

# Chapel worth £1.4m after redevelopment

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A chapel in Dover has appeared again on BBC's Homes under the Hammer.

The conversion of the Beacon Methodist Church was shown on the morning TV show last Tuesday.

Narrated by show favourite Martin Roberts, it revealed the final stages in the 120 year-old chapel's conversion.

The building, situated at the corner of London Road and Beconsfield Road in Dover, was built in 1901 by the Primitive Methodists at a cost of £5,500. Then it had accommodation for 600 people and remained in use until Easter 2012.

It was sold for £135,000 - £500 under the guide price - by Clive Emson auctioneers on February 8, 2016 which was when it first came to the attention of the Homes under the Hammer presenter Martin Roberts and filming crew.

On first viewing of the "fantastic space" Martin said it was a "shell" but structurally okay.

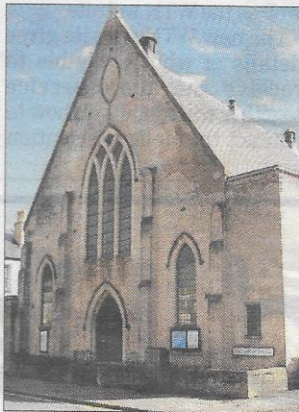
Viewers also saw developers Steve and Hazi, Sunil and Gita speak of the five year project which eventually produced nine flats.

Hazi said: "It's not a usual part of our portfolio. We thought 'why not' It's a great price, a massive building, it has a lot of potential in a great area."

At the time there was no planning consent but the family team already had ambitions to create two mezzanines for six flats with a modern feel.

They had a budget of £250,000-£300,000 and a time scale was a year and a half.

When the crew returned two and a half years later in August 2018 no flats or mezzanines had been installed. But the developers had managed to get planning for four one-bed apartments and five two-bed homes over three



The Beacon Church as it was at the time it went to auction



Homes Under the Hammer's presenters Martin Roberts and Lucy Alexander

Picture: BBC

floors.

Project manager Sunil and Gita praised the support they received from DDC planning department and the committee but Gita said the hardest part was "handling objections from people around the local area".

The cost for developing the building had doubled to £540,000. This required a steel frame to allow construction of the upper units within the former church shell.

Gita said: "Keeping the character of the building was really

important to us. The main thing was keeping the shape of the windows, the front door and also the structure of the building. It is a church and want it to look like a church but when people walk inside they'll see it looks completely different and modern."

A return visit in March revealed they have created nine apartments over three floors with three separate entrances.

Original attractions like the wood beams and windows have been retained.

Sunil revealed they had needed to dig the foundations out because they would not take the weight of the new building.

The renovation tally currently stands at £650,000-700,000, not including the £135,000 purchase price and £25,000 on planning which makes a total investment of £860,000.

Estate agent Thomas Dean of Thomas & Partners, visited in March.

He said: "What a super development. When you look at the plans I didn't imagine it would be as good as this."

"It really is enhancing all of the features of the old church. The features that stick out is the usage of the old arches, it gives it a little bit of individuality."

He valued the one bedroom apartments at £150,000-£160,000 and the two bed flats between £165,000 to £195,000 for the penthouse.

The total re-sale value would be between £1.4m and £1.6m if the group decided to sell, raking in a "healthy" pre-tax profit of £540,000-£740,000.

Rental income was estimated as £650-£670 pcm and the two bed homes range from £750-£850 pcm.

The properties will be rented once finished.

The development of Beacon Church in Dover can be seen on Homes Under the Hammer (series 22, episode 40) on BBC iPlayer.



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