

Jacob's Wells Baths

Jacob's Wells Road
Bristol
BS8 1DX



Brief for organisations wishing to submit an Expression of Interest in the former Jacob's Wells Baths premises.



**Brief for organisations wishing to express an interest in
taking over the management, use or ownership of the
Jacob's Wells Baths, Jacobs Wells Road, Bristol BS8 1DX**

Bristol City Council would like to invite expressions of interest from suitably qualified organisations and/or partnerships wishing to take over this property for social & community purposes. The Baths require considerable investment and we are looking for a partner organisation that is able to develop and deliver a new future for this important asset.

Background

This former municipal swimming pool building was opened in 1889 as the Hotwells Public Baths. It provided hot baths and a swimming pool in what was then a very deprived part of Bristol.

The baths closed in the late 1970s and the building was listed Grade II by English Heritage.

The building consist of a central swimming pool, with a lantern roof, side blocks, a boiler house, water storage tanks and a tall chimney.

The water for the pool initially came from Jacob's Well on Brandon Hill.

After it ceased to be a public swimming pool, the building was converted in 1979/80 into a community-managed dance centre. The Bristol Community Dance Centre leased the property from the City Council until 2016.

Since then, the building has been used on a temporary basis by [Artspace Lifespace](#) for dance, music, art and community activities.

Read more about the fascinating history of the building on the Jacob's Wells Community Hub website:

<http://jacobswellscommunityhub.com/baths/jacobs-wells-baths-complex/>

(the Jacobs Wells Community Hub group is a representative, local organisation that seeks to preserve and enhance the special character of the local area and to bring together the local residential and business communities)

A feasibility study was commissioned by the [Central, Clifton and Harbourside Neighbourhood Partnership](#) from [Vivid Regeneration](#). This was published in January 2017 and sets out the background, aspirations and possible uses for the property and the diverse community-based activities associated with it.

The report can be downloaded from:

<http://jacobswellscommunityhub.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/Future-of-Jacobs-Wells-Baths-Vivid-report-January-2017-FINAL.pdf>

Property particulars

The JW Baths building is located on the edge of central Bristol, close to the Harbour. Please [click here](#) for a map and for a [Streetview photograph](#) of the property.

The building provides approximately 400 m2 of net internal floor space. The overall property covers a 0.16ha plot of land.

Services:

The building uses a gas fired warm air heating system in the main space and a large gas fired boiler for general heating.

Water and electricity services are also available in the property.

Condition:

The property is in poor overall condition. A condition survey was carried out in 2012 and is in the process of being refreshed.

An asbestos survey and an electrical inspection were carried out in February 2017.

Copies of the various survey reports may be downloaded from the website of our local partner, the Jacobs Wells Community Hub: <http://jacobswellscommunityhub.com/cat-information-jacobs-wells-baths/>

Further details about the property, including floor plans and a Heritage Impact Assessment, are part of the 2015 planning application and can be downloaded from:

<http://planningonline.bristol.gov.uk/online-applications/applicationDetails.do?activeTab=documents&keyVal=NLGSILDNIAN00>

Business rates:

The current rateable value of the property is £10,750 – for details please see:

<https://www.tax.service.gov.uk/view-my-valuation/cca/detail/250248212>

Listings:

The property is Grade II listed – see details on the Historic England website:

<https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1292890>

It is also listed as an Asset of Community Value on the Council's Register. The current listing expires on 24/5/2021 – for details please see:

<https://www.bristol.gov.uk/crtb>

Address details:

Jacob's Wells Baths, Jacobs Wells Road, Bristol BS8 1DX
(BCC property ID 9110, UPRN 000000108218)

The offer

This Brief sets out the Council's intentions for the building and the options for its future under the Community Asset Transfer Policy ('CAT').

Bristol City Council recognises the significance of this property, both as a historically and architecturally important property, and as a prominent community asset with a 35+ years cultural and artistic history.

The purpose of the CAT process is to identify whether or not any non-commercial options exist that could secure both the building itself and its 'community use'.

The Council would like to consider options for leasing the property for a period up to 35 years to a not-for-private-profit organisation. This organisation will maximise the use of the building for the delivery of social, economic or environmental benefits to the people of Bristol. Particular emphasis will be placed on how the proposed use will

meet the needs of the local community and Bristol's needs for a community-managed Dance, Arts, Culture and Leisure venue.

By seeking expressions of interest from not-for-private-profit organisations and partnerships, the Council is not committing to a particular type of disposal, and is not a guarantee that the Council will definitely agree to a disposal. As part of its fiduciary duties, the Council also has to consider the market value of the property and its potential for other or non-community uses.

No decision has been made on what to do with the property, but the Council intends to identify a solution by the end of 2017.

The drivers for a swift disposal include the deteriorating condition of the building and the ongoing cost (and liability) to the Council.

Lease:

If expressions of interest are received that demonstrate that the property could have a financially sustainable future when used for artistic and social purposes, the Council will consider offering a long leasehold interest in the property to a third sector organisation. The criteria we will use to select the preferred bidder will be those set out in our CAT Policy – see: <https://www.bristol.gov.uk/cat>

The length of the lease term will depend on the level of investment that the incoming tenant would need to make, on their experience and expertise, on the condition of the property at the time of hand-over, and on the needs of the local community.

The Council is able to grant leases of up to 35 years on concessionary terms and at reduced or nil rent. A longer lease term can only be considered by the Council's Cabinet and only in exceptional circumstances. Such a request will require detailed evidence of why the proposal cannot succeed with a 35 year lease.

CAT leases will have a linked Service Agreement, which sets out the minimum level of activities, opening times, admission criteria, and other non-property aspects of the transaction.

The Service Agreement will be monitored annually and will be reviewed every five years. Non-compliance with the Service Agreement will be a breach of the terms of the lease. The Council will rely on a forfeiture clause in the lease to give it the right to re-enter the property, following a breach by the tenant. The statutory notice procedure will be followed, before the lease can be terminated and the Council will serve a written notice, giving the tenant time to remedy the breach in question.

For an example of a standard Service Agreement please see Appendix B.

The lease will be excluded from the security of tenure provisions of the Landlord and Tenant Act 1954.

The Council's is unable to transfer the freehold ownership of the property for no consideration, but could consider a freehold sale at a value that reflects the property's market value, its current condition and the proposed end use(s).

At this stage, no decisions have been made on the criteria that would apply to a freehold sale. Any sale at an undervalue would be subject to restrictive covenants that prevent a future disposal for profit, or for a use that does not meet the Council's CAT criteria.

If it is agreed to dispose of the property, the Council's preferred option is to enter into a long lease with an organisation that has a suitable 'asset lock' that prevents the asset

from being 'lost' to the local community and the wider community, including the artistic community and other communities of interest.

Preserving the use of the property for social, artistic or community purposes is best achieved through a long lease which contains certain safeguards, so that the property reverts back to the Council if the project is unsuccessful or if the tenant goes into administration or ceases to meet the CAT eligibility criteria.

Condition:

The property will be offered in its current condition. The future tenant will be required to carry out all necessary repairs within agreed timescales, in addition to all necessary maintenance and repairs throughout the lease term.

The tenant will also be responsible for the outdoor spaces within the leased area, including the chimney and the land at the rear of the property, which needs to be controlled to prevent further damage to the property through plant and tree growth. The council is not offering any financial assistance towards the cost of repairs and maintenance.

Although the Council will make available on request any condition or maintenance records it holds, the future tenant should carry out their own checks on the property's condition and suitability.

Operating costs:

The tenant will be responsible for paying all outgoings, including utility bills, rates, waste collection, insurance, staffing and general running costs in respect of the premises.

The council is not offering any financial assistance towards the property's running costs, with the exception of business rate relief for qualifying occupiers.

Mandatory rate relief of 80% is currently available to occupiers that are a registered charity, Community Amateur Sports Club, or who have similar charitable aims.

Discretionary rate relief may also be available in some cases.

For details see: <https://www.bristol.gov.uk/business-rates/discounts-for-charities-or-local-non-profit-organisations>

Minimum obligations on the future tenant

- Significant investment in the fabric of the building will be required and the new tenant will be expected to secure the necessary funding to carry out a programme of major repairs and bring the building back into full use.
- Operating the property as a financially viable Dance, Arts, Culture and Leisure venue is likely to require additional income sources; the tenant will need to maximise the use of the property and increase the amount of income generating floorspace in order to create a sustainable business model for the project.
- For the property to deliver maximum social/community benefit, the tenant needs to ensure that the premises are used for community-based activities and a city-wide arts offer that directly benefit the local community and the people of Bristol.
- The premises should be available for community and/or arts activities every weekday, and at weekends, including evenings; part of this use should include letting the premises to other organisations and, to a lesser extent, the local community.

- The specific use of the property will be agreed with the tenant and will be set out in detail in the Service Agreement.
- The tenant will set up and service a User Group which will consist of occupants, regular users, beneficiaries and local residents, to ensure they have a voice and influence in the way that the property is operated, as well as in future changes to the building.
- There will be a presumption that the tenant will work in partnership with users, local organisations and recognised representatives of the local community in order to develop and increase the future use of the property; a balance between community and income-generating uses should be achieved, following consultation, through the User Group.
- An effective and accessible booking system for the lettable spaces should be in place and a tariff of charges should be published and reviewed regularly.
- Particular emphasis will be placed on creating and maintaining a visually attractive and well-kept building that contributes positively to the character of the local area and environment and that recognises its listed status.

Organisation specification

Not-for-private-profit organisations interested in developing the property and bringing it back into use are asked to submit a formal Expression of Interest as part of the CAT process.

This opportunity is open to any voluntary, community or social enterprise organisation that is suitably qualified and meets the criteria set out in this brief.

Proposals by a consortium of different community-based organisations are welcomed. Expressions of Interest from other organisations, including statutory bodies, can also be considered, subject to such organisations meeting the council's general CAT criteria and having a relevant or local connection to the property.

Proposals from commercial organisations or projects that do not deliver social, economic and environmental benefits to the local community and the people of Bristol, are unlikely to be considered.

The tenant should meet the criteria set out in Sections 4 and 5 of the Council's Community Asset Transfer Policy (see Appendix A) and in particular:

- Needs to be a properly constituted organisation.
- Must generate social, economic or environmental benefits.
- Must directly benefit the people of Bristol, and the local community in particular.
- Should benefit as wide and diverse a range of local people as possible.
- Needs to have a clear vision and well-prepared business case.
- Needs to demonstrate a clear community/social demand for the proposed Lease.
- Needs to have the capacity to manage the asset and have directors, trustees or management committee members who have the necessary experience and skills to do this.
- Needs to meet all the basic requirements for a good 'community organisation' as set out in the pre-VISIBLE quality standard – see Appendix B within the Community Asset Transfer Policy.
- Needs to be aligned with the agreed priorities of the local community and those of the Council, including the Mayor's Vision for Bristol.

More details about the CAT Policy can be found at www.bristol.gov.uk/cat

The tenant should also have:

- A track record of successfully managing a community building, or have trustees or board members who have the necessary experience and expertise to successfully manage a property for community-based activities.
- A track record of working in partnership with city-wide arts and leisure providers, local residents and community organisations.
- Experience and expertise of financial planning and control.
- A track record of developing capital plans, successful fundraising and renovating buildings.
- An understanding of current Health & Safety and Fire Safety legislation.
- An understanding of Equalities legislation, including the Equalities Act in relation to the accessibility of public buildings.

Selection criteria and decision making process

1. Expressions of Interest will be considered by a Selection Panel made up of council officers from different departments and councillors, and representatives from the local community.
2. The Panel will short-list Expressions of Interest and invite successful applicants to an informal interview.
3. Following interviews, one successful applicant will be invited to submit a full business plan to the Panel within three months; this will be evaluated and considered in respect of the applicant's experience and capacity, the council's policies and priorities, local needs and the viability of the proposal.
4. Decisions will be made in accordance with the council's CAT Policy; particular emphasis will be placed on the capacity, governance and financial sustainability of the applicant, on the applicant's experience and ability of engaging a diverse community, and on the level of social/economic/environmental benefits generated by the use of the property.
5. Expressions of Interest will need to clearly demonstrate how the building will be repaired and brought back into active use and how the running cost of the building will be met; details of confirmed and anticipated funding sources, anticipated income from activities and hiring out the premises, and cashflow forecasts will need to be included.
6. A final decision on whether or not to grant a Lease or to dispose of the property will be made by the Service Director Property, the Corporate Property Board, Cabinet, or another part of the Council's decision making process.
7. It is anticipated that the standard CAT Policy timescales for decisions will not be applicable to this property; all decisions and processes will be fast-tracked and a decision made as soon as possible (see the timetable below).

Viewing the property before submitting and Expression of Interest

The property is in active, daily use and all visits/inspections/surveys require reasonable notice.

To request an appointment to visit the property for a viewing, please contact us:

Email: community.buildings@bristol.gov.uk

Phone: 0117 903 6440

If you would like a surveyor, architect or advisor to visit the property with you, please mention this when you contact us, giving their details as well as yours.

Technical workshop

A workshop will be held between 12:00-15:00 hrs on Wed 3rd May 2017 at the JW Baths premises. This will provide organisations in submitting an expression of interest with an opportunity to ask questions of Bristol City Council (CAT, heritage considerations, planning, etc), Vivid Regeneration (feasibility study), and Building Consultancy (building conditions survey).

The workshop is aimed at organisations considering bidding, their partners and their professional teams.

The following are expected to be in attendance:

- Richard Fairs, [The Building Consultancy](#) (commissioned to undertake the Building Condition Survey)
- Stephen Beggs, [Curtins](#)
- Helen Bone, [Vivid Regeneration](#)
- Pete Insole, BCC Heritage
- BCC Arts (person tbc)
- John Bos, BCC Property
- BCC Building Practice (person tbc).

There will be no charge for attending the workshop, but places need to be booked in advance by emailing helen@vividregeneration.com

Process for Expressions of Interest

- Interested organisations wishing to express an interest in taking a lease and in managing the JW Baths premises should submit their proposal by email only to: community.buildings@bristol.gov.uk
- Please telephone us on 0117 903 6440 if you are unable to email your submission.
- All expressions of interest must be received by no later than **9am on Monday 3rd July 2017**.
- Proposals should have regard to the guidelines set out in and address the issues listed in this Brief and should clearly state the length of term sought and the level of rent offered, if any, and give full contact details for the person(s) responsible for the submission.
- The expression of interest must include an outline plan of how the organisation will deliver the building improvements and how these will be funded.
- It is not necessary to submit a full business plan at this stage; this will be required from the successful applicant in due course.
- For further information about the property and lease arrangements please contact: Telephone 0117 903 6440 or email community.buildings@bristol.gov.uk

Timetable

A Brief is published and advertised widely and sent to those already having expressed an interest	Thu 13th April 2016
Technical workshop	Wed 3rd May
Deadline for submission of Expressions of Interested	9am on Mon 3rd July 2017
Short-listing of Expressions of Interest	by Fri 7th July
Short-listed organisation(s) interviewed by Selection Panel *	Tue 18th July and Thu 20th July
Panel decision & successful applicant invited to submit a full business plan	Mon 24th July
Seeking the views of the local Neighbourhood Partnership (or their successor)	September/October
Deadline for submission of full business plan and supporting documentation	Wed 27th September
Evaluation of business plan by Selection Panel	October
CAT decision issued	by end November
Organisation signs Tenancy with the council and begins management of JW Baths	January 2018

* **Please note:** Interviews will take place between 2pm-6pm on 18th and/or 20th July in an accessible venue in central Bristol. If you know you will not be available for the planned interview dates, you are advised to state this clearly in your Expression of Interest and to contact us separately, so that we can discuss your particular situation.

The dates highlighted in yellow are aspirational and the exact dates may change nearer the time.

Appendices

Appendix A: Bristol City Council Community Asset Transfer Policy

Appendix B: Example of Service Agreement

Appendix C: Location/site plan