**Local Building Development Plans**

**Introduction**

Buildings are a positive asset when they are fit for purpose, but conversely, can feel like an anchor, stopping a PCC and congregation from fully embodying it’s discipleship, mission and ministry.

When buildings are fit for purpose…

* They play a key role in Transforming Lives, by acting as the stage for people’s major life events.
* They play a major role in Growing Church by providing a sanctuary of peace, a space to worship God, and a place to teach and inspire.
* They play many roles in Building Community - meeting place, polling station, community hub, food bank, spiritual resource centre, to name just a few.

A sustainable and relevant church building will potentially look very different from parish to parish, but working towards a Local Building Development Plan will give the PCC an opportunity to consider all the options and in turn, help reset or strengthen the connection between:

* The church building and the vision of the PCC and congregation.
* The church community and wider parish community

**Four Simple Steps**

**Identify** or reaffirm the core vision and ministries of the PCC and congregation in relation to your local context. A critical relationship in this is the one with your parish community. Essentially, until you know what your building needs to facilitate, symbolize, or project, you won’t know if it is an effective building – discover this together as a community, because this is not a clubhouse, it’s a parish’s place of gathering, worship and sanctuary. This very practical step of discernment and discovery will underpin and shape your Local Building Development Plan.

**Assess** the current attributes and elements of the building (these may include elements from all levels of effectiveness). Each of the attributes and elements in the following tables, could be applied just as well to a cathedral or a chapel of ease, and everything in-between.

**Determine** what the building needs, to support your vision & enable discipleship, mission and ministry within your local community.

**Create** a Local Building Development Plan which prioritizes the changes needed and identifies the resources required, within a defined period of time. The earlier you involve the voices of the whole community the better.

**Articulate the vision.**

You may have an existing MAP or similar document, in which case you can simply move on to the building assessment, returning to this when it comes to thinking about what you need your building to be and do in enabling it.

If you aren’t sure where you are going or what kind of church you want to grow in to, there are a large number of resources within and beyond the Diocese to which you can turn. Churches can benefit at any time from a period of discernment and reflection, and it is finding the most appropriate vehicle for this that matters – God’s next steps for you can become apparent in all sorts of ways, whether it’s the start, continuation or ending of something,

You can find MAP and other resources, including the whole range of Living in Faith training courses on the Diocesan website or you can contact the Discipleship, Mission & Ministry Team directly for a conversation. No PCC is an island, and you may want to think about mission and buildings in the wider context of a multi-parish Benefice, Team or Deanery. It will be from this vantage point that you will be able to make the best decisions about your building.

**Assess your buildings.**

The Strategic Buildings Review started with the collection of more data about church buildings than we have ever held before. One thing the data tells us though, is that only a very small number of church buildings could be said to give a warm welcome, with a comfortable place to sit, the use of a toilet and the enjoyment of a warm drink.

The idea of the assessment is not to grade or score the capability of a church building, but if we want to continue to use our buildings to worship and serve in the 21st century then they need at the very least to meet a basic set of ‘must haves’. After these foundational attributes are met, it is the role that the PCC and wider community wants to see its church fulfill, that will determine what other attributes are of importance; these may include elements from all of the other levels of effectiveness.

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| **Foundational, regardless of context** | **YES** | **NO** | **COMMENTS** |
| **Watertight, safe and accessible** |  |  |  |
| **Regularly maintained** |  |  |  |
| **Enables worship and basic hospitality** |  |  |  |
| * Sufficient heating |  |  |  |
| * Sufficient lighting |  |  |  |
| * Water and drainage |  |  |  |
| * Level access |  |  |  |
| * An accessible toilet |  |  |  |

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| **Next level of effectiveness** | **YES** | **NO** | **COMMENTS** |
| **In Good condition** |  |  |  |
| * Within QI period maintenance planned or complete. |  |  |  |
| * Fixtures & fittings in good order. |  |  |  |
| **Clean and tidy** |  |  |  |
| * Dusted / polished / hoovered / mopped. |  |  |  |
| * Furniture / displays and other free-standing items etc. neatly organized. |  |  |  |
| * Clutter minimized and/or safely stored. |  |  |  |
| **Open and welcoming** |  |  |  |
| * Available to the public outside of organized worship / ministry times. |  |  |  |
| * Welcome signs. |  |  |  |
| * Who’s Who information. |  |  |  |
| * Occasionally staffed. |  |  |  |
| **Well sign-posted and within easy reach** |  |  |  |
| * Road-side notice boards |  |  |  |
| * Road-side direction signs |  |  |  |
| * Basic web-presence |  |  |  |
| * Well lit |  |  |  |
| * Footpaths in good condition |  |  |  |
| **Enables prayer and worship** |  |  |  |
| * Stimulating interior features |  |  |  |
| * Audio visual equipment |  |  |  |
| * Some flexible space |  |  |  |
| * Votive candles / other aids |  |  |  |
| **A kitchenette / kitchen** |  |  |  |
| * Clear policies around access and use |  |  |  |
| * Fit for purpose current and foreseeable future |  |  |  |
| * Potential for a suitably stocked self-service facility |  |  |  |

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| **Third Level** | **YES** | **NO** | **COMMENTS** |
| **Flexible, comfortable seating** |  |  |  |
| * Settees, armchairs and/or other soft furnishings |  |  |  |
| * Adequate pew cushions |  |  |  |
| * stackable and/or upholstered chairs |  |  |  |
| * Moveable pews |  |  |  |
| **Appearance maximized inside and out** |  |  |  |
| * Memorials, banners, shrines, stained glass, screens and other fabric well maintained and presented |  |  |  |
| * Good quality material standards applied to moveable and/or transient fabric elements |  |  |  |
| * Effective / enhancing lighting scheme |  |  |  |
| * Visually stimulating |  |  |  |
| **Strong engagement through signage and visitor information** |  |  |  |
| * Appropriate interpretive signage |  |  |  |
| * Informative and engaging visual displays |  |  |  |
| * Clarity in navigation, use and appreciation of facilities |  |  |  |
| * Guidebooks / tour sheets |  |  |  |
| * Interactive displays |  |  |  |
| **Thoughtful use of space which promotes spiritual development, human contact and social** **activities.** |  |  |  |
| * Defined quiet / peaceful space e.g. side chapel |  |  |  |
| * Resources area |  |  |  |
| * Where mainly pews, create a less formal feel if space allows |  |  |  |
| **Generates some income** |  |  |  |
| * Engage visitors with the story and central purposes of the building |  |  |  |
| * Provide opportunities to give |  |  |  |
| * Promote Fairtrade / Eco-commerce within the building |  |  |  |
| * Rents out space(s) appropriately |  |  |  |

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| **Fourth Level** | **YES** | **NO** | **COMMENTS** |
| **Staffed and accommodating** |  |  |  |
| * Friendly face on hand to respond |  |  |  |
| * Handles booking processes |  |  |  |
| * Respond to needs and problem solves |  |  |  |
| * Engagement with visitors and users that helps people feel at home |  |  |  |
| **A great venue** |  |  |  |
| * Offers a level of facilities that compare well with other public buildings |  |  |  |
| * Acoustics and sightlines addressed where practicable |  |  |  |
| **Inspiring** |  |  |  |
| * Enables a focus on the core purpose of the building |  |  |  |
| * Accentuates and maximizes its best features |  |  |  |
| * Appropriate lighting and soundscape, setting people at their ease |  |  |  |
| * Engages and lifts the spirits |  |  |  |
| * Champions environmental sustainability |  |  |  |
| **Innovating** |  |  |  |
| * Thoughtful use of core fabric and function that allow flexibility |  |  |  |
| * Exciting use of space that enables varying spiritual and secular uses |  |  |  |
| * Fabric and function have sustainability at their heart |  |  |  |
| * Exceptional use of social media and connectivity |  |  |  |
| * Leading the way in community involvement / ownership |  |  |  |
| * Partner with organisations with whom you have synergy to develop use |  |  |  |
| **Self-supporting** |  |  |  |
| * Active and ongoing engagement with its host community |  |  |  |
| * Well organised and informed involvement by congregation / trustees |  |  |  |
| * Strong financial planning |  |  |  |
| * Appropriate balance of giving, fund raising and trading |  |  |  |
| * Keeping abreast and taking advantage of all appropriate grant funding |  |  |  |

**Consider** **what changes and additions are required to your buildings.**

Working methodically through what the building actually needs to enable your vision, will become the basis of your plan, and along with any consultation you carried out, will help you in producing the ‘statements of need’ you will require for faculties and funders.

Simply go back through the tables. and if your activities require an attribute that you have identified as missing, say why it is needed in the comments column – you may wish to divide into essential or ideal, as this will help with prioritising your programme of work.

**Create a development plan.**

There are a hundred and one different templates for this step and not all of them will be proportionate to your needs.

It is entirely possible that you will discover that your buildings effectiveness falls short of what your vison entails, and in some cases, you may have to literally ‘think outside of the box’. You may also wonder whether the cost benefit of changes to your building’s effectiveness is too high, or that compromises you may need to make are too restrictive.

In some cases, the most positive way forward for the building, will be in the service of another vision and that might be a great sadness and relief all in one go. There are numerous examples of churches that have found a new lease of life whilst enabling some forms of Christian worship to be maintained. In some cases, there will be a multi-parish benefice where repurposing one building will better enable the Christian mission and ministry to continue more sustainably from the other(s).

There’s a considerable amount of talk about building status (much of this focussing on what is colloquially referred to as the Festival model), and it may be that you develop your building in all sorts of ways to meet a variety of needs, but in the end, a Local Building Development Plan must support the purposes and needs of the parish as a whole.

It is important at this stage whilst being realistic and good stewards, you do not lose heart if your vision appears to demand greater resources than you appear to have at hand. Some of the same community members and partners that you involved in the shaping of your vision in step one, may also bring with them resources of their own. Also, from a funders’ point of view, the more diverse the functions and services, the more likely you are to attract their interest.

RESOURCES

If you have identified a significant amount of project work that will require partners and/or outside financial help, then you’ll need to write a Business Plan – the National Council of Voluntary Organisations has some good advice and support on their site

<https://knowhow.ncvo.org.uk/tools-resources/business-plan-template/before-you-start>

To download and use the templates, you’ll need to sign up as a member which is free to charities with less than £30k income and an annual fee of only £53 for income up to £50k.

There are also templates and case studies in the ‘[Crossing the Threshold Toolkit](https://d3hgrlq6yacptf.cloudfront.net/60187623b57f6/content/pages/documents/crossingthethresholdtoolkit.pdf)’

If you are looking for something very basic at first, the Community Project Development Officer has created a simple project template that would get you started.

Community Planning - <https://www.communityplanningtoolkit.org/sites/default/files/Engagement.pdf>​

​Mapping your church connections - <https://www.john-truscott.co.uk/Resources/Articles-index>  then A35​

​Open and Sustainable - <https://www.churchofengland.org/resources/churchcare/advice-and-guidance-church-buildings/sharing-your-building-and-finding>

There are also Mission Action Planning resources on the Derby Diocese website - [MAP](https://derby.anglican.org/en/our-mission/mission-action-plans-map/map-start.html?highlight=WyJtaXNzaW9uIiwibWlzc2lvbmFsIiwiJ21pc3Npb24nIiwibWlzc2lvbicuIiwiJ21pc3Npb24iLCJtaXNzaW9ucyIsImFjdGlvbiIsInBsYW5zIiwicGxhbiIsInBsYW5uaW5nJy4iLCJtaXNzaW9uIGFjdGlvbiIsIm1pc3Npb24gYWN0aW9uIHBsYW5zIiwiYWN0aW9uIHBsYW5zIl0=) to help you with Step 1.

Finally, if you want to talk about how you might use this toolkit, and would like some help getting the process off the ground, contact Gareth Greenwood, community Project Development Officer by emailing [gareth.greenwood@derby.anglican.org](mailto:gareth.greenwood@derby.anglican.org) or calling him on 07579 969593.