

Guildhall Project Update R&D 31st March 2026.



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Governance Framework for Delivery Phase.

The Guildhall project is now firmly in the delivery phase which requires a clear and coordinated governance structure to provide strategic oversight, critical decision-making support on operational, assurance and key outputs as the project moves towards launch and beyond that into the critical post opening period.

Five Workstreams have been identified that will drive the demands of the project.

1 - Construction Delivery & Contractor Management – Lead: Robin Lewis

2 - Stakeholder Engagement – Lead: Tim FitzHigham

3 - Engagement, Activities & Social Value – Lead: Duncan Hall / Tim FitzHigham

4 - Fundraising – Lead: Tim FitzHigham

5 - Site Operations & Business plan – Lead: Siobhan Cleeve

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Agenda

- 1 - Construction Delivery (Site Activities, Programme, Budget.)
- 2 - Stakeholder Engagement
- 3 - Engagement, Activities & Social Value
- 4 - Fundraising
- 5 - Site Operations & Business plan

Progress Photo's – covering the site Dec 2025 – March 2026.

Management Summary						
	1.Overall Status	2.1 Risks	2.2. Issues	3.Financials	4.Timelines	5.Resources
This Report	A	A	A	A	G	A
Last Report	A	A	A	A	G	A

Workstream 1 - Construction Delivery

– Site Activities, Programme, Budget, Health & Safety.

Site Activities

- Contract Signed – Messenger Construction Ltd (MCL).
- Start on Site 24th Nov 2025 – Handover 30th June 2028.
- Scaffold erection, asbestos removal and WC, site wide demolition started.
- Party wall awards and specific Scaffold licenses for various locations.
- Monthly Construction Progress Meetings Dec-February.
- Contractor payments, procurement of 2nd Tier packages.
- Immersive media consultant appointment to compliment Interpretation design.
- Guildhall Roof Repair package of work has started (Historic England Funded).
- Crown Post Truss.
- Substation procurement.

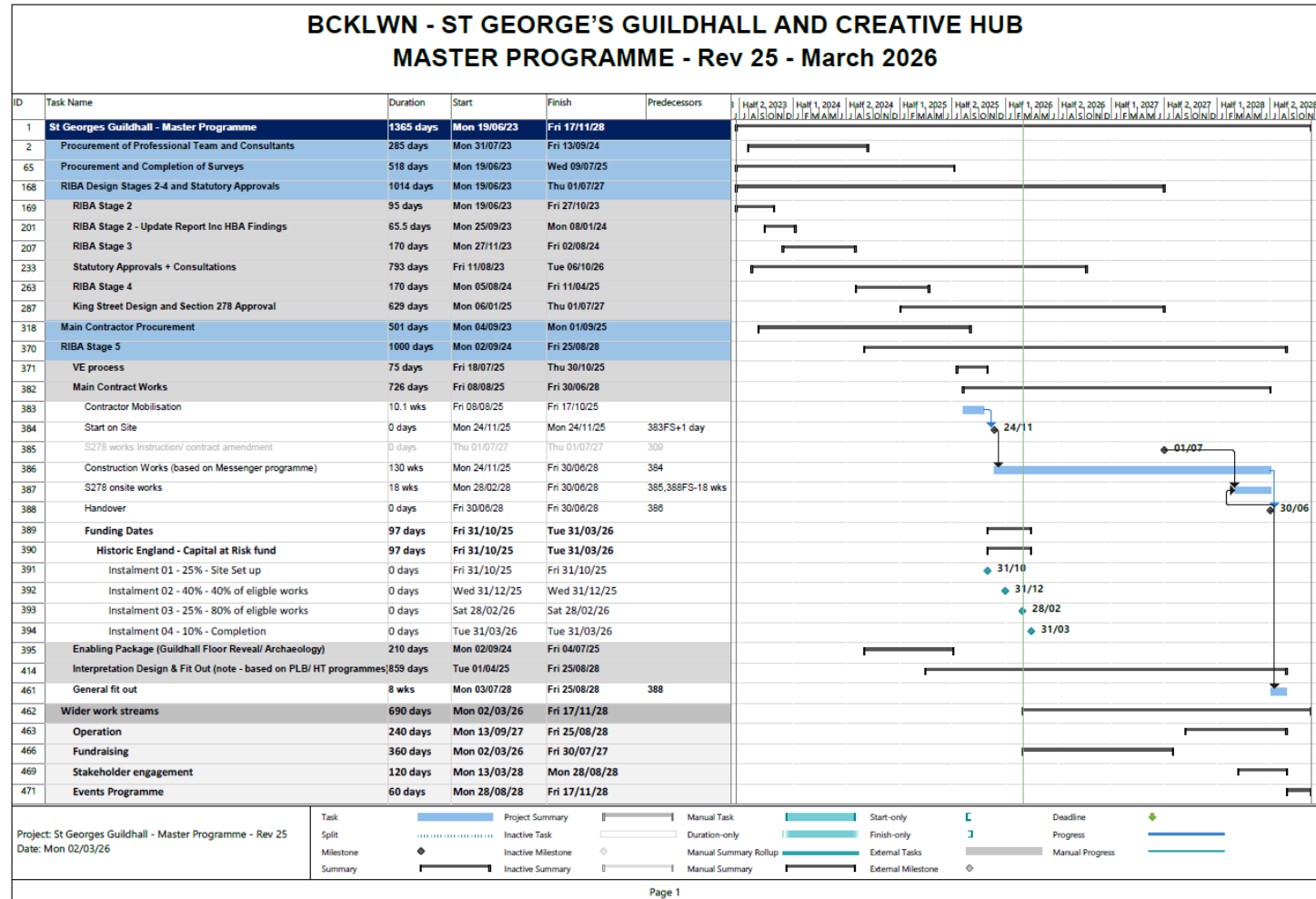
Programme – Update March 2026.

Main Contract.

- Start 24th Nov 2025
- Planned Handover 30th June 2028

Post Handover

- Operational fit out
- Interpretation & Immersive Experience fit out.
- Launch to the Public Summer/ early Autumn 2028.



Budget & Cost - Headlines.

- £30.5m Budget – March 2026 Forecast - £30.5m. On budget.
- Post Contract Value Engineering workshops continue. Contractor (Messenger), Project Team continue to target c£250k of savings.
- Spend to date as of 28th February 2026 is £3.8m.
- Actuals primarily relate to professional and consulting costs, including Architect, Project Management, Quantity Surveyor, Archaeologist, Scaffolding License costs, and the first 3-4 months of Main Contractor costs at £0.7m to date.
- Funding of £12.5m is secured, and £2.5m Pride in Place (formerly PfN) awaiting final approval from MHCLG. This leaves a current balance of £15.5m of funding as approved by Full Council (July 25) to meet the project requirements. Work is well underway to find further funds to reduce the Borough's financial commitment.

Workstream 2 - Stakeholder Engagement

- Partners consistently updated and kept informed (National Trust, Historic England, Charitable Incorporated Organisation (the Charity), Norfolk Museum Service, Norfolk County Council, King's Lynn Neighbourhood Board).
- Talks given to local stakeholder groups (West Norfolk Archaeological Society, True's Yard).
- Information submitted to Parliamentary APPG.
- Further international partner organisations identified and meetings held with them.
- Continuing meetings with other nationally recognised Shakespeare organisations.
- Messaging and communication to stakeholders is in a good place, for example, the Anglia Water leak issue in King Street was handled well and within 60 minutes of becoming an issue.



ACTIVITIES

Over 10,000 children engaged



Volunteers

Workstream 3 - Engagement, Activities & Social Value

- Volunteer Co-ordinator reports volunteers are in a good place and feel well informed.
- Education and Outreach Officer delivering Shakespeare Week in Schools across the Borough in partnership with Shakespeare Birthplace Trust (Stratford upon Avon). In KLWN Shakespeare Week runs over 2 weeks due to popularity: this year we will engage with over 700 children and young people within the Borough. This year secondary school engagement added.
- Preparations for Shakespeare's Birthday are underway (23rd April).
- No.29 King Street Visitor Centre continues to operate as normal under Messenger's guardianship and their legal duty of care to control the space.
- The overall Strategy continues to be updated to recognise the importance and opportunities associated with the Guildhall project and the impact on the wider community.

Workstream 4 - Fundraising

- Historic England Roof Repair award c£721k. Installment 01 received c£274k. Instalment 02 c£151k due late March and final grant claim, c£296k by end March 2026.
- Private overseas German Trust fund awarded £858,000 to support the project.
- St Georges Guildhall CIO charitable objects now allow for them to request and receive funding to support the capital works.
- Appointment of Fundraising Consultant (Cause4) complete.
- Pride in Place funding (formerly Plan for Neighbourhoods – awaiting MHCLG ratification of Regeneration Plan, due by end March 2026

Workstream 5 - Site Operations & Business plan

- Operational Matrix being developed to act as the strategic bridge between physical construction and a live, operational destination.
- The matrix maps requirements across 10 distinct areas, from the Shakespeare Experience to Riverside Dining, ensuring operational readiness is aligned with construction build phases.
- Individual area plans will be required that integrate 'Day 1' requirements, including but not limited to Licensing (Alcohol, PPL/PRS, and Public Entertainment), alongside the development of System Integration and Planned Preventative Maintenance (PPM) schedules.
- The matrix identifies critical paths for strategic partnerships and leads into a rigorous soft launch phase, including dry runs and load-out trials to stress-test physical and digital infrastructure.
- As the matrix further evolves and specific distinct area plans are developed, detailed progress will be reported against the required timelines of the project.

Site Progress – Borough Clerk of Works reviews. December – March 2026.

December 2025 onwards



Site Progress – Borough Clerk of Works reviews. December – March 2026.

Jan - Feb 2026



Shakespeare's Barn roof removal



Asbestos removal to White Barn Anex



Potential asbestos in floor between Joists to be tested



Potential asbestos in floor between joists to be tested



Changing rooms demolition in progress



Changing room WC demolition in progress

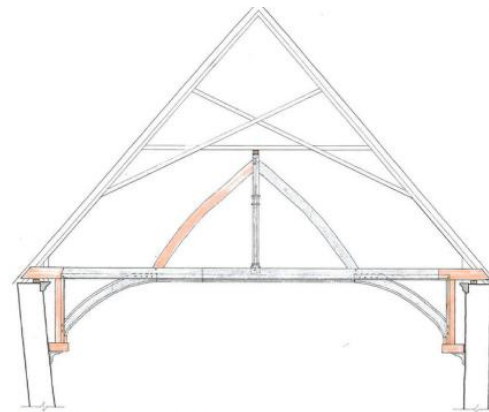
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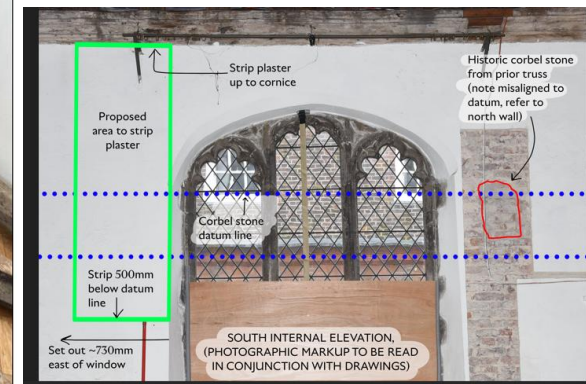


Crown Post Truss

- Signature change to the Guildhall.
- Funded via Historic England.
- Involvement of site Archaeologist, Specialist Timber repairer, Historic England and National Trust.
- 19th Dec – July 2026 target (re)installation.



Note: Pink tone indicates new timbers required



Questions?