



HMO SUMMIT AND AWARDS

Best Residential to HMO Conversion

Project: One Battison | Applicant: Amanda Woodward From Essential Property Options

Application Form

Company Trading Name

The name people know your company as

Essential Property Options

Applicant Name

The individual who is representing the company, and will be named on award publications.

Amanda Woodward

Contact Email Address

We will send all communications to this email address. You may enter multiple.

amanda@essentialpropertyoptions.co.uk

Contact Number

A single contact number in case we need to get in touch

07713519001

Applicant Social Media Accounts

Facebook, LinkedIn, Instagram, if applicable. These will be tagged if the applicant is a finalist or winner.

IG – AmandaWoodwardProperty

FB – AmandaWoodward123 & AmandaWoodwardProperty

Website & Social Media

The company website, if applicable. You may include LinkedIn, Instagram, and Facebook accounts.

www.EssentialPropertyOptions.co.uk

www.OneBattison.co.uk



Best Residential to HMO Conversion

Judging Criteria

- The property must be completed but can be occupied or unoccupied
- Proof of any required planning permission and building regulations or application will be required
- Proof of compliance with the local authority (HMO Amenities standards) will need to be met and supplied by means of a floor plan (doesn't need to be to scale)
- All safety certificates will need to be produced where applicable – Gas Safe – EPC – Electric Cert – Fire Alarm Cert – Building Regs Cert.
- Photographs of before and after are required (a site visit may also be required)
- Property must have been completed within the last 12 months
- Judges will look for unique elements of living – something that really stands out above the rest
- Full set of figures will need to be provided to include ROI / Yield / Money left in and monthly cash flow

Please visit <https://www.onebattison.co.uk/awards> for all the supplementary documents relating to this application needed for the judging criteria

Description of Portfolio (max 100 words)

Include information such as region, number of units, target market, and how long you've been operating

- BTL portfolio covers London, Kent, Derbyshire, Birmingham, Stoke on Trent, Newcastle Under Lyme & Crewe. Our HMO & SA portfolio is concentrated in Stoke on Trent, Newcastle Under Lyme & Crewe. Circa. 250 rooms bought in the last 10 years.
- HMO & SA property management companies under 3 brands which are **Crewe & Stoke Rooms & Suites**, **Stay & Co.** and **Comfort & Co.** with 650 rooms under management targeting professional HMO market over the last 8 years.
- You can find more info on the different companies I am involved in on my website www.AmandaWoodward.co.uk
- The property I am presenting for this award is

One Battison

Pub, Function Hall & Rooms to 17 Bedroom (25 person) HMO

1 Battison Crescent, Stoke on Trent, ST3 4DS

www.OneBattison.co.uk



What is your ethos around HMOs and Coliving? (max 250 words)

- At the heart of our ethos is the idea of *raising the bar*. We aim to create homes that residents are genuinely proud to live in. Places they're excited to share with friends. One moment that stays with us is overhearing a tenant on the phone saying, "*I have a huge room with a four-poster bed and an amazing big bath.*" That kind of genuine pride perfectly captures what we set out to achieve at One Battison.
- We believe HMOs and co-living spaces are essential to meeting the UK's housing needs, offering affordability, convenience, and community, especially for working professionals. The COVID-19 pandemic tested the resilience of shared living. Far from being a weakness, it highlighted how strong, well-designed HMOs can become supportive, stable 'bubbles' during challenging times.
- We focus on quality & style alongside the functional element of compliance. Our properties are thoughtfully designed and highly functional. Local HMO officers often compliment our standards and enjoy visiting our properties, which we take as a sign we're doing things right.
- Whether it's entry-level rooms or design-led spaces like One Battison, we're committed to providing high-quality, well-managed homes that enhance the lives of our residents and add value to the communities around them.



Room 207 – Superior suite with standalone bath

How did/does your approach adapt during a slow market? (max 250 words)

- Slow markets are inevitable for HMOs, particularly during the winter and holiday season. We have taken the approach of 'flexibility' to adapt and pivot when needed. Across our portfolio (both owned & managed) we ask that our landlords and investors trust us to make the best decisions to fill and maintain occupancy. We range from 84% on a bad day to 98% on a good day across 650 rooms using a few different techniques.
- We reduce minimum stays to match the demand for doctors and medical professional visiting for exams or shadowing in local hospitals. We provide referral vouchers to all in houses tenants to refer a friend and get paid up £50 which they love. We offer first month discount incentives and no deposit incentives for those who need a little assistance with the initial financial outlay.
- As we have our own in-house management company, we understand that even at 90% occupancy, there are still a lot of vacant rooms to fill across the portfolio. Therefore, we continually innovate our marketing strategy, using a combination of digital platforms and direct marketing to reach potential tenants. This creativity in how we market ensures we're always visible, even during slower months.
- Above all, our philosophy is to give tenants everything they need to stay. By creating welcoming, well managed spaces, and offering flexible terms, we ensure our tenants feel at home and want to stay long-term.

What are your company values? (max 250 words)

Our Company Values

- At the core of our business is a simple but powerful philosophy: *to maximise returns for our investors, partners, and landlords by developing and managing high-quality accommodation while delivering excellent service in the communities we invest in.* We share this message across our group of websites.
- We believe in creating comfortable and well designed homes that residents are genuinely proud to live in. When tenant's friends visit and say, "Oh my god, I can't believe you live here!", we know we've done our job.
- Our values are built around five key stakeholder groups: tenants, investors, suppliers, staff/team, and the wider community. Each plays a vital role in our success. We prioritise larger rooms, thoughtful design, and great service to meet the needs of modern living, while remaining fully compliant.
- We're also committed to sharing knowledge, through podcasts & blogs. We believe transparency, education, and collaboration raise standards across the industry and we do that through our podcast **The Essential Property Podcast**.

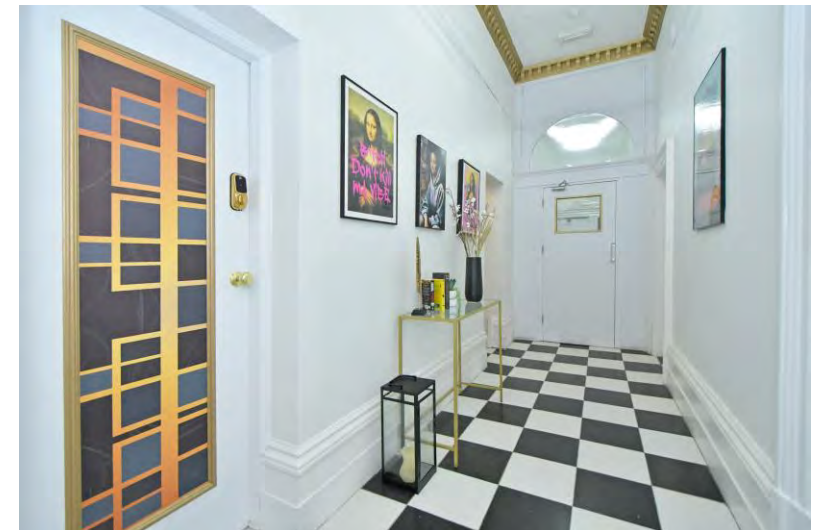


What would you say makes your property different to your local competition / other similar projects? (max 250 words)

- There is nothing quite like One Battison. Of course I may be a little biased 😊
- We used the size, age and grandeur of the building to focus on the feeling of luxury with vintage wallpapered ceilings and gold painted coving.
- We focused on space as we have rooms as large as 26sqm opposed to competitors squeezing in more rooms.
- We focus deeply on amenity, convenience & security. We provide car parking, cycle storage, amazon parcel delivery box, CCTV, weekly staff visits. We have 3 x kitchens, all ensuite bedrooms, along with extras such as in room phone charging, extra large TVs & in-room amazon Alexa.
- We retained traditional elements of the building such as the windows, shutters and coving and twinned that with a modern, stylish design.
- We encourage flexible co-living with short, medium and long term stays available. We provide daily communal cleaning with in-room linen supply and room cleaning service on offer to tenants.



First Floor Landing



Entrance Hall

Please detail if this is a Purchase, Lease Option, Exchange with delayed completion or something different (max 250 words)

It was a pleasure to work with Amanda , and it is so impressive to see the effort put in on the property and for the neighbours. They have definitely achieved what they promised of the property, I hope they are proud of this achievement. Best wishes,

Deb Watson

10:08

- Traditional cash purchase with an exchange with delayed completion conditional on achieving planning.
- On the surface the property seemed straight forward (famous last words). The top 2 floors were previously operating as rooms and the current owner had a HMO licence. Great! So our planning application to convert just the pub and function room was submitted and was later declined and withdrawn. 12 months later, after a string of objections from the local residents which included a consultation where we received 2 hours of abuse, a second application was eventually granted.
- Please take a look at the application and the documents that were submitted to convince the council we were the right developers for the job.
- Plus a WhatsApp message from the seller, Debbie Watson, after completion



How did you source this property? (max 250 words)

- It started with a fortuitous chance encounter, taking a photo of an electrician's van. The following week the electrician completed some EICR reports across our properties and asked if I would buy his mother's pub that was closing and not yet on the market.
- I reluctantly viewed, not usually being a fan of traditional pub conversations, but was stunned with the beautiful 1800s building. Once a catholic centre, rumoured to have had an underground tunnel to the Convent opposite which then turned into local pub and function hall with rooms above. I was sold!
- Negotiations took place behind masks during the pandemic and when the seller's husband died mid-sale we agreed to increase our commitment with a non-refundable deposit to offer certainty that we would not pull out of the sale during such a sensitive time for the seller.
- Negotiations started September 2021, planning agreed & completion September 2022. Conversion works started January 2023 and split into 3 phases. Phase 1 complete 2023, phase 2 and 3 complete mid and end 2024.



Main Pub area

How was this property financed? (max 250 words)

- We financed the transaction using a combination of our own funds and private investors.
- We have a total investment of £817,500 with the project completed in full December 2024.
- Our strategy is to refinance onto an HMO mortgage however we are waiting for more favorable interest rates to do so. The BoE are slowly reducing the base rate and we plan to apply in the Summer of Autumn of 2025 and attract a rate of 5% interest on a 75% LTV.

How many people are involved with this deal and in what capacity? (max 250 words)



Original Cellar & Pump Room



Survey Visit & Safety Signage

- Buyers (2)
- Electrician (who highlighted the deal) (1)
- Husband & Wife Vendors (2)
- Solicitor (2)
- Planning Consultant & Architect (2)
- Structural Engineer (1)
- Angel investors (2)
- Surveyor (1)
- Interior Designer (1)
- Building control officer (1)
- Trades and sub-contractors (10+)
- HMO Officer (1)
- Local Photographer & Drone Operator (1)
- Cleaning Team (3)
- 30+ people in total
- Pleased to say all local people based within the Stoke on Trent postcode apart from the investors & interior designer.

What are your intentions with this deal? (Sell, refinance etc) (max 250 words)

- Refinance & hold. We rarely sell.
- We invest in HMOs for the long term, we believe in their place within the housing sector and proud to own and manage them.
- We lead our investments with design and passion and feel connected to our properties for the long term



Ground Floor Shared Kitchen



Second Floor Shared Kitchen



Room 104 Ensuite Bathroom



Room 104 Ensuite Bathroom

Please summarise the numbers of the deal (both capital investment/uplift and the operating financials)? (max 250 words)

• Purchase Price	£350,000		
• Legal, Planning & Development	£467,500		
• Total Investment	£817,500		
• GDV	£1m – £1.2m		
• Money Left in (at 75% Loan)	Between £67,500 left in and £0 left in plus 82,500 pulled back out		
• Average Rental	£ 11,050	PCM	
• Average Operating Costs	£ 3,522	PCM	
• Management Fee	£. 1,657	PCM	Managed in house by Essential Property Options
• Average Cash Flow	£ 5,871	PCM	
Based on £1m valuation with 5% interest & 75% loan equity	£2,746 Cashflow PCM	48% Return on £67.5k Money Left In and £250k	
Based on £1.2 valuation with 5% interest & 75% loan	£2,121 Cashflow PCM	Infinite Return as £0 Money left in and £300k equity	

What is the end-product EPC rating? (max 250 words)

- 73 – Rating C
- We worked with our energy assessor to understand what was needed to reach the all-important C. We also trialled for the first time, infrared ceiling heaters as a low-carbon and energy-efficient heating solution in 7 of the rooms.



Room 104 with ceiling heating panel

How is your company considering ESG factors in the work you do? (max 250 words)

- **Environmentally**, our renovation addressed the inefficiencies of the original commercial building. We installed high-quality insulation in the roof, walls, and floors; upgraded all windows; replaced outdated lighting with energy-efficient LEDs; and fitted appliances that meet modern energy standards. We also introduced smart meters and intelligent thermostats, empowering residents to monitor and reduce their energy use. For the first time, we installed infrared heaters, further improving efficiency. Beyond the building itself, we solved long-standing parking issues on the road introducing a permit system, engaged residents in meaningful conversations to address concerns, and added amenities such as a secure cycle shed. We also creatively recycled wooden materials from the former bar along with the religious confession cards and candles from this unique historical feature
- **Socially**, One Battison directly responds to real housing needs in the city. We've transformed vacant commercial space into high-quality, desirable living spaces with a varied pricing model based on room size, ensuring accessibility for local professionals. Throughout the project, we built strong relationships with local tradespeople and businesses. Initially, there were concerns from the community about the site becoming a 'homeless hotel', but after inviting them for a post-completion tour, perceptions changed. Residents and neighbours now see a well-managed, high-quality housing development that enhances the area.
- **Governance-wise**, we prioritised transparency & communication from the start. Open communication with local residents, authorities, and other stakeholders has been central to our approach, ensuring that the development adds genuine value to the community. This commitment continues post-completion, with clear protocols for tenant maintenance reporting, regular safety testing, scheduled 90-day inspections, and weekly visits from a dedicated property manager who walks the building and speaks directly with residents.

Room 303 Before, During & After



Why should you be considered for this award? (max 250 words)

The Best Deal Finding Process

The chance meeting with the electrician and how we were perfectly aligned to work with each other. He now works with us almost full time, responsible for the electrical servicing for all our HMOs. We helped his family to sell their building which in turn helped us to create a fabulous HMO to add to our portfolio and present to our tenants. The law of reciprocity in full force.

The Best 'turn around' on Planning

During the planning process we agreed to a local meeting with the residents on the road. We are located on a private road with just 5 houses and a building with 6 flats. On this day, over 50 people attend, including the ex Mayor of Stoke on Trent! We came prepared with plans, flip charts and photos however we received 2 hours of abuse! We even had the vendor daughter present to explain why they were selling and why we were the most desirable buyer for the community however we felt defeated in the moment and had to work very hard to keep the motivation up to proceed through the planning process.

The Best Commitment

Our builders quote increased by 40% due to the impact of Covid and the increase in material prices at the point we were ready to start. He was a large contractor who we worked with before and who we knew could deliver on this size job. However, the price increase was not viable so we made the decision to get our hands dirty and project manage the refurbishment ourselves. Our largest project prior was a 9 bedroom HMO so almost twice the size it felt a little daunting. We readied the team which we nicknamed the 'Avengers'. All the trades that we knew and trusted from smaller jobs in the past were brought together, led by us and our architect, supported by building control and we got to work. We decided to break the project into 3 phases to make it manageable and to manage cashflow and we are very pleased at the result.



Old bathroom for function room

The Best Transformation

The pub and function room were transformed to create more HMO rooms whilst still retaining as many original features such as the beautiful wood flooring, sash windows and original window shutters.

The Best Style

Gold Four Poster Beds, Freestanding Baths, Chandeliers, Original Heritage shutters, Gold Painted Woodwork, Vintage Ceiling Wallpaper.

The Best Amenities

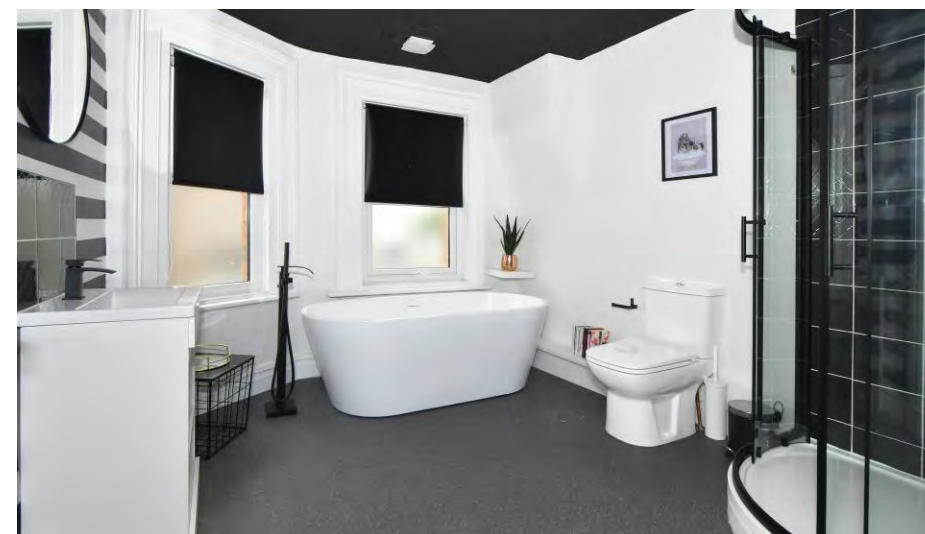
Large bedrooms, extra-large TVs, in-room sofas, desks, fridges, irons, kettles, chargers, Amazon Alexa. Amazon parcel delivery box, CCTV, car park, commercial bin waste, daily cleaners, tenant in-room cleaning available. 3 x kitchens, plus additional kitchenettes in studios.

The Best Room

Having checked all the platforms, I believe we have the highest priced HMO room in the city. Room 201 which is rented at £895 per month. This is the black and white stripped room with a free-standing bath and shower in the ensuite. Whilst being the most expensive, doesn't always equate to the best, it is reconfirmation within the marketplace that we have presented a product that is worthy of such price tag



Room 201



Room 201

Links For Additional Information

Please visit

<https://www.onebattison.co.uk/awards> for all the supplementary documents needed for the judging criteria along with a copy of this application.

- Before, during & after photos & video
- Floor plan
- 25 person HMO licence and building control final certificates
- Planning application links
- Supplementary planning docs
- Safety/compliance certificates and EPC



Thank You For Considering One Battison For This Award