

Plan for town hall to be run by trust

A TEAM made up of three separate groups could take control of Hornsey Town Hall.

The future of the grade II listed building could lie in the hands of developers, Haringey Council and a community trust.

The advisory panel on the art-deco building will advise the council's executive on December 22 on how they think the landmark should be run.

The panel, chaired by Councillor Judy Bax, has spent the past nine months meeting with experts to help decide on the fate of the disused building.

They have also made visits to other

By **JANINE KELSO**

town hall projects like Battersea Arts Centre and Hampstead Town Hall.

The group are currently putting the final touches to their report which they will present to the executive.

Councillor Bax said: "Everyone is very keen on the idea of a trust. We are looking at a three-way approach of the council, a community trust and a developer working together.

"We are only making recommendations to the executive. It is not our decision."

She added: "The adaptation to community use has to be in keeping with the whole present quality of the building. It is a high quality building, although it is very neglected.

"We don't want a horrible development at the back. There are some very good developers who will look at the whole site and will look at the best ways of using it. The back of the town hall is desolate and horrible.

"We want some exciting and imaginative proposals. There could be flats or houses or work units related to things going on in the town hall. There has to be some development as it has got to pay for itself."

After council workers move out of the town hall, the advisory panel are keen for community groups to move in as soon as possible.

Councillor Bax said: "It could be used for after-school activities and for old people during the day. There are hundreds of groups that are doing things like music, drama and lots of them are looking for space."



Stylish star



viewpoints

TOWN HALL'S FUTURE IS IN OUR HANDS

ALTHOUGH originally from the North East of England, I have for the past 20 years lived in Crouch End, which I now call home.

The sense of community which I have been lucky enough to find here is, I feel, not typical of life in a huge

metropolis and is fuelled by the diverse mix of people who make up the local population.

It is an extremely friendly, sociable place – one in which I have been happy to bring up my only son.

However, over the years I have spent more man hours than I care to count sitting in meetings and organising petitions against proposals by the local council – cuts in the education budget, threatened library closures, controlled parking zones, and now the possible demise of our Town Hall which has been allowed to plunge into a state of disrepair.

At the recent meeting organised by the Hornsey Town Hall Trust, it was overwhelming to see so many residents coming together to protest about the future of this building.

The feeling was unanimous: save our town hall.

Give us a chance to restore it to its former glory and to use it as it was meant to be used – as a space for the community.

The area needs this building and it is a chance for Haringey Council to do something right for a change and create a heritage of which future generations will be proud.

Back the Hornsey Town Hall Trust's vision of an exciting and vibrant heart and soul of Crouch End.

The future of the town hall is in our hands. – **Kit Greveson, Stapleton Hall Road, N4.**

st a fund appeal

and talents freely. The launch of our appeal was not the only new element within the evening. Your article fails to mention the endorsement of a cinema within the town hall by independent experts City Screen.

We believe the audience did not feel they were responding to beggars, rather that the commitment and vision were fully deserving of their contribution. – **Sally Kendall, Crouch End for People, N8.**

'My booksta people wha

Three-screen cinema plan for town hall 'is impossible'

PLANS for a cinema at Hornsey Town Hall have been branded impossible by experts.

Campaign group Crouch End for People (CEfP) wants to see the town hall, in Crouch End Broadway, transformed into a cinema as part of plans to return the building to community use.

Leading independent cinema group City Screen – the team behind the Clapham Picture House, Brixton's Ritzy and The Other Cinema – has been called in to help realise CEfP's vision.

City Screen representative Tony Jones spoke at the last CEfP public meeting.

He said: "The community halls could be converted into three screens. We would encourage local film-makers to use them. We hope that the scheme succeeds."

But experts say three screens would be impossible within the listed building, and would struggle to win the seal of approval from English Heritage.

Former Haringey councillor Alan Richardson, who was on the board of the London Film and Video Agency, said: "They said they were going to have

two screens in the balcony, but they've got no permission.

"One independent screen would be nice, but City Screen is commercial and is going to have to finance the operation. It is going to have to show stuff which is more mainstream in order to get income.

"It's not helpful to present experts who may or may not be fully briefed on uncertainties and are not open to questions."

But architects behind the CEfP scheme insist two screens would fit and a third should be possible with modern technology – including digital and mobile projectors.

Architect Anthony Charnley said the group has had meetings with English Heritage and a local conservation officer to discuss possibilities.

He added: "English Heritage will not give judgement until it has seen final proposals.

"Under the planning guidance, a cinema is a listed use for the balcony.

"What one has to do is a lot of work to make sure it has the necessary quality that this fantastic space demands. I think the prospects for a cinema are extremely good.

"They used to show films in the main hall and there is a projection room at the back. With this new proposal, we could have the best of both worlds."

Professor Ian Christie, a former member of the London Film Institute, said: "It's a bit broad-brushed to say the whole thing can't work.

"My view after looking at the plans is that I think the Crouch End for People scheme would work. It's a realistic scheme. It respects the building.

"It's wrong to say it will never work. City Screen does a good job. It has looked at it first-hand and the view is that it could work. I trust him."

Link boost for schoolkids

CHILDREN with hearing problems at two Haringey schools are to benefit from new state-of-the-art facilities. Highgate Primary School and Blanche Neville School have been linked by a new two-storey building boasting a computer suite, parents' room and a new area for art and technology teaching. Gill Pinkerton, headteacher of Highgate Primary School, said: "It's fantastic to have this new building which will be of enormous benefit to pupils."