

## Design & Access statement for replacement windows in Flat 1, 1 West Road Buxton SK17 6HE

The flat was purchased on 5<sup>th</sup> October 2012. A number of issues were identified during the purchase of the flat which is on the first and second floors above Fiveways Café and Laundrette.

- 1 An EPC report prepared in August 2011 identified that the existing windows had high U Values and were major sites of air leakage. It was recommended that new frames should be fitted with double glazing.
- 2 The property is located on a busy junction in Buxton and suffered from high levels of traffic noise from early in the morning until late at night.
- 3 The lower half of the sash window in the cloakroom had to be opened to provide ventilation but the glass cracked as the weakened frame distorted. The window is above the entrance to the Café and a bench used by customers and presented a serious risk of injury.
- 4 The sill height of windows in the kitchen, the cloakroom and two of bedrooms is around 0.5m. The sills presented a limitation on safe use of the rooms by children because when the bottom half was open, small children could easily fall or drop items onto the street below and the lower panes were not glazed with toughened glass.
- 5 Over the years, the flat had acquired three different window designs on the East elevation. Whereas the two kitchen windows were divided horizontally and vertically to form 4 panes, the cloakroom window was divided horizontally to form only two panes whilst the bathroom window had a small top hung casement with a single lower pane. An old photograph dating from 1920 that was republished in the Buxton Advertiser in January 2008 appeared to show that the first floor windows had originally been divided into four panes.

Although the fact that the property is in a Conservation Zone did not become apparent during the purchase process, an honest attempt was made to retain or restore the original appearance of the building whilst addressing the issues of safe access for children, thermal and acoustic insulation and the safety of customers using the business premises beneath.

A simple survey of the surrounding properties indicated that a large majority were already fitted with uPVC double glazed windows which would address the thermal and acoustic insulation.

If sash windows were to be fitted, owing to the low sill height we were informed that visible guard rails or some form of embrasure would have to be fitted to the lower half of the window. It was decided therefore to fit 50% top hung casements with vertical divisions to recreate the original 4 pane effect and to fit toughened glass to the panes in the bottom half of each window. The end result is shown in the photographs of the North, North East, East and South East elevations after completion of the installation. There has been a marked improvement in thermal and acoustic insulation, the rooms are safe for young children yet can be ventilated by opening the upper half of each window.