



Ledbury & District Civic Society

Registered Office:
Burgage Hall
Church Lane
Ledbury
Herefordshire
HR8 1DW

*Butcher Row House Museum
and Burgage Hall.*

Unique Chance To Shape Ledbury's Future

"We need your help!"

That is the message to the people of Ledbury from the project team formed by Ledbury & District Civic Society to work on a national pilot scheme that reached a crucial milestone at the end of January.

The project – known as 'Ledbury Places' – is aimed at securing the long-term future of some of Ledbury's prime assets – six key heritage buildings in the town.

Ledbury Places is being supported by 'My Community Rights' funding from the Social Investment Business (SIB). This money comes from central government and is provided to explore the possibilities offered by co-ordinating the management and ownership of the buildings to provide more sustainable community benefit.

This local project is a national pilot because the future security of the buildings involved is being sought through their being linked together as a group. The project is also unusual because all six buildings are acknowledged as being of national importance, demonstrated by their inclusion in the statutory list of buildings of special architectural or historic interest compiled by English Heritage.

The project is not only seeking to ensure good custody of the six landmark buildings in the centre of Ledbury - the Market House, the Barrett Browning Institute, the Town Council offices, the Heritage Centre, the Butchers Row Museum and Burgage Hall – it is also examining ways and means of ensuring their long-term economic viability by putting them to the best possible use for the community in the future.

For the last six months, the Ledbury Places team – which includes Chairman of the Civic Society, Alex Clive - has been carrying out a Feasibility Study to establish how the six beautiful buildings can best be used and the team has now come up with a series of conclusions and recommendations which are being presented as the most viable options.

On Thursday 30th January the Ledbury Places team presented their recommendations to Ledbury Town Council and they are now asking the people of the town to take the time to look at the various options and offer their feedback on them.

Among the options for discussion are the installation of a sympathetically designed lift system in the Market House building so everyone is able to have access to the first floor, while the possibility of converting the first floor of the Heritage Centre or part of the Town Council building into holiday letting accommodation is also an option for consideration.

Having taken on board the thoughts of the local community, at the end of February the Ledbury Places team will then assemble their final proposal and submit grant applications to attempt to secure funding to make the project a reality.



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Speaking about the project team's desire to hear from as many local people as possible, Civic Society Chairman Alex Clive explained that feedback from the local community is now absolutely vital to ensure the final plans fully represent what is best for the town.

"We have made great strides over the past few months and have been fortunate to have the assistance of knowledgeable professionals in many fields. Our aim is not only to preserve these six beautiful buildings, but also to ensure they are put to fuller use in order to safeguard their long-term future.

"Although we have done a huge amount of work and have tried to consult with the community throughout this project, we know there are bound to be ideas we haven't considered or recommendations we have made that might not be the right way forward.

"Therefore, it is now vital that local people engage with this process in the next couple of weeks so we can take on board their feedback and ensure the grant applications we submit are endorsed by the community we have been working for.

"Local people – or anyone who would like to offer their thoughts on this project - can look at the various options by logging on to the Ledbury Places section of the Civic Society website at www.ledburycivicsociety.org/ledburyplaces.html, or by viewing the display boards in the town's Library in the Barrett Browning Institute.

"Feedback can be given online via the Civic Society website or alternatively by filling out the forms that can be found with the display boards. In addition, you can also have your say on this project via our Twitter feed [@LedburyPlaces](https://twitter.com/LedburyPlaces), or by logging onto our Facebook page at www.facebook.com/ledburyplaces.

"On behalf of the Ledbury Places project team I would ask anyone who cares about Ledbury's future – young or old – to do all they can to engage in this progress. This is our chance to preserve the long-term welfare of these six historic buildings as part of a secure future for the centre of our town and this is likely to be the only shot we get at it.

"Help us put forward the best possible proposal to support our grant applications – proposals that this whole town can be proud of should they become reality in the future."

For anyone wanting more information about the six historic buildings grouped together in this project, architectural firm Purcell – who are providing professional advice to the Ledbury Places project team - have created six separate moving animations of the buildings as they are now that can be viewed on YouTube. The links to these animations are as follows:

Burgage Hall - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=v686O9KgKTc>

Barrett Browning Institute (Library) - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6xRIAN--4e0>

Butchers Row Museum - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IfRfYQCwPSY>

Heritage Centre - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Gp-yLU_Oik8



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Market Hall - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zy-bujTbWNU>

Council Offices - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BhKVaxXkOrc>

Issued: Monday 3 February, 2014

Notes: From 10am on Tuesday 4th February the various options put forward by the Ledbury Places project team will be on show in the Market House building in Ledbury.

Members of the project team will be attendance on the day to discuss their proposals and anyone is welcome to pop in to view the display boards and have their say.