



The Sandwich Guildhall Project

Project Managers Progress Report 5

9th March 2017

Project documentation

Communications strategy – documentation cannot be completed until information received from Partners – see Actions from progress report 2, 3 and 4. Can all Partners provide the contact details of their Communications contact as soon as possible please so that this document can be completed and so that any communications can be produced in line with the agreed strategy.

Partnership Agreement –to be signed by all Partners at the March Board meeting.

Activity Plan –The Action Plan continues to be populated. As requested in Progress Report 4, please can all Partners ensure that those leading the design and delivery of the agreed project elements within their organisations provide key project information to ensure that these elements can be included in the HLF Stage 1 bid.

Project Elements

The detail of the Project elements continues to be progressed. The success of the project depends on active involvement from all partner organisations. To date some partner organisations are more active than others, and Board Members are requested to ensure that their own organisation is involved to take part so that a well-rounded project can be developed.

Funding

Heritage Lottery Fund

The information for the bid continues to be collated for a bid submission in September 2017, as requested by HLF.

The main risks to the preparation of the bid document are currently:

- 1 Ownership of the Guildhall

The HLF have advised that the bid must be submitted in the name of the organisation which holds the freehold of the building and they want to see a consistent ownership after the award of grant.



Decisions relating to transfer of ownership and any subsequent negotiations must be completed before a bid can be submitted. This falls outside the remit of the Project Manager but may impact upon the timescales for submission of the bid.

2 Supply of information relating to Project Elements

Limited information has been provided by lead organisations to date, and a bid cannot be submitted without detailed input from lead organisations.

It is noted that Sandwich Town Council are recruiting an Officer to work on the STC projects, but until this time there is no resource to progress the projects. In addition, it is noted that STC will be appointing a consultant to complete a Business Plan. The business plan is a requirement of the HLF bid.

Coastal Communities Fund

No further information has been released by DCLG.

Consultation update (from Hannah Batley)

The online survey has been available since the 23rd January 2017 and has so far has had 141 responses. It was originally intended for the survey to be available for only 8 weeks but this has now be extended to coincide with the release of the newsletter, to give as many people as possible the opportunity to respond.

The responses to the online survey have been encouraging and very informative;

- The majority of people use the Guildhall and market place for the cafes (56.12%) and markets (43.88%)
- 103 people said they would attend the Guildhall specifically for festivals, 120 for markets and 81 for Sandwich heritage related events/activities
- Nearly 40% would be interested in using the Guildhall to learn more about heritage

When asked “What is it you love about the Guildhall?” the responses were very positive;

- “Central hub of the town”
- “Community space in a beautiful historical setting”
- “The buildings are attractive, historically interesting and it gives Sandwich a sense of gravity, seriousness. Internally the building has some lovely features and as locals we are proud of it.”
- “It's the heartbeat of the town”
- “Guildhall has kept its history alive”

Some of the improvements suggested are;

- More of a café culture

- Regular farmer/food markets
- Repair and improve cobbles
- Better facilities i.e. benches and bike racks

On Wednesday 1st March 2017 we hosted a very successful drop in face to face consultation, at the Guildhall, for regular building users. 21 people attended and once again we had a very positive response.

Some of the key points taken from the user group consultation are;

- The main room used are – The court room, main hall and Jury room
- Main reasons for using the Guildhall – social events, history society, meetings and archives
- What is it they like about the Guildhall – The heritage, easily accessible, central location and very helpful staff
- Improvements needed – The bar area is sterile and dated and could be better utilized. The tours could have a better flow if redesigned. The artwork should be re-organised; used a narrative for the history of Sandwich
- Many users commented that the museum area should be bigger and that more archives and exhibition should be on public display
- Concerned were raised about the stairs, as many people feel they are dangerous
- Storage not adequate for archives and not easily accessible to those with disabilities
- Make better use of the new hall i.e. working stage for theatre productions

Other comments regarding the market place and outside space;

- The cobbles need repairing but must not be removed
- Café culture
- Café seating must not encroach too much on the outdoor space
- Market must improve, otherwise it isn't worth having
- More events

The online consultation will continue to be accessible until an adequate number of responses have been received and more face to face consultations will take place the 1940s weekend.

A newsletter has been produced on line and is available for partners to circulate. In line with DDC Policy, DDC will be making the newsletter available on the website, on their A New Vision for Sandwich page, and also via Keep Me Posted.

Consultation with Local History Groups will commence in April. In addition, consultation will take place at the 1940s Weekend.

All Partners are invited to be actively involved in developing and delivering consultation, for the success of the project.

Procurement

As previously advised, the following survey work will be instructed by DDC in April:

- Measured drawings
- Building Condition Survey
- Topographical survey

Communication

The newsletter has been released. Information is available on DDC Keep Me Posted Sandwich Topic.

Other Project Updates

None received. Partners are requested to provide updates for inclusion in the Project Manager's monthly report.

Previous Actions outstanding

All Board members to provide details of the Lead communications contact for their organisation.	Outstanding
Board to agree the lead Communications contact to support the Chair.	Outstanding
Board to agree message for A New Vision for Sandwich and for The Guildhall Project. Approval and adoption by the Board	Outstanding
Partnership Agreement to be approved. Document to be signed by all Partners at the next Board Meeting.	Document complete and circulated. To be signed at March Board Meeting.

Actions this month

Surveys to be instructed	RC
On line Consultation analysis and report	HB