

Owners of historic workhouse are left 'devastated' by fire

THE owners of the historic workhouse in Carmarthen say they are "devastated" by a fire which ripped through the second floor and roof of the building.

Smoke could be seen from miles away as it belled from the building on March 2.

Now, just over a month since the blaze, a police investigation is ongoing with two youths arrested and on bail.

Property developer

IAN LEWIS

01267 610452
ian.lewis@mediawales.co.uk

Edgar Stephens bought the building with his father and said they are still hopeful of selling the site, which was a focal point of the Rebecca Riots.

Mr Stephens said: "We are devastated by the fire and the damage that has been caused to the roof."

A sale was understood

to have been close to be struck ahead of the fire, but there are discussions still ongoing.

Mr Stephens said: "We are still in talks with several developers over a sale which we hope will happen soon."

Any sale could secure the future of the site in Penlan Road.

The workhouse itself has planning permission to be turned into flats but whether a buyer would

have other plans remains to be seen. When the blaze broke out, fire crews from Carmarthen, Tumble, Kidwelly and Swansea West were all at the scene of the blaze which took almost four hours to get the blaze under control with the use of six main jets, hose reel jets, a water bowser and an aerial appliance.

The building itself dates back to 1837, having been designed by architect George Morgan, the man behind many religious and public buildings across Wales.

It was the setting for one of the most important events in Welsh social history when the Rebecca Riots stormed the building on June 19, 1843.

Hundreds of rioters trashed the workhouse in protest against the Poor Act Law 1834.

During the protest, the rioters were attacked by a squadron of Light Dragoons who galloped up Waterloo Terrace in what remains the last ever cavalry charge on mainland Britain.

Since it was closed as a workhouse it has been used as a military hospital, a Second World War base for soldiers and offices for the BBC and Carmarthen-shire Council.

Find out more online at:
walesonline.co.uk/carmarthen



Fire ripped through the former workhouse in Carmarthen last month.

