



Annual Report 2010-2011

Stroud Preservation Trust is a building preservation trust set up to preserve buildings of particular historical, architectural and constructional interest, in and around Stroud, for the benefit of the local community and the Nation.

The Brunel Goods Shed

The main project throughout the financial year was again the Brunel Goods Shed. After so many years of research, project ideas, feasibility studies and so on this

financial year has seen a very real and significant change in the fortunes of the Goods Shed at last.

Early in the financial year the renovation contract was signed with local building company Carters Construction and they spent some months working on the Goods Shed, removing the old external platform, defining the eastern footprint and parking areas, filling in the floor and putting large roller shutters into the five arches. Network Rail contractors repaired the

rooflights as the permissions to work on the roof were complex because of trains passing. Both contractors did a good job.



The eastern end with new roller shutters

The building work was planned and checked by Nigel Bedford, whose company Atelier 7 had won the feasibility study done in 2008. He revised his plans and gave us a serviceable and practical solution that came in on budget. The only unforeseen aspect of the work were the 'pingos' that appeared in the car park at the eastern end of the building. The Bredon gravel was put down and well watered just before the severe winter weather set in and some of the water froze deep so that when cars drove over the surface round pits appeared that could not be satisfactorily filled. We had not planned how the defined footprint of the property would affect parking and driving and the Bredon gravel surface was not designed for so many vehicles to drive over it each day.

In June both the Stroud News and Journal and Stroud Life gave the refurbishment of the Goods Shed good coverage where we could celebrate that we had a secure, dry and safe building and one that you could at last see the potential of its wonderful space and we asked Andrew Watton to put it on the commercial market.



Internally showing shutters & skylights

At the AGM in November we also opened the building and over 50 people came to visit, including many who had worked there or told us stories about people who had worked there. After the opening of the building we had our AGM attended by 30 people.

The building work and raising money for this Goods Shed does not stop. There are still some major areas of work to be completed – for instance there is still no electricity supply to the building so we commissioned a full and detailed specification from suppliers Western Central (Eon) and an internal wiring specification for when three phase supply was installed. Water and mains sewerage connections need checking and updating and the little office block needs windows, doors and floors – all of this is being costed and delivery of some of those items is in the continued repairs programme for 2011/12.

There are always stumbling blocks with a building like this and what we have discovered is that if we find an end user who is VAT registered and shows profit we will have to pay the VAT on the renovations – around £14,000!. If they are not VAT registered then we would not have to pay this VAT. Prudently we have the money put aside and the discussions and research goes on – ie is this still relevant if the end user is VAT registered but is a not for profit organisation. Research and queries like this, in our experience, can take many years to sort out. Watch this space!



Nigel & Anne with volunteer Geoff Murray

Looking to the future

There are 9 trustees of SPT and we have all spent a lot of time on the Goods Shed – Anne Mackintosh and Nigel Paterson especially having taken it on in 1986! It was important to step back from the day to day details of the renovation and look at SPT overall. So on July 21st 2010 most of us met to talk about ideas for the future, what our commitment was to the organisation, what we needed to do if nothing changed for the Goods Shed and there was no end user etc.

We had a really good evening session facilitated by trustee Camilla Hale and came up with new ideas and renewed energy for the organisation.

One immediate result was that we decided to sell the leaseholds of the buildings that we have restored over the years. Rents from the leaseholds were low but we felt that we wanted to offer the owners of the properties the option to buy their own leaseholds. This is the one main asset of SPT and we felt it important to realise that asset if possible. In the past 6 months the Management Company of the Withys Yard shops, flats and offices have agreed to purchase their ground lease, the Toll House at Cainscross has offered and two of the Arundel Mill owners as well. We are in negotiation around the other Arundel Mill properties and the Medieval Hall at the top of the High Street. We feel that people want fully to own their properties and if SPT did have a short future for any reason

(especially in these difficult financial times) then the legal passing on of 950 year leases would be cumbersome for another group. We double checked the legality of this move with the Charities Commission and were given the thumbs up.

To help with this new work SPT have also found a new solicitor. Every step of work that we do takes time and consideration and throughout the financial year the trustees have met monthly with different trustees taking on different responsibilities and negotiating and arranging for the details of renovation or contract negotiations or lease arrangements and other legalities. Approximately 1,000 volunteer hours through the year – very much the Big Society in action!

And of course fundraising continues – some donations come in, membership remains steady but small, the selling of the leases will raise some finite funds and applications for continued renovation will run through 2011/12.

Is there an end user in sight?

This has been the question for SPT with the Goods Shed for many decades and by the time you read this at the AGM you will know that SPT has signed a five year lease with Stroud Valleys Artspace (SVA) and that they have been using the building since May 2011. Negotiations were slow to start with but early in the New Year we met with SVA and discussed ideas and options for the Goods Shed. Things really got rolling when SVA knew they had secure Arts Council funding. Our new solicitor drew up a lease and after working through it in great detail it was signed in May 2011.

We look forward to a long relationship with SVA and for them to help develop the Goods Shed to its full potential and its fully restored glory. At last the building has a future that is full of people, is being run by a community group (which was the basis of several of our funding streams) and that is open to the public much of the time for exhibitions, events, classes and workshops. Even the building insurance has reduced a little because the building is no longer empty and, most importantly, we

are in negotiation to have the building taken off the English Heritage Buildings At Risk register.

Publicity this year

Articles in the local papers around the changes to the Goods Shed.
Several local radio slots to talk about the changes.
Press releases re SVA as end user.
Open day for the AGM, November 6th 2010.

Trustees and Members

Trustees continue to work hard for SPT and a new Chair has steered the organisation through its first year without founder member and Chair Nigel Paterson. However she can only offer to be Chair for one year so another must step forward from the AGM in 2011. A new member has joined and will write newsletters for us. This really helps us keep SPT's presence in the public eye, and to all the trustees, members and supporters of SPT I say thank you at the end of a satisfying year when at last there will be a programme of activity in the Goods Shed. Still plenty to do but plenty has been achieved!

Camilla Hale Chair



Trustees

Tim Bryan
Richard Fox
Camilla Hale Chairman
Tim Harrison
Steve Hurrell
Anne Mackintosh Treasurer
Nigel Paterson
Emma Stuart
Richard Wood

Bankers

CAF Bank
Barclays Bank

Solicitors

Hugh Read of Read & Co

Auditors

Shiner Mitchell Fisher & Co Ltd

Financial Information Income and Expenditure

Income £ 93,718
Expenditure £95,215

Breakdown of Income

Membership /Donations £457
Investment Income £81
Grants £93,261
Rents £700

Breakdown of Expenditure

Administrative £1,252
Brunel Goods Shed £94,663

Fund Balances

General Fund £61,309
Restricted Funds £11,862
Total £73,171
The accounts are available on request.

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