



Heritage Lottery Fund

# malthouse news

Issue 2 SMH - HOUSING AND SUPPORT FOR PEOPLE IN NEED

## Malthouse open day

The rainy December weather wasn't enough to dampen spirits at our Malthouse open event. The day was well received and covered by Anglia Television, BBC Radio Suffolk, the Bury Free Press and the East Anglian Daily Times.

Heritage Project Manager, Allan-Scott-Davies proved an excellent guide, showing the media and local VIPs around the site.

In attendance were local councillors and members of the Bury St Edmunds Town Trust, the Conservation Department, the West Suffolk College and representatives of Greene King.

The day played an important part in letting people know what will be happening on the site during the next two years as well as the important role for the local community that the Malthouse will play in the future.

St Matthew Housing are hoping to hold a similar event for Elseys' Yard residents and SMH staff in 2006.



A group of visitors viewing the site



The Malthouse with protective scaffolding

## Where heritage and hope are rebuilt

With works to phase one of the development already complete, the site has been cleared and the building protected for winter. Work will resume on 13th March when the real conservation and building efforts begin.

### Site Manager, Ken Dobinson:

As the second stage of works draws closer, we talk to Site Manager, Ken Dobinson about the progress so far.

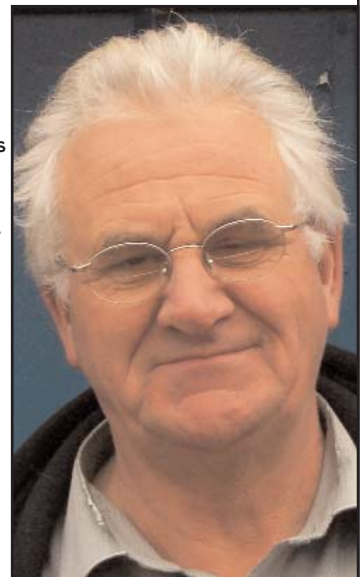
"Its gone really well. It's a tricky job and an interesting challenge."

Work to date has involved opening up the building and removing old makeshift roof coverings. The site was strewn with rubbish, much of which had been left on the site for years.

"We can now view the original structure and see what really needs to be done," says Ken.

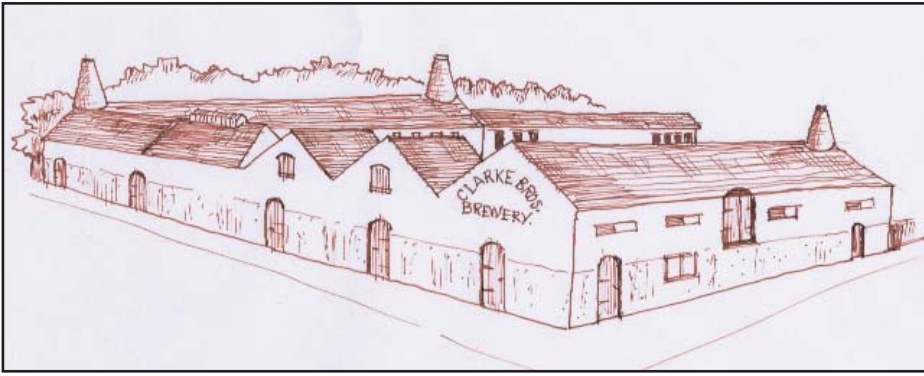
The task of clearing memorabilia left by squatters and industrial tools left by workers of yesteryear was undertaken with good spirit by our building contractor, Cocksedge.

"After completing the first phase, I am looking forward to making a start on phase two. It will be a challenging but very rewarding project."



Site Manager, Ken Dobinson

# A brief history of time



The Malthouse in its heyday

As the project gets under way there is time to reflect on the people and buildings that have stood on the site for the past 400 years. The first sign of there being a building on the site of the present malting arrives in the mid 17th Century when a barn and small out-building appear in records for the tithes of St Edmunds.

This was the mid section of the building with heavy support posts rising from stone pads to meet the upper beams. From this barn there is a steady development of the East West extension and later in 1833 the building has been extended North South on the Risbygate side.

By 1893 the building had developed to the place we see today - the L shape with a small courtyard. During the crop failure of 1622, and throughout the 17th Century, the many maltsters working in Bury St Edmunds were granted a license to produce a restricted amount of malt. This was in order to help the grain stocks from which bread was made to feed the ever growing population pouring into the town from outlying villages. This would explain why no malting took place on site until the 17th Century when restrictions were lifted and grain was more freely available.

With the development of the transport infrastructure, grain and coal had begun to be imported to the town from Ipswich, Norwich and parts of Essex. The process of malting was the cause of the great fire in Bury St Edmunds on the 10th April 1608. In a malting in Eastgate Street a servant, through sleepy negligence had let the drying fire race out of hand and destroy 140 houses and 400 outhouses. From this date onwards a law was passed ensuring all new houses were roofed in tiles instead of thatch, as before.

## Malthouse Project work to date



A worker clears the site

\* All vegetation removed from the courtyard of the site. \* Work hut and toilet installed on site. \* Two old tin sheds removed from the courtyard. \* Excavation undertaken by the Suffolk Archaeology team of Suffolk County Council. \* Foundations found at the front of the building. \* Internal rooms cleared of accumulated rubbish. \* Trees removed from the walls they had been growing through. \* Loose material from the floors removed into skips, checked for artifacts. Modern partitions removed in three areas of the building. \* Modern ceilings removed from all areas. \* Tiles removed from all roof sections as well as the tin sheets from roof and wall sections. Tiles stored on site for reuse. \* Marine ply, new battens and rubber sheet placed on N-S

section of roof, made secure. \* Temporary low tin roof removed from the front gable section of the building. \* Modern battens removed from the 18th Century parts of building. \* Dangerous Victorian purlins and rafters removed from roof area subject of a collapse. \* 20ft low section of Victorian wall capping removed from the top of the earlier flint wall on the front of the building.



A worker gives the roof its protective cover

## Friends of the Malthouse Project



### The aim

The aim of the Friends of the Malthouse is to establish a group of like minded people who support our work at the Malthouse from the beginning. They will be informed on a regular basis of progress during the development then of courses, events and milestones once complete. There will also be a junior club whose members will have a separate newsletter with quizzes, challenges and puzzles to complete. We also plan to have a corporate membership.

### The benefits

There are to be several levels of membership, each with various levels of benefit to the member. The benefit to our organisation is that we will have a strong reliable number of people supporting our work to help people in need regain valuable life skills through regular giving.

As a friend you will be kept informed of our work through our regular Malthouse Newsletter and be invited to openings, courses and the annual Friends get together.



St Matthew Housing  
Registered charity 266521



St Edmundsbury  
BOROUGH COUNCIL



Bury St Edmunds Town Trust

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