

WOKING UNITED REFORMED CHURCH – APPLICATION FOR FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

Executive Summary	
<p>This application is seeking a capital grant of £25,000 towards the overall costs of an extensive refurbishment programme drawn up by the Woking United Reformed Church, located along White Rose Lane. The programme covers three elements; refurbishment of the kitchen, replacement of lighting with energy efficient lights and the installation of a comprehensive intruder and panic alarm system. The overall cost of the programme is £108,000, comprising £70,500 for the kitchen refurbishment, £30,000 for the upgrade of lighting and £7,500 for a new intruder and panic alarm.</p> <p>The facilities at the Woking United Reformed Church are well used by the local community and support a wide range of activities for those of all ages, including the outreach work undertaken by the Church itself. The proposed programme of refurbishment will significantly improve the facilities for those groups and individuals visiting the Centre, and will ensure that the Church facilities meet today’s standards, including in terms of energy efficiency and security. In light of the Church’s contribution to the well-being of the local community and the need to provide a warm and welcoming venue with facilities that meet today’s standards, it is recommended that the application should be supported.</p> <p>Officers recommend that the request is supported with capital funding of £25,000 from the Council’s Community Fund towards the overall costs of the kitchen refurbishment on the basis of the anticipated cost estimates provided.</p>	

Recommendations	
The Executive is requested to:	RESOLVE That a capital grant of £25,000 be awarded from the Council’s Community Fund towards the costs of the kitchen refurbishment.
Reason for Decision	To enable the Church to undertake the refurbishment works for the benefit of all users of the community facilities at the venue.
Legal Authority	S19 (Misc. Provisions) Local Government Act 1976
Conditions	<p>Accounts. The Organisation must submit accounts for the year in which the grant is awarded, including an income and expenditure account and balance sheet. Please note that accounts for other years may also be required.</p> <p>Monitoring Information. The Organisation must submit monitoring information as a measure of its achievements. Failure to provide details will jeopardise the award.</p> <p>Publicity. Where possible, the Organisation is required to publicise the support received from Woking Borough Council, including on websites and literature / leaflets produced.</p> <p>Payment Period. Final claims must be made by the second week in April. Unclaimed awards will not be available at a later date unless exceptional circumstances can be demonstrated to the Council before</p>

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	<p>the end of the award year.</p> <p>Joint Working. WBC expects the Organisation to engage positively on health and wellbeing multi-agency joint work affecting Woking. Groups which refuse may place their Council support at risk, e.g. grant, concessionary rent and other assistance.</p> <p>Invoices / Receipts. In order to claim an element of the funding, the Organisation must submit paid invoices or receipts relating to equipment purchased or services provided.</p> <p>Homelessness Reduction Act 2017. Following the introduction of new legislation from April 2018, the Council expects the support of partner agencies in identifying people at risk of homelessness as early as possible to maximise the opportunities to prevent such. Partner agencies / organisations are expected to be engaged in joint working arrangements to assist in finding suitable housing and support solutions, and where appropriate to undertake and respond to the new 'duty to refer'. Groups which do not support this new legislation and way of working positively may put their Council support at risk.</p> <p>Venue Hire. Woking Borough Council has a duty to ensure that publicly-owned venues and resources do not provide a platform for extremists and are not used to disseminate extremist views. This duty extends to organisations that work with the local authority so this includes recipients of any grants from Woking Borough Council. If Groups hire out their venue(s) they should ensure good processes are in place for record keeping and checking if hirers are appropriate groups to be making the hire arrangements. The following are some areas which should be considered:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Basic details should be recorded to include speaker's address, mobile phone number and organisation details. • Has the identity of the speaker been confirmed and is their organisation bona fide? Are they known to the hirer? • Is the speaker from the area? Are they UK citizens or from overseas and will they travel specifically for this event? • Consider checks on the internet to confirm the status of speakers to include website, YouTube or social media sites. • How many people are likely to attend (check previous or similar events either locally or online).
Performance Indicators	<p>Users. The Organisation to provide a breakdown of the users.</p> <p>Activities. The Organisation to provide details of activities and events held.</p> <p>Publicity. The Organisation to advise how the Council's support has been publicised.</p> <p>Statement of Use. The Organisation to provide a statement stating the use to which the grant money has been put.</p>
Future Support	<p>The support represents a one-off capital award to assist with refurbishment works at the Church. There are no ongoing funding implications arising from the award.</p>

The Executive has authority to determine the above recommendation.

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Background Papers:

2020/21 Application Form.

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1.0 Summary of Application	
1.1 Status and Aims	<p>Woking United Reformed Church is a Christian Church formed in January 2005 from the amalgamation of the former St Andrews URC and York Road URC at the premises in White Rose Lane.</p> <p>The facilities at the Church include a Chapel, a Sanctuary Room, a Forum area, a lounge, a youth room, a meeting room, a kitchen and a large main hall which can be subdivided into three separate spaces.</p> <p>Besides regular Sunday worship, the Church is open seven days a week. During the week, it offers fellowship, pastoral care and an initial level of welfare, building support in a safe and inclusive environment across the complete age spectrum from parents/guardians with babies and toddlers, couples in 25-40 age range (an important group where they have financial pressures of children and a mortgage in a relatively expensive area of the country to live), to seniors (with emphasis on vulnerable members of the community).</p> <p>A variety of community groups and youth and children's activities meet throughout the week. Visitors can call in for tea, coffee and a chat any day of the week.</p>
1.2 Employees	5, comprising the Minister (full time), Church & Community Worker (full time), Children's & Youth Worker (full time), Office Administrator (12 hours per week) and the Premises Administrator (26 hours per week).
1.3 Volunteers	<p>229.</p> <p>Volunteers carry out a wide range of activities for the benefit of the local community as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work, in conjunction with Woking Borough Council, to help Syrian refugees who have arrived in Woking. Provide a place for English lessons to take place with a simultaneous crèche, as well as a place for social gathering before and after classes which includes interaction with church volunteers. Syrian friends are also considering the use of the premises for other events of their own for which the use of improved catering facilities in the kitchen would be desirable. • Host in refugee week (17-23 June 2019) a Christian Aid photography exhibition entitled "Uprooted and Overlooked" which ended with a community evening and meal where the Syrian refugees (see above) provided music and a Syrian chef cooked a meal. • Support the York Road Project which provides a night shelter for single homeless people in Woking, supported lodgings for those moving up from being homeless and runs a day centre which provides training, help and support for the homeless and long-term unemployed. The Church provides limited work experience for residents during their time there, makes an annual grant to them, a weekly collection of foodstuffs and occasional collections of clothing and sleeping bags as part of the ongoing support for its work. Together with the Project, the Church won funding from Eagle Radio to provide materials for a garden project in the grounds of the premises to the value of £1,000 which is

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maintained by York Road Project's clients.

- Hold an 'empty bowls' fund-raising event for the York Road Project in conjunction with Surrey Adult Learning Centres. Pottery and ceramics students hand craft a bowl which is then donated to Woking United Reformed Church for a soup and bread meal for members who in turn make a donation and keep the bowl as a reminder.
- Work with Woking Borough Council in running annual Silver Sunday event, for the elderly and lonely.
- Offer the use of the entire premises to a Hungarian group on a fortnightly basis on a Saturday..
- Support Woking Street Angels in making a positive impact on crime and antisocial behaviour in the town centre (particularly in the vicinity of bars and clubs) by providing a calming presence on the streets on Friday and Saturday nights (10pm to 4am). Members of the Church together with representatives from other churches in Woking are both Street Angels and trustees of the charity. Surrey Police says incidents they have to deal with on the nights the Angels are on duty have dropped by at least 64% since they started in 2011.
- Offer 'Commuter' coffee once a fortnight, on a Monday morning. Volunteers provide free coffee/tea/soft drink to passers-by on the street outside the premises in White Rose Lane between 6.30am and 9am. The passers-by are mainly commuters on their way to the station or students on their way to Woking College or to John the Baptist School.
- Support Freemantles, the Surrey County Council School for children and young people from 4 – 19 with complex social communication needs, who use the Church's premises as a base to help pupils develop their communication and social understanding skills by taking them into the town to experience the hustle and bustle of shopping to gain life skills to help them become independent.
- Support other local charities like the Hospice (with monthly collections of goods for sale in their shops or to be sold for recycling) and Your Sanctuary, the local women's refuge, (mainly through weekly collections of foodstuffs, but also of clothing, bedding and so on).
- Work with the staff of Engage in leading primary school assemblies together with lunchtime and after school clubs, storytelling, anger management groups, and in secondary schools, individual student mentoring, detached and pastoral work and religious education (RE) lessons, as well as support for Christian Unions, school staff, and general school activities. This work is now done in 35 primary schools, three secondary schools and Woking College.
- Established a regular monthly lunch club and Sunday afternoon tea (T@3) for the elderly and those who feel lonely or are living on their own. Some of those who attend are from the Church family and some from the community, including local care homes.
- Began an annual Holiday at Home club which attracts those from

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within the Church and, in equal numbers, from the community, many of whom are elderly and/or perhaps live on their own. The aim is to entertain elderly residents of the town who are unable to go away as a result of age or infirmity at the Church's premises with discussions, games, videos, talks and music.

- Operate a Holiday Fun Club for primary school children which has run for many years during the Easter and Summer school holidays. Most of those attending do not attend a Church, Woking United Reformed Church or any other, but some do now attend either or both our Friday after school club for primary school children and the Boys and Girls Brigades. The Church is looking at ways of developing school holiday activities which will attract children from the local area and add to the Church's aim of supporting the local community.
- Extended opening times of the Church premises by ensuring there are volunteers to welcome and provide refreshments for visitors who may drop in. The Church is close to the Community Hospital and three GP surgeries and is a convenient place for those going to or having been to appointments or visiting in-patients at the hospital to drop-in before or afterwards for a coffee or a chat.
- Maintain a strong relationship with the Children with Special Needs Foundation charity and have organised events like a petting farm with a Ferris wheel and a skating rink to raise funds for them and for the Woking Hospice. The Church is currently in discussion about other ways of working with and helping them.
- Developed an opportunity for young people, in conjunction with the Royal Horticultural Society (RHS) at Wisley, to learn how to grow vegetables and cook them and using seasonal vegetables to make soup for the community. RHS Wisley staff visit Woking United Reformed Church and advise on how more fruit and vegetables could be grown; this will also help the Church's progress towards a gold Eco-Church award.
- Make a substantial contribution to the work of Woking People of Faith which aims to promote religious harmony for the people of Woking. Its main activities are to deliver public meetings, make educational visits, hold sports events and give community service. The Church has developed strong links with the Shah Jahan Mosque in the town. The Church is also involved with Churches Together in Woking where the minister was recently the moderator.
- Increased intensive pastoral care to disengaged individuals, for example young people, individuals with mental health problems, homeless and unemployed people

All volunteers are given training for their role, often supplemented by on-the-job support for the work they have volunteered to do. Refresher training is also provided from time to time.

All those wishing to carry out voluntary work where children, young people and adults at risk are involved are interviewed by two trustees of the Church to confirm their commitment and suitability. They are then 'disclosure and barring service' (DBS) checked, after which they have to undergo safeguarding training prior to commencement of their duties.

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1.4 Clients/Users	<p>1,800, comprising:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">698 male1,102 female80 disabled304 ethnic minority1,674 resident in Woking285 aged 0-5170 aged 6-10191 aged 11-18762 aged 19-65392 aged 65+ <p>The Church provides its facilities totally free to a number of voluntary bodies. Some of them do make a voluntary contribution from time to time to help with the costs but it is entirely up to them. Some organisations like Freemantles school as well as charities who hire the premises regularly like the Citizens Advice, Mind groups, Mediation Services, and Conquest Art (an art group for the disabled) do get charged but at a much lower rate than that charged to commercial hirers, depending entirely on what they can afford.</p> <p>Regular commercial hirers are offered a slightly reduced rate and one-off commercial hirers pay the full rate, but these are in the minority because of the demand from the Church's own internal organisations, voluntary bodies, charities and the like. Helping them is part of the Church's aim in developing the Church as a community hub in this part of Woking.</p> <p>Most of the Church's own organisations meeting during the week use the premises for free, but one or two social groups make small charges to members for refreshments and speaker costs and any surplus goes into Church funds.</p>
1.5 Members	<p>395, comprising:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">153 male242 female21 disabled16 ethnic minority255 resident in Woking29 aged 0-558 aged 6-1033 aged 11-18135 aged 19-65140 aged 65+ <p>Church members consider that part of their mission is to welcome any user of its services on their life's journey. For this reason, considerable effort has been devoted to involvement in community activities outside</p>

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	<p>the organisation’s premises within the community.</p> <p>It was one of the Church’s aims to make the premises a community hub in this part of Woking. There is more that the Church could and would like to do in that regard, but the fact that it entertains groups as diverse as baby sensory and mothers and tots at one end to supporting senior citizens at the other and from railway enthusiasts and tai chi to alcoholics anonymous and the disabled is indicative of the success so far.</p>
1.6 Sum Requested	£25,000 (Capital)
1.7 Project	<p>The proposals by the Church consist of a number of projects, set out below.</p> <p><u>Kitchen refurbishment</u></p> <p>The existing kitchen facilities were installed in the mid-1990’s and no works were carried out in this area during the major refurbishment completed 10 years ago. The catering facilities are now showing their age and recent damage has occurred to the worktops and storage cupboards that could mean they no longer meet the standards required today for catering premises and concern has been shown by church organisations, visitors and hirers.</p> <p>To facilitate the existing and expanding community activities, many of the activities require well maintained kitchen facilities, else these organisations will look elsewhere for alternative accommodation.</p> <p>It is planned to commence this work by Easter 2020 providing adequate funds have been established.</p> <p><u>Lighting</u></p> <p>Since the building refurbishment was completed 10 years ago, the building regulations have been revised to require energy efficient systems when lighting is being replaced. To help those who attend functions within the premises, particularly where they have impaired vision, the Church would like to improve the lighting levels within the premises and, in conjunction with this initiative, install LED type light fittings and consequently reduce the overall premises’ carbon footprint.</p> <p>The Church currently holds an Eco-church silver award. Eco-church is a free online survey, managed by A Rocha UK, with supporting facilities designed to equip churches to express their care for the world in everything they do: looking after buildings and land, how they engage with their local community and in global campaigns, also the personal lifestyles of the members in their worship and teaching. Eco-Church awards are given at bronze, silver or gold levels. Within Woking, besides the Church, other churches that are working towards or have achieved this award are Christ Church (Town Square), St Paul’s Church (Oriental Road) and many churches in the Guildford area.</p> <p>It is hoped to start this work by May 2020.</p> <p><u>Intruder and panic alarm</u></p> <p>Following a previous break-in to the premises, Surrey Police have indicated to the Church that where the premises is located is likely to become more challenging to maintain adequate security. The</p>

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	<p>applicant has recently advised that a further burglary took place in December, with the Church's office broken into.</p> <p>As the area to the south side of the railway is gradually redeveloped, this is likely to have an impact on the Church's security. Externally, shrubs have been cut back and CCTV fitted but internally there is a need to upgrade the existing intruder alarm system to meet current needs. Employees are often in the premises alone, meaning that there is an additional requirement for lone workers to be able to alert off site on-call support if necessary. This could be provided via an app to volunteers on a call-out team. This is essential to meet the Church's duty of care to the employees and volunteers.</p> <p>It is also intended to provide improved panic alarms particularly when an employee or volunteer needs emergency help or support in dealing with an incident, e.g., an interaction with a visitor where they feel unsafe, they may need to trigger an alarm for the benefit of others in the premises. The current personal alarms cannot be heard throughout the building. A system linked to the central alarm system would be significantly more effective.</p> <p>Again, it is hoped to start work by May 2020 provided funds are available.</p>
1.8 Cost breakdown:	<p>Kitchen refurbishment, budget £70,500.</p> <p>Lighting upgrade, budget £30,000.</p> <p>Intruder and panic alarm, budget £7,500.</p> <p>The costs are based on quotes already received.</p>
1.9 Community Benefit	<p>It is reckoned that each week during school term-time, and quite apart from on a Sunday, around 1800 people use the premises.</p>

<h3>2.0 Financial Background</h3>	
2.1 Budget	<p>At the time of the application, the Group held £140,000 in the bank. The sum includes £50,000 for reserves, as per policy and £50,000 towards the heating system repair to be spent in 4th quarter 2019.</p> <p>As at June 30 2019, approximately £40,000 was in restricted funds. These comprise:</p> <p>A Benevolent Fund – established to be used at the minister's discretion;</p> <p>Helen Sampson Fund – set up in memory of Helen Sampson to provide assistance for young people under 21 to participate in Church Activities;</p> <p>FM Support – monies received to support a member of the congregation;</p> <p>Brigades Funds - restricted for use of the Girls and Boys Brigades;</p> <p>Property Fund – monies received specifically for works on church premises or for musical instruments for the Brigade band.</p> <p>The Church has submitted a budget for 2020/21 which shows an anticipated income of £330,800 against an anticipated expenditure of</p>

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	<p>£338,320, resulting in an anticipated deficit of £7,520.</p> <p>Anticipated income includes offerings (£159,000), use of premises (£44,000), Special Appeal for Projects (£21,600), Sundry Income (£3,600), Grants on Projects (£70,000), Grants (Children & Youth Work) (£10,000), Grants (Church & Community Work) (£21,850) and Grants (Manse) (£750). Items of expenditure include Ministry & Mission Fund (£60,120), Own Ministry Expenses (£12,000), Premises Costs (£35,300), Property Repairs & Expenses (£20,000), Projects (Kitchen, Lighting, Alarm) (£108,000), other expenses (£17,200), Administration (£23,000), Children and Youth Work (£27,700), Church and Community Work (£26,500) and Outreach and Outward Giving (£8,500).</p>
2.2 Accounts	<p>The Church has submitted accounts for 2018 which show an income of £294,964 (£266,905 in 2017) against expenditure of £291,912 (£292,896 in 2018), resulting in a surplus of £3,052 (a deficit of £25,991 in 2017). The sum of £1,699,865 was carried forward at the end of the 2018 year, comprising unrestricted funds of £142,886, restricted funds of £24,890 and expendable endowment of £1,532,088.</p> <p>The reserves policy of the Church is to maintain free reserves equal to three months' core expenditure (approximately £50,000).</p>
2.3 Support over the past five years	New Application.

3.0 Assessment of Application		
3.1 Key Information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Constitution ○ Registered Charity ○ VAT Registered ○ Equal Opportunities Policy ○ Safeguarding Policy ○ Reserves Policy ○ Quality Mark ○ Other funding sources pursued ○ Other support by the Council ○ Fundraising ○ Two quotes ○ Regular monitoring provided previously 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Yes Yes No Yes Yes Yes Yes Yes No Yes Yes N/A
3.2 Consultee Comments	None (capital project).	
3.3 Assessment	This application is seeking a significant capital grant towards the overall costs of an extensive refurbishment programme drawn up by the Church. The Council's criteria for grant funding states that, whilst grants will not normally be awarded for projects designed purely for	

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places of worship, consideration will be given to applications for assistance towards Church Halls and other Community Halls where use and/or hiring is open to all.

The programme covers three elements; refurbishment of the kitchen, replacement of lighting with energy efficient lights and the installation of a comprehensive intruder and panic alarm system. The overall cost of the programme is £108,000, comprising £70,500 for the kitchen refurbishment, £30,000 for the upgrade of lighting and £7,500 for a new intruder and panic alarm. The kitchen facilities were installed some 25 years ago and extensive work is needed to bring the facilities up to the standards required today. The lighting proposals will improve light levels overall and will ensure that all lighting is energy efficient, helping to reduce the Church's overall carbon footprint. The proposals for a new alarm system follow a previous break-in and discussions with the Police around security, taking into account the rising risks associated with the development of the area surrounding the Church.

In terms of funding for the programme of work, the applicant has advised that the Church is a member church of Wessex synod, one of 13 synods that cover the whole of Great Britain (similar to Church of England dioceses). The Wessex synod has granted the Church up to 40% of the costs for the kitchen refurbishment, and has also indicated that it will consider a grant of up to 40% for the lighting and intruder and panic alarm systems.

A successful giving appeal to members of the congregation in the previous 12 months provided additional funds for mission extension and to contribute to repairs to the heating system, which failed in October 2018. A further appeal is being considered for early 2020.

For the rest of the finances required, representatives attended a Surrey Community Action funding fair held within the town where an organisation that publishes a Directory of Social Change giving details of over 8,000 grant giving bodies was reviewed. A small group within WURC has been set up that is currently in the process of approaching appropriate grant giving bodies.

In terms of community engagement, the Church is active in partnership working both with Woking People of Faith and Churches Together in Woking. The Church also works in partnership with the York Road Project, Your Sanctuary, Woking Hospice, Woking Community Hospital and the Children with Special Needs Foundation.

The programme of work will significantly benefit the local community and those using the facilities offered by the Church. The applicant has advised that the number of people visiting the premises each week during school term-time continues to grow, increasing from around 1,300 in 2013 to around 1,800 today. The redevelopment of the sites around the Church will only serve to increase the need for the facilities and services offered by the Church.

The facilities at the Woking United Reformed Church are well used by the local community and support a wide range of activities for those of all ages, including the outreach work undertaken by the Church itself. The facilities are provided free of charge to a number of voluntary bodies whilst other organisations who regularly hire rooms incur a charge, with some organisations including the Freemantles school, Citizens Advice, Mediation Services and Conquest Art charged a

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much lower rate than that applied to commercial hirers

The proposed programme of refurbishment will significantly improve the facilities for those groups and individuals visiting the Centre, and will ensure that the Church facilities meet today's standards, including in terms of energy efficiency and security. The Church has undertaken fundraising to assist with the overall costs of the programme (£108,000) and has secured the support of the Wessex Synod which has offered to fund 40% of the kitchen refurbishment costs (approximately £28,000). The application before the Executive is seeking a contribution of up to £25,000 from Woking Borough Council.

Officers have reviewed the application and recommend that the request is supported with capital funding of £25,000 towards the overall costs of the kitchen refurbishment on the basis of the anticipated cost estimates provided. The activities of the Church and its available facilities contribute significantly to the well-being of the local community and the proposals will ensure that the Church continues to provide a warm and welcoming venue with facilities that meet today's standards.

REPORT ENDS