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A New Found Faith in the Taunton Deane Planning Department

Colin Urquhart laid the foundations of what has become Kingdom Faith in the late 1970's, when he moved from being an Anglican vicar in Luton to a speaker travelling the world. Now, in a new development for the Church, Crescent House [Taunton] has become the new home for Kingdom Faith South-West. For over 10 years the Church has been looking for a home for their Taunton Congregation ? Thanks to Keith Farmer Associates their needs have been realised.

Similarly to the Kingdom Faith, Crescent House was first established in the 1970's but unlike the Church, interest in the building has declined in recent years; The building is now due a new lease of life with a radically different purpose from the office building that it once was.

For many years Crescent House has been a humble office block ? recently falling into disuse as its? white collar occupants moved out. The once redundant town centre offices now have a sustainable future as a place of worship and a community centre. Judith Butler - Pastor for the Kingdom Faith in Taunton - contacted Keith Farmer Associates to help with her plans following recommendation from a local building company. Judith wanted to explore the possibility of securing planning permission for change of use from offices to a community use. Her plans incorporated developing a café, community centre, and worship hall in the former office space - thanks to their negotiation and constant contact with Taunton Deane Borough Council, the professional firm achieved swift success. On 4th December 2011 Kingdom Faith held their first official meeting at Crescent House.

Judith Butler explained ?We need to undertake internal refurbishment work and to convert some areas to provide the amenities we need. On the ground floor will be a café where all age groups can meet and enjoy their leisure. We will devote the first floor to children and facilities for young people, while the top floor will become our Worship Hall.?

Young mums will welcome the crèche and café as a new meeting place in the town. Equally the Youth Clubs run by the church will have a safe and attractive meeting environment.

Keith Farmer Associates (based near Wellington) have worked with Kingdom Faith to achieve the change of use and have advised on the internal changes and refurbishment needed. ?We found that they could bring the whole project together in a timely and professional way? said Pastor Judith Butler. The

experience of the Keith Farmer Associates team in handling sensitive applications throughout the South-West has been invaluable for this grateful client.

It seems that Churches and ecclesiastical works are likely to become a specialism for this growing professional practice; particularly so with the recent appointment of Martin Jones ? a highly experienced and talented conservation Architect. Martin has much experience, knowledge and personal interest in conservation work including Heritage restoration projects and alterations to listed buildings. In recent times Martin has worked with a number of well known practices including Smith Gamblin [Bridgwater] and Boots Retail [National].

?Often, sensitive and at risk buildings are listed and need a skilful team to create the opportunity for a new lease of life without damaging the history or heritage of a property. Our team?s real skill is in introducing sympathetic changes that improve use potential without adversely affecting its historic background or heritage aesthetics? said Ian Firth, MD - Keith Farmer Associates. This specialist firm of Chartered Surveyors and Architectural consultants serve a variety of clients from the West-Country to London and beyond.

The future for Kingdom Faith in Taunton is bright and secure thanks to the professionalism and skill of the Keith Farmer Associates Planning & Development team.

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