

Milestones in KCM history:

Pre Campaign:

1902 Baths nearly complete but held up by high ground water level.

1903 Baths actually open. Public galas celebrate the event.

1950's Public health problem identified with Cholera and river water. Plant room constructed and water no longer fed directly from the river but circulated via filters and chlorinated.

1965 onwards- pool season shortened –opened at digression of pool supervisor

1970 ? Pool shallow end made 1ft shallower for safety with a wedge of concrete

1973 Pool closed for repairs

1974 Pool no longer to be opened in summer

1975/6/7/8 Council unsure what to do and get offers for redevelopment but don't act.

1978 Reading Civic Society Chair writes to ask RBC to consider renovating the Baths and lowering walls to allow more sun in.

1978 Council chose to lease the Baths to Reading Branch of the British Sub Aqua Club for a peppercorn. BSAC put forward plans to modify entrance lobby and gain grant for creation of a dive school of excellence with its own pool. Soon after BSAC get started plan to renovate the tank is dropped and the water area is boarded over to make an indoor storage area.

Early Campaign:

2001 First realisation of the condition of the Baths –Bob visited the BSAC club and was surprised to see the state of the inside of the building.

Reference spotted in Reading BC's documentation about the leasing of the Baths to the sub aqua club and then consideration of the building for disposal for development.

2002 Site gets consideration by council with 6 proposals – one is a proposal and 5 are bids. One proposal was to convert the Baths into a freshwater aquarium. Proposal made by an employee of EA and intended to be run as a supported charity. Council furious that KMC steps in.

Bob starts campaign and approaches Jane Griffiths MP for help. Plan shows a massive hotel and baths removed.

March 2002 Bob organises the first public meeting with 150 attending

Bob produces an outline scheme of regeneration.

Council approached and asked to explain what is to be done with the Baths. 6k petition goes to Parliament against RBC.

Opposition at Council meetings against McAllier Rush hotel

2003 Enquiry to English Heritage (considerable library and archive work done to research the history)

August 2004 EH accepts KMC's request to reconsider previously rejected listing and listing goes through. RBC attack EH for listing building.

2004 RBC have a survey undertaken on the state of the building. KMC are not made aware of this until 2012.

2005 KMC asks RBC to work with it to apply for funds to repair the Baths. RBC rejects offers of a relationship. Big public meeting run by KMC at Reading Town Hall: guest speakers: EH and AHF. Council refuse to attend.

2005 onwards KMC continues to grow a petition.

2006 Campaign group assist in clearing the tank of the pool for a survey to be carried out. It hosts an open day with pool and ice rink experts to study options.

2007 RBC issue a new area development plan and put the Baths and Lock Island on the market. RBC commission a survey which resulted in drillings extending out into the park; enabling developer piling details to be considered. Council summary did not focus it to reviewing the repair options for the tank.

KMC approach Rob Wilson MP (next MP for area) for help.

2007 Bob O'Neill puts in a detailed "proposal" -not a bid, with a financial plan. KMC had not the funds to offer RBC money to buy the site. Proposal widely publicised and letters continue to flow to the press. RBC chose another hotel bid Askett Hawk and KMC began heightened objecting. Financial crash and Askett Hawk withdraw. Proposal is shown to the Reading Civic Society and others.

Recent History:

2009 Autumn

KMC now offered the option of two years to find the money. Granting of 2 years exclusivity. Agreement Bruce T to work in partnership with RBC. KMC begin monthly meetings with RBC.

Opening of first KMC bank account. KMC apply for Paypal donation account with "buy a brick", Companies House registration as "Reading Building Preservation Ltd", Inland Revenue tax exemption as a charity.

2010 KMC offered a lease on the building but concerned that this would hand the liability as well as the benefits for the building. KMC prefer a licence to do the repairs followed by a lease.

KMC begin application for the Registered Charity status.

Consultation free from James and Cowper on business status.

Presentations to Yell and Cadbury staff in the hope of engagement.

Start of offers coming in – BT, BG, Yell, Kier, Mace, Halcrow,

University of Reading - SIFE, Career advisors, Dept. of ConstructMan, Dept. of LndMan, Student Union,

Training co-ordinators – Oxfordshire, West Berks, Central Berks, RBC, JSP, CITB, EH, IHA,

KMC ask Reading Borough Council to partner with them on a youth training scheme.

KMC investigate fund scope:

Football Foundation

Our fundraising

JSP and probation office

Community Builder – lottery fund

Matching funding may come from:

Cemex

Sport England £300 -£10,000 but the total project cost cannot exceed £50,000

Sport England Sustainable Facilities fund - Round 2 26 October - 5pm,

(requires confirmed partnership funding from at least one third-party including the private sector)

Sport England - Innovation Fund - Grow: getting one million people doing more sport and working with the Youth Sport Trust to offer young people at least five hours of high quality sport a week

KMC request services in kind:

Design facilities (to continue enhancing the design drawings)

BT, BG, Halcrow, Mace, Lloyds, Graham, Yell, Kier, Peter Brett

Accountants/ construction advice....

Solicitors....

Planning Aid South East Staff & students at Reading University

2010 Participation in the first Heritage Open day. KMC take out liability insurance. Creation of stock of memorabilia (teeshirts etc.)

2010 Application to install CCTV to reduce the vandalism on the building. Application for a grant to pay for CCTV.

2011 Work begins on tidying the inside of the building

2011 Presentations to various community groups and attendance at fundraising events, fairs etc.

2011 Application to the Heritage Lottery Fund (later stalled because of partnership detail and scope of fund), Application to People's Million fund

June 2011 Work party clean the pigeon faeces and make secure the inner area. Anti pigeon netting installed over part of the Baths.

July 2011 meeting with EH to enforce council protection of the Baths –covering bad workmanship to prevent roof collapse

July 2011 Listed Building Consent granted to install the CCTV

September 2011 KMC open for 3 days to participate in this year's Heritage Open Day

September 2011 KMC have best month ever for fundraising via the collection box

October 2011 RBC repairs roof and re-application for electricity reinstallation begins

October 2011 Yell.com offer to do a substantial team building exercise on the Baths and we are looking to do a thorough clean-up of inside and outside.

Easter 2012 KMC apply to LawWorks for free legal help to vet the proposed lease.

Summer 2012 Open days and tabletop sales and sponsored clean up bring in funds

Summer 2012 KMC awarded time with a top London solicitor to help with lease.

August 2012 big clean up with pressure washer etc in the interior

September 2012 KMC install new coping stones to plant room wall.

September 2012 Reading BC finally release a copy of a survey they had conducted in 2011 on which they judged it necessary to shore up the building with scaffolding.

October 2012 KMC continue pressure on RBC to fix roof to allow electricity reconnect.

Work situation:

Lots of volunteers casually offering to help. Council and EH suggest that we should not start any construction work repairs until we have all the legal things in place and a large pool of money. Plan set out for scrutiny of urgent work needed. KMC would like to start earlier with weekend work parties and by creating an on-site catering facility for the park (using that as a fundraiser). KMC has replaced the electrical distribution system in the plant room but this cannot be turned live. CCTV installation /power awaits RBC roof repair. KMC have agreed to pay SEB monthly contract on installation when this goes ahead.

Gorilla work has been done Labour costs 60% and materials 40%.

Bob O@ Neill