

1<sup>st</sup> June 2005



Dear Member

In March 2002, the Sutton congregation commissioned our team to look into the possibility of building a community centre on The Oval. It has been a long and detailed process and we have met on a regular basis to carry out the study. After many hours of research and discussion, we have concluded our findings and are now in a position to present the report back to the congregation.

The full report is a sizable document containing over 160 pages of information, but we want to make sure it is available for those members of the congregation who wish to read it. We have attached a four page executive summary for you to look at which highlights the key aspects of the report. We would ideally like to print copies of the full document to give to each member but we are aware of the costs associated with this, and we believe there are alternative and more cost effective ways of circulating the information to those who wish to see it.

Therefore, if you want to receive a full copy, we have identified two formats for viewing the report and we would ask you to advise which you would prefer. The two formats are as follows:

- 1) Hard copy (paper report)
- 2) PDF format on a CD-ROM (if you have Acrobat Reader on your computer you will be able to view this on your PC)

Please contact Wayne Rowe on 01623 474436 or e-mail [waynerowe70@hotmail.com](mailto:waynerowe70@hotmail.com) with your preferred choice and this will be sent to you.

There will be a full copy of the report situated near the notice board at church for anyone who wishes to view it.

Following the issue of the formal report we are intending to hold a forum where people will have the opportunity to ask questions about the findings. The feasibility team, along with representatives from mission centre will be present to answer any questions. The date of this meeting will be advised in the near future.

The feasibility team would like to thank you for your patience in waiting for this information and we hope the details will enable you to make an informed decision on the future direction of the project.

Kind regards,

Wayne Rowe  
On behalf of the Feasibility Team

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# COMMUNITY LIFE CENTRE FEASIBILITY STUDY

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## **Executive Summary**

In early 2002, the Sutton-in-Ashfield congregation commissioned a feasibility study to be carried out to investigate the possibility of building a new community centre on The Oval, Carsic. A team of 7 individuals (inc. ex-officio) were duly elected to carry out this study.

Due to a lack of previous knowledge regarding a project of this nature, it was agreed by the team that professional assistance was required to help in the process. Tanc (Technical Aid for Nottinghamshire Communities) was appointed and provided a considerable amount of expertise and knowledge to the study.

A needs analysis of the local area was carried out to determine the views of the local community along with deprivation information which was provided by the 'State of Ashfield' report. The community survey established the desire by the community to have facilities available that are currently not being supplied within the area. The deprivation report highlighted the need for social regeneration to assist in the development of community life in general within the Carsic area. The State of Ashfield report identified Sutton Central ward as being the third most deprived of Ashfield's 15 wards and is within the top 12½% of deprived wards in the country. There was also a need for the existing church ministries to continue to take place and to be expanded wherever possible.

The identified facilities for a new building were as follows:

- Drop-in-Café
- Multi Purpose Hall
- I.T. Suite
- Advice & Counselling
- Church Sanctuary
- Multi-Sensory/Peace Room

A survey of the local area was also carried out to establish the extent of existing community facilities within the Carsic area. The survey highlighted the lack of facilities within easy walking distance of the Carsic Estate.

Numerous statutory agencies, interest groups and community organisations were contacted to assess their views on the potential project. Most replies from these groups were positive and some expressed their desire to utilise the facility if it were to go ahead.

Following the needs analysis, an architect was appointed to provide a building feasibility report based on the teams findings/objectives. All the required facilities were considered and discussed and this allowed Redmak Architects to provide sketch schemes which incorporated all the key elements. The current site area is 1360m<sup>2</sup> and the new design had a footprint of 815m<sup>2</sup> with a total floor area of 1235m<sup>2</sup>.

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The ground floor of the building would incorporate the following: Multi Purpose Hall, Café, Offices, Changing Area, Kitchen, Peace Room, Storage and WC's.

The First Floor would incorporate the following: Sanctuary (c/w font), Meeting Room, I.T. Suite, Vestry/Advice Room, Storage, Kitchenette & WC's.

The predicted cost of the building would be £1.6m, with a total project cost (inc. fixture & fittings etc.) of £1.8m.

Due to the lack of funds available within the congregation for the build, it would be essential that applications be made to external agencies/funders. After consultation with various sources it has become apparent that funds are available for projects such as this, especially as the area is considered as a high priority for community regeneration.

Funds are typically obtained from the following areas:

Private Sector	-	church
	-	individuals
Trusts	-	Coalfield Regeneration
	-	Fair Share
	-	Garfield Weston
	-	Charles Hayward
Local Authority	-	Ashfield District Council
	-	Notts County Council
Institutions	-	The Big Lottery
	-	Sport England
Europe	-	ESF Objective 2
	-	ERDF Measures 3.11

Although there are many sources of funding available, the larger grants are usually made by the lottery funded organisations. If the congregation decides to only apply to non-lottery funded bodies, the timescale of fund-raising would be considerably greater.

The feasibility study group asked Bishop Derek Judd to provide clarification regarding the church's position on applying for funding from the bodies established to make grants from funds allocated from the National Lottery. Upon contacting World Church sources on this issue they have confirmed that, in this situation where the funding body is a distinct legal entity separate from the National Lottery company, there is nothing in World Church rules and resolutions or in the policies adopted by the Presiding Bishopric which would prevent a jurisdiction of the Church in the

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British Isles from applying for a grant from lottery funding bodies if they chose to do so.

Early in the feasibility process it was identified that a separate organisation to the church would have to be formed to manage the new centre. The purpose of this would primarily be to satisfy funding bodies due to their reluctance to fund 'religious organisations'. Professional advice was sought from solicitors to provide details on the potential relationship between the church and the new company.

The most favourable structure would be for the Church to own and develop the community life centre. Management and operation of the community centre would be the responsibility of a separate charitable company limited by guarantee. The relationship between the Church and the company would be defined in a management agreement. Alternatively the Church could lease the property to the management company with the relationship defined in the lease.

If either of the above options are pursued it would be necessary for the Sutton-in-Ashfield property to be held in a company limited by guarantee to provide the legal protection which is not currently provided by the unincorporated association which is the present legal structure for holding of church properties.

The solicitors acknowledged the possibility that some major funders may not be willing to have the Church as owner and developer of the community centre. If this is the case it will be necessary to consider a structure where the Church owns the freehold of the property and grants a lease of the land to the company which would then develop and manage the community life centre.

Whichever structure is used it will be necessary to define the relationship of the Church with the community life centre by means of a management agreement or lease. This document will specify how the facility can and cannot be used; responsibility for insuring maintaining and repairing the property; when the facility can and cannot be used; and the provisions for complaints and termination of agreement.

It is envisaged that the operation of the community centre would be the responsibility of the Directors of the new company. Expected nominees for the Board of Directors would be church, local community, user group and local authority members. Due to the size of the centre and the extent of the facilities and services to be offered, it is suggested that a Centre Manager, supported by volunteers, designated by the Board, would run the centre on a day-to-day basis. The manager and all staff would operate under the direction of the Board and would ensure the effective delivery of the services to the local community and the church.

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Income and expenditure projections have been devised after careful consideration and detailed analysis of all the potential users of the centre. Above all, the projections are as realistic as possible and shows that the ongoing operation of the centre is viable.

Mission Centre Leadership and World Church approvals for the project have been sought. On the assumption that the project provides reasonable protection for the church's interest in the property there is no reason (subject to analysis of the full report) to suggest that approval in principle will not be given to the project by both Mission Centre Officers and the Presiding Bishopric.

A survey of the existing church building was carried out to establish the potential maintenance costs for continuing in the existing building. The survey identified various aspects which would require attention over the coming years. Anticipated costs for the work to be carried out may range from £20,000 to over £100,000 dependant on what is deemed necessary.

Following the demolition of the existing church and during the construction of the new building, accommodation would have to be found to continue with some of the current church activities. There are various options available such as, portacabins, hiring of local rooms/halls or utilising other church facilities. The costs of these options vary greatly. There are some activities that may not be able to continue in the same format as is currently.

The anticipated timescale of the project from congregation approval through to completion is approximately 2 years.

The remit of the study team was to establish the feasibility of a community centre project on The Oval, Carsic. There are certain elements of the study where absolute guarantees cannot be made such as funding availability, local planning permissions, and community use of the facility. However, the overall study suggests that the project is feasible on all accounts. Further to this, the report also identifies that the centre can be sustained operationally to ensure the future success of the project and its objectives.