

The new Oliver's Battery Community Centre Charity

Dear Resident,

I'm delighted to tell you that a new charity known as **Oliver's Battery Community Centre Ltd.** has now been formed. This means that we will soon be able to accept charitable donations and start serious fund raising and planning for construction. Will you help us to create a new building?

We have followed guidance that the modern way of creating a charity is by forming a non-profit *Company Limited by Guarantee* which has charitable purposes. I wanted to let you know that our application to register Oliver's Battery Community Centre Ltd. has been processed by our solicitors, Paris Smith LLP of Southampton, and has resulted in the successful registration of company no. 9882906 with Companies House.

As part of this process, we had to create a constitution document (known as the *Articles of Association* of the company), appoint an initial set of directors and open a bank account. Our next actions will include appointing an accountant, registering for Gift Aid tax relief, subscribing to local support organisations, including Community First Winchester and Action Hampshire, and developing a detailed business plan.

I am delighted we have accomplished this important step, even though it has taken much longer than any of us expected. There is, of course, a great deal still to do. We do not underestimate the challenge involved in a project of this size and we know there are many questions still to be resolved. However, it will all be really worthwhile if it enables residents of Oliver's Battery and neighbouring areas to enjoy the kind of communal activities which they obviously want.

We have also been awarded £300 from Winchester City Council's Small Grants Fund, for the creation of this information leaflet, which is being distributed to all households in Oliver's Battery Parish and the Oliver's Battery Road North area, and have received verbal promises of future grant support from WCC. This is very welcome news as is Oliver's Battery Parish Council's statement of support in principle for a new community centre.

This leaflet gives more details of our proposals and how you can contribute. I do hope you will want to support this ambitious project which could make a real difference to our community. I'm confident that, together, we can bring it to a successful conclusion.

With best wishes,

Geoff Sharman
Chairman, Oliver's Battery Community Centre Ltd.

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From this



In 2016, St Mark's has been at the heart of Oliver's Battery for 60 years: hosting fetes, sales of work, flower shows, exhibitions, childrens' activities and many adult user groups in addition to church services and parish council meetings. Many of us have very happy memories of past events there but, sadly, the signs of deterioration are already clear and a prefabricated post war building cannot meet the needs of today's community.

Early indications from Oliver's Battery Parish Council's consultation to create a Parish Plan are that there is "a strong desire for more community activities". We feel these cannot take place unless an adequate building to house them is made available. Whatever your views, we encourage you to express them in the forthcoming Parish Plan survey.

Is there an alternative?

Oliver's Battery has few sites on which anything can be built and there are no alternative sites for a community building. For example, any proposal to build on the Ancient Monument or Recreation Ground would be refused planning permission. As long as 40 years ago there was a proposal to build a community centre on the school field but it was voted down by a public ballot, due to concerns about traffic and late night noise. That decision led to the search for another site and the creation of Badger Farm Community Centre.

We're aware that Oliver's Battery Pre-School has ambitions to replace its current timber building with a permanent building on the school site and fully support that principle. But most modern pre-school centres have specialised requirements for equipment, furniture, storage and security which are best satisfied in a dedicated building as, for example, at the West Downs Centre at University of Winchester or the Rotherly Centre at Westgate School. Advice from other community centres in Winchester is that they don't mix well with pre-schools.

To this



Our design concept provides for a two storey building with almost as much capacity as the very popular Littleton Millennium Memorial Hall and would exploit its prime position adjacent to the Oliver's Battery Ancient Monument - our very own village green. We invited public comment when we published this concept in 2014 and the response was very encouraging, with the great majority of respondents endorsing the overall concept.

The site is designated as a place for community use in the Oliver's Battery Village Design Statement 2008, which means that a planning application would be likely to succeed. Direct consultation with Planning Officers from Winchester City Council has confirmed this and they have endorsed the design concept as "the right building in the right place". They encouraged us to take the next step of developing a detailed internal and external design which could be submitted for planning approval.

What is the biggest challenge?

In a word, money. This project is only possible because we have been offered a long term lease on the site at a peppercorn rent, but we need to raise funds in excess of £600,000. While we anticipate raising up to half of this in the form of grants, the rest will have to come from the community's own fundraising activities and donations. A project of this size can only succeed if it has the full backing of the community and, therefore, we will be grateful for all offers of support - however large or small. Please help!

Please see the back page and enclosed form for more details and how to contact us.

Who will run the charity?

The initial directors of the charity are:

Mr Paul Draper (member of St Luke's Parochial Church Council)
Mr Ian Millar (former Chairman of Badger Farm Community Centre)
Mr Terry Morris (former Parish Council Chairman)
Mr David Pople (Company Secretary and charity director)
Dr Geoff Sharman (Chairman and former Parish Council Chairman)

They will hold office until the first AGM of the charity, which must be held within 18 months. Subsequently, directors will be elected or re-elected at each AGM. The directors are ably supported by:

Mrs Debbie Burrows (Treasurer)
Mr David Everest (architectural and development consultant)

Each person in this management team is well known in the parish and has a great deal of relevant experience. We are very grateful for their willingness to act in this capacity.

How you can help

If you have a skill which you think could contribute to our efforts, please contact us. We need people for our Charity Management, Fund Raising, Publicity and Building Design groups, and will also be contacting everyone who volunteered in 2014. A great range of activities is needed: organising fund raising events, designing and operating a web site, creating newsletters, project management, writing grant applications, office work, and many others.

Start a new user group. If you have an idea for a community activity which isn't currently available, why not start planning a new user group? You may know of others with a common interest and be able get going in a small way. Or you may already run a U3A group or similar activity which could benefit from a larger meeting room. If so, we would like to hear from you.

Become a Supporter by making a donation. All donations will attract Gift Aid tax relief, adding 25% to your gift, and everyone who donates will be added to our mailing list and receive regular updates on progress and notices of events. This will ensure you are kept fully up to date as the project progresses and save us time and money.

Become a Member by paying a regular subscription. Any resident can become a member and we especially encourage existing and new user groups to become members. All members will have voting rights at each AGM of the charity and can play an active role in its management and direction. They will also be invited to periodic special events and enjoy all the benefits of supporters.

Become a Lifetime Member by making a substantial donation. Gift Aid tax relief will add 25% to your donation and gifts of this sort could make a real difference to how soon we can start building. With enough of them, we could probably build our new centre next year!

For more details, please see the enclosed donation form.