

THE CABINET AT REED

The campaign to save the 400-year-old Cabinet at Reed enters a decisive phase this autumn.

This delightful, grade 2 listed building was acquired three years ago by a property developer who turned it into a house without planning permission or listed building consent. He reckoned without the strong community support for restoring the pub. The Save the Cabinet Action Group was formed and has been leading the fight to reclaim what was a popular and successful pub for many years.

In July 2017, retrospective planning permission for change of use was refused by North Herts councillors. Unsurprisingly, the developer appealed. Earlier this year, the Action Group launched a petition designed to make sure the appeal was held in public and not in writing, which attracted about 1500 signatures. This – plus the intervention of the local MP – persuaded the Planning Inspectorate to upgrade the appeal to a Public Inquiry. That's good news in that it means all the evidence will be brought out in detail – and the Action Group think they have a strong case for saving the pub.

That Inquiry will be held at Letchworth on **6-8 November**, and the Action Group is asking as many people as possible to attend and support them.

Less good news is that these sorts of procedures are formal and expensive, and the campaign to save the pub needs urgently to raise money to pay for a lawyer and expert witnesses. Edwin Kilby, vice-chair of the Action Group, said, "The developer who owns the pub will undoubtedly be represented by an expensive lawyer. We need a lawyer too, otherwise it would be like marching naked into the lion's den." Various activities have proved successful at raising funds but at the time of writing there was still a shortfall.

So the Action Group is asking PoV readers please to help if they can. You can donate to the Save the Cabinet Fighting Fund quickly and easily online here: www.justgiving.com/crowdfunding/cabinet-fighting-fund.

Read more about the fight to save The Cabinet at www.savethecabinet.uk, or search for "Save the Cabinet" on Facebook and Twitter.