CROSSING THE THRESHOLD
A community development approach to the use of church buildings

HEREFORD DIOCESE TOOLKIT

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THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND
THE DIOCESE OF HEREFORD
ENGLISH HERITAGE
Becky Payne -

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You wouldn’t set off on the adventure of a lifetime by stuffing a toothbrush in your pocket, dashing to the nearest airport or dockyard and jumping on the first plane or ship to leave, regardless of its destination. No, part of the enjoyment of such trips is thinking about where to go, working out what time you have available, whether you can afford it, who’s going to travel with you, reading around the subject, talking to people who have made such an expedition before and then planning, very carefully, an itinerary.

If that is true of your holiday then how much more it is true of making once-in-a-generation changes to your church building!

This toolkit is a step by step guide to helping you get the very best of the experience; the best for you and those with whom you work, for your church building and the community it serves. It will help you to think about what the building offers and could offer, to weigh up the options for what you might achieve, dream up ideas, explore the apparently impossible and the wildly exciting. It will help to identify who might also want to be involved and what contributions they can make.

Just as when you go on your exotic travels you have to deal with practicalities, such as passports and visas, insurance and tickets, so too, exploring the future of your church building will require permissions and plans, financing and organisation. You don’t want to be forced to abandon a holiday because you failed to get the right permits and medical advice and similarly, you don’t want to have to cancel a beautiful and creative vision for your church building because you’ve failed to get permission, professional expertise or a team of committed volunteers. To avoid such disappointments, read on!

I’ve journeyed to some fantastic places of worship and my favourites include some in Herefordshire. I’ve opened an ancient door and discovered an extraordinary space, filled with evidence of activity and vibrant life seven days a week. In others I’ve found only the energy of prayer enlivened by a single vase of brilliant flowers put there by a careful hand. Some have offered mediaeval bench ends with wonderful cakes balanced precariously on them, others modern chairs and restaurant-style lunches.

Two things stand out from them all; firstly that they were unlocked and the congregation trusted me, a total stranger, to come in and share their special space. Secondly, whether it was the fresh flower, or the tasty sponge, the multi-coloured toilet or the cinema screen, it was obvious that each community wanted to do something, no matter how small, to enhance what was already a wonderful building. Behind all that, of course, is an enormous amount of hard work. It is that labour of love which this toolkit will help you to achieve, to enjoy and to recognise as a vital contribution to both the future of your church and the way other people journey through their lives.

Mrs Diana Evans
Head of Places of Worship Advice,
English Heritage
THE CONTEXT

BRINGING BUILDINGS BACK INTO MISSION

“Investing in a church building means that more people use it and build networks of support and friendship. This is an experience reported by many other churches which have carried out repair and modernisation projects. In an age when some of the ills of society stem from people’s isolation ensuring that parish churches continue to be where Christians come together for worship, but also where it is possible for us to get to know our neighbours regardless of faith seems to me to be money well spent”.

Rt Revd Nicholas Holtam, Bishop of Salisbury and Trustee of the National Churches Trust in an article published in the Times on 16th February 2013.
The full article can be read here http://nationalchurchestrust.org/news-blog/news-blog-detail.php?id=549

The guidance in this toolkit will be most useful to any congregation which wants to develop a new vision for their church, involving opening up their church building for wider community use and which may also include making physical changes to that building.

We hope it will help you:

• develop those parts of your church’s mission which are about community use and involvement.
• use your building to reconnect with your local community while also providing a sustainable future for your church as a place of worship.
• achieve the balance between conserving the historic fabric of your building/s and your mission and the desire to make your church more accessible and able to meet the needs of a 21st Century place of worship.
• understand the process and the stages involved in getting a community-based, re-ordering project off the ground and through to completion

Please note that for sake of brevity, where we use the word church or church building, we mean this to be inclusive of all places of worship.
As well as looking after the spiritual needs of the local community, part of the mission of churches has always been to work among, and for the well-being of, the entire local community, not just for the benefit of those who attend services.

The relationship between a congregation and its building can be a less than positive one. The care and upkeep of a building is not the primary reason why people join a church and yet congregations find themselves responsible for a building which they may feel drains their resources, impacts negatively on what they really want to do and about which other organisations have the right to get involved and place restrictions on any changes.

Many of our churches are under-utilised both in terms of time and space and in many congregations the burden of looking after these - very often historic buildings - is being borne by small groups of people, most of whom are volunteers. At the same time, communities, up and down the country, are facing the centralisation of services and seeing local facilities such as their local pub, post office, shop and school close. In many areas, the church building may be the only community building left. These factors can provide the opportunity for a church to reconnect with and return to the heart of its community.

Over the last few years many have rediscovered the role that the church building can play in their mission. It is for most church groups/faith groups, their most important asset and congregations across the country have been working with others in their communities to develop a range of new and extended uses for their buildings.

The ideal project enables the building to continue as a place of worship, while at the same time helping to meet a specific need or needs of the community. Using your building, and where appropriate attached land, can better secure your future by generating an income. By providing additional services to the community you will create a wider group of people able, and importantly willing, to take on the shared responsibility of maintaining the building.

This is not new. Parish churches originally used to be at the centre of the community. The chancel was reserved for liturgy and worship and was the responsibility of the church, while the nave, owned and cared for by the local community, was used not just for religious purposes, but also as a public meeting place and for a range of activities including public meetings, theatrical events, elections and schools. For the Church of England, this changed after the Reformation when naves became preaching areas. In the C18th, the new Non-Conformist denominations also focused on preaching. During the Victorian period, churches were very much seen as sacred rather than community spaces.

Nowadays, it is accepted that churches can accommodate many uses which need not be specifically ecclesiastical in purpose, provided that worship remains its primary purpose. Church Courts have held that the additional uses do not need to be ancillary to worship or pastoral in motivation; they can also be commercial and primarily motivated by the need to raise revenue for the church.
The same courts have judged that impermissible additional uses are those which prevent the primary use of the church for worship and those which involve activities that are unsuitable in a church, either because they conflict with its teaching or because they are unlikely to be acceptable to members of the Church of England. (Footnote: Charles George (2002). Shared use of Church Buildings or is Nothing Sacred? Ecclesiastical Law Journal, 6, pp306-317).

Developing a community project and re-ordering or adapting your church building are not simple processes. It raises issues which have to be faced thoughtfully and worked through. The wish to change the use of church buildings, and any physical alterations, must take into account the fact that these buildings are viewed by many as sacred places. Many are protected by law in recognition of their historic and architectural merit. The need to ensure that any alterations are sensitive to its historic fabric and cultural significance while making the building fit for 21st century purposes, and the wish to create a community space while preserving a sacred space have to be carefully balanced. Many of these buildings are loved by their local communities and change has to be introduced carefully and with due consultation. It takes a lot of careful thought, creative ideas and good design.

It is important to remember that any project, even small ones, will involve vision, a lot of hard work, determination and a team of people. It will also involve a range of skills, some of which you will find within your congregation and wider community, and others which you will have to develop as you go along.

**Building Faith in our Future**

In 2004 the Church of England published a ‘green paper’ Building Faith in our Future which reminded us that church buildings are a precious resource and can play a vital role in their communities. It outlined the numerous opportunities of opening up churches for additional uses and included recommendations about how this could be facilitated.

National and local government and public sector agencies are increasingly acknowledging the contribution of faith groups to social cohesion, education, and regeneration. There is now much research available to show that faith groups have a special contribution to make. They are deeply rooted in community life, able to reach out to the most vulnerable groups, and are well placed to provide high-quality local public services.

In recent years, there have been hundreds, if not thousands of examples where communities have revitalised their buildings by opening them up to the local community. It is now much more accepted that places of worship can be used for community activities and to deliver vital community services and in the process
become the heart of their communities. Across the UK, you will find examples of churches that are hosting a variety of activities and providing space, which include the following:-

- civic events and cultural activities, such as exhibitions, drama performances, rehearsals, and concerts; or other community services like mother and toddler groups, playgroups, after-school club or drop-ins for youth groups or elderly people;
- offering important resources for school educational visits and local tourism;
- public meeting spaces for councillors’ surgeries and ward or area meetings, polling stations and other public meetings;
- providing accessible premises to deliver vital services such as school halls, community shops, farmers’ markets, libraries, cafes, internet cafes and computer clubs, children’s centres, health centres, food banks, projects to support the homeless and other vulnerable groups, doctors’ surgeries, satellite community police stations, training centres, arts centres, outreach post offices and Citizens Advice Bureau.

All of these activities are taking place in ‘living churches’ that are still in use as places of worship. The activities may be organised by the church itself, by an outside organisation or by a partnership between the two. Such uses have required varying degrees of physical intervention into the building. They cover a wide range of sharing options with many different types of organisations employing varying administrative and legal arrangements.

We can now benefit from those pioneering communities which worked so hard to make their church building work better for them.

The aim of this guide is to take you through the various stages of developing and carrying out a major community project by providing as much practical information as possible. However, no two projects will be same and developing and managing a project is not an exact science, but we hope that this guide can at least explain the basic processes, make you aware of the wide range of issues involved and offer useful tips along the way.

Overall resources are provided at the end of this toolkit and we provide a list of resources specific to that particular area at the end of each chapter for you to follow up. There are plenty of resources out there, some written specifically for church groups and others for community groups. Searching the internet can lead to a whole range of ideas and support.

We have also included case studies to illustrate the range of possibilities already out there. Many are Herefordshire based, and whilst the county is rural, these ideas will work just as well in an urban neighbourhood. We have tried to use examples where there are good websites so that you can read more about the project and look at photographs.
OVERALL TOP TIPS

• It is essential to initially read through the complete guidance so that you understand the whole process. Although the chapters cover different areas, many of the stages will need to run concurrently. This will help you with your project planning.

• Many funders will not support a project that promotes religion. You must be able to clearly separate your community activities from your faith-based activities. Community projects are still part of your church’s mission, but are not about promoting religion.

• Probably, the most important part of any project is developing a clear vision of what you want to achieve and why. Every church building differs in size, the materials it is constructed from, its history and the size of its worshipping community. Every community is different and so are its needs. Your project has to fit your particular set of circumstances.

• Bear in mind that often only minor changes are required to enable a church building to continue serving its worshipping community while also being able to offer new services to the wider community. It is not necessary to reorder the building in every situation.

• Think about starting small and trying things out before embarking on a major re-ordering. Remember that small changes can achieve a lot.

• Time spent researching and planning before the project starts is never wasted. Applying for grants can be onerous and time consuming, however, if you have fully developed your vision and objectives and worked out an implementation plan and a budget and developed strong relationships with your partners, it will be a lot easier.

• Be realistic about what is achievable.
“Every place of worship has a mission to its community. Each church can seek to articulate this, or develop it, in different ways. The most important task for any parish is to try to work through, honestly, objectively, and prayerfully, what it means to be people of God in their own community, location and circumstances”.

Resources for Rural Places of Worship, the Arthur Rank Centre
http://www.arthurrankcentre.org.uk/publications-and-resources/rural-church-buildings

Developing a mission statement, sometimes called a mission action plan, for your place of worship is an important first step to underpin any proposals to change or develop the building. You may already have one, and if not, most dioceses and denominations will have guidance on how to develop one on their websites.

A mission plan is about defining your church’s aims and vision, setting priorities and identifying what it is you hope to achieve. It can cover a range of aspirations including spreading God’s Love and helping the most vulnerable in your community. It will help to keep you focussed and will clarify to others the reason for your existence. Your overall vision and aims should not be too specific; particularly if your group may go on to do more projects. Example aims may include:

- To improve the quality of life for the local community,
- To broaden the range of activities taking place within the local community,
- To improve accessibility of building for community events,
- To use the church building more effectively.

The next stage is to identify what this could mean practically and think about specific project/s. Any project will need to be specific to your congregation, your church building and your community. The key to developing a sustainable project is making sure that your project is based on a clearly identified need.

Therefore, the idea one community has for its local church may differ from that of an adjacent community for their church. What works in one community may not work in another.
A Parish Audit and a Community Audit

A good way to start is to undertake a Parish Audit and a Community Audit. This entails compiling a factual profile of your church and your community/neighborhood. At the same time you want to collect and listen to people’s views and ideas on what needs to be improved and how this might be achieved.

There are four groups of people that you should consult:

(a) your congregation
(b) the local community
(c) those running local services, including charities; those running community groups and activities; and finally
(d) local government including your own parish /town council.

In a small community, many people may be members of more than one group.

Guidance on carrying out a Community Audit and consulting (b) to (d) are covered in Chapter 4.

Two important things to do before that are:-

(A) Talking to your own congregation

You need to give the congregation time to take a good look at their church building and how it currently functions. This could be done by organising a special meeting and asking those interested to come along.

The aim would be to produce a Parish Audit which really just describes as many aspects of your church as possible such as: style/s of worship; a profile of the people who come; current resources and activities that take place within the church.

Topics for discussion would include:

i) What do you already have? – your place of worship and any other buildings eg a hall.

What is special about your building (its history, its architecture, its atmosphere) and your location? What do you add to your local area?

ii) What is your core purpose or do you have more than one?

These could include: your mission, community outreach, a worship space? Are they equally important? If there is more than one do they complement each other? Does each activity bring added benefits to other activities? Is there any conflict between the different roles?

iii) How do your church members currently connect with the community?

What relationships do you already have? What form do they take?
iv) *How do people currently engage with your building?*

- list all the different groups that come into the building: members of the congregation, tourists, architectural historians, school groups, community groups etc.
- what is happening in your church today that involves the wider community?
- what events and activities already take place there?

v) *How much do you know about the management of your building?*

- what is the current financial situation of the church as a whole?
- what are the current annual/monthly running costs for the church building/s?
- do you know if there are any major building repairs coming up?
- how much do you have to fund-raise every year? For church activities? For the building? Is there a shortfall?
- where does your current support come from – some or all of the congregation/local community?
- is/are the building/s currently sustainable?

vi) *Are you making the most effective use of your building?*

- what opportunities might there be for the wider use of your building?
- do you know what your community needs/lacks?
- what would you be willing and able to offer?
- what possible barriers could there be to opening up your church for wider use?
- how might the building need changing? Will you need to upgrade facilities?
- what about access to the building? Could it be improved?
- what about improving energy efficiency?

vii) *Think about what the building means to you.*

- As a spiritual place? As a quiet space? What about emotional connections?

viii) *Think about how others beyond the immediate congregation might see you and the church building.*

- what do people find when they go into your church? A living church? A church bearing witness to the Christian faith? A church involved with their community? A church where there is lots going on?
- think about the sense of ownership that others in the community may have for the building. It may be that for most of the wider community, it is the church building with which they connect and have an emotional attachment (e.g. married there, grandparents buried there, or interested in historical buildings) or they may just see it as an important local landmark.
ix) What is your vision for your church?

- how would you like to see the building being used in the future? Where do you want to see it in 5-10 years’ time?
- who will be the beneficiaries of your vision? The congregation? The wider community? Particular groups within the community?
- does the current church building fit your vision? Will you have to make any changes to the building in order to achieve your vision?
- how might the current worship practice be affected?

Remember this is only the beginning of generating ideas. Feel free to talk around lots of ideas and be bold – don’t worry too much about practicalities at this stage. Bear in mind, you don’t necessarily have to re-order for the sake of it. You don’t have to remove all the pews unless you have a good reason. One pew removed for a tea point might be less expensive and all that is required.

Current users of your church

Don’t forget to include Church groups who use the building and ask them how they find it and what could be improved eg: ask the choir as they will be using the church at different times.

(B) Look at some examples.

“The re-ordering or changes in use of part of a church can herald a wonderful new chapter in the life of a parish, expanding how a building is used regularly and by whom, changing how it is perceived, and bringing under-utilised areas into active service. But thinking about what’s possible and desirable, as well as what’s necessary, can be difficult: imagining new scenarios when stood in a familiar setting can be very challenging and bold changes can be hard to visualise. There is no formula for what will work in any given church; what is the perfect way forward for one parish and building could be totally inappropriate or ineffectual in another. However, seeing what others have done, what worked and what didn’t, and what they’d do differently if given the chance, can help to stimulate ideas and discussion.”

The English Parish Church through the Centuries (DVD-ROM), The Christianity and Culture Project at the University of York, Section 6: Churches to the Present Day >> Church Art and Architecture >> Care, Conservation, Re-Ordering >> Use and Re-Ordering,

http://www.christianityandculture.org.uk/
To make this vision become a reality you will need to start thinking about

- developing a team of people to take this forward – Chapter 2
- developing a structure to manage project development and to manage the project in the long term – Chapter 3
- gathering information and consulting the wider community to get their views – Chapter 4
- beginning the process of thinking about what changes, if any, may need to be made to the building – Chapters 5 and 6

**TOP TIPS**

- Remember, this isn’t about installing facilities for existing church users (although they will clearly benefit); it’s about getting **MORE** people to use the building.
- Don’t think of one idea – **think of many**. It’s possible that some can be linked together to form one bigger project, or a large project with distinct **phases**.
- There are plenty of good examples which are the result of imagination and good design. Go and look at other places of worship that are undertaking similar projects and others that have already completed projects and talk to them about how they did it and the lessons learnt. Ask them who and which organisations they went to for help and guidance. Contact your local Diocesan Advisory Committee Secretary or Denomination Property Adviser to find out about other projects in your local area that you could go and visit.

**Chapter 1 Checklist**

- Have you talked to your own congregation? **✓**
- Have you got a Mission Statement?

**Further Resources:**

**Developing a Mission Statement**

The Diocese of Hereford has guidance here

And there is also guidance on the Diocese of London website here
http://www.london.anglican.org/kb/mission-action-planning

www.arthurrankcentre/publication-and-resources/book-stall
**ChurchBuild**

A website created by Archangel architects that offers very useful guidance to help a church through all the stages of a project. This includes a free downloadable Health Check - *Is your Church a Millstone or Springboard?* It offers a quick and easy way to find out what a church’s biggest constraints are, and the best opportunities for improvement.

http://www.churchbuild.co.uk/

**The Churches Trust for Cumbria**

There is a large amount of useful information on this website http://www.ctfc.org.uk/

including a *Thriving Church model* which illustrates in diagrammatic form all the areas that need to be looked at to develop a sustainable church and building. It can be downloaded from here


This exercise helped people to take a fresh look at themselves and their building in the ‘Through the Church Door’ project in Hereford and Worcester, South Shropshire and South Warwickshire in 1994-1996.


The Arthur Rank Centre also has a *Congregational Questionnaire* which will allow you to discover how church members are connected into their community. It can be found here

CHAPTER 2
DEVELOPING A TEAM AND ASSESSING YOUR SKILLS AND ABILITIES

If you are starting a major project, you must bring together a group (which could be called a committee/project board/management group/working or development group) with the necessary range of skills and knowledge to undertake the project using the appropriate professional help when necessary. You will need people with project management, business and financial skills, and also a good Chairperson and Secretary to run the group and undertake all the necessary administration.

The larger your community project team, the better. It is far easier for ten people to find a little bit of free time on a regular basis and share the load than it is for two people to find a lot of free time.

Invite people from the wider community to be involved in your Group from the beginning to send the message that this is a community project, rather than a church project.

Being Professional

Your community group needs to act and behave in a professional manner at all times. Potential funders and supporters, including your local community, will need to see that it is a professionally run group that is capable of managing a project from development through to completion and beyond.

Your organisation will need to be properly constituted and funders will expect to see a business plan and other documentation including minutes of meetings. All of these will have to be professionally produced as if you are going to be asking for funding from public funders and local people, you will need to provide the evidence that you have developed a workable and sustainable project.

Here are the things you will need to think about:

Setting up your organisation

In order to ensure that the money is spent on the purposes it was allocated for, grant funders prefer to deal with properly constituted organisations. You also need to show that you have a structure in place that will not only develop the project, but manage it in the long term. (Choosing an appropriate organisational structure is covered in Chapter 3).

A first step is to define the terms of reference of your Group and develop a clear set of aims and objectives. As your project develops, your vision and main objectives will
become more focussed i.e. deciding what services you are going to provide and who will be the beneficiaries.

You should also agree clear lines of accountability and communication. There will be times when decisions may need to be taken quickly and everyone needs to understand the chain of command and where responsibilities for the project lie.

Every member of the Group should be aware of the terms of reference and understand how decisions are made and actions taken.

You will need to actively seek the backing of your PCC or your ruling body or committee.

**Skills and Abilities**

Running a community/building project will require many skills. So draw up a resources plan in which you list:

- the full list of skills you think you will need;
- those you already have;
- those you hope to be able to find in the wider pool of the local community;
- those you may have to ‘buy’ in or seek from outside experts.

Ask your volunteers what skills they have. Some may have been Treasurer of another community group, while others through current or previous employment may have a financial or communications background or experience of project management, or giving presentations to groups of people. Look within your own congregation and the local community. You may be lucky enough to have a retired architect in your congregation who can help with writing briefs, or a solicitor living nearby who can advise on writing legal agreements, or a local historian who can help with understanding the historical and architectural significance of your building. Anyone who has had an extension built on their property will have an idea of what is involved in managing a building contract.

You may also need people with specialist skills depending on the project e.g. if it’s about education, then see if there are any retired teachers in your congregation/community. Ask if they would like to be involved. They may not be aware of your project – and people always liked to be asked.

**Training Requirements**

A Resources Plan will also demonstrate what training requirements you may need. Volunteers need to be trained – they must know what they are doing. A project running a lunch club with food prepared in your new kitchen will need volunteers trained in food hygiene and preparation skills. Do any volunteers need First Aid training? They should be as qualified as a paid person. Volunteer does not mean inferior or cheap. Identify the standard of quality that your project must achieve and then ensure that any volunteers are adequately trained to meet those standards.
Organising appropriate training for your group can be added to your list of objectives (see further on in this Chapter).

Running your meetings

It is valuable to spend some time discussing as a group how you will run your meetings. Will you make decisions by taking a vote or trying to reach a consensus through discussion? Crucial to achieving this is having:

- an experienced/skilled Chairperson
- an experienced/skilled Secretary to take the minutes and record the decisions taken and the agreed actions and who will undertake them. The minutes need to be produced and circulated quickly and at every meeting actions should be reported back on.
- an experienced/skilled Treasurer/finance person

You might also want to agree a set of values. A suggested list could be

- Be positive
- Be respectful
- Speak succinctly and let everyone have their say
- Aim to agree by consensus
- Be responsible for actions you agreed to undertake and be honest if you need to ask for help
- Listen to hear

Learn to appreciate other’s contributions. People can contribute in different ways i.e.: some say little, but they will have been listening and will provide crucial input just when it is needed most. Others may talk a lot because that is how they do their thinking.

Get regular meetings scheduled in the diary to keep your project moving forward. Make sure you meet somewhere comfortable and practical. Meeting in the pub may be a good idea, but if it is in the public bar, it may be difficult to hear if you are competing with a quiz or football match on the TV.

Agree how you are going to communicate between meetings. There may be decisions that need to be taken quickly. And if it’s by email, then ensure all your members have access to the internet. There are other facilities out there such as Dropbox which allows you to share documents and for them to be edited by several people simultaneously. Again ensure everyone can access this and no one is excluded.

It is a good idea to ensure that people are willing to take responsibility for specific aspects of the project. This does not mean they have to do it all, but that they will take charge of making sure that the actions in that area get done.
Objectives

Chapter 1 covered agreeing your group’s Visions and Aims. As soon as you have your overall aim, you can then start agreeing your objectives, which will be more detailed and should explain how you will make your project happen. These are the actions that you tick off as you progress on your journey. Objectives need to be ‘SMART’:

- **Specific** – Something detailed (e.g. the opening of a bank account.)
- **Measurable** – Quantifiable. You need to know when you have achieved something. This helps with project monitoring. If your objective is to recruit 20 volunteers within 6 weeks, and you’ve recruited 10 volunteers in 3 weeks, then you know exactly how much more of this objective is left to achieve and when you need to achieve it by.
- **Achievable** – Don’t set objectives that only Superman or Wonder Woman can achieve! Be realistic with your targets.
- **Relevant** – The objective needs to be relevant to your project.
- **Timely** – There will be some objectives that you can’t start until you have completed others. Being aware of when certain objectives need to be completed will help you with your project management.

Financial Controls

If you’re opening up a bank account, most banks will insist on a minimum of two signatories, and usually suggest that all cheques should be signed by at least two from a pool of three signatories. Signatories at different addresses offer better financial security.

Think about who will pay the invoices and what your procedure for approving expenditure will be. A lot depends upon the financial size of your project. What about financial limits? Should work of more than £20,000 be authorised by the whole Group and not just the Treasurer, for example?

Who should act as the co-ordinator for these? A Treasurer is the sensible option, but the project finances are not the responsibility of one person – it’s the responsibility of the whole committee. How will the Treasurer know when an invoice should be paid? Has work by contractors been carried out to a satisfactory standard? If so, how will the Treasurer know? Who in your group has financial monitoring skills?

Your bank and also your church Treasurer will be able to give you advice on this.

Communication/PR – If you’ve worked hard to consult the local community about what they’d like to see, then it is important to maintain their support, so you must keep them informed as the project progresses. Funders will want to see that the community is involved throughout.

You also need to feedback to your own congregation; you don’t want them to feel they are being kept out of the loop.
A simple strategy to clarify how you will do this, as well as how you will let funders and other interested parties know about how your project is developing, is useful. This could include setting up a website or a new section on the existing church website or community website, sending out a regular newsletter, putting updates on public notice boards, organising events to celebrate when particular stages of the project have been reached eg: plans have been drawn up, work is about to start onsite etc. You can organise talks, tours and exhibitions so everyone can see how it is progressing.

Your website/newsletter should set out your vision and your objectives as well as providing relevant information such as costs and proposed plans and results of surveys etc. Let people know how they can get involved and keep it up to date!

Every Diocese has a Director of Communication, and every denomination will have a Communication Adviser and they can help you with this. You may also have someone in your congregation or local community who has experience of writing press releases, or who can write a blog, create a Facebook page and uses Twitter.

Policies and Procedures

Developing, implementing and monitoring a project means creating many plans and policies along the way. Collect them all together into one big business plan document. This becomes your project ‘bible’ – the document containing all of your policies on equal opportunities, environmental sustainability, and social inclusion. It’s where you can keep your community group’s vision and aims, skills lists, objectives, action plan and communication strategy. All of these documents should be regularly reviewed. Whenever a change happens, go through this big business plan and see what impact it has on your other policies and procedures. (Chapter 8 covers writing a Business Plan)

If you are running a project that involves building work and providing facilities and activities for people then there will be several areas of policy and procedures that you will need to have in place. It is not only better to have thought about these issues in advance rather than having to do so when a situation crops up, but funders may also ask to see them.

There is support out there and you may find that another group’s (including your own church) policies and procedures can be adapted to suit your needs. Don’t re-invent the wheel if you don’t have to.

Policies that you may want to consider including are:

Environmental sustainability

Nowadays, sustainability should be included in everything that goes on in your building from heating to lighting to the transportation of your congregation and other users.

If your project involves making alterations to the building, then you should think about appropriate sustainable materials, techniques and design. For example, do you
want to source labour and materials from within a 20-mile radius to reduce the carbon footprint of your project?

You can start by carrying out an audit. www.shrinkingthefootprint.org.uk, the Church of England’s Environmental Campaign has guidance on audits, developing action plans and what sort of changes you can make including guidance on heating and lighting. Most Church of England Dioceses will have an Environmental Officer and most denominations have information on their websites. (There is more on this in Chapter 9)

**Access for everyone**

Access now comes under the **Equality Act 2010** which under the duty to make reasonable adjustments requires:-

- all employers, large and small, to make reasonable adjustments to avoid substantial disadvantage to disabled employees. This duty is not speculative, but relates to the actual needs of a specific individual who is disabled. It may, however, be more cost-effective to consider access improvements as part of a programme of planned refurbishment, thereby allowing for disabled people to be employed in the future without the need for further alterations. It will also enable you to welcome disabled volunteers;

- service providers to take positive steps to ensure that disabled people can access services at a standard that is as close as possible to that offered to the public. Unlike the duty imposed on employers, this is an anticipatory duty; service providers are required to anticipate the needs of disabled people and to accommodate them in a wide variety of ways.

So take this opportunity to not only look at ensuring your project is fully accessible, but look again at current access to all your activities, including worship. Maybe this project can improve access to the whole building.

**Important:** The Equality Act does not override other legislation such as listed building or planning legislation, and the need to obtain appropriate approvals under Ecclesiastical Exemption still applies in the case of changes made to improve access.

There is plenty of guidance on the internet on how to undertake an access audit. All the denomination websites have information on this.

Your church management group (eg: PCC, Trustees) should have the following policies, at least, already in place. Constituted community groups may wish to use these versions as a template for their own policies.

- **Child Protection/Vulnerable Users** – this will vary from project to project, but it is something that should be considered. If you’re creating a community space in the church that will be used by groups of children or vulnerable people, will you only let out the space to adults who are registered with the Independent Safeguard Authority? What steps will you take when new users wish to use your project, to ensure that they are protected accordingly?

- **Equal Opportunities** – what steps will you take to ensure that anyone can get
involved and volunteer with your project, or use your project facilities once they are up and running? This often raises issues within the community group. Some people may feel uncomfortable allowing certain groups of people to use a church for specific activities. However, equal opportunities apply to everyone. A public funder may refuse to give you public money, if there are some members of the public that you wouldn’t allow to use your church or get involved with your project.

- **Health & Safety** – what steps will you have in place to assess whether the intended use of your project meets current health and safety guidelines? You must ensure your building is safe to visit, use and work in.

**Who Can Help?**

There is a lot of advice and support out there. Try to find out as much as you can, as early as possible. People to consider approaching include:

- Your local Diocesan or denomination Community Development Worker – if they have one. Job titles vary – they may also be called a Community Funding and Partnership Officer, Parish Development Officer or Community Outreach Officer.
- Your local English Heritage Support Officer.
- The Community Development Officer at your local council, or Partnership Project Officer at your local Strategic Partnership if you have one. (Search your local authority’s website for ‘community grants’ and this will point you in the right direction.)
- Your local Community Voluntary Action group or local Council for Voluntary Services (CVS) who offer advice to community groups. To find groups in your area visit www.navca.org.uk
- Your local Rural Community Council. You can find details here http://www.acre.org.uk/Resources/useful-links/useful-links-rcan ) ACRE also runs an information service for village halls. A lot of their information publications, which cover hiring agreements, health and safety, recruiting and keeping volunteers will be relevant. http://www.acre.org.uk/our-work/community-assets/village-hall-information-service

**TOP TIPS**

- Have a look and see what expertise you already have within your own congregation and local community especially among people who have just retired who may be willing to offer their help.
- Update your skills list regularly, especially when someone new joins your group.
- When about to undertake any works – whether repairs or re-ordering or even maintenance, you should take the opportunity to think about access and energy efficiency and see whether it provides a chance to make improvements.
• Whenever you visit a public building have a look at access and energy efficiency arrangements. Look at what has been achieved and how.
• Start documenting the development of your project: with formal records such as minutes, but also start taking photographs which can be useful for exhibitions and the website.

### Chapter 2 Checklist

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<td>Have you undertaken a skills assessment of your group?</td>
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<td>Have you identified any immediate or future training requirements?</td>
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<td>Have you identified your group’s aims and objectives?</td>
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<td>What are your group’s SMART objectives?</td>
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<td>Have you established suitable financial controls and procedures for your group?</td>
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<td>Do you need to create Environmental, Access and Communication policies?</td>
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### Further Resources:

**Guidance on Environmental Policy**

*Shrinking the Footprint* is the Church of England’s national environmental campaign aimed at helping the Church’s 44 dioceses and 16,000 churches reduce their carbon footprint.

http://www.churchcare.co.uk/shrinking-the-footprint/

(More resources at the end of Chapter 9)

**Guidance on undertaking an Access Audit:**

*English Heritage* has produced *Easy Access to Historic Buildings (2012)* which focuses on physical access issues because these often pose the greatest challenges as well as opportunities for historic buildings. The guidance also focuses on the challenges and constraints posed by buildings whose function is not directly related to their historic
status - shops, offices and civic buildings - rather than those preserved and opened to the public purely as historic attractions. It explains the requirements under current law and includes plenty of practical guidance and illustrated examples. You can download the document here:
http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/publications/easy-access-to-historic-buildings/

There is advice on the Churchcare website here:
http://www.churchcare.co.uk/churches/open-sustainable/extended-and-additional-uses/welcoming-people

The Heritage Lottery Fund has guidance on Making your project accessible for disabled people here:
http://www.hlf.org.uk/HowToApply/furtherresources/Pages/Improvingyourprojectfordisabledpeople.aspx

Help with creating your own access statement can be found here:
http://www.visitengland.org/busdev/bussupport/access/info/Statements.aspx

The Centre for Accessible Environments http://www.cae.org.uk/index.html

Health and Safety

There is useful guidance on the Ecclesiastical and Churchcare websites at:
https://www.ecclesiastical.com/ChurchMatters/Churchguidance
ChurchHealthandSafety/index.aspx and
http://www.churchcare.co.uk/churches/guidance-advice/looking-after-your-church/
health-safety-security and also on all denomination websites
In order to help ensure that the money is spent on what it was allocated for; grant funders prefer to deal with properly constituted organisations. It is vital for the success of a project to have a formal structure that ensures decisions get taken and recorded properly and that finances are fully accounted for.

You must ensure that you choose the right vehicle i.e. the right organisational and legal structure that allows you to do what you want to do. It might be beneficial to set up a separate company, for instance if your project involves some form of trading.

The structure should reflect your values and principles or in other words ‘the culture of your organisation’. How are you going to make decisions? Will you be a member-based organisation and who are you accountable to? Who develops and decides upon policy and strategy? Do your users get a say?

It may be that the working group developing the project works within one structure and sets up another to run the project in the long-term.

There are two ways you can approach this. You can either join forces with the local Parochial Church Council (PCC) (or your ruling body or committee) which is already a legally constituted body, or you can set yourself up as an independent, constituted community group.

- It’s possible for the PCC to create a delegated ‘sub-group’, comprising members from the community to run and monitor the project. The PCC is the overseeing body, but this option still enables the energy of the community to help drive the project.

- A legal agreement will be required between the PCC and the Community Group allowing the community to use the relevant part of the Church for their community activities.
Option 1  
– Using the Parochial Church Council

The benefit of this option is that the community group is using the existing PCC as its constituted body. This is a perfectly good way of managing a project and it does cut down on some paperwork. If the community group becomes a sub-committee of the PCC, it will, though, be necessary to lay down some ground rules. For example, will the sub-committee be entitled to make decisions, or should they merely make a recommendation to the main PCC? If the sub-committee can make decisions, then it is essential that someone from the PCC sits on the sub-committee.

A sensible option would be to draw up a Terms of Reference document, which sets out what the roles and responsibility of the PCC and the sub-committee are and how the relationship between the two parties should operate. Funders will be content to enter into a grant contract with a PCC or Church committee, but a Terms of Reference document will offer confidence that you have a structure in place for managing the project in the future.

Option 2  
– Establishing your own Constituted Community Group

The benefit of this option is that the community group is an independent group, which could go on to implement many other community projects in other parts of the village or neighbourhood in the future. This does mean that because you are a separate group from the PCC, a funder will expect there to be some written agreement between the community group and the PCC to clarify the terms and times when the community group can use the church for its community activities. This written agreement may also need to include a licence or leasing agreement between the PCC and community group formalising their use of the space.

There are various models of organisation that you can consider:

i) Go to the Charity Commission and set yourselves up as a separate charity. The website provides guidance on how to do this. http://www.charity-commission.gov.uk/

ii) Social enterprises
A social enterprise is a business with primarily social objectives whose surpluses are principally reinvested for that purpose in the business or in the community, rather than being driven by the need to maximise profit for shareholders and owners. They can be about a traditional community-based activity or can operate in a commercial arena. Social enterprise isn’t for everybody, but for others it provides a valuable model. The current government has also said that it intends to offer tax relief on investment in social enterprises which would place investment in a social organization on the same footing as investment in a for-profit enterprise.

There are probably four different forms of social enterprise, as it depends on what you are trying to achieve and in what context. The commonest are:

- **Community Interest Companies (CICs)**
  CICs are limited companies, with special additional features, created for the use of people who want to conduct a business or other activity for community benefit, and not purely for private advantage. This is achieved by a “community interest test” and “asset lock”, which ensures that the CIC is established for community purposes and that the assets and profits are dedicated to these purposes. The Business Link website has guidance here [http://www.businesslink.gov.uk/bdotg/action/detail?itemId=1077476109&type=RESOURCES](http://www.businesslink.gov.uk/bdotg/action/detail?itemId=1077476109&type=RESOURCES)

- **Co-operative Societies**
  Co-operatives are not-for-profit organisations that are jointly owned and operated by a group of people for their mutual benefit. They are democratic enterprises, operating with a one member, one vote policy. The Co-operatives UK website offers a comprehensive (free) set of resources for community enterprises covering legal, financial and governance issues. [http://www.uk.coop/simply-suite-legal-and-governance-resources](http://www.uk.coop/simply-suite-legal-and-governance-resources)

- **Community Shares**
  A community share scheme enables people to invest in their own community and take ownership of a project. Instead of turning to the private sector and wealthy individuals for support, community investment is about engaging communities to invest in themselves. The Community Shares website profiles current examples as well as providing guidance and toolkits which can all be downloaded from [http://www.communityshares.org.uk/](http://www.communityshares.org.uk/)

- **Companies limited by guarantee**
  These are private limited companies where the liability of the members is limited. A guarantee company does not have a share capital, but has members who are guarantors instead of shareholders. Limitation of liability takes the form of a guarantee from its members to pay a nominal sum in the event of the company being wound up while they are a member, or within one year of their ceasing to be a member. More information here [http://www.sfsgo.com/guaranteecompany.asp](http://www.sfsgo.com/guaranteecompany.asp)
Tax and Trading

Individual churches of most denominations enjoy charitable status and therefore may only conduct activities falling within the charitable purposes of the Church. When you are considering new activities which fall outside these purposes and which will amount to ‘trading’, then you will need to check the legislation to see what the implications are. Any doubts about the effect of this aspect of the law on a local church should be discussed, in the first instance, with the appropriate person in your diocese or denomination. You should also check with the relevant department in your local authority about whether you would now be liable for Business Rates.

You also need to check with your Insurance Company if you are undertaking activities which bring in an income, i.e. you are starting to trade.

You will need to get legal and financial advice to ensure you fully understand the different options and their implications. Spend time on this and talk to other projects and your church’s legal advisers. If you get this wrong it can cause pain and expense in the long run. Initially, have a conversation with your Diocesan Secretary or equivalent for other denominations, for advice.

Relationship with your Church

Whichever route you choose, it is important that the clergy or someone who is there as a representative of the PCC (or ruling body or committee) are included in the partnership – it is their church.

Do not think that because your project involves the church building, the vicar has to chair your group or sub-group. The vicar needs to be kept informed of developments and your links with the PCC will enable this to happen. Therefore, it is better if you choose someone else to chair your group and sub-groups. Ideally, as this is a community project, let someone else from the community take on the role.

Working in partnership with other organisations

Working in partnership with others can bring huge benefits in the form of specialist knowledge and skills, additional funding and sharing of resources. Churches are able to offer a building, volunteers and a wish to help their communities and support those in need.

This can include hosting an outreach Post Office two mornings a week, where all equipment is brought in at the beginning of a session and taken away at the end of each session, or supporting the homeless in partnership with an experienced Homeless Charity by providing space and volunteers. Many projects are a partnership between the church and the local authority which may want to provide a statutory welfare service to a specific locality and is looking for a building. Such partnerships...
are especially vital in rural or deprived areas where the church can provide essential services and facilities, contact hard-to-reach communities, and contribute knowledge of local circumstances.

Consideration must also be given to the legal mechanics of sharing the space with another group or organisation. Depending on the requirements, this can range from licence under faculty, the setting up of a community group or association or separate trust. Within the Church of England, the Pastoral (Amendment) Measure (2006) from January 2007, allows for a lease to be granted under faculty of part of a consecrated church building, provided that taken as a whole the building continues to be used primarily as a place of worship. Prior to January 2007, if a Church of England church wanted to grant a lease they had to make that part of the building redundant and it then came under the secular planning system. Using the new measure means that the whole church remains under one planning system and it also offers greater security to potential leaseholders as well as enabling them to meet conditions of some of the major funders which require proof of security of accommodation.

It will be important that both sides have something to bring and to gain from the partnership and that you both share the same objectives and values. It is important to understand how each other’s organisation works and its core objectives.

**Licenses and Leases** – if you are going to offer leased space to a tenant, or your project is going to have a licence or lease arrangement with the church, remember this is a specialised area which you will need to take sound legal advice on. There are models out there, but each one will need to be negotiated on a case by case basis. Don’t be afraid to talk about money – get this right and it can ensure your sustainability and it has to be viable for both parties. The document should set out clearly what each partner is responsible for and should cover details such as cleaning responsibilities as well as who is going to pay for what eg: servicing of equipment and maintenance and proportion of utility bills. You should also make for provision for what will happen if there are weddings and funerals and around special church services and festivals.

You may want to have a Memorandum of Agreement which is a written understanding of the agreement between parties setting out how they will work together on an agreed upon project or meet an agreed objective. NB a lease can’t be easily changed, but a Memorandum of Agreement can.

So, do make use of the templates that are available, but take legal advice from your diocese or denomination. It is likely you will need to get a Faculty/Consent or Permission from your church authority as you are, in effect, giving right of access to part of your building to another organisation. You may be able to get advice from a
friendly solicitor in your community or if not you should consider getting paid advice. Initially ask for advice from your church authority.

If this seems a little daunting, don’t panic. There is plenty of help out there. Remember, there are thousands of community groups up and down the country doing something similar.

**Who Can Help?**

In fact, getting advice and support is a sensible step to take, so go and ask for it. Try to find out as much as you can, as early as possible. People to consider approaching include:

- Your local Diocesan or Denomination Community Development Worker – if they have one. Job titles vary – they may also be called a Community Funding and Partnership Officer, Parish Development Officer, or Community and Outreach Officer.
- our local English Heritage Support Officer.
- The Community Development Officer at your local council, or Partnership Project Officer at your local Strategic Partnership if you have one. (Search your local authority’s website for ‘community grants’ and this will point you in the right direction.)
- Your local Community Voluntary Action group/Council for Voluntary Services (CVS) offer advice to community organisations. To find groups in your area visit: www.navca.org.uk
- our local Rural Community Council (visit www.acre.org.uk)

**TOP TIPS**

- Whether you have set up a delegated sub-group or a new separate constituted community group, ensure that a representative from the PCC/Church Committee and/or clergy is included within your group.
- Just because your project may use the church building, it doesn’t mean that someone from the clergy must chair group meetings. Clearly though, the clergy and PCC must be supportive of the project and the community group!
- Establish some **terms of reference** between the community group and the church as soon as possible. It prevents problems arising later that could impact on the project.
Further Resources:

The Plunkett Foundation helps rural communities to set up and run community-owned shops and other community-owned rural services. They are able to advise on governance. [http://www.plunkett.co.uk/](http://www.plunkett.co.uk/)

Locality provides support for community enterprises at each stage of the journey. Go to [http://locality.org.uk/community-enterprise/](http://locality.org.uk/community-enterprise/)

A new service for the growing number of communities wanting to raise finance for co-operative and community-owned enterprises has been launched by Co-operative UK and Locality. The Community Shares Unit offers information and support on a wide variety of topics relating to the operational duties of IPSs, including those of secretaries and directors. It has a number of model rules for bodies wishing to register as IPSs, including community investment model guidance and some case studies. [http://www.communityshares.org.uk/](http://www.communityshares.org.uk/)

Social Enterprise UK is the national body for social enterprise [http://www.socialenterprise.org.uk/](http://www.socialenterprise.org.uk/)

Village SOS began in 2010 when six enterprising UK rural villages won Big Lottery Fund investment of around £400,000 to revive their communities through new business ventures. Today, Village SOS aims to build on the experience of these six projects and inspire others to start a new business that will regenerate their community. Go to the website where you will find Tools, support and expert guidance to help communities take the step towards starting their own businesses and guide them on the journey from their initial idea to transforming the area. There is also an advice phone line you can ring at 0845 434 9123. [http://www.villagesos.org.uk/](http://www.villagesos.org.uk/)

You can find guidance on Working in Partnership in Funding Guide No 7 found on the Parish Resources website under the Buildings Section. [www.parishresources.co.uk](http://www.parishresources.co.uk)

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**Chapter 3 Checklist**

- Have you decided how to organise your group? Be a sub-committee to the PCC or establish yourselves as a separately constituted group?
- Have you fully researched the different models of governance and decided which is the best for your project?
- Have you drawn up some terms of reference or a legal agreement with your Church?
You can download a summary of the history and provisions of the Pastoral (Amendment) Measure 2006 as well as a guidance document on the practical operation of the Pastoral (Amendment) Measure 2006 entitled ‘Wider Use of part or parts of a Church’ at:

Pro-bono support
There are now plenty of companies/organisations that will offer their services pro-bono for community projects. These include lawyers, architects and mentors for social enterprise. Websites listing companies that can offer these services can be found on the internet.
The basic aim of most projects is likely to be that more people use the building. You need to find out exactly what your local community wants from its church. This is your opportunity to create a plan of action led by the local community. Bear in mind, that the result of a consultation may mean that you have to change your original ideas.

**Identifying the Need**

For your project to be successful, you want to ensure that it is answering a real need within your community. This stage is about doing the research to identify that need and gathering the information that will provide the evidence that grant funders will be looking for when assessing your application. You need to demonstrate your case ie: that there are people who will want to use whatever you are offering.

The key is being able to explain the difference that your project will make to the community.

Funders will want a description of the current situation so that they can understand the need/problem and how your project will change this.

**Community Audit**

The first stage is therefore undertaking a Community Audit so that you can compile a profile of your community/neighbourhood. You can use the 2011 Census data as your starting point. ([http://www.ons.gov.uk/](http://www.ons.gov.uk/)). You want to build up a picture of your local community which will include the following areas: is the local population one of young families, older people, or mature couples? Is it an area of high unemployment? Or is it a mix of professionals and low skilled local jobs. Is it situated in the commuter belt? Who is around during the daytime? What type of housing is there and is there enough affordable housing?

Other baseline data you need to collect is about local organisations and amenities. The more information you collect, the better. The following areas are relevant:

**What does the community already have?** There may already be a lot of positive things happening. List the facilities that you have such as the church, a pub, a post office, a neighbourhood shop, a cafe. What healthcare provision is accessible? What activities can the youth or older people get involved in? Is there a strong sense of community? A neighbourhood with a community spirit is more likely to succeed in any collective action it takes.
What services are currently provided? What local services are provided eg: library, bank, shop, post office? Does the community see regular mobile services eg: library, bank, shop? Identify community activities that currently take place. Does your neighbourhood offer youth activities for one day a week? Do other community groups meet regularly, if so where? Is there provision for mothers and toddlers? Are there activities for older people? What about their carers? What other community buildings are there? Are they fully used or under-utilised?

What services are missing? Identify the services that the community would like to see. Would people like to see a small crèche operating five mornings a week? Could existing neighbourhood groups do more with better meeting facilities? Has the closure of a shop facility left car-less people with no access to shopping facilities? What would make life easier or more enjoyable for people in your local community?

You can gather a lot of this information yourselves and perhaps start to come up with some ideas about how you and your building can help with some of these issues. However, before any of these ideas are taken forward you need to collect the views of the community.

Consulting/Engaging with the wider community

You want to find out:-

i) What do local people think of the existing services? The majority of people may be happy with existing services, but feel a new service is required to meet a new need. Perhaps an existing service meets the needs of those it can help, but should be expanded to help more people. Ask them what they like about living in this area? Ask them who misses out in this area? What services are lacking?

ii) What ideas do local people have? Everybody has an opinion on most things so find out what it is. If your community has a problem, ask them what the solution is. Some people’s suggestions will be more appropriate than others, but somewhere within all those ideas may be the perfect solution to your community’s problem/s.

Talking to People

There are various ways in which you can get people’s views and comments and the method you choose will depend upon the size of your community. Here are a few suggestions, but choose the ones that suit your community best.

Keep the consultation targeted and appropriate or you will develop what the professionals call ‘consultation fatigue’.
• **Questionnaires.** You can deliver one to every household or business to ensure that everyone gets an opportunity to have their say. To work, you need to give people enough time to think about your questions, and make it easy to return their responses. Either quote a local address or set up a collection point in your community. Ask open questions. These are the ones that begin with What, Where, Why, When, How and Who? This encourages people to offer their own view. Avoid leading questions. *Wouldn’t it be good if we could have our own neighbourhood library* prevents people from putting forward their ideas. Don’t make the questionnaire too long.

• **Chat to people.** Instead of getting people to fill in a form, why not fill it in for them as you chat to them? Ask if you can chat to people in your local health centre, estate community centre, doctor’s waiting room or pub, and ask for their thoughts and opinions. Again, don’t bombard them with too many questions, and make sure they’re open questions.

• **Suggestion boxes.** Set up boxes in popular places in your community for people to put their own suggestions. This is a good way of encouraging people to put forward their own ideas.

• **Community Day, Fete, or Festival.** Have a stall at an existing event and use it as another opportunity to talk to people. You might need something – a competition or something for sale to draw people to your stall.

• **Organise your own event in the church itself.** This can be very worthwhile as it may encourage people who have never been into your church building before to ‘cross your threshold’. Organise an open day or a fun day of events: serve refreshments; have a small exhibition; organise a fun activity e.g. practical workshops, making Christmas decorations, a tour of the church. Invite all local groups such the Women’s Institute, Drama Societies, Music groups, Local History Society and the Art Society. Alongside asking them about their community and needs, you can ask them what they think about the building. Do they find it welcoming? Is it comfortable? Does it explain itself? What would they like to happen here? (Remember not everyone will want to speak out in front of others so provide paper and pens for people to write down their thoughts).

However you consult, make sure that you talk to as many people as possible. The more people who get an opportunity to express their views and opinions, the better it will be.
Other groups you should talk to

Your own parish council/town council

It is important to talk to and present your ideas to your parish/town council, your local authority and local Primary Care Trust. They will know about some of the key issues in your community. They may be looking for a location for a specific service or might like to be a partner in your project.

Church Statistics – what can the church tell you about your area?

The Church of England National Statistics Department have collated national census statistics by parish, these are called ‘Parish Spotlights’ and these are available from every diocesan office.

Current community users of your church

If community groups already use your church, then ask them how they find it and what could be improved eg: lighting, heating

Other local groups and organisations

It is essential that you make contact with and talk to existing groups in your area, for example the local Women’s Institute, the Scouts and Guides, the Young Farmers, Youth Groups, Pensioners Clubs and also some of the smaller activity groups as they may have needs that are not currently being met. And don’t forget to include the local schools as they may be looking for premises for some of their activities.

This can be done by including them in some of the activities above or going to talk to them separately.

Organisations which own community buildings

Make contact with community leaders and the organisations in your area that work with key groups such as children, the elderly, the disabled, their carers and other disadvantaged vulnerable groups. They may well also be local charities or local branches of national ones. They will have insight into the local communities and those most in need. They will be able to tell you what issues they are trying to tackle and have ideas for services which the church could provide or host. They may also offer opportunities for partnership.
Do you want to run a lunch club for retired house-bound people in your community? Can you link up with the local Age Concern group? Perhaps a little support from your group will mean they can extend an existing service that they offer. Don’t duplicate and don’t try to compete with existing activities – that’s a waste of resources. Reach out and work with other groups, rather than working in isolation.

Other faith groups

They may also be looking at community outreach which again may create opportunities for partnerships.

Local businesses

Make links with local businesses eg: shops, tea shops, pubs, potteries, craft shops.

**Community Led Planning (also known as Parish Planning).**

Community-led plans (Parish Plans) provide a process for local people who want to produce a holistic plan that will improve the wellbeing and sustainability of their neighbourhood. It’s a way of a community working together to decide what is important to them and what kind of changes they want for their community. It helps a community identify key issues and needs. This consultation exercise is usually led by the Town or Parish Council in partnership with local groups and organisations.

Getting involved with the development of a local plan can be a useful tool in addressing the wider strategy for community ministry. If you are involved, then the church will be included. As part of the process existing facilities will be identified as well as local needs and possible solutions and it may be that your church can be part of that solution either by providing a venue, volunteers and/or working in partnership with another organisation to provide a service etc. Remember, the church building is a huge resource for many communities, and taking an active part in parish or community led planning can mean that you are rightly recognised as being part of a community and may be seen as a solution to any issues that arise. It was once said that many parish churches are on the outside picture of a parish plan, but not many were to be found on the inside pages.

You can also make use of Planning for Real® (PFR) which is a nationally recognised community planning process based on a 3D model. The process allows residents to register their views on a range of issues, to work together to identify priorities and go on to develop an action plan for change in partnership with local agencies. They will also provide training and project delivery support so that communities can use Planning for Real® and other techniques to develop and run programmes of community-led engagement. The ethos underpinning all their methods is that they are highly visual, tactile, participatory and community-led. This means it is a good way of involving a whole range of people including children and those not used to reading plans or thinking about community development. http://www.planningforreal.org.uk/
If there is no local plan and no enthusiasm in the local community to develop one, then you can rely on undertaking a community consultation as outlined above. Of course, you could as a church take the lead role in initiating the idea of undertaking a community plan. If there is already a plan, and your church is not included, then look to see what were the needs identified and see if your church can offer a solution.

The Localism Act

In 2011, this Act became one of the key pieces of legislation introduced by the current Government. It is a radical shift of power from central government to local communities and the intention is that it will devolve greater powers to local councils and neighbourhoods and give local communities more control over local decisions.

There are two elements to the Act which could have direct relevance on churches undertaking community outreach:

The Right to Plan: Neighbourhood Plans are intended to become the new building blocks of the planning system where communities have the power to grant planning permission if a local majority are in favour. The process for developing Neighbourhood Plans will rely on active community involvement. Communities will be able to draw up Neighbourhood Plans for their area and use these to pass planning applications by local referendum, provided that their decision aligns with national planning requirements. As yet, the details of how this will actually work are still in development, but some hope that neighbourhood planning will provide a statutory framework through which Community Led Plans can achieve their aspirations.

Community Right to Challenge: voluntary and community groups, parish councils and local authority staff will be able to challenge to take over the running of local public services. A community group could express an interest in running a local service and submit a supported petition to show that they would be able to provide a better service or facility. If the proposal is accepted then this would set off a procurement exercise. Full details of how this will work in practice are still to be worked out.

Where to find more help

- Find out if anyone from your diocese or church body is already involved with your local authority and may be able to provide contacts.
- Ask for help from your local CVS (Council for Voluntary Services) about which consultation methods may suit your community. To find groups in your area visit: www.navca.org.uk
- Contact your Local Authority Research Team. They can provide local statistics about your community, obtained from sources like the census. They may also be aware of other documents, strategies, and plans that exist now. Perhaps you can link in with a Cultural Strategy, a Town Plan, or a Regeneration Area?
- Your Local Authority Planning Department may also be able to help on Community-Led Planning
• **Rural Community Councils (RCCs)** provide training and guidance for communities on the development of a Community Led Plan (CLP). If you are part of an existing community planning group or want to start one, then you are advised to contact your local RCC/RCAN member to discuss the toolkit and find out what support is available locally.

• **Action with Communities in Rural England (ACRE)** have produced a new toolkit for Community Led Planning which outlines the steps that communities should take to produce plans that are well researched, inclusive and achieve the actions they propose.

• **Planning Aid England** provides free, independent and professional planning advice to communities and individuals who cannot afford to pay professional fees. [http://www.rtpi.org.uk/planning-aid/](http://www.rtpi.org.uk/planning-aid/)

** Analysing the results **

Once you have all of this information and community feedback, you need to go through it and identify what people have suggested. Are there any common themes? Are several people suggesting a common solution? If you have carried out a survey or other form of consultation exercise, make sure you make the results freely available so all can see them.

It is a good idea to write up the results as a formal report. This can then be put up on the website or public notice board so the community can see the outcome. Funders will also ask to see the results of any consultation.

When you know what the problem is, and you have a solution to aim for then your project becomes much more focussed. You can build up a picture of what you want your community to look like ‘after’ the project is completed.

** Continuing engagement/communication **

You will need to keep in touch with the people who’ve taken the time and effort to give you their thoughts and ideas and let them how the project is progressing and how they can become involved. As well as a website, you can use e-newsletters and updates on public notice boards. Always provide a contact person and contact details to make it easy for people who have questions or want to help.

Organise further special days and invite people to come and see how far you’ve got. Putting up displays with photographs and plans and having people who can explain them is a good way of continuing the dialogue. Invite continual feedback – you want people to feel ownership and then they will support you.

** Volunteers **

Use any consultation activities as a volunteer recruiting exercise. Encourage new people to get involved. It’s common in some communities that whenever volunteers
are called for, the ‘usual suspects’ step forward. These people can’t do everything. You must have enough people to help out. Ask members of the congregation to get involved as well as other people from within the community. Your project should encourage new people into the church building, so get new people involved as volunteers right from the start.

Keeping People on Side

It is rare for a project not to face some level of opposition or at the very least expressions of concern. Take time over consulting everyone, and listen to all points of view. You can reassure people by keeping everyone informed as to what is actually happening as opposed to allowing rumours to circulate. Genuine concerns may mean that you have to revise your plans or modify your project. Above all, keep an open door and encourage questions and feedback.

TOP TIPS

• Seek ideas from every section of the community, young and old. A community project is all about a partnership approach. Consider everybody’s views.
• Use a couple of consultation methods to attract as many views and ideas as possible.
• Create an opportunity for some of the consultation to take place in the church building itself.
• Take photos of your consultation events in action! They are useful for the website or exhibitions and to attach to and strengthen funding applications.
• Keep copies of forms/questionnaires that you create, and produce a report analysing the results as it will form an important part of your funding applications.
• Throughout the progress of a project, make sure you keep everyone informed and engaged. You can do this through a regular newsletter and/or website, putting updates on a notice board, or start a blog. Tell people what you are doing and how they can help. Link in with any plans and strategies that already exist. Start thinking about small changes you could make in the short-term. This can be a good way of testing ideas before embarking on permanent changes. This could include:
  • increasing the times the church is open
  • offering to become involved in existing local festivals/events
  • providing a venue for community activities eg a new cinema club
• Try not to deal with development issues on a one-off basis by, for instance, trying to solve one immediate problem in isolation just because it is easy and achievable. Always see them as part of a bigger plan. You can always carry out the plan in smaller phases, which may give the congregation a better sense of achievement.
Chapter 4 Checklist

Have you collected evidence and information (baseline data), about your community?

Have you sought advice from your local Council for Voluntary Services about the best methods of consultation for your community?

Have you identified suitable consultation methods to allow everyone in your community to express their view?

Have you consulted all local groups?

Have you produced a report which details the results of your consultation exercise and shows your analysis and assessment on which ideas/solutions are most popular?

Have you contacted your Local Authority’s Research Team to find out what data and policies or strategies already exist?

Have you checked that your project idea doesn’t duplicate any existing services?

Can you link up with other organisations and adopt a partnership approach to solving your community problem?

Further Resources:

The Arthur Rank Centre has developed a simple tool for auditing and profiling rural churches and the communities they serve. It is designed specifically for rural, small, isolated & dispersed communities and churches, and churches in groups. Find more at http://www.arthurrankcentre.org.uk/publications-and-resources/profiling-tools

Help with assessing the use and viability of new community buildings can be found in the New Forest Community Facility Toolkit published by the New Forest District Council. The Toolkit aims to support and guide people who want to assess the usage, gaps and potential of their community facilities. www.newforest.gov.uk/index.cfm?articleid=6979

Making Church Buildings Work by Maggie Durran
This offers ways in which churches can be a more effective local presence and serve their neighbours’ needs. (Details in Chapter 15).

Setting up a church website
There are a large number of websites offering guidance on how to create an effective website. A good place to start is http://www.goodchurchwebsites.org.uk/. Another good resource is www.achurchnearyou.com, which is free to all Church of England parishes.
The Methodist Church has guidance here
getting-a-website-for-your-church

Talk to your denomination’s communications officer. Have a look at other churches
websites and get some ideas on what is effective.

If there is a village website, ensure your church is included and there is a link to your
own website. Make sure you keep it up to date and include photos illustrating events
or progress on building works.
Having consulted the community, you’ve probably found that people suggested a range of solutions and projects. There may be one that stands out above all the others, but that doesn’t necessarily mean it is the best option. Now is a good time to assess all the options and work out which solution your team feels best solves the problem and is the most feasible.

There are also a few things you might want to think about before too much work has gone into developing definitive proposals – before you start commissioning any drawings or engaging a professional adviser:

**Sharing community space with worship space**

Making changes to sacred space has to be given careful consideration and there may be initial tensions caused by sharing the same space for both church and community use. The key is to have a coherent vision which you can communicate to other people whether they are in your own congregation, or from the wider community. You should never feel that you have to hide God away, but at the same time, don’t expect that all your users will necessarily share your faith. There may well be tensions but never lose sight of the fact that you are a living, working place of worship.

You will need to think through how you will worship after your changes, which might include new seating, or community events taking place on Saturday night. Any changes must work for both church and community use.

And how it might change things on a day to day level? If there is a mother and toddlers group taking place in the nave of a church, is it still possible for someone to visit the church and find a quiet space? What happens to a regular activity when the church is needed for a funeral, for example? There is also the issue of what is sometimes referred to as ‘homeliness versus holiness’: Does the introduction of too much carpet and too many chairs, run the risk of losing that sense of awe that the church is a special sacred space.

*Think about how you can raise and discuss this issue with (a) the rest of the congregation, (b) the wider community who, while not regular church attenders, may still feel the role of the church should remain solely as a place of worship.*
A major re-ordering may not be necessary

Before you can start making firm decisions on what changes you are going to need to make, you need a clear idea of what new uses you are going to introduce into your building.

Are you thinking of a specific additional use or are you seeking to create ‘a flexible space’? It is important to think through specific uses both in the short-term and the long-term. Who will be your new users and most importantly when and how they will be using your building?

Things to think about include:

- **Do you need to physically divide up the space?** Do you need to create separate spaces e.g. a sound-proofed room for regular meetings which would enable other groups to be using the church for different activities at the same time? Do you want to be able to create separate spaces for children? Are you going to be renting out a permanent space within your building? Or will different groups use the same space, but at different times? Will there still be a quiet space available at all times?

- **Do you want seating that can be easily moved or cleared away and stored when you want to create an open space?** This can be a very sensitive issue. A thorough case for removal of all or part of existing seating such as pews will have to be made and you will need to look at the building interior as a whole. You will also have to show that any replacement seating combines good design, high quality materials with comfort, whilst maintaining sympathy with historic interiors. There is a very helpful section on seating on the Churchcare website at [http://www.churchcare.co.uk/images/Seating.pdf](http://www.churchcare.co.uk/images/Seating.pdf)

- **Installation or upgrading of facilities.** People have a higher expectation of comfort these days. Think about specific uses eg: if you are intending to provide a venue for concerts etc. then ensure you have enough lavatories.

- **Don’t settle on obvious solutions** — there might be better ones. Divisions can be created between the nave and chancel and aisles. You can even create a mezzanine floor, but dividing spaces with full-height screens or partitions can be hugely expensive and visually damaging. It might be possible to divide them with clever, flexible modern lighting and heating.

- **Sound-proofing is important.** You also need to think about the materials used for physical divisions, for instance a glass screen can retain views from the west end to the east end or enable windows to remain visible. Will you be able to get back the full space for particular occasions e.g. Christmas, a wedding?

- **Extensions:** any alterations to a church’s interior or exterior will have a noticeable impact on the building’s character and atmosphere, and will be costly. It is therefore advisable to consider carefully whether the need for change is properly justified. Proper consideration of the real requirements might show that new facilities can easily be accommodated within the church building and that an
extension is not necessary. If you do decide to build an extension then the choice of materials is very important. Sometimes it is possible to construct an extension which is entirely different to the existing material, but great care needs to be taken if it is to complement the original.

- You will also need to be aware of the state of your building. Check your latest quinquennial report. Any major repairs should be undertaken prior to embarking on new works. Repairs of course can be included as part of your community project, although you will probably have to apply to some separate funding programmes, however, the current Heritage Lottery Fund Repair Grants programme, will allow a contribution towards new facilities. www.hlf.org.uk

Understanding your Church and completing a Statement of Significance and a Statement of Need

As soon as it becomes clear that your project may involve changes to the interior or exterior of the church building and/or its contents, you will need to seek permission. Even if it is a listed building, this doesn’t mean that you can’t make changes or enhance it. It just means that in order to make alterations, you will be required to present good reasons and show that your scheme is based on a sensitive understanding of the cultural and heritage significance of your church and will minimise the harm to the special historic, architectural, archaeological and artistic merit of the building, its contents and setting. (Chapter 6 explains more about this important part of the process).

At this stage, you need to first evaluate the significance of what you have and then, secondly what you need and why. Both you and your building advisor bodies need to understand the impact your proposals will have on the building and whether that impact is appropriate and if not, if there is another, less intrusive way of achieving the same outcome.

It is important to start thinking about this as early as possible in the process and not when you are starting to develop fixed ideas.

A warning: a vision which has been developed with little or no regard for its impact on the significance of the building, the setting of the alteration, including tombs and furnishings etc., will undoubtedly lead to problems when you present your proposals to your church authority and other statutory consultees.

A template for a statement of need and significance can be found at:
Is your building listed?

You can find out if your building is listed from your local authority. Usually this information will be available on the planning or environment pages of their website. Larger public libraries should also have this information. However, the easiest way to obtain a copy of the listed building entry is to visit the National Heritage List, which can be accessed here: http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/professional/protection/process/national-heritage-list-for-england/

The best tools, and now a requirement for any building project that involves a listed place of worship and all places of worship within the denominations covered by the Ecclesiastical Exemption (See Chapter 6), are Statements of Significance and Need.

Completing these two documents will help you to understand your place of worship, its history and previous changes that have taken place. Taking the time to do this will reveal potential and limits. If your building is listed and especially if it is listed either grade II* or I, then you may not be able to make all the changes you want and you will have to seek advice on how you can achieve what you want.

A Statement of Significance should describe how the building has evolved over time. It should describe when the various parts of the building were constructed and when notable additions were made to the interior, for instance the pews, the pulpit, organ or stained glass. It should provide a summary of why they are important and the contributions they make to the character of the building. This should be a Statement that you revisit at regular intervals over the years and consider at all times to be a working document.

A Statement of Need should be a document which serves both the parish and those involved in the faculty process. It is the parish’s opportunity to explain, justify and rationalise the proposals to all interested parties, having regard to the Statement of Significance and the impact of the proposed changes. It should set out the reasons why it is considered that the needs of the parish cannot be met without making changes to the church building and why the particular proposed changes are regarded as necessary to assist the church in its worship and mission. Liturgical requirements will have to be balanced alongside any proposals for the enhancement of the building for easier access and wider use by the community. The Statement should particularly highlight the significance of those parts which are to be altered.

Options Appraisal

If there are a range of possibilities in front of you — even if one idea in particular is coming to the fore — it is useful to undertake a detailed objective assessment before too much work has been done and too much commitment given to a particular outcome. It may well be that the proposed idea is a good one, but is it the best solution to the problem?
Sometimes referred to as SWOT Analysis, this is an exercise where you look at each of the ideas that have emerged and consider the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats for each one. This will help you to think realistically about what might be possible.

All those bodies from whom you will have to seek approval as well as the majority of funding bodies will want to see your application supported by a summary of what options have been considered to meet your identified need and their strengths and weaknesses both in terms of impact on the building and effectiveness in addressing the need. This will help them to decide whether your proposal is the best solution. It may well be that a better solution can be found, one that doesn’t require so much funding for example.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Solution</th>
<th>Benefits</th>
<th>Drawbacks</th>
<th>Summary</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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You should be able to say with confidence that “we’ve looked at doing this, this and this, but decided that our solution is the best solution to this problem because …”

Organise a meeting where the Group can carry out this exercise. One way to do this is to draw a grid. You only need four columns, and as many rows as you have possible solutions.

In each row, list one of the solutions to the problems, then identify the benefits in the next column, the drawbacks in the column after, and finally, make a summarising statement about that solution. Then do the same with your next solution idea. Remember to include the financial costs and building works for each option.

As part of the exercise, get the Group to answer the following pertinent questions. Again, the answers will help you with your grant funding applications forms.

• Why is your solution the best solution for this problem?
• Why are you the best group to deliver this project?
• What would happen if the project didn’t go ahead?
• Have you assessed all of the options?

Be specific with your answers. Know exactly why your solution is better than all of the other solution ideas. Be clear as to why you are the best group to deliver this project. You may have decided to set yourself up as an independent community group, separate from the PCC, but a funder may question this. Would the PCC be better placed to implement this project?

And what exactly would happen if the project didn’t go ahead? What changes won’t happen if the project doesn’t go ahead.
It is not the End of the World

If, while going through this stage, you suddenly realise that perhaps you have not identified the best solution to your problem, try not to be too disheartened. In fact, it is a good thing that:

- this has been identified now, and not after you have spent time and money getting plans drawn up or completed grant applications forms.
- you haven’t wasted any more of your time progressing with a solution that may not have worked.
- you haven’t had to give the community disheartening news when a grant funder has rejected your application.
- none of your work community consultation or the establishment of your community group has been wasted. You may still identify a more suitable solution to your problem.
- all of your preparatory work in establishing your community group, or the partnerships you have built, are still valid and important. Your new solution may still use this work.
- you can explain to the local community better, why you have selected the solution that you have, when you next come to inform the community about your progress. Similarly, it will strengthen any information you provide to funding bodies.

Feasibility Study or Straight to Design?

Once you think you have identified a solution, which the Group feels is best for your community, then you need to decide whether to undertake a formal feasibility study or whether you need to brief your architect to go straight to the design stage and produce an fully worked up set of plans, fully costed and showing what it is you propose to do. The two options are explored below, but whichever option you choose, it will require you to gather together and assess all the evidence to show that what you are proposing is a viable project. For major projects, you will definitely be asked to provide one by your denominational buildings advisory body and by funders.

Feasibility Study

A feasibility study is a formal written document which provides a method of undertaking an evaluation and analysis of a proposed project’s potential and is based on extensive investigation and research. The aim is to objectively and rationally uncover the strengths and weaknesses of a proposed venture, any opportunities and threats, the resources required to make it happen and ultimately the prospects for a successful outcome. In its simplest terms, it should help you identify:
• if your idea is viable or not
• how your project will deliver what it sets out to deliver
• useful facts and figures to aid decision-making
• alternative approaches and solutions to putting your idea into practice

It should be a formal written document and should include all of the following:

• an assessment of the current situation and need for your project (The work you have done to produce your community profile and the results of the community consultation will form the basis for this, but you may have to undertake more research to obtain firm facts and figures)
• an evaluation of the possible options that have been proposed. This should include a financial model eg: estimating the potential income and expenditure for each of these options (The results of the options appraisal exercise will help with this).
• an assessment of the impact of each main option on your group’s chosen structure and type of project
• an assessment of the impact of each main option on your building. (It should explain what works will be required in the church and detail the architects’ recommendations. The architect should also indicate how long the work will take to do and – most importantly – the cost. You also need to show you have tested whether your idea is feasible and allowable within the confines of the church building)
• a conclusion which identifies the best option and the reasons why you have selected it.

For medium to large projects, funders will insist that an architect or an independent group of experts carries out a feasibility study. This will be especially true of projects which involve major interventions into the church building itself or an extension. This will involve specialist knowledge and experience.

Obtaining funding to pay for a feasibility study is getting increasingly difficult, but it may be possible to get grant funding to cover this cost. An internet search may produce a lead or try the funding directories listed in Chapter 15. Your local authority may be able to help if your project is going to benefit your local community. Your denominational buildings advisory body may also know of other projects which have obtained funding for this.

Not every project will require a feasibility study. If a PCC, or constituted group, is comfortable about what needs to be done with their smaller, less complicated project, then the feasibility study may be bypassed. However, it is a useful exercise and a good document to show potential supporters, so for smaller projects you can always carry out a feasibility study yourself. There is plenty of advice for community groups on how to undertake feasibility studies on the web. Just type feasibility studies for community groups into your search engine.
Plans Designed up to RIBA Stage 4.

As mentioned, unless you already have funds in place or unless you have already found an external funder who will fund feasibility work, it is becoming increasingly difficult to find funding for feasibility studies. For this reason, some parishes decide that they have explored the feasibility options in the consultation process and have a very clear idea of what they want to see in any new works within their building. This has led many of them to brief their architect to go straight to design stage, to include detailed drawings and costings, full specification and a schedule of work for the project. The architect will be required to keep a full dialogue and consultation going with all interested parties. This means, for the parish, that they are using their resources to fund architectural work that is not speculative. The benefit of this is that the plans can be used to back up funding applications as they have accurate costs, whereas feasibility study only provide speculative costs on a number of options. What is important is that you brief your architect well and that you have a constant and on-going dialogue with him or her, your consenting body and statutory consultees throughout the process.

Appointing an Architect

All churches that fall with the ecclesiastical exemption system (see Chapter 6) will already have an architect for the quinquennial (five-yearly) review of the church building. You do not need to use this architect for your project. In fact, some architects prefer only to do quinquennial reviews and offer advice on repairs, rather than refurbishments. However, when you invite architects to tender for your project, it is good practice to offer the quinquennial review architect the opportunity to tender and get involved with your project. They do know all about your particular church, after all.

All denominations have guidance on their websites on how to appoint an architect. For the Church of England, you should make contact with your DAC who will be able to help you select an architect from their approved list. It is perfectly acceptable to speak to other architects who are not on the list, but please bear in mind that some funders will insist on the architect being conservation credited if they are putting funds into a project.

Procurement Guidelines for the recruitment of professionals

Following clarification of the law on procurement, there is a requirement to seek tenders for services by a professional adviser (usually a church architect) if public funds make up more than 50% of the total funding for a repair scheme, even if it is divided into stages over several years. Public funds include the Listed Places of Worship Grant Scheme, Heritage Lottery Fund grants and any other public sector grants. However, new guidance on the tendering process emphasises that quality and experience - not just price - should be taken into account when choosing an architect.
architect for the work. This means that if the current church architect is demonstrably the best person to do the work, according to reasonable and clear criteria, they can be awarded the contract - even if their costs are marginally higher than those of a less suitable candidate. The Churchcare website provides a very helpful short guidance note for places of worship on the new EU Procurement Rules http://www.churchcare.co.uk/churches/guidance-advice/looking-after-your-church/procurement

Churchcare also has a procurement page where advertisements for a professional under the new Procurement Guidelines can be placed to request expressions of interest for the service of a professional adviser at any place of worship in England. These will be publicised by the Church of England and English Heritage.
http://www.churchcare.co.uk/churches/advertising-for-professionals

Architects who are interested in tendering will need:

- to be sent a comprehensive brief setting out your vision, what you plan to do with the church building and why before they meet with you. This should include results of the research to describe your community’s profile and the findings from your community consultation as well the results of your Options Appraisal exercise.
- to know of any important points raised by the DAC or other denominational buildings advisory body or other statutory body such as English Heritage in any preliminary discussions.
- to be made aware that they will be expected to attend community consultations and meet and talk to local people and that you will be looking for a proven track record in this.
- the contact details of someone who can help arrange for them to visit your church.

Ensure you ask that they include their charges for undertaking this brief. You need to know whether you can afford it.

From those who apply choose those you want to invite for a meeting – ideally, you should have a choice of 4 or 5 architects. If you’ve established a working group or a project-monitoring group to specifically deal with buildings issues, try to have as many of them at the meeting with the potential architects as possible. It’s just like a job interview and you need to be sure you have the right candidate for the job. Remember too, that you are creating a new working partnership between the architect and your group – this is someone with whom you will all be working closely. It is important that you are working with an architect who not only understands your building, but also your vision.

The architect you select will then need to go away and carry out the work they have been briefed to do and provide you with either a feasibility report or a set of design
drawings and specifications and an outline schedule of works for your project. This is often referred to as the Design Stage documentation. It is also sensible to ensure there is a one-page summary of the project included, which will be useful to include as part of your application for consent and later on for funding applications. If the project involves major building works, it may also be useful to produce a 3-D model which can help people understand what it will look like.

Remember there is no problem with keeping in close working contact with your chosen architect during the development of the feasibility report or detailed plans and accompanying documentation.

On-going dialogue ensures that the architect can ask more questions and try out ideas with you. Even after you have received the report, there may well need to be further discussions with the architect before you finally agree upon a final version. It is crucial that all members of your Group fully understand the proposals and are happy with the design.

Your feasibility report should be shown to the whole Group as well as any partners and important community stakeholders/groups for comments and agreement. It should also be shown to your Parochial Church Council or local church body. Once you have agreement, this document can be part of the material sent to the Diocesan Advisory Committee or your denomination buildings advisory body when you apply for faculty/consent/permission to undertake the work. (More of this process is explained in Chapter 6).

Only once you have obtained the necessary permissions, will your architect produce detailed plans and drawings and specification and schedule of works for the contractors. This is sometimes referred to as the Implementation Stage documentation.

**TOP TIPS**

- Any proposals for change will need to be assessed in relation to the significance of the building and whatever else is also affected within it or around or underneath it. You should always proceed by means of considering options – one option might have less impact than another and still achieve the vision, another option might allow the development of something not thought of first time round.

- Although you can find help in compiling your Statements of Significance and Need from your existing guidebook and the listing entry for your church, which will both describe any special areas of interest structurally, historically, and artistically that you may need to be aware of, it is important that the Group fully understand for themselves the story of their building. It is not sufficient to just include the listing entry as your Statement of Significance.

- Ensure the whole Group is clear why you have rejected the options you have. Everyone needs this information for when you consult the community again, and when you approach funders.
• Bear in mind that you don’t necessarily have to do it all in one phase. It may be more cost effective and practical to break a large project down into stages.
• You can try things out by, for instance, moving furniture around.

### Chapter 5 Checklist

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Requirement</th>
<th>Completed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Have you assessed your church building and produced a Statement of Significance?</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have you consulted with your Diocesan Advisory Committee or denomination buildings authority body on an informal basis for help and support?</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have you checked if there are any outstanding repairs and whether it would make sense to do them at the same time?</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have you checked who you will need to consult about your project eg: English Heritage, other statutory consultees?</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are you clear as to why your group is the best group to deliver this project?</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you know exactly what changes will not take place, if your project does not go ahead?</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have you undergone a tendering process to select your architect for this project?</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you have a clear understanding of the fee structure and what you will be required to pay to your architect and do you have enough funds to pay for any work you ask him to do, including any the feasibility reports or detailed plans?</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Further Resources:

**Find an architect**

Registers of accredited professionals Architects accredited in building conservation can be found at [http://www.aabc-register.co.uk/register](http://www.aabc-register.co.uk/register)

Royal Institute of British Architects – [www.riba.org.uk](http://www.riba.org.uk)

Surveyors can be found via the Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors (RICS) [www.rics.org](http://www.rics.org) (follow the links to Services/Find a surveyor/Accreditation)

The Building Conservation Directory is an annual publication and an online database of suppliers and professional advisers - at [www.buildingconservation.com](http://www.buildingconservation.com)
The National Churches Trust’s website also includes a directory of professional advisers, building contractors and craftsmen
http://nationalchurchestrust.org/supporting-you/professional-alliance/professional-alliance.php

The Churchbuild website contains a range of practical information around developing and managing a building project. http://www.churchbuild.co.uk/ including:

- 10 Top Tips for choosing a contractor http://www.churchbuild.co.uk/how-to/choose-the-right-contractor/
- A page describing the many people who may need to be involved in a building project and advice on how when you make these appointments is important. http://www.churchbuild.co.uk/how-to/who%CA%BCs-who-winning-teams-for-church-building-projects/
- A diagram based on the RIBA Plan of Work which shows the various stages that most building projects will go through. It is really helpful if both the leadership and the rest of your church understand how these different stages fit together. With this basic structure in mind everyone can get to grips with the typical timescales involved. http://www.churchbuild.co.uk/how-to/the-process-explained/

The Society for the Preservation of Ancient Buildings has a useful statement on Church Extensions http://www.spab.org.uk/advice/statements/spab-statement-1-church-extensions/

Guidance on how to write Statements of Significance and Need

All denominations will have advice on making changes as well as specific advice on aspects like seating and extensions. They will also have advice on writing Statements.

The Church of England’s Churchcare website has advice on understanding your Church prior to considering making any changes, which can be read here http://www.churchcare.co.uk/churches/guidance-advice/making-changes-to-your-building/understanding-your-church

and guidance on completing Statements of Significance and Need here http://www.churchcare.co.uk/churches/guidance-advice/making-changes-to-your-building/understanding-your-church/statements-of-significance-need

English Heritage has advice here: http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/publications/writing-statements-of-significance-for-historic-places-of-worship/

The Baptist Union has advice here  
Leaflets LB01-LB10 are specially prepared for churches with Listed Buildings

The Divine Inspiration project, Diocese of Coventry
Toolkit 5: Writing a better Statement of Significance can be downloaded from here  
http://www.divine-inspiration.org.uk/resources/toolkit

The English Parish Church through the Centuries (DVD-ROM), The Christianity and Culture Project at the University of York, Section 6: Churches to the Present Day >> Church Art and Architecture >> Care, Conservation, Re-Ordering >> Use and Re-Ordering, http://www.christianityandculture.org.uk/

Sources of advice on extended uses
All denominations will have some community development support in the form of area support officers who can give you further advice and guidance. Many also have sections on their websites devoted to resources for churches who want to increase their community outreach.

This should be your first point of contact as your diocese or denomination will have an understanding of social issues and will already be involved with or have knowledge of a number of local groups and organisations and will be able to offer you specific support on how to increase your level of engagement within the local community. Importantly, they are also likely to be working ecumenically. They may also be able to point you in the direction of other local churches who are already working on a similar project that you can make contact with.

Churchcare has a whole section on developing your church building contained within their Church Development Plan guidance which explores the different options, and advises you on where to find professional help, managing the financial aspects, advice on altering your building, managing the project, and realisation, promotion and monitoring your project. You can also find specific guidance on particular wider uses such as community shops, outreach post offices tourism, and education. Start here  
http://www.churchcare.co.uk/churches/open-sustainable

The Arthur Rank Centre has links to rural advice and community projects as part of their resources for rural places of worship  

Village SOS began in 2010 when six enterprising UK rural villages won Big Lottery Fund investment of around £400,000 to revive their communities through new business ventures.
Today, Village SOS aims to build on the experience of these six projects and to inspire others to start a new business that will regenerate their own community. Go to the website where you will find Tools, support and expert guidance to help communities take a step towards starting their own businesses and guide them through the journey from their initial idea to transforming the area. There is also an advice phone line you can ring http://www.villagesos.org.uk/

The Plunkett Foundation supports rural communities through community-ownership to take control of the issues affecting them. They

- Support rural communities looking to set up and run community-owned shops
- Help rural communities to set up a wide range of community-owned enterprises, social enterprises and co-operatives to provide vital rural services
- Enable community food and farming enterprises to set up and run successfully http://www.plunkett.co.uk/
“This country’s historic places of worship should retain their role as living buildings at the heart of their communities. We want to help congregations accommodate changes that are needed to achieve this, in ways which sustain and enhance the special qualities of their buildings. New work in historic places of worship should:

• be based on an understanding of the cultural and heritage significance of the building;
• minimise harm to the special historic, archaeological, architectural and artistic interest of the building, its contents and setting;
• bring with it public benefits, such as securing the long-term use of the building, which outweigh any harm to significance;
• achieve high standards of design, craftsmanship and materials”.

(New Work in Historic Places of Worship, English Heritage 2012)

You cannot undertake any works in your church until you have obtained the relevant permissions, which may involve both church and secular planning authorities. Ensure you check with your relevant building advisers at Diocesan, District, Synod or national level and find out what you will need.

Bear in mind that many processes in this Chapter will run concurrently with the activities outlined in Chapter 5 – crucially your options appraisal and feasibility study.

Most churches will have undergone some form of change during their history, and some will have been rearranged several times. In some cases, it might have been a minor adaptation, for others a radical re-ordering reflecting a change in liturgical practice, the desire of a local benefactor to show his patronage or the wish of a congregation to provide a community space.

Understanding the architecture and constraints when making physical alterations to your building

Some new uses and changes may merely mean that the heating has to be kept on longer, or require that pews and/or seating become ‘flexible and therefore moveable’ depending on different needs. In order to accommodate and facilitate the extended uses you are planning, some adaptations of the building, such as the provision of
kitchen and toilet facilities, removal of the pews or the erection of a screen, may become necessary.

Other uses may require major intervention into the fabric of the building to create mezzanine floors, galleries, or a three-storied structure at the west end of a city church to create space for a café, a shopping mall, and conference centre.

Any works to a church building that involve alteration or extension, which would affect its character as a building of special architectural or historical interest, requires listed building consent or its equivalent permission. Assume that most changes will require that you obtain permission. Like for Like repairs and maintenance should not need permission, but it is always best to check.

However, even if it is listed, this doesn’t mean that you can’t make changes or enhance your building. It just means that you will need to seek consent or permission and this requires that you show why any impact those changes will have on the building is justified.

This means developing a scheme that works with and is sensitive to the particular character of your building i.e.: based on an understanding of the cultural and heritage significance of the building and which will minimise the harm to the special historic, architectural, archaeological and artistic merit of the building, its contents and setting.

There are three factors which you should bear in mind:

• alterations as far as possible should be reversible
• flexibility is important as your needs may change sooner than you think
• there is no intrinsic problem with introducing new work; new and old work can complement each other. New work must be sensitive to the particular character of your building. Good design, good materials and workmanship are the other key elements.

So before you start drawing up definitive plans, you will need to ensure you thoroughly understand your building and its history and importance. As already covered in Chapter 5, a useful exercise, and a requirement if you need to apply for a Permission/Faculty under the Ecclesiastical Exemption, is to complete Statement of Significance and a Statement of Need.

Archaeology

The continuity of use has protected and preserved many of our churches, so that the parish church is almost always the oldest building in a village, town or city, and together with its churchyard often forms an island of ancient remains within a constantly changing environment. When repairs and especially alterations are under consideration the archaeological implications should always be looked at. Applications for permissions/faculty/consents should always include adequate information on any necessary archaeological provision. Many grants in support
of works upon historic churches are conditional upon an adequate level of archaeological recording and analysis being incorporated into the programme of work.

Works that might carry archaeological implications include:

- any alterations or repairs (including conservation work) that might disturb the building fabric including floors
- the removal or alteration of fixtures and fittings
- structural extensions
- the excavation of drainage, service or foundation trenches in the church or churchyard
- works upon monuments and boundary walls and gates

The potential impact should be explored when you are writing your Statement of Significance. Understanding the history of a church will help a parish to recognise when proposed works of maintenance or development may have archaeological implications. Seek advice at the earliest opportunity from your DAC Secretary or buildings advisory body. You can find a detailed guidance note on archaeology on Churchcare at http://www.churchcare.co.uk/churches/guidance-advice/looking-after-your-church/archaeology-and-ruins

### Obtaining permission under the Ecclesiastical Exemption

The Ecclesiastical Exemption Order 2010, Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas, England gives exemption from listed building and conservation area consent for the five main denominations in England and the Church in Wales.

It recognises the particular function of the buildings as places of worship and ensures that sacred uses are protected, the parishioners are duly consulted and that the wider aesthetic interests of the public are considered. The system balances mission and worship and wider community use with care and conservation.

The Ecclesiastical Exemption reduces burdens on the planning system while maintaining an appropriate level of protection and reflecting the particular need of listed buildings in use as places of worship to be able to adapt to changing needs over time to ensure their survival in their intended use. It is widely acknowledged that keeping a building in use is more likely to result in the preservation, proper maintenance and sustainability of that building. To read guidance on the Operation of the Ecclesiastical Exemption and related planning matters for places of worship in England (July 2010) go to:

The five denominations within England are:

- The Church of England
- The Roman Catholic Church
- The Methodist Church
- The Baptist Union of Great Britain
- The United Reformed Church

They are exempted from the following parts of planning legislation as follows:

- Listed Building Consent (LBC)
- Conservation Area Consent
- Building Preservation Notices
- Compulsory acquisition of buildings in need of repair
- Urgent Works Notices

In 2010, for England only, exemption was extended to include separately listed structures within the curtilage such as churchyard walls, railings and monuments which no longer need LBC when works are required.

The exemption does not exclude the building from the jurisdiction of planning permission, dangerous structure notices, advertising consents, buildings regulations, or any other secular legislation eg: Health and Safety regulations. So you will need planning permission for changes that affect the external appearance of a building eg: a new doorway or an extension.

In return for the Exemption, the five denominations have demonstrated that they operate an equivalent system to manage change to listed ecclesiastical buildings and unlisted buildings in conservation areas. So if your church building belongs to one of the five denominations above and you want to make changes that would normally fall under the exempted parts of the planning legislation, then you will need to apply for ‘permission’ from your denomination.

Other denominations, not included within the five exempt ones, proposing building works would have to apply to their local planning authority in the same way as any other building.

All listed place of worship also have to consult English Heritage, the local planning authority and the relevant national amenity societies about works that would otherwise require listed building consent. The proposals also have to be advertised locally by way of a site notice and, where external works are proposed, in an advertisement in a local paper. Your denomination can advise you on all of this.

Each of the five exempt denominations operates its own consent system and each has extensive guidance on their individual websites. Links to the relevant section on the main denomination websites where their consent processes are explained are listed at the end of this chapter.
The rest of the chapter will concentrate on what happens within the Church of England. The basic process will be the same for all denominations, but you will need to check your own denomination’s system.

**The Faculty Jurisdiction**

The Church of England’s mechanism for regulating changes to its buildings, contents and churchyards is in the form of the Faculty Jurisdiction. Faculty Jurisdiction applies to all Anglican parish churches, listed and unlisted and has been in existence long before the modern planning systems we know today. A faculty (meaning ‘permission’) is a licence to carry out work.

“It ensures that churches are properly cared for, and that whatever is done to them is properly considered beforehand and carried out in the most appropriate way. The system recognises that churches are living buildings, many of which are of great historic significance but all of which exist for the worship of God and the mission of the Church. It acknowledges that a community’s needs change over time”.

http://www.churchcare.co.uk/churches/guidance-advice/making-changes-to-your-building/faculty-jurisdiction

This means that in order to carry out any changes or repairs, whether it’s to the building’s structure, internal decoration or contents, you must have a licence from the faculty, authorising the works.

However it is possible that a licence may not be required for very minor works. Each diocese will have written guidance on works of a minor nature that may be undertaken without a faculty. This guidance (usually referred to as De Minimis List) varies slightly from diocese to diocese. For advice or a copy of the guidance for your diocese contact your DAC Secretary. However, even in this situation, you must have it in writing from the faculty that a licence is not required. To find out more

http://www.churchcare.co.uk/churches/guidance-advice/making-changes-to-your-building/faculty-jurisdiction

**The Basic Process**

The first stage in obtaining a faculty consists of seeking advice from the Diocesan Advisory Committee (DAC). DAC members have a range of experience, covering building conservation, liturgy, archaeology etc. This expertise is freely available and as has been stressed in earlier chapters, parishes should contact their DAC at the earliest stage in their thinking so as to allow the Committee’s advice to be included in the project planning.

Further consultation may be required with the Church Buildings Council and other statutory bodies such as English Heritage and the National Amenities Society. The DAC can advise on this and on what documents and paperwork you will need to provide and at what stage this should happen. Once the DAC has formally considered
the proposal, it will issue a certificate. This will either support the project or not. Conditions may be attached to the certificate.

This is sent to the parish accompanied by a public notice, which must be displayed for 28 days, giving parishioners and others the opportunity to make representations. Just like local authority planning controls, this process gives the general public and any other interested parties the opportunity to comment on the proposed changes.

Next the parish petitions formally for a faculty, by sending the faculty form provided by the DAC to the Diocesan Registrar together with information about the proposals, such as plans, specifications and the PCC resolution. In cases that are uncontroversial, the faculty will be issued shortly afterwards, perhaps with conditions. If the work is controversial, involves structural changes or changes to the character of a listed church, the Registrar sends notifications to various advisory bodies, like English Heritage, the statutory National Amenity Societies and the Church Buildings Council who will be invited to express their opinion on the proposed changes, if they have not already commented.

If there is some dispute, i.e. if there is an objection from a parishioner or an advisory body, the Chancellor, the judge of the diocesan consistory court, must determine the petition. Generally this will be on the basis of the papers, but occasionally a formal court hearing may be necessary. More information at http://www.churchcare.co.uk/churches/guidance-advice/making-changes-to-your-building/faculty-jurisdiction

Remember, if a faculty is granted, it has been granted based upon the information you supplied. If any subsequent changes are made to your plans or project you must notify the faculty jurisdiction before implementing those changes.

Talk to your DAC

This chapter can only provide a basic overview of the faculty process. Seek advice from your DAC or equivalent.

You may also have to apply for permissions from other authorities eg: changes to the exterior means that planning permission is also required from the local authority before works starts, so the expected timescale to obtain this needs to be built into your project timetable.

The faculty process takes no longer than the normal local authority planning process, but it does take time. Bear this in mind, because you need this process to fit in with your funding programme too. Applying for funding can take time, and some funders may require work to begin by a specific date. Never start work before you have the appropriate permission.
Some words of advice from a DAC Secretary and the Amenity Societies

The DAC and the PCC

The Diocesan Advisory Committee for the Care of Churches (DAC) of each Diocese exists to assist in the process of planning permissions relating to Places of Worship (known as Faculty), and to provide education and training for churchwardens, PCC members, incumbents and architects. DAC members serve on a voluntary basis and are appointed by the Bishop’s Council. The committee members include a range of specialists on architecture, liturgy, archaeology, engineering, and representatives from Local Authorities and Amenity Societies and the Archdeacons.

The DAC advises the Diocesan Chancellor (who has the authority to grant Faculties) on the suitability of schemes of repair and alterations. The DAC is happy to advise PCCs on the maintenance and care of the buildings, how to petition for faculty, and where to seek funding. It is also available to advise on the commissioning of new work in churches, for example WC and kitchen facilities.

The DAC secretary (and in some Dioceses, the Church Buildings Support Officer) can put PCCs in touch with other PCCs, contractors and other specialist organisations to help at the feasibility stage of any development. The DAC will usually maintain a list of exemplar sites for PCCs to visit to review works ranging from WC installations to heating and lighting systems. It is good to see real examples to get a feeling for what might be suitable / appropriate in your church; there is no “one size fits all” and what works well in one location may not in another.

Contact between the DAC and Parishes is to be welcomed and encouraged; regular training events enable PCCs to draw upon the knowledge and experience of each DAC. Similarly it is a good opportunity for the DAC to hear of the things that frustrate PCCs; minor changes in processes can often bring about significant improvements in the way we do things. Site visits by DAC members to meet PCCs at the early stages of major project planning are important; usually the DAC will encourage the PCC to think about the “bigger picture” rather than focussing on one single issue – it is good to have a vision for the entire building even if works have to be phased.

The DAC will provide the liaison between the PCC and the statutory consultees e.g. The Church Buildings Council, English Heritage, The Victorian Society etc. The DAC secretary will advise at what stage of planning consultation should take place; generally this should be as early as possible to minimise delay and frustration at a later stage.

The DAC secretary is available to support incumbents, churchwardens, and PCC members and should normally be the first point of contact with any query relating to your church building. The secretary is unlikely to know the answer to every question, but is able to draw on advice from DAC Consultants (on such matters as bells, clocks,
organs, furniture) and the Diocesan Registrar (on legal matters). The secretary is there to help all; from those unfamiliar with Faculty Jurisdiction to those seeking straightforward advice on basic housekeeping and maintenance. In many Dioceses a Church Buildings Support Officer will track the progress of projects and offer support to PCCs at “staging points” during the faculty petition.

It is important for PCCs to view the DAC as its support resource; the DAC is there to help PCCs achieve their ambitions for their buildings with a friendly, guiding hand.

Stephen Challenger
Property and DAC Secretary, Hereford Diocese

Working with the National Amenity Societies.

Plans for work to churches involving changes to the historic building and its contents are referred to a number of organisations for comment. Consultation with the national amenity societies is directed under Circular 01/01 from the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister on those works which include any form of demolition to a listed building. This might include breaching historic walls with new openings as well as the removal of historic fixtures and fittings. Whatever the change being proposed, early consultation with the appropriate amenity society as well as with English Heritage and the Church Buildings Council, is recommended. A good time is when initial plans are produced. This might be arranged via your DAC Secretary or equivalent, so an early discussion with them on process is also strongly recommended.

The National Amenity Societies relevant to work on churches are;

- The Ancient Monuments Society looks at ancient monuments and historic buildings of all periods.
- The Council for British Archaeology look at historic buildings of all periods, but with a particular concern for archaeological features.
- The Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings (SPAB) look primarily at buildings of before 1700, but have an interest in buildings and their historic features from all periods, and will often take an ‘overview’ of buildings with work of a variety of dates.
- The Georgian Group look at buildings and features of between 1700 to 1837
- The Victorian Society look at buildings and features of between 1837 and 1915 (Victorian and Edwardian periods)
- The Twentieth Century Society look at buildings and features of after 1915.

Some work on churches which are complex buildings dating from several historic periods may involve consultation with more than one if not all of these organisations. In general terms amenity societies will appreciate early and wide-ranging consultation to make them aware of forthcoming proposals and inviting participation in discussion. As many churches were either built or significantly restored in the Victorian and Edwardian periods, it is likely that at least the Victorian Society will
need to be consulted. The society has a Churches Conservation Adviser, and its stated aim is ‘to help churches make better decisions about adapting Victorian and Edwardian buildings to the way we live now, while keeping what is special about them.’ With all of the amenity societies early contact and discussion will help to establish what that society considers to be important about the building, and will give an indication of how the society is likely to respond in formal consultation when plans are submitted for approval. It is important to be aware of what these views might be as it may influence how proposals are developed. It is not generally helpful to leave initial consultation with the amenity societies until a later stage, when negotiating changes might add to project costs and cause delays.

Changes to the building will be assessed by the amenity societies with regard to their impact on the character and appearance of the building and its fittings. The impact of such change will be considered with regard to at least the following factors:

- The listed status of the building (grade I., II* or II) and its relationship to any designated conservation area.
- Is the building or its restoration the work of any known architect of national or local importance? Is it the first, last or considered in published sources to be a good example of their work and why?
- Is there an historical significance, such as the burial place of a famous person?
- The completeness of the historic material. Does the church have a complete set of pews or chancel ensemble? Or both? Are they in their original form or position?
- The significance of quality, design and craftsmanship. Are the fittings of unusual design? Were they specially commissioned? Are they handmade or individually decorated?

This list is not exhaustive and each proposal will be considered on a case by case basis.

An awareness of the significance of the building and its contents which can be gained through the production of a detailed and accurate statement of significance prior to any consultation with the amenity societies will assist greatly in discussions. Possible further questions may arise during consultation. Any changes to important historic fabric will have to be justified through a robust statement of need, which the amenity societies will take into account when they comment on proposals.

Tim Bridges
West Midlands Conservation Adviser
The Victorian Society
TOP TIPS

- Any work undertaken in a Church without authority is unlawful. You need confirmation in writing that you have consent or that you don’t need consent.
- Make sure the whole Group understands the process of obtaining permission and what information is going to have to be provided.
- Check with your DAC or denomination buildings advisory body to find out how long the faculty process is likely to take. There will be other stages of the project that you can continue to develop while waiting for permissions.

Chapter 6 Checklist

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Have you found out about any archaeological implications?</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Have DAC issued a certificate, either authorising you to apply for a faculty, or stating that faculty isn’t required?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have you sent your Feasibility Study and Architect’s drawings to the Diocesan Registrar for faculty consent?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have you checked whether your project will require local authority planning permissions or listed building consent?</td>
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Further Resources:

Secular Statutory Controls

You can get further information on the secular controls applicable to churches and their immediate surroundings, including below ground, their furnishings, fittings and churchyard from your local planning authority.

There is also a useful section on Churchcare at
http://www.churchcare.co.uk/churches/guidance-advice/making-changes-to-your-building/faculty-jurisdiction/secular-statutory-controls

Seeking Permission

For the Church of England, help and guidance on Faculty Jurisdiction can be found on the Churchcare website here
http://www.churchcare.co.uk/churches/guidance-advice/making-changes-to-your-building/faculty-jurisdiction

For the Methodist Church visit here
For the Catholic Church visit here
https://www.cbcew.org.uk/patrimony

For the Baptist Union visit here
Leaflets LB01-LB10 are specially prepared for churches with Listed Buildings

For the United Reformed Church visit here

For the Quakers visit here
http://www.quaker.org.uk/property-matters

The Arthur Rank Centre provides summary descriptions of how each denomination system operates (both exempt and non-exempt) and links to the relevant parts of each denomination’s websites.
http://www.arthurrankcentre.org.uk/publications-and-resources/rural-church-buildings

English Heritage offers advice and support as well as being part of the regulatory process.
http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/caring/places-of-worship/making-changes/

This document provides guidance on re-ordering and extensions, starting with identifying need and developing a scheme that is sympathetic to your building. There is advice on common issues including heating and lighting, drainage, flooring, doors and porches, security, energy efficiency and access as well as explaining the legal requirements and how to obtain authorisation from the denominations as well as from the secular planning authorities. There is guidance on how to start writing Statements of Need and Significance.
CHAPTER 7
PROJECT PLANNING

Now that you have your project, it is time to start developing your Strategy – how are you going to make it happen? Think about your timescales. When do you hope the work will start? When do you hope that it will be finished?

Funders will expect to see a full Business Plan detailing all aspects of your project. (More in Chapter 8). First here are some things to think about that will help in compiling that document.

Planning is vital to your project and it is worth going into detail and breaking everything down into small, simple steps or actions that need to take place. These can also be called project activities as they should:

- Specify what will be done, how it will be done, who will do it and when it will be done in order to achieve your outcome
- form the main content of your project planning
- determine the resources and budget that you need to run your project.

A Plan of Action

A simple table or spreadsheet can help you with this process. Set up a table with a column for each of the following and create a simple action plan:

- what work needs to be done,
- when it needs to be done by,
- who needs to do it (eg: who in the Group will be the liaison contact person for the architect; who will chase up estimates or drawings from your furniture designer),
- what and whether help is needed from elsewhere.

This is relatively easy for the structural, building and refurbishment works because this detail will be in your architect’s schedule of works. What you need to do is to incorporate information about when you need to apply for funding, claim money, undertake additional consultations and recruit and train any more volunteers into your action plan, for example. Many of these tasks will be happening concurrently.
Day-to-day Working Methods

This is also the time to consider who will monitor the project on a day-to-day basis and what process you will have in place to monitor the work that goes on. For example, during major building works, it may be sensible for someone from the Group to meet the architect every couple of days. Use one point of contact. You may find it useful to establish a project monitoring team or working sub-group, within your Group. Give key tasks to a handful of members. That way, it’s much easier to know who is doing what and who is responsible for what.

Consider at what point you need to draw up any contracts, either to commission people to work on your project or for when the project is complete and the community want to start using their new facility. Do you have enough money in place to pay for the initial expenditure? Do you have the funder’s permission to start? Investigate whether you need to take out any additional insurance – for when the building works are taking place, or when they are finished. Public Liability Insurance is one such cost to bear in mind, especially if you’re using volunteers.

Working out Project Costs

A key element to project planning is determining costs.

There will have to be another tendering exercise in order to procure a contractor to undertake any building works and obtain the best value costs. Advertising and seeking tenders for the works will usually be part of the services you ask your architect, building surveyor or quantity surveyor to carry out on your behalf. However, it is a good idea for your project monitoring team or working sub-group to be involved.

You will also have to get several quotes for any equipment and furnishings. Funders will expect to see a breakdown and evidence of how you arrived at your costs for the building works and other expenses. The tendering exercise and quotes will provide you with the necessary documentation.

Plan out your cash flow. At what stage will contractors require payments? Do you have sufficient resources to make these payments until you can begin claiming grants? (There is more on this in Chapter 12).

Systems Success

Think about what sort of information you may need to collect while the project is actually taking place. For example, do you need to know for how many hours volunteers are helping out so that you can include this ‘in-kind’ contribution as part of your match funding? (See Chapter 8) If so, create a timesheet that everyone can complete as and when they do some work.
What sort of information may a funder require you to collect?

Your project should result in more people using the church building than before. So, is there a system for collecting existing user numbers? (Don’t worry if worshippers are the only people who use the church now – this means that nobody else does, so you’ll only need to keep records of the number of new users of your refurbished building.) Some churches have a visitor book for tourists to sign. This is an excellent source of tourist visitor data, although not every tourist signs it, so real visitor numbers are often much higher. Having this baseline data will allow you to create ‘before’ and ‘after’ pictures, when it is time to measure the success of your project. So think about what information you’ll need to collect and how you will get it. How will you collect the number of new users of your project facility in the future?

Review Regularly

Regularly review and adapt your action plan as you discover any further steps you need to take. When you identify an action that needs to be taken, identify who in the group should be responsible for it. Ensure that you continue to have regular meetings and that those who have taken on responsibility for different aspects report back regularly on progress and alert the Group to any potential problems.

Two other important documents you will need to produce include a business plan, which will include your project’s budget and a risk assessment of your project. Most grant-making bodies will ask to see these. (For more on producing a business plan see Chapter 8).

Risk Assessment

Basically this should be about identifying risks and thinking about ways to mitigate them and what actions will need to be taken if unforeseen things happen. Examples could include:

- What will we need to do if the project costs more than planned because of unforeseen necessary works?
- What will be the problem if the project takes longer than we thought?

There is a lot of guidance out there for community groups – look on your local authority website or do a search on the internet.
TOP TIPS

• Don’t commit yourself to any work until you receive offer letters from funders. Any expenditure incurred before the date of an offer from a funder will be ineligible for grant support.

• Ensure you know when you should receive any required permissions from the relevant authorities, and who should receive them. You can only begin work when you have permission to do so.

• If there’s a delay of several months between planning your project and applying for funding, get revised quotes to check your figures are still correct.

• Continue to take photos of the work in progress so you have a pictorial reference of the project. This may prove useful for final reporting and evaluation processes.

• Think about creating a project monitoring group, or working group to take on the day-to-day responsibility of pushing the project forward. The quicker key people can liaise with one another, the quicker problems are resolved and potential delays are eliminated.

• Once you have permissions in place and are ready to start major alterations, renovations or repairs, it’s important that you inform your insurer as soon as possible – see Chapter 13.

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**Chapter 7 Checklist**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Have you created a project action plan combining information from your architect’s schedule of works with your own project actions?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Have you established a project monitoring group and allocated key responsibilities to specific members of the group for when the project is being implemented?</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have you established appropriate and realistic costs for your project by obtaining several quotes for each cost?</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have you planned your potential cash flow?</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Further Resources:
The Churchbuild website contains a range of practical information around developing and managing a building project. http://www.churchbuild.co.uk/ including:

- 10 Top Tips for choosing a contractor  
  http://www.churchbuild.co.uk/how-to/choose-the-right-contractor/
- A page describing the many different people who may need to be involved in a building project and advice on how when you need to make these appointments is important. http://www.churchbuild.co.uk/how-to/who%CA%BCs-who-winning-teams-for-church-building-projects/
- A diagram based on the RIBA Plan of Work which shows the various stages that most building projects will go through. It is really helpful if both the leadership and the rest of your church understand how these different stages fit together. With this basic structure in mind everyone can get to grips with the typical timescales involved. http://www.churchbuild.co.uk/how-to/the-process-explained/

The Big Lottery has guidance on project planning which can be found here http://www.biglotteryfund.org.uk/funding/funding-guidance

Seeking Permission
The Heritage Lottery Fund has an example of a risk table which can be downloaded at http://www.hlf.org.uk/HowToApply/furtherresources/Pages/WorkedexampleRisktable.aspx

A business plan often sounds daunting, but when you bring everything together, it will help to give you confidence that you can deliver your project! It will also provide the evidence that your funders will need so that they can see if your project is going to be viable. It will need to contain the answers to the following questions.

And by this stage, you should have most of the information to hand.

**Who are you and what do you want to do?** - a description of your group, your ideas and vision, an overview of the project and its aims and intended beneficiaries i.e.: what do you want to achieve and how will your project do this?

**Where are you?** - a description of your location and community, which is your community profile and the proposed premises for your project. You can include details like maps or an outline plan in an Appendix.

**Why is your project necessary?** – the results of your community audit and any consultation you have undertaken. This is your market research which shows how you have identified the need. You should also make clear that you have checked out the competition, identified a real gap in the market and are proposing a different or complementary service to that which already exists. You need to demonstrate that you’re fully aware of the marketplace that you’re planning to operate in and you understand any important trends and drivers.

**What systems will you have in place?** – to manage the development and the long term management of your project. This will include your organisational structures and your policies and procedures.

Outline any legal matters you have to comply with and how you are going to sort them out i.e.: permissions for building works, legal agreements with partners.

**How are you planning to do it?** – This is your project strategy – sometimes called your implementation plan. This is a detailed description of your project and how it will be set up, managed and operated in the long term.

**How will your project be managed?**
Who will be involved in the delivery and management? Will you be employing staff and/or volunteers? How will you recruit them?
Identify the skills required and how you will obtain them. You need to set out your own background and skills and the structure and key skills of your staff and volunteers etc.

Remember people are your most valuable resource. Describe your partners, volunteers, and the time put in so far.

What resources and equipment do you already have and what will you need to make the project happen?

Describe your assets, which will include premises. Outline any building works involved – and attach plans.

What kind of equipment will you need and where you will get them?

What about any IT requirements?

How much will it cost?

You need to compile a financial plan which shows the costs of developing the project (Capital Costs) and secondly, the financial out-goings once the project is up and running (Revenue Costs). It is important to divide your costs into these different types of funding, as most funders will usually only fund one kind.

Capital Costs

This will be your start-up costs, which will include professional advice, building costs, and marketing.

Capital funding refers to money paid for one-off items. The refurbishment or the installation of new equipment or solar panels are examples of one-off items ie: not something that takes place every day of the week. Replacing fixtures and fittings, like chairs and pews, installing new heating systems, cookers, lighting, toilets, and furnishings are all examples of expenditure that fall under the capital heading.

Full Cost Recovery: for voluntary organisations, some funders including the Heritage Lottery Fund will also accept part of an organisation’s overheads (sometimes called ‘core costs’) as a part of the costs of the project. They will expect this to be calculated using Full Cost Recovery and the funders’ guidance notes will explain where you can get help on this.

Revenue costs

Revenue funding relates to the day-to-day running costs incurred by a project. This would include any regular utility bills (electricity, gas, water, phone), rates, insurance, salary costs of a paid worker or expenses for volunteers. You may also be paying rent for your use of part of the building. Depending upon your project, some funders may offer grant money towards some revenue costs. If, for example, part of your project was to establish a crèche in the Church one day a week, then employing a worker or co-ordinator to run the crèche for the first year may form part of your project. The worker’s salary would be classified as revenue expenditure. A funder may be willing to offer some grant money towards this cost to help kick-start the project (this is sometimes referred to as ‘pump-priming’), but they won’t pay the worker’s salary forever.
Don’t forget on-going maintenance and the replacement of equipment. This will also include any obligations towards paying for maintenance or repair costs for part of the building under a rent or lease arrangement.

Identify as many of these as possible, and try to predict what these will be in the future. In all these financial aspects, as far as possible be clear about all the assumptions you are making eg: how much one of something costs and how many you will need in a year; how many days you will be open. Use existing expenditure information for the building as a starting point.

**How are you going to fund it?**

Your plan will need to include details of where you are applying for funding. Funders will ask to see how much you have raised already from other sources eg: grants and donations, community fundraising activities. Most funders will not provide 100% of your funding needs and will expect you to raise a fixed percentage from other sources usually known as match-funding or partnership funding.

Many funders will also expect your community group to make a small financial contribution to the project anyway – perhaps 10%. It is only fair that you demonstrate to funders your commitment to your project by ‘risking’ your own cash.

**In-kind Support**

Some funders will allow you to include volunteer-time/in-kind donations as a financial contribution to the start-up costs or revenue costs as part of your match-funding. So this can be a way of increasing your own financial contribution to your project. Funders will be more than happy to advise you on the type of in-kind support that they will consider.

For example, if a project needs to clear some church land to create a play area for local children, you could ask for volunteers to do the work instead. The funder will specify what they will allow as the volunteer rate eg: £8 per hour. So if five volunteers spent two hours each, clearing the land, the financial value of that work is:

\[
2 \text{ hours} \times £8 \text{ per hour} = £16 \times 5 \text{ volunteers} = £80.00.
\]

A contractor may have charged £150 to do the work. So not only have your volunteering efforts reduced the total cost of your project, you may have saved your potential funder some money too. That’s why some funders will put a value on volunteer time. This means that you will need to keep accurate timesheets.

Businesses with strong links with the community may be prepared to help out your project in some way, either by offering free use of labour, or equipment. It’s important that this ‘value’ is recorded too.
Revenue funding

Once the project is up and running, where is your income going to come from? What is your rental structure, charging policy? Charging a small rental for using the space is a common idea, and there is more guidance on hiring arrangements in Chapter 9.

You need to show how your project will cover your costs. Creating a spreadsheet is a good way of doing this. There is more on this in Chapter 9.

If you are taking out a loan as part of your finances, then show how you plan to repay any borrowings.

How are you going to promote and market the project?

How will people find out where you are and what you do - and how much will it cost to tell them? Will you use leaflets? Adverts in the local press? Signage? A website? Get your project listed in local directories? Special events? How much can you do yourself and with volunteers? Will you need to pay for some professional marketing?

How will you measure the success of your project?

In your planning stage you will have identified your specific objectives which will describe exactly what you are trying to achieve or accomplish.

For each of your objectives, you need to identify criteria, or indicators, which will provide reliable and valid measures for each of your objectives.

You will need to develop measures that tell you what is really happening. Once again, your measures (or indicators) should be based on your objectives.

TOP TIPS

• Collect all of your action plans, strategies, and policies together to create your project business plan.
• Before, during and after the development and realisation of your project you need to keep both your business plan and budget up-to-date. It may be useful to schedule a review of these documents at regular intervals to keep your project on track. Maintaining a business-like approach is vital.
• In-kind support needs to be evidenced. If a business is willing to offer you help, ask them to invoice you and then add to the invoice ‘This is In-Kind Support, do not pay.’
Chapter 8 Checklist

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Status</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Have you collated all of your plans, policies, and strategies into one business plan?</td>
<td>✔️</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have you identified all forms of in-kind support that your project can call upon and established systems (e.g. timesheets) to enable you to claim it?</td>
<td>✔️</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are you clear what type of funding your project requires and whether your funders offer this support?</td>
<td>✔️</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have you thought about how you are going to market your project?</td>
<td>✔️</td>
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Further Resources:

The Parish Resources website has guidance on writing a budget and developing a business plan as part of its Funding Guides which can be downloaded from here http://www.parishresources.org.uk/funding.htm

The NCVO website also had guidance on project planning for community groups on its website http://www.ncvo-vol.org.uk/advice-support/advice-support
CHAPTER 9
PROJECT SUSTAINABILITY

Sustainability is about the long term future of a project. It is also important that any alterations you make to your building continue to work for your community long into the future.

Sustainability is most commonly used with particular reference to the environment, however, from a project point of view; there are other sustainable aspects you need to consider:

- Economic Sustainability,
- Organisational Sustainability,
- Social Sustainability,
- Environmental Sustainability.

Funders will expect to see that you have thought about all of these aspects, taken action and set in place appropriate mechanisms for the long term.

Economic Sustainability

Many funders give financial support for ‘capital’ projects – those that require refurbishments or structural changes to buildings, or the purchase of specialised equipment. They may even pay for some other setup costs such as marketing and training. They may not help with the day-to-day running costs such as utility bills – and if they do, it will be for a limited period of time – or for longer term costs such as maintenance and the replacement of equipment.

To support your capital project, a section of your business or action plan needs to look at this day-to-day financial future. You’ll need to demonstrate that once your project is up and running, you can estimate what the regular running costs will be and what steps you will take to generate enough income to cover them.

One common way to generate an income is by charging a small fee to hire your new community space, but you need to set that cost at an acceptable level. There’s no point charging a fee so high that the community groups or other potential users cannot afford to pay it.
Hiring or leasing parts of your building

If you intend to share space with other users, the agreements you have with them will vary depending on the scale of use. This can range from another organisation using part of the building for long periods of time or installing a permanent structure, to regular or one-off lettings or hiring. If the former, then a lease or licence may be required, both of which will need the relevant permission from your denomination. Check with your relevant building advisers at Diocesan, District, Synod or national level at an early stage and certainly before you enter into any commitments.

All agreements should cover costs and set out clearly what is expected of you as the hirer and your users. This should include details such as who is responsible for cleaning, locking up, timings etc.

It is recommended that you inform your Insurance Company if you are changing the nature of the use of your building, especially if hiring out space to external users. Your insurance company will also be able to give guidance when hiring out space in your buildings to outside users as well as guidance on running functions.

You also need to ensure that you take account of inflation eg: the cost of hire should rise every so often – to help you meet rising costs associated with looking after the building. Keep an eye on what other facilities in your area are charging, but be realistic, being the cheapest may get you business, but you still need to cover your costs.

Consider the long term. The work you have done today may need repairs in ten, or twenty years’ time. What steps are you going to take to create a financial reserve to cover such costs and any unforeseen circumstances?

Organisational Sustainability

This is about developing structures which are the right ones for managing the project in the long term. There is a difference between project management and facility management.

You may have already planned a different management structure/organisation to manage the new facility to the one that developed the project.

However, whether the PCC or a separate Community group managed the project, it may well be appropriate for the same group to continue managing the new facility. However, you may find that different people within the group have better skills and abilities for doing this, rather than relying on the same people involved in the project management. Some may decide they want to stand down at this point and you should ensure you identify which skills you need for this next stage.

Your structure should ensure that the right mix of people continue to be involved in the decision-making ie: a good balance between church and community, paid staff, volunteers and users. You need feedback from all these groups to ensure you pick up on problems and suggestions for improvements in good time.
Whatever you do don’t let your project be dependent on one person who then collapses with exhaustion.

Planning for succession

You will also need to ensure that knowledge is passed on and that arrangements are in place if a key person moves on. Encourage people to take on new responsibilities so that experience and the necessary skills are not concentrated in only one or two people.

Volunteers

Equally important is keeping your volunteers on board and inspired over the long-term. Volunteers need good leadership and management. It is important that they don’t become overstretched and you will need to ensure you are continually encouraging fresh volunteers to join the project.

Social Sustainability

The whole reason for undertaking this project is to solve a community need. As well as demonstrating that your project will solve the problem, you also need to introduce a system that allows you to continue consulting the community about its needs in the future.

After the launch you will still need to regularly review whether and how you are achieving your aims. Projects and activities may need to change over time as they adapt to changing circumstances, such as competing facilities or changes in the population, which may no longer correspond to your initial community research. Changes can be bring both opportunities and challenges. It could be that a school which has been using your church closes, or another local facility providing meeting space is forced to close.

If your project enables a crèche to operate for a couple of mornings a week, that’s great for local mothers and babies. But in a few years’ time, (whilst hopefully, new mothers and babies will still be using the crèche facilities), what will you need to do for those original babies who are now a few years older and need nursery places or after school clubs?

What steps are you taking to ensure that you include the views and wishes of everyone in the community? How are you trying to reach out to disadvantaged groups in your area?
Environmental Sustainability

When about to undertake any works whether repairs or re-ordering, routine maintenance or thinking about installing new lighting or heating, make sure you have looked at the most energy efficiency option as well as thought about sustainability. All funders will increasingly be looking at this element when assessing applications.

“Finding one solution to fit all churches is impossible. Instead each church must aim to strike the right delicate balance between encouraging use of the building, energy efficiency and conservation”. www.churchcare.co.uk

There are several different aspects you may wish to consider here:

- The materials and products you use to refurbish buildings. It makes sense to try to use the most environmentally friendly products possible while also using energy-saving products. If you’re refurbishing a building, this is the ideal time to install such infrastructure. If you’re installing a toilet can you use a grey-water system that uses rainwater to flush the toilet for example? What about installing solar panels to help with the increased electricity demand?

- BREEAM (BRE Environmental Assessment Method) sets the standard for best practice in the environmental performance of buildings. (Visit www.breeam.org) It assesses the building’s performance in areas like energy use, pollution, water consumption, and material usage. However, the age and construction methods of our churches mean that BREEAM standards may not be possible. English Heritage has advice on how to save energy in historic buildings. (Visit http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/your-property/saving-energy/)

- You should though, always aim to achieve the highest environmental standards as possible. Make this clear to your architect, when they’re composing their detailed brief.

- Life expectancy of the proposed new facilities. It may be more expensive, but it may be more cost effective to go for longer lasting materials.

- The environmental impact while the project is taking place. For example, what steps will you take to reduce noise pollution while builders are carrying out your refurbishment? Will the noise affect those in the church and neighbouring properties too?

- Where are you sourcing the materials for your project? Can they be sourced locally?

- Where will your contractors come from? Employing a team of contractors from the other side of the county will increase the carbon footprint of the development, as they travel to and from the site every day.

- Decisions on heating. You need to look at efficiency, greenness, meeting conservation requirements and how to determine the most effective heating systems depending on different uses within a church building e.g. regular use, mixed uses, heating of different spaces within a building or infrequent, irregular use. In an historic church, any system will need to be aesthetically unobtrusive. You can find detailed guidance here http://www.churchcare.co.uk/churches/guidance-advice/looking-after-your-church/technical-matters/heating
Environmental Sustainability is an on-going responsibility. The building's operation should be as environmentally friendly as possible, so review its sustainability frequently. Does new technology now offer new solutions?

You’ll see from this that there is a close link between Environmental Sustainability and project costs. Locally sourced materials, locally sourced labour, solar panels and grey-water recycling systems may cost more money now (although costs are falling), and increase the project’s overall costs. However, it is important that a balance is struck. Increasingly, funders these days are taking their own environmental policies more seriously. They realise that they have a role to play in this, so some funders are prepared to offer higher grants for projects using environmentally sustainable products and services.

Value for Money

There’s also an understanding that the cheapest quotes may not necessarily offer the best value for money. So while a local firm of builders may not be the cheapest, they may be the better choice because they won’t be travelling so far to do the job. They’ll also be on hand to undertake any repairs in the future. It also has an additional sustainable economic effect because if a local building firm is employed on the project, the grant money is more likely to be spent again in the local community.

TOP TIPS

- When estimating any future day-to-day costs work closely with your PCC. Look at their accounts, which may provide useful guidance as to what expenditure you can anticipate. Remember that installing an improved heating system may reduce running costs.
- Ask your architect about environmental options and how this fits in with local authority guidelines.
- Economic, Environmental and Social sustainability all need to work hand in hand. There’s no point using a new environmentally friendly product within your project if it isn’t sustainable. Don’t use a new woodchip boiler if you’ll find supplies of woodchips difficult to come by.
- Liaise with your local Community Development Officer (may be employed by your Local Authority, Local Strategic Partnership or nearest Voluntary Action) about social inclusion techniques.
- Liaise with the local Agenda 21 Officer about local environmentally sustainable solutions.
Further Resources:

The Big Lottery has Guidance on developing a sustainable project
http://www.biglotteryfund.org.uk/funding/funding-guidance/applying-for-funding/sustainable-development

Building Calculator
The Building Calculator is a professional online tool to support community organisations to develop sustainable building projects. If you already own or have responsibility for maintaining local assets, the Building Calculator uses Whole Life Costing methodology to help you understand and plan ahead for your operating and maintenance costs. This may have real value for rural churches seeking to adapt their buildings and develop them for community use.
http://www.arthurrankcentre.org.uk/component/k2/item/8961-building-calculator

Hiring out your building
ACRE’s model hiring agreement for village halls provides a comprehensive agreement and all the information you need to consider when hiring out your hall.

Ecclesiastical has guidance on planning events and on letting church premises at

Methodist Insurance also has a lot of information on organizing functions and working with outside users in the Resource Centre part of its website
http://www.methodistinsurance.co.uk/products/church-shield/index.aspx

Chapter 9 Checklist

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**Chapter 9 Checklist**

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- [ ] What steps are you taking to ensure that your project is socially sustainable?
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- [ ] Have you taken steps to minimise the detrimental effects on the local environment during your project works?
- [ ] Have you sought all the advice available from the relevant websites and your local authority’s Agenda 21 officer?
Volunteers

Volunteering England is the national volunteer development organisation for England. You can find guidance on managing your volunteers and investing in them on their website at www.volunteering.org.uk

Your local authorities may also have guidance and policies around volunteering and managing volunteers.

There is also guidance on volunteers on the Government website. As part of the March 2013 Budget, the Chancellor promised to improve advice for volunteers who run events and publish it in a single document. https://www.gov.uk/volunteering

Environmental Sustainability

Find out if your diocese/denomination has an environmental officer who can advise you. There may also be a bulk procurement of 100% green energy opportunity that you can opt into.

Approach your local authority and ask to speak to their Agenda 21 officer who will be able to offer advice and guidance.

Eco Congregation — is an ecumenical programme offering practical hints and tips about making churches and their congregations as environmentally sustainable as possible. www.ecocongregation.org/

Information on increasing the energy efficiency of your church, renewable technology and other environmental issues can be found on the Church of England’s national environmental website Shrinking the Footprint. You will also find information on Government support and other possible funding for energy projects. There are also toolkits, guidance on how to undertake energy audits and best practice case studies covering issues from heating, to boilers, from lighting to waste and recycling, and transport to renewable technology. It also provides contact details for Diocesan Environment Officers.

http://www.churchcare.co.uk/shrinking-the-footprint

Information and guidance for Methodist churches on environmental policy can be found here http://www.methodist.org.uk/mission/public-issues/environment-and-the-created-world

The Methodist Church has provided very useful information on renewal energy, solar panels and guidance on how to undertake an environmental audit at


The United Reformed Church has a section on its website setting out its commitment to sustainability and information for its churches

Quakers can download guidance, and the Sustainability Toolkit on how your Meeting can respond to the Quakers’ commitment to becoming a low carbon and sustainable community and read about what others are doing at http://www.quaker.org.uk/sustainability. You can also download two new interactive online calculators so you can work out the carbon footprint of your meeting and also your personal footprint. You will also find information on QPSW Sustainability Grants which are intended to provide support to Quaker, or Quaker-supported, projects focused on sustainability go to http://www.quaker.org.uk/sustainability-grants

This English Heritage website provides information on how to become more energy efficient if you manage older buildings. www.climatechangeandyourhome.org.uk

The Energy Savings Trust gives ‘impartial, accurate and independent advice to communities and households on how to reduce carbon emissions, how to use water more sustainably and how to save money on energy bills’. www.energysavingstrust.org.uk

The Church of England and the Church in Wales have set up the Parish Buying website which details national negotiated deals on everything from paperclips to photocopiers. It also includes a negotiated ‘national’ level affinity deal’ for 100% renewable energy tariffs with both ‘Good Energy’ and ‘Ecotricity’. These tariffs can be found on the new website at http://www.parishbuying.org.uk/

ACRE and the Rural Community Action Network (RCAN) of village hall advisers provide an information and advice service for those who manage village halls and other rural community buildings. This includes advice on making buildings more energy efficient, found here: http://www.acre.org.uk/our-work/community-assets/village-hall-information-service/environmental-issues

The Churches Trust for Cumbria has collected together a lot of information. Some of it is local to Cumbria, but it will give you an idea of organisations you could contact in your own area http://www.ctfc.org.uk/environmental-sustainability.html

There are also some examples of churches which have adopted low carbon technologies which you can read about here http://www.ctfc.org.uk/cumbrian-case-studies.html

BRE Environmental Assessment Method – www.breeam.org

The National Trust has been producing a series of case studies to review various building projects, following each one through from conception to completion. The focus of their Building Design Guide is to share information and best practice. The case studies feature many conservation projects, from adapting redundant buildings for new uses to the sensitive introduction of lighting into a Grade I listed building. In addition, a series of case studies has been produced to document the installation of energy saving systems and sustainable technologies within the historic environment. http://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/what-we-do/what-we-protect/houses-and-buildings/knowledge-bank/view-page/item699721/
There are also an increasing number of organisations that can advise and support community groups seeking to create their own renewal energy. Have a look and find one that is local to you. One example is Sharenergy, which is a not-for-profit organisation that helps communities find, build and own renewable energy generation: “we are currently working on various projects with hydro power, wind, biomass, biogas and solar from our base in the Marches … and throughout the UK” http://www.sharenergy.coop/
CHAPTER 10
IDENTIFYING THE RIGHT FUNDERS

The first thing to say is never begin any work before you have got confirmed offers of funding.

Appoint someone to lead on fundraising, however, this should never be one person’s responsibility. Setting up a small sub-group to deal with funding applications can be a sensible approach. You need two or three people who have the time to research and complete the application forms. Fundraising is an integral part of any project. The fund-raisers should be fully involved in the project development group so that they understand all aspects of the project. They should also provide regular feedback to the Group so that if raising funds is slow or there are too many rejections, the whole Group can work together to see if a change of strategy is required.

These days it is a very competitive environment. Don’t underestimate the time fundraising will take. Some trusts will only meet twice a year to consider applications, and even the bigger funders are likely to only make decisions on a quarterly basis.

Develop a funding strategy

This is basically compiling a list of the different sources of funding that you are going to try. It is sensible to start locally and move outwards. Your list might look something like this:-

- Church Funds – you may have some reserves or a project fund
- Church assets – you may have a hall or other building that you could consider selling
- Your congregation – donations, gift aid, interest-free loans
- Community – appeals, fund-raising activities, sponsorship eg: ‘buy a brick’.
- Fund-raising can be hard work, but it is a way of involving the local community. It is also a good way of communicating your project. Do not underestimate the importance of local fundraising – some funders will expect to see a percentage of the money raised by the local community as it is evidence of local involvement and commitment.
- Local businesses – in-kind support
- Local Trusts and local funders eg: local authorities and charities – they will be interested in local visible projects although some may have specific criteria and interests
- National Trusts and funders eg: national lotteries – it is especially important to check you match their criteria
Keep good records

It is very important to keep track of who you applied to and when and their time frame for responding. Some funders now receive so many applications that they make clear that if you haven’t heard from them within 3 months, then it is a NO.

Keep a record of any replies received and if it is a rejection, keep a record of the reason given.

Keep a record of any phone calls made or emails sent or received and any additional information sent.

And of course, keep a record of any grants offered including the amounts, any timescales, and specific conditions. As you will see below, some will insist that the money is spent on a particular part of the project and within a specific period of time.

Funding Criteria

All funders will set out their funding criteria. So, and yes it is obvious but worth stating, the starting point for targeting the right funders is to ensure that the criteria of the funder matches what you are trying to achieve. It is a waste of time applying to funders who are not interesting in financially supporting your type of project! Grant funders have their own priorities (and usually too many applications) based on their own aims and objectives.

Searching for funding is much easier these days with the advent of the Internet, but when you come across a potential funder, the temptation to download an application form immediately may be great, but don’t waste your time, until you know that they may be interested in your project.

Check out their aims and objectives and see whether they overlap with yours. The more similarities, the better. Then you need to scrutinise the rest of the criteria. can you meet all of their demands? It is usually possible to telephone funders to chat through your ideas. This may save a lot of time in the future.

Common Criteria Clauses to Consider

There are some criteria that are common across a wide range of funders, which may impact upon who and how many funders you approach.

• 100% funding is rare. Most funders like a project applicant to put in some of their own money. They may offer you 90% of the money you need, but stipulate that 10% needs to come from your own resources which can include local fund-raising. You can also include – in-kind support which is covered in Chapter 8.

• some grant bodies are only willing to fund a small proportion of the total cost of your project – this could be anything between 10% and 75%. They may insist
that another funder also supports your project. This is called match-funding. A grant of 20% from your local authority may make you eligible for a grant from another funding source, for example. Some grant funders do this because it means their money goes further – they can help more projects because of this, although it does mean that there's more work for the project, because it has to find the shortfall.

- some funders may only contribute to specific elements of your project. A funder may be willing to give you a grant towards the cost of installing solar panels and a grey-water recycling system, but won’t be interested in helping you install a kitchen or computer equipment.

Read as much information about the funder as possible, especially with regards to how they operate. There are funders, for example, who release their grant money in stages. Some funders will only release a grant payment upon receipt of a paid invoice. This means that you’ll need to monitor your expenditure and manage grant payments carefully to ensure that you’ll have sufficient cash flow to pay invoices as they arrive. (see Chapter 12)

This is why having some funding in your own reserves can be useful. In some circumstances, your local Diocesan Office may be able to offer a bridging loan, but they will only consider this if you have a firm offer of a grant, in writing from a funder. Some churches have used interest-free loans from their church members to cover such gaps. If you are taking out a loan/s, you must show how you will be paying it back, Funders have to manage their funds strictly and ensure they don’t put their money at risk. This is especially true of public money such as that from the National Lottery. Private trust funds may have a large sum of money invested and it is the interest income generated each year that is offered as grants. They may receive their ‘interest’ payments quarterly, so they need to stagger when they actually release their grant payments. Remember, you are being offered someone else's money, so it is only fair that you adhere to the conditions that they lay down. The simple choice is, if you don’t like the criteria then don’t apply.

Guidance Notes

Look for any help a funder offers. Many produce guidance notes that explain how their processes work, what kind and how much information they will expect to see from you. If there’s anything you don’t understand, ring and talk to the funder. Grant funding is a two way process. The funder may be giving you the money, but you have to deliver a project. Funders are keen for you to understand exactly what your responsibilities are.

A warning: when discussing your project with funders, don’t be tempted to change your project drastically, just because a funder offers you more money to do so. Remember, your community has identified the solution it wants your project to supply and if you start changing your project in order to be awarded more grant money, you increase the possibility of changing the project so much that it doesn’t actually meet
your community’s need. Be strong. A funder may offer you several thousand pounds to install a water feature, but do you actually need one?

There are thousands and thousands of funders out there. You only need a few to help you achieve your project.

You might also consider:

**Setting up a Friends Group**

This can be a good way to harness the skills and fund-raising potential of the wider community. A lot of people who don’t come to your church to worship may well care about the building or a project and want to help and a Friends Group can be a good way to get them involved. You may already have one in which case you could enlist their help in fundraising for your project or you could set one up.

And don’t forget

**VAT (Value Added Tax)**

VAT can be an important consideration for your project. Since, April 2001, the Listed Places of Worship Scheme has offered grants towards the VAT incurred in making repairs to listed buildings mainly used for public worship.

From 1st October 2012, the Scheme was extended and will now offer grants towards the VAT incurred in making repairs and approved alterations to listed buildings mainly used for public worship. Once you have identified that you are eligible, it can be a positive start to your fundraising campaign as you can calculate the amount you will be able to recover once the works have been completed. For more information go to www.lpwscheme.org.uk/

**TOP TIPS**

- Liaise with your Local Authority or Local Strategic Partnership about grants in your local area. Go to your local authority website and search for ‘Community Grants’.
- Some organisations, such as Voluntary Actions and Rural Community Councils, have access to a database of grant giving bodies.
- Keep any letters of support you may receive from community groups who would like to use your project when it is completed. It helps demonstrate demand for your project.
- If local businesses offer in-kind support, ask for it in writing so you can include copies with your project application.
- Ask other community groups whose projects are based within churches where they received their funding from.
Chapter 10 Checklist

- Have you established a sub-group to deal with funding applications?
- Have you checked to ensure that you meet all the funder’s criteria for the grant scheme you applying to?
- Does your project support the funder’s own aims and objectives for their grant scheme?
- Does the group have its own financial resources that it is willing to put into this project?
- Along with your own resources, have you applied for sufficient funding from various grant bodies to cover your project costs?
- Have you read the funder’s guidance notes? Do you understand them and what your responsibilities are?

Further Resources:

Most denominations have some funds of their own to offer their churches for building or mission initiatives. They will also have information on other funding sources on their websites.

Most Church of England diocesan websites will have a section on fund-raising. So start with your local Diocesan Office. They may offer small grants schemes you can apply to.

The Churchcare website has a section on funding and funding sources. Go to http://www.churchcare.co.uk/churches/funding-and-grants

The Church of England’s Parish Resources website offers a range of 23 “How to” funding guides to help you target funding for projects - either for capital works, community outreach or for mission. They are designed to help you target funding for projects, including building works and community projects. They provide advice on preparing and organising a funding strategy and appeal, including guidance on funding sources, applications, budgeting, business plans, Gift Aid and fundraising. http://www.parishresources.org.uk/funding.htm.

The Churchbuild website looks at the range of different types of fund-raising. http://www.churchbuild.co.uk/how-to/raise-funds/

The Ecclesiastical Insurance website has some useful guidance including planning and its importance, using the internet, applying for grants, talking to the press and fundraising ideas. https://www.ecclesiastical.com/ChurchMatters/fundraising/index.aspx
The National Churches Trust (NCT) offers an independent source of advice and grants on both building repairs and for community engagement. They also have information on funding sources.  
http://nationalchurchestrust.org/supporting-you/overview.php
You can also call the NCT’s National Support Officer for help and support on 020 7776 1042.

The County Churches Trusts which are voluntary organizations, raising money for the restoration and maintenance of historic churches and chapels, will provide grants to all places of worship within their County. For contact details go to  
http://nationalchurchestrust.org/supporting-you/in-your-area/in-your-area.php
County Trust websites also provide information on funding sources including local ones.

The Church Urban Fund, which now supports rural projects, offers the Mustard Seed Programme which aims to provide grants of up to £5,000 to enable churches and faith-based organisations to engage in social action, by supporting them to initiate or develop community work.  
http://www.cuf.org.uk/mustard-seed-grant-programme

NAVCA (National Association for Voluntary and Community Action) is the national voice of local support and development organisations. It champions and strengthens voluntary and community action by supporting members in their work with over 160,000 local charities and community groups. For more information go to  
www.navca.org.uk
To find the local bodies which can provide support at local level to the voluntary and community sector go to http://www.navca.org.uk/directory. They can provide advice on setting up new projects as well as offer information on local grants and support for the application process.

Local Funding Advice Bodies. Most areas have some form of organisation that supports voluntary and community organisations to get the resources they need. They can provide advice, information on local funding sources and training to help local organisations develop their fundraising knowledge, skills and confidence. E.g. the South Yorkshire Funding Advice Bureau (SYFAB) covers South Yorkshire  
www.syfab.org.uk

The Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) has launched a new £2 million investment programme – Catalyst Heritage. Grants of between £3,000 and £10,000 are now available to enable heritage organisations to build their fund-raising capacity and develop new approaches to securing funding, whether from corporate sponsorship, private giving or the donation of volunteering hours. Further information can be found here  
http://www.hlf.org.uk/HowToApply/programmes/Pages/Catalyst.aspx#.UTTssTA70wo

Many of the community and ethical banks have community-targeted funding to help new projects start up e.g. Big Society Bank, Charity Bank, and the Triodos Bank among others. So check out their websites.
**Funding Directories**

Heritage Alliance Funding Directory
http://www.theheritagealliance.org.uk/fundingdirectory/

The Architectural Heritage Fund has a funding directory especially for historic buildings www.ffhb.org.uk

Funding Central provides updated information on local and national sources of funding for charities and projects as well as training opportunities. You can also subscribe to a free alert service which will tell you about any new funding programmes that match your criteria.
http://www.fundingcentral.org.uk/

The Directory of Social Change is probably the most comprehensive directory available www.dsc.org.uk, www.trustfunding.org.uk and www.governmentfunding.org.uk. However, there is a registration fee for these, but your local authority or local library may be able to provide cheaper access.

**Setting up a Friends Group**

The Arthur Rank Centre Resources for Rural Church Buildings
http://www.arthurrankcentre.org.uk/publications-and-resources/rural-church-buildings/item/8769#fiveseven

“Friends’ Scheme” for a Parish Church by Susan Rennison
Published: 01/03/1994
Format: Paperback
RRP: £6.00
Available from Church House Bookshop

The National Churches Trust has also brought together some useful information here

The Parish Resources website has information on running Friends Schemes.
http://www.parishresources.org.uk/friends-schemes/
CHAPTER 11
COMPLETING APPLICATIONS
(SELLING YOUR PROJECT TO FUNDERS)

When you approach a funder you need to explain clearly what it is your project will achieve and how you are going to do that. You need to have all your facts and figures ready before you start making applications. **Funders will be able to see if you haven’t done sufficient homework.**

Public money in the form of grants is becoming increasingly difficult to obtain. In order to qualify for funding for a repairs project, or improving or installing new facilities, you will need to be able to show how you are going to benefit the wider community. And you need to show that you are going to be fulfilling a real need and that you have done your research. This will include providing evidence that:

- you have undertaken some form of community audit, and/or
- the need came out of the development of a local plan
- You have local support and can supply letters of support especially from partners

Your application will have to make clear:

- that you have a clear mission statement. Granters will want to understand what your project hopes to achieve and who will benefit. Explain the ‘before’ picture of your project transformation. What change are you going to bring about? What difference will their money make to your community?
- how you are going to achieve your project. You will need to explain why you have chosen this option
- that you have a fully worked out business plan
- that you have assessed the risks and taken steps to minimalise them
- how you will measure achievement/success
- what will be in place to ensure future sustainability

Always be clear about what you are asking money for. You can set up separate funds so that people can donate for a specific cause eg: the roof or the organ. Or you may want to ensure you have flexibility on what funds can be spent on eg: set up a Fabric Fund or Community Project.

If you have written a full business plan – (see Chapter 8) then you will already have all of this information in place.
Form Filling

Most funders will require an application form to be completed. Read the questions carefully. This may be your only opportunity to explain your case. Give the answers the applications asks for, not what you think you need to say! Overall, funders are looking for the same information, they may just phrase their questions slightly differently, but your answers should still fit the actual question. Remember:

- Funders have their own criteria – so explain how your project helps them to achieve their own aims and objectives.
- Clearly state what difference their funding will make to this project.
- Explain how much you have already raised, from your own efforts as well as from other funders. This will demonstrate that your community and at least one other funder have confidence in your project and your group to deliver the project.
- Set out how much you are asking from other funders and how much you are asking from them.
- Answer every question. Leaving any blanks delays the application process, further delaying when you can start your project.
- Be precise and succinct. Many application forms set a word limit for answers so you need to be able to summarise without losing clarity and important facts.
- Assume funders know nothing. When you come to complete application forms, you will know your project inside out, but the funders won’t.
- Clearly answer the questions. Be readable and look professional.
- Attach all the documentation they require – it should make sense and look professional.
- Make sure your figures add up.

Some funders don’t have application forms and ask for a letter. In which case ensure you provide the same information possibly in an attached document. You can always present it under the same headings.

Evidence

You may be asked to supply evidence to support your application. This is not the funder trying to catch you out, merely double-checking that the information you provide is accurate. If you tell a funder that you have an Equal Opportunities policy, then you may be asked to supply it. If you’ve stated that your project will cost £20,000, some quotes demonstrating that you haven’t plucked the figures out of the air prove that your figures are robust. Photographic evidence can help too. If the walls are crumbling, take a picture to illustrate this.

Offering Outputs

Every funder who offers you money wants something in return – outputs. What they mean by this is a result that can be quantified in some way. For example, if you were to create a community meeting space in your local church, this may allow six
community groups to meet in the church every week. So, the result of their grant money is that six community groups have been helped.

Because some funders have clear aims and objectives, they may even list the sort of outputs, or results, that they are looking for. Scrutinise this list and include everything that your project will achieve. And if you can think of other results that aren’t on their list, include them too. The funder may still wish to consider them.

Offering Outcomes

Some funders are more interested in outcomes rather than outputs. Whereas outputs can be measured more easily, (1 new community space created, 5 local community groups supported, 1 crèche facility created), outcomes are more difficult to measure. They look at the wider picture. For example, installing a kitchen facility may enable ‘home cooking’ lessons to be taught to the local community, using local home-grown produce. The outcome of this is that more people may consume a healthier diet and adopt a healthier lifestyle. Similarly, establishing a youth project, giving young people somewhere to go and something to do, may stop them from hanging about in groups. An outcome of this could be that other people in the community feel safer and less intimidated when they go out.

Outcomes are closely linked with a funder’s aims, so look for ways in which your project may achieve some of the outcomes that funders are looking for.

Face to Face

Funders collect most of their information by application forms, however some may also want to meet with you. This may involve you travelling to their offices and giving a short presentation, or they may come out and visit you. Coming to visit your church building can help them understand what it is you are trying to achieve. Don’t let this worry you. It’s an opportunity for them to ask you questions about anything they don’t understand. Sometimes a paper application can’t convey everything about a project. If you are asked to meet the funder, either for a chat, or meet an ‘appraisal panel’, consider following these steps:

• the whole community group doesn’t need to go, but nor should it be left to one person. Get members who are used to giving presentations to go with you.
• it might be appropriate to bring along some future users to say why they are supporting the project
• a presentation doesn’t have to be a slick, computer generated audio-visual show. Talk to the funders. Ask them what you need to do. It may be a simple question and answer session.
• review your application before you go and take any documentation you think you may need.
• remember, it’s an opportunity for you to ask them questions too.
TOP TIPS

- Brevity is the key. Be as clear and as succinct as possible. The appraising officer at the grant organisation may have a pile of applications to work through. Make your application clear and simple to read.
- Think evidence. If you say something, what evidence do you have to back it up? You don’t need to submit everything with your application (see point above), but having the information to hand in case a funder asks for it saves time and demonstrates professionalism, if the information is provided promptly.
- Get someone who isn’t involved in your project to read your application – they can give you an objective feedback.
- If you don’t understand a question the funder is asking, then ring them for clarification.
- Check to see if there is an application deadline. Some funders deal with applications on a quarterly basis.
- You’re selling your project, not begging for money. Be proud of what you will achieve with their help.

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<th>Chapter 11 Checklist</th>
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<tr>
<td>Have you answered ALL of the questions on the application form?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Have you given the funder ALL the information they require? (Remember, funders know little, if anything, about your local community.)</td>
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<td>Do you have evidence to back up all of your claims, figures and costings?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Have you identified all the appropriate outputs and outcomes your project will achieve?</td>
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<td>If meeting funders face to face, have you prepared yourselves for this event by reviewing your project, application form and background information?</td>
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Further Resources:

The Heritage Lottery Fund publishes useful guidance on preparing high-quality applications at http://www.hlf.org.uk/HowToApply/goodpractice/Pages/Goodpracticeguidance.aspx#.UTT2UDA70wo
CHAPTER 12
PROJECT CASHFLOW

Once you have successfully managed to obtain sufficient funding for your project for it to become a reality, one of the biggest problems you may find will be managing the cash flow while the works are in progress. Few funders pay the whole grant amount up front, which means that sometimes, without careful planning, you will suffer cash flow problems. We’ve also seen in a Chapter 10 that you should think about how to keep the cash flowing on a day-to-day basis in the future once the project is up and running.

Firstly though, you need to be aware of the different types of funding a project may require, that funders may or may not offer. You will be receiving some money for the development stage and other money for the longer term running of the project.

Having your own reserves are important. Many funders will expect your community group to make a small financial contribution to the project anyway – perhaps 10%. However, this reserve may also prove useful for your cash flow too.

Cash Flow

Having more than one funder may make one feel like life is more complicated than it needs to be, however, if they have different payment schedules, this can be a benefit. Funder A may release 50% of their grant money at the start of the project, whilst Funder B will only release grant money against paid expenditure. This means that you can use the first grant payment from Funder A to pay the first invoices you receive. These then become ‘paid’ invoices, which enables you to claim a grant payment against them from Funder B. This money then enables you to pay more invoices, and so on.

Future Cash Flow

Community use of a church building will incur various expenses including utilities, insurance costs, and on-going maintenance.

As part of your business planning you will have identified these. Plan to review these costs on a regular basis so you can assess whether you need to make changes to any sources of income the project generates. Rental fees should keep in line with inflation and will have to go up as all your other costs will. You should have already considered this as part of the business planning stage and when looking at the project’s economic sustainability.

We all have to juggle our own personal finances in life, and project finances are no different. But with a bit of planning and forward thinking, it’s possible to be able to keep cash flow problems to a minimum.
TOP TIPS

• Set up a spreadsheet or table with known dates of when you’ll need to pay out money, and when you can claim it from funders. Visualising cash flow will illustrate any difficult periods.

• If you have different funders paying for different elements of your project, write on the back of the receipt/invoice which funder you can claim this expenditure from.

• Give each receipt a unique sequential number as you receive it. (001, 002, 003, etc). Then you can record when you received it, when it was paid, and which funder’s grant you claimed it against.

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<td>Have you planned how your funder’s payment/claim systems will affect your cash flow?</td>
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<td>Have you established what your project’s future cash flow and financial commitments will be, once it is up and running?</td>
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CHAPTER 13
MANAGING THE BUILDING WORKS ON SITE

Project Management Role

Your architect will be able to take the lead on most of the activities in the lead up to getting the works on site and also managing while the works are in progress.

Your architect will have advised you what additional specialist advice you may need. This could include archaeologists, conservators, a structural engineer, a mechanical and electrical engineer, a quantity surveyor as well as building contractors. You may also want to employ heating and lighting specialists and energy efficiency advisers. Your architect will be able to help you identify contractors and obtain estimates for these tasks as well as managing the tendering processes involved.

Your architect will also ensure that Building Regulations are complied with. Any building project to create something new or to alter or extend an existing building will usually need to comply with Building Regulations that are national standards for England and Wales. They ensure that the building are safe, that adequate access and facilities are provided for people with disabilities and include requirements for conservation of fuel and power. There are also procedures that need to be followed and notifications given to the local authority before, during and on completion of the project.

In the majority of cases, the architect will be the project manager in respect of managing and co-ordinating the works programme and all the people who need to be involved. If you decide to appoint your own separate project manager, then make sure the chain of command and where responsibility for different parts of the project is made clear and understood.

What your Group will need to do and be aware of:

Tendering for contractors

Your architect will take the lead on this process, but to ensure you end up with the right contractor, remember:-

- draw up the tender list carefully – only put on the list those you think you might want to work with
- ensure they have the right experience and skills before you add them to the list
- check references and/or go and look at examples of their work
- make sure those who will actually be doing the work come to the interview ie: the practitioners
- agree a clear set of criteria against which you are going to select the contractor
- ensure that members of your Group attend the interview – you will be working with these people
Timetable for works

It is important that everyone in your Group is aware of the works programme ie: when works are due to start and when they are due to complete.

It is also important that everyone in your Group is aware of the costs of the project. Any building project needs to be regularly monitored to ensure that there is advance warning of any delays to the timetable due to - for instance - unforeseen additional works or an increase in costs. Your Risk Assessment should have set out what has been done to ensure such risks are minimal and also describe action that will be taken if delays occur.

Your architect will be taking the lead in monitoring the quality of the works and ensuring that the works are being executed as set out in the specification and drawings and keeping tabs on progress. However, it is a good idea to appoint someone from the Group to be the main liaison contact point with the architect so that regular progress reports can be feedback to the Group. They can also be the person whom the architect contacts if a decision is needed.

Use of the church while works are on-going

It may be that part of the church will be unusable for a period of time. It may even be that the whole building will be out of action. Plans will need to be made for instance services and weddings and funerals have to be held elsewhere. Don’t forget to consult other users such as the choir and other church and community groups. The earliest this is thought about the better. Make sure you involve your clergy and churchwardens in any discussions.

Before the main works start there may have to be investigative works which might also involve temporary scaffolding and disruption.

Keep everyone informed

Put up an exhibition and display drawings and plans, models (if you have them) and photographs.

There may be opportunities to offer to take groups eg: local history society, schools on tours to see previously unseen or rarely seen parts of the church. You may be able to provide the chance to go up scaffolding, but check health and safety factors with your architect and insurers first.

Control of noise and pollution

Most building works will produce dust and mess. You will have to ensure that precautions are taken to protect the interior and fixtures and fittings eg: the organ while works are on-going. Be a good neighbour and talk to residents and businesses nearby if they are going to be affected eg: additional traffic, temporary road closures.
Insurance and Regulations relating to Building Works

If you intend to start major alterations, renovations or repairs, it’s important that you inform your insurance company so they can consider the effect the work will have on your policy and ensure that the correct cover is in place for the building works themselves.

Usually, the work under construction and the materials involved are the responsibility of the contractor and you don’t need to do anything. But, if you’ve signed a formal contract, which makes you liable to insure these, then you must definitely inform your insurer.


TOP TIPS

• Keep a photographic record as works progress. They are good for exhibitions and later displays on the history of the building.

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<th>Chapter 13 Checklist</th>
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<td>Does everyone in the Group know the timetable for the start and completion of works?</td>
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<td>Have you got a system in place for monitoring progress on works?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Is your Risk Assessment document up to date?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Have you set up a chain of communication with your architect?</td>
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</table>
Further Resources:

The Churchbuild website contains a range of practical information around developing and managing a building project. http://www.churchbuild.co.uk/ including:

- 10 Top Tips for choosing a contractor http://www.churchbuild.co.uk/how-to/choose-the-right-contractor/
- A page describing the many people who may need to be involved in a building project and advice on how when you make these appointments is important. http://www.churchbuild.co.uk/how-to/who%CA%BCs-who-winning-teams-for-church-building-projects/
- A diagram based on the RIBA Plan of Work which shows the various stages that most building projects will go through. It is really helpful if both the leadership and the rest of your church understand how these different stages fit together. With this basic structure in mind everyone can get to grips with the typical timescales involved. http://www.churchbuild.co.uk/how-to/the-process-explained/
CHAPTER 14
THE FINAL STAGES
CLAIMING MONEY, CELEBRATING, IMPACT AND EVALUATION

As you approach the completion of the development part of your project, there will be several actions that you will still need to do.

Claiming Money, Submitting Reports

Some funders will release funding in instalments, or upon receipt of paid invoices. The final claim may be a little different. When your project is complete, funders will expect to see a report. This is usually in the format of a question and answer form, but it’s a simple procedure. Now’s the time for your ‘after’ pictures demonstrating what has been achieved. So tell the funder what you’ve done and remember what you said you were going to do in your application.

- Explain what happened, including what went well and what didn’t go as planned. Funders like to know this – it may help them advise another project in the future.
- State which of your objectives and outputs you met. Be honest. If you exceeded them great! If you didn’t, tell them what you have achieved and why the figures differ from your application. And if you are going to be able to meet them in the near future then explain how.
- Clarify how much your total project actually cost and how this has been funded, from all of your funders.
- Tell funders how your project will now progress in the future.

Some funders will hold back the final instalment of the grant money until they receive this final report. We’ve already mentioned exit strategies in the planning stage, but a funder may want to know whether your plans for ‘life after funding’ are the same or whether they have changed. Completion of the project may open up other opportunities that you hadn’t considered.

Marketing of your project

Once you project is ready to start, you will need to promote it. Once you are sure everything is on target will be a good time to think about this. This might take the form of mailings, articles in the local press, interviews on radio, leaflets, posters or a regular newsletter. Make sure your website is up to date and makes clear what new facilities you are offering and how people can make use of them eg: what are opening hours, what are the charges.

One way to get good publicity is to plan a special launch event.
The Launch

This is another milestone in the life of your project. Make sure you celebrate your achievements. You will have worked hard to realise your activity or project. It is also a perfect excuse to communicate your success to the local community. Organise a launch or an official opening ceremony. Get someone to cut a ribbon and make sure the local press is there to record the event.

- Invite the funders. Offer them the opportunity to come and look at what you have done with their money.
- Invite all the local dignitaries. They're always available for drinks and nibbles.
- Invite everyone who volunteered or offered ‘in-kind’ support on the project to say ‘thank you’.
- Remember to take photographs of the event.
- Invite the press. Liaise with your Diocesan Director or Communication Adviser for help with drafting a press release.
- Invite your Bishop and Archdeacon or other relevant people from your denomination.

Impact and Evaluation

For some projects the final report will be the time when a community group can step back and consider whether their project has achieved what it set out to achieve. For others, it may not be possible to do this for a year or longer. If your project aimed to get more people using a church building during the first year, then you won’t know whether you have succeeded until a year later. This is why it is important to have your original data at the start. You need to know how many people used the building originally, so that you have something to compare it against.

Part of the evaluation may include consulting the community again. There are some results of a project that cannot be easily quantified. For example, following the completion of your project, is the community happier and more vibrant now there is more going on? The only way to find out is to ask them if they feel happier.

Evaluation is important because it’s a chance to measure the success of the project. Money is a limited resource, and funders are keen to ensure that the funds they have are used to best effect. If your project has a huge impact, perhaps other communities up and down the country can consider following in your footsteps?

Project Management to Long term sustainability

Remember, your business plan is a living document. Keep referring to it and making any changes required as your project progresses. If your costs change, look through your business plan to see what impact this will have elsewhere in your project. You will need to regularly check that you are still financially viable.
Before, during and after the development and realisation of your project you need to keep both your business plan and budget up-to-date. It may be useful to schedule a review of these documents at regular intervals to keep your project on track. Maintaining a business-like approach is vital.

**TOP TIPS**

- Invite the funders to your launch.
- Issue a press release to announce the completion of your project, or to publicise your big reveal. Remember to name all the funders in your press release and any publicity you do. It will be a requirement of most funder’s offer letters.
- Don’t forget to invite a representative from the Diocese and your denomination.
- Take photographs during the launch. Useful for more press releases and exhibitions. Put up on the website to illustrate the new facilities.
- Keep an evidence file for your achieved outputs. If future evaluation of your project is required, make a note of when you need to complete it by.
- Feedback to community members unable to make your celebrations about what you have achieved.
- How long do you need to keep the paperwork for? Check with funders. Publicly funded grant schemes (such as those run by councils, Europe, Government, lottery) may need to be audited at some point, so auditors may wish to have a look at your paperwork.
- Don’t forget – now’s the time to publicise your new community facility. Encourage community groups to book it and use it! Put it on the church and community websites, the parish newsletter and noticeboard, and contact any groups you consulted with.
- Finally, remember to enjoy your new facility. Be proud of what you have achieved!

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**Chapter 14 Checklist**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Answer</th>
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<tr>
<td>Are you clear how you will evaluate the impact of your project, once it is complete?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Have you claimed all the outputs and outcomes you declared on your original application form?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Have you answered all the questions the funders have asked in their report form?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Have you explained what went well with your project and what didn’t?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Have you held a launch event to publicise your project’s completion to the world?</td>
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**CHAPTER 14**

**THE FINAL STAGES**
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
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<tr>
<td>Have you invited all of the funders, the Archdeacon, Bishop, the people</td>
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<tr>
<td>from your denomination, the press and all the volunteers who helped you?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Do you need to consult your community once again to collect their views</td>
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<tr>
<td>and opinions on your completed project as part of your evaluation</td>
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<tr>
<td>process?</td>
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<tr>
<td>What systems and procedures have you established to manage the new</td>
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<tr>
<td>facility that your project has created?</td>
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CHAPTER 15

FURTHER INFORMATION

This guidance can only be a basic guide to developing a project within your local community. Below are details of other sources of information and also funding opportunities.

The most important will be the website of your own denomination. The links to the relevant sections of those websites are given below.

**Denomination websites:**

The Churchcare website is maintained by the Church of England’s Cathedral and Church Buildings Division, but is a comprehensive resource for anyone managing a church building. This includes guidance on opening up a church and developing it for wider community use. It explains the Church of England’s Faculty System and what to consider when making changes to the use or physical fabric of your church.

http://www.churchcare.co.uk/churches

The Church of England dioceses have very useful guidance and information on their websites usually under a menu heading of church buildings or looking after your church buildings.

In the Catholic Church, the care and management of church buildings comes under the Patrimony Committee. Guidance can be found here

https://www.cbcew.org.uk/patrimony

The Methodist Church has guidance on managing and developing their churches here


The Baptist Union Corporation has written a series of leaflets to help local churches with practical building issues, legal matters, property opportunities and problems, and charity law.

Leaflets B01-B14 are about church buildings and trusts (pages 3-5)
Leaflets C01-C37 are about legal and charity law issues (pages 6-13)
Leaflets LB01-LB10 are specially prepared for churches with Listed Buildings (pages 14-15)
All can downloaded here http://www.baptist.org.uk/legal-property-a-charities.html

The United Reformed Church has prepared the Plato Property Handbook which covers all issues to do with buildings. It can be downloaded here


The Quakers have information on managing meeting houses and developing new building projects here http://www.quaker.org.uk/property-matters
Other Sources of advice

The National Churches Trust provides practical support and information as well as sign-posting to other sources of useful advice. They also offer grants.
http://nationalchurchestrust.org/supporting-you/overview.php

The Churches Conservation Trust which looks after 340 churches is increasingly encouraging and supporting community-based extended uses to help sustain those church buildings. The Regenerating Communities section on their website provides guidance as well as featuring case studies and inspirational ideas.
http://www.visitchurches.org.uk/AboutCCT/Regeneratingcommunities/

The Arthur Rank Centre is an ecumenical Christian charity founded in 1972 with the aim of resourcing rural churches of all denominations. There are links to resources useful for anyone involved in mission, ministry or training related to the rural church here.
http://www.arthurrankcentre.org.uk/signposts

The Arthur Rank Centre has also compiled a comprehensive online resource to support individual congregations in maintaining their building, adapting it for today's needs, balancing conservation and mission and helping to make rural churches more accessible. It provides links to relevant pages on all the denomination websites.
http://www.arthurrankcentre.org.uk/publications-and-resources/rural-church-buildings

Resourcing Christian Community Action This study was commissioned by the Church of England to research and bring together current best practice in Christian care in local communities with the resources and knowledge base needed to multiply those good works across the country. Go to www.how2help.net to read the study in full and also access information on how to start a project, how to manage a project it, where to get advice and where to find local partners and funding. There are also case studies of existing projects from across the country covering different policy areas, location and types of activity.

The Church Urban Fund has resources for churches that want to set up projects to tackle poverty. There is guidance on setting up a project, good case studies as well as information on training and funding opportunities.
http://www.cuf.org.uk/act/resources-projects

The Church Community Value toolkit is a way for churches to calculate their financial contribution to the community, and demonstrate their distinctiveness. The toolkit has been developed by the Church Urban Fund in conjunction with the Commission on Urban Life and Faith and the Churches Regional Commission for Yorkshire and the Humber. This is useful if you want to apply for more funding once your project is already up and running and you would like to demonstrate your church’s contribution to the community,
for example for a grant application or negotiations with other bodies such as Local Authority, Local Strategic Partnership, or Primary Care Trust. The toolkit can also be used over a period of time to identify changes and developments.
http://www.cuf.org.uk/act/resources-projects/community-value-toolkit

The Church Growth Research and Development website aims to communicate and disseminate some of the Church of England’s work on church growth research and development to help the Church allocate its resources effectively to facilitate its mission and growth. There are also case studies and resources for churches wishing to grow through wider use of their buildings and community engagement.
http://www.churchgrowthrd.org.uk/

The Faith Based Regeneration Network UK (FbRN) is the leading national multi faith network for community development, regeneration and social action. They have guidance on every aspect of setting up and managing a community project as well as case studies.
http://www.fbrn.org.uk/

The Churches Trust for Cumbria has several case studies illustrating rural places of worship engaging with their communities in innovative ways. There is also guidance and other support to help churches of all denominations develop their own projects. Visit http://www.ctfc.org.uk/churches-in-the-community.html

The Centre for the Study of Christianity and Culture, University of York is developing a range of training resources and study packs which will be downloadable from their site. http://www.christianityandculture.org.uk/churches

They have also produced a DVD-Rom on the History of the English Parish Church which can provide help in understanding your parish church and developing a Statement of Significance. There is also useful information on developing your church building for wider community use. The DVD-Rom can be ordered here http://www.christianityandculture.org.uk/products

**Advice on Heritage**

English Heritage is part of the regulatory process and also offers advice and support. They offer useful advice on balancing the needs of congregations with the desirability of conserving heritage as well as guidance on obtaining permission and consents for works to places of worship. In 2012, they published a revised edition of their guidance on New Work in Historic Places of Worship. All can be downloaded here http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/caring/places-of-worship/

The Royal Institute of British Architects has a register of architects– www.riba.org.uk
The Council for British Archaeology www.britarch.ac.uk
The Ancient Monuments Society www.ancientmonumentssociety.org.uk
The Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings www.spab.org.uk
The Georgian Group www.georgiangroup.org.uk
The Victorian Society  www.victoriansociety.org.uk
The Twentieth Century Society  www.c20society.org.uk

The Building Conservation Directory provides a list of over 1,000 practitioners and suppliers in the areas of conservation, restoration and repairs from access audits to wall painting conservators. You can access the Directory free here http://www.buildingconservation.com/

Guidance on Community Projects

Approach your local authority (ask for Community Development) or local strategic partnership (your local authority can point you in their direction).

Your local voluntary and community sector (VCS) infrastructure organisation can also provide vital support for voluntary organisations and community groups. They can provide advice on setting up new projects as well as information on grants available and offer support in the application process.

Unfortunately, they can go by different names in different areas. However, NAVCA (National Association for Voluntary and Community Action) is the national voice of local support and development organisations. They champion and strengthen voluntary and community action by supporting their members in their work with over 160,000 local charities and community groups. For more information go to www.navca.org.uk

To find the local bodies which can provide support to the voluntary and community sector in your area go to http://www.navca.org.uk/directory.

The Plunkett Foundation support rural communities through community-ownership to take control of the issues affecting them. They

• Support rural communities looking to set up and run community-owned shops
• Help rural communities to set up a wide range of community-owned enterprises, social enterprises and co-operatives to provide vital rural services
• Enable community food and farming enterprises to set up and run successfully http://www.plunkett.co.uk/

Community Tool Box has a range of practical guidance on all aspects around setting up community projects. http://ctb.ku.edu/en/

Village SOS began in 2010 when six enterprising UK rural villages won Big Lottery Fund investment of around £400,000 to revive their communities through new business ventures.

Today, Village SOS aims to build on the experience of these six projects and to inspire others to start a new business that will regenerate their own community. Go to the website where you will find Tools, support and expert guidance to help communities take a step towards starting their own community businesses/social enterprises and guide them through the journey from their initial idea to transforming the area. There is also an advice phone line. http://www.villagesos.org.uk/
Action with Communities in Rural England (ACRE) is the national umbrella body for the 38 charitable local development agencies, also known as Community Councils, that make up the Rural Community Action Network (RCAN). Community Councils in England can offer advice, support, and access to grant databases. To find your Community Council visit www.acre.org.uk

Guidance on Funding
There are thousands of funding organisations and we can only scratch the surface here. Liaise with your local authority, local strategic partnership, voluntary action, council for voluntary services, or rural community council. Some can offer you free access to funding databases, whilst others produce funding directories of national and local sources of funding.

The Church of England’s Parish Resources http://www.parishresources.org.uk/funding/ offers a range of funding guides to help you target funding for projects – either for capital works or for mission. They are intended to be simple “how-to” guides and cover a range of topics from Preparing a Funding Strategy, A Simple Guide to writing a Business Plan to running Fundraising Events.

The Heritage Lottery Fund provides a range of good-practice guidance to help you plan and deliver your heritage project. This includes reducing environmental impacts, guidance on carrying out evaluation, making your project fully accessible, using digital technology in heritage projects, how to encourage community participation and working with volunteers.

http://www.hlf.org.uk/HowToApply/goodpractice/Pages/Goodpracticeguidance.aspx#.USEMsqWpXZa

The Big Lottery website has a list of organisations which can provide help to community groups.

http://www.biglotteryfund.org.uk/funding/funding-guidance/applying-for-funding/external-help-and-advice

There is also a lot of useful guidance on applying for funding at http://www.biglotteryfund.org.uk/funding/funding-guidance/applying-for-funding

Funding Sources
The Heritage Lottery Fund - http://www.hlf.org.uk/
The Big Lottery - http://www.biglotteryfund.org.uk/
The All Churches Trust http://www.allchurches.co.uk/
The Church and Community Fund – http://www.ccfund.org.uk/

There are several Funding Directories:

Heritage Alliance Funding Directory
http://www.theheritagealliance.org.uk/fundingdirectory/
The Architectural Heritage Fund has a funding directory especially for historic buildings [www.ffhb.org.uk](http://www.ffhb.org.uk)

Funding Central provides updated information on local and national sources of funding for charities and projects as well as funding training opportunities. You can also subscribe to a free alert service which will tell you about any new funding programmes that match your criteria. [http://www.fundingcentral.org.uk/](http://www.fundingcentral.org.uk/)

The Directory of Social Change is probably the most comprehensive directory available [www.dsc.org.uk](http://www.dsc.org.uk), [www.trustfunding.org.uk](http://www.trustfunding.org.uk) and [www.govemmentfunding.org.uk](http://www.govemmentfunding.org.uk). However, there is a registration fee for these, but your local authority or local library may be able to provide cheaper access.

**Publications**

4. *Making Church Buildings Work* by Maggie Durran (Canterbury Press Norwich 2005, ISBN: 978-185311597-4) Practical guidance on ways churches can be a more effective local presence and serve their neighbours’ needs. Also available from the Arthur Rank Centre bookstall@arthurrankcentre.org.uk
6. *Fund Raising for Churches* by Jane Grieve
   Aimed at all churches, from those in the smallest villages to the large secular organisations, this text takes the methods of modern fundraisers and adapts them specifically for Christian churches. 1999, ISBN-13: 9780281050581
   Only available on Amazon
CHAPTER 16
CASE STUDIES

Everything written in the toolkit has been based on two things, existing good practice from the voluntary and community sector, and real life examples from parishes and church communities all over the country that have decided that part of their mission is to share their buildings with the wider community. Every project is different, every project has had its high points and low points – but the one thing they all have in common is that they have followed a process that has led them to achieve what they set out to achieve. It is also worth pointing out that community development and church building development is not an exact science – what works for one group or community may not be the same for another. What was stressful or difficult for one parish or church, may not be a problem for another – but if you follow the procedures and advice contained in this toolkit, we feel you won’t go far wrong – and you can always phone for advice if you feel you need it.

St Michael’s and All Angels, Winforton, Herefordshire

Winforton is a small rural community which had lost their village hall. In fact the Parish Room was in such a bad state of repair it had to be demolished! After consulting with the local community, all were keen to see the local church refurbished to enable them to use the space for community use in addition to holy use. From the proceeds of the sale of the land where their original Parish Room had been, and grants from the Local Authority and the Countryside Agency, the Parish Council and the PCC and the community of Winforton working together to provide a community space. In 2004, they:

- installed toilets,
- installed a small kitchen,
- removed the Victorian pews,
- installed new lighting,
- repaired the floor,
- incorporated a curtain across the Chancel Arch. This provided a clear demarcation between the community space within the building and the holy space.

Winforton now has an adaptable space for it to use and the village’s quality of life has returned.
http://www.eardisleygroupcommunity.co.uk/community/winforton/church.aspx
St Deinst, Llangarron, Diocese of Herefordshire

Consultation with residents has confirmed the need for and a high level of interest in the provision of a new centrally located community venue in Llangarron. It has also indicated majority support for the Grade I, but underutilised Victorian Church to be developed for community purposes.

The North Aisle Project plans to develop the north aisle into a self-contained community facility to be used by the residents of Llangarron and the adjacent parishes for a range of community activities and services while retaining the option of recombining the north aisle and nave for larger concerts and services.

Llangarron already has a Village Hall which dates back to the 1920s. This is situated on the outskirts of the village. Although upgraded over the years, it is only suitable for a limited range of activities for as long as it remains structurally sound which is likely to only for another 5-10 years.

The project was awarded a development grant early in 2012 and in December 2012, it was awarded a BIG Lottery grant to finance the project and work is hoping to start in Spring 2013.

This project is being managed by the Llangarron Community Association (LCA) Management Team. The joint working between church and village is illustrated by the village website Llangarron Life, a community website which offers a comprehensive insight into all of community life in the Parish of Llangarron including the church and this project.

http://www.llangarron.info/

Holy Ascension, Oddington, Diocese of Gloucester

This grade II, small rural Cotswold church recently completed a major reordering which included installing a WC, kitchen, new storage, new sound and lighting, and new underfloor heating and re-orientating to face south and new storage.

You can read more here

and about the building project here
http://www.spiritarchitecture.co.uk/
Eardisley lies on the Black & White Trail, a tourist route designed to encourage visitors to visit Herefordshire's historic rural villages. While the village hall provided a meeting space for the local community, there were no facilities for visitors. This project added an extension to the church, enabling:

- public toilets, a kitchen and storage space to be added,
- the creation of a performance space with a demountable stage,
- installation of audio-visual equipment and amplification loop.

This not only provided public toilets for the many visitors, but also a performance venue within the community, which the village hall was unable to offer. It provided a better space for use by the village school, gave disabled people access to a performance venue, enabled local artists to display and sell work to passing tourists and offered locals the opportunity to stage more cultural events. Eardisley Church is now a centre for exhibitions featuring local history, local businesses and topical or controversial issues, concerts and workshops.

http://www.eardisleygroupcommunity.co.uk/community/eardisley/church.aspx

In 2012, this church undertook a major internal re-ordering including removal of all nave pews and replacement by new seating, new flooring, and installation of new heating and lighting systems. Their website has three videos showing before, during and after the works as well as a report describing all the major stages of this re-ordering project.

http://www.poyntonpc.net/refurbishing.html
http://www.poyntonpc.net/reorderreport.html

Erskine United Reformed Church, Belford

Erskine United Reformed Church, Belford, is the home of a community cinema, Belford Cinema.

http://www.urc-northersynod.org/churches/belford.htm
St James Church, Carlisle, Diocese of Carlisle

The Cornerstone Centre grew out of the high street mission and ministry of St James’. Opportunity shops (“OpShops”), was a £0.5m project which involved the demolition and rebuilding of the site of the original shop and the two adjoining premises. These premises were rebuilt to form one modern spacious development while retaining the exterior character of the buildings. The objective was to enable the expansion of the OpShop ministry by providing the base for a range of services and facilities to the benefit of the whole community, all in a new building with a friendly and welcoming atmosphere. Opened in 2012, there is a large coffee shop integral with the charity shop and meeting places for groups and a range of community events.

http://www.stjamescarlisle.org.uk/
http://cornerstonecarlisle.org/

Peterchurch, Diocese of Hereford

St Peter’s is an impressive 12th century Grade I listed building which stands in the small village of Peterchurch situated in the Golden Valley in South West Herefordshire. The area is very rural with many families feeling isolated with few opportunities and a lack of access to services. Herefordshire council were looking for ways to deliver children’s services in the area when they approached the Hereford Diocese and expressed an interest in St Peter’s. At the time the church had no facilities and the Local Authority offered £20K towards the cost of putting them in. A vision developed, and the whole community backed the idea of using the church for a variety of activities. The project to refurbish the interior involved freeing up space by removing the pews, environmentally friendly under floor heating, a lift, lighting, toilets, kitchen, consulting room and a new mezzanine floor with access into the bell tower to provide an additional room.

The project has met several objectives and addressed several needs of the Peterchurch Community: a long term use for an underused community facility and resource, ensured the sustainability of a major heritage building now in regular daily use, helped address the issue of access, increased service delivery from the church centre, created a greater sense of community cohesion and people working together to address their own needs, improved access to cultural activities through the facility provided in the library and an improved performance space, and improved quality of life for families and young children.

The project was finished at the end of 2009 and is an exemplar of extended church use and partnership working.
CHAPTE16
CASE STUDIES

Buckland Brewer Methodist Church, North Devon

On 10th December 2012, the Buckland Brewer Community shop opened in the
vestry of the village Methodist church which is leased from the Methodist Church at
a market rent. The shop is primarily staffed by volunteers and offers a range of goods
and services for parts of 6 days a week and newspapers on Sunday mornings.
Buckland Brewer Community Shop Limited has been set up as an Industrial and
Provident Society to provide the legal entity to manage the shop using a community
co-operative model. They raised some of the funds from a Community Shares Scheme.
The committee see the main benefits as being firstly that a beautiful historic building,
which was underutilised, is used daily during the week and secondly that the shop
serves as a hub for the whole village.
Website: http://bbshop.wordpress.com/

New Bridge Community Centre, Diocese of Hereford

St. Andrew’s is a Grade 1 listed building in one of five very small
parishes in the Bishopstone group. The need for a community
centre for the parishes in this isolated part of Herefordshire had
been identified in the Parish Plan and after extensive public
consultation St. Andrew’s was felt to be the best location.
The newly completed conversion, now called the New Bridge
Community Centre, involved taking the fixed pews out of the
nave. The chancel and sanctuary were left as they were for
Sunday services. There is a kitchen, toilet and a small room for
private meetings and consultations and all areas are accessible to the disabled. The
conversion was designed to make the building energy and waste efficient, to use local
materials and suppliers, and to leave as small an environmental footprint as possible.

St Peter ad Vincula, Coggeshall, Essex, Diocese of Chelmsford

This grade I church, which serves a community of 5,000, is in regular use for a variety
of events, such as pantomimes, art exhibitions and quiz nights. In 2002, a discreet
and architecturally sympathetic extension was added to the building to provide basic
facilities. This houses a loo, a kitchen and two meeting rooms, which currently act
as the venue for youth groups, a charity knitting group, mums-and-babies’ groups
and yoga classes. The churchyard also helps bring the community together as it’s
cared for by a group of volunteers who have won several awards, including the Best
Kept Churchyard in Essex title and a BBC Breathing Places award. Good picture of
extension on website under History.
http://www.st-peter-ad-vincula.org.uk/
St Michael’s, Mansel Lacey, Herefordshire

Mansel Lacey is a small community with just over 100 inhabitants. Their village hall was part of the old village school, which had been closed in 1961. The community desperately needed a space where they could get together for various clubs and activities, but felt that because they were such a small community, grant funders would feel that they didn’t deserve to have a brand new village hall. However, the village already had a community building – St Michael’s Church.

With community participation, some hard work and grants from organisations like the National Lottery, the Local Authority, the Rural Development Commission and the local community’s own fundraising efforts, it was possible to re-arrange the church. The project enabled:

- radiators to be fitted throughout the whole church, benefitting the worshipping community too,
- the entire floor area (except the chancel) to be carpeted,
- some of the pews being retained and fitted to the carpet, while 100 moveable chairs were purchased, giving the community area flexibility within their new meeting space, (the church is now capable of seating more people),
- a small kitchen was fitted, with a cooker; water urns, crockery and cutlery, and two toilets have been installed.

Completed in 1997, this was an early innovative project. The Friends Group had to convert into a new organisation with a charitable status, titled “Mansel Lacy Community Association”. This meant it had a legally set up constitution and was able to apply for grant money, not only from the District Council, but also from other funders, including the National Lottery.

The funding organisations, particularly the local authority, insisted on any grants being subject to a lease, however, it was not possible at that time to ‘lease’ a consecrated building. So instead, a ‘Licence to Occupy’ for 21 years was developed and legally agreed. This was to ensure that the church, as owners of the building, did not receive public funding and then at some point, refuse the Community Association permission to use the building.

Mansel Lacey now has a flexible community meeting space and the building is in regular use, often on a daily basis. The village has a focal point once again, and constant use means that the church building itself is better maintained.

http://www.visitherefordshirechurches.co.uk/st-michael-all-angels-mansel-lacy/
St Martin’s, Horsley, Diocese of Gloucester

The nave of this grade II* church was converted to make the space suitable for school plays, arts events and regular church services. Known as the 3 in 1 project it is now used by the church, the community centre and the local school.

http://www.horsleyprimary.org.uk/galleries/CreativeArts.html

The St Mary’s Church, Kemp Town, Brighton, Diocese of Chichester

Still open for regular worship, hosting regular music recitals, the Diocese approached the Churches Conservation Trust’s Regeneration Team to assess the potential for additional community use of the building which may help to provide a sustainable future for St Mary’s and help to support the ministry and vision of the church. As a result, a working partnership between St Mary’s and the CCT’s Regeneration Team was established in 2010.

After generous funding from the Lankelly Chase Foundation, the Church of St Mary’s was able to develop and run a successful Open Day in June 2011 to celebrate and showcase the beauty of the building, fundraise and explore opportunities for additional use. The Day included lots of family friendly activities and events and was a huge success with over 500 people attending from the local and wider community.

Visitors were asked what they felt was special about St Mary’s and what groups or activities they wanted to see run from the church.

These results will feed into an Options Appraisal which will explore feedback in more detail and guide St Mary’s on the most sustainable and viable options for future use.

http://www.visitchurches.org.uk/AboutCCT/Regeneratingcommunities/Projectsexamplesofourregenerationwork/AsustainableworshipspaceBrighton/ and here http://www.stmaryschurchbrighton.co.uk/

Spilsby Bunkhouse

Spilsby Bunkhouse provides affordable accommodation for groups and families from only £10 per night. This project’s innovation lies in the addition of high quality, yet inexpensive “bunkhouse” accommodation to the first floor of the building and the introduction of systems (mechanical services and digital operational infrastructure) to contain the ongoing cost of building operation to an affordable level. By utilising this approach, they are increasing the number of visitors into the town largely bikers, hikers and cyclists. Read more here including a Youtube clip.

http://www.ukbunkhouses.com/
All Saints, Benington, Lincolnshire

This Grade I church was forced to close in 2003 when the small congregation could no longer see a way to pay for necessary major repairs. Realising what they would lose and that “a closed church would be the final straw for this community” which had already lost its shop, post office and school, the village of 500 people have come together, formed the Benington Community Heritage Trust (BCHT) and are working with enthusiasm and commitment to safeguard a future for the church. They hope to reintroduce church services. “It opened the eyes of a lot of people to the church and its potential”, said one of the BCHT Trustees.” We cannot lock the door on the memories our church holds”. To read about how they organised open days and invited local people to come into the church and talk about a future for the building go to: http://www.visitchurches.org.uk/AboutCCTourwork/Regeneratingcommunities/Projectsexamplesofourregenerationwork/AthrivingheartforvillageBenington/ and http://www.beningtonallsaintschurch.co.uk/ to read their story.

St John’s, Fernham, Diocese of Oxford

St John the Evangelist, a grade II listed parish church is on an elevated site overlooking the village, which has a population of about 250 (88 households). Two factors came together. After the village hall burnt down and a subsequent space became unavailable, the villagers had no community space. Regular church services at St John’s were also attracting an elderly congregation of about half a dozen and the PCC was increasingly concerned about rising maintenance costs and future usage. The church interior underwent a major re-ordering and conversion to become the village hall. It now offers a comfortable, attractive, high quality space featuring a state-of-the-art audio-visual and sound experience. It opened in June 2010, and while still being used for church services, the building can be hired to host a wide range of activities and events.

It was a village project in close association with the church, rather than the other way round. A Project Team was largely responsible for making the building conversion happen while in parallel, the Church Warden ran a separate project to gain funding for the new roof.

Project Inspire, a charitable trust set up as a Company Limited by Guarantee to manage the conversion, now covers the running costs for the building’s use for community activities and for services and other church activities. Under a repairing 30 year lease, Project Inspire now has responsibility for the routine maintenance of the church building with an expectation of assistance for any major repairs from the PCC. http://www.fernham.info/
St. Leonards, Yarpole, Diocese of Hereford

St Leonard’s, grade II*, is at the centre of a small rural village which is very much off the beaten track. The village population is less than 300 households and the wider parish itself is only 700. A parish plan of 2005 identified two issues, first that the shop which had closed in 2004, was central to the community and secondly that the church was underused. The community, determined to hold on to their community run shop and post office, worked with the church to secure a permanent home at the west end of the church.

An exhibition of the proposals was put up in church as a way of getting people used to the idea of using the church for secular use. A very carefully structured questionnaire, overseen by the County Council, asking people what they would like to use the church for, was sent to every household. A third responded of which 85% were broadly in favour of extended community use.

An extensive programme of re-ordering was undertaken and now St Leonard’s provides premises for the shop, post office, café, flexible community space and numerous community activities. The Victorian side aisle houses the toilets and vestry. Raising the £240K required and obtaining the necessary permissions proved the two most challenging aspects.

The Yarpole Community Shop Association Ltd was set up in 2005, as an Industrial and Provident Society (IPS). The shop is a stand-alone business and independent of the PCC.

A Community Shares Scheme was set up to help fund the shop. Shares were bought by 236 members for £10 each. These shares are still valid and the number of shareholders has grown to 322.

This is a project where there has been a lot of thought around the sharing of sacred and community space. Initial thoughts that a division should be created between the secular space and the sacred place have evolved into thinking about how the ‘sacred space’ can be integrated into a cohesive whole with the nave.

St Leonards Building Management Group (BMG) (the inclusive management committee which represents all the users – the shop, the café etc.) has taken full responsibility for all aspects of running the building. The BMG is a sub-committee of the PCC. They also currently manage the café through a part-time manager who reports to the BMG, but that too ultimately could become a separate entity along with whatever else is developed on behalf of the community.

The project took nearly 5 years and on 1st October 2009, Yarpole Village Shop became the first full time community shop to operate within a church. It is open 7 days a week and much of the day-to-day work is carried out by 45 unpaid volunteers.

Church website is at: - http://www.yarpole.com/stleonards/Welcome.html

Shop website is at: http://www.yarpoleshop.co.uk/home
St Mary-le-Bow, Cheapside, London

The C11th crypt has been converted, and while retaining its architectural significant features, it is now used for public and religious functions. Anyone who passes St Mary-le-Bow can attend Morning Prayer in the crypt chapel any week day, or drop into the popular vegetarian restaurant The Place Below for breakfast or lunch. The Café was set up 20 years ago when the incumbent was keen to develop more links with his parish where there were no residents. On one of the busiest streets in London, the café has proved a great way of bringing people into the building.

http://www.stmarylebow.co.uk/

St Mary Magdalene, Stoke Canon, Diocese of Exeter

In May 2004, this grade I church was closed on the advice of English Heritage (EH) due to the dangerous condition of the roof. Repairs were carried out with the assistance of an EH grant. The parish also undertook a Community Appraisal to see how the village wanted to use the church, as the PCC didn’t think that it was right to spend so much on the roof for the building to remain underused. Analysis of Community Appraisals and census information, together with numerous consultations with parishioners clearly demonstrated the community need for more social events, activities and support services especially for senior citizens and young people.

As a part of the feasibility study, consultations were held with potential providers of the services for which a need had been identified.

A major re-ordering was undertaken which has created a large flexible space with movable seating; kitchen area and storage; a gallery with further seating together with rooms for vestry/benefice office and toilet facilities accessed by both stairs and lift and a worship area “in the round.”

The resulting worship area has underfloor heating and high-tech audiovisuals, can accommodate traditional and modern services and can be used for plays and concerts. The open plan area and gallery meeting area are used for community activities, including concerts, health sessions for the elderly, coffee mornings, history groups, activity sessions for young children and by the adjacent school for assemblies and dance/drama lessons.

http://www.netherexe.org/the-churches/the-bridge-community-centre-stoke-canon
http://www.netherexe.org/the-churches/stoke-canon
St Nicholas, Great Hormead, Diocese of St Albans

This C12th grade II* rural church wanted to reach out to its contemporary village community. In 2008, they built a new extension attached to the church to provide a meeting place with toilet and kitchen. It has been used by youth and children projects, a young mum’s group, and a luncheon club for older people. Photographs can be seen here.


St John’s Church, Nottinghill, Diocese of London

St John’s is the Parish Church for the diverse and vibrant community of Notting Hill. They have launched a major restoration campaign called ‘Restoring the Future’ which is aiming to raise £1.25 million. It is a multi-faceted project which includes:

- improving access
- restoring many of the original features of the interior including the pulpit and tester, and the important C19th organ.
- making liturgical changes including the relocation of the restored pulpit and tester to their original position underneath the crossing. Similarly, the font will be repositioned to be on an axis with the North and South porches. This more central location will communicate the importance of baptism, and make the font more accessible. This will also release the space where it currently sits, allowing community groups to use the area for meetings as discussed.
- enhancing the community facilities so they can be used by more groups such as the Community Payback Programme which works with offenders
- developing specific learning projects based around the organ which is linked to the Wilberforce anti-slavery movement as well as be using local volunteers to record oral histories, and create visual projects to display in the Church after the completion of the works.

They have set up a separate Restoring the Future Campaign website.


The Vineyard Church, Richmond, London

This is an independent Evangelical Church which runs the Vineyard Community Centre in their basement which offers a morning drop-in for those who are homeless or in crisis, a community café in the afternoons, and a once a month late night café for under 18s offering responsible socialising in a safe alcohol and drug-free environment. This is an area where there is a lack of youth provision for those under pub drinking age.

http://www.thevineyardchurch.org.uk/thevineyardproject.htm
The Lewis Carroll Centre at All Saints Church, Daresbury

Lewis Carroll, whose real name was Revd Charles Lutwidge Dodgson, was born and lived in Daresbury village for the first 11 years of his life, from 1832 to 1843. Lewis Carroll's father, another Revd Charles Dodgson, was the much-loved vicar here for 16 years, from 1827 to 1843. Visitors come from all over the world to see the famous Lewis Carroll window put up in the church to mark the centenary of Carroll's birth.

The idea for a Lewis Carroll Centre at Daresbury had been under discussion for at least 20 years. A number of plans were considered over the years but came to nothing. Finally, with the help of national, regional and local funding bodies, the All Saints Lewis Carroll Centre, Daresbury began to take shape in late 2009. The PCC wanted to enhance the visitor experience for those interested in Lewis Carroll and the history of Daresbury. It was also keen to ensure that Village life was not disturbed too much through the promotion of the Lewis Carroll connection and providing facilities for visitors.

It opened as a small extension to the church in March 2012. The project cost over £700,000 of which £370K came from the Heritage Lottery Fund and £212K from the NWDA Rural Development Programme.

http://lewiscarrollcentre.org.uk ; http://www.daresburycofe.org.uk/

St Philip and St James, Norton St Philip

At St Philip and St James, Norton St Philip, Somerset, a Grade II* church, the north aisle has been cleared to provide space for gatherings and the ‘Hub’, a freestanding two storey glass and oak construction at the west end which provides a meeting room upstairs and a lavatory, servery and office downstairs. In common with many rural villages in recent years, Norton St Philip has seen the loss of its shops and post office. Moreover, the village hall was not an appropriate or economic venue for small gatherings and events.

Therefore, it was decided to develop the church as a new focus for the village and “place the church at the heart of village life”. As well as providing a venue for an estimated 300 village-related meetings a year, ‘the Hub’ allows the church to be used regularly by a wide variety of groups, from mothers and babies to a 50-strong youth club. In addition, the catering facilities and flexible space have encouraged concerts and exhibitions to take place, and there is a monthly coffee morning and produce stall, a lifeline for the older people in the village.

http://www.hardingtonvale.org.uk/?Our_History:Norton_St_Philip:The_Hub
**St Peters Church, Peterstow, Diocese of Hereford**

This village had been using their community hall for community events, but it had become derelict and was not on main drainage so it was proposed to move community events into the grade II* church. Two questionnaires were organised and the project brought church and community together over the five years it took to raise the funds, agree the design and obtain all the necessary permissions.

In 2008 a bid to the Big Lottery Fund was successful and the village found itself with £103,000. Kitchen and toilets were installed at the west end, the pews were removed and replaced with comfortable chairs creating space for the residents of Peterstow to use as a village community centre while leaving the east end of the church in its original form, but in a better state of repair. Opened in 2009, it has been a wonderful asset to the village and “we now have a medieval building fit for the twenty first century.” said Barbara Gratton, one of the members of the Peterstow Community Project. http://www.peterstowvillage.co.uk/church.html and you can watch a Youtube clip of the opening here http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0YGplvupRjY

**Holy Saviour, Westbury Leigh, Wiltshire, Diocese of Salisbury**

Holy Saviour Church, grade II, is situated in the centre of Westbury Leigh and has been transformed into a multi-purpose community hall that meets a wide range of local needs. Faced with the prospect of Westbury Leigh Church hall coming to the end of its life and wishing to make more use of the Chapel, the church hall site was sold for development and the proceeds put towards the cost of converting the church to dual use. Since the project was undertaken there has been a considerable amount of new housing and an influx of young families.

The chancel of the church is preserved for regular Christian worship. However, by folding back a screen the entire church might be used for larger services. What was the nave of the original design is now a large modern hall. There is a fully equipped kitchen, along with toilets and facilities for the disabled. Above the kitchen is an upstairs meeting room, which is carpeted, spacious and quite atmospheric.

The Community Hall is run by a community association, which is a registered charity and a company limited by guarantee. They do not find it difficult to get volunteers because they have a wide“ customer base”. Initially it was used by the school, but by 2009 the school had ceased using the hall as it now has a new school building. However additional community activities are now making use of the space. http://www.westbury-leigh-community-hall.org.uk/
St Andrew’s Church, Lowestoft, Diocese of Norwich

St. Andrew’s Church, Lowestoft recently celebrated a £750,000 transformation.

The church located in the very deprived Roman Hill area of Lowestoft, has undergone extensive building work as part of the Access All Areas project which transformed the cold, inflexible and underused facility into a warm building for a wide range of community uses at the same time as continuing as the parish church.

In 2003, the church had asked the local community what they wanted to see in the local area. They said that they wanted more local facilities and more activities for all ages. There was nowhere in the community to put new buildings, so the church started thinking about how their building could bridge the gap.

This project has transformed the church by installing insulation and modern heating and lighting systems so that it can be used as second hall as well as being a space for prayer and worship. There is a brand new kitchen and meeting facilities. The hall which was already well used has been refurbished, an extension built to accommodate an office, improved toilet facilities and the central area of the building opened up for a community café.

It was funded by a range of local and national funding groups and individuals, including the Big Lottery Fund Community Building Programme, Lowestoft Together, WREN and the Diocese of Norwich.

http://www.networknorwich.co.uk/Articles/231349/Network_Norwich_and_Norfolk/Regional_News/East_Norfolk/Lowestoft_church_transformation_is_complete.aspx

Holy Trinity, Guildford, Diocese of Guildford

This parish has recently refurbished its two churches and parish hall to provide three buildings available for hire in Guildford Town Centre (with convenient public parking). There are all fully accessible and available for hire. See

http://www.holytrinityguildford.org.uk/Buildings/Hiring_our_Buildings/
St Peter’s Church, Swainsthorpe, Diocese of Norwich

Over three years, the PCC and Swainsthorpe Parish Council and the Swainsthorpe Community Charity Trust planned and fundraised together for the refurbishment of St Peter’s Church so it could be used for a wider range of community activities. It is being funded by a £25,000 grant from Lafarge Aggregates, £10,000 from South Norfolk Council, £10,000 from Norfolk Rural Community Council, various other grants and local fundraising.

David Chapman, chairman, said: “Swainsthorpe does not have a village hall, a shop, or any other community facility, and we have tended to use the church as not only a place of worship but also the focal point in the village. The church is the heart of the community but it was too restrictive and lacked the basic facilities of toilets, a kitchen, warmth and comfort, and so the so the charity trust, the Parochial Church Council and have been working together to plan the refurbishment.”

All 159 households were surveyed of which 130 returned a completed form (80%) of which 100% were supportive of the new proposed facilities. 167 suggestions were made for activities that residents would like to see.

Phase one involved replacing the church’s pews with moveable chairs to create a more flexible space for everything from music events to keep fit classes. Toilet and kitchen facilities are being put in, the heating is being upgraded, and a sound system is being added for the hard of hearing. Work on this £75,000 first phase was completed at the end of 2012.

http://www.tasvalley.org/church/9

Cottage Wood Centre, Methodist Chapel at Plumpton, near Penrith

Twenty years ago, in the early 1990’s, Penrith Methodist Circuit had its Circuit church and nine chapels. Today only four of these chapels remain. Plumpton Back Street could have closed, but the congregation decided instead that their chapel, steeped in 300 years of worship and service to the rural community, was a physical resource that had a continuing future and they wanted to understand this and plan for this future. So supported by the Penrith Circuit, this small rural chapel is currently engaged in an exciting project to redevelop its premises into a retreat/rural studies centre.

Situated on the edge of the Brackenburgh estate there are immense opportunities for the premises to be used by Christian groups and others. They also want to see the building used as a community resource for the nearby villages of Plumpton and Calthwaite.

http://www.penrithcircuit.org.uk/plumpton.htm
**St Andrew’s Church, Farnham, Diocese of Guildford**

A major internal upgrade, to this 12th century grade I church, to allow multiple uses including worship was completed in 2005. The Pavilions meeting rooms with their adjoining kitchen and movable chairs mean that the church, situated at the heart of Farnham’s town centre, serves a modern purpose for both the congregation and the wider community. The main north entrance now has a ramp for visitors in wheelchairs and a disabled access toilet is located near St George’s chapel.

http://www.standrewsfarnham.org/ChurchFacilities.asp?menuID=5&pageID=Church%20Facilities

**Spilsby Meeting Point**

Spilsby Meeting Point is a community hub of two small rooms that are available for one to one local meetings, and a main hall which is suitable for larger meetings a maximum of 80 people. There is a modern kitchen and recently renovated toilets. There are also ‘hot desks’. There is a very good website and bookings can be made online.

http://www.spilsbyme.org.uk/

**Meeting Point and Bunkhouse at Spilsby Methodist Church, Lincolnshire Wolds**

The Spilsby project was to create a sustainable community hub within the walls of a struggling grade II Methodist church. The congregation wanted the parts of the building they no longer needed to be used/opened up for community benefit.

Lincolnshire Community Foundation was brought in and they levered in c.£300,000 of capital investment (£150k grants and £150 in loans) for refurbishment and upgrading.

The church lease the space to the Natural Conclusions Company which is a Community Interest Company (CIC) for a peppercorn rent. It has two unpaid directors.

There is also a management company and a steering group – one for the hub and one for the Bunk House.

The Bunkhouse and Meeting Point are at the rear of the building in what used to be the hall and the Caretaker’s flat. The Bunkhouse is upstairs and the Meeting Point is downstairs.
Alsager St Mary Magdalene, Diocese of Chester

This Grade 2 church had no toilet or kitchen facilities, and needed to use its east-end vestries for children’s work. They therefore built a new complex at the west end comprising meeting room/choir vestry, kitchen, three toilets (including disabled) and upstairs office and storage. They also built in capacity to create a first floor room over the new meeting room if this is required in the future. Completed in 2011, these facilities have helped consolidate the parish’s relationship with the local community and raise its profile.

http://www.stmarysalsager.org/open-door-lettings

St Marylebone Parish Church, Marylebone Road, Diocese of London, Grade I

A flourishing city centre church which makes full use of its crypt by renting out rooms as well as housing the Marylebone Health Centre.

In 1817 St Marylebone was built over a large vaulted crypt which served as a burial ground until 1853 when its use was discontinued. In 1980 the bodies were removed from the crypt and reburied in Brookwood cemetery in Surrey. A full refurbishment was completed in the late 1980s. It was always the intention that the crypt would become a centre for healing, both physical and spiritual. There is both a Healing and Counselling Centre and the Marylebone Health Centre which is a regular NHS practice which also offers complementary therapies such as osteopathy, massage therapy, homeopathy, acupuncture and naturopathy through GP referral. There is plenty of information on the website including a short video which shows the premises.

http://www.stmarylebone.org/  http://www.marylebonehealthcentre.co.uk/

St Michael’s and All Angels Church in Spencers Wood

St Michael’s and All Angels Church in Spencers Wood, Diocese of Oxford has set up Caf’Active a popular community café open Monday to Saturday. They also have constructed a gallery area set up as an internet café and hosts children’s computer activities as well being available for hire for business meetings.

http://www.spencerswoodchurch.org/facilities.htm
St Anne’s, Edgeside, Rossendale, Diocese of Manchester

Situated in a semi rural valley 15 miles N of Manchester and close to a deprived housing estate, the Church had a vision that they would become the centre of their community, of service to all ages.

There was a problem of vandalism of church and drug and alcohol abuse in the churchyard.

Now the church is ‘buzzing’ with activities, congregation up by half, and there has been no significant trouble around the church for years.

They started by creating safe crèche area for children and modest improvements to the kitchen. They worked closely with the local school to provide activities for children and toddlers. There are adult courses including gentle exercise for older people, crafts for all ages, first aid, and food hygiene. It has also become a centre for a Credit Union. They were supported by the Edgeside and District Community Partnership along with the Baptists, the police, housing officials and health workers who all see the church as the hub of the community.

Congregation then decided they wanted to reorder the Victorian building to improve what they could offer the community and to create an economically, socially and environmentally sustainable building that would enable greater community usage of the facility and concurrent activities to run for the first time. Awarded in 2009, £284,209 by the Big Lottery fund’s Community Buildings Programme, it now provides a flexible community space as well as worship centre. It has an auditorium to seat 150, a meeting room to seat 30, Kitchen and disabled toilets and access.

CROSSING
THE THRESHOLD

A community development approach to the use of church buildings