

Monday 3rd January 2011

Original builders take on Old Fire Station redevelopment

The multi-million pound revamp of the Old Fire Station on George Street will be managed by the same firm which built the Victorian building in 1896.

Local construction firm, Kingerlee, was appointed after the initial contractor Rok went into administration in November. The Kidlington-based firm will begin on site early next month – 114 years after the fire station first opened.

Michael Puttick, Managing Director at Kingerlee, said: “We’re very pleased to be appointed as the main contractor for this exciting project, particularly as the company was involved in building the original fire station over a hundred years ago and we are looking forward to reinventing it.”

Councillor Bob Price, Leader of Oxford City Council, said: “I am delighted that we have been able to appoint a well respected local firm, Kingerlee, to complete this important project for the city and Crisis.

“The difficulties caused by ROK going into administration will mean that the project will be completed a couple of months later than hoped but we have been able to secure a new contractor very swiftly.

“I am sure Kingerlee will do an excellent job in transforming this historic building into a facility that the homeless and the arts sector will both treasure for years to come.”

The Old Fire Station is being redeveloped by the homelessness charity Crisis, in conjunction with Oxford City Council, as a multi-disciplinary centre for the arts and homelessness.

The building will be home to a new Crisis Skylight centre providing training and employment opportunities for homeless and vulnerably housed people alongside a social enterprise Crisis Skylight Café.

There will also be high quality, flexible spaces for artistic development and training, including a gallery, auditorium, retail space, and a creative workspace for artists and designers.

Work on the Old Fire Station scheme began in August 2010 and is expected to be completed in autumn 2011.

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For more information contact:

Oxford West End Partnership
Sarah Leach (01865 252389)

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sleach@oxford.gov.uk

Oxford City Council

Media and Communications Office (01865 252096)

NOTE TO EDITORS

Crisis is the national charity for single homeless people, dedicated to ending homelessness by delivering life-changing services and campaigning for change.

Oxford West End Partnership was established in 2005 as the driving force behind the West End Renaissance, a long-term regeneration programme to revitalise the central west area of Oxford.