



EMMANUEL NEIGHBOURHOOD CENTRE PROJECT



**Sharing Life with our Community
And Being Good News within it.**

2020

Executive Summary

Emmanuel Anglican church is a registered charity (1175550) and is located in Woodley, East Berkshire. Woodley is a relatively prosperous town. However, the church is located in Loddon Ward, which comprises one of the most deprived parts in the whole borough.

Emmanuel is a young Anglican church that was initiated in 1991. One of its key founding principles was to engage and partner with the residents in this area in order to bring about a better quality of life and better opportunities for them. This vision runs right through to the present day and helps us frame our current vision and purpose.

Over two decades of growth now sees a thriving and youthful congregation which is actively engaging with the local community. In addition to our weekly church services and other faith-based groups for all ages, our building is used to run activities, groups and events for young people, families and older people of all walks of life.

This proposal outlines specific priorities within our local community including supporting more young people and their families; providing job training and addressing the needs of the elderly in relation to income deprivation; budgeting advice; better coordination of responses to food poverty, support for previous residents of a nearby drug and alcohol rehabilitation centre, and taking advantage of intergenerational opportunities locally.



Community Café

In order to respond to these priorities, Emmanuel needs to replace two obsolete and leaky portacabins with a larger brick built extension to the church providing a kitchen, extra meeting space and storage. The extension will provide a permanent home for the local foodbank and provide vastly improved facilities that will directly improve local social cohesion and engagement.

With the positive response from the local community over time and with our gradual growth as a congregation, our desire to partner more with the local community has correspondingly increased. We can see continuing challenges locally that we are in a position to help address and have a passion to do so.

Our current building is the principal restriction to the wider inclusion of the local population and broadening the range of activities on offer. We are aiming to expand the building to be able to provide more and better community services. We have set ourselves a challenge with this project as we are not as established as many churches, and have few financial resources in comparison. We are, however, convinced that this is in the best interest of our community for decades to come. We aim to begin building work in late Spring 2020.

Main Proposal

Woodley is a town of some 30,000 people located adjacent to the eastern edge of Reading in Berkshire. It falls within Wokingham Borough Council and is close to junction 10 of the M4. The population will rise to around 35,000 in the next few years due to new housing developments. Woodley is mixed demographically, with the northern part demanding generally higher property values than the southern part.

Emmanuel church is located in the Loddon Ward, south-east Woodley, adjacent to the Drovers Way estate. Loddon is the ninth most deprived ward in Wokingham borough, and 1,920 people in the ward are classed as amongst the 10% most deprived in the borough. We serve a parish population of about 12,000 people. The church was built in the mid-1960s, originally as a parish hall for St John's church. However, it was in 1991 when the real history of Emmanuel church began as a community of people. Emmanuel was 'planted' by a team of eleven, mainly from St John's. Currently, Emmanuel has a wealth of volunteers from the church community who work alongside the vicar, pioneer curate, youth worker and administrator.

Sharing life and faith with local people has always been, and remains, a key part of the church's identity. It is this community vision that we wish to grow even further. In the last 2 years, we have been encouraged to observe a marked increase in ethnic and religious diversity amongst volunteers and facility-users from many of the groups detailed below. This also reflects the changing demography of our local area.

The current building is a multi-functional space with a large garden. It is not consecrated and hence faculty-exempt, which gives flexibility in usage and development. The current footfall is between 350 and 400 people a week. Current activities include a teenage puppets group serving 8 per week; an open teenage youth group serving 25 per week; one-to-one youth work serving 6 per week; an open children's club serving 20 per week; a Christians Against Poverty budgeting course serving 6 to 10 per week; a toddler group serving 30 adults and 40 children per week; a 'Knit and Natter' group for older people serving 20 per week; an art and craft group serving 12 per week; and finally two annual community fun days for local families with free inflatables and attractions serving up to 1,000 people per day.



Annual Community Fun Days

"Well done to all who were involved with organising the Woodley Fun day. There was lots to do for all age groups. The variety of activities were brilliant. The whole place had a real community feel to it. My kids absolutely enjoyed themselves and wanted to visit again the next day. Looking forward to next year. Thank you again. A happy parent!"

In addition to this there are several other hall users from the local community during the week and they provide activities such as Line dancing, Pilates, Keep Fit, dog training, a street dance group, slimming groups and more! The hall is frequently booked for parties and other community events. Facilitating outside groups is important for the benefit of the whole community and we take this

aspect of our mission seriously. As a result, our policy is always to offer the facilities at not-for-profit hire rates and sometimes even for free when it feels important to support something of a charitable nature.

As a Sunday church, Emmanuel has over one hundred people each week for worship (about 35 of whom are under 16). We run two different faith-based groups for young people aside from these times.

Need and Delivery

Over many years, Emmanuel has engaged with the local community, being sensitive to local priorities and issues and responding to them as best we could. Thanks to numerical growth at church, we have more human resources available for deeper engagement. We have a good history of partnership with the local councils, and teamed up with them to consult residents in the local community. We discovered a strong sense of community, although isolation was an issue with some people, and this is recognised in the Health and Wellbeing Strategy as one of three major concerns in Wokingham Borough. We are also aware of the need for basic food supplies in several households. We recognised that there was a need for better access to the foodbank; a community café for all ages; and an afternoon drop-in social space for older people. Additional facilities for young people and young families was also highlighted along with the need for job training and support.

Many of these concerns are mirrored within statistical data and local reports (such as the Joint Strategic Needs Analysis) which we have consulted. Loddon is locally ranked as Wokingham Borough's ninth most deprived area and in the 41-50% bracket of most deprived areas nationally. There are four main aspects to this:

1. Income – Currently, 9.5% of children locally are at risk of living in poverty (6.8% in the borough). This is reflected in the number of children claiming free school meals, which is 8.5% (5.2% in the borough). Loddon ward is the borough's most deprived area for income deprivation in households affecting older

people, and within the 21-30% most deprived nationally for this measure.

2. Employment – Fourth locally most deprived area for employment, and within 31-40% nationally.

3. Education, Skills and Training – This area is also the borough's most deprived area for education, skills and training. Despite being a borough of relatively high levels of skill and educational attainment, this area falls alarmingly within the 11-20% most deprived in England.

4. Health and disability – Although ranked second locally for health deprivation, in a national context it falls within the 41-50% most deprived.

Health and disability are ongoing concerns as Emmanuel has a significant membership of children and adults who have Autistic Spectrum Disorder and other disabilities. Woodley is home to Addington School for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities which in turn draws many families and carers to the area. Another local survey has assessed the need for depression support groups in Woodley as approximately 2,450 people are treated for depression in Woodley each year.

As we reflected on our findings we recognised that we have targeted the local need for youth and children's work over the last decade by employing a part time youth worker. We want to build upon this strength to support more young people and their families. The more persistent problems of the area will require other solutions.

In keeping with the intent of the original vision for Emmanuel the current members are concerned for the needs of the local area particularly for the elderly (especially as the adjacent Age Concern building has recently closed). Our new partnership with Christians Against Poverty is the first step in addressing the need for job skills, training and support. We have commenced with a budgeting course and a lifeskills course. We plan to develop programmes in addition to this to support job skills and interview training.

Tracy is a local single mum with four children. She has intermittent work as a carer, but her uncertain work and resulting benefits changes have created a need for her to occasionally draw on the help of the foodbank. A family worker from the church has built a great relationship with her. Several of her children attend our children's group. Tracy's eldest son has behaviour issues that cause a great deal of problems for her but with support he is doing better and feels she has more skills to support him.

By incorporating the Woodley Foodbank into our building we can address the income deprivation needs very directly for local people. By offering a meeting space, local people can be much better served, and deeper rooted problems addressed. The problems of food poverty are unlikely to diminish in the future and with this response we can best support local people.

Developing a community café is an important part of addressing the needs recognised through the survey and our knowledge of the community. We also see we have a wonderful intergenerational opportunity for older and younger people to encounter and enrich each other through friendship, job support, homework help, clubs and play.

The biggest constraint is our building which is too small for our social outreach and our worshipping community. Our plan to expand the building will remove the major inhibitor for growth in order to address more local needs in the following ways:

- Consultations with local people have demonstrated the need for simpler and close access to the Woodley Foodbank. This is highlighted by the fact that 382 households in the ward (11%) do not own a car. The foodbank is dispersed across Woodley and lacks a central point to organise around. Our forward vision is to provide a base for a widely used and appreciated service currently distributing around seventy to one hundred parcels per month. For the first time, the foodbank would have one central drop off and collection location. Food parcels could then be tailored to the household collecting. In addition, there would be opportunities for those collecting to chat, receiving various complimentary forms of support.
- Providing a private counselling area is planned to allow private meetings to take place. This will encourage additional support to be discussed without visitors feeling 'on view' or in any way intimidated. This area would also double as a much-needed office area with 'hot desks' when available;

Bob is in his early fifties and has suffered from a crippling anxiety problem that has destroyed his ability to work and brought a deep depression. Through referral to a depression group at the church, and a counselling service he has found support and a personal faith that has brought him to Emmanuel. He recently thanked the whole church community for their prayers and loving support that has enabled him to overcome his anxiety to such a point he could holiday abroad for the first time. He is increasingly seeking more opportunities to help around the church, from gardening to children's work.

- Current community groups using the church building have identified the existing kitchen facilities as inadequate and limited to offering tea and coffee making at best. We will build a kitchen space (adequately fitted out) and a serving hatch adjacent to both of the halls to allow refreshments to be more easily served, and for a community café to cook meals and serve them. This would also be used to offer social meals for older people to decrease isolation and address food poverty;



Children's Activities

- There is a requirement for smaller rooms so that we can host additional simultaneous groups. A second hall would meet this requirement and would be dividable to provide enough space for a café, church children's groups and to help with demand for evening bookings from community groups;
- By forming a small office space and reception we will provide a visible church presence during the week. The minister, youth worker or hall bookings administrator will be able to be on site to welcome, orientate and build relationships with those using the building. Currently there are no facilities and staff work from their homes several kilometres away;
- We will improve the welcome area of the church with increased space and natural

Impact

We are currently encouraging friendship and community for all ages, local spiritual needs and starting to address some of the income poverty problems. However, we are limited in the extent to which these can be addressed, and this project will make a significant impact in our ability to respond effectively. Based on our analysis and local knowledge we will aim to:

lighting. It is important for us to improve ease of access and warm hospitality in a common social area for all visitors and users;



- We will add purpose-built storage spaces for chairs, tables, supplies and group storage for existing and anticipated hall users;

We have recently appointed a Pioneer Curate who works alongside the current minister to boost the current outreach of the church. The curate gives the church increased capacity to engage with local people at a pastoral level and to develop new initiatives within the community.

Tiffany is a mother of four and recently became homeless following the breakdown of her relationship with her partner. Newly pregnant and needing to escape a difficult situation that was causing her intense distress and health problems, she found much help from the Emmanuel family worker who assisted her in a search for accommodation. Tiffany has attended Emmanuel intermittently but is well known by the church community. She has received food parcels from the foodbank. She has just started to attend the Christians Against Poverty budgeting course.

1. Develop the building to create a second hall which can be divided for multi-use purposes; a newly-fitted kitchen and a serving hatch; an enhanced entrance area including a small office/ counselling space and a reception.	
Outcome	Activities such as friendship, job support, homework help, clubs, community café and intergenerational activities will be established. There will also be improved access, capacity and a welcoming environment.
Output	Numbers of people attending activities will double within 2 years of the centre opening.
Monitoring	We will measure the impact on the lives of those using the centre through questionnaires and case studies. We will also monitor the numbers attending activities.
2. Provide easy access and a central drop-in and collect base for the Woodley foodbank.	
Outcome	Satisfy hunger and alleviate poverty across all groups. Build community and enable signposting to additional help.
Output	70% of those using the foodbank will be new referrals by the end of the first year. 60% will take advantage of other local services or volunteering opportunities by the end of the first year.
Monitoring	Monitor the number of new referrals and successful signposting carried out.
3. Provide job clubs and financial advice	
Outcome	Decrease actual poverty and poverty of aspiration.
Output	Following the establishment of the job club, we will support 10 people into work or training per year. As a result of offering debt advice and budgeting guidance, we will see 10 people becoming debt-free and 10 creating and maintaining a budget each year.
Monitoring	Record numbers of residents securing work/ training and becoming debt-free.
4. Operate lunch groups, café space and friendship clubs for all the ages but especially older people.	
Outcome	Diminish loneliness, social isolation and hunger.
Output	To welcome 30 people of all ages to our lunch groups and 50 people to café space each month and 30 people over the age of 65 to our friendship club/s
Monitoring	Conduct regular reviews measuring community engagement, levels of new friendship and dietary improvements
5. Establish depression and ADHD support groups.	
Outcome	Improve mental health.
Output	We will run three depression and ADHD support groups per year which benefit a minimum of 8 people per course
Monitoring	Evaluation forms after each group will monitor effectiveness.
6. Increase the capacity to host activities which benefit the local community.	
Outcome	Improve community cohesion
Output	We will see an increase in the overall footfall within the venue from 350 to 550 per week by the end of the first year, with a minimum of 5 new activities having been established.
Monitoring	Monitor the number of people using the building. Evaluate the number of new projects and groups after one year.
7. Improve the facilities for young people's groups.	
Outcome	Provide support and safe spaces for local young people to meet.
Output	Numbers of young people engaging with youth activities will increase by 50% by the end of the first year. 90% of those regularly attending will report positive experiences and learning.
Monitoring	Record numbers of young people attending groups & regularly review their feedback through small groups and questionnaires.
8. Establish a weekly Recovery Café for men in addiction recovery	
Outcome	Increase opportunities for men leaving a residential rehabilitation centre to continue their recovery and be helped into employment or training.
Output	The number of men who will not relapse but instead continue in their recovery will be 12 in the first year, along with 10 men helped back into employment.
Monitoring	We will record numbers using the café and liaise closely with Yeldall Manor about ways in which we can improve and grow the initiative.

Images & Drawings



Image 1: Current building



Image 2: Proposed sketch

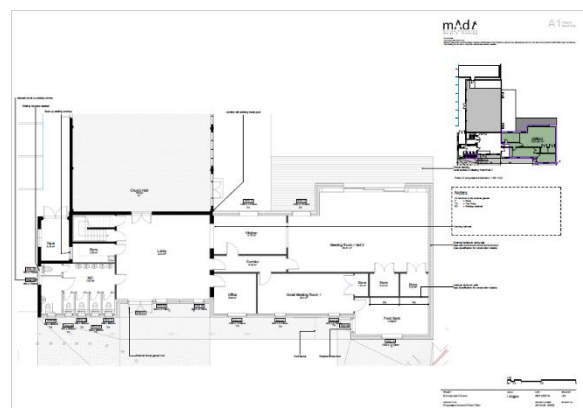


Image 3: Proposed plan

Image 3: Proposed East & West Elevation

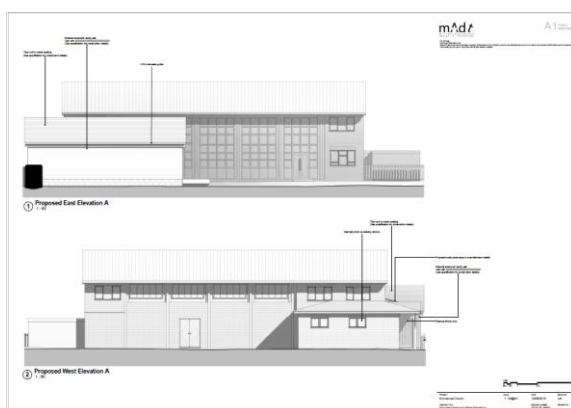
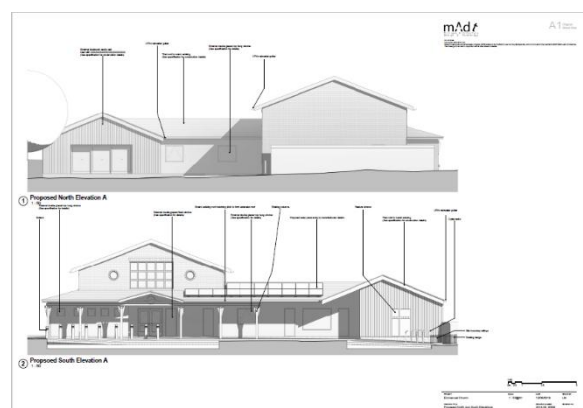


Image 4: Proposed North & South Elevation



Leadership and Management

Sean Riordan is the minister of Emmanuel. He has been in post since 2008 and has in that time acquired an in-depth knowledge of the local needs as well as establishing strong relationships with many local people and professionals working in this area. Helen is Sean's wife and active pastorally

and with the toddler group 'Little Gems' and supporting local individuals. Helen also works at the nearby drug and addiction rehabilitation centre, Yeldall Manor.

Sean is supported by Susie Templeton who is a full time Pioneer Curate with us until 2021. Her main brief is to develop links and partnerships within the local community. Laurie-Ann Price is the half-time youth worker who started here in 2018. Sonia Hall is the part-time administrator and hall bookings manager who balances a role at a local school with her 10 hour p.w. church role.

Steve Hogg is the chair of the Neighbourhood Centre working group comprising 8 people. We have in principle agreed engaging an experienced building project manager to manage the construction phase as we recognise the complexity is beyond our abilities and specialisms. However, internal finishing is much more likely to include participation from different trades people and volunteers from the community.

Partnership Working

Rev. Sean Riordan is previous chair of the South East Woodley Community Association and is a trustee with Pilot Light Trust who operate the Woodley Foodbank. Emmanuel has an agreement with the Trust in place to provide a permanent home for the foodbank. He is also a key member of Churches Together in Woodley, a body which co-ordinates shared events and advertising and sponsorship of religious education support in local primary schools. The church also works closely with Wokingham Council and regularly conducts joint events and activities.

Funding Strategy

We aim to raise about £300,000. We have a broad range of income streams, through which we aim to raise the required target and we have compiled a detailed timeline outlining dates, sources, potential amounts and allocated responsibilities for actions. We are working with a fundraising adviser to assist with grant applications, and the working group oversees the ongoing strategy and building decisions. We also plan to approach businesses to invite them to donate specific items of equipment.

We are not anticipating a great change in Emmanuel's revenue as the project develops as we are not currently planning on employing extra staff. We can do much more with existing and new volunteers; we are limited by our building. The net increase in heating and lighting costs due to operating a larger building are anticipated to be offset through increased hall rental and the installation of solar panelling as part of the design. Emmanuel has been successful in growing its finances over the last years as the congregation has grown and has produced a considerable surplus. The steady giving of the congregation is the main source of Emmanuel's income with some rental income from hall use supplementary to this. The whole church is deeply supportive of the plan as can be seen from their generous personal giving, as are the local residents whom we have discussed the plans and sought input from.

THANK YOU

Thank you for taking the time to read this proposal. We would be very happy to discuss further if you would like to know more. Any contribution you might feel able to make towards this project would be most gratefully received.

Contact: Sean Riordan (Vicar) sean@emmanuelwoodley.org.uk 0118 375 3718