

Chambers Institution Trust: Update report for PCC 11/06/26

The design team has now completed the technical design work to RIBA Stage 4, which is to be cost-checked before work proceeds on the preparation of construction information, with a view to seeking tenders for the main contract works. Construction commencement is still programmed for 26th November, with completion expected by 15th December 2027.

Meanwhile the scope of the pre-contract enabling works has been agreed, including opening up works and the removal of the old lift, and these works will be commencing shortly subject to acceptance of the tender from SBContracts which is due to be submitted by the beginning of next week.

Attached is a copy of the most recent progress report issued by the Project Board earlier this week, which usefully provides more detail on the above.

Fundraising efforts are currently focusing on securing the required Phase 1 match funding, which is expected to be covered by South of Scotland Enterprise and the Heritage Lottery Fund. It is hoped that the latter will continue as a mainstay of fundraising for Phase 2.

Feedback from the recent Phase 2 public consultation has been overwhelmingly positive, and the results will be collated for review in due course. Meanwhile, the finalised versions of the feasibility study and business plan are being prepared, which will conclude the current stage while providing an important basis for promoting the project and for gathering a portfolio of potential funders. Further work is needed to explore the feasibility of certain aspects of the Phase 2 proposals which will be the subject of further discussion in the interim.

The Friends of the Chambers Institution is continuing to gather new members, and the first meeting of the membership is expected to be in or around October this year, by which time arrangements should be in place for the main Phase 1 works to commence on site the following month. During this time the board will be looking to appoint up to 5 additional trustees from the membership, therefore we will be pleased to hear from anyone interested in becoming involved as a trustee. In due course, and in cooperation with the Chambers Institution Trust, the Friends will be considering the recommendations in the recently completed business plan in developing operational capability over the next 5 years, and working with the fundraising consultant in building funding support for the Phase 2 objectives.

Following the receipt of quotations from firms recommended by the SBC Heritage and Design officer, a specialist conservation consultant is now to be appointed by the Chambers Institution Trust to carry out a detailed survey of the deteriorating stonework at the War Memorial, and to provide a condition report with repair and conservation recommendations, along with specifications for stonework cleaning, repair, replacement and repointing. It is hoped that grant funding can be found to support the cost of the necessary work to preserve this important memorial.

Sam Coe



Chambers Institution Levelling Up Fund Project High-Level Report for Sharing

Project Overview

- Reporting Period: May 2026 (06/05/2026-04/06/2026)
- Project Stage: RIBA Stage 4
- Planning application submitted December 2025
- Total Budget: £4,662,000 (£4,195,800 LUF, £466,200 CIT Fundraising)

Progress & Activities

- Design team issuing RIBA Stage 4 design packs to TTPM/TTCM to allow costing to commence, on track to issues by Friday 12th June.
- Costing to take place 12-19th June.
- Construction programmed to commence 26/11/26 and due to conclude 15/12/27.
- TTCM preparing cost plan for enabling works package following conclusion of scope and drawings.
- Enabling works tender pack issued to SBContracts, due to return by midday 15/06.
- Accessibility review with community volunteers took place 08/05/26. Accessibility consultant brought on board and carried out a review of the building.
- Franks Portlock carried out full R&D survey and due to issue their final report 12/06.
- Design team and cost management team currently reviewing additional scope requirements for Live Borders fit-out.
- In person review of Stage 4 due to take place on Tuesday 30/6. Session aims to explain key elements of the Stage 4 report with the client team to assist with the approval of the proposed design and cost. This will allow the project to move to the next stage – tender of the main works package

Programme

- Current forecast completion: **15 December 2027 (excluding the building recant)**
- Key milestones:
 - Stage 3 approved: **4 December 2025.**
 - Decant start: **April 2026.** Completed April 2026.
 - Main works start: **November 2026.**

Key Achievements

- Planning and Listed Building consent approved
- Accessibility review undertaken
- R&D survey carried out

Key Issues

- Match funding to be found and secured.

Risk & Change Management

- Conflicting stakeholder feedback
- Adequacy of approval periods
- Timely and accurate survey information
- Additional time for intrusive surveys and enabling works
- Potential need for further refinement of 12-month construction period



Funded by UK Government

- Conclusion of opening up works
- Sufficient procurement periods
- Decant delay
- Obtaining full LUF funding

Financial Overview

- Costs were reviewed with the team and remain within budget.