming the timeliness and accuracy of transactions.

Creasey Park Community Football Centre – facilities hire: We reviewed the booking records for a sample week in September 2023, confirming that all of the hires in that week were

either covered by a long-term hire agreement or subsequent bookings and that, in the case of one-off function bookings, these had been paid for in advance. There were no issues arising.

Cemetery-related fees and charges: We have reviewed the interment applications and other cemetery-related activities for a sample month (November 2023). We confirmed that, in all cases, the correct amounts had been charged and that, with minor exceptions, the income due had been received and banked on a timely basis.

Allotment income: We reviewed the records for the current allotment year (which commenced on 1st January 2024), confirming that requests for rental payment were sent to all allotment holders on a timely basis. At the time of our second interim visit, only a very few payments remained outstanding and reminder letters have been sent. At the time of our second interim, revised allotment agreements were being sent out to allotment holders, to apply from 1st April 2024 onwards. At our final audit visit, we confirmed that the introduction of the new agreements has been delayed, on the advice of the National Allotment Society.

Specialist markets: We reviewed the spreadsheet records maintained in relation to the Christmas “Twilight” market held on 8th December 2023 to supporting information, to confirm that the correct amounts had been charged to stallholders, that payments were received on a timely basis, and that the details of insurance cover required by the Council had been provided. There were no matters arising.

Outstanding debts: We reviewed the Sales Ledger as at 31st March 2024. We were pleased to note that the overall value of long-standing debts remains relatively low and we confirmed that effective control arrangements remain in place, with appropriate action being taken in relation to outstanding payments.

Historically, the most significant outstanding debts, by value, have related to the football clubs using the Creasey Centre Community Football Centre, who are billed on a seasonal basis (running to the end of May each year). At our second interim audit, the Council had just been informed of the loss of the management contract for Creasey Park with effect from 31st March 2024 and an exercise was being undertaken to ensure that appropriate arrangements were in place to recover all outstanding hire fees due for the period up to the end of the financial year. At our final audit, we confirmed that all of the required billing has been undertaken, but that discussions regarding outstanding payments were still being held with the clubs involved and in relation to other potential commitments relating to the Creasey Park contract. *(Any suggestions to improve wording and do you need to flag up to members in here about unforeseen potential costs to the Council of the late termination of the contract).*

Conclusion

There are no matters arising that require a formal comment or recommendation.

Petty Cash

As part of the internal audit certification process on the Council’s AGAR, we are required to consider and comment upon the controls in place over the operation of petty cash accounts at the Council. Our objective in this area is, therefore, to ensure that appropriate controls are in place; that expenditure incurred is adequately supported by trade invoices or till receipts; that

the expenditure is appropriate for the Council's requirements; that VAT has been separately identified for periodic recovery and that cheque reimbursements from the main cashbooks are properly recorded.

At our first interim audit visit, we reviewed the procedures in place for the main petty cash account holding at Grove House, which is effectively operated on an Imprest basis with a float of £150. We checked and agreed the cash balance held at the date of the first interim audit to the petty cash ledger, and confirmed that there was appropriate supporting information for petty cash payments made since the date of the last reconciliation. We also checked and agreed the balance of the petty cash and the bar till floats held at Creasey Park.

At our second interim, we confirmed that regular reviews of other petty cash floats are being undertaken by the Finance team. We reviewed the Priory House petty cash schedule that had been submitted for the period to 27th February 2024 and confirmed that all payments were supported by appropriate receipts.

At our final audit, we confirmed that the year-end petty cash balances had been subject to independent review and that the correct overall petty cash balance had been included in the 'cash and bank' figure in Section 2, Line 8 of the AGAR.

Conclusion

There are no matters arising that require a formal comment or recommendation.

Staff Salaries

In examining the Council's payroll function, our objective is to confirm that extant employment legislation is being adhered to, that the requirements of HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) legislation are satisfied regarding the deduction and payment over of income tax and NI contributions and that the requirements of the local government pension scheme are met.

To meet this objective, we undertook the following:

- We confirmed that the Council applied the approved employee pay rates for the financial year – noting that the annual pay settlement to apply from 1st April 2023 was agreed at the start of November and that back-pay was included in that month's payroll;
- From review of the contracts of employment for a sample of full and part-time staff whose employment commenced during 2023-24, we confirmed that appropriate signed contracts of employment are held;
- We examined the payroll procedures in place and the computations undertaken for the payments to staff in 2023-24 by reference to the November 2023 payroll documentation produced by the Council's external payroll bureau (Payroll Options Ltd, Milton Keynes). Our work involved:
 - Checking and agreeing the detail of the salary payments (including the back-pay for the annual pay settlement) made to a sample of staff in November 2023, to the latest schedule of salaries and pay scales;

- Confirming that tax and NI deductions have been made applying the appropriate tax code and NI Table, also ensuring that appropriate amounts are paid to HMRC;
- Confirming that the appropriate employee and employer contributions to the pension scheme have been applied in accordance with the current arrangements and confirmed that these have been paid over to the Pension Fund Administrators on a timely basis, and
- Confirming that the monthly net salary payments to staff agreed to the underlying records.

Conclusion

There are no matters arising that require a formal comment or recommendation.

Asset Register

During the 2023-24 financial year, the Council purchased the RBS ‘Asset Inventory’ software to replace its existing asset records. An exercise was undertaken to populate the inventory from existing asset records so that it could be used to complete the asset and investment figure in the 2023-24 AGAR.

At our final audit, we confirmed that the details of assets held at the start of the year had been set up accurately in the Asset Register and that details of additions in the year (there were no disposals) had been recorded. We also confirmed that the updated total cost of assets held as at 31st March 2024, £8,207,590, has been reported correctly in the draft AGAR (Section 2, Line 9).

Conclusion

There are no matters arising that require a formal comment or recommendation.

Investments and Loans

Our objective is to confirm that an appropriate investment/treasury management policy is in place, that any funds not required for immediate use, whether temporarily or on a longer-term basis are invested in line with that strategy and that interest earned is brought to account correctly and appropriately in the accounting records. We also confirm that any loan repayments due to or payable by the Council are transacted in accordance with the relevant loan agreements.

During the course of our audit work, we confirmed the following:

- As required by the ‘Statutory Guidance on Local Government Investments’, a Treasury Management Policy is in place and this was last updated and approved at the F&GP meeting on 18th September 2023;
- At present, the Council does not hold any long-term investments. As noted earlier in the report, surplus funds are held in either the NatWest (instant access) Business Reserve Account or the two CCLA Public Sector Deposit Fund accounts, and
- The Public Works Loan Board (PWLB) loan instalment repayments made in the year agree to the third party “demand” notices from the UK Debt Management Office;

- The repayments of principal and interest (the latter reported on an accrual basis) and the overall loan balances outstanding at the year-end have been reported correctly in the draft AGAR (Section 2, Lines 5 and 10, respectively)..

Conclusion

There are no matters arising that require a formal comment or recommendation.

Statement of Accounts and AGAR

We have reviewed the detailed financial statements produced by DCK Accounting Solutions Ltd from the RBS Omega software and also the draft of the statutory 'Accounting Statements 2023-24' (Section 2 of the AGAR) that the accountants have produced, and which the Council is required to formally approve. We have confirmed that the AGAR entries reconcile to the detailed financial statements and to other related documentation.

Conclusions

There are no matters arising from this area of our review that require any formal comment or recommendation. We look forward to receiving a copy of the finalised AGAR (Sections 1 and 2), once the document has been approved by the Council.

On the basis of the work undertaken during the course of our review for the year, we have completed and signed the 'Annual Internal Audit Report' on page 3 of the AGAR, assigning positive assurances in all areas of internal control.

Internal Audit outline programme (detail in hours)

	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25
Corporate Governance & Risk			
General Management Arrangements (incl. Review of Standing Orders, Financial Regulations, Policies & Procedures & Council minutes)	3	3	3
Assessment and Management of Risk, including insurance	2	2	2
Asset Management	1	1	1
	6	6	6
Expenditure			
Tendering/contracting and purchasing procedures	2	2	1
Approval and release of payments	4	4	4
Salaries & wages	4	3.5	4
Petty cash	1	0.5	1
	11	10	10
Income			
Cash receipting & banking	2	3	2
Burial fee & associated income	2	-	2
Creasey Park – Sports hire. Bar and catering	4	3	3
Priory House – Shop sales and Tea Room catering	2	-	3
Tenancies: Priory House & Grove House	-	1	-
Allotments	-	2	-
Other miscellaneous income	1	3	2
	11	12	12
Accounting Arrangements			
Ledger & Cash books (incl. Bank reconciliations)	3	3	3
Budgetary Control & Reserves (incl. External funding on holding accounts)	2	2	2
Year-end Accounts / Annual Return	2	2	2
	7	7	7
Total hours	35	35	35
Total days	5	5	5

Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2023/24 Form 3

To be completed by Local Councils, Internal Drainage Boards and other Smaller Authorities*:

- where the higher of gross income or gross expenditure exceeded £25,000 but did not exceed £6.5 million; or
- where the higher of gross income or gross expenditure was £25,000 or less but that:
 - are unable to certify themselves as exempt (fee payable); or
 - have requested a limited assurance review (fee payable)

Guidance notes on completing Form 3 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2023/24

1. Every smaller authority in England that either received gross income or incurred gross expenditure exceeding £25,000 **must** complete Form 3 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return at the end of each financial year in accordance with *Proper Practices*.
2. **The Annual Governance and Accountability Return is made up of three parts, pages 3 to 6:**
 - The **Annual Internal Audit Report** must be completed by the authority's internal auditor.
 - **Sections 1 and 2** must be completed and approved by the authority.
 - **Section 3** is completed by the external auditor and will be returned to the authority.
3. The authority **must** approve Section 1, Annual Governance Statement, before approving Section 2, Accounting Statements, and both **must** be approved and published on the authority website/webpage **before 1 July 2024**.
4. An authority with either gross income or gross expenditure exceeding £25,000 or an authority with neither income nor expenditure exceeding £25,000, but which is unable to certify itself as exempt, or is requesting a limited assurance review, **must** return to the external auditor by email or post (not both) **no later than 30 June 2024**. Reminder letters will incur a charge of £40 +VAT:
 - the Annual Governance and Accountability Return Sections 1 and 2, together with
 - a bank reconciliation as at 31 March 2024
 - an explanation of any significant year on year variances in the accounting statements
 - notification of the commencement date of the period for the exercise of public rights
 - Annual Internal Audit Report 2023/24

Unless requested, do not send any additional documents to your external auditor. Your external auditor will ask for any additional documents needed.

Once the external auditor has completed the limited assurance review and is able to give an opinion, the Annual Governance and Accountability **Section 1, Section 2 and Section 3 – External Auditor Report and Certificate** will be returned to the authority by email or post.

Publication Requirements

Under the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015, authorities must publish the following information on the authority website/webpage:

Before 1 July 2024 authorities **must** publish:

- Notice of the period for the exercise of public rights and a declaration that the accounting statements are as yet unaudited;
- **Section 1 - Annual Governance Statement 2023/24**, approved and signed, page 4
- **Section 2 - Accounting Statements 2023/24**, approved and signed, page 5

Not later than 30 September 2024 authorities **must** publish:

- Notice of conclusion of audit
- **Section 3 - External Auditor Report and Certificate**
- **Sections 1 and 2 of AGAR** including any amendments as a result of the limited assurance review. It is recommended as best practice, to avoid any potential confusion by local electors and interested parties, that you also publish the Annual Internal Audit Report, page 3.

The Annual Governance and Accountability Return constitutes the annual return referred to in the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015. Throughout, the words 'external auditor' have the same meaning as the words 'local auditor' in the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015.

**for a complete list of bodies that may be smaller authorities refer to schedule 2 to the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014.*

Guidance notes on completing Form 3 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) 2023/24

- The authority **must** comply with *Proper Practices* in completing Sections 1 and 2 of this AGAR. *Proper Practices* are found in the *Practitioners' Guide** which is updated from time to time and contains everything needed to prepare successfully for the financial year-end and the subsequent work by the external auditor.
- Make sure that the AGAR is complete (no highlighted boxes left empty) and is properly signed and dated. Any amendments must be approved by the authority and properly initialled.
- The authority **should** receive and note the Annual Internal Audit Report before approving the Annual Governance Statement and the accounts.
- Use the checklist provided below to review the AGAR for completeness before returning it to the external auditor by email or post (not both) no later than 30 June 2024.
- The Annual Governance Statement (Section 1) must be approved on the same day or before the Accounting Statements (Section 2) and evidenced by the agenda or minute references.
- The Responsible Financial Officer (RFO) must certify the accounts (Section 2) before they are presented to the authority for approval. The authority must in this order; consider, approve and sign the accounts.
- The RFO is required to commence the public rights period as soon as practical after the date of the AGAR approval.
- You must inform your external auditor about any change of Clerk, Responsible Financial Officer or Chair, and provide relevant authority owned generic email addresses and telephone numbers.**
- Make sure that the copy of the bank reconciliation to be sent to your external auditor with the AGAR covers all the bank accounts. If the authority holds any short-term investments, note their value on the bank reconciliation. The external auditor must be able to agree the bank reconciliation to Box 8 on the accounting statements (**Section 2, page 5**). An explanation **must** be provided of any difference between Box 7 and Box 8. More help on bank reconciliation is available in the *Practitioners' Guide**.
- Explain fully significant variances in the accounting statements on **page 5**. Do not just send a copy of the detailed accounting records instead of this explanation. The external auditor wants to know that you understand the reasons for all variances. Include complete numerical and narrative analysis to support the full variance.
- If the bank reconciliation is incomplete or variances not **fully** explained then additional costs may be incurred.
- Make sure that the accounting statements add up and that the balance carried forward from the previous year (Box 7 of 2023) equals the balance brought forward in the current year (Box 1 of 2024).
- The Responsible Financial Officer (RFO), on behalf of the authority, **must** set the commencement date for the exercise of public rights of 30 consecutive working days which **must** include the first ten working days of July.
- The authority **must** publish on the authority website/webpage the information required by Regulation 15 (2), Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015, including the period for the exercise of public rights and the name and address of the external auditor **before 1 July 2024**.

Completion checklist – 'No' answers mean you may not have met requirements		Yes	No
All sections	Have all highlighted boxes have been completed?	✓	
	Has all additional information requested, including the dates set for the period for the exercise of public rights , been provided for the external auditor?	✓	
Internal Audit Report	Have all highlighted boxes been completed by the internal auditor and explanations provided?	✓	
Section 1	For any statement to which the response is 'no', has an explanation been published?	✓	
Section 2	Has the Responsible Financial Officer signed the accounting statements before presentation to the authority for approval?	✓	
	Has the authority's approval of the accounting statements been confirmed by the signature of the Chair of the approval meeting?	✓	
	Has an explanation of significant variations been published where required?	✓	
	Has the bank reconciliation as at 31 March 2024 been reconciled to Box 8?	✓	
	Has an explanation of any difference between Box 7 and Box 8 been provided?	✓	
Sections 1 and 2	Trust funds – have all disclosures been made if the authority as a body corporate is a sole managing trustee? NB: do not send trust accounting statements unless requested.		✓

**Governance and Accountability for Smaller Authorities in England – a Practitioners' Guide to Proper Practices*, can be downloaded from www.nalc.gov.uk or from www.ada.org.uk

Annual Internal Audit Report 2023/24

DUNSTABLE TOWN COUNCIL

ENTER PUBLICLY AVAILABLE WEBSITE ADDRESS www.dunstable.gov.uk

During the financial year ended 31 March 2024, this authority's internal auditor acting independently and on the basis of an assessment of risk, carried out a selective assessment of compliance with the relevant procedures and controls in operation and obtained appropriate evidence from the authority.

The internal audit for 2023/24 has been carried out in accordance with this authority's needs and planned coverage. On the basis of the findings in the areas examined, the internal audit conclusions are summarised in this table. Set out below are the objectives of internal control and alongside are the internal audit conclusions on whether, in all significant respects, the control objectives were being achieved throughout the financial year to a standard adequate to meet the needs of this authority.

Internal control objective	Yes	No*	Not covered**
A. Appropriate accounting records have been properly kept throughout the financial year.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
B. This authority complied with its financial regulations, payments were supported by invoices, all expenditure was approved and VAT was appropriately accounted for.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
C. This authority assessed the significant risks to achieving its objectives and reviewed the adequacy of arrangements to manage these.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
D. The precept or rates requirement resulted from an adequate budgetary process; progress against the budget was regularly monitored; and reserves were appropriate.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
E. Expected income was fully received, based on correct prices, properly recorded and promptly banked; and VAT was appropriately accounted for.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
F. Petty cash payments were properly supported by receipts, all petty cash expenditure was approved and VAT appropriately accounted for.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
G. Salaries to employees and allowances to members were paid in accordance with this authority's approvals, and PAYE and NI requirements were properly applied.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
H. Asset and investments registers were complete and accurate and properly maintained.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I. Periodic bank account reconciliations were properly carried out during the year.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
J. Accounting statements prepared during the year were prepared on the correct accounting basis (receipts and payments or income and expenditure), agreed to the cash book, supported by an adequate audit trail from underlying records and where appropriate debtors and creditors were properly recorded.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
K. If the authority certified itself as exempt from a limited assurance review in 2022/23, it met the exemption criteria and correctly declared itself exempt. <i>(If the authority had a limited assurance review of its 2022/23 AGAR tick "not covered")</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
L. The authority published the required information on a website/webpage up to date at the time of the internal audit in accordance with the relevant legislation.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
M. In the year covered by this AGAR, the authority correctly provided for a period for the exercise of public rights as required by the Accounts and Audit Regulations <i>(during the 2023-24 AGAR period, were public rights in relation to the 2022-23 AGAR evidenced by a notice on the website and/or authority approved minutes confirming the dates set)</i> .	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
N. The authority has complied with the publication requirements for 2022/23 AGAR <i>(see AGAR Page 1 Guidance Notes)</i> .	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
O. (For local councils only)	Yes	No	Not applicable
Trust funds (including charitable) – The council met its responsibilities as a trustee.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

For any other risk areas identified by this authority adequate controls existed (list any other risk areas on separate sheets if needed).

Date(s) internal audit undertaken

24/11/2023 01/03/2024 30/05/2024

Name of person who carried out the internal audit

SF Christopher for Auditing Solutions Ltd

Signature of person who carried out the internal audit



Date

30/05/2024

*If the response is 'no' please state the implications and action being taken to address any weakness in control identified (add separate sheets if needed).

**Note: If the response is 'not covered' please state when the most recent internal audit work was done in this area and when it is next planned; or, if coverage is not required, the annual internal audit report must explain why not (add separate sheets if needed).

Section 1 – Annual Governance Statement 2023/24

We acknowledge as the members of:

DUNSTABLE TOWN COUNCIL

our responsibility for ensuring that there is a sound system of internal control, including arrangements for the preparation of the Accounting Statements. We confirm, to the best of our knowledge and belief, with respect to the Accounting Statements for the year ended 31 March 2024, that:

	Agreed		
	Yes	No*	'Yes' means that this authority:
1. We have put in place arrangements for effective financial management during the year, and for the preparation of the accounting statements.	✓		<i>prepared its accounting statements in accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations.</i>
2. We maintained an adequate system of internal control including measures designed to prevent and detect fraud and corruption and reviewed its effectiveness.	✓		<i>made proper arrangements and accepted responsibility for safeguarding the public money and resources in its charge.</i>
3. We took all reasonable steps to assure ourselves that there are no matters of actual or potential non-compliance with laws, regulations and Proper Practices that could have a significant financial effect on the ability of this authority to conduct its business or manage its finances.	✓		<i>has only done what it has the legal power to do and has complied with Proper Practices in doing so.</i>
4. We provided proper opportunity during the year for the exercise of electors' rights in accordance with the requirements of the Accounts and Audit Regulations.	✓		<i>during the year gave all persons interested the opportunity to inspect and ask questions about this authority's accounts.</i>
5. We carried out an assessment of the risks facing this authority and took appropriate steps to manage those risks, including the introduction of internal controls and/or external insurance cover where required.	✓		<i>considered and documented the financial and other risks it faces and dealt with them properly.</i>
6. We maintained throughout the year an adequate and effective system of internal audit of the accounting records and control systems.	✓		<i>arranged for a competent person, independent of the financial controls and procedures, to give an objective view on whether internal controls meet the needs of this smaller authority.</i>
7. We took appropriate action on all matters raised in reports from internal and external audit.	✓		<i>responded to matters brought to its attention by internal and external audit.</i>
8. We considered whether any litigation, liabilities or commitments, events or transactions, occurring either during or after the year-end, have a financial impact on this authority and, where appropriate, have included them in the accounting statements.	✓		<i>disclosed everything it should have about its business activity during the year including events taking place after the year end if relevant.</i>
9. (For local councils only) Trust funds including charitable. In our capacity as the sole managing trustee we discharged our accountability responsibilities for the fund(s)/assets, including financial reporting and, if required, independent examination or audit.	Yes	No	N/A
			✓

***Please provide explanations to the external auditor on a separate sheet for each 'No' response and describe how the authority will address the weaknesses identified. These sheets must be published with the Annual Governance Statement.**

This Annual Governance Statement was approved at a meeting of the authority on:

24/06/2024

and recorded as minute reference:

MINUTE REFERENCE

Signed by the Chair and Clerk of the meeting where approval was given:

Chair

SIGNATURE REQUIRED

Clerk

SIGNATURE REQUIRED

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Section 2 – Accounting Statements 2023/24 for

DUNSTABLE TOWN COUNCIL

	Year ending		Notes and guidance
	31 March 2023 £	31 March 2024 £	
1. Balances brought forward	2,196,772	2,860,550	Total balances and reserves at the beginning of the year as recorded in the financial records. Value must agree to Box 7 of previous year.
2. (+) Precept or Rates and Levies	2,480,490	2,791,245	Total amount of precept (or for IDBs rates and levies) received or receivable in the year. Exclude any grants received.
3. (+) Total other receipts	2,268,793	1,856,248	Total income or receipts as recorded in the cashbook less the precept or rates/levies received (line 2). Include any grants received.
4. (-) Staff costs	1,987,336	2,200,520	Total expenditure or payments made to and on behalf of all employees. Include gross salaries and wages, employers NI contributions, employers pension contributions, gratuities and severance payments.
5. (-) Loan interest/capital repayments	109,364	125,813	Total expenditure or payments of capital and interest made during the year on the authority's borrowings (if any).
6. (-) All other payments	1,988,805	3,013,403	Total expenditure or payments as recorded in the cashbook less staff costs (line 4) and loan interest/capital repayments (line 5).
7. (=) Balances carried forward	2,860,550	2,168,307	Total balances and reserves at the end of the year. Must equal (1+2+3) - (4+5+6).
8. Total value of cash and short term investments	2,821,081	2,277,012	The sum of all current and deposit bank accounts, cash holdings and short term investments held as at 31 March – To agree with bank reconciliation.
9. Total fixed assets plus long term investments and assets	7,901,976	8,207,590	The value of all the property the authority owns – it is made up of all its fixed assets and long term investments as at 31 March.
10. Total borrowings	998,395	920,242	The outstanding capital balance as at 31 March of all loans from third parties (including PWLB).

For Local Councils Only	Yes	No	N/A	
11a. Disclosure note re Trust funds (including charitable)		✓		The Council, as a body corporate, acts as sole trustee and is responsible for managing Trust funds or assets.
11b. Disclosure note re Trust funds (including charitable)			✓	The figures in the accounting statements above exclude any Trust transactions.

I certify that for the year ended 31 March 2024 the Accounting Statements in this Annual Governance and Accountability Return have been prepared on either a receipts and payments or income and expenditure basis following the guidance in Governance and Accountability for Smaller Authorities – a Practitioners' Guide to Proper Practices and present fairly the financial position of this authority.

Signed by Responsible Financial Officer before being presented to the authority for approval



Date

13/06/2024

I confirm that these Accounting Statements were approved by this authority on this date:

24/06/2024

as recorded in minute reference:

MINUTE REFERENCE

Signed by Chair of the meeting where the Accounting Statements were approved

SIGNATURE REQUIRED

Section 3 – External Auditor's Report and Certificate 2023/24

In respect of

DUNSTABLE TOWN COUNCIL

1 Respective responsibilities of the auditor and the authority

Our responsibility as auditors to complete a **limited assurance review** is set out by the National Audit Office (NAO). A limited assurance review is **not a full statutory audit**, it does not constitute an audit carried out in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK & Ireland) and hence it **does not** provide the same level of assurance that such an audit would. The UK Government has determined that a lower level of assurance than that provided by a full statutory audit is appropriate for those local public bodies with the lowest levels of spending.

Under a limited assurance review, the auditor is responsible for reviewing Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return in accordance with NAO Auditor Guidance Note 02 (AGN 02 as issued by the NAO on behalf of the Comptroller and Auditor General. AGN 02 is available from the NAO website – <https://www.nao.org.uk/code-audit-practice/guidance-and-information-for-auditors/> .

This authority is responsible for ensuring that its financial management is adequate and effective and that it has a sound system of internal control. The authority prepares an Annual Governance and Accountability Return in accordance with *Proper Practices* which:

- summarises the accounting records for the year ended 31 March 2024; and
- confirms and provides assurance on those matters that are relevant to our duties and responsibilities as external auditors.

2 External auditor's limited assurance opinion 2023/24

(Except for the matters reported below)* on the basis of our review of Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return, in our opinion the information in Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return is in accordance with Proper Practices and no other matters have come to our attention giving cause for concern that relevant legislation and regulatory requirements have not been met. (*delete as appropriate).

(continue on a separate sheet if required)

Other matters not affecting our opinion which we draw to the attention of the authority:

(continue on a separate sheet if required)

3 External auditor certificate 2023/24

We certify/do not certify* that we have completed our review of Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return, and discharged our responsibilities under the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014, for the year ended 31 March 2024.

*We do not certify completion because:

External Auditor Name

ENTER NAME OF EXTERNAL AUDITOR

External Auditor Signature

SIGNATURE REQUIRED

Date

DD/MM/YYYY

LOANS AND LONG TERM LIABILITIES - AS AT 31 MARCH 2024

Ref	PWLB	Amount	Date of Loan	Term	Type	Annual	Annual	Total	Amount	Final
						Principal	Interest	payable	Outstanding	Repayment
								2023/24	at 31.03.2024	
462749	Luton Road	£85,000.00	1987 original	40 yrs	EIP	£1,062.50	£430.31	£1,492.81	£3,718.75	Nov 2026
		£33,468.75	part repaid May 1996							
483971	Performance Area/ (63.55%)									
483971	Cemetery Extension (36.45%)	£99,925.00	March 2000	25 years	annuity	£6,732.70	£669.94	£7,402.64	£7,108.06	Nov 2024
488657	Priory House Part 1	£500,000.00	March 2004	30 years	EIP	£16,666.68	£8,689.57	£25,356.25	£166,666.40	Nov 2033
489085	Priory House Part 2	£131,237.00	Sept 2004	30 years	EIP	£4,374.58	£2,436.07	£6,810.65	£45,932.69	May 2034
561470	Priory House Refurbishment	£215,000.00	October 2022	20 years	EIP			£0.00	£204,250.00	Oct 2042
								£32,166.91		
489782	Grove House Part 1	£207,000.00	March 2005	30years	EIP	£6,900.00	£4,013.21	£10,913.21	£75,900.00	Nov 2034
490604	Grove House Part 2	£500,000.00	Sept 2005	30 years	EIP	£16,666.68	£2,647.01	£19,313.69	£191,666.42	May 2035
								£30,226.91		
495054	Cemetery Loan 2008	£450,000.00	21 November 2008	30 years	EIP	£15,000.00	£11,292.75	£26,292.75	£225,000.00	Nov 2038
	Totals					£67,403.14	£30,178.87	£97,582.01	£920,242.32	

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF DUNSTABLE JOINT COMMITTEE HELD
AT GROVE VIEW, DUNSTABLE ON 14 DECEMBER 2023 AT 19:00**

Present:

Central Bedfordshire Councillors:

Cllr P Crawley
Cllr K Gurney
Cllr Neall
Cllr Young
Cllr Hegley

DTC Councillors:

Cllr Brennan
Cllr Jones
Cllr O’Riordan
Cllr J Gurney
Cllr P Hollick

CBC Officers:

Ms S Hobbs
Mr C Martin
Ms S Hughes (Virtual)
Ms J Barker (Virtual)

DTC Officers

Mr P Hodson
Ms B Wisbey (Virtual)

Outside Body Representatives

J Bowes- Dunstable Cultural Consortium
S Warboys- Don’t let Dunstable Die
S Knott- Don’t let Dunstable Die
S Patterson- BRCC

Others in Attendance

PS Konopka – Bedfordshire Police Sergeant

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

None

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllr Hegley declared that her husband had a street traders' licence.

Cllr Hollick was a Member of Dunstable Cultural Consortium.

3. QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

No members of the public had registered to speak.

4. CHAIRS ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chair advised that proposals had been received on how to use funding available to the Committee and that these would be considered at the meeting on 14 March 2024 and a scheme of delegation would also be considered. The Chair advised that any proposals to be considered on 14 March should be submitted by 9 February 2024.

The Chair reported that following the closure of Barclays bank, a banking hub would be hosted in Community Hall. She had also been in discussion with CBC about the future of Wilko and the local MP on the future of hotels in the area that had been acquired for housing asylum seekers.

The agenda order had been changed to move item 10 to after item 7 Police report.

5. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the meeting from 7 September 2023 be approved as a true and accurate record.

6. CO-OPTED OR OUTSIDE BODIES UPDATE REPORT

Application for Membership- Dunstable Cultural Consortium.

- The Committee received an application for Co-opted membership from Dunstable Cultural Consortium (DCC).
- The Committee was informed that DCC were set up to work in coordination with the High Street Heritage Action Zone to work alongside Dunstable Town Council and other community groups.
- It was confirmed that the Consortium had been awarded funding for projects focused mainly on heritage in the Town Centre.

- It was reported that the Board is made up of representatives of local organisations and community groups and was well placed to continue to champion local projects and schemes.

RESOLVED

That Dunstable Cultural Committee be Co-Opted as Members of the Dunstable Joint Committee.

Beds RCC

A summary was provided of the recent work of the Bedfordshire Rural Communities Charity

- The Community Garden had become dormant for winter with a corner being revitalised into a sensory garden.
- Pioner Hall was undergoing work to improve the heating system and funding had been applied for to improve the heating system in Top Hall.
- Volunteers from Local Schools were working at the Wellbeing Café as part of their training.
- The Wellbeing Café continued to be successful with strong attendance from all parts of the community and a Christmas event was planned.
- It was confirmed that Barclays will be using the hall to deliver their banking hub.

7. Report from Bedfordshire Police

The Committee received a report from Bedfordshire Police about matters concerning Dunstable.

Points and Comments Included:

- Sergeant Konopka provided a summary of the report published in the Agenda.
- Recent successes were highlighted to the Committee, including recent arrests of robbery and burglary suspects involved in multiple offences.
- It was reported that Officers are working with the supermarkets in the Town to prevent and reduce shoplifting.
- It was confirmed that anti-social behaviour in the Grange Park area had been a high priority over the previous months. This resulted in the statistics being higher than usual in the area.
- In response to a question about preventing youth anti-social behaviour, the Sergeant confirmed that during the winter months young people tend to congregate in sheltered spaces, such as outside the library. The Sergeant stated that a shelter in an area such as the skate park, could assist with reducing incidents as it would provide a space for young people to gather without causing a nuisance to other residents and the Police would know where they were gathered and where to find them if required.

- Concerns were raised about the effectiveness of reporting the use of off-road motorbikes on streets and alleys, as by the time they were responded to the offenders had moved on. The Sergeant urged Members and the public to continue to report incidents as the Police could track their movements via the reports and utilise CCTV to investigate and find the offenders.
- A question was raised about the rise in rape and sexual offences reported, it was confirmed that these offences might be historical offences recently reported and there was no evidence of a rising trend.
- In response to a question about the plan to dim street lighting by CBC, the Sergeant confirmed that he did not believe this would lead to a spike in crime.

NOTED

The report from Bedfordshire Police.

8. DUNSTABLE TOWN CENTRE REGENERATION AND REVITALISATION PLAN

The Committee received a verbal update on the Dunstable Town Centre Regeneration and Revitalisation Plan.

Points and Comments included:

- CBC's Assistant Director of Place provided a presentation and summary of the support and funding available for businesses within Dunstable and Central Bedfordshire. The presentation can be found at Appendix A of these minutes.
- The different elements of UKSPF funding and the partner organisations involved were introduced to Members.
- Concerns were raised that funding was shared equally across towns in Central Bedfordshire, with Dunstable receiving the same level of funding as smaller towns.
- The AD confirmed that it was deemed the fairest ways to distribute available fund, but that a review would take place and any lessons learned would be implemented in future funding distribution.
- Members were encouraged to contact the AD directly with any questions they had and the Team would be able to signpost Members and businesses to the correct applications and schemes.

9. DUNSTABLE TOWN COUNCIL UPDATE REPORT

Points and Comments Included:

- A summary of the report was provided by Officers.
- The Town Centre was the focus of UKSP funding with applications being prepared for schemes such as water fountains and EV Charging Points.

- An application had been submitted for funding for Cultural Projects which provide funding to increase the performing arts capacity and fund events and performances. It would be confirmed in February 2024 if the application as successful.
- In response to a question, it was confirmed that Officers worked alongside the Mayor and Chair of Community Services to identify the Council's priorities for prosperity funding applications.
- It was reported that work was being undertaken at the Moore's site in conjunction with the High Street Heritage Action Zone. Officers were applauded for their efforts in ensuring the project was delivered.

NOTED

The Dunstable Town Council Update Report.

10. CENTRAL BEDFORDSHIRE COUNCIL UPDATE REPORT

Points and Comments Included:

- A Summary was provided of the CBC update report.
- It was reported that Ward Councillor Grant Scheme for the current financial year would be ending in March and Members were encouraged to submit applications early in the new year.
- There were a number of updates at Dunstable leisure centre, including a gym refurb and improvements to the poolside facilities.
- It was reported that the 2024/25 Budget Consultation would be closing on 9 January and Members and residents were encouraged to submit responses to the consultation.
- The number of visits by Parking Enforcement Officers to areas within Dunstable were highlighted to Members, also the number of reports to Fix My Street and the outcome of these reports.
- It was reported that 350 Potholes had been repaired in Dunstable since April 2023 and that the surface dressing works on Kirkstone Drive had been completed.
- Members expressed concern that the next meeting of the DJC would be after the Budget Consultation closed. Members resolved to form a sub-group that submit a response on the behalf of the committee.

NOTED

The Central Bedfordshire Council Update Report.

RESOLVED

That a sub-group consisting of Cllrs Hegley, K Gurney, Crawley, Brennan, Don't Let Dunstable Die and Dunstable Cultural Consortium, be formed and

work with the Chair to submit a response to Central Bedfordshire Council's Budget Consultation on behalf of the Committee.

11. WORKPLAN

Members noted the content of the work plan.

12. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

It was Confirmed that the next meeting of Dunstable Joint Committee would take place on 14 March 2024 at Grove View, Dunstable.

DUNSTABLE TOWN COUNCIL

FULL COUNCIL

24 JUNE 2024

DUNSTABLE JOINT COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

Purpose of Report	To agree the Town Council's representatives and substitutes for the Dunstable Joint Committee
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1. RECOMMENDATION

- 1.1. That Members nominate two additional Town Councillors to be substitutes for the Dunstable Joint Committee.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1. The Town Council's constitution stipulates that the Dunstable Joint Committee's membership is made up of five Town Councillors (the Town Mayor, Deputy Town Mayor and Chairs of Standing Committees) and five Central Bedfordshire Councillors plus such other co-opted non-voting advisors as determined by the Committee. Named substitutes are permitted as full Committee Members.
- 2.2. The Town Council agreed the following Members at the Annual Council Meeting:

Louise O'Riordan (Mayor)	Member
Sally Kimondo (Deputy Mayor)	Member
Gregory Alderman (Chair FGP)	Vice-Chair
Liz Jones (Chair Communities)	Member
Richard Attwell (Chair GES)	Member

- 2.3. The Council also agreed that, in the usual way, the named substitutes would be the "Remaining Vice-Chairs of the three Standing Committees". i.e.:

Nicholas Kotarski (Vice-chair FGP)	Substitute
Matthew Neall (Vice-Chair Communities)	Substitute
Philip Crawley (Vice-Chair GES)	Substitute

- 2.4. Central Bedfordshire Council (CBC) has appointed the following Members:

Cllr Matthew Neall	Member
Cllr Carole Hegley	Chair
Cllr Kenson Gurney	Member
Cllr Philip Crawley	Member

Cllr Nigel Young	Member
Cllr John Gurney	Substitute
Cllr Eugene Ghent	Substitute

- 2.5. This means that Councillor Neall and Councillor Crawley are both CBC member representatives *and* Town Council substitutes. CBC has fewer Members to choose from as only eight CBC seats cover Dunstable. It is therefore proposed that the Town Council nominates two other substitutes to serve on the Joint Committee, along with Councillor Kotarski. This would mean that the remaining eligible Members would be the following Town Councillors:

Johnson Tamara
Mark Davis
Matthew Brennan
Michelle Henderson
Peter Hollick
Robert Blennerhassett
Trevor Adams
Wendy Bater

3. **AUTHOR**

Paul Hodson – Town Clerk and Chief Executive
paul.hodson@dunstable.gov.uk

DUNSTABLE TOWN COUNCIL

FULL COUNCIL

MONDAY 24 JUNE 2024

REFERRAL REPORT FROM FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

Purpose of Report: To consider a Grove House Building Maintenance recommendation report presented to the Finance & General Purposes Committee.

1. RECOMMENDATION

1.1. To approve release of funds from the Grove House Building Maintenance Reserve of up to £226,550 to allow for essential repair and maintenance works.

2. GROVE HOUSE BUILDING MAINTENANCE DISCUSSION AT FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

2.1. FGP Members received a report requesting approval to release funds allocated from the Grove House Building Maintenance Reserve up to £226,550.

RESOLVED: To defer this matter to Full Council following the circulation of additional information.

Minute Number (140/24)

3. TIMELINE OF ACTIONS

30 June 2023	Brasier Freeth conducted a Planned Preventive Maintenance Schedule of Grove House.
21 & 28 July	Brasier Freeth completed a full building inspection, via instruction prompted by water entry and damage to building fabric and finish.
27 September	Brasier Freeth Building Inspection report issued to the Council
13 October	Initial meet with Brasier Freeth to discuss content of Building Inspection report.
9 May 2024	Following ongoing discussions relating to details of the report and reflecting learning from Priory House, Officers and Brasier Freeth met to review options in light of

additional works required to heating. Brasier Freeth provided their advice regarding the priority of works required to Grove House recognising the Listed Status of the property and budgetary constraints, as a first phase of the overall required works.

The repair and works advised are those detailed in the Grove House Building Maintenance Recommendation report.

17 June

The Finance and General Purposes Committee discussed the recommendation to release funds from the ear-marked reserve to enable officers to commence tendering of works. The report provided explained that the Council had procured a Planned Preventative Maintenance Schedule and Property Survey from the council's expert contractor and that the recommendations provided were based on this report.

The report is rather large, so rather than include with the report pack Members were advised in the report that the "Planned Preventative Maintenance Schedule and Property Survey are available to view, please request via the Corporate Performance & Compliance Manager". **No Members requested the schedule or survey before the meeting despite this offer being made in the report.**

Scanned copies of these documents are attached with this report.

4. CONSIDERATIONS

- 4.1. Central Bedfordshire Council, as the local planning authority, have authority to take action against the Town Council as the owner of a property should it not be properly maintained.
- 4.2. Central Bedfordshire Council issued a S215 to Dunstable Town Council in the past relating to Priory House approximately 10-15 years ago. A Section 215 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 provides a local planning authority with the power, in certain circumstances, to take steps when land or building conditions adversely affects the amenity of the area.
- 4.3. Under Section 48 of the Planning (listed Building and Conservation Area) Act. If a local planning authority considers that a listed building is not being properly preserved, it may serve repairs notice on the owner. This notice must specify the works which the authority considers reasonably necessary for the proper preservation of the building and must explain the relevant provisions of the legislation. These powers are not confined to urgent works or to unoccupied

buildings, and failure by an owner to keep a listed building in reasonable repair places the building at risk.

5. FINANCIAL

5.1. The Council commissioned Brasier Freeth to carry out a property survey of Grove House with a view to preparing a 10 year plan of essential maintenance works, to enable the Council to properly plan and budget for necessary works to ensure the building is properly managed, and that staff have a safe working environment and to reduce the risk of large and unforeseen expenditure. Brasier Freeth provided indicative costs for essential future maintenance & capital works at 31.1.2 of the Property Survey:

1.	Additional Surveys & Inspections	Cost
1.1	CCTV Drainage Survey.	£2,500.00
1.2	Check routing of high level drainage pipe through front felt roof near hopper head – may involve opening up works.	£1,500.00
1.3	Check condition of timber floor voids near damp walls.	
1.4	Check condition of lintels on front elevation.	
1.5	Monitor movement of portico structure and front wall on the interior.	
1.6	Further opening up of basement and footpath areas to try and locate the source of flooding.	
2.	Works	
	East (Rear) Elevation	
2.1	East Elevation: re-roof plain tiles, repair rear parapet walls.	£100,000.00
2.2	East Elevation: renew exposed rainwater goods.	£5,000.00
2.3	East Elevation: reduce external ground levels and construct french drain around the perimeter of the property.	£10,000.00
2.4	East Elevation: repair defective render and redecorate.	£40,000.00
2.4	East Elevation: repair defective windows and doors and redecorate.	£25,000.00

	Works	
	West (Front Elevation)	
2.6	Remove all plant from ground floor zinc roof above entrance door, relocation plant to alternative location.	£5,000.00
2.7	Rationalise and repair all plumbing, drainage and rainwater goods above zinc flat roof.	£2,500.00
2.8	Repair uPVC rainwater goods.	£4,000.00
2.9	Repair defective render and redecorate walls.	£60,000.00
2.10	Repair defective windows, including lintels (if required) and redecorate.	£35,000.00
2.11	Renew mineral felt roof finishes.	£15,000.00
3.	Works – Second Phase	
3.1	Remove defective internal plaster to ceilings and walls, repair and replaster after allowing a period to dry out and redecorate.	
3.2	Include for timber repair, as found necessary, upon removal of plaster.	

5.2. These initial indicative costs in the Property Survey total £305,500. These costs were discussed with Brasier Freeth (9 May 2024 meeting), in relation to the Council's available budgets, appropriate building consents required and timeframes at hand.

5.3. Brasier Freeth subsequently advised on a scheme of works (as presented in the Grove House Building Maintenance recommendation report), which could be managed as separate individual projects. This allows the Council the ability to obtain the most economical and appropriate quotations for each project.

5.4. It is proposed that Members agree the release of the current reserve to enable officers to tender for the highest priority works take place as soon as possible, to ensure that the building has a reliable heating system in the autumn, that water ingress is stop and the building protected from further water damage.

6. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 6.1. Planned Preventative Maintenance Schedule and
- 6.2. Property Survey

7. AUTHOR

Paul Hodson – Town Clerk and Chief Executive
paul.hodson@dunstable.gov.uk

■ Property Survey

In respect of:

Grove House
76 High Street North
Dunstable
Bedfordshire
LU6 1NF

Prepared for:

Dunstable Town Council
Grove House
76 High Street North
Dunstable
Bedfordshire
LU6 1NF

Following inspection on:

Friday 21st July 2023 & Friday 28th July 2023

PROPERTY SURVEY



Regarding:
Grove House
76 High Street North
Dunstable
Bedfordshire
LU6 1NF

For:
Dunstable Town Council
Grove House
76 High Street North
Dunstable
Bedfordshire
LU6 1NF

Following Inspection on:
Friday 21st July 2023 & Friday 28th July 2028

Prepared by:
Brasier Freeth LLP
Wentworth Lodge
Great North Road
Welwyn Garden City
Hertfordshire
AL8 7SR

Issued: 27/09/2023

Revision: 0

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Our ref: PR/JLB/23-WGC003790

27th September 2023

Dunstable Town Council
Grove House
76 High Street North
Dunstable
Bedfordshire
LU6 1NF

For the attention of: Mr P Hodson, Town Clerk & Chief Executive

Dear Mr Hodson,

Grove House, 76 High Street North, Dunstable, Bedfordshire LU6 1NF

Further to your instructions, I am pleased to inform you that we have inspected the above-named property to carry out a Building inspection which, has been prompted by recent water entry and damage to the fabric and finishes. Our comments, findings and analysis are contained below.

The report has been prepared in accordance with our Conditions of Engagement, dated 18th July 2023, and should be regarded as a comment on the overall condition of the property and not as an inventory of every single defect. It relates to those parts of the property that were reasonably and safely accessible at the time of the inspection, but you should be aware that defects can subsequently develop.

We trust you will read the report in its entirety, but we would suggest that you initially look at the summary, which we feel highlights the most significant (but by no means all) defects.

You should be aware that context sensitive photographs are included throughout the body of this report, where appropriate.

SUMMARY

The summary is intended to provide a broad overview of the property and identifies what the surveyor considers to be the salient points.

1.0 GENERAL OVERVIEW

- 1.1.1 This substantial Georgian property is believed to have been built circa 1750, originally as a coaching inn, then as private residences before being used for municipal purposes since the mid-1930's.
- 1.1.2 As one would expect the building has undergone many alterations, but the external form and appearance of the property is thought to maintain the majority of its original character and features. Although there are many modern additions, such as the felt coverings over the mono-pitched roof on the south side of the front elevation.

We identified a number of principal defects on the exterior which need consideration and will need repair and rectification over the forthcoming years. These principal ones are listed as follows:

- 1.1.3 The condition of the clay plain roof tiles on the rear roof slopes (east side).
- 1.1.4 The condition of the rear parapet wall enclosing the rear roof (east side).
- 1.1.5 The condition of the rear parapet gutters behind the parapet wall (east side).
- 1.1.6 The consequent dampness in the first floor rear walls, both internally and externally due to Items 1.1.4-1.1.6 listed above.
- 1.1.7 The condition of the rendering and lintels over the window openings to the front (west) elevation.
- 1.1.8 The defective rainwater disposal goods to the front (west) elevation.
- 1.1.9 The consequent dampness within the front (west) elevation walls with the internal plaster damage to ceilings and walls.
- 1.1.10 The internal localised flooding within the basement on the front east side of the property.

We also identified additional defects which at the moment are having a lesser impact on the building, its fabric and finishes but will still need addressing in the future. These are listed as follows:

- 1.1.11 The condition of the felt roof finishes to the north-west front elevation (two storey elevation) and the south elevation (above the ground floor additions).
- 1.1.12 The condition of the external drainage pipes on the front elevation.
- 1.1.13 Aged render and flashing to chimney stacks.

- 1.1.14 Defective mortar pointing under exposed verges (sloping end sections) to slate roofs.
- 1.1.15 There are further defects and areas of disrepair which at present are having a lower impact on the fabric and finishes but over a longer period of time may develop into more serious issues.
- 1.1.16 The issues in Items 1.1.4-1.1.16 are disrepair to the weathering envelope whose function is to enclose the building, keep it watertight and is designed to protect the interior of the building, keeping it dry and warm. Failures in these elements and the joints between them causes the internal damage and disrepair. Which in turn requires additional repair works to the interior.

The disrepair to the external weathering envelope has caused internal damage to the finishes in the form of:

- 1.1.17 Damp roof void timbers.
- 1.1.18 Damp brickwork to the chimney breasts.
- 1.1.19 Damp ceiling plaster on the first floor.
- 1.1.20 Damp wall plaster on the first floor.
- 1.1.21 Water damage to decorative finishes.
- 1.1.22 Moisture retention in floor joists, skirtings, and windows in contact with areas of water ingress, and to a lesser extent, damage to fabrics such as carpets, blinds, etc.
- 1.1.23 More recently the front (west) side of the basement close to the pavement areas has flooded, this is a reasonably recent discovery and is inconsistent with the usual condition of this part of the basement.
- 1.1.24 Additionally, as with any other building there are compliance matters such as electrical installations, fire detection and fire safety equipment, gas, water, plumbing, heating and drainage installations which need regular review and attention.

In addition to the defects in the weathering envelope, there are some potential stability issues, these are:

- 1.1.25 The stability of the entrance portico structure.
- 1.1.26 Internal plaster crack on the first floor to the north side of the building adjacent to the front elevation.
- 1.1.27 The cracks and slight displacement of front wall structure and lintels over the openings.
- 1.1.28 There are other localised areas of dampness along the front wall also affecting the floor in the disabled WC, but we have been unable to inspect this void due to the fitted vinyl sheeting. We recommend this be stripped back to facilitate further inspection. The source of dampness may be a blocked or surcharging external rainwater downpipe in this vicinity, or a services leak.

- 1.1.29 Along the front elevation all the Acco slot drains are blocked, meaning water will surcharge onto the pavement rather than onto the road carriageway, as intended. This may be a contributing factor in the dampness problem and should be cleared.
- 1.1.30 Previous structural repairs have been undertaken to the front elevation with metal restraint ties being bolted through the front wall, fixing it back to the internal wall to give lateral restraint and rigidity. These defects are concentrated around the two storey lobby area, where the front wall has least restraint. It is believed the porch canopy is also contributing to the movement and some works may be necessary in the future.
- 1.1.31 Two large steel beams have been inserted into the roof space above the lobby, with “hangers” giving intermediate support to the ceiling joists, which were displaying sagging. These beams span the entire width of the lobby and are built off the two masonry walls to the left and right hand sides, they are long spanning, hence the displacement noted.
- 1.1.32 To the left hand side of the lobby, significant movement is noted around the doorway into Office 14/15 where it appears the rear section of the wall and floor has dropped. We assume that the original wall beneath it at ground floor level has been removed and that the removal of the wall between Office 16 and 17 has reduced the restraint to the upper parts and caused some sagging of the floor, and subsequently the studwork built onto it.
- 1.1.33 Further investigation is required to assess the likelihood for future and progressive movement, which will probably entail lifting the floorboarding in this area to assess whether the means of support are adequate.
- 1.1.34 The front entrance portico with its stone pilasters is exhibiting some signs of movement and appears to be dropping away at the front, causing some cracking to develop between the portico and the main structure. It is quite common for features such as this not to be well tied in.
- 1.1.35 The majority of the chimney stacks are capped and redundant, but many are not ventilated which could allow condensation and dampness to build-up within the void. Some remedial works are recommended.
- 1.1.36 The internal fire compartmentation arrangements are reasonable to the first floor, but there is no protected enclosure around the main staircase or throughout the ground floor lobby.
- 1.1.37 The doors at first floor level require minimal upgrading to achieve compliance, but at ground floor level the doors into the council chamber and to the right hand side into the registrars’ lobby, and the partitioning to which they are installed, is inadequate and requires consideration, re-modelling and upgrading.
- 1.1.38 The services (both electricity and heating) are old and have exceeded their recommended design life.
- 1.1.39 We have been involved in recent works to repair the central heating system, but these have enjoyed limited success and the heating is in need of replacement.
- 1.1.40 We understand the Council procures regular 5-yearly electrical tests, so assume the electrical system is probably serviceable, but significant parts of it are extremely dated and we suspect re-wiring has occurred on a piecemeal ad-hoc basis over the years.

2.0 PLANNING & BUILDING CONTROL

- 2.1.1 The property is Grade II Listed under Listing Entry No. 1138223, dated 25th October 1951.
- 2.1.2 We obtained some of the Planning and Building Control history from Central Bedfordshire Council's website. A visit to the council or a chargeable search would reveal more information and may be helpful in identifying further and more accurate history of the building.

Date	App No.	Proposal
30.03.21	21/01432	Listed Building: Structural repairs to timber beam.
20.03.19	19/00915	Extension of external tarmac surfaces to accommodate 8No additional parking spaces to the rear of Grove House
20.03.19	19/00916	Listed Building: Extension of external tarmac surfaces to accommodate 8No additional parking spaces to the rear of Grove House
23.01.19	19/00068	Installation of flagpole and associated foundation within the grounds of Grove House, Dunstable
23.01.19	19/00069	Listed Building: Installation of flagpole and associated foundation within the grounds of Grove House, Dunstable
24.10.18	18/03980	External repairs and installation of new double entrance doors. Internal reconfiguration.
24.10.18	18/03981	Listed Building: External repairs and installation of new double entrance doors. Internal reconfiguration.
02.02.17	17/00426	Listed Building: Installation of architectural lighting and lantern over front entrance.
04.10.16	16/04474	Listed Building: Installation of architectural lighting and lantern over the east wing doorway.
05.08.16	16/03514	Listed Building: Installation of linear luminaires along the roof line fitted close to the guttering and 3 recesses downlights to light the entrance within the porch.
16.11.15	15/04392	Reinstatement of chimney pots to southern chimney with new pots and ventilated cappings. Installation of internal vents to chimney to improve ventilation and avoid trapping of moisture.
08.10.10	10/03418	Erection of 6m high glass fibre flagpole with gold onion finial and internal halyard system to fly a Green Flag awarded for Grove House Gardens.

Grove House, 76 High Street North, Dunstable, Bedfordshire LU6 1NF

Date	App No.	Proposal
11.08.10	10/02956	Removal of a wall mounted GRP sign to the front elevation and renewal of new wall mounted notice board cabinet to a different location to the front elevation.
10.08.10	10/02906	Non-illuminated wall mounted notice board cabinet (1200w x 900h x 76d mm), construction in stainless steel with black powder coated finish and gold lettering. Glazed opening to the left hand side for notices, GRP panel signage to right hand side with opening times and contact details.
15.01.10	10/00133	Erection of overthrow over existing gates, secured to existing columns. Replacement of defective section of railing (revised application CB/09/05173/TP).
15.01.10	10/00136	Erection of new overthrow over existing gates, secured to existing columns. Replacement of defective section of railing (revised application CB/09/05174/TP).
28.05.09	09/05173	Erection of new overthrow over existing gates, secured to existing columns. Replacement of defective section of railing.
28.05.09	09/05174	Erection of new overthrow over existing gates, secured to existing columns. Replacement of defective section of railing.
22.04.05	05/00407	Repairs to roofs and dormer windows and rendering of entire rear elevation.
31.08.04	04/01132	Internal alterations to enlarge admin office and installation of condenser unit.
22.04.99	99/0020	Installation of security system to register office.
22.10.98	98/0056	Installation of air conditioning unit and alterations to toilet.
16.02.95	95/0098	Sitting of flagpole on front elevation.
15.02.95	95/0009	Sitting of flagpole on front elevation.
10.05.90	90/0018	Display of various office signage.
19.04.89	89/0005	External and internal alterations.
19.04.89	89/0019	External and internal alterations.
14.04.89	89/0018	Refurbishment and minor alterations.
28.02.89	89/0001	Temporary use of site for toilet accommodation.

Date	App No.	Proposal
01.02.84	84/0004	Internal and external alterations including removal of temporary rear addition.
06.09.83	83/0854	Erection of new municipal offices.
16.03.83	83/0223	Extension to municipal offices.
06.03.83	83/0034	Erection of municipal offices and alterations to existing building.
Unknown	83/0012	Proposed extensions to municipal offices.

- 2.1.3 We have been unable to locate any Building Control history for the property via Central Bedfordshire Council, but to our knowledge there have been localised structural repairs to a split timber beam, and in 2009, external repairs involving localised roof repairs, chimney flashing repairs, attic roof repairs, new flat roof coverings, coping repairs to parapet walls, localised internal plaster repairs and internal redecoration, all undertaken for a relatively modest tender sum of circa £48,000.
- 2.1.4 In 2013, part of the exterior were redecorated for a sum of circa £28,000 with further external redecoration works to walls, joinery and rainwater goods undertaken in 2017 for a sum of c.£50,000.
- 2.1.5 There have also been heating system repairs in 2009 and more latterly in 2020.

3.0 REGULATIONS

- 3.1.1 As the owner/occupier of a commercial property employing staff, there are various statutory instruments, which affect the way the property should be occupied, used, maintained and repaired.
- 3.1.2 Generally, the aims of such legislation are to improve health and safety, accessibility, sustainability and reduce environmental impact. We list and comment on the core areas as follows.
- 3.1.3 The following paragraphs are not intended to discuss all areas of compliance but give advice on the most topical and significant legislative requirements from a technical perspective.

3.2 Fire Precautions (The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005)

- 3.2.1 Commercial premises must now have a valid Fire Safety Risk Assessment. This requires that those responsible for buildings, principally the occupiers, evaluate property by identifying potential fire hazards, and people at risk. Then a process of evaluation and action is required to minimise the risks and this process should be recorded to demonstrate compliance.

- 3.2.2 A clear plan of how to prevent fire and keep staff safe is to be put in place and all staff properly trained. Many large organisations have nominated 'fire marshals' who receive specialist training on what to do in the event of an emergency.
- 3.2.3 The plan should be the subject of ongoing review to ensure it is up-to-date with all fire hazards, preventative measures and can run efficiently.
- 3.2.4 Both active and passive fire detection and prevention methods should be employed but needs vary with different styles of occupancy and use. Fire extinguishers, alarms and sprinkler systems should be serviced annually and maintained in good working order, and fire exits should remain unlocked at all times while the building is in use and remain clear of obstructions.

3.3 Disabilities Discrimination Act

- 3.3.1 The Equality Act 2010 provides the framework legislation to protect the rights of individuals and promotes equality of opportunity. Part M (Access to and use of Buildings) of the Building Regulations covers the requirements with respect to the Access and Use of Buildings. This usually applies when building alterations are undertaken.
- 3.3.2 It is illegal to discriminate against both staff and customers with disabilities, the definitions of which should be considered as all encompassing; from those who are hard of hearing and partially sighted, to those who are mentally handicapped.
- 3.3.3 The spirit of the legislation is to promote social inclusion for all and raise awareness and understanding of the issues, so the Act is not over prescriptive and requires that a reasonable approach be adopted.
- 3.3.4 In doing so, it is important to appreciate that less than 5% of those covered by the Act are wheelchair bound, and that changes to management regimes, company policy and staff awareness may suffice. Physical, costly building alterations are often not required.
- 3.3.5 You should also remember that the Act forms part of civil law, and that prosecution can only occur from an aggrieved party who can substantiate a specific claim of discrimination.

3.4 Control of Asbestos

- 3.4.1 Under The Control of Asbestos Regulations 2012, owners, occupiers and tenants have a duty to manage asbestos. All commercial properties, which potentially contain asbestos, are required to have an up-to-date asbestos register. Generally, only properties constructed since 1999 are likely to be asbestos free.
- 3.4.2 This report in no way constitutes an asbestos survey/register, although we will highlight any areas suspected to contain asbestos found during our inspection.
- 3.4.3 We are aware that you hold an Asbestos Register for the property. This should be available for review and included in tender documents when new works are planned.

4.0 DATE OF INSPECTION

4.1.1 Friday 21st July 2023 and Friday 28th July 2023.

5.0 WEATHER

5.1.1 During our inspection the weather was dry but overcast with light rainfall towards the middle part of the day.

6.0 DESCRIPTION

6.1.1 The property is described on the English Heritage Listing as a late 17th Century brick house of two storeys with heavy stucco covering (originally a coloured render) with late 18th and 19th Century additions. A very steep pitched gable roof with early tiles on the left and brown tiles on the right with a varying ridge line, long high central section and two lower (unequal) shorter end sections and a valley at the north end.

6.1.2 The rear elevation (east, rear) has a deep parapet and cornice and the six widely spaced dormers, five sides and two storey bays in the centre with three windows and a very steep hipped roof.

6.1.3 There are six windows on both sides of the centre second storey. Immediately north of the bay there is a light pedimented Doric doorcase (timber) and three windows. To the south of the bay there is a plain doorway.

6.1.4 The windows are timber sash, some early single hung, in wide wooden cases. The interior has been much altered, but many minor details of the 17th Century have survived. The roadside elevation (front) has at the north end asymmetrical five window façade of the late 19th Century classical style with heavy details.

6.1.5 Grove House has Georgian proportions and a distinctive porch with Tuscan columns. It started life as an inn for travellers. In the mid-18th Century, Dunstable was a major coaching centre on the busy Watling Street and many inns were established to cater for this trade. John Swindall, the proprietor of the town's oldest inn, The Saracen's Head, decided to build a new hotel which was completed in about 1750. It was originally called The Duke of Bedford's Arms and later this was shortened to The Duke's Arms.

6.1.6 From the roadside the building consists of two halves as, after the decline of the coaching trade, the property was rented for residential occupation. Grove House on the left (north side) and The Beeches on the right (south side).

6.1.7 In 1906, both properties were purchased and converted into one house which was later sold in 1936 to Dunstable Borough Council. In 1975, a major fire broke out in the attic, but the main fabric of the building was not destroyed.

7.0 ACCOMMODATION

7.1.1 Please refer to the Floor Plan in Appendix I for further information on the accommodation.

8.0 SERVICES

- 8.1.1 Drainage: Mains
- 8.1.2 Gas: Mains
- 8.1.3 Electricity: Mains
- 8.1.4 Water: Mains
- 8.1.5 Heating: Gas fired central heating system serving a combination of pressed steel panel radiators and cast iron hospital radiators via a combination of galvanised steel and copper pipework.

9.0 BUILDING DIMENSIONS

- 9.1.1 Frontage: 36.72m excluding single story extensions to north and south elevations.
- 9.1.2 Depth: 13.40m
- 9.1.3 Gross Internal Area: 744.36m² excluding basement and roof space.

EXTERNALLY

All high level areas such as roof finishes, chimneys, etc., are inspected from ground level with the assistance of binoculars from within the boundaries of the property and from public highways or rights of way. Where possible, areas are inspected through adjacent window openings, therefore our observations in some areas are limited.

Rainwater goods have been inspected from ground level (unless otherwise stated). We were not able to make a close inspection of the roof level rainwater goods (our ladders are not long enough) and we, therefore, cannot always identify the material or the condition exactly. Our comments have, therefore, been based upon our best assumptions.

We have not exposed foundations or elements below ground level, and therefore, cannot comment upon the type and adequacy of the foundations supporting the main walls. Where defects have been identified, we have based our comments on our best assumptions using evidence from our observations.

10.0 STRUCTURE & SITE CONDITIONS

10.1 Structural Frame

- 10.1.1 The property is traditionally constructed building with masonry enclosing walls and timber framed internal structure bearing on a combination of timber stud walls and masonry partitions.
- 10.1.2 There are multiple pitched timber frame roofs covered with either slates or plain clay tiles, some bounded by masonry parapet walls rising above the lower parts of these roof slopes.
- 10.1.3 On the south side there is a ground floor extension with a flat roof bounded by parapet walls and covered with a mineral finished felt roof.
- 10.1.4 On the front (west elevation) there is a mono-pitched roof which is also covered with mineral felt.
- 10.1.5 The rainwater disposal systems are quite tortuous in places which does not assist the efficient collection and disposal of rainwater away from the property which then causes contingent problems leading to rainwater damage.
- 10.1.6 The loadbearing external masonry walls vary in thickness, but the ground floor walls generally seem to be about 450mm thick, and there are also substantial internal masonry walls providing intermediate support to the timber framed first floor.
- 10.1.7 The ground floor is a combination of suspended timber and in-situ cast concrete, the latter of which is unlikely to be original, probably added when the building was converted to municipal offices during the 1930's.

- 10.1.8 There are three separate basements under the property, with vaulted brick arch ceilings to the left hand side, and some random coursed stone walling. The south basement is simpler in design and does not appear as old. The basement ceilings include vaulted brickwork, timber farmed joists with timber floor boarding above and in places concrete floor slabs. These possibly replace old stone thresholds behind entrance doors
- 10.1.9 We do not know the type, size or construction of the foundations. Originally, the building would have been founded on shallow foundations; these may have been augmented by shallow brick stepped foundations. Later underpinning works may have occurred, but there is no way of confirming this.

10.2 Ground Conditions

- 10.2.1 We have not undertaken any site excavation or testing and cannot comment on the prevailing subsoil conditions, or on the presence of badly consolidated made-up ground, which can cause foundation movement.
- 10.2.2 Predominantly, Dunstable is founded upon a Chalk substrate originating from the Cretaceous Period. Generally, this provides an excellent and resilient bearing strata and ground movement problems are accordingly rare.
- 10.2.3 Since these buildings front directly onto the A5 trunk route with HGV's and buses passing many times per hour, traffic vibrations may influence the stability of the construction, particularly in the past when traffic flow may have been faster.

11.0 ROOFS & HIGH LEVEL STRUCTURES

This section considers the condition of the outer covering of the roofs and the roof voids beneath, including the structural frame. The outer coverings usually endure extremes of the climate and temperatures. They are susceptible to deterioration, which ultimately leads to water penetration.

11.1 Summary of Construction

- 11.1.1 There are multiple roof structures over this building.
- 11.1.2 On the south side of the building, adjacent to the entrance gates, the main roof is timber framed and double pitched covered with slates on the front elevation and plain tiles on the rear.
- 11.1.3 The south gables are more usual, the front and rear slopes follow the same pitch line as the adjoining main roof slope and appear to be "one and the same" but the apex (ridge) to these front and rear slopes is much lower. Behind these two lower ridges there are internal roof slopes draining to a central valley. Effectively, the left hand side (south side) appears to be an old extension to the original building. There is a gable wall rising above these two smaller double pitched roofs forming the wall enclosure to the upper main roof and attic accommodation inside.
- 11.1.4 On the right hand side of the building (north side) there is a double pitched roof covered with plan tiles to the rear and unusually to the front (west elevation) and two separated mono-pitched roofs above first floor accommodation, which are shallow pitched and

covered with mineral felt finishes. The highest part of the felt roofs terminates just under the lower edge of the front slope of the rear double pitched roof. Effectively, this part of the building has two different roofs and a wall abutment detail to the taller part of the building on the south side.

- 11.1.5 There is also a small ground floor link structure under a flat roof bounded by parapet walls and taller wall abutments between the south and north structures; this faces the front elevation; the wall is dominated by a large arched double entrance which unusually is situated within both ground and first floor wall structures.
- 11.1.6 The roofs to the rear are bounded by a continuous raised masonry parapet walls and from ground level look to be homogeneous, but this is because the walls are finished with similar materials and render finishes. The two different roof structures are separated by a two storey bay structure which has a ridge line which intersects the main slope at right angles forming tiled sloping valleys with the main roof slope.
- 11.1.7 To the north side, principally at the rear and wrapping around the rear right hand corner of the original building, is a ground floor extension with a mineral felt covered flat roof bound by parapet walls finished at the top with concrete coping stones. A previous survey identified that the roof structure was built from reinforced concrete planks (or slabs).
- 11.1.8 Effectively, there are eight different but adjoining roof structures.

11.2 Summary of Condition

Rear (East) Plain Tiled Roof Slopes, Bay Roof Structure & Parapet Walls that Bound Them

PHOTO 11.2a:

Rear (east) roof slopes.

JPEG No: IMG_5797



PHOTO 11.2b:

Rear (east) roof slopes.

JPEG No: IMG_5877



- 11.2.1 These roof slopes are broadly evenly pitched despite the variety and discontinuity with the roof tiles. The ridge line undulates and is not consistently aligned which indicates that the ridge timbers have moved, sagged or become displaced where they are joined.

PHOTO 11.2.1:

Displaced ridge line.

JPEG No: IMG_5799



- 11.2.2 There have been many isolated repairs of the years with many areas of tiles inserted which are of different colours, ages and composition. This is fairly typical with older roofs.

PHOTO 11.2.2a:

Modern tiled repairs to verge with patched replacement tiles on main slope, typical example.

JPEG No: IMG_5800



PHOTO 11.2.2b:

Numerous patch repairs to rear slope.

JPEG No: IMG_5807



- 11.2.3 Close inspection reveals that many of the older tiles are in a poor state of repair being spalled, cracked or displaced and have possibly lost their fixings to the tile battens behind.



- 11.2.4 Some of the replacement tiles have not been skilfully inserted; these too are either cracked or displaced which, is clearly seen by the uneven and irregular edges across the lower line of the tiles.
- 11.2.5 From this brief description, it can be seen that over the years there have been many isolated tile repairs and replacements, but having reviewed the roof slopes in their entirety we believe that the east facing slopes are now due for comprehensive re-roofing of the tiled surfaces.
- 11.2.6 The east facing rear parapet wall also requires repair; it comprises raised brickwork which has been rendered and painted on the outside facing the gardens and rendered and partially painted on the inner face which is hidden from view.
- 11.2.7 Between the sloping tiles and the parapet wall there is a lead lined parapet gutter lining which drains through holes in the parapet wall to external wall mounted hopper heads which in turn are connected to rainwater downpipes.
- 11.2.8 The parapet wall construction comprising these elements is generally in poor condition.
- 11.2.9 It is worse on the north side than the south side.

11.2.10 On the south side, the copings require repointing on the joints and redecorating.

PHOTO 11.2.10a:

Parapet copings which require repointing on the joints and redecorating.

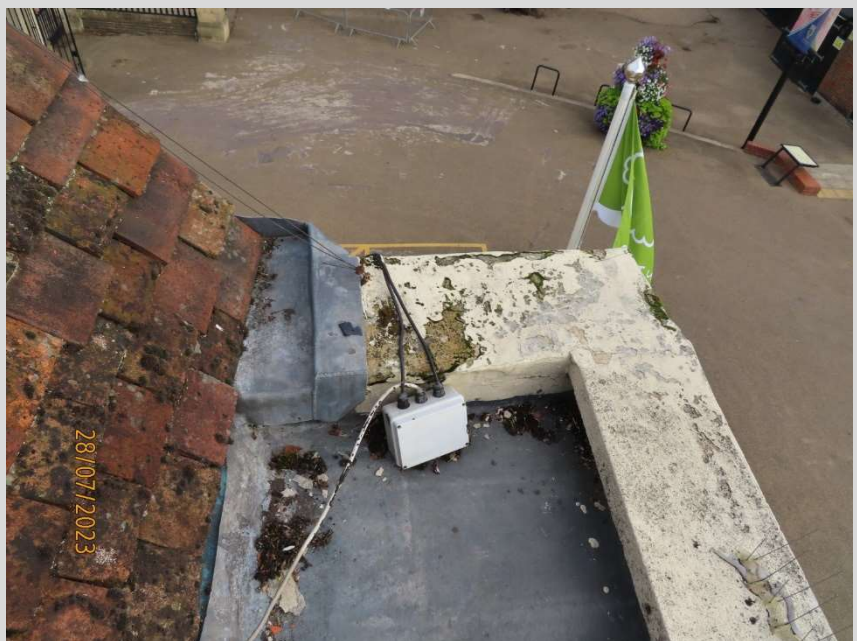
JPEG No: IMG_5798



PHOTO 11.2.10b:

Parapet copings which require repointing on the joints and redecoration.

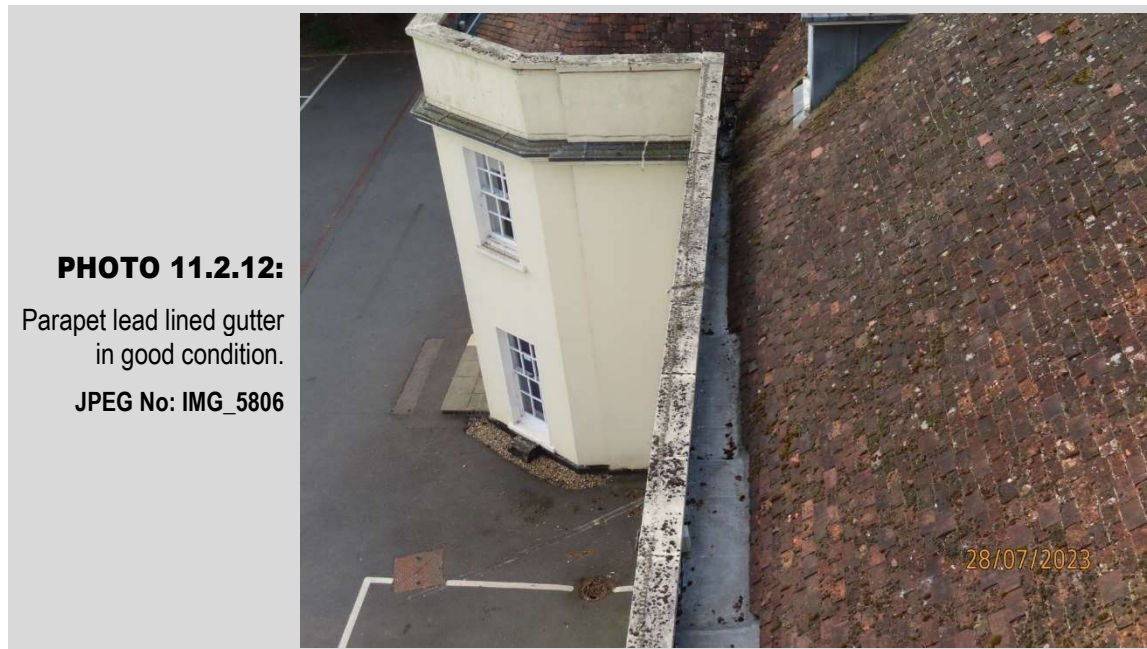
JPEG No: IMG_5904



- 11.2.11 There is also tile debris within the parapet gutters, which over time will either cause blockages in the parapet gutters themselves or possibly the hopper heads and downpipes.



- 11.2.12 On the south side, the lead lined parapet gutters are largely free from blockage with only minor moss debris which is a positive observation. The lead lining itself was inspected and generally noted to be free from defect.



- 11.2.13 On the north side and around the bay construction, the parapet wall and gutter is in much worse condition and needs repair. The internal rendering which has been painted black, presumably in an attempt to provide some improved moisture resistance, is crazed and cracked throughout and in some sections, it is completely missing; exposing the brickwork behind which is generally in poor condition.

PHOTO 11.2.13a:

Spalled and crazed render to interior of parapet wall which has failed and needs renewal.

JPEG No: IMG_5828

**PHOTO 11.2.13b:**

Missing render to parapet wall with spalled brickwork behind.

JPEG No: IMG_5836



PHOTO 11.2.13c:

Cracked and displaced render to inside face of parapet wall.

JPEG No: IMG_5848



- 11.2.14 In many places the gutter lining and flashings are displaced or have been coated in proprietary sealants of various types, which clearly have been an attempt to prevent ongoing water ingress. These types of repairs are rarely successful and make matters worse; ultimately the best solution is to remove the linings and flashings and reinstate them with new materials, installed to higher standards of workmanship, quality using better materials.

PHOTO 11.2.14a:

Loose and displaced upstand flashing to parapet gutter.

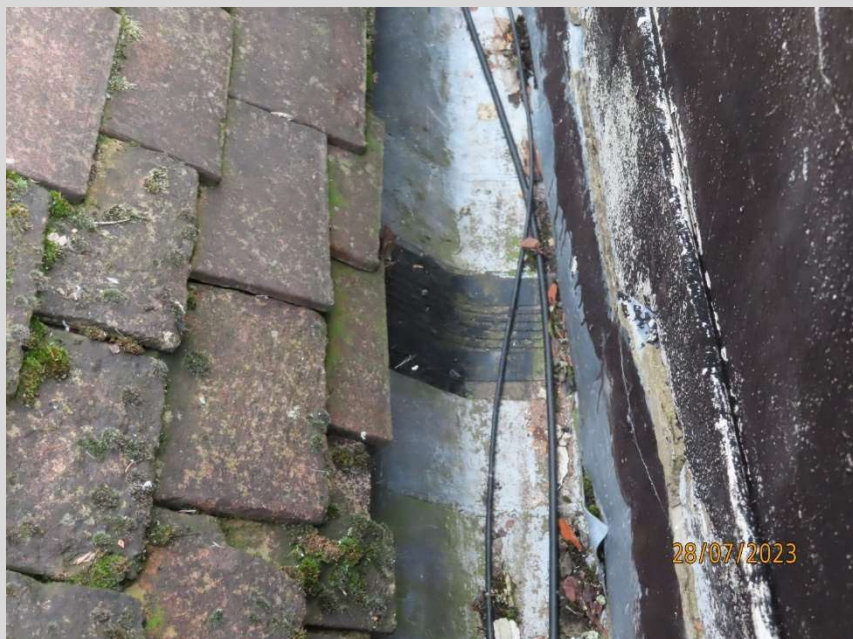
JPEG No: IMG_5849



PHOTO 11.2.14b:

Rubber patch repair over gutter in an attempt to seal the lead lining.

JPEG No: IMG_5855

**PHOTO 11.2.14c:**

Mastic sealant repairs to lead lined upstands in an attempt to rectify water ingress adjacent to loose laid cables and accumulated silt and debris. Note: crude mastic sealant applied to seal the lead upstand in brickwork on the right hand side of the photograph.

JPEG No: IMG_5893



- 11.2.15 On the north side of the bay construction, the parapet wall has been reconstructed in modern brickwork but in this location the width of the parapet gutter is too narrow; and probably inadequately drains the rainwater away particularly in storm water conditions. The hopper head outlet in the corner of the junction between the bay and the main rear slope of the north roof is also quite narrow and the parapet wall has been cantilevered over the gutter with a void below. This is a very unusual form of construction and may over time give rise to further water penetration problems. This appears to be an historic configuration, but it is far from ideal. Any changes to the configuration will need Listed Building Consent, which may be problematic but in the short term, repair and overhaul of the gutter lining and junctions of the hopper head and associated flashings and weatherproofing elements is necessary.

PHOTO 11.2.15a:

Cantilevered parapet wall (black painted bricks) above lead lined rainwater outlet to external hopper head with restricted drainage capacity.

JPEG No: IMG_5859



PHOTO 11.2.15b:

Cantilevered parapet wall above lead lined rainwater outlet to external hopper head with restricted drainage capacity.

JPEG No: IMG_5869



PHOTO 11.2.15c:

Cantilevered parapet wall (black painted bricks) above lead lined rainwater outlet to external hopper head with restricted drainage capacity.

JPEG No: IMG_5861



PHOTO 11.2.15d:

Reconstructed parapet wall around bay construction using modern bricks.

JPEG No: IMG_5866



PHOTO 11.2.15e:

Reconstructed parapet wall around bay construction using modern bricks.

JPEG No: IMG_5876



- 11.2.16 In many areas the coping stone joints are heavily eroded, sections are cracked but have been sealed with mastic which, is unlikely to be effective in waterproofing the cracked section, which leads us to conclude that these sections of coping stones should be replaced.

PHOTO 11.2.16a:

Cracked and eroded coping stones which require replacement.

JPEG No: IMG_5870



PHOTO 11.2.16b:

Eroded coping stones to parapet on north side of rear elevation which shows that, as a minimum, removal of moss, repointing joints and decoration is required.

JPEG No: IMG_5872



11.2.17 The lead linings through the parapet walls forming the chutes to the hopper heads all require re-dressing and repair, as the lead work has become displaced.

PHOTO 11.2.17:

Displaced lead lining through parapet wall aperture.

JPEG No: IMG_5911



West Facing Roof to Main Building (North Side)

- 11.2.18 This area is one of the main roof coverings over the tallest part of the property. It is covered with natural slates and terminates into a lead lined parapet gutter behind a raised masonry rendered parapet wall facing the front elevation.
- 11.2.19 The main roof slope undulates slightly, indicating that the timber framework has settled over the years and no longer remains evenly pitched. This is quite evident on the left hand side adjacent to the gable wall and is caused because the gable wall is rigid and has not move much over the years in contrast to the ageing and sagging of the adjacent roof frame.

PHOTO 11.2.19:

Gentle sagging of main pitched slate coverings of the front elevation.

JPEG No: IMG_5717



- 11.2.20 The slate coverings, although aged, are generally in fair condition and provide a consistent weathering envelope over the roof frame.

PHOTO 11.2.20a:

Slate coverings over west facing main roof which are generally in fair condition.

JPEG No: IMG_5723



PHOTO 11.2.20b:

Slate coverings over west facing main roof which are generally in fair condition.

JPEG No: IMG_5724



- 11.2.21 The main defect with this roof at the present time is the defective cement mortar pointing on the verges (edges) of the slates where they overhang the gable walls below. The mortar pointing should be renewed to prevent displacement of the slates and possible water ingress at these vulnerable points.

PHOTO 11.2.21a:

Defective cement mortar pointing under slates.

JPEG No: IMG_5737



PHOTO 11.2.21b:

Defective cement mortar pointing under slates.

JPEG No: IMG_5738



11.2.22 The leadwork forming the gutter behind the main parapet wall is generally in fair condition; at the time of inspection, no significant defects were noted.

PHOTO 11.2.22:

Lead linings to parapet gutters on the west side, generally in fair condition.

JPEG No: IMG_5741



11.2.23 The copings to the parapet wall are also in fair condition, although they do not appear to overhang the wall below by very much, and therefore, the rainwater run-off from the coping may be compromised and allow water absorption into the masonry below. One section of wall coating appears to have been replaced with a non-matching coping stone. It was also noted that brackets have been fixed through the copings to form supports to the overhead lighting illuminating the elevations, we did not check the fixings of the brackets that they appear to be secure at the time of inspection.

PHOTO 11.2.23:

Front parapet wall (west facing) with non-matching coping stone bedded in centre section.

JPEG No: IMG_5718



- 11.2.24 Inevitably, the fixings through the coping stones will lead to localised water penetration into the copings and over time the fixing holes will enlarge, and the brackets will become less securely fixed. Ideally, they should be checked every 2-3 years or so to make sure they are still securely fixed, and the coping faces are not becoming excessively damaged.

Two Smaller Double Pitched Roofs with Central Valley Gutter on South Side of Building Adjacent to Entrance Gates

- 11.2.25 These two double pitched roofs are parallel with each other and are covered with concrete plain tiles and a lead lined valley gutter between them.

PHOTO 11.2.25:

Inner tiled slopes with lead lined valley gutter between.

JPEG No: IMG_5762



- 11.2.26 The inner slopes are protected by pigeon netting which is keeping the debris at bay. Part of the pigeon netting has become torn and has been repaired with blue netting as a temporary measure.

PHOTO 11.2.26:

Temporary repair using blue netting to main pigeon netting.

JPEG No: IMG_5779



- 11.2.27 The roof tiles are continuous and generally evenly pitched, although there is evidence of patch repairs noted by a discontinuous colour in the tiled surfaces. The ridge tiles do require minor repointing.

PHOTO 11.2.27a:

Displaced pointing beneath ridge tiles which requires repair.

JPEG No: IMG_5763



PHOTO 11.2.27b:

Cracked pointing on
ridge tile with junction to
chimney abutment.

JPEG No: IMG_5767



PHOTO 11.2.27c:

Cracked pointing
underneath ridge tile.

JPEG No: IMG_5774



11.2.28 The even pitch tends to indicate that the roof framework supporting the tiles is generally in good order and does not appear to be overloaded or displaced.

- 11.2.29 The lead lined valley gutter is rather narrow and prone to blockage as noted by the silt debris along its length which requires cleaning through.

PHOTO 11.2.29:

Blocked valley gutter.

JPEG No: IMG_5766



- 11.2.30 There is a rainwater drainage pipe routed through the tiling and discharging through the gable wall to an external hopper head; this is a rather unusual arrangement but appears to be effective and does not require repair at present.

PHOTO 11.2.30:

Rainwater drainage pipe
routed through roof tiling
into external hopper
head.

JPEG No: IMG_5781



West Facing Sloping Roof on the North Side of the Building above Felt Roof

- 11.2.31 This is one of the principal roofs but is set at a lower height than the previously described west roof. It is finished with clay and concrete plain tiling and is generally evenly pitched and consistently aligned. This again indicates that the roof frame stable and not overloaded.
- 11.2.32 On the left hand side of the roof, as viewed from the front elevation, the tiles abut the rendered gable wall so that all roof and wall abutment flashing is beginning to show signs of disrepair. There is a rendered and painted angle fillet which is cracked, and therefore, will be allowing localised water entry. Adjacent to that, a crude mastic sealant has been applied at the junction with the tiles the sealant has also been applied to cracked tiles in an attempt to seal gaps and defects in this junction. This repair is largely ineffective and needs attention.



- 11.2.33 On the right hand side of the roof, there is a lead flashing at the junction with the chimney stack abutment which has been finished with a plastic termination bar screw fixed to the render, and again, sealed with mastic. This is becoming displaced and over time water will penetrate past the termination bar and into the roof slopes below. Over time the timbers adjacent will deteriorate and become decayed, but the decay will not be visible for many years, as it will be hidden from view. It is difficult to seal lead flashings to rendered walls, but they should be cut and chased into the rendering and finished with a bell mouth drip. Over time the screw fixings will also become an issue, enabling water to penetrate into the render.

PHOTO 11.2.33a:

Lead flashing and termination bar to rendered chimney stack which is separating from render and will allow water ingress into the structure below.

JPEG No: IMG_5727

**PHOTO 11.2.33b:**

Lead flashing and termination bar to rendered chimney stack which is separating from render and will allow water ingress into the structure below.

JPEG No: IMG_5695



- 11.2.34 Below the chimney stacks there is a small, raised parapet wall section which has been finished with a lead cover flashing which is well fixed and in good condition.
- 11.2.35 The tiles are affected by moss and lichen growth, which ideally should be removed, as vegetation tends to encourage water retention on the roofs, which over time will encourage tile surfaces to deteriorate; particularly in frosty conditions when water is absorbed into them and causes spalling of the tile faces.

West Facing Mono-Pitched Felt Roof

- 11.2.36 There is a mono-pitched felt covered roof below the tiled roof which is a slightly unusual feature. The roof slope is quite shallow which possibly explains the existence of the felt covering rather than a tiled or slate covering.
- 11.2.37 The green mineral felt coverings are aged, therefore, we estimate renewal will be necessary within 5 years or so. The exposed edges of the felts are particularly poor and will need re-covering and may fail sooner than the main surfaces.

PHOTO 11.2.37:

Badly eroded edge detail to the felt roof coverings above the gutter line.

JPEG No: IMG_5684



- 11.2.38 There is also a raised bulkhead detail which possibly encloses a redundant chimney flue, but nevertheless will need re-covering at the same time.

PHOTO 11.2.38:

Raised felt bulkhead detail on sloping felt roof.

JPEG No: IMG_5694



- 11.2.39 The uPVC gutters serving this felt roof are heavily blocked with silt and require cleaning through; we recommend that this should be done every 6 months. The gutter joints are also displaced and require realignment.

PHOTO 11.2.39a:

Displaced gutter joints
which require repair.

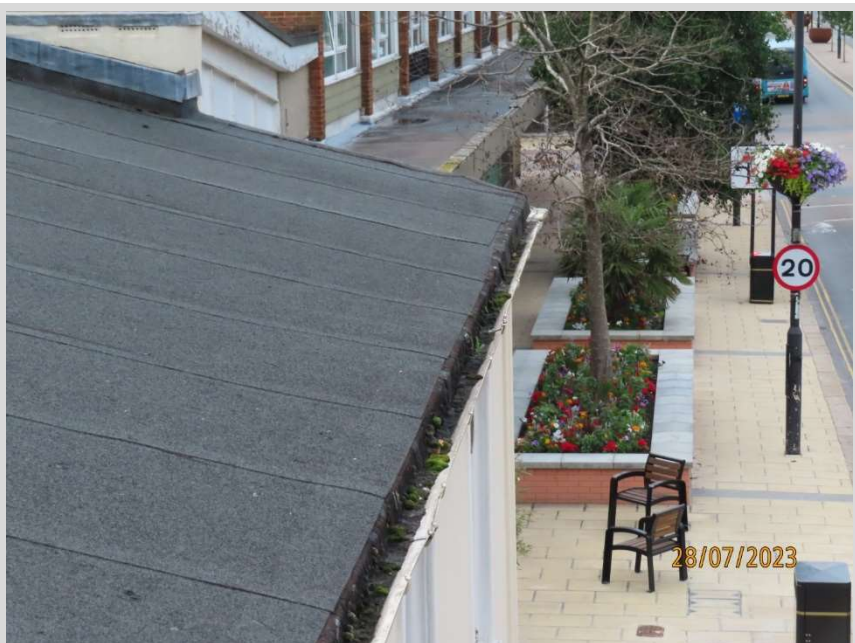
JPEG No: IMG_5679



PHOTO 11.2.39b:

Blocked uPVC rainwater
gutters.

JPEG No: IMG_5683



- 11.2.40 There is also a 100mm diameter drainage pipe running through the gable wall which is connected to one of the gutters and tends to indicate that the rainwater pipe drains into the roof void and then discharges elsewhere. This needs to be traced, as this may be a source of the internal water damage affecting the first floor rooms below.

PHOTO 11.2.40:

Rainwater drainage pipe
routed into roof void
through wall which
needs tracing.

JPEG No: IMG_5685



Small Ground Floor Flat Roof Area above Secondary Entrance Between North and South Main Elevations

- 11.2.41 This small ground floor flat roof is bounded on three sides by main walls rising up and enclosing the first floors and a small, raised parapet wall to the front. It is also protected with pigeon netting. It appears to have a metal roof covering, possibly zinc although it has been painted over.
- 11.2.42 It is a small, but congested area with a VRF heat exchanger and associated pipe, cables and isolator switches taking up much of the space, as well as a drainage pipe with multiple connections.
- 11.2.43 The roof drains to an external hopper head and drainage pipe, but the roof is not free draining and there is a build-up of moss and accumulated silt. Maintenance is difficult because of the pigeon netting, but we imagine that the netting is essential.
- 11.2.44 The heat exchanger unit is placed upon tiles we believe and these to some degree restrict rainwater run-off. It is also apparent that the drainage pipes have leaked, as replacement rubber joints have been installed in two sections and one of the vertical joints is misaligned.
- 11.2.45 Overflow pipes also oversail this roof, so water can escape on to the roof covering if the internal ball valves become faulty.
- 11.2.46 This roof area needs close inspection as we suspect that the wall abutment flashing may be defective, the roof covering may also be damaged and the drainage pipe leaks. All of which may be causing water damage within the property on the ground floor areas.

PHOTO 11.2.46a:

Congested flat roof area with heat exchanger, displaced drainage pipe joint and failed roof coverings.

JPEG No: IMG_5688

**PHOTO 11.2.46b:**

Moss and silt debris on roof.

JPEG No: IMG_5686



- 11.2.47 Part of the concrete coping is cracked and displaced' leaving a gap in the coping which will be allowing some rainwater to drain into the masonry wall below. This needs repair as it will be a source of water ingress into the structure and internal dampness. Judging by the moss growth around the crack this defect appears to be quite old.

PHOTO 11.2.47:

Cracked coping which allows water into the structure.

JPEG No: IMG_5689

Entrance Portico Roof

- 11.2.48 This roof is lead covered, it has some minor debris on it and the rainwater outlet point is quite small, but the lead coverings appear to be in good condition for the time being. The abutment flashings along the main wall will need checking periodically, just in case there is some separation from the wall due to the portico structure leaning out and separating from the main wall itself. This could be achieved by reinstating the monitoring process.

PHOTO 11.2.48:

Lead coverings over entrance portico.

JPEG No: IMG_5742



Ground Floor Rear Flat Roof to North Eastern Corner

- 11.2.49 This roof is finished with green mineral felt surrounded by a small, raised parapet wall capped with concrete copings. The coping stone joints require cleaning and repointing, as they are slightly open jointed with moss growing through them. This indicates they are retaining water which, in the longer term, can penetrate into the wall structure and lead to internal dampness.
- 11.2.50 The green mineral felt is slightly aged, but generally appears to be in fair condition for the time being. The upstand flashing is also in fair condition. The felt is slightly uneven and rucked which is an indication that it has suffered from thermal expansion in the past. Eventually these areas of unevenness will tearing of the felt and lead to internal water ingress; at the moment that does not appear to be occurring. We estimate that the felt will have a life expectancy of approximately 5 years or so.

PHOTO 11.2.50a:

Flat roof to north-eastern side. Note: coping stone joints require repair and repointing.

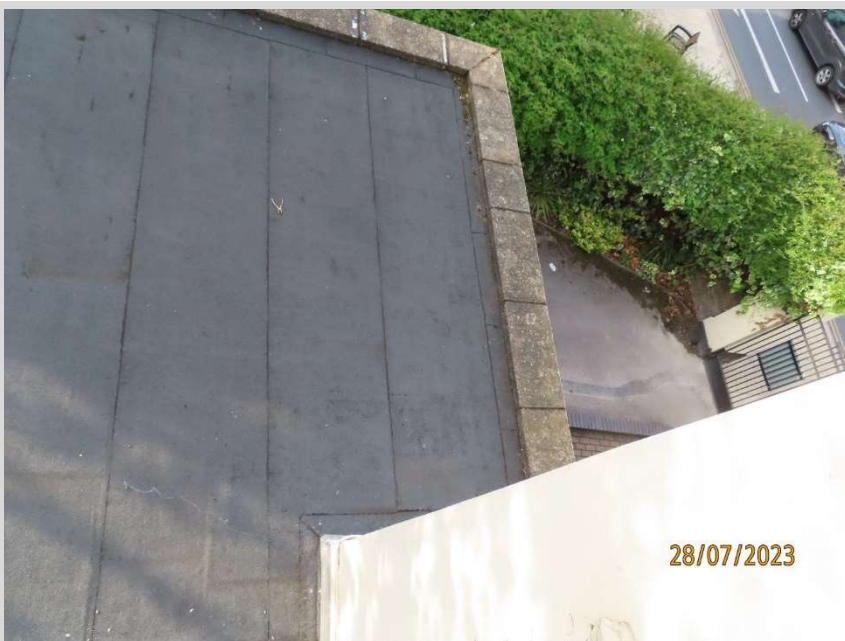
JPEG No: IMG_5814



PHOTO 11.2.50b:

Slight unevenness in felt coverings at foot of photograph near chimney stack due to thermal expansion.

JPEG No: IMG_5815



11.2.51 There is a smaller lower felt roof over the entrance door which is in similar condition.

PHOTO 11.2.51:

Flat roof over entrance porch.

JPEG No: IMG_5818



11.2.52 The roof voids are used for storage with boarding and lining being provided to the joists and rafters throughout. In some places, the timbers are exposed, and we noted that the roof would originally have been of random cut timber as some are still present. They are all heavily infested and decayed which is largely historic and the majority have been replaced or supplemented with modern square cut timbers. At the time of inspection, we did not detect signs of any active woodworm or beetle infestation, but this cannot be discounted. Regularly inspections are required as these are important structures.

11.2.53 In the main area, there are bolted timber trusses jointed into the original structural timbers which are sound. We estimate the works were undertaken many years ago.

- 11.2.54 The majority of rafters to the front slope are new, with only those to the left hand side being original. The front wall plate has been renewed in part. The older part is heavily infested with woodworm and is soft and failing. Whilst not urgent, this will require replacement in the longer term, which would mean lifting off this part of the roof entirely.
- 11.2.55 Given the age of the property, the roof framework looks to be in reasonable condition, although does need some stabilisation and repair.
- 11.2.56 If necessary, It would be quite possible to convert the spaces to habitable accommodation or a working environment, if required, which may enhance the commercial viability of the property in the longer term.

12.0 CHIMNEY STACKS & FLUES

The chimneys section looks at all chimneys to the property and considers each in turn. Chimney stacks act as a flue for open fire within the property so it is important that they are intact and in good working order to prevent the risk of smoke ingress into the property.

12.1 Summary of Construction

- 12.1.1 There are three remaining chimney stacks to this property, although we estimate a further four have been removed wholly or in part since construction, possibly more.
- 12.1.2 The left hand chimney is built into the small front gable to the left hand side and has a gas flue cowl to the rear flue and the front flue is blocked.
- 12.1.3 The flue is finished with render and built externally in the gable wall, with metal flashings at the roof junction with a cement mortar flaunching.

PHOTO 12.1.3:

General view of left chimney.

JPEG No: IMG_5723



- 12.1.4 The central chimney is located to the left of the small turret roof, over the Mayor's Parlour. This is a larger stack thought to provide four flues. The stack is formed in masonry which is rendered to finish with banding courses at high level. All of the flues are capped and assumed to be redundant.

PHOTO 12.1.4:

General view of central chimney stack.

JPEG No: IMG_5799



- 12.1.5 The right chimney is the largest of the remaining stacks, possibly containing up to six flues. Again, it is formed in masonry and rendered to finish. It is built outside the gable wall and all flues are capped except one which has a gas flue cowl. Metal flashings are provided at the roof abutments.
- 12.1.6 There is evidence of two partially removed stacks above the front flat roof area. These are felted over and unventilated.
- 12.1.7 The floor plan and internal fireplace positions also suggest a further large stack has been removed from above the roof line to the rear (to the left hand side), which is curious since this is over a door opening at ground floor level. We cannot confirm the means of support for the brickwork at first floor level. There is no evidence of movement, but we recommend this is checked.

12.2 Summary of Condition

- 12.2.1 The chimney flues are found in similar condition throughout. There is some evidence of cracking to the render, but the flues are thought generally sound and free from significant structural defects. The internal flues do not appear to have been significantly altered and the support for the stacks above roof level is considered sound.
- 12.2.2 The condition of flashings is variable and leakage is occurring into the roof void around the left stack. The flashings are clearly dated, and we recommend they are renewed, since there are some splits and badly detailed sections.

PHOTO 12.2.2:

Poor flashings to left hand stack allowing water penetration into roof void.



- 12.2.3 All three stacks have redundant flues. This is of course common on older buildings, but redundant flues should be capped and ventilated to prevent the build-up of condensation. Most redundant flues are capped and ventilated, but this has been done rather crudely, generally with two plain tiles leant together and bedded in mortar.
- 12.2.4 Whilst this arrangement should be effective, the majority of the mortar flashings are cracking and failed and require repair in the medium term. The central stack is in particularly poor condition with weed growth and loose mortar.
- 12.2.5 The left stack has a flue which is capped and unventilated and the detailing should be altered. The partially removed stacks to the flat roof are felted over and also unventilated. This detail should also be improved to prevent condensation.

13.0 RAINWATER GOODS

'Rainwater goods' is the term given to the rainwater gutters and the rainwater downpipes. Their function is to carry rainwater from the roof to the ground keeping the main structure as dry as possible.

13.1 Summary of Construction

- 13.1.1 The majority of the rainwater goods appear to be of uPVC construction in a variety of sizes and styles.
- 13.1.2 Some of the rainwater downpipes are uPVC, but many are cast iron with hopper heads.
- 13.1.3 The subsurface drains were not inspected.

13.2 Summary of Condition

- 13.2.1 We have commented upon the condition of the valley gutters and parapet gutters within the preceding section relating to roofs.
- 13.2.2 We noted that generally the external rainwater gutters, hopper heads and downpipes all require repair and maintenance.
- 13.2.3 The function of the rainwater goods is to remove rainwater away from the building and by safe disposal ensuring that the property remains dry. When the rainwater goods do not function correctly, water tends to collect or worse still permeate into the building structure leading to internal dampness which is difficult to trace.
- 13.2.4 Many of the rainwater gutters are full of silt and debris and periodic cleaning of the gutters is required on at least a 6 monthly basis, if not more frequently.
- 13.2.5 At the same time any displaced joints or broken sections should either be repaired or replaced.
- 13.2.6 Over the years, there have been various alterations to the gutters, which to some degree have not been executed very well and possibly encouraging water retention within the building structures.

PHOTO 13.2.6a:

Rainwater gutters below west facing felt roof with drainage pipe routed into roof void and lower gutter section blocking cast iron hopper head.

JPEG No: IMG_5678



PHOTO 13.2.6b:

Displaced gutter joint to
west elevation.

JPEG No: IMG_5679



PHOTO 13.2.6c:

Rainwater downpipe
connections draining
front gutters.

JPEG No: IMG_5964



PHOTO 13.2.6d:

Soil stacks fitted to front wall which appear to drain into rainwater disposal systems below.

JPEG No: IMG_5680



PHOTO 13.2.6e:

Moss and vegetation in gutters restricting rainwater disposal.

JPEG No: IMG_5683

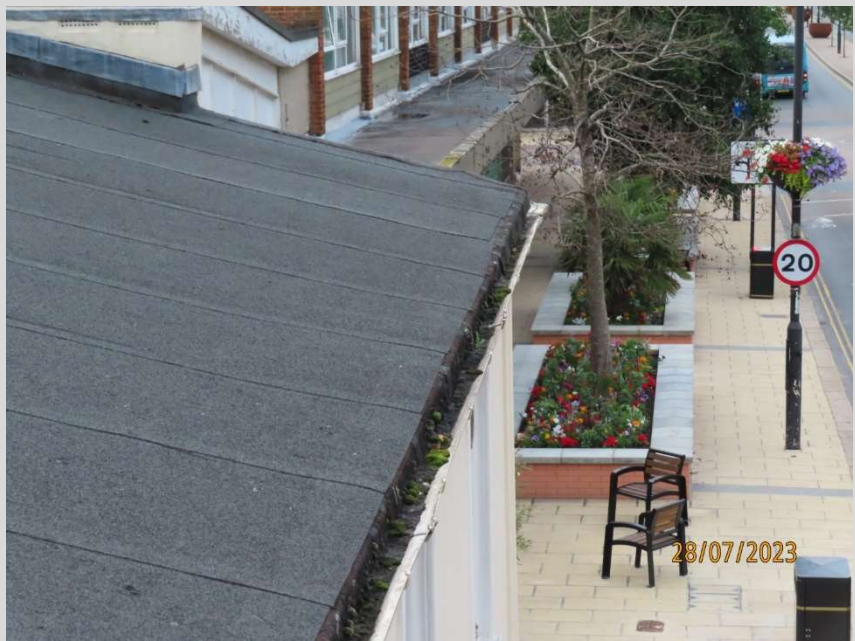


PHOTO 13.2.6f:

Waste water disposal
pipes which appear to
drain to side of
extension.

JPEG No: IMG_5688



PHOTO 13.2.6g:

Cast iron drainage pipe
which drains onto flat
roof on front elevation.

JPEG No: IMG_5693



PHOTO 13.2.6h:

Old lead drainage pipe
embedded in rendered
wall crushed but
connected to uPVC
elbow.

JPEG No: IMG_5692



PHOTO 13.2.6i:

Wastepipe outlet
draining into external
rainwater hopper head
with rainwater outlet
adjacent and soil pipe
connection in front.

JPEG No: IMG_5691



PHOTO 13.2.6j:

North facing gable with upper rainwater pipe draining through sloping roof behind wall and external hopper heads draining to valley gutter, which is full of leaf debris and silt.

JPEG No: IMG_5758

**PHOTO 13.2.6k:**

Corroded metal hopper head which is draining through rear parapet wall.

JPEG No: IMG_5900



PHOTO 13.2.6i:

Blocked metal hopper head which is causing dampness in the wall face.

JPEG No: IMG_5914



PHOTO 13.2.6m:

Blocked and redundant hopper head with damp render behind.

JPEG No: IMG_5985



PHOTO 13.2.6n:

Rainwater pipe draining onto paving with clear water retention on path, as evidenced by more staining and dampness in black painted plinth.

JPEG No: IMG_5995

**PHOTO 13.2.6o:**

Corroded downpipe with heavy moss growth around joint where long term water saturation is occurring.

JPEG No: IMG_5996

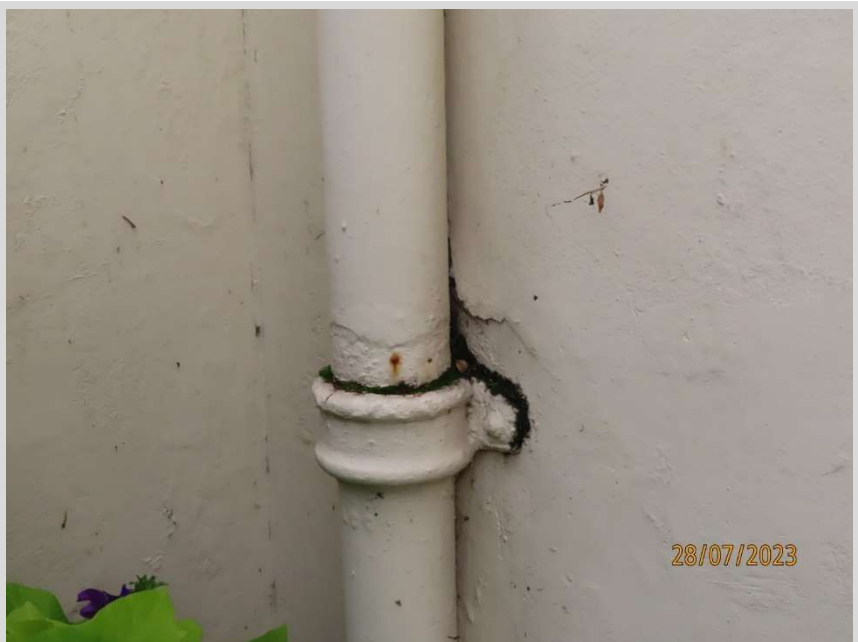


PHOTO 13.2.6p:

Rainwater outlet from
entrance portico with
separation cracks
adjacent.

JPEG No: IMG_6017



PHOTO 13.2.6q:

Broken gulley grating on
north elevation.

JPEG No: IMG_6040



PHOTO 13.2.6r:

Damp wall and paving
adjacent to rainwater
outlet.

JPEG No: IMG_6050

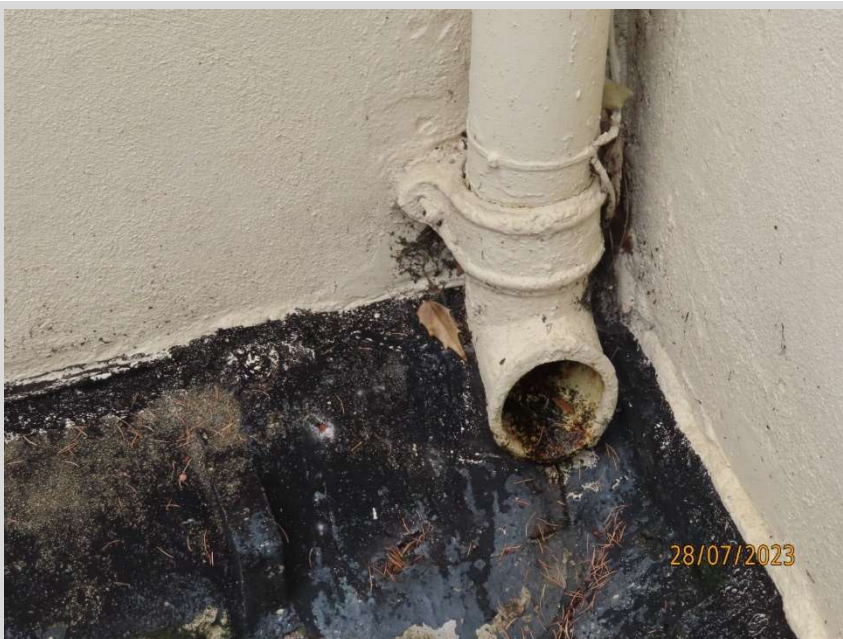


PHOTO 13.2.6s:

Blocked rainwater gulley
outlet.

JPEG No: IMG_6052



PHOTO 13.2.6t:

Rainwater downpipe
draining to open gully.

JPEG No: IMG_6065



13.2.7 The preceding photographs illustrate the condition of the rainwater disposal goods and a variety of issues which are contributing to water retention within the structure and contributing to dampness in those parts the building.

13.2.8 The Recommendations (subject to Listed Consent Approval) are:

- Rationalise the gutters and disposal arrangements on the front elevation.
- Renew all the older rainwater hopper heads and downpipes.
- Change the open gullies to accessible sealed gullies.
- Clean the rainwater goods at least every 6 months.
- Additionally, it would be prudent to clean and clear the subsurface drains, removing all silt and debris.

13.3 Maintenance Advice

13.3.1 Gutters should fall evenly towards the outlets and regular checks should be made to ensure that they are clear of debris and sediment. Any leaking joints should be remade. Brackets should be checked for defects and repaired/renewed as appropriate. Cracked or broken sections of gutter and downpipe should be renewed to prevent damp penetration. Ensure that rainwater drainage arrangements are operating efficiently.

14.0 WALLS & EXTERNAL ENVELOPE

External walls need to perform a variety of functions. These include supporting upper floors and the roof structure, resisting dampness, providing adequate thermal and sound insulation, offering resistance to fire and being aesthetically presentable.

14.1 Summary of Construction

- 14.1.1 The walls are rendered and painted; the Listing describes the render as stucco, but over the years most of the original stucco has been replaced with render which we suspect will be cement based rather than lime based.
- 14.1.2 We believe that most of the walls are solid masonry rather than cavity, but we also suspect that many of the lintels will be timber rather than concrete or steel and there will also be timber floor joists and beams embedded within and bearing off the masonry walls.
- 14.1.3 The property may not have been built with a damp proof course, but if it was, it would probably have been slate. No doubt over the years, various chemical injection damp proof courses may have been inserted.
- 14.1.4 It appears that cement based render plinths have been added as an attempt to keep external dampness at bay.

14.2 Summary of Condition

- 14.2.1 The render on the walls on most elevations is cracked and crazed.
- 14.2.2 Sand and cement render is inflexible so it is prone to cracking, it can also expand and contract causing further cracking through the yearly cycle of hot summer weather and frost conditions in the winter.
- 14.2.3 Water can get into the cracks and soak into any voids between the render and the brickwork and over time this will deteriorate the masonry even further. Once trapped behind the render, water cannot escape so instead of evaporating into open air, evaporates into the interior causing large damp patches or moisture on the affected walls. If there are any timbers built into the wall, such as joists or window lintels these can decay due to the trapped water.
- 14.2.4 The sand and cement render also reduces the ability of the building to evaporate and circulate the moisture that is produced internally, which can further exacerbate the dampness and cause condensation issues. From this brief description, it can be seen that the application of sand and cement render can lead to severe long term moisture and dampness issues.
- 14.2.5 This property displays cracked render finishes on all elevations. In many places, the paint applied to the render is also bubbling and lifting, further indicating that water is trapped behind.

PHOTO 14.2.5a:

Cracked render and bubbling paintwork on parapet wall to rear bay.

JPEG No: IMG_5915



PHOTO 14.2.5b:

Cracking on south elevation on main gable wall with peeling paintwork below on corner of building.

JPEG No: IMG_5963



- 14.2.6 As a short term measure, the cracked areas should be carefully repaired as soon as possible to try and reduce the amount of water entering the building.
- 14.2.7 In the longer term, we recommend that the rendering is renewed with a more breathable render system which would enable evaporation to take place.
- 14.2.8 On the front elevation, there are cracks between the ground and first floor window openings adjacent to the window arches and window cills.

PHOTO 14.2.8a:

Cracked first floor window head which extends into render below parapet.

JPEG No: IMG_6000



PHOTO 14.2.8b:

Cracked window head with further cracking on pediments and parapet above.

JPEG No: IMG_6003



PHOTO 14.2.8c:

Crack through ground floor rendered window cills.

JPEG No: IMG_6009



- 14.2.9 We believe that over the years the loadbearing timbers built into the masonry walls have decayed due to their age, but also long term water penetration issues and as a result they have compressed slightly enabling displacement of the masonry between the windows on each floor. The movement is not severe and is likely to have been present for many years, however, it is important to repair the render prevent the deterioration becoming more serious.
- 14.2.10 At some point in the future the loadbearing timber should be checked so an assessment of the condition can be made to establish whether any repair will be required which will of course be subject to Listed Building Consent.

PHOTO 14.2.10a:

Hairline vertical cracking in south facing gable wall.

JPEG No: IMG_5736



PHOTO 14.2.10b:

Damp render finishes
with water trapped
behind on north facing
gable wall overlooking
lower roofs.

JPEG No: IMG_5771



PHOTO 14.2.10c:

Typical crazing of render
on east facing parapet
wall.

JPEG No: IMG_5887



PHOTO 14.2.10d:

Cracked render on
north-east extension.

JPEG No: IMG_5969



PHOTO 14.2.10e:

Typical cracks on west
elevation with uneven
render finishes behind.

JPEG No: IMG_5975



PHOTO 14.2.10f:

Typical cracks on west elevation with uneven render finishes behind.

JPEG No: IMG_5976



PHOTO 14.2.10g:

Typical cracks on west elevation with uneven render finishes behind.

JPEG No: IMG_5977



- 14.2.11 The black painted ground floor plinths around the base of the property, adjoining the pavements, are also in poor condition; the paintwork finishes are failing, the air vents are partially blocked, and the render is cracked.

PHOTO 14.2.11:

Failing plinth at base of wall.

JPEG No: IMG_5982



- 14.2.12 In addition to these observations, the external painted surfaces, which are quite extensive, are now due for redecoration which should be done once the repairs have been undertaken.
- 14.2.13 The entrance portico is separating away from the main building with vertical cracks at the junction to the main building; this movement has been monitored in the past and it is evident that, although quite noticeable, it did not appear to be progressive.
- 14.2.14 However, we recommend that the movement is monitored by measurement at least annually to either provide reassurance that no remedial work is necessary or ensure that any future movement is not overlooked.

PHOTO 14.2.14a:

Separation crack between the main building and the portico on the south side.

JPEG No: IMG_6016



PHOTO 14.2.14b:

Separation crack
between the main
building and the portico
on the north side.

JPEG No: IMG_6023



PHOTO 14.2.14c:

Old monitoring tell-tale.

JPEG No: IMG_6024

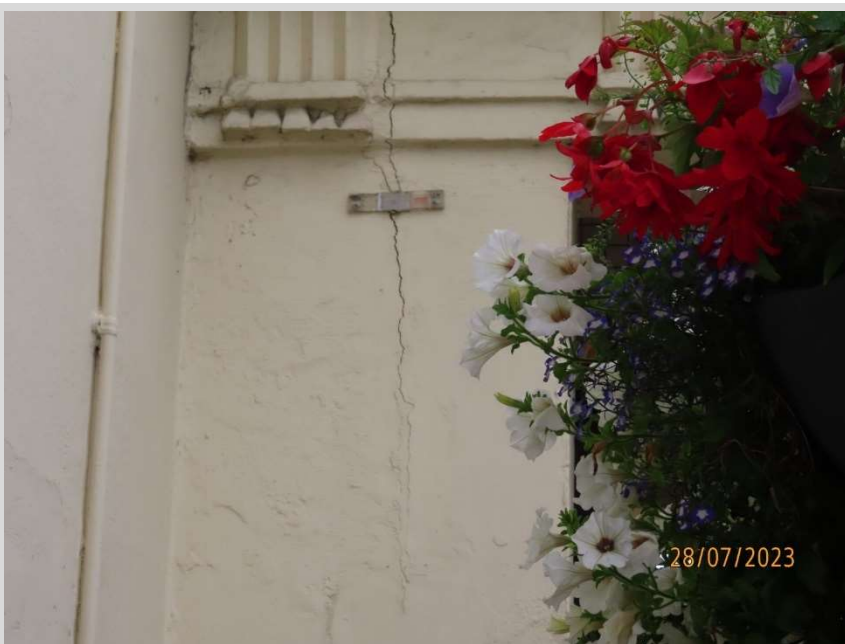


PHOTO 14.2.14d:

Displacement of stone paving supporting the portico.

JPEG No: IMG_6028



14.2.15 The descriptions of defects in Items 18.2.1 to 18.2.19 have manifested themselves internally with severe dampness to plaster and ceiling finishes in the first floor kitchen on the west elevation, and dampness within the offices to the east elevation at first floor level, as well as cracking within the offices on first floor north-west elevation and dampness at ground floor level to both the west elevation and internal walls to the rear as well as south and north gables.

PHOTO 14.2.15a:

Damp ceiling and wall plaster to first floor.

JPEG No: IMG_6076



PHOTO 14.2.15b:

Damp ceiling to first floor, rear elevation.

JPEG No: IMG_6080



- 14.2.16 With respect to the internal dampness, our recommendations regarding roofs, parapet walls, valley gutters, rainwater goods and rendering repairs will address the internal damage and disrepair to the plaster and decorative finishes. However, the walls will take a long time to dry, and it may be some time before the interior areas can be redecorated.
- 14.2.17 Ideally, if possible, the damp plaster should be removed, this will be unsightly, but it is the fastest method of drying out the walls, it will also facilitate an internal inspection of the wall structures and enable exposure of any timbers built into the damp masonry to establish if they need repair too.
- 14.2.18 The cracking noted in the first floor wall plaster on the north-west side is principally vertically oriented and hairline in nature, located at the junction of the front wall to the dividing partition walls. With reference to BRE Digest 254, the crack widths are relatively minor on the plaster, but they could be wider behind the plaster where the two walls intersect. The walls may not be bonded together and have just naturally separated.
- 14.2.19 Localised plaster removal may help establish the nature and cause of the displacement and help determine whether just cosmetic repairs are required, or more structural intervention is required. There is also some plaster cracking and dampness above the window heads on the front elevation. These cracks seem to coincide with the external cracks around the windows. As described earlier, the cracks are allowing some water penetration which is causing damage, but again, it would be useful to remove some plaster in these areas to establish whether there is any additional disrepair to the brickwork, or any timbers built into the walls.

PHOTO 14.2.19a:

Plaster cracks on first
floor front elevation.

JPEG No: IMG_6072



PHOTO 14.2.19b:

Plaster cracks on first
floor front elevation.

JPEG No: IMG_6073



PHOTO 14.2.19c:

Plaster crack and dampness above first floor window lintel.

JPEG No: IMG_6074



- 14.2.20 Additionally, there is the more recent phenomenon of localised flooding within the basement adjacent to the paving on the west side (front).
- 14.2.21 The origin of the water entry has not been clearly established at this stage. The water appeared to be ground water or rainwater and not sewage, which if correct, eliminates the possibility of broken drains or sub-ground soil pipes. The pathway for the water entry may be due to leaking surface water drains or a change in the local ground conditions following the pavement works on the High Street outside. The water appears to be entering the basement adjacent to the secondary entrance door, which is a congested area with lots of drainage connections, external inspection chambers for various statutory services, and of course, changes in the footpath. Further investigations are necessary.
- 14.2.22 The remaining areas of the basement are largely dry, for subterranean structures. Clearly, there is residual brickwork dampness as the walls are in contact with damp ground conditions, and ideally, the ventilation levels could be improved but the condition of the basement structures is consistent with these types of structures.
- 14.2.23 On the north side of the property, there is a single storey brick built extension, probably dating back to the Victorian era or possibly later; the paint finishes on the exterior are poor and redecoration of the brickwork is necessary.
- 14.2.24 The perimeter the property is generally damp; this is due to a combination of the age of the building, the relative differences in height between the ground floor and the exterior paving is, which appears to be generally at the same level of as the interior or even higher in some cases. Many of the vents built-in the external walls are blocked and there is insufficient air ventilation through timber subfloor voids on the ground floor. This will cause dampness and decay in the ground floor supporting timbers and floorboards.

- 14.2.25 The introduction of chemical injection damp proof courses will be largely ineffective in our view, but the introduction of french drainage beds around the perimeter of the property, and possibly reducing the external levels, where this is feasible, will greatly enhance the condition of the walls and associated floor timbers in contact with those damp walls.

14.3 Maintenance Advice

- 14.3.1 Ensure that brick pointing is in sound condition and renew, where necessary, to prevent damp penetration.
- 14.3.2 Ensure the junctions between windows or door frames and the brickwork are maintained in a watertight condition. Ensure that joints around pipes where they extend through the wall are properly sealed and that pipework is securely attached to walls. If minor cracking is noted, ensure that it is made good. If the cracking recurs or larger cracks are noted seek further professional advice from ourselves to establish the best course of action.
- 14.3.3 If the property is rendered or covered with an alternative, form of cladding, ensure that it is maintained in good condition and renew defective areas as and when found. Poor maintenance may lead to water penetration and could cause timber decay.
- 14.3.4 Keep soil, paving, patios, etc. at least 150mm (6") below the level of the damp proof course, air bricks or internal floor levels, whichever is the lowest, to prevent dampness occurring. Airbricks should be maintained in good condition and free from blockages.

15.0 EXTERNAL JOINERY

The external joinery section encompasses windows, doors, fascias, soffits and any other joinery present such as decorative weatherboarding, etc.

Windows primary function is to admit light and air, but in modern properties, they are expected to also have thermal and sound insulation benefits. Another element of external joinery is the fascias and soffits. These offer protection to the rafter feet and also allow the securing of guttering.

15.1 Summary of Construction

- 15.1.1 Fascias & Soffits: Painted timber
- 15.1.2 Windows: Predominantly timber framed and painted
- 15.1.3 Doors: Painted timber

15.2 Summary of Condition

- 15.2.1 Most of the windows require overhaul and repair; there are a significant number of windows, and in many areas, the timber has become decayed and open grained. Some of the window cills and frames are severely decayed and will need renewal.

PHOTO 15.2.1a:

Decayed window cill on
attic roof window.

JPEG No: IMG_5833



PHOTO 15.2.1b:

Decayed window cill on
attic roof window.

JPEG No: IMG_5903



PHOTO 15.2.1c:

Typical decay on front elevation window.

JPEG No: IMG_6009



PHOTO 15.2.1d:

Decay on rear elevation window.

JPEG No: IMG_6051



- 15.2.2 Following repairs to the timber windows, redecoration will be necessary, but the standard of decorative works should be improved. In many areas the detailing of the window frames has been lost due to overpainting on the glass which detracts from the attractiveness of the window framing.

PHOTO 15.2.2:

Overpainting on glazing
of window sections.

JPEG No: IMG_5986



- 15.2.3 The curved sections to the window arches also need repair, as these are cracked and displaced; the render above them appears to be absorbing water which is deteriorating the framing of the curved windows.

PHOTO 15.2.3:

Defective window arches
due to long term water
ingress.

JPEG No: IMG_5992



- 15.2.4 The doors and door frames also need redecoration, and the timber thresholds and stone thresholds require repair.
- 15.2.5 From this brief description, it could be seen that timber joinery overhaul and repair is necessary to all external joinery items.

15.3 Maintenance Advice

- 15.3.1 Periodically inspect all areas of external joinery for defects including flaking or blistered paintwork, dampness or decay. Prepare and redecorate, as necessary. Regular painting / treatment helps prevent timber decay.
- 15.3.2 Replace all cracked and broken panes of glass and renew loose or missing putties. Replace broken sash cords and window catches. Ease and adjust opening windows to ensure that they work freely and seal properly to the frame. Ensure that all windows and doors are provided with adequate security. Do not allow condensation to cause decay to internal sections of windows and doors.

16.0 EXTERNAL DECORATIONS

- 16.1.1 The external decorations act as a protective coat for the building from the elements. Where this protective covering has failed, such as with flaking paintwork, the elements will infiltrate the structure. This is of particular concern since they are the primary cause of damage to any property.
- 16.1.2 The building has a large amount of decorative features and a maintenance burden for redecoration is high given the size of the building. The building is due for redecoration and the failure of the decorative services is leading to additional problems with defective render and timber joinery which is further causing damage to the interior of the building.
- 16.1.3 Therefore, it is clear that as a minimum a phased plan to repair damaged sections and improve the decorative coverings is required. The cost of this will be relatively significant.

16.2 Maintenance Advice

- 16.2.1 Maintain all decorated elements in good and sound condition and renew on a regular basis ensuring that all woodwork, metalwork and other painted surfaces are properly prepared prior to receiving the new finishes.

INTERNALLY

In this section we look at the internal finishes applied to the structural elements, such as the plasterwork applied to the ceiling joists, walls or partitions, together with the construction of the internal walls and partitions.

Ceilings, walls and partitions have been inspected from floor level and no opening up has been undertaken. The type of materials employed cannot be ascertained fully without damage being caused.

No exposure was carried out due to the restrictions of fitted carpets, floor coverings, etc. Comments are based upon our experience and knowledge of this type of construction. Floor voids were not inspected unless expressly stated.

We also note details of the internal fixtures and fittings and provide information of any services (gas, electricity, water, etc.) installed to the property and briefly comment upon their condition/state of repair.

It should be noted that not all joinery has been inspected. We have taken a random sample and visually inspected these to give a general overview of the condition. Please also see the External Joinery/Detailing Section.

Tests for dampness were taken internally with an electronic moisture meter. However, effective testing may be prevented in areas concealed by heavy furniture, fixtures such as kitchen fittings with back boards, wall tiles, wall panelling and also where dry lining was present, etc.

17.0 CEILINGS

17.1 Summary of Construction

- 17.1.1 The property has a variety of ceiling finishes ranging from lath and plaster, plasterboard and timber boarding.
- 17.1.2 Lath and plaster was in common use up until around the 1930's, following which plasterboard ceilings tended to be used.
- 17.1.3 We suspect plasterboard ceilings have been used in some areas where refurbishment and alteration works have been undertaken, such as to the rear office on the first floor and in the Council Chambers.
- 17.1.4 It is not possible to confirm whether these have been underdrawn on the original lath and plaster ceilings or whether the original lath and plaster was removed first. Obviously, securing new ceilings through unstable old materials can be problematic.
- 17.1.5 Many of the rooms have ornate decorative plaster covings and mouldings around the perimeters and this is much more ornate in the main entrance lobby and Council Chambers than in other areas but this is not thought to be an original feature and we estimate dates from the 1970's refurbishment.

17.2 Summary of Condition

- 17.2.1 In a number of locations around the property on all levels, the ceiling and wall finishes have been damaged by persistent long term water ingress. Clearly, the external sources of the water ingress need to be rectified before the internal disrepair is addressed.
- 17.2.2 Once the external repairs have been undertaken, localised repairs can be executed in the affected rooms, but the repairs may involve removal of plaster finishes and replastering rather than treating and overcoating the already damp sections.
- 17.2.3 As stated previously, once the external water ingress sources have been rectified, the internal repairs will remain durable for many years to come.
- 17.2.4 The principal areas affected at present are Town Clerk's main office, the first floor kitchen, the first floor offices on the north side and the ground floor toilet accommodation. All these areas are adjacent to defects noted on the exterior.
- 17.2.5 In addition to the water ingress and consequential damage, many of the ceilings are decoratively poor through a process of ageing and long term displacement and if the building is refurbished, there would be a good opportunity to renovate the ceilings and their associated features.
- 17.2.6 There is the possibility that the long term water ingress may have damaged timber lintels, beams and joists in close contact with these areas, and therefore, if possible, the sections of the ceiling should be removed to enable these elements to be inspected and repaired, as required.
- 17.2.7 The ceiling over the two storey entrance lobby is formed in lath and plaster with joists running from the front wall to the intermediate wall. There has obviously been a problem here in the past since two large steel beams were inserted into the roof space with sky hooks supporting the joists at their mid-span. The ceiling appears to be in sound condition at the present time with the exception of old historic minor water staining near the box gutter and the door to Office 14 and also cracking concentrated at this end.
- 17.2.8 The ground floor of the right part of the building are thought to be plasterboard with downstand boxed in timber beams. These beams are considered to be loadbearing, as the overlay plan in the Appendix shows they are generally under first floor partition positions.
- 17.2.9 In the north extension, additional 600 x 600mm suspended ceiling grids are provided under the flat roofs. Above the suspended ceiling, we noted plasterboard ceilings fixed to the underside of the block and beam roof construction. Around the perimeter of the rooms, in various isolated locations, water staining was noted to the tiles, and this is still wet, and we assume an ongoing problem.
- 17.2.10 Above the suspended ceilings, the plasterboard ceilings have failed and remedial works to this roof are required; following which isolated replacement of ceiling tiles will be necessary. On the basis of our single inspection, it is not clear whether this is caused by a roof leak, or whether condensation is to blame, possibly a combination of both.

- 17.2.11 The ceiling to the small rear annexe over the rear fire exit to the extension is suffering from condensation problems. This is a reinforced concrete slab and is uninsulated hence condensation problems are occurring. It is recommended this be re-covered externally and lined with an insulated plasterboard internally which should help alleviate the problem.
- 17.2.12 Generally, lath and plaster ceilings are likely to be coming to the end of their useful life and may fail with little warning.

17.3 Maintenance Advice

- 17.3.1 Check ceilings under flat roofs for any signs of leaks and investigate and repair, as necessary. If it is necessary to replace the roof covering, consideration should be given to improving the levels of insulation at the same time.
- 17.3.2 It is recommended practice to redecorate internally once every 5-7 years.

18.0 WALLS & PARTITIONS

18.1 Summary of Construction

- 18.1.1 The internal walls are a combination of timber stud partitions and masonry walls. Some of the masonry walls have internal timbers built within them.
- 18.1.2 Most of the walls are finished with plaster and timber skirtings and architraves with plaster covings at the junctions to the ceilings. Some areas include ceramic tiling or timber panelling.
- 18.1.3 At ground floor level, timber veneered timber partitions are provided separating the Council Chamber from the lobby and the Registrar's Office. They also form the main entrance lobby and are fairly attractive.
- 18.1.4 The walls are finished in a variety of materials, with ornate plaster mouldings to the Council Chamber, entrance areas and photocopying room.
- 18.1.5 Some of the offices have timber panelling and there are ornate plaster mouldings to the Marriage Room and Registrar's waiting area.
- 18.1.6 In other respects, the walls are generally plastered and decorated to finish with a variety of dado mouldings, textured lining paper and ceramic tiling to the toilets around the wash hand basins, etc.
- 18.1.7 The internal finishes are predominantly painted either directly over the plaster or timber or over wallpaper and lining paper.

18.2 Summary of Condition

- 18.2.1 The principal defects relating to the internal walls are either dampness with subsequent decorative and performance deterioration or shrinkage and settlement movement given the age of the building.
- 18.2.2 Plaster is incapable of resisting the forces of movement within the substructures, and therefore, will crack when the structures behind move through either thermal cycling, shrinkage or differential displacement.
- 18.2.3 Older plaster tends to lose its key to the backing structure and shrinks, bulges or becomes loose.
- 18.2.4 Given the age of the property, wall finishes are generally in fair condition.
- 18.2.5 We have discussed at length various areas of external damage and the causes which are leading to water ingress. Once these are addressed, the interior fixtures and finishes can be repaired or upgraded and approved to enhance the cosmetic appearance of the property and more importantly, protect the internal fabric and condition.
- 18.2.6 Inevitably, in a building of this age, differential movement will have occurred in the past; there have been repair schemes to rectify damaged structural timbers, stabilise walls and try and remediate differential movement.
- 18.2.7 During our inspection, we did not detect the signs of any significant structural displacement that is occurring which would give rise for immediate concern. However, due to the condition of the weathering envelope, we are concerned about the condition of timbers built into the structure and these could well be suffering from decay and dampness, which will cause them to lose their strength in a loadbearing capacity. There is also the possibility that these timbers will be affected by wood boring insects, which will also have damaged their capacity to bear the building load sufficiently.
- 18.2.8 Therefore, at every opportunity when the building is opened up for other works, all adjacent timbers should be carefully inspected and checked and a contingency for repair, in addition to the works around those areas, should be included.
- 18.2.9 On the front elevation, we noted some displacement between windows on the ground and first floors, particularly around the window heads and cills, which tends to indicate that some displacement of the loadbearing lintels and beams is occurring and in a building of this age these are quite likely to be timber. Therefore, it would be prudent to inspect these areas carefully at every opportunity.
- 18.2.10 We found a localised area of rising dampness in the disabled WC and this may be causing decay to the floor timbers (although they were not visible first hand because of fitted or vinyl sheeting). Investigation is required in this area and will also require removal of dry lining to the walls of this WC and some replastering. It is possible these defects are caused by dry rot in the floor void which is creeping up the walls. Although rare, this is a serious condition and should be investigated in the short term.

18.2.11 We noted dampness to the right hand side of the main entrance doors. This is almost certainly a problem with the rainwater goods and condition of the flat roof over the entrance portico. The internal plaster has efflorescence on the surface and some cracking which will need to be hacked off and repaired once the source of water penetration has been eradicated. It may be possible to sand the surfaces to remove any efflorescence staining and redecorate with breathable finishes.

18.2.12 At ground floor level, in the lean-to annexe containing the kitchen adjacent to the Council Chambers, the walls are poor condition. They have been dry lined with plasterboard, but the external masonry is allowing water penetration and even the dry lining is damp at low level.

18.3 Maintenance Advice

18.3.1 It is recommended practice to redecorate internally once every 5-7 years.

19.0 SERVICE DUCTS & RISERS

19.1.1 An internal inspection of service ducts was not made.

19.1.2 All the service ducts and risers should be carefully checked and following on from the detailed assessments contained in the Fire Risk Assessment report, all gaps and apertures between floors walls and ceilings passing into adjoining spaces, either vertically or horizontally, should be fully fire sealed to prevent the passage of smoke and flames from one area to the other.

20.0 FLOORS

20.1 Summary of Construction

20.1.1 The floors are predominantly of suspended timber construction, but in some areas solid floors do exist.

20.1.2 The majority of the floors are finished with carpet and vinyl coverings, restricting the ability to check and verify the condition of the floor timbers. Floor voids were not inspected, as floorboarding was not lifted or removed.

20.1.3 From our inspection in the basement, it is clear that the principal ground floor construction is an in-situ cast concrete slab, but it is possible floating timber floors are provided over these in some areas. We would assume suspended timber floors are employed towards the rear part of the building, since some floor ventilation ducts are provided externally and the floor certainly sounds like suspended timber.

20.1.4 The first floor construction is of suspended timber frame throughout and the floors are principally covered with carpet, except where fitted vinyl sheeting is provided to the WC's.

20.2 Summary of Condition

- 20.2.1 Generally, floor surfaces are reasonably level and in the main appear to be stable. Clearly, at first floor level, some of the floors slope slightly which is not surprising given the age of the property.
- 20.2.2 As previously stated, floor joists or floor beams will be supported on the masonry walls and as we already appreciate that these walls are damp, it is likely that floor joists and beams embedded in these walls will also be decayed to some extent.
- 20.2.3 We refer to our previous comment, that when areas are opened up for any works, they are carefully inspected to check the condition of the exposed timbers.
- 20.2.4 Suspended timber floors require subfloor ventilation to prevent dampness and decay occurring in the timbers by promoting a through flow of air. To the rear of the property, subfloor ventilation grilles are provided, and whilst some are provided at the front, the intermediate areas of concrete floors will prevent a through flow of air and we have no doubt that some areas of dampness and beetle infestation will be noted if the floor void were to be completely exposed.
- 20.2.5 These problems are usually concentrated around sleeper walls and internal walls that are not adequately damp proofed and used to support the floors. It is very difficult to make a detailed assessment without being able to remove carpets throughout the building and the hardboard floor surfaces beneath, but it is anticipated that significant repairs works may well be necessary following exposure.
- 20.2.6 The in-situ cast concrete floors seemed level and uniform. We have been unable to inspect them in any detail due to filled floor coverings and hardboard linings. They are visible from the basement in part. We could not determine the bay positions or sizes, but there is no evidence of significant defect.
- 20.2.7 Where the ground floor is in contact with the perimeter of the property, they are also in contact with damp areas as we understand that the damp proof courses are largely ineffective. The timbers adjacent to these areas are vulnerable to decay and deterioration and so should be monitored closely over time.
- 20.2.8 Using an electronic moisture meter, we did detect the presence of dampness in the low level walls around the perimeter of the property in numerous locations. Where possible, floorboarding was also tested and much of the floorboarding was relatively dry. However, a more accurate assessment would be revealed beneath the floorboarding and within the floor structure itself.
- 20.2.9 Within the basements, some exposed ground floor timbers could be seen and generally these were in fair condition, although again dampness was evidence for the reasons previously explained.

- 20.2.10 It is currently difficult to fully eradicate the risks associated with long term dampness in the structure and so a regime of regular checking will be beneficial, but for the most effective solutions would be that outlined in Item 18.2.30, a reduction in the external ground levels and the reintroduction of drainage beds around the perimeter of the property, where possible. This would make a significant improvement to the condition of the perimeter walls and the elements of construction within the property adjacent to those walls.
- 20.2.11 Floorboarding is exposed on the attic areas; minor evidence of old woodworm infestation was noted, there are some damp sections where floorboarding has been exposed to penetrating rain as windows have been left open and there is some dampness adjacent to the damp chimney breasts which have been suffering from water absorption for a long time. However, floorboarding is generally sound, the floor itself appears to be relatively stable and we feel this provides reasonable indication of the overall condition of the floors in the other parts of the building.

20.3 Maintenance Advice

- 20.3.1 Replace loose and damaged boards ensuring that pipes or cables are not damaged.
- 20.3.2 Ensure that there is no timber decay, particularly around sanitary fittings, ducts or at ground/basement floor levels.

21.0 INTERNAL JOINERY

21.1 Summary of Construction

- 21.1.1 **Doors:** Flush fire doors with decorative mouldings to give mock timber panel affect to the first floor. Glazed doors to the Council Chambers and Marriage areas and poor quality sapele and other flush faced timber doors to the CAB offices.
- 21.1.2 **Skirting:** A variety of square edged profiled skirtings are provided throughout the property; in some cases, used as boxing to conceal pipework. In some areas, the skirtings are particularly ornate and presumably covered by the Listing
- 21.1.3 **Staircase:** The principal staircase is a hardwood frame staircase with cut stringers and barley twist handrails with ornate turn balustrade details. The rear fire escape staircase is not thought original to the property and is a simple straight flight timber staircase. There is a further staircase leading to the roof void from the first floor corridor, which again, is a straight flight timber staircase. The staircase leave the basement is rather steep and narrow with tapered treads, requiring care when using it.
- 21.1.4 **Kitchen Units:** Chipboard carcasses with laminated finishes.

21.2 Summary of Condition

- 21.2.1 The internal joinery is serviceable, but decoratively tired and requires cosmetic enhancement.

- 21.2.2 Most of the internal doors were noted to open and close, but general overhaul of hinges and locks and ironmongery would be beneficial. Internal door closers used to close the doors for fire safety purposes need easing and adjustment, so they close positively.
- 21.2.3 All doors leading onto the means of escape corridors should be 30-minutes fire resistant and provided with closers, intumescent strips and smoke seals. It appears the first floor doors are of fire resisting construction; however, they are not provided with intumescent strips or smoke seals, and we accordingly recommend these be upgraded to achieve compliance.
- 21.2.4 The first floor kitchen requires renovation; it is suffering from excessive dampness which has damaged most of the fixtures and fittings, more significantly the plaster finishes to ceilings and walls and once the exterior has been repaired, this area should be renovated.
- 21.2.5 The timber staircase treads and risers do not appear to be unduly loose, displaced or uneven and although the secondary staircase is relatively steep, all staircases afford safe access to and from their respective landings.
- 21.2.6 The staircases are thought to be generally satisfactory, however, there are no non-slip nosings to the main staircase and poor tonal contrast between the treads, nosings and walls, which contravene the Disability Discrimination Act and in renewing carpets, consideration should be given to this issue.
- 21.2.7 The staircases generally seem firm under foot and the main staircase is known to be lined with 60-minutes fire resistance to the underside, as this was recently upgraded during the asbestos removal works.
- 21.2.8 The rear staircase is less ornate, more akin to a servant's staircase in a large mansion house, but may have been the main staircase when the properties were used as two dwellings. It is difficult to determine whether the staircases are in their original positions or have been subsequently altered or moved, but completely removing the carpet to allow inspection of the boarding may give some further indication of previous alterations to the floor structures.
- 21.2.9 The separate staircase up to the roof space is particularly narrow and probably too steep for modern Building Control Compliance but has a hand rail which is relatively safe. The door is too close to the stair treads and appropriate warning signage should be provided to minimise the risk of trips and falls. Again, stair nosings should be non-slip and highlighted in lighter colours.
- 21.2.10 There are a variety of skirtings throughout the property, some are probably of historic value, but many are relatively modern replacements with no modern interest whatsoever. There are a variety of styles throughout and it is anticipated that some of these will be fixed to areas of damp masonry and may be subject to decay, but otherwise they are decoratively tired, but probably in reasonable repair.

21.3 Maintenance Advice

- 21.3.1 Ease and adjust doors, as necessary, and ensure that door furniture is in good condition.

- 21.3.2 Ensure that any glazed panels in doors, glazed screens and low level windows are of safety glass to prevent accidents.
- 21.3.3 Ensure that stair treads and balustrades are secure, and that stair and other carpeting is safe.

22.0 INTERNAL DECORATIONS

- 22.1.1 Once the exterior has been repaired and is watertight, it would be beneficial to redecorate and refurbish the interior of the property.

22.2 Maintenance Advice

- 22.2.1 It is recommended practice to redecorate internally once every 5-7 years.

SERVICES

As detailed prior to our inspection, the services were not specifically tested. Our comments result from a visual inspection only and where defects were noted, we would recommend that specialist engineers are consulted, and any recommendations provided are implemented

Service records should be obtained. It is essential for the services to be regularly maintained to run efficiently.

23.0 ELECTRICITY

- 23.1.1 Mains electricity is connected to the premises. The main intake is located in the centre basement and connects to a number of large distributions boards and consumer units, which all appear rather old. The visible fittings and outlets are of varying ages and qualities, and the number of outlets throughout appears limited for modern office use.
- 23.1.2 It appears that piecemeal upgrading of the system has occurred over the years, but we understand that the 5-yearly tests are undertaken, and your electrical contractor will be able to provide more information in relation to this.
- 23.1.3 We are not aware of any services drawings in existence, so faults may be difficult to trace and repairs difficult to undertake. We suspect some of the visible cabling in the roof space is redundant, but there is no way of confirming this.
- 23.1.4 The periodic testing regimes stipulated by the Wiring Regulations should be observed and maintained as they presently are.
- 23.1.5 It would be beneficial to undertake a process of enhancement of electrical installations, where possible, but probably best to incorporate these within any scheme for localised renovation repair within the property.
- 23.1.6 Arrange for the electrical installation to be checked regularly, at least once in every 5 years to ensure its safety. If defects are identified, they should be rectified immediately by a qualified electrician, preferably one registered with the NICEIC.
- 23.1.7 Do not make any alterations to the electric wiring without qualified advice.

24.0 GAS

- 24.1.1 Main gas is connected, with the meter and mains being located in the left basement near the boiler.
- 24.1.2 We have not inspected the gas supply as this is beyond our area of expertise. We recall that in the past there were concerns about the inadequacy of the gas pressure, but we believe this has been resolved.

25.0 COLD WATER

- 25.1.1 There appears to be a water intake and meter in the basement near the gas meter. We are unsure whether there are one of two rising mains serving the property. Visible pipework is generally of copper or steel, but the installations are generally very old and untidy and have been the subject of many piecemeal alterations over the years.
- 25.1.2 There are water cisterns and distribution pipework within the roof void, but these are thought to be header tanks for the central heating system, rather than for cold water storage. In any case, they are uninsulated and insulation jackets should be provided to prevent freezing.
- 25.1.3 A full investigation into the means of water distributions and the building services generally would be beneficial so, that the distribution system is fully understood.

25.2 Maintenance Advice

- 25.2.1 Ensure that cold water storage cisterns are properly supported, insulated and covered, and that overflows work freely, do not leak and discharge properly to the outside. Ensure that all valves and stop cocks work freely and there is no contamination within the cistern. Label the stop cocks for quick reference.
- 25.2.2 Ensure that all exposed pipework is properly insulated and that external taps are drained down and isolated during winter periods.
- 25.2.3 Ensure that internal and external main stop cocks are readily accessible and in good condition in case of an emergency.
- 25.2.4 Overhaul leaking or defective taps to prevent water wastage.

26.0 HEATING & HOT WATER

- 26.1.1 Hot water heating is generally provided via electric point of use water heaters adjacent to the outlet points. Many of these appear to be aged and may be due for replacement.
- 26.1.2 However, the hot water temperature and pressures seem to be reasonable when tested, but they will be prone to localised scaling, and therefore, have become inefficient.
- 26.1.3 The central heating system is quite old and over the years has undergone many different repairs and alterations; there are now different sized pipes which may affect the flow rates through the radiators.
- 26.1.4 There are also different types of radiators ranging from pressed steel radiators to cast iron hospital style radiators.
- 26.1.5 We are aware that heating works were undertaken a few years ago with minor upgrades in an attempt to improve efficiency, particularly on the south side of the building. We understand that these works may have inadvertently cut off flow and return pipes to part of the building and this is still being investigated via the contractors who undertook the works on your behalf.

- 26.1.6 The heat output may be quite good, but relatively inefficient and at some point, it may be worthwhile undertaking a capital investment program and replacing the heating system, but we appreciate this will be both expensive and disruptive.
- 26.1.7 As far as we can ascertain, there are no distribution diagrams, and this may be the first logical step in assessing the future viability of the system.
- 26.1.8 Renewing the heating system could provide a significant saving in running costs and energy efficiency. A review of alternative systems may be beneficial, although there may be limited options given the Listed status of the property. It is unlikely that solar heating could be installed, and we do not believe that ground source heat pumps or air source heat pumps can viably serve the heating and cooling requirements of the property. However, specialist mechanical heating themselves will need to be consulted on this matter.
- 26.1.9 Completing these works whilst the building is occupied would also present significant health and safety issues, as floorboards would need to be lifted and it may actually be impossible to work in this way. A significant amount of builders' work would also be required in connection with this.

26.2 Maintenance Advice

- 26.2.1 The heating installation should be serviced annually by a suitably qualified person ("Gas Safe" registered fitter).
- 26.2.2 Check the hot water cylinder, radiators and radiator valves for any signs of deterioration or leaks.

27.0 AIR CONDITIONING & VENTILATION

- 27.1.1 There is a single split system comfort cooling unit in the Enquiries Office, with the condenser being located on the ground floor flat roof, near the Registrar's entrance. This system is thought to be functional and is relatively modern.
- 27.1.2 Localised extractor fans are installed through the windows in the majority of offices with local control switches.
- 27.1.3 Most of these were noted to be not working and very old. The lack of ventilation is a problem with the comfort of occupants and the building itself, as it encourages condensation problems.
- 27.1.4 Modern regulations require a number of air changes per hour or being within 5m of an opening window. There are many rooms which fall short of this standard and upgrading is required.
- 27.1.5 The ventilation to the boiler room is thought to be inadequate. We recommend that additional vents are provided to the basement door to ensure adequate combustible gasses are available for the boiler to function properly.

28.0 SANITARY FITTINGS, WASTES & SOIL PIPES

- 28.1.1 The sanitary fittings are relatively old and limited in their provision, although they were generally noted to be in good working order.
- 28.1.2 The majority of waste and soil pipes are concealed in ducts and voids and could not be inspected.
- 28.1.3 Mastic seals should be maintained to prevent this penetration of water, but this is more important for showers and baths.

29.0 DRAINAGE

- 29.1.1 The mains drainage system was not inspected, but we have had no reports of blockages or failures within the discharge systems. The system is clearly very old, and we would expect a full CCTV Survey to reveal a number of problems requiring attention.
- 29.1.2 A number of inspection chambers are located in the public footpath. Ownership of these should be ascertained by your Legal Advisors.
- 29.1.3 In any event, permission is required to work on the highway and appropriately insured and licensed contractors must be used.

29.2 Maintenance Advice

- 29.2.1 Ensure that all covers to manholes are in good condition and suitable for the type of use, i.e. medium to heavy duty covers in areas where vehicles are likely to pass.
- 29.2.2 Periodically lift manhole covers to ensure that there are no blockages. Defective and leaking drains can damage the foundations leading to structural movement.
- 29.2.3 If you have a private drainage system, ensure that it is properly maintained and is of adequate size for your current needs.

30.0 THERMAL EFFICIENCY

- 30.1.1 It is very difficult to comment upon thermal efficiencies in a building of this age and type. For example, many requirements of the present Building Regulations, which cover thermal efficiency, would not be appropriate to this type of structure as they are designed for modern buildings, which are constructed to different standards.
- 30.1.2 The solid masonry walls and single glazed windows are not thermally efficient, and therefore, heat losses from the building are relatively high; there is also very little insulation within the roof void and as we suspect boilers and heating system to be inefficient with very little pipe insulation provided, heat losses will be high, and therefore, energy costs will also be high.

- 30.1.3 There are to some extent limited opportunities in providing additional insulation to historic properties, but a full review could be undertaken to establish whether any energy efficiencies and thermal improvements can be made.

31.0 FUTURE MAINTENANCE & CAPITAL WORKS RECOMMENDATIONS

- 31.1.1 We set out our views on a future maintenance and repair programme which can at a later stage be developed into a Pre-Planned Maintenance Programme following consultation with yourselves.
- 31.1.2 For clarity, we have not included compliance matters, periodic testing and maintenance of mechanical and electrical installations, all of which will need to be included.

1.	Additional Surveys & Inspections	Cost
1.1	CCTV Drainage Survey.	£2,500.00
1.2	Check routing of high level drainage pipe through front felt roof near hopper head – may involve opening up works.	£1,500.00
1.3	Check condition of timber floor voids near damp walls.	
1.4	Check condition of lintels on front elevation.	
1.5	Monitor movement of portico structure and front wall on the interior.	
1.6	Further opening up of basement and footpath areas to try and locate the source of flooding.	
2.	Works	
	East (Rear) Elevation	
2.1	East Elevation: re-roof plain tiles, repair rear parapet walls.	£100,000.00
2.2	East Elevation: renew exposed rainwater goods.	£5,000.00
2.3	East Elevation: reduce external ground levels and construct french drain around the perimeter of the property.	£10,000.00
2.4	East Elevation: repair defective render and redecorate.	£40,000.00
2.4	East Elevation: repair defective windows and doors and redecorate.	£25,000.00

	Works	
	West (Front Elevation)	
2.6	Remove all plant from ground floor zinc roof above entrance door, relocation plant to alternative location.	£5,000.00
2.7	Rationalise and repair all plumbing, drainage and rainwater goods above zinc flat roof.	£2,500.00
2.8	Repair uPVC rainwater goods.	£4,000.00
2.9	Repair defective render and redecorate walls.	£60,000.00
2.10	Repair defective windows, including lintels (if required) and redecorate.	£35,000.00
2.11	Renew mineral felt roof finishes.	£15,000.00
3.	Works – Second Phase	
3.1	Remove defective internal plaster to ceilings and walls, repair and replaster after allowing a period to dry out and redecorate.	
3.2	Include for timber repair, as found necessary, upon removal of plaster.	

- 31.1.3 This is a “snapshot” of the anticipated works which as stated excludes mechanical and electrical compliance matters and day to day or annual maintenance and periodic testing.
- 31.1.4 Additionally, improvement will be needed on a phased basis following the issue of the Fire Risk Assessment report which Dunstable Town Council have received.
- 31.1.5 We recommend that once the report has been reviewed that a repair and capital works strategy is developed in conjunction with a PPM programme for future ongoing maintenance.

32.0 GENERAL COMMENTS

- 32.1.1 To conclude, we would add that we have been unable to inspect those parts of the property which were covered, unexposed or were in any other way inaccessible and therefore we are unable to report that such parts are free from rot, beetle or other building defects.
- 32.1.2 Only a partial inspection of the various timber components throughout the premises was made as indicated within the body of the report. For a more detailed inspection of these areas, together with a report detailing remedial works (if any), we would recommend that a fully qualified contractor or other specialist be retained specifically for this purpose.

32.1.3 In formulating this Report the following assumptions have been made:

- a) that no high alumina cement, concrete or calcium chloride additive or other deleterious materials were used in the construction of the property.
- b) that the property is not subject to any unusual or specifically onerous restrictions, encumbrances or outgoings and that a good title can be shown.
- c) that the property and its value are unaffected by any matters which would be revealed by Local Search and Replies to the usual Enquiries or by any Statutory Notice and that neither the property, nor its condition, nor its use, is or will be unlawful.

32.1.4 Once you have had an opportunity to read this report, we would be only too pleased to help should you require further assistance and, in such matters, please do not hesitate to contact us.

32.1.5 In accordance with our normal practice, we must point out that the report survey is for your exclusive information and use and no responsibility can be accepted for the whole or any part of its content being passed to a third party.

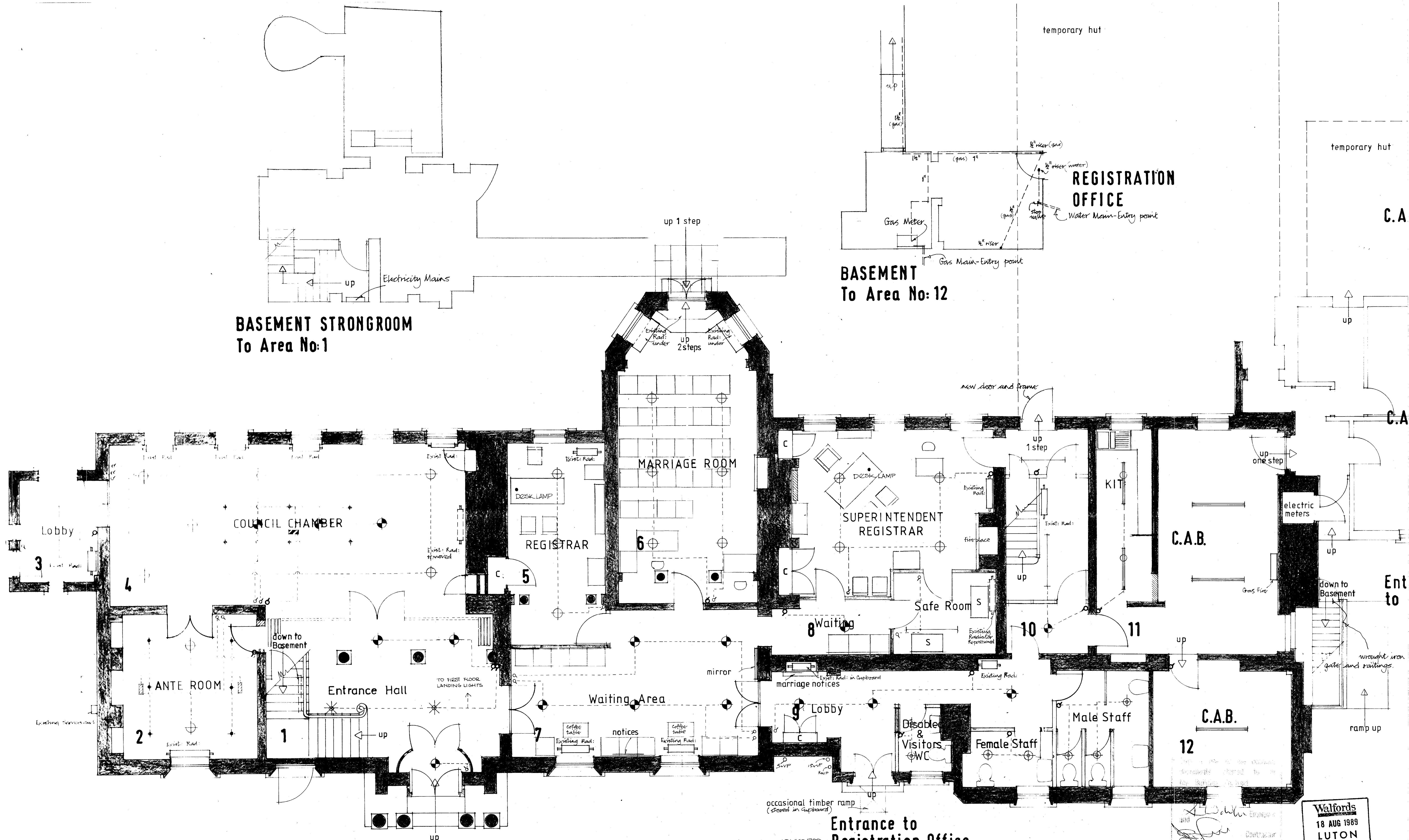
May I take this opportunity to thank you for your instructions. If you have any queries, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Yours sincerely,



P Raitt BSc MRICS
For and on behalf of Brasier Freeth LLP
Direct Dial: 0203 8288532
Email: paul.raitt@brasierfreeth.com

APPENDIX I – Floor Plans



GROUND FLOOR PLAN

Entrance for General Public - Enquiries

SWITCH POSITIONS.
BROKEN LINE INDICATES SWITCHING ARRANGEMENTS ONLY.

LIGHT FITTING REF. RAS ROBERTSON CS14421700

RS 7204 D.

RS 7212

RS 7203 D.

RS 7406 DECK LAMP.

RS 1670 USING M62 WIDE FLOOD LAMP.

RS 5105 C2

RS 1690 USING M58 WIDE FLOOD LAMP.

LLTRF 300 TRANSFORMER.

LLTRF 50 TRANSFORMER.

SCALE: 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

NEW LIGHT FITTINGS INDICATED THUS

EXISTING POSITIONS OF LIGHT FITTINGS INDICATED THUS

Entrance to Registration Office

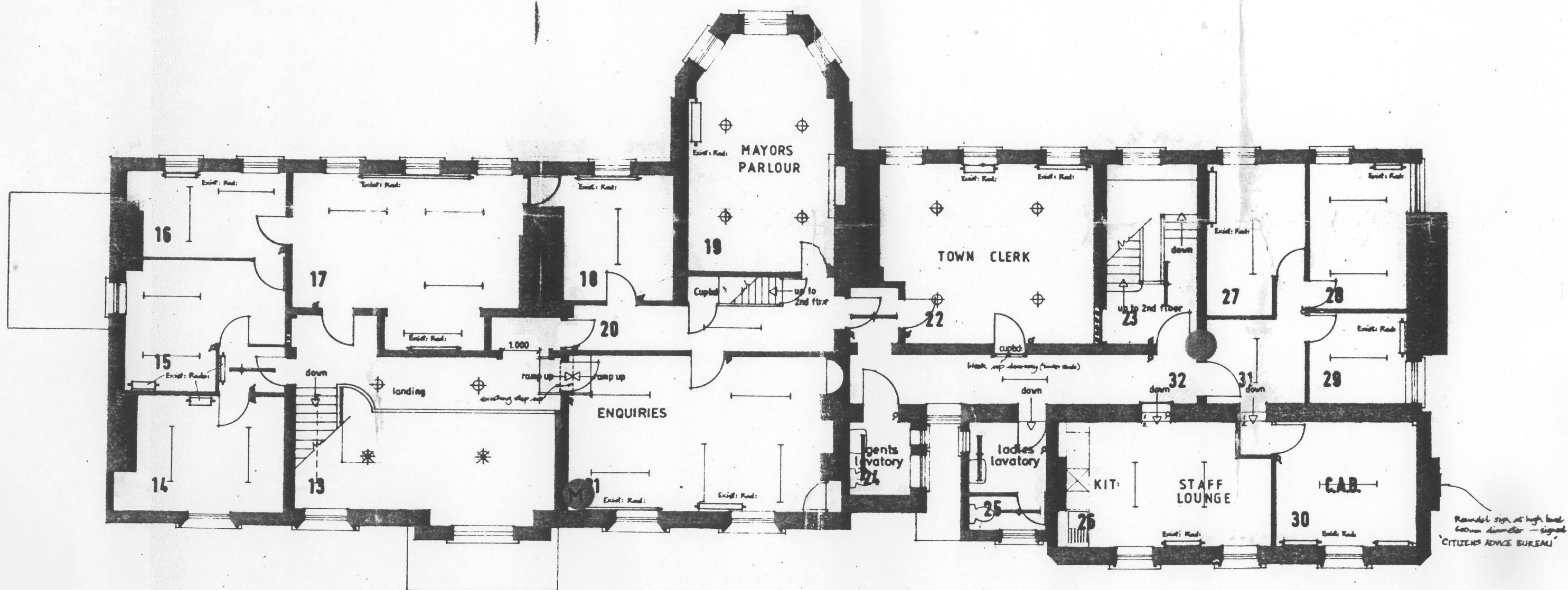
- E. April '89 New light fittings added, works for demolition erased.
- D. March '89 Entrance doors added, Registrars amended, gas and water services indicated.
- C. Feb '89 - C.A.B. Kitchenette added, reposition radiators to Areas 4+8. External door + frame added to Area 10 scale added.
- B. Feb '89 - Basements added.
- A. 12.1.89 - Suggested layout of Registration Office added. Additional information added.

ANCHOR YARD - 13A HIGH STREET NORTH - DUNSTABLE - BEDS - LUG 1HX - TEL. 0582 601614
F.J. PORTHOUSE & ASSOCIATES




Scheme
GROVE HOUSE - DUNSTABLE

DRAWING PROPOSED LIGHTING LAYOUT GROUND FLOOR LAYOUT		SCALE 1:50
DATE Dec '88	JOB NO. 1988	DTG. NO. 7
DRAWN BY pag.		REV.

MONITOR
DOOR ACCESS/CARD READER



FIRST FLOOR PLAN

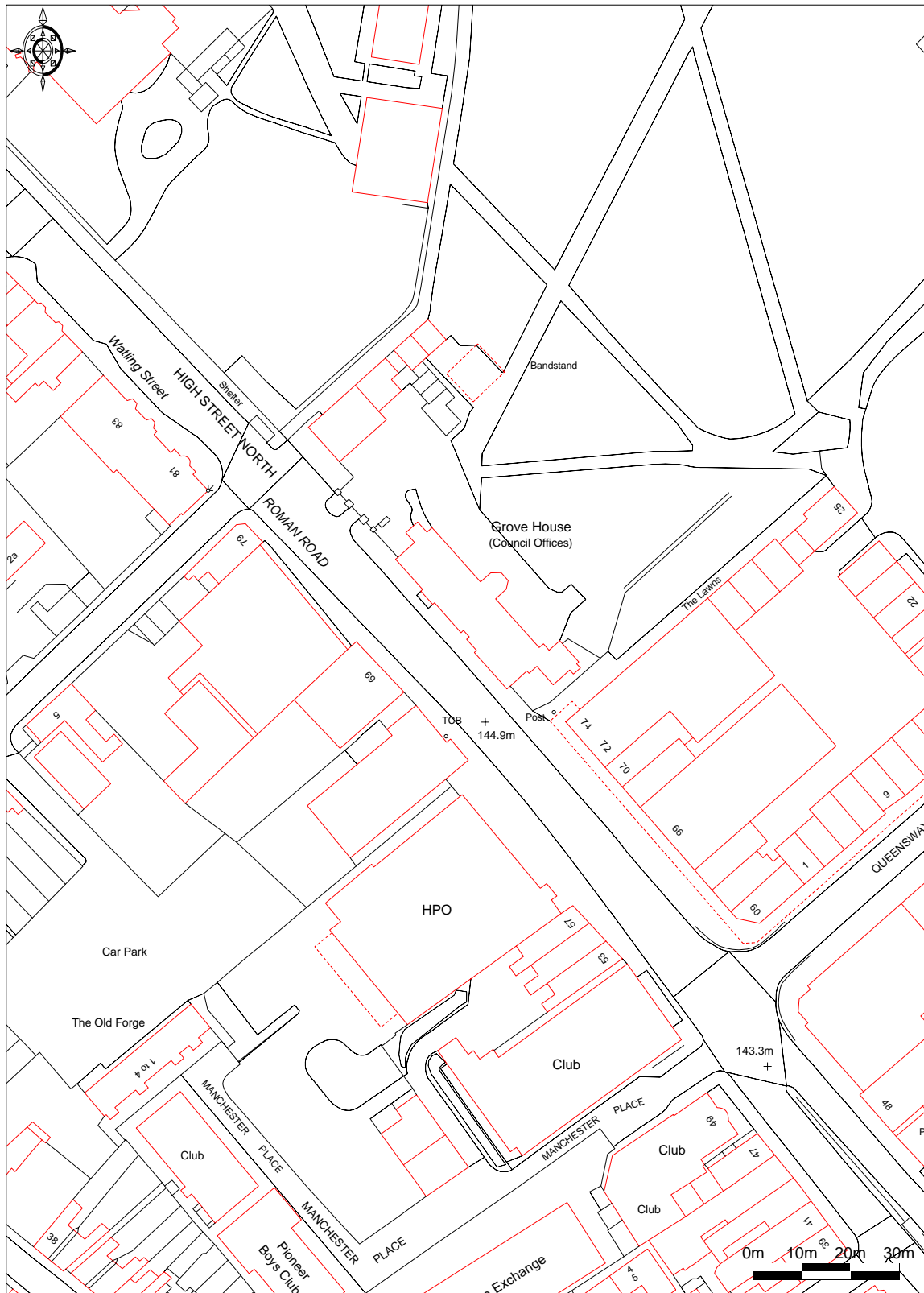
NEW LIGHT FITTINGS INDICATED THUS  
EXISTING POSITIONS OF LIGHT FITTINGS INDICATED THUS 

SCALE 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

- E. April '89 - New light fittings added - landing, Mayor's Parlour and Town Clerk's office.
- D. March '89 - Black up T.C. doorway; Ramps to Enquiries.
- C. Feb '89 - Staff Kitchen & Lounge added, seats added.
- B - 1987 - Existing Radiators added.
- A - JAN 1989 - Existing lighting fittings added

GROVE HOUSE - DUNSTABLE			
Proposed FIRST FLOOR LAYOUT			
Dec 88	1988	4	E
Page			

Grove House, 76 High Street North, Dunstable



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London. Kings Langley. Welwyn Garden City.



PLANNED PREVENTATIVE MAINTENANCE SCHEDULE



Regarding:
Grove House
76 High Street North
Dunstable
Bedfordshire
LU6 1NF

For:
Dunstable Town Council
76 High Street North
Dunstable
Bedfordshire
LU6 1NF

Prepared by:
Brasier Freeth LLP
Wentworth Lodge
Great North Road
Welwyn Garden City
Hertfordshire
AL8 7SR

Issued: 30/06/2023

Revision: 0

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Grove House, 76 High Street North, Dunstable, Bedfordshire LU6 1NF

INTRODUCTION

1.0 Confirmation of Brief and Extent of Inspection

- 1.1.1 The inspection was carried out in accordance with instructions received from Dunstable Town Council.
- 1.1.2 Inspections were undertaken on multiple occasions, during which time the weather was dry and clear.
- 1.1.3 This report is prepared following a visual inspection of those readily accessible parts of the external fabric, grounds and boundaries, including the internal common parts and the basement. We have not commented on those areas which were inaccessible or occupied, at the time of inspection.
- 1.1.4 The inspections were undertaken by foot and not with the benefit of any specialist equipment and did not extend to hidden, inaccessible parts or surfaces concealed at the time of the inspection.
- 1.1.5 No tests were carried out to the services installations and, similarly, no tests were carried out to establish the presence, or otherwise, of deleterious materials on or around the site.
- 1.1.6 No assessment was made of the ground conditions or any tests undertaken to determine the nature of the foundations or the presence of ground contamination. Similarly, no assessment was made of the underground drainage systems.
- 1.1.7 This report provides an outline of the condition of the external features of the building, including internal common areas, which were accessible at the time of inspection and highlights significant items of repair or redecoration anticipated and recommended over the forthcoming 10 year period.
- 1.1.8 This report does not identify day to day items of maintenance or routine servicing, such as replacing lamps or cleaning floor coverings or sanitaryware. The report, therefore, concentrates on the structure and fabric of those external features and internal common areas, highlighting items which are recommended to be undertaken during the period for budgeting purposes. The timing of expenditure is based on an assessment of when maintenance repairs can be expected which, if left, may result in a deterioration of the fabric.
- 1.1.9 With the exception of a small number of items, the majority of the recommendations herein comprise maintenance works of a non-urgent nature and could be deferred to subsequent years, subject to current and future budgetary constraints and any special requirements.
- 1.1.10 We recommend that a succinct Schedule of Works is compiled to enable contractors to provide costs for budget purposes.
- 1.1.11 The timing and method of procurement of the works will impact upon the costs and it will be prudent to package as many of the individual works' items in order to gain maximum economies. For example, it is normal for external redecoration to be arranged on a 3-5

Grove House, 76 High Street North, Dunstable, Bedfordshire LU6 1NF

year basis, as this is a usual timescale adopted to ensure that painted surfaces are suitably protected and maintained against decay, which can occur if the paint surface breaks down. However, it may be necessary to budget for the proposed works packages and spread the expenditure over the lifetime of the programme subject to financial constraints.

- 1.1.12 There may be separate budgets being held for day to day reactive maintenance works and for improvements to the site, which may be considered for reasons other than maintenance and repair. For the purpose of this assessment, no consideration has been given to the anticipated costs of minor maintenance repairs or any improvements under consideration and it is assumed that these will be allocated separately.
- 1.1.13 As outlined, this report provides a summary of potential expenditure over the period. The exact timing of expenditure would depend on many factors, including budgeting constraints and priorities arising. Under normal circumstances, it is recommended that this report is considered for overall budgeting purposes but the actual expenditure for any particular year should be determined by an annual inspection, when a further assessment can be made on the need to undertake works at that time or if certain works can be brought forward, or deferred, depending on the policy in place and the relevant priorities.

DESCRIPTION AND CONDITION

2.0 Main Building

- 2.1.1 The property is believed to have been built c.1750 originally as a Coaching Inn although later on was apparently used for private residencies. After that period the building was converted for use as a Town Hall or public building which we believe was around the mid-1930s.
- 2.1.2 Since its original construction it has been changed many times from its original form but, the external elevations are generally thought to be largely original, matching the original character and features.
- 2.1.3 Due to its age, the building suffers from problems consistent with its style of construction and character but, broadly it remains functional, serviceable and viable.
- 2.1.4 Over the years there have been many maintenance procedures and capital works projects undertaken to the building but, due to its character and style of construction perhaps the maintenance demand is higher than one would normally expect with a modern comparable building.
- 2.1.5 Whilst the roofs remain generally in fair condition and have been reasonably well maintained, they do require regular overhaul following inspection for blocked gutters, slipped roof tiles and slates, localised defects to lead flashing and other details but, most of these could be captured and addressed following a period of regular inspection and reactive maintenance. At the present time, we do not believe that the roof coverings need significant renewal, however, the box gutter details have become and do remain a regular source of attention and repair.

Grove House, 76 High Street North, Dunstable, Bedfordshire LU6 1NF

- 2.1.6 The external walls are largely rendered and painted which in itself represents an ongoing maintenance requirement particularly as defective rendering and discoloured paintwork detracts from the overall appearance of the building.
- 2.1.7 Internally, the building suffers from dampness in some areas and at some point a capital works project will be necessary to address this with respect to assessing exactly the nature and origin of the defect and subsequently the appropriate remedial measures. Over the past, many ad-hoc attempts have been undertaken to rectify the dampness and theories have existed to the origin from leaking plumbing pipework to defective damp proof courses, rendering details or rainwater pipe surfaces.
- 2.1.8 Whilst the rendering remains in relatively good condition and has been maintained to an acceptable standard, sections are noted to be cracked and displaced and this will accelerate the deterioration of the structure as water will ingress through these cracks causing frost damage and saturation of the brickwork behind. Cracks to the render can allow water penetration causing significant problems with internal dampness retained in the structure for extended periods.
- 2.1.9 At some stage, it would be prudent to inspect floor voids and ceiling voids as with this type of construction, ceiling joists and structural beams are often embedded in external walls and if these are damp then the timbers embedded in those walls can decay.
- 2.1.10 Along the front elevation, the Acco drainage channels can become a source of water ingress, as they regularly block and surcharge.
- 2.1.11 The front entrance portico with stone pilasters is exhibiting signs of movement and appears to be dropping away at the front, causing some cracking to develop between the portico and the main structure. It is possible that this feature is not adequately tied into the front wall. In the past, the portico roof is leaking causing internal dampness to the right hand side of the main entrance doorway and the flashings need to be checked again, to ensure that they are weathertight.
- 2.1.12 Structural repairs have been undertaken in the past which include the provision of metal restraint ties bolted through the front wall, the insertion of two large steel beams into the roof space above the lobby providing support to the ceiling joists and as previously stated, on the left hand side of the lobby, some significant movement was noted around the doorway into the offices where it appears the rear section of wall and floor has dropped.
- 2.1.13 At higher levels, the chimney stacks are predominantly capped being redundant but, many are not ventilated, and therefore, condensation and dampness can build-up within the floor void.
- 2.1.14 Concerns over the adequacy of fire compartmentation, fire sealing and fire protection measures do exist, and a comprehensive review has been undertaken by specialist contractors which needs to be assessed with the more urgent matters incorporated into a PPM.
- 2.1.15 The central heating system has been partly renovated but, there are concerns that the contractors disconnected sections of the heating system, and this needs further review.

Grove House, 76 High Street North, Dunstable, Bedfordshire LU6 1NF

- 2.1.16 Ultimately, a comprehensive review of the building services would be beneficial, particularly with the drive to ensuring the building becomes more energy efficient. With this type of structure, these costs could be significant and the implementation of alternative heating or energy reduction measures could be very disruptive for the occupants during the process of installation.

REGULATIONS**3.0 Fire Safety**

- 3.1.1 Review the existing Fire Safety Risk Assessment to ensure compliance with the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005.
- 3.1.2 During our inspection, we noted that the fire signage is provided throughout the main buildings, emergency lighting and alarms are installed, and detectors are in place in the main thoroughfares. However, a detailed report obtained by Dunstable Town Council has highlighted various inadequacies which need review and addressing.
- 3.1.3 Commercial premises must now have a valid Fire Safety Risk Assessment. This requires that those responsible for buildings, principally the occupiers, evaluate the property by identifying potential fire hazards and people at risk. Then a process of evaluation and action is required to minimise the risks. This process should be recorded to demonstrate compliance.
- 3.1.4 A clear plan of how to prevent fire and keep staff safe should be put in place and all staff should be properly trained. Many organisations appoint or nominate fire marshals who receive specialist training on what to do in the event of an emergency.
- 3.1.5 Fire safety plans should be displayed around the property and up-dated, as necessary.
- 3.1.6 Both active and passive fire detection and prevention methods should be employed but, needs can vary with different styles and occupancy of use.
- 3.1.7 Fire extinguishers, alarms and sprinkler systems (if supplied) should be serviced annually and maintained in good working order.
- 3.1.8 Fire exits should remain unblocked at all times when the building is in use and remain clear of obstructions.
- 3.1.9 With older buildings, compliance with fire regulations is rarely straightforward and is often difficult. In this particular circumstance, sections of the building on the south side do not propose a significant risk but, you should ensure that fire doors, signage and emergency lighting is up to standard. The main hallway and entrance lobby should be a protected stairwell and should ideally be enclosed with a one hour fire resistant structure. The doors leading on to it being 30-minute fire rated doors with intumescent strips and self-closers.

4.0 Equalities Act

- 4.1.1 We have not inspected the property in relation to the Equalities Act.

Grove House, 76 High Street North, Dunstable, Bedfordshire LU6 1NF

4.1.2 We recommend that if not already undertaken an Accessibility Audit for the building is implemented and any recommendations are considered, as required.

4.1.3 As the building is partially used as a public space, a further review is recommended.

5.0 Control of Asbestos

5.1.1 An old Type3 Asbestos Survey was commissioned by M3 Associates which was subject to usual limitations of opening but, particularly in the light of this property being Grade II Listed. This report confirmed that all areas possessing significant risk have been stripped out of asbestos and removed by a company known as Luton Insulation Services but, there was evidence that some areas of low risk products remain in the building, as evidenced by a further inspection. This inspection revealed that asbestos cement board lining was present in the hallways to the first and also within the former area occupied by the Citizens Advice Bureau.

5.1.2 Given the age of the property, it is quite likely that asbestos containing materials could be present particularly in voids and ducts that are not regularly accessed. Under the Control of Asbestos Regulations 2012 Act, a suitable Register should be available and measures put in place to monitor and protect against any potential risks to the building occupants.

5.1.3 We have appended an Asbestos Report, dated from 2013, to this report.

6.0 Action Points

The building was surveyed in 2008 and a report submitted to Dunstable Town Council. We recommend the following action points:

6.1.1 A new up-dated survey report is prepared.

6.1.2 All the existing compliance documents are collated and reviewed. Any omissions are addressed by commissioning additional surveys, tests or reports with recommendations.

6.1.3 A succinct Schedule of Works is compiled to enable various works to be costed.

6.1.4 The PPM is revised to take account of any:

- Anticipated Capital Works Projects
- Future energy proofing.
- Legislative compliance.
- Budgetary constraints.

Grove House, 76 High Street North, Dunstable, Bedfordshire LU6 1NF

APPENDIX A – ELEMENTAL SCHEDULE

Grove House, 76 High Street North, Dunstable, Bedfordshire LU6 1NF

APPENDIX B – PLAN

Notes:

Rev	Date	Revisions

Client:

Dunstable Town Council

Address:

Grove House
78 High Street North
Dunstable
LU6 1NF

Drawing Title:

Schematic Floor Plans

Scale:

1:200 @ A4

Date:

02/03/11

Drawn:

DJT

Dwg No:

SK01

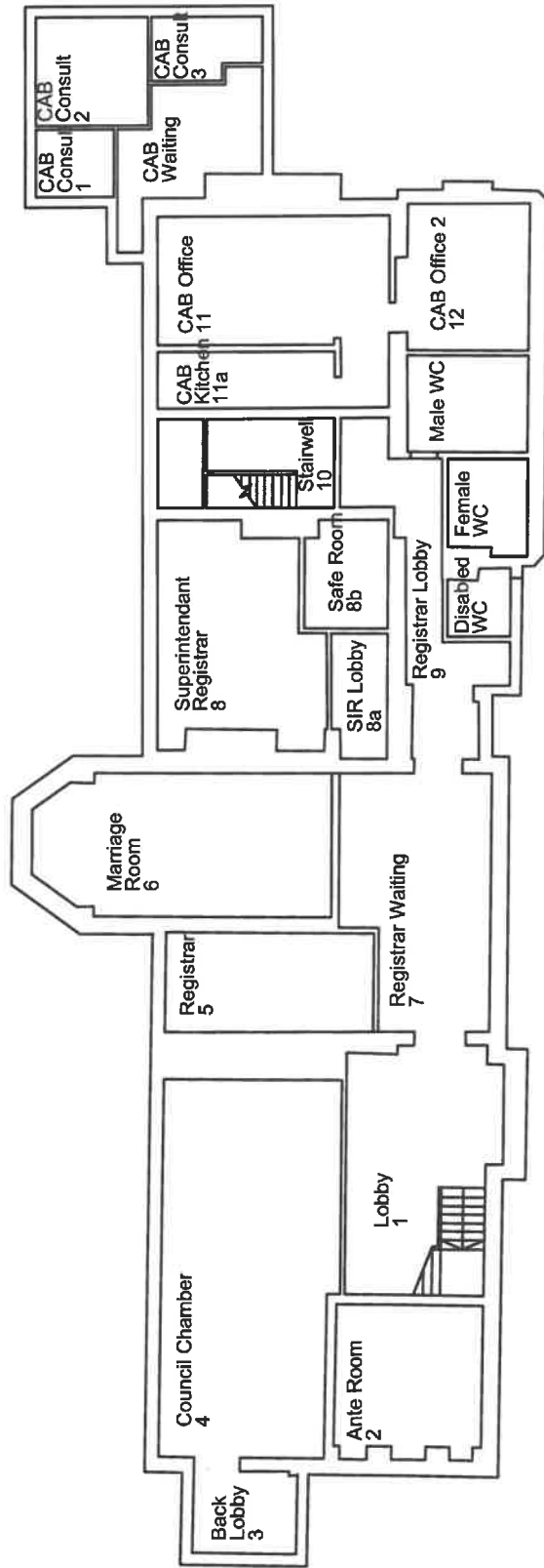
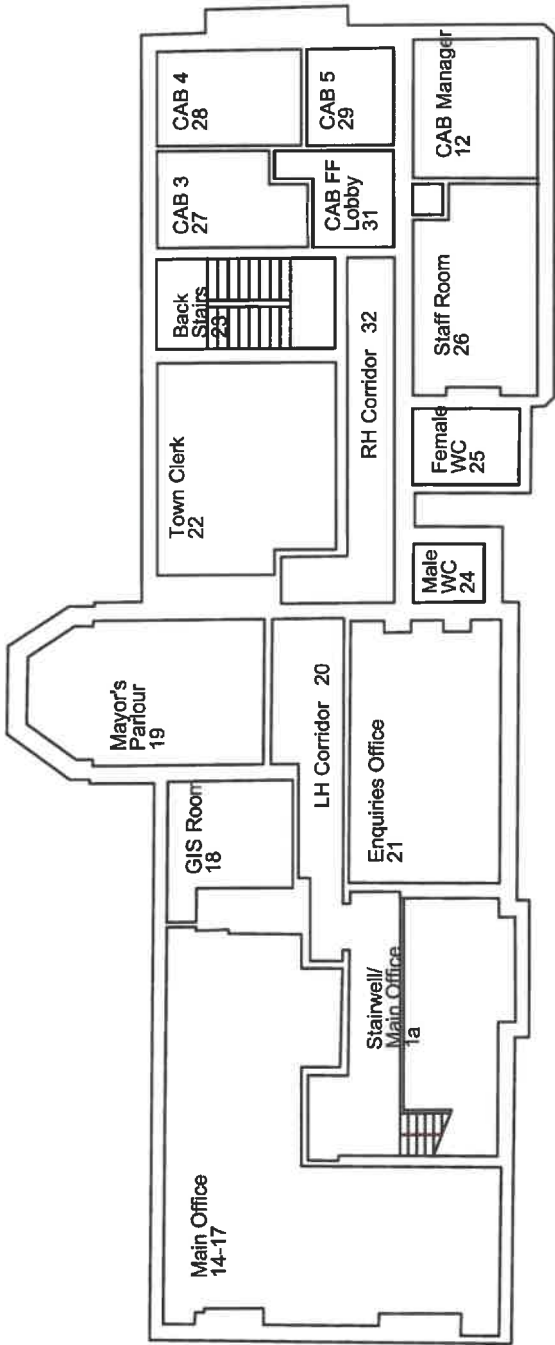
Rev:

-

SCHEMATIC

Watership Lodge
Great North Road
Dunstable, Bedfordshire
MK22 6JH
T: 01757 500900
F: 01757 500000
E: info@brasierfreeth.co.uk
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**brasier
freeth**
CHARITABLE SERVICES



Grove House, 76 High Street North, Dunstable, Bedfordshire LU6 1NF

APPENDIX C – LISTING

GROVE HOUSE

Official list entry

Heritage Category: **Listed Building**

Grade: **II**

List Entry Number: **1138223**

Date first listed: **25-Oct-1951**

List Entry Name: **GROVE HOUSE**

Statutory Address 1: **GROVE HOUSE, HIGH STREET NORTH**

This List entry helps identify the building designated at this address for its special architectural or historic interest.

Unless the List entry states otherwise, it includes both the structure itself and any object or structure fixed to it (whether inside or outside) as well as any object or structure within the curtilage of the building.

For these purposes, to be included within the curtilage of the building, the object or structure must have formed part of the land since before 1st July 1948.

Understanding list entries (<https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/understanding-list-entries/>)

Corrections and minor amendments (<https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/minor-amendments/>)

Location

Statutory Address: **GROVE HOUSE, HIGH STREET NORTH**

The building or site itself may lie within the boundary of more than one authority.

District: **Central Bedfordshire (Unitary Authority)**

Parish: **Dunstable**

National Grid Reference: **TL 01688 22118**

Details

1. 5125 HIGH STREET NORTH (East Side) Grove House TL 0122 3/38 25.10.51.

II

2. A late C17 brick house; 2 storeys, heavy stucco covering. Late C18 and late C19 alterations. Very steep pitched gabled roof with early tiles on the left, brown tiles on the right, varying ridge line, long high central section and 2 lower (unequal) shorter end sections, valley at North end. The Park front (East) has deep parapet and cornice and 6 widely spaced dormers. 5 sides, 2 storey bay in centre (3 windows) with very steep hipped roof. There are 6 windows on both sides of centre (2nd storey). Immediately north of bay there is a light pedimented Doric doorcase (wooden) and 3 windows, South of bay a plain doorway. The windows are sash, some early single hung, in wide wooden cases. The interior has been much altered but many minor details of the C17 have survived, the road front has at the North end a symmetrical 5 window facade of 'late C19 Classical' style, heavy detail.

Listing NGR: TL0168822118

Legacy

The contents of this record have been generated from a legacy data system.

Legacy System number: **35742**

Legacy System: **LBS**

Legal

This building is listed under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 as amended for its special architectural or historic interest.



Map

This map is for quick reference purposes only and may not be to scale.
This copy shows the entry on 29-Jun-2023 at 13:13:09.

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(<https://historicengland.org.uk/terms/website-terms-conditions/>).

End of official list entry



Grove House, 76 High Street North, Dunstable, Bedfordshire LU6 1NF

APPENDIX D – ASBESTOS REPORT

Dunstable Town Council

**Asbestos Re-inspection
& Risk Assessment**

**Grove House, High Street North,
Dunstable, Bedfordshire, LU6 1NF**

Report HR 5042sup3

August 2013



Dunstable Town Council
Grove House
High Street North
Dunstable
Bedfordshire
LU6 1NF

M3 Associates Ltd.
Conquest house
248 Toddington Road
Luton
LU4 9DZ

01582 866800

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M3 ASSOCIATES
Conquest House
Luton
Bedfordshire
LU4 9DZ

Telephone: 01582 366800

Facsimile: 01582 366446

E-Mail: enquiries@m3associates.co.uk

Web: www.m3associates.co.uk

Dunstable Town Council
Grove House
High Street North
Dunstable
Bedfordshire
LU6 1NF

August 2013

REPORT ON ASBESTOS RE-INSPECTION AND RISK ASSESSMENT

Site: Grove House, High Street North, Dunstable

For the attention of Ms Rosemary O' Sullivan

1. INTRODUCTION

Further to a request by Ms Rosemary O' Sullivan of Dunstable Town Council, M3 Associates Ltd carried out a re-inspection of, and an assessment of the risk posed by, the asbestos-containing materials previously identified at the above site. In addition, the Surveyor conducted a cursory inspection of areas of the site to determine whether any obvious asbestos-containing materials had been overlooked during the original survey. Details of the full extent of the investigative work carried out as part of this project are presented in Section 3 (Scope of Works) below. The re-inspection was carried out by D J Motture.

This report should be read in conjunction with the original survey documentation. It does not represent the findings of a new asbestos survey and is not a stand-alone site asbestos reference document. Any restrictions or limitations detailed in the original survey documentation continue to apply.

Priority assessment examines the likelihood of someone disturbing the ACMs. An evaluation was made in association with on-site representatives of the client based on information provided by the Client, with each item of asbestos-containing material being individually assessed against the criteria described in the HSE algorithm. The Client is advised to review the assessments undertaken by M3 Associates in light of the Client's more detailed knowledge of the site's present and future status.

This report is subject to the M3 Associates Limited service constraints detailed in Appendix A.



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2. DEFINITIONS

2.1 Re-inspection

A survey re-inspection, or "re-inspection", is the process of:

- Attending a site that has previously been surveyed for the presence of asbestos containing materials (ACMs).
- Using the material assessment and priority assessment processes to ascertain the current condition of ACMs previously identified.
- In the event that material assessment and priority assessment processes had previously been employed, determining whether deterioration in the condition of ACMs has occurred in the interval between the original survey and this re-inspection.
- Determining whether there is any requirement for remediation works.
- Preparing and supplying a written report detailing the condition of ACM's at the time of the re-inspection, highlighting where possible the degree of deterioration of ACMs, and, where appropriate, providing recommendations for on-going management and remedial works.

2.2 Additional Activities

Whilst conducting survey re-inspection activities, M3 Associates' surveyors:

- Carry out a cursory visual inspection of the site generally to determine whether any obvious ACMs were overlooked during the original survey (this is not to be interpreted as a re-survey)
- If 'new' suspected ACMs are observed, the surveyor may collect samples for laboratory analysis.
- If 'new' ACMs are confirmed as present, to include full details within the re-inspection report, including all information that would normally be included in a survey report.

3. SCOPE OF WORK

3.1 Re-inspection

The re-inspection of ACMs was limited to those materials detailed in:

- M3 report HR 5042, HR 5042sp1, HR 5042sp2 of April 2008, June 2011 and July 2012, respectively

Results of the re-inspection are detailed in Section 7.1 (Results) below and refer only to the areas inspected.

3.2 Additional Inspection

A cursory examination of the property was carried out, no further ACMs were identified.

4. LIMITATIONS AND RESTRICTIONS

Information used, and relied upon, in the preparation of this report, particularly details on building/area usage, may have been supplied by third parties. M3 Associates Ltd. accepts no responsibility for inaccuracies in the risk assessment scores based on the provision of erroneous information by third parties.

Some additional sampling may have been carried out during the course of the site re-inspection. Sampling will not have been carried out where it would have caused unreasonable damage to the fabric of the buildings, or where it would have been unsafe to do so. In some cases, asbestos materials or non-asbestos materials may have been identified without recourse to sampling where to do so was a reasonable extrapolation from materials sampled or examined elsewhere.

Bulk sampling is carried out safely creating minimal disturbance in accordance with methods described in M3 Associates in-house procedures. Sampling methods have been assessed for risk and are based on accepted good practice. Any samples collected will have been appropriately labelled and securely double bagged before return to the laboratory for analysis and sampling points sealed using spray adhesive and/or tape, all in accordance with our UKAS accreditation for sampling and analysis. Where additional samples have been collected and analysed, the results will be presented in Appendix D of this report.

This report is not to be interpreted as a Bill of Quantities. The quantities of all asbestos materials given are approximations and do not take account of possible hidden materials.

5. METHODOLOGY

The re-inspection was carried out in accordance with our in-house procedure TP6 in conjunction with the HSE publications HSG 264 and HSG 248. The methodology used for assessment of risk is detailed in Appendix B.

6. ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Subsequent to the visits of June 2008 and July 2012, all the roof eaves on the second floor found to contain asbestos lagging materials have been sealed off and the asbestos insulating board lined door panels that had been stored in the corridor outside Store 8 have been removed.

7. RESULTS

Table 7.1 overleaf details the locations and descriptions of ACMs previously identified at the site along with the materials assessment, priority assessment and overall risk scores for each item as allocated during both this inspection and the previous inspection, where available. The last column shows the risk assessment score, calculated by the addition of each material and priority assessment score.

7.1 Re-inspection of previously Identified ACMs

All locations described refer specifically to areas as detailed on drawings appended to this report														
Location	Product Type	Extent	Accessibility of ACM	Amount of damage or deterioration	Surface treatment (if any)	Asbestos Type	Inspection Date	Material Score	Priority Score	Overall Risk Score	Photo	Inspection Regime	Notification required	Priority score and Action/Recommendation (See Appendix B & C or Legislation Requirements, Guidance & General Information)
Second floor, Store 5: Right-hand-side of stairwell (beneath window).	Lagging	3m linear	Not accessed	Unknown	Boxed-in	Amosite & Chrysotile	August 2013	8	2	10	1	6	Y	Manage and maintain or remove using a licensed asbestos contractor.
Second floor, Store 8: Within void to roof eaves.	Lagging	4m linear	Not accessed	Unknown	Void sealed	Amosite & Chrysotile	August 2013	9	2	12	2	6	Y	Manage and maintain. Or remove using a licensed asbestos contractor.
Second floor, Corridor outside Store 8 & 9 and Stairwell: Within void to roof eaves.	Lagging	5m linear	Not accessed	Significant deterioration	Void sealed	Amosite & Chrysotile	August 2013	10	3	13	3	6	Y	Manage and maintain or remove using a licensed asbestos contractor.
First floor, Office 1: Ceiling.	Textured coating	10m ²	Medium	Minor	Paint sealed	Chrysotile	August 2013	4	4	8	4	12	N	Manage and maintain or remove subject to a CAR 2012 assessment
Ground floor, C.A.B. 1: Boxed-in pipework at high level.	Lagging	9m linear	Difficult	Minor	Boxed-in	Amosite & Chrysotile	August 2013	7	3	10	5	6	Y	Manage and maintain or remove using a licensed asbestos contractor

8. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This report has been produced on the understanding that it may be used in its entirety but not quoted in part.

8.1 Remedial Actions

Ranking the risk assessment scores for each item gives an indication of those which pose the highest risk.

It is recommended that the lagging and the integrity of their encapsulation/boxing be monitored bi-annually. The textured coating should be inspected annually.

8.2 Asbestos Management Plan

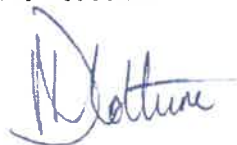
As part of the 'duty to manage' under Regulation 4 of the Control of Asbestos Regulations 2012, the duty holder is required not only to carry out an assessment for the presence of asbestos in the premises, but also to assess the risk presented by the asbestos and prepare a written plan for the management of that risk.

The plan will need to include provisions for monitoring the condition of known or presumed asbestos-containing materials in the building, procedures for ensuring that employees and others such as contractors do not disturb asbestos-containing materials on the site and procedures to follow in the event of an incident. The plan also needs to address the provision of information to all those liable to disturb the materials and to the emergency services (particularly the fire service) and will need to allocate specific responsibilities to personnel.

8.3 Recommended Inspection Regime

Recommendations for an appropriate regime for regular re-inspection of ACMs present at the site are detailed in the Inspection regime column of the tables presented in section 7 of this report.

Report prepared by:
M3 Associates Ltd.



D J Motture
Consultant

Report reviewed by:



C J Morris
Senior Consultant

Report Issued: 30th August 2013

Appendix A Service Constraints

M3 ASSOCIATES SERVICE CONSTRAINTS

1. This report and the asbestos consultancy/training/survey/monitoring carried out in connection with the report (together the "Services") were compiled and carried out by M3 Associates Ltd (M3) for the client (the "client") in accordance with the terms of a contract between M3 and the "client" as dated by the client instruction or on the survey report. The Services were performed by M3 with the skill and care ordinarily exercised by a reasonable asbestos surveyor at the time the Services were performed. Further, and in particular, the Services were performed by M3 taking into account the limits of the scope of works required by the client, the time scale involved and the resources, including financial and manpower resources, agreed between M3 and the client.
2. Other than that expressly contained in paragraph 1 above, M3 provides no other representation or warranty whether express or implied, in relation to the Services.
3. Unless otherwise agreed the Services were performed by M3 exclusively for the purposes of the client. Unless expressly provided in writing, M3 does not authorise, consent or condone any party other than the client relying upon the Services. Should this report or any part of this report, or otherwise details of the Services or any part of the Services be made known to any such party, and such party relies thereon that party does so wholly at its own and sole risk and M3 disclaims any liability to such parties.
4. It is M3's understanding that this report is to be used for the purpose described in the introduction to the report. That purpose was a significant factor in determining the scope and level of the Services. Should the purpose for which the report is used, or the proposed use of the site change, this report may no longer be valid and any further use of or reliance upon the report in those circumstances by the client without M3's review and advice shall be at the client's sole and own risk. Should M3 be requested to review the report after the date hereof, M3 shall be entitled to additional payment at the then existing rates or such other terms as agreed between M3 and the client.
5. The passage of time may result in changes in site conditions, regulatory or other legal provisions, technology or economic conditions which could render the report inaccurate or unreliable. The information and conclusions contained in this report should not be relied upon in the future without the written advice of M3. In the absence of such written advice of M3, reliance on the report in the future shall be at the client's own and sole risk. Should M3 be requested to review the report in the future, M3 shall be entitled to additional payment at the then existing rate or such other terms as may be agreed between M3 and the client.
6. The observations and conclusions described in this report are based solely upon the Services which were provided pursuant to the agreement between the client and M3. M3 has not performed any observations, investigations, studies or testing not specifically set out or required by the contract between the client and M3. M3 is not liable for the existence of any condition, the discovery of which would require performance of services not otherwise contained in the Services. For the avoidance of doubt, unless otherwise expressly referred to in the introduction to this report, M3 did not seek to evaluate the presence on or off the site of electromagnetic fields, lead paint, heavy metals, radon gas or other radioactive or hazardous materials.
7. The Services are based upon M3's observations of existing physical conditions at the Site gained from a walk-over survey of the site together with M3's interpretation of information including documentation, obtained from third parties and from the client on the history and usage of the site. The Services are also based on information and/or analysis provided by independent testing and information services or laboratories upon which M3 was reasonably entitled to rely. The Services clearly are limited by the accuracy of the information, including documentation, reviewed by M3 and the observations possible at the time of the walk-over survey. Further M3 was not authorised and did not attempt to independently verify the accuracy or completeness of information, documentation or materials received from the client or third parties, including laboratories and information services, during the performance of the Services. M3 is not liable for any inaccurate information or conclusions, the discovery of which inaccuracies required the doing of any act including the gathering of any information which was not reasonably available to M3 and including the doing of any independent investigation of the information provided to M3 save as otherwise provided in the terms of the contract between the client and M3.
8. Any site drawing(s) provided in this report is (are) not meant to be an accurate base plan, but is (are) used to present the general relative locations of features on, and surrounding, the site.

Appendix B Risk Assessment Methodology

RISK ASSESSMENT METHODOLOGY

General

The assessment of risk was carried out using the algorithms described in HSE guidance HSG264 *Asbestos: The Survey Guide* and HSE guidance document HSG227 *A Comprehensive Guide to Managing Asbestos in Premises*. The method assesses risk using a combination of two algorithms.

The first algorithm is employed to assess the asbestos-containing material itself and takes into account the type of asbestos-containing material (ACM), the type of asbestos and the condition of the material. The material assessment is normally carried out as part of a survey, or re-inspection, of the premises.

The second algorithm is the priority assessment, which assesses the likelihood of the ACM being disturbed and exposing individuals to airborne asbestos fibres. The priority assessment takes into account the use of the area, in terms of the activities that are undertaken, the numbers of occupants normally present, the frequency of use and any maintenance activities.

Material Assessment

This section describes the results of the assessment for the asbestos materials identified and/or presumed present at the site during this inspection visit.

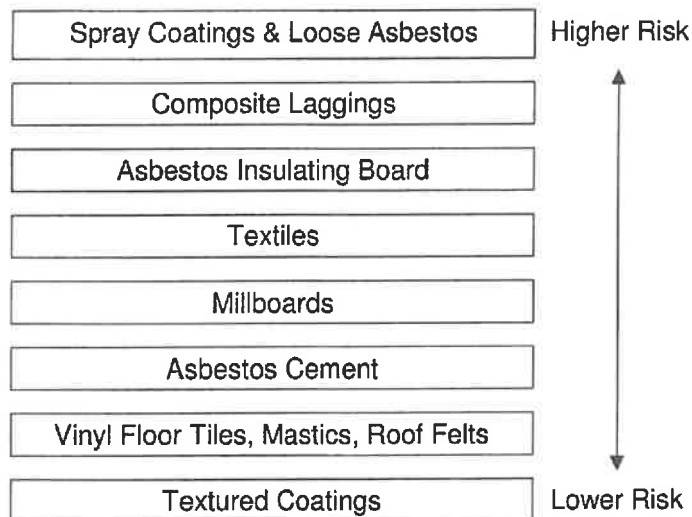
Four parameters determine the evaluation of potential fibre release from an asbestos-containing material when subject to normal environment.

- Product type
- Extent of damage or deterioration
- Surface treatment
- Asbestos type

The in-situ ACM's were assessed against each of these parameters and 'scored' in line with the guidance laid down in HSE publication HSG 264 as follows: high (3), medium (2), low (1) & very low (0) likelihood of fibre release given a standard disturbance. The values assigned to each of the four parameters were added together to give a total score of between 2 and 12. The following table gives the interpretation (for information purposes only) of the material assessment scores as given in HSG 264.

Material Score	Material Assessment
10 or More	High potential to release asbestos fibres
7 to 9	Medium potential to release asbestos fibres
5 to 6	Low potential to release asbestos fibres
4 or Less	Very low potential to release asbestos fibres

The list below rates asbestos materials in general order of risk (The list is not exhaustive).



All Asbestos containing materials are potentially hazardous if disturbed.

Non-asbestos materials have no potential to release asbestos fibres.

Priority Assessment

The priority assessment examines the likelihood of someone disturbing the ACM's. Four parameters determine the chances of this occurring:

Normal occupant activity
Likelihood of disturbance
Human exposure potential
Maintenance activity

The parameters were individually assessed on a scale of 0 to 3 and the results combined to give the priority rating score (a numeric value attributed to the likelihood and level of potential asbestos exposure). An on-site evaluation was made in association with on-site personnel, of all asbestos-containing materials, each item being individually assessed against the criteria described in the HSE algorithm. This assessment was based on the limited knowledge the Consultant had of the activities carried out within clients' premises and should only be used as guidance. In most instances the occupancy and usage of areas was largely self evident and priority scoring was determined by the M3 Associates Consultant. The client is advised to review the assessments in light of detailed site knowledge, and to amend the assessments as appropriate.

Overall Risk Assessment Scores

Depending on the 'asbestos situation' at any particular site, budget and time constraints may not permit immediate removal or other remedial activities to be undertaken. The objective of the Overall Risk Assessment is to provide a numeric 'risk value' to be assigned to each ACM present. This should enable the client to prioritise the order of works, and to allocate available resource to the most urgent cases.

Both the material assessment and priority assessment result in a numeric score; the two being added together to give the overall risk assessment score. The system is designed to be transparent so people can see how priorities were decided and if necessary allow debate about the decisions made.

The following table gives M3 Associates' general interpretation (for information purposes only) of the Overall Risk Assessment scores.

Risk Score	Risk Assessment
20 or More	High Risk
14 to 19	Medium Risk
9 to 13	Low Risk
8 or Less	Very Low Risk

Overall risk = Material score + Priority score

Appendix C Photographs

KEY




	Indicates materials confirmed as containing asbestos
	Indicates items and/or areas presumed to contain asbestos
	Indicates non-asbestos type materials

Photo 1

Material: Lagging (boxed-in)

Location:

Boxed-in pipe work in Second floor
Store 5 (right-hand-side of stairwell).

Contains Amosite & Chrysotile
asbestos.

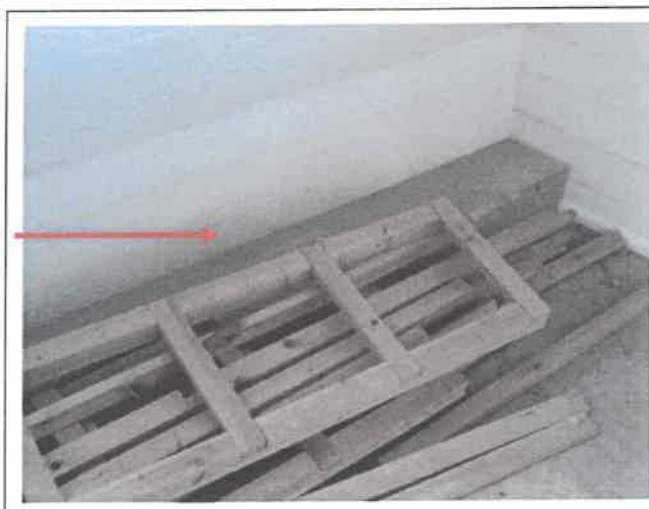


Photo 2

Material: Lagging (in void)

Location:

Second floor, Store 8: Sealed void
with pipe lagging in.

Contains Amosite & Chrysotile
asbestos.

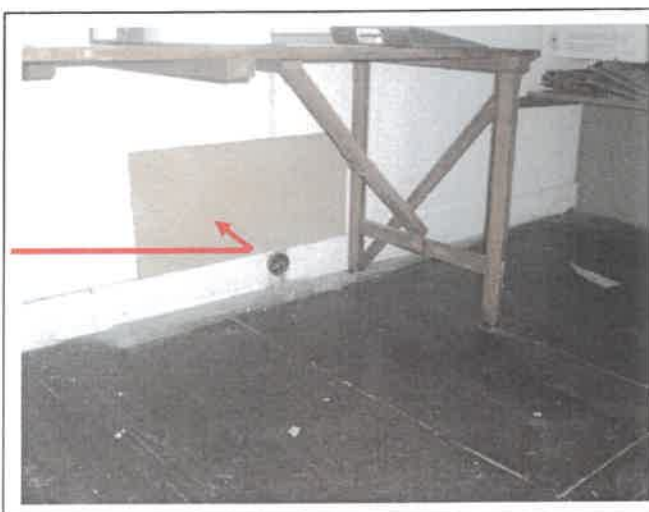


Photo 3

Material: Lagging (in void)

Location:

Second floor corridor: Void with pipe
lagging in.

Contains Amosite & Chrysotile
asbestos.



Photo 4

Material: Textured coating

Location:

Ceiling of Office 1 on the First floor.

Contains Chrysotile asbestos.



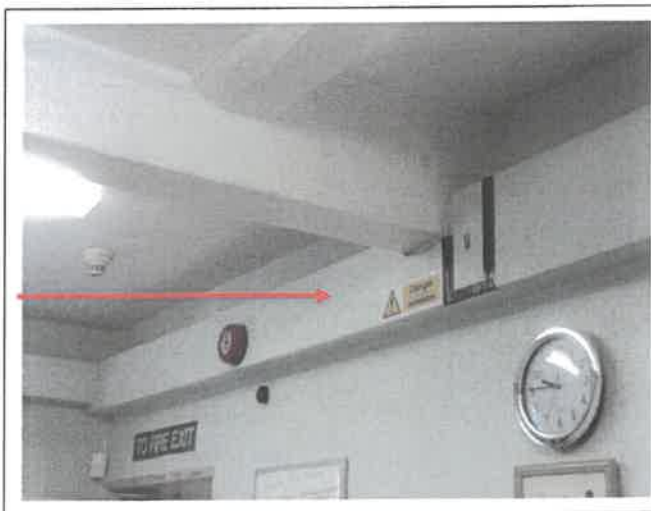
Photo 5

Material: Lagging (boxed-in)

Location:

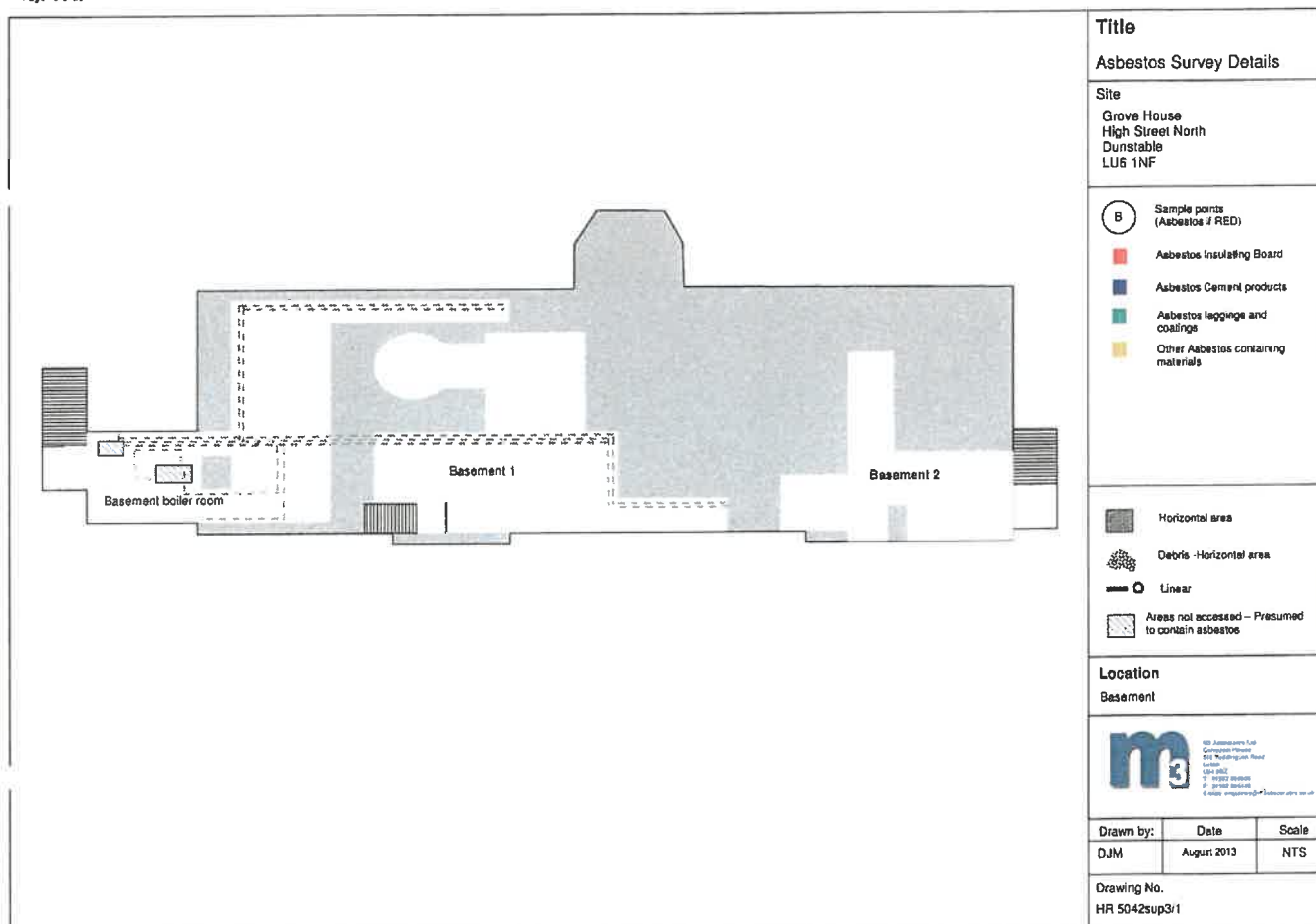
Boxed-in lagging in Citizens Advice Bureau.

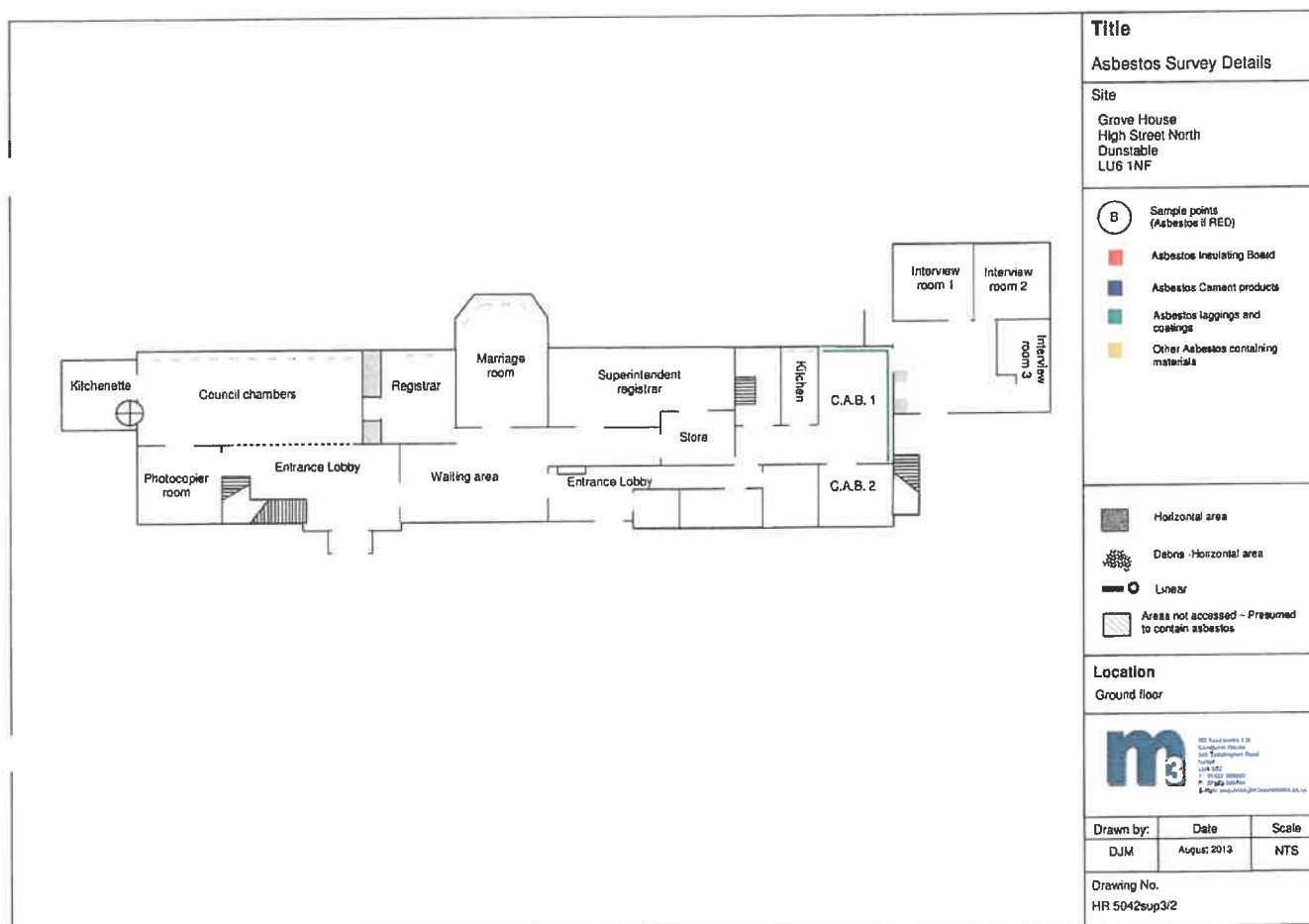
Contains Amosite & Chrysotile asbestos.

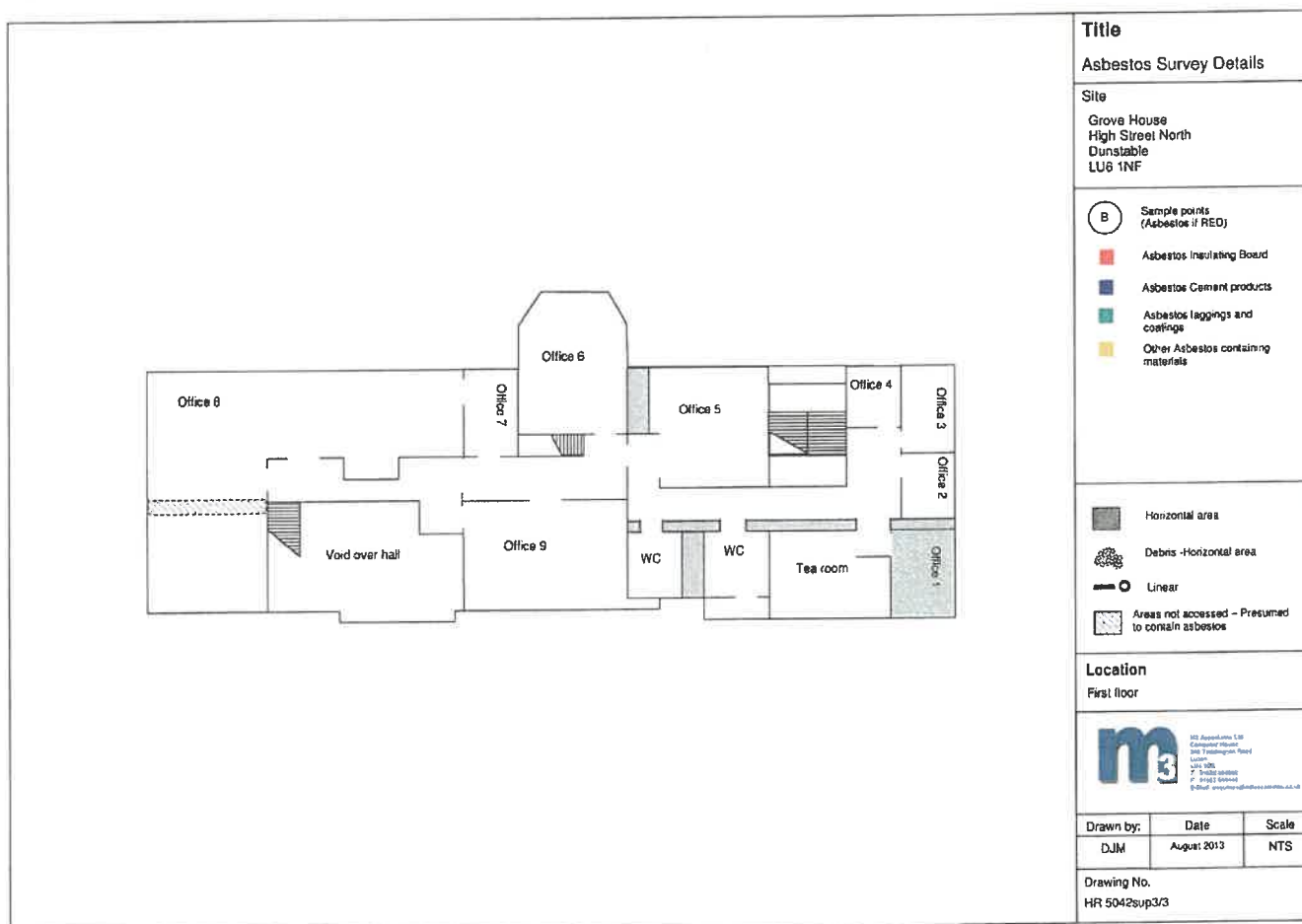


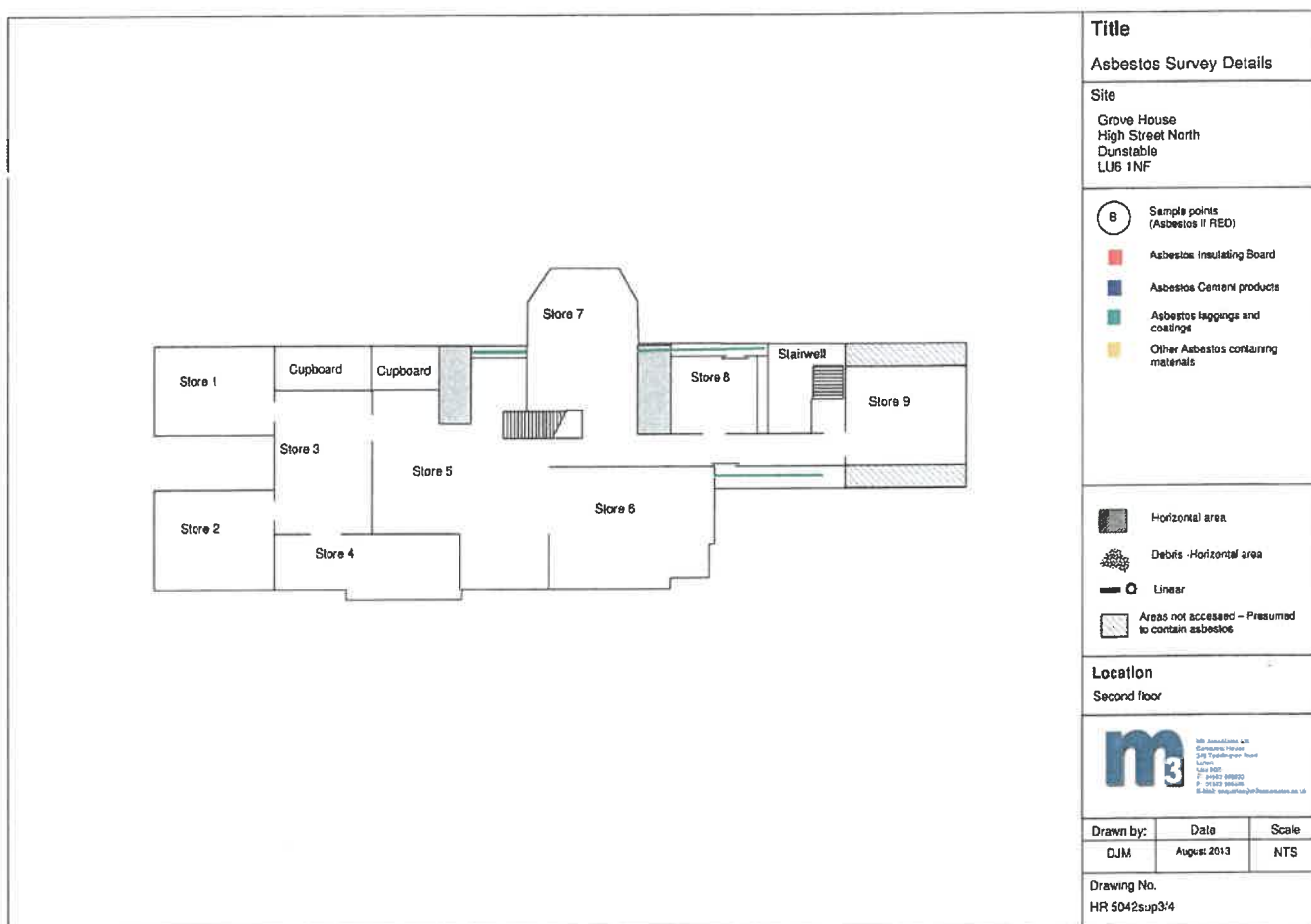
Appendix D Site Plans

**(Copied from original survey report and
amended/annotated where necessary)**









Appendix E Review & Update

[illegible]

Grove House, 76 High Street North, Dunstable, Bedfordshire LU6 1NF

LOCATION	DESCRIPTION AND CONDITION	REMEDY	YEAR 1	YEAR 2	YEAR 3	YEAR 4	YEAR 5	YEAR 6	YEAR 7	YEAR 8	YEAR 9	YEAR 10
EXTERNAL (Capital Project Expenditure Highlighted in Blue Font)												
Roof	Lead coverings and flashings.	Periodic high-level inspection and report.	X			X			X			X
	Box and valley gutters.	Annual inspection, leaf and silt clearance and unblocking.	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
	Box and valley gutters	Repairs.					X					
	Roof tiles and slates.	Annual inspection, leaf and silt clearance and unblocking.	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
	Roof tiles and slates.	Isolated and localised repairs of slipped or broken slates and tiles.	X				X					X
	Roof tiles and slates.	Repoint ridge and hip tiles.					X					
	Flat roofs (including sloping sections.	Annual inspection and moss/debris clearance.	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
	Flat roofs.	Coping stone, parapet and upstand repairs.	X				X					X
	Flat roofs.	Roofing recovering and upgrade roof insulation.					X					
	Sloping flat roof sections.	Roofing recovering and upgrade roof insulation.					X					
	Parapet walls and copings.	Annual inspection of lead cappings, flashings and stability.	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
	Parapet walls and copings.	Repoint coping stones and repairs.					X					
	Parapet walls and copings.	Render repairs and redecoration.					X					
	Dormer windows.	Annual inspection of lead flat roofs, dormer cheeks, flashings and joinery.	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
	Dormer windows.	Inspection, repair and redecoration.			X						X	
	Chimney stacks.	Annual inspection of chimney heads, flashings, render and painted surfaces.	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
	Chimney stacks.	Removal of moss, repairs to cracked render, flashings and abutments.					X					
	Chimney stacks.	Redecoration of render.					X					
	Rainwater goods and drainage gullies.	Annual inspection and moss/debris clearance.	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
	Rainwater goods.	Repairs to corroded and broken sections.	X									

Grove House, 76 High Street North, Dunstable, Bedfordshire LU6 1NF

LOCATION	DESCRIPTION AND CONDITION	REMEDY	YEAR 1	YEAR 2	YEAR 3	YEAR 4	YEAR 5	YEAR 6	YEAR 7	YEAR 8	YEAR 9	YEAR 10
	Rainwater goods.	Redecoration of painted sections.			X						X	
Walls	Render and brickwork.	Inspection condition and report.	X									
	Render.	Repair cracked render and redecorate rear elevation and south walls.		X							X	
	Render.	Repair cracked render and redecorate front elevation and north walls.			X							X
	Painted brickwork.	Clean, repoint and redecorate rear and south elevations.			X						X	
	Painted brickwork.	Clean, report and redecorate any remaining sections.				X						X
	Portico	Ongoing movement monitoring.	X		X		X		X		X	
Windows & Doors	Timber framed.	Detailed condition survey.		X								
	Timber framed.	Timber repairs and redecoration – west and south elevations.			X						X	
	Timber framed.	Timber repairs and redecoration – east and north elevations.				X						X
External Metalwork	Railings, grilles, etc.	Repair and redecorate.			X						X	
Bird Protection	“Anti-pigeon” netting and spikes.	Renew and upgrade.		X								
INTERNAL												
Internal Roof Voids	Timber framework.	Inspection and report.		X								
	Timber framework.	Periodic woodworm and beetle infestation treatment and timber repairs.		X						X		
	Timber framework.	Upgrade roof insulation and ventilation, where possible.			X							
Electrical Installations	Safety and compliance.	Detailed NICEIC level inspection.		X						X		
	Safety and compliance.	Attend to C1 defects immediately.		X								
	Safety and compliance.	Attend to C2 defects.			X					X		
	Safety and compliance.	PAT testing.			X						X	

LOCATION		DESCRIPTION AND CONDITION										REMEDY	YEAR 1	YEAR 2	YEAR 3	YEAR 4	YEAR 5	YEAR 6	YEAR 7	YEAR 8	YEAR 9	YEAR 10
Heating & Hot Water	Safety and compliance.	✓	Annual Gas Safe and equipment control tests.	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
	Safety and compliance.	✓	Attend to serious safety installation defects.	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
	Energy performance.	near	Consider capital works improvements for energy performance improvements.	X																		
	Day to day performance.		Resolve current short term performance issues regarding lack of control and inefficiencies and former repairs/upgrades.	X																		
Fire Safety	Safety and compliance.	✓	Annual testing of fire, smoke, detection and alarm systems.	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
	Safety and compliance.		Attend to serious safety installation defects.	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Drainage & Plumbing	Condition assessment.		CCTV surveys of sub-ground installations.							X												
	Condition assessment.		Drainage repairs.								X											
Air Conditioning / Ventilation	All air conditioning and ventilation systems should have a regime for annual periodic testing and servicing in place.	✓	Undertake annual periodic testing and servicing of air conditioning systems and ventilation, to include cleaning, service, adjusting and overhaul, as necessary, of all components of the systems.	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
	There should be a suitable Risk Assessment assessing the risk of Legionnaires disease.	✓	If not available, commission a Risk Assessment to be carried out, to identify and assess the risk of Legionnaires disease.	X						X												
Cold Water Storage Installations	Arrangements should be made to check, record and take water samples and arrange for analysis on the microbiological activity.	✓	Frequency variable dependent upon Risk Assessment.																			
	Inspect, clean, service and disinfect, as necessary, all components of the storage cisterns.	✓	Frequency dependent upon Risk Assessment. A maintenance regime may already be in place and should be continued regularly.																			
Asbestos	Review and maintain an Asbestos Register.	✓	Refer to Asbestos Reinspection & Risk Assessment Repot, dated August 2013 and up-date or implement, as appropriate.	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X

LOCATION	DESCRIPTION AND CONDITION	REMEDY
Internal Areas	Meeting Rooms, Offices, Circulation Areas and Welfare Areas.	Phased internal improvements and redecoration across the interiors.
		YEAR 1
		YEAR 2
		YEAR 3
		YEAR 4
		YEAR 5
		YEAR 6
		YEAR 7
		YEAR 8
		YEAR 9
		YEAR 10