

Save the Coal Exchange Ltd Background and Time-line

Save the Coal Exchange Ltd was constituted on 2nd December 2014 following a public meeting called by Stephen Doughty MP in October, to discuss possible futures for the building. StCE is a not-for-profit company, limited by guarantee with charitable aims and objectives. While not a registered charity it has been accepted as having charitable aims by HMRC and allocated a specific charity number by them. There are currently six Directors and 46 members. There are no paid staff, all work is undertaken by volunteers.

Following a Big Clean Up weekend in March 2015, StCE have been cleaning, repairing and decorating rooms in the West Wing not under prohibition notices and attracting a range of small incubator companies. The number of resident companies grew to 30, although some are now moving out due to uncertainty about the future. StCE have been providing Facilities Management Services for the building for which they have charged a fee. What we have achieved with this money is listed below the timeline table.

During an extremely wet winter with high winds StCE members have located leaks, repaired leaks and taken other remedial action to ensure that water ingress is kept as low as possible, particularly in areas in which there has been little water damage to date.

31st May 2013	Prohibition Order served on Coal Exchange Ltd and Macob.
2nd July 2013	Section 78 notice served stating building in imminent danger of collapse, so all activities had to stop instantly. Details of this and Council's actions are in the briefing paper circulated to Members of the committee including extracts from RVW report.
29th January 2014	Cardiff CC Cabinet meeting had an update on what had been happening regarding the Coal Exchange. Cabinet delegate powers to Director of Economic Development in consultation with Cabinet Member with responsibility for Finance & Economic Development to move the matter forward. More detail of this included in briefing paper circulated to committee Members.
<p>Shortly after this Cllr Phil Bale became Leader of CCC and Cllr Russell Goodway (previous Cabinet Member for Finance & Economic Development) was no longer in the Cabinet.</p> <p><i>Question - what action if any did the new Cabinet take regarding the decisions made in January '14 Cabinet meeting?</i></p>	
1st March 2014	Macob / GYG Exchange Ltd went into administration.
11th March 2014	Jon Avent's petition to Petitions Committee asking for a public enquiry into the situation re The Exchange, and in particular CCC serving the section 78 yet doing no remedial works on the building.
9th October 2014	GYG Exchange Ltd went into voluntary liquidation.
October '14	Public meeting called by Stephen Doughty MP re future of Exchange
2nd December '14	Save the Coal Exchange Ltd incorporated as a not for profit company limited by guarantee with charitable aims and objectives
01 February 2015	StCE Ltd started charging resident organisations a Facilities Management

	fee. Money was used for the general upkeep and some emergency remedial work - list of what money has supported to date see below table.
May '15	Mann Williams report on South Entrance deemed the area safe, challenging findings of earlier RVW council commissioned report. Cardiff CC H & S accepted the Mann Williams report and following an agreed Management / Inspection Plan the prohibition notice was lifted on the over-ground and under-ground car parks. Entrance to under-ground car park is sited behind the Council's barrier. Repeated requests for access, including plans to re-instate safety railings on pavement and move the end of the barrier (all at the expense of StCE) have been denied.
mid 2015	Various developers showed an interest in the building, many came and looked round
10th July 2015	1st Prohibition Orders served on StCE Ltd
September '15	Capita Report published by Welsh Government. Detailed clear report on possible development of The Exchange as mixed use, phased / zoned development.
22nd September '15	StCE Awarded Heritage Lottery start-up grant for Business Planning, training volunteers and outward facing communication
towards end of 2015?	Signature Living chosen by Cardiff CC as preferred developer. Actual date of this not known. Procurement process also unknown
12th November 2015	Notice posted by CCC re a rack rent due of £177,593.56 re works carried out. Interest to be charged at 8% per day. Addressed to "owner / occupier". Cardiff CC person from Major Projects who posted notice assured StCE this did not mean that StCE were liable.
18th December '15	Stakeholders meeting called by Heritage Lottery Fund Mentor, included mentor from Princes Regeneration Fund, representatives from Cadw, Welsh Government, Cardiff CC (Major Projects). CEO and Senior Project Officer from HLF Cymru and 3 representatives of StCE attended. Council denied there was a proffered developer throughout the entire meeting even though every organisation present (with the possible exception of Cadw) had met with Lawrence Kenwright.
January '16	Mann Williams reported on further areas of the building. i) A high-level external inspection of the east and north sides ii) Internal inspection of the Trading Hall, foyer and adjacent rooms, plus the roof. All inspections offered a different view to the earlier RVW report. The Hall was declared safe, but with a recommendation that 6 monthly inspections should take place. StCE submitted an Access Management Plan to H & S regarding Hall & front door, that was rejected due to lack of detail. Work started on a more detailed plan but stopped once Sig Liv became the owners.
End Jan / early February '16	Spectrum installed super-fast broadband into building under the <i>Super-fast Cities</i> scheme run by the DCMS

31st March 2016	Signature Living claim to have ownership
20th April 2016	Debate at Westminster Hall under parliamentary privilege - Stephen Doughty MP re Coal Exchange
27th April 2016	2nd prohibition orders served on StCE + ones served on Sig Liv & Coal Exchange Ltd
13th May 2016	Letter from Head of Planning re change of use application by Signature Living for 200+ bed hotel, function rooms, restaurant, bar, heritage space & spa - 21 days to respond.

Actions by Save the Coal Exchange undertaken over the past 18 months

- ⤴ 3 reports commissioned from Mann Williams on the south, east and north external walls + one on the Trading Hall, Foyer, adjacent rooms and roof over that section. All took a different view to the RVW report from 2013. The one on the south was accepted by Cardiff CC H & S, along with the Management Plan, this resulted in the Prohibition Order lifted from both overground and underground car parks. **As stated above the council continue to deny access to the underground car park.** Work on the Access Management Plan to The Hall stopped once Signature Living became owners.
- ⤴ vegetation removed from much of the external walls, helping to protect their integrity
- ⤴ refuse collection contract with Cardiff CC
- ⤴ asbestos report on West wing and Trading Hall
- ⤴ fire safety report on West wing, including checking of all fire extinguishers
- ⤴ temporary repairs to hole in glass roof to stop water penetration
- ⤴ repair to parquet flooring in hall that had become a trip hazard due to leaks
- ⤴ engaging local electrical company to wire up rooms before bringing them back into use
- ⤴ public liability insurance
- ⤴ insurance for all volunteers
- ⤴ water rates being paid
- ⤴ electricity contracts arranged
- ⤴ facilitated the installation of super-fast broadband
- ⤴ cleaning common areas, supplying light bulbs, toilet rolls, hand towels etc

In addition to the above StCE have also undertaken some community engagement work. To date this has included a stall at the Butetown Carnival in August 2015. This was an interesting day with lots of conversations with members of the community. This was followed up with two public meetings at Butetown Community Centre, one immediately after The Carnival and one in April 2016 after the publicity surrounding Signature Living's Plans.

Alongside all of the above StCE have continued to develop our own plans for mixed-use of the building incorporating incubator companies, studios, a third sector hub, rehearsal space, cafe, restaurant, small retail units mirroring the design of the arcades in the city centre, heritage and learning centre and other activities, always in the knowledge that it would be imperative to work with a private developer. This has been discussed with HLF who have offered advice and support throughout. The Capita Report has been helpful in this.