



St Margaret’s Hall Decarbonisation Project

Next steps:

After the disappointment of over a year’s closure of St Margaret’s Hall (SMH) due to severe flooding in November 2024, Councillor Alex Kay , Amy Starr (Climate Friendly Bradford on Avon - CFBoA), Vicky Stone (CFBoA) and Simon Forsyth (CFBoA) met to consider how we could move forward, with the community, to make SMH more resilient and also reduce its carbon-footprint. As we re-open the Hall (estimate now May 2026), we will pool our resources and understanding to develop a project plan to deliver a better and safer community space which also acts as a flagship for retrofit of heritage buildings, delivering climate resilience.

This is the 20th year of BoA Climate Friendly and could be the project to reaffirm the intention and aims of the past two decades.

Town Councillor Alex Kay, Chair of environment and Green Spaces,

Vicky Stone Chair of Bradford on Avon Climate Friendly, developing business and advice to provide resilience

Amy Starr, architect and building towards carbon-neutrality, insulation and retrofit

Simon Forsyth, Community energy consultant

- The project may include:
- Evaluation of low carbon options for heating and cooling a large public space, including heat pumps, battery storage, lower cost night time energy, infrared or other space heaters, potential opportunities for better insulation and glazing,
- Fund-raising events and grant applications
- Screening and prioritising best options, in phased and workable fashion
- Considering flood resilience
- Working with the community to raise awareness of issues, provide ideas that can be used in other buildings or homes



Bradford on Avon Town Council is committed to reducing the carbon footprint of our services and assets, but have to do so within the remit of good value for the public spend.

In due course – and framed and informed by our recent carbon audit - a longer-term plan to decarbonise, with expert advice, would be ideal.

The first step should be a detailed assessment carried out by experts specifically to address measures to reduce the carbon footprint, and add resilience for future for inevitable inundation. All options should be considered. The results may provide a stepped, multi-stage project and require fund-raising.

Background

It has been a full year that St Margaret’s Hall (SMH) has been closed due to damage from severe flooding in November 2024. The drying out and reinstatement have been largely in the control of the Council’s insurance company (by way of the loss adjuster appointed to our claim)

The damage to the building was extensive and repair will be costly. Based on our insurance cover, our claim is essentially on a like-for-like basis - and any improvements requiring additional costs are unlikely to be covered. Cost-neutral changes can and have been considered.

In autumn 2025, specifications and a schedule of works for the reinstatement were made and tenders for the work were invited. A contractor was selected from five tenders. That contractor started work on 26th January 2026 - and the Town Council are expecting it to be completed in April 2026. All dates subject to change.

Carbon-footprint reduction: The Town Council has recently commissioned a survey of the carbon footprint of all their assets, including the buildings owned and rented by the council. This project has now been returned and will be available for review soon. This should enable us to develop a strategic plan for the council (including SMH) to reduce the carbon footprint and improve energy efficiency towards net zero.



Resolution: BOATC and CFBOA to agree to work together as a shared project to de-carbonise and increase the resilience of SMH, including expert studies, fund-raising, project planning. This could be a flagship opportunity in a central community and heritage building.

Several estimates for detailed audit are available for immediate consideration.