

**KIRRIEMUIR CONSERVATION AREA REGENERATION SCHEME -
STEERING GROUP – 22 AUGUST 2017
CARS PROJECT OFFICER'S REPORT**

SMALL GRANTS SCHEME UPDATE

Current/ On-Going Works

At the time of writing, three Small Grants projects remain outstanding for the CARS Steering Group to note.

17 Bank Street

Works were completed at the former Church Centre, 17 Bank Street by the stated deadline of the end of June and the Contractors (Nortel Ltd.) have now left the site. No receipted invoices have however been submitted for payment of grant monies despite the Agent trying to progress preparation of the final accounts. It is also evident on site that, whilst works to the front elevation have been completed, no works other than roof repairs and replacement downpipes (+ painting) have been carried out by the roofing sub-contractor at the rear in Manse Close. Grant eligible works included window repairs (7 in total) and 8sq.m of stonework repairs on the west (Manse Close) elevation which have not been completed. As the Council's QS had initially assessed the cost of grant eligible works to amount to some £32,265 overall, the grant offer was capped at the maximum amount of £20,000 so even if this work, however desirable, is not carried out the actual grant payment would not be affected. Masonry repairs and repainting works have however been carried out to the Pend which was included in the grant eligible amount.

The revised offer of grant (dated 2 June 2017) was signed by the prospective new owners of the building on 6 June 2017. Of some concern however, is the on-going delay in that the missives for the sale of the building to the Applicants have not yet concluded due to legal issues with the property title. The Council's Legal Services team has advised that the Applicant's Solicitors (Thorntons, Dundee) are continuing to investigate an issue regarding a competing title for an adjacent property at 13 Bank Street, across the Pend from no. 17. The Seller's Solicitors are taking this up with Registers and have asked for the Plans Report to be updated accordingly. They had been hoping to resolve this quickly but clearly there is slow progress and it is taking longer than anticipated. Meantime, no grant can be paid out for the completed works.

This has now impacted upon timescales for the minimum 6 month Defects Liability period up to the end of December, before final grant payment is made within the last quarter of the CARS Grant project.

Former Ogilvy Arms

Similar timescale issues have also been experienced with works being completed at the former Ogilvy Arms in High Street. The Applicant's Agent issued an Interim Certificate/

Valuation 1 for the completed works on 1 June which was submitted for payment. Additional minor snagging works were required which, to date, have not been done although the Agent has been pursuing this in order to issue the practical completion certificate. Again there is a timescale issue due to the delay in approving legal documentation sent out to the Applicant's Solicitor and the Solicitors acting on behalf of the Scottish Ministers (because of the level of grant award). Some £40,000 of grant monies is currently allocated towards this project however grant funding cannot be paid out until the necessary paperwork is signed and registered. This should hopefully be within the next week or two. As with 17 Bank Street, this impacts on timescales for a minimum 6 month Defects Liability period.

Visocchi's

As Members will also note, the new lime render has been applied and approved signage installed at Visocchi's shopfront in High Street. It is noticeable however that the renovation of the shopfront has not been fully completed as anticipated with snagging works still requiring to be carried out. Indeed, the overall finish appears incomplete and disappointing albeit in accordance with the approved planning drawings. The Contractor has informed the Project Officer that there are contractual issues to be resolved before any final snagging works are carried out and full grant monies for this project can be reimbursed.

Previous Members of the CARS Steering Group will recall awarding a grant for the sum of £14,793 on 20 October 2015. The original offer of grant, issued on 9 December 2015 was not signed or returned by the Applicant and was therefore re-issued by Legal Services on 16 March 2016. This was finally signed (by the property owners Scott James Partnership) and returned on 13 May 2016. The original Grant Offer included a Condition that the grant eligible works must be completed and grant award claimed by no later than 31 March 2017. With the Contractors only starting in February 2017, this deadline was passed whilst works were on-going on site and extended to 30 June 2017. An interim grant payment of £7,792 was made on 1 June 2017 for completed grant eligible works, based on two receipted invoices totalling £9,167. The scope of the works has changed to include additional boarding and rendering works to the whole façade for which planning permission was finally applied for and approved on 27 June 2017. Following the agreement of the CARS Steering Group, the Applicant was sent a revised Grant Offer (dated 11 July 2017) of £4,231 towards the additional cost of re-rendering work to the façade. To date, this grant offer has not been signed nor returned by the Applicants despite a time limit (Clause 21) stating that "the Offer is open for acceptance in writing within one week after the date of the Offer and failing acceptance on or before that date will thereafter be deemed to have been withdrawn". The total CARS grant award now amounts to some £19,024 however only the original £14,793 grant offer has been formally accepted leaving £7,001 in grant payment outstanding.

In collaboration with the appointed Contractors, the Project Officer has continuously tried to engage with the Applicant having had discussions and verbal agreements made on site but with no follow-up, having left telephone messages and written out to the Applicant on two occasions recently but with no response. Additional grant monies have been offered but not accepted, no further receipted invoices have been received to be reimbursed for works already carried out therefore the Steering Group is asked to consider whether grant monies should continue to be allocated towards this project particularly when monies could be directed towards other sources (see below) before the Project is due to finish in March 2018.

Steering Group Members are therefore asked to consider the following two options:

Either to -

- Formally withdraw the Offer of Additional Grant monies (£4,231) dated 11 July 2017 as per Clause 21 therein, and to re-allocate the funds accordingly. This would require the Applicant to fully fund the additional works which have been carried out; or to
- Offer the Applicant a further deadline of 1st September for the Offer of Additional Grant monies to be formally accepted in writing, then works completed on site and all grant monies claimed by 30 September 2017.

It is unfortunate that the last three remaining grant projects above, which are all in prominent locations have proved problematic. Putting this into perspective however, 50 buildings within the Kirriemuir Conservation Area have benefitted from CARS grant assistance from the Small Grants Scheme. This is in addition to the 2 main Priority Projects which were completed at the Glengate Hall and in Roods. Some £423,833.70 of grant monies have been paid out in Small Grants to date with approximately £73,132 still due to be paid for retentions and the above projects currently underway.

PUBLIC REALM WORKS

Members will recall at the last Steering Group meeting that grant applications for Curries Accountants at 2-8 Bank Street and Three Bellies Brae were considered and declined due to the timescales for the scheme. This left a surplus of £16,005 within the small grants scheme fund. As part of discussions on this and the financial update report Members agreed that consideration should be given to suitable uses for these funds and any remaining surplus. Proposals were to be put forward by the CARS Project Officer.

Members will be aware, through the last update report, of the collaboration work ongoing with the Dementia Friendly group and the proposed difficulties around a suitable location for the "Memory Mural". Consideration was therefore given to locating the mural further along St Colme's Close on the west facing elevation of the east wall which is within Angus Council's ownership, through the Roads section. Discussion has taken place with Roads who are agreeable to this. Work is currently well advanced on the mural with over 60 local people helping with the project.

Whilst there has been some previous repair work undertaken to the wall there are points where cement is slastered over the face of the stone and does not provide a good example of traditional repair or workmanship. The wall therefore offers scope as a project to utilise the remaining funds for appropriate traditional repairs but also for the re-pointing to be undertaken as part of a hands-on training programme. This would ensure the re-pointing of the wall in a traditional manner and provide a showcase location for the siting of the mural.



PHOTOS OF THE WALL IN ST. COLME'S CLOSE / JULY 2017

A small amount of CARS funding has already been directed towards the mural (as part of the DFK contribution), so there has been some discussion around reflecting CARS within this and agreement that the CARS logo be included as part of the mural design.

A detailed review of existing financial commitments has been undertaken within each of the CARS budget headings to determine the available funds for this project and whether this would fit within the scope of any restrictions associated with this. There is approximately £30,000 remaining within the CARS budget.

In light of this, Frew Conservation who were contracted to provide the training elements of the CARS scheme were asked to prepare a training proposal. They have provided examples of similar schemes which have successfully run elsewhere. The budget currently available is substantially less than that for these other projects however an option has been developed which would fit within the £30,000 budget.

The CARS proposal would include the setting up and delivery of a 6 week project, incorporating a 3-week intensive training programme for the appropriate repair of the west facing elevation of east wall to St Colme's Close, providing 'real' work experience and training for those participating. Provisionally, two groups have been identified to participate in a week-long course/ placement each; Webster's High School and Dundee & Angus College. A small team of up to 6 pupils/ students (each group supervised by a teacher/ lecturer from their respective organisations) would work with experienced and respected stonemasonry tutors to complete the repairs of a designated section of walling. The role of Frew Conservation would be to train the participants to repair the walls and to supervise the standard and extent of repairs.

A further week of work would also provide an opportunity for a wider range of participants, through a series of one and/or two-day lime pointing training courses. These would be designed around the needs of specific groups such as building contractors and professionals.

The day-to-day training and supervision would be provided by a small pool of experienced and respected conservation masonry craftspeople, all of whom run their own companies specialising in the repair of traditional and historic building repairs. The project would be managed directly by Frew Conservation who would act as the principal point of contact.

The total cost of the project is £30,000 (including VAT) which includes all training and supervision, materials, PPE, set up costs, preparation costs and project management and site administration and costs for tutors. The overall programme would extend to 6 weeks, with 3 of the weeks being dedicated towards the training elements. The remaining time period would be allocated to repairs work to the remainder of the wall and elements to be undertaken working at height. It is anticipated that work may start in early-September.

The project fits well with the CARS outcomes and can be delivered within the project timescales.

Steering Group Members are therefore asked to consider this proposal and advise the Project Officer on whether they are in agreement to pursue this course of action. Further details on timescales, costings etc. will be available at the meeting.

WAYFINDING APP

The App on Kirriemuir's Unknown History has now been updated by the Webster's High School pupils to include an additional three questions relating to Visocchi's (previous use as the town's Cinema), the buildings previously demolished around The Square and the conversion of the Glengate Hall (bellcote on the roof). The CARS project has been recognised in the supplementary information after the Glengate Hall question.

The additional offer of grant funding (up to £1,000) has been made for publicity and marketing of the App but the details of this will not be confirmed until the pupils are back at school after the summer break and contact resumes with the School.

CARS LEGACY

Work is continuing on furthering the legacy of the CARS funding in the town. Discussions have taken place with Dundee and Angus College in relation to options for a student from Building Surveying or Architecture to undertake a short placement to provide a photographic survey. Students will return to College at the end of August so it is hoped that this can be progressed on their return.