

# REMEMBER WHEN

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City streets blocked off and people evacuated as fire ripped through historic building

## Fire-ravaged Drill Hall sold at auction



**SMOKE:** The former Drill Hall in Lower dock Street, Newport, which was engulfed by fire in March 2018, has been sold at auction



**BLAZE:** Flames leap from the well-aight Abundant Life Centre building in Lower Dock Street, Newport.



**DAMAGE:** Firefighters damping down the fire at the Abundant Life Centre in Lower Dock Street, Newport. Picture: www.christinsleyphotography.co.uk.

**By Jo Barnes**

A GRADE II listed former drill hall in the centre of Newport which was badly damaged in a catastrophic fire two years ago has been sold at auction for £199,500.

Dating from 1901, the Lower Dock Street hall which was initially the headquarters of the 3rd Monmouthshire Rifle Volunteer Corps, was latterly used as a church and for community groups and was known at the Abundant Life Centre.

The building was reduced to a shell after being engulfed by flames in March 2018 when renovation work was being carried out. It had been partially destroyed by fire just a couple of years before then.

The impressive castellated building was listed with a guide price of £160,000 when it was put up for auction by Newport-based Paul Fosh Auctions.

The locally-owned hall was decommissioned in the 1960s.

Debra Bisley, of Paul Fosh Auctions, said: "It's a wonderful, eye-catching building which is ripe for redevelopment."

"The previous owners had drawn up a scheme which has had pre-planning approval from Newport City Council and Cadw, the Welsh historic monuments organisation. This scheme allows for the main drill hall to be retained while the front, three storey part of the property would incorporate eight, self-contained apartments."

Back in March 2018 the South Wales Argus was on the scene as flames ripped through the building.

The road was closed for almost three hours and residents and workers in the area were evacuated while 37 firefighters from eight stations tackled the blaze.

The fire caused damage to the front of the church.

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**WORK:** The fire damaged Abundant Life Centre in Lower Dock Street, Newport, after the 2016 fire



**FLAMES:** The March 2018 Drill Hall fire. Picture: Jonathan Jones



**ACTION:** The March 2018 blaze. Picture: Chris Taylor



**BLOCKED:** Streets were blocked off when the March 2018 fire took hold. Picture: Ceri Davidson



**SCENE:** The former Drill Hall in Lower dock Street, Newport, when it was engulfed by fire in March 2018