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9th May 2018

Life Skills Academy for adults with a learning disability.

I am delighted to let you know that, thanks to the tremendous encouragement, belief and support Canterbury Oast Trust has received from you and other generous supporters, we now have in place the funds necessary to begin building our new Life Skills Academy, here at Highlands Farm.

It has been a long journey to reach this point and we are extremely grateful to you for sharing it with us. To know that this much anticipated new learning facility will soon become a reality is exciting indeed.

Since making our application to you in September last year we did see an increase to our original estimate for the build. Despite a forensic review of all elements final costs total £473,500 against our initial estimate from last year of £354,750. We did, of course, follow industry guidelines from the outset on recommended costs per square metre, but rapidly rising materials prices and the need to dig extra-deep foundations (as instructed by our local authority's planning department) drove up costs. I am delighted to confirm, however, that we were able to secure the total needed.

Following a very detailed tender process we have chosen a local, family run contractor to undertake the works on our academy. As well as providing the most competitive quotation, performing well in our tender analysis and in responding to our technical questions and clarifications, they conveyed a true feeling of commitment and pride in their work.

The company has undertaken similar builds locally including projects supporting vulnerable groups and were, for instance, very sympathetic to our particular focus on health and safety requirements for both the people we support and visitors to our farm. We felt they demonstrated the best cost effectiveness and potential for a successful partnership.

Supporting adults with learning disability

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Works on the new academy commenced in February 2018. The foundations have been laid and work on the main structure is well underway*. We are now beginning to see the general outline and size of the new facility and looking forward to seeing the completed structure.

*please see photos below showing the progress of the building works and current status.

Our timeline for the academy is::

- ✓ Sep 2017: Building regulations process.
- ✓ Dec 2017: Tendering and identify contractor.
- ✓ January 2018: Commencement of ground clearance works and preparation of site.
- ✓ February 2018: Main build begins.
- June/July 2018: Final fit and sign-off and handover.
- 31st August: Harrington College closes.
- 3rd September 2018: Move to new facility and student orientation.
- 19th September 2018: Life Skills Academy formal opening ceremony.

We are running to schedule and confident that we will achieve our planned completion date of July 2018.

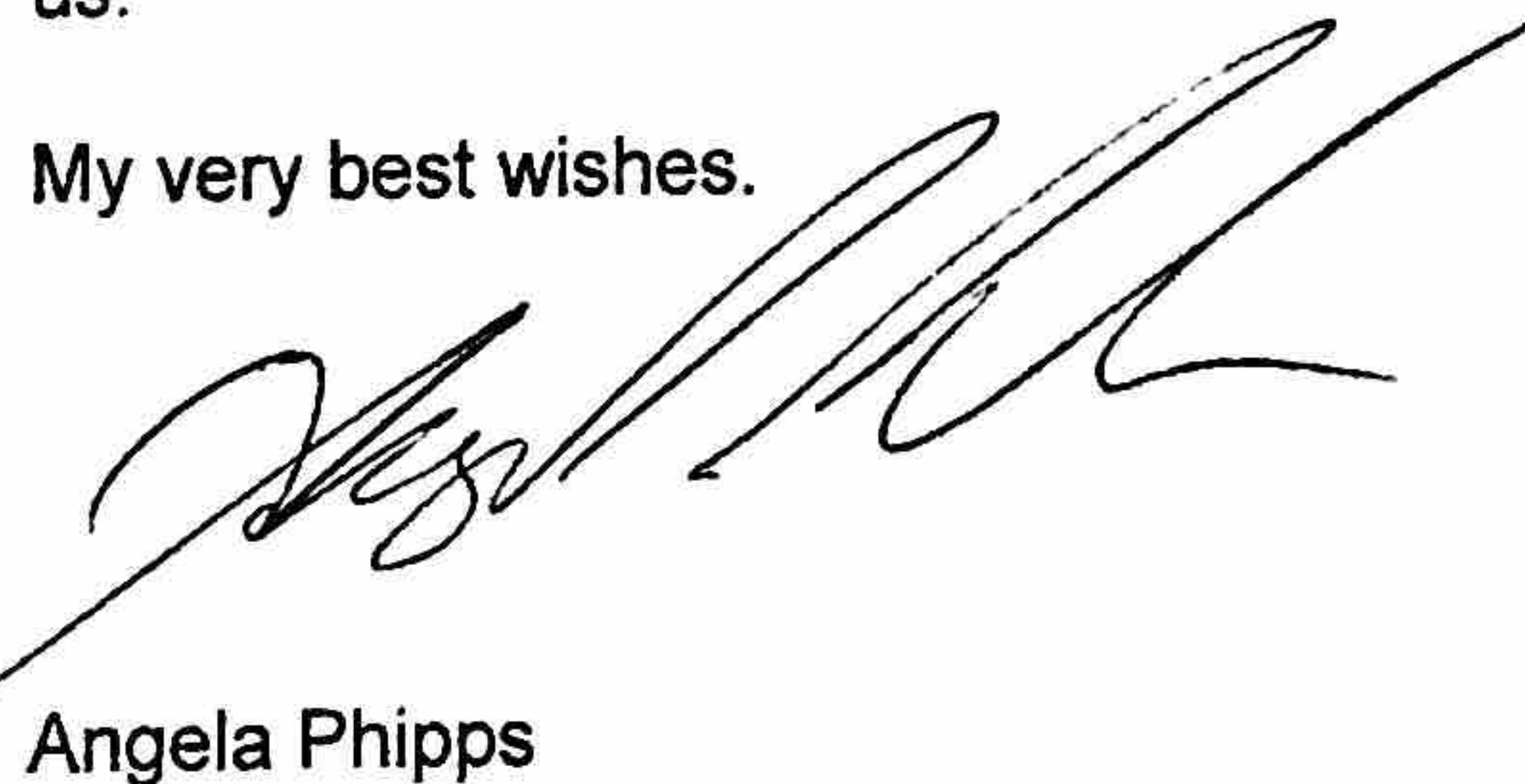
Our tutors are now designing and planning the internal fit out of the academy. There are a number of factors which play a role in positive learning experiences but pivotal is the environment. With this new purpose built facility we will have space where students' talents, skills and aspirations can be drawn out and nurtured. We aim to ensure students have a more creative and dynamic learning experience encouraging the understanding of numeracy and literacy, creative development, communication and language and social interaction.

A fundamental part of our new facility will be the effective use of technology with classrooms equipped to encourage students to explore and learn in more meaningful ways than before. Each classroom will be fitted with an interactive whiteboard, projectors, PCs and adapted equipment for additional needs. An exciting development is our plan to pilot immersive experiences or virtual reality type environments to support learning programmes such as creative writing sessions or linking computer based activities to real life situations.

The new Life Skills academy will offer so many possibilities for our students, tutors and volunteers to explore together. This is a very exciting time of our charity and the people we support and we are extremely grateful to you for helping to make this possible.

We are very much looking forward to opening the doors to our new Life Skills Academy and its formal opening on the 19th September 2018. We will be sending invitations soon and we do hope that you and the other Trustees of the Nineveh Charitable Trust will be able to join us.

My very best wishes.



Angela Phipps