

STAR NEWS

From your Community Land Trust

A New Beginning for the Stars!

After six years of lying empty, the Stars is coming back to life. The old frontage has been taken down and the parts for the new one delivered, awaiting assembly. It will be much more in keeping with the other 19th century shops in the town centre, and remove an eyesore that so many people have rightly been concerned about. However, the work has revealed serious weaknesses in the brickwork supporting the beam running above the window, and we have had to wait several weeks to get expert advice on what needs to be done to make the building sound and secure.

This key stage of the Star's restoration has been a text-book example of drawing on local skills, involving the fruitful collaboration of Jonathan Greig, Architect, Anthony Jones, Shropshire Hardwoods, and Stuart Taylor, Board member of the Trust and an expert planner. The new look Stars will also be graced by two reclaimed cast iron columns which have been sent away to be shot blasted and painted.

Upon completion of the project later this year, there will be two flats available to local people in housing need (a one-bed on the ground floor, with a spacious two-bed family flat above), and a Community Space where the newsagents was, to be made available on short term lets to local organisations and businesses.



Stuart Taylor and Anthony Jones in the Community Space



Stars Appeal

The Trust needs to raise at least £50,000 to deliver this project, by far the largest it has ever undertaken.

This is because of increased cost of building materials and services, plus the higher interest rates limiting how much the Trust can borrow. It represents a very significant investment by our small organisation, and is our vote of confidence in the vitality of Bishops Castle.

In addition to buying the building for £175,000, and spending £14,000 on pre-development costs, the Trust is committing a further £50,000, and expects to spend £260,000 to complete the job.

We are very grateful for the support we have already received from Charles Ransford & Son, the Linley Hall Charitable Trust, an anonymous donor, the Ecology Building Society, and Shropshire Council.

You can support the Appeal now, by going to <https://bcclt.co.uk/donate>



COMING SOON

NEW POP-UP VENUE!

Calling all Kitchen Table Talent, Entrepreneurs and Organisations!

As the main building work by GM Jukes of Lydbury North will not be starting until June, the front part of the shop has been partitioned off, creating a no-frills area for hire at a discounted rate as a pop-up venue.

This trial period will offer an opportunity for small local businesses, voluntary groups and individuals to showcase their wares and activities for blocks of a week at a time (maximum four weeks).

We have already had lots of enquiries, from amongst others a silversmith, a pie maker, a bookseller and a maker of country clothing, which is all very encouraging.

Follow us on Facebook to keep in touch with the latest on this exciting development!

Rosie gets to work on the Stars

Rosie is serving an apprenticeship with Shropshire Hardwoods and is part of the team working on the Stars.

Putting her training to good use, Rosie Hughes from Bishops Castle is part of the team building and installing the new shopfront.

Rosie is into her second year as an apprentice and is relishing the task. *"It's great to be involved in bringing the Stars back to life,"* she says; *"I really like working with wood and each time I go past the Stars it will be good to remember the part I played in getting it into shape for another 20 years or more."*

Rosie's course in architectural joinery involves one day week studying at Shrewsbury College of Arts & Technology. The rest of the time she is under the wing of Anthony Jones at Shropshire Hardwoods, who says: *"It's a real pleasure to have Rosie on the team. She's a fast learner and as we are a bespoke joinery business with a wide range of commissions, each day brings a different skill to learn. I'm sure her time with us will stand her in good stead when it's time for her to move on."*



'Star' apprentice Rosie Hughes



Rosie and Anthony in the workshop with joinery for the shopfront



Smoke without Fire!

Over the past few months, retained firefighters from the stations at Bishops Castle, Craven Arms and Minsterley have been using the upstairs part of the Stars for search and rescue training whilst wearing breathing apparatus. To make the conditions as realistic as possible, the windows are all covered over with blackout, and a smoke generator used to create zero visibility.

The fire crew work by touch, and in pairs, to carry out a thorough search of the property, bringing out any 'bodies' (in this case just dummies), that simulate the weight of a genuine casualty. The local fire crew must enjoy the experience as they have since been back for another go!

Their training is organised by Bishop's Castle Fire Stations Watch Manager, Simon Harris, who says; "Bishops Castle has many older buildings with a complicated layout," said Simon. *"It's really important that our retained firefighters get the chance to practice a realistic search and rescue in this way. The old Stars was a great venue for our exercise, and we very much appreciate the community land trust allowing us to use it."*

Other news

Community Noticeboard

The noticeboard by the side of the Stars has long been a popular site to display a wide variety of posters and flyers, but needs tidying up. We are going to get it cleaned and painted, with a new surface.

Mayors Quiz

Every month our energetic Mayor Josh Dickin hosts a quiz in the Six Bells. This month it's our turn; it's fully booked and we expect to raise over £300 towards the Stars Appeal. A big thank you to Mandy and Josh for their support.

Loose change?

Look out for the new 'tin on a brick' collection tins that will be placed at main outlets around the town for your loose change.



Knobbly knees and cast-iron columns!

The Bishops Castle & District Community Land Trust is a Society for the Benefit of the Community.

Registered Office: Enterprise House, Station Street, Bishops Castle, Shropshire SY95AQ

