

ABINGDON TOWN COUNCIL

Report to	Finance Governance & Asset Management Committee
Meeting date	26 July 2022
Report author	Victoria Moore
Agenda item	Item 8

REPORT OF THE PROPERTIES OFFICER

1. **Purpose of the Report**

- 1.1 To Update members of current works and property progress in the Guildhall complex

2. **Summary**

- 2.1 **Royse Drains** – Ridge is progressing with arranging works for the project.
- 2.2 **Guildhall Stonework** – Andrew Townsend is sourcing contractors for stonework and damp proofing.
- 2.3 **Guildhall Roof** – Awaiting start date from Inside out to commence roofing works and window replacement.
- 2.4 **Women’s Institute Tapestry** – WI would like to hang a tapestry in the Royse Room

3. **Action required**

- 3.1 Members are asked to note **Guildhall Roof**
- 3.2 Members are asked to note **Royse Drains**
- 3.3 Members are asked to note **Guildhall Stonework**
- 3.4 Members are asked to approve hanging of **WI Tapestry**

4. **Link to strategic plan and objectives**

- 4.1 Maintenance and improvement programme yr 3
- 4.2 Primary linked objective:
KO2: To develop a resilient, sustainable town which will provide a home for residents now and in the future.
- 4.3 Other objectives addressed:
KO1: To respond effectively and speedily to the climate emergency.
- 4.4 KO3: To manage the Council's assets efficiently and effectively to meet for the needs of the community now and in the future.

5. **Background**

- 5.1 **Current works and property progress** – Stages of works are included within the 'revised' agreed schedule of works in line with councils 5 yr. strategic plan which was noted by members at the Finance, Governance and Asset Management Advisory Committee on 23rd November 2021.
- 5.2 **Royse Drains** – Ridge have carried out all preliminary surveys and obtained a foul drain and drainage channel map of Abbey Close and surrounding streets, with this information Ridge were able to submit an estimated cost for works which was received in June 2022.
- 5.3 **Guildhall Stonework** – Andrew Townsend Architects had confirmed water ingress penetrating through the external concrete staircase causing severe damp and decay within the Robing room, WC area and original gateway of Royse Court. Without repairs stonework and robing room refurbishment cannot be carried out. Investigations were undertaken into the repairs required; a quote was forwarded to the Properties Officer in June 2022 for a new waterproof membrane. Alongside this Andrew Townsend was sourcing contractors and costs to restore the stonework on the original Abbey Gateway.
- 5.4 **Guildhall Roof** – Ridge was appointed to survey the Guildhall roof in November 2020 due to water ingress. The properties officer has appointed a contractor to carry out the repairs highlighted in the report. Before roofing repairs start planning permission was required prior to works.
- 5.5 **Women's Institute Tapestry** - Fitzharrys WI, now renamed Abingdon Fitzharrys WI presented to the town a hanging to celebrate the Millennium in 2000. This was an original idea from the Mayor Lesley Legge 2000 -2001. The tapestry was originally hung above the wide

staircase entrance to the Abbey Hall but this is now leased to the Abbey Cinema. The tapestry came down during the 2018 refurbishment. It has since been in storage.

6. **Key information and options**

- 6.1 **Royse Drains** – Ridge is obtaining dates for the underground utility survey, obtaining tender information to produce a pricing document, and organising the administrative duties required for the project. Upon completion a date for works will be submitted. At the meeting of 21st June 2022, it was noted that the Guildhall carpark is sited on ancient burial ground and care must be taken when excavation works are carried out.
- 6.2 **Guildhall Stonework** – Andrew Townsend Architects have drafted a brief specification for builders' work in connection with the lining of the roof above the Robing room and WC and hope to be able to issue this for pricing week commencing 25th July. Depending on the scope of works to the roof and gateway stonework it may require listed building consent. Andrew Townsend Architects will carry out these enquiries.
- 6.3 **Guildhall Roof** – Works to repair the roof and replace rooflights is booked. Scaffold will be erected in Abbey close outside the Mayors Parlour balcony week commencing 26th September. Works and rooflight replacement to start week commencing 3rd October. Works will take approximately 1 month, weather dependant.
- 6.4 **WI Tapestry** – Fitzharrys WI are not keen for the tapestry to go to the museum and feel it would be more suited in the Historic Guildhall, primarily the Royse room. The hanging is approximately 1m square. The Guildhall Management operator, Regal Evesham have been notified of the potential hanging of the tapestry in the Royse room and have no objections. A picture of the tapestry can be found in Appendix 1.

7. **Financial/budget implications**

- 8.1 All monies for the forementioned works have been budgeted and agreed. There are no current financial implications.

8. **HR implications**

- 8.1 Items detailed in the above report will have no additional implications to staff.
- 8.2 There may be minor disruption to the Abbey Hall Cinema when scaffolding is being erected near the entrance and whilst works are being carried out. Abbey Cinema have been notified of works. There is safe access for pedestrians to the reception area and scaffolding will be enclosed with barriers.

9. **Supporting papers and appendices**

- 9.1 Appendix 1 – Picture of Fitzharrys WI tapestry

Victoria Moore
Properties Officer
21 July 2022