



Be kind



Byddwch yn garedig

TOWN HALL ROOF REPORT

To present at a meeting of the Town Hall Committee on the 4th July 2023.

REASON FOR REPORT

To present an overview of the current position regarding an unpaid CADW Grant.

BACKGROUND

During Autumn/Winter 2021/22, there were extremely heavy rains and storms, resulting in the Town Hall roof leaking in several places. The two lower roofs of the Town Hall, namely the Lesser Hall and the Mayor's Parlour Roofs suffered significant water and storm damage, which resulting in damage to internal ceilings, walls and furnishings in the Mayors Parlour and the Lesser Hall.

ACTIONS

On the 3rd of December 2021, I submitted an application to CADW for a grant to match fund the cost of replacing the two lower roofs of the Town Hall.

On the 21st December 2021, I registered a Listed Building Application with the Vale of Glamorgan Planning Department requesting the roofs be refurbished with Spanish slate as a suitable alternative to Welsh slate which is double the price.

On the 6th January 2022, I received a letter from the CADW Grants Manager Anne Thomas agreeing the grant in principle.

Due to the delay in receiving Listed Building Consent from the Vale of Glamorgan Planning Department, CADW agreed to carry the grant into the financial year 2022/23.

On the 6th of July 2022, Listed Building Consent was approved by a letter received from the Vale of Glamorgan Planning Department, signed by the then Conservation Officer, Mr Peter Thomas.

A caveat of the consent was that a sample of the Spanish slate be submitted to Mr Thomas.

A subsequent response from Ian Robinson, Head of Planning was received stating – "The slate sample is acceptable and is approved but an application form is required".

The necessary application form was sent to Ian Robinson.

On the 11th July 2022, I contacted CADW Grants to inform them that the sample slate had been approved and work was due to start in two weeks.

The work took place and was completed by the end of October 2022.

Following several emails and phone calls to CADW, Jonathan Green from CADW telephoned me on the 31st October 2022 to tell me that he had been to visit the Town Hall and was disappointed that Welsh slate had not been used and that he felt the quality of the work was sub-standard. I requested a written report, which has not been received.

Jonathan Green said that he was unaware that LBC had been approved and that he was monitoring the work of Peter Thomas Senior Planner at the Vale Council's work.

In another phone call, Jonathan Green told me that Peter Thomas had left the Council and that anyone could have sent the letter of approval for LBC which was signed by Marcus Goldsworthy.

I requested that Jonathan Green meet with me and the contractors AJ Roofing, prior to him submitting a report to CADW Grants Department. I did not receive a response.

Anne Thomas of the CADW Grants department confirmed on the 14th February 2023 that a report had not yet been received from Jonathan Green. She also informed me that Jonathan Green had raised the issue with Senior Planner Stephen Butler.

On the 14th March 2023, the then Mayor Cllr John Andrew met with Stephen Butler outside the Town Hall. Stephen Butler advised Cllr Andrew that he was satisfied that the correct slates as per the LBC had been used and would advise CADW accordingly.

On the 16th June 2023, there has been no further communication received from either the Vale Planning department or indeed CADW.

The Town Hall Committee instructed me to write a letter of complaint to the Chief Executives of the Vale Council and CADW. **Appendix One.**

Following the letter sent to CADW and the Vale Council, there has been further correspondence from Rob Thomas Chief Executive **Appendix Two** and CADW/Vale Council **Appendix Three.**

THE ISSUE

Delays in payment not only hinder the progress of further renovations to the remainder of the roof but may also impede the successful operation of Cowbridge Town Hall.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The Town Council requires sufficient funds to replace the remainder of the Town Hall roof, which due to the age of the roof will need to be carried out over the next couple of years. If the Town Council do not receive financial support and are unable to replace the roof, this will inevitably lead to further damage and disrepair of a Grade II listed building.

APPENDIX ONE

To:

Mr Rob Thomas Chief Executive Vale of Glamorgan Council
Mr Gwilym Hughes Deputy Director and Head of CADW

Sent by email on the 19th June 2023.

Dear Sir's

I am writing on behalf of the members of Cowbridge with Llanblethian Town Council to express concern regarding the delay in receiving the agreed in principle grant for the replacement roof of Cowbridge Town Hall.

Despite fulfilling all the necessary requirements and having the work inspected and approved by Vale of Glamorgan Planning Department Staff, the payment has not been processed due to a dispute regarding the type of slate used and the standard of the completed project.

To provide some context, sections of Cowbridge Town Hall roof, a Grade II listed building were in dire need of replacement due to deteriorating condition and inclement weather, resulting in damage to internal ceilings, walls and furnishings in the Lesser Hall and the Mayors Parlour.

Understanding the importance of preserving this historical landmark, the Town Council submitted an application for a CADW Grant to part fund the roof replacement project.

The application was subsequently approved in principle by CADW on the condition that Listed Building Consent to use Spanish slate as a substitute to Welsh slate was approved.

The Town Council, therefore, submitted an application for listed building consent to the Vale of Glamorgan Planning Department.

Following consideration of the listed building application and receipt of a sample of the intended replacement slate, the application was duly approved by the Vale of Glamorgan Planning Department.

On receipt of the approval letter, and on behalf of the Town Council the urgent repairs to the roof were initiated.

The roof replacement project was undertaken by a reputable, experienced in working on listed buildings contractor, who executed the work as per the agreed specifications.

The same contractor previously replaced a Grade II Listed Building Roof in the neighbouring town of Llantwit Major and was highly recommended by the Llantwit Major Town Clerk.

Stephen Butler from the Vale of Glamorgan Council Planning Department conducted a visit to the Cowbridge Town Hall to inspect the completed roof and in a conversation with the then Mayor of the Town Council John Andrew, Stephen Butler expressed his satisfaction with the slate used. He confirmed that the installed slates matched the agreed specification.

It is disappointing that nine months following the replacement of the roofs that CADW are withholding payment of the grant on the grounds of a perceived inadequacy in the completed project.

The Town Council believe this discrepancy may have resulted from a misunderstanding or miscommunication between the then Vale of Glamorgan Council Conservation Officer Peter Thomas and Jonathan Green the CADW Officer overseeing the Project.

It is essential to address this matter promptly to avoid further delays and ensure that the Town Council has sufficient funds to serve the community of Cowbridge, Llanblethian and Aberthin.

Furthermore, the two lower roofs replaced are the two smallest sections of the overall roof, there are still significant sections of town hall roof that need to be replaced over the next couple of years.

In light of the above, members of Cowbridge with Llanblethian Town Council request that you take the following actions:

1. Conduct a thorough review of the attached report and supporting documents, including the agreed specifications and the approved Listed Building Consent letter.
2. Engage in a direct dialogue with the contractors AJ Roofing, who have offered on several occasions to meet with Vale and CADW staff to address any concerns.

3. Attend a meeting of the Cowbridge with Llanblethian Town Council to address any concerns or issues that have led to the delay in payment.
4. Expedite the payment process and release the grant funds to ensure the completion of the payment for the roof replacement project. Delays in payment not only hinder the progress of further renovations to the remainder of the roof but may also impede the successful operation of Cowbridge Town Hall.

I trust that you understand the urgency and importance of this matter.

Cowbridge Town Hall serves as a vital hub for the community, hosting the Town Council Office, community groups/clubs, and various events that contribute to the cultural fabric of Cowbridge, Llanblethian and Aberthin.

Members of Cowbridge with Llanblethian Town Council request your immediate attention to this issue and a prompt resolution.

We look forward to hearing from you to the next steps in rectifying this matter.

Should you require any additional information or documentation, please do not hesitate to contact me directly.

Best regards,



Cathy Kennedy
Town Clerk, Responsible Financial Officer, Chief Executive Officer
Cowbridge (Ancient Borough) with Llanblethian Town Council
Cyngor Tref Y Bontfaen (Bwrdeustref Hynafol) gyda Llanfleiddan

Town Hall, Cowbridge, Vale of Glamorgan CF71 7AD

Neuadd y Dref, Y Bonfaen, Bro Morgannwg CF71 7AD

www.cowbridge-tc.gov.uk

Town Hall Office Opening Hours: Monday to Friday - 9.30am to 1:00pm

Please email or phone if you have an enquiry or wish to make an appointment.

01446 773385

APPENDIX TWO

Hi Cathy,

Excellent news. I will keep myself updated on it as it seems straightforward (famous last words!).

It was great to meet you also – brilliant event with a fantastic atmosphere. Well done to the team at Cowbridge for organising such a great programme. You and colleagues should be very proud of what you are achieving.

Rob.

From: Cathy Kennedy <townclerk@cowbridge-tc.gov.uk>
Sent: 19 June 2023 13:24
To: Thomas, Rob <DRThomas@valeofglamorgan.gov.uk>
Cc: Cathy Kennedy <townclerk@cowbridge-tc.gov.uk>
Subject: RE: Cowbridge Town Hall Roof

Dear Rob,

Thank you for your prompt response.

Ian Robinson has responded and confirmed that Stephen Butler is progressing the matter.

It was lovely to meet you this morning at the Cowbridge Pride flag raising event, we were thrilled to receive such a fantastic turnout and a high level of support from the Vale Council.

Cathy

From: Thomas, Rob <DRThomas@valeofglamorgan.gov.uk>
Sent: 19 June 2023 08:17
To: Cathy Kennedy <townclerk@cowbridge-tc.gov.uk>
Subject: RE: Cowbridge Town Hall Roof

Dear Cathy,

I acknowledge receipt and have asked the team to explore the issues with a view to responding as soon as possible.

Rob Thomas
Chief Executive / Prif Weithredwr
Vale of Glamorgan Council / Cyngor Bro Morgannwg
tel / ffôn: 01446 709202
mob / sym: 07976112338
e-mail / e-bost: DRThomas@valeofglamorgan.gov.uk

Cathy Kennedy
Town Clerk

APPENDIX THREE

Cathy

Further to your email, I have just advised Matthew by way of a separate email, that we are satisfied with the slate and that I previously advised Jonathan of this. As such there are no outstanding matters for the authority to be involved in respect of the Listed Building Consent application itself, as the application was just to replace the slate.

Best Regards

Stephen Butler
Principal Planner / Prif Gynllunydd
Regeneration and Planning / Adfywio a Chynllunio
Vale of Glamorgan Council / Cyngor Bro Morgannwg
tel / ffôn: 01446 704624

From: Cathy Kennedy <townclerk@cowbridge-tc.gov.uk>

Sent: 23 June 2023 10:57

To: Matthew.Coward@gov.wales

Cc: Jonathan.Green@gov.wales; Robinson, Ian <IRobinson@valeofglamorgan.gov.uk>; Butler, Stephen <SButler@valeofglamorgan.gov.uk>; Cathy Kennedy <townclerk@cowbridge-tc.gov.uk>; Thomas, Rob <DRThomas@valeofglamorgan.gov.uk>; Cllr Malcolm Wilson <cllrmwilson@cowbridge-tc.gov.uk>; Cllr John Andrew <cllrjandrew@cowbridge-tc.gov.uk>

Subject: RE: Cowbridge Town Hall Roof

Dear Matthew,

Thank you for your response.

I have reached out to Jonathan Green on several occasions to meet with me, the contractors and councillors to discuss the matters he raised in a telephone call last October, but despite his promise to follow up, a report or email was never received and all my telephone calls and emails were left unanswered.

As stated in my letter, Vale officials have inspected the roof and are content with the works and the slate used is unequivocally the same slate as was presented to the then conservation officer Peter Thomas and subsequently approved by listed building consent.

I personally do not have the expertise to comment on the kicking and tilting, but was informed that as a natural product which is not manufactured in a factory, it is impossible to achieve a totally smooth finish.

I was also informed that the underfelt was visible, as it acts as a guard against the water getting under the slate, however, the contractors are more than happy to rectify this.

Finally, the damage to the guttering was there previously and is very minor, I note you have not included a photo of this below?

I have samples of the slate here in my officer and will be more than happy for Jonathan Green to inspect and compare them to the slate on the roof, when he visits the Town Hall.

I also have samples of the slate that came off the roof, which as it happens is not Welsh slate.

I look forward to hearing from Jonathan Green and will arrange for the meeting to take place with myself, councillors, Stephen Butler from the Vale Council and AJ Roofing.

Cathy

From: Matthew.Coward@gov.wales <Matthew.Coward@gov.wales>
Sent: 23 June 2023 10:37
To: Cathy Kennedy <townclerk@cowbridge-tc.gov.uk>
Cc: Jonathan.Green@gov.wales; IRobinson@valeofglamorgan.gov.uk; sbutler@valeofglamorgan.gov.uk
Subject: Cowbridge Town Hall Roof

Dear Cathy,

Thank you for your below email and attachments to Gwilym Hughes. I have been asked to reply on his behalf.

I understand that the roofing works undertaken to the Town Hall are not of the standard that we would normally expect on such a high ranking listed building at grade II*, among the top 8% of nationally important listed buildings in Wales.

I am sure that you will appreciate that when grant aiding works to any listed building we must ensure that the highest of standards are met to protect the character and appearance of listed buildings and conservation areas. I have therefore asked Mr Jonathan Green to urgently contact you to arrange a site meeting with you, the contractor and the local authority so that matters may be remedied in order for us to release our grant contribution.

It is important for us to establish if the new slates match the sample provided to the Vale of Glamorgan Council in discharging the condition of listed building consent. The slate appears as though it is a different grade and weight to that approved by the local authority, it is very shiny and appears not to have been sorted or graded properly hence the kicking/tilting shown in the below photographs. The leadwork flashing does not seem to have been re-sealed as there are gaps to the mortar/fillets where water could ingress. The underlay felt is red in colour and should really be of a colour that blends with the slates so that it cannot be seen or attract the eye like it does just above the gutter line. The scaffolding also appears to have damaged the cast iron gutters allowing more of the red underlay felt and battening to be seen.

Cathy Kennedy
Town Clerk

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Mr Green will be in touch soon.

Regards,

Matthew

Matthew Coward

[Uwch-Rheolydd Cynllunio Treftadaeth a Dynodiadau](#)

Senior Heritage Planning and Designations Manager



[Amgylchedd Hanesyddol](#) / Historic Environment

[Llywodraeth Cymru](#) / Welsh Government







