

EMAIL from MGW, 30/8/25

Dear Friends,

Emails from architects seem to cluster like buses. I have just received seven from John Renshaw, covering different aspects of our requests to him. Rather than forward all to everyone I will try to summarise them here and provide more details to those who need them. The first was just a covering email explaining why he was separating the others, which were:

1. Plans of the two flats. This was to complete the quinquennial survey report, so he can now submit his invoice for that work.

2. Tender documents for the windows, walls and rainwater goods facing the courtyard. Tenders are due by 26th September, but he has obtained for us an estimate from a chartered surveyor of £90k, including 15% contingencies. John added "Please note that the tender documents include the minimum window repairs considered necessary and that if a more comprehensive scope of works is preferred ie the installation of a Ventrolla system <https://www.ventrolla.co.uk/the-ventrolla-system-restoring-and-enhancing-wooden-windows-for-optimal-performance/> then the additional cost would be in the order of £800 per window."

3 Description of work and layout drawings for improvement to the Bow Room, which could be used to invite tenders. He has suggested that this might be combined with the courtyard work with some saving of money. He has also suggested that because the improvements include a new heater, getting the advice from Luths on the heating and ventilation strategy for the whole building first (see 4 below) could avoid any abortive costs. As well as insulating the north wall he suggests including those to the west and east (to the outside and common stair respectively). He identifies accessibility as a specific issue, and suggests that a platform lift could cost at least £10-£15k, and would only be big enough for a small wheelchair.

4. A fee proposal of £2360 from Luths Services for a site visit, site condition appraisal and options appraisal for heating and ventilation improvements, plus John's own fee proposal of £1239 for working with them on history, layout, constraints etc. Total £3599.

5. His own fee proposal (£2075) and one from the structural engineer (£650 or £1250) for combining the creche area and store to provide a large office/meeting room with separate access from the common stair. The smaller fee would apply if the engineers find the wall is not load bearing, the larger if it is, and therefore has to be replaced by a beam.

6. An email enclosing a sketch of a possible separation of the Bow Room and existing office into a lettable unit with separate access from Upper Bow. This was not something we had specifically asked for, but we did mention we were looking at possibilities for the entrance area. John comments:

"The main entrance and reception room could then be altered to provide a new entrance vestibule, reception area and new office or meeting room. I think part of the problem with this space is caused by the five separate entrances into the space from the main entrance, the steps up to the office and Bow Room, the lift, the toilet corridor and the access two the main stair - so its more of a large draughty circulation space then a cosy welcoming room."

For comparison the draft budget I sent out included, under investment in the Edinburgh building, a figure of £60k for 2025 and £80k for each of 2026, 2027 and 2028. [now reduced to £10k, £80k, £40k and £20k].

Please let me know if you would like to see any or all of these documents before our meeting on Tuesday.

All the best meanwhile,

Martin