

Ansty and Staplefield Parish Council

Ansty Village Centre Grant Application

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1. Name of organisation and contact details.

Organisation: Ansty Village Centre Trust
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Contact: John Thorpe
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Who we are

The Ansty Village Centre Trust (**AVCT**) was established in 2015 to promote community recreation and participation in sport in Ansty and the surrounding area.

The AVCT is a community partnership between the users of the existing Ansty village hall, the village social club and the recreation ground. It brings together four bodies: Ansty & Staplefield Parish Council (**ASPC**), the Ansty Village Hall Trust (**AVHT**), Ansty Sports and Social Club (**ASSC**), and Ansty Cricket Club (**ACC**).

The role of the AVCT is to oversee the construction of a new Ansty Village Centre (**AVC**) and to take the lead role in its operation. It provides a new governance framework as a registered charity following the Charity Commission's charitable incorporated organisation model.

As a not-for-profit organisation focused on support for community activity in Ansty, AVCT's financial objectives are to generate an operating surplus sufficient only to finance the Trust's working capital and a maintenance reserve.

2. How much are you applying for and when would you need the money?

The AVCT is applying for grant funding of £100,000 as part of an overall funding package of £1,425,000.

Based on the project's planned start date of 6 January 2020, and the indicative construction programme, we anticipate that the grant will need to be drawn down over the period of February to May 2020, in conjunction with funds from other funders.

3. Project Background

The village hall, acquired from the Canadian Army in 1921, is well past its useful life and is dilapidated. The poor state of the building and the inadequate facilities limit hiring and contribute to low utilisation and high running costs. The social club and sports changing facilities, added in 1970s, are also inadequate and fall well short of standards required by sports governing bodies.

The AVHT's ambition to redevelop the village hall is long standing. In 2007, the AVHT trustees proposed a scheme to demolish the existing hall and replace it with a new building. At the same time ASSC was also exploring the opportunity to improve sports and social club facilities. There was concern, however, that proposals to develop a separate sports clubhouse would lead to an inefficient use of space, increase costs, and not deliver an effective model for the management of the site. Consequently, the AVHT and ASSC joined discussions with the district council and parish council on an alternative project, the Ansty Village Centre project, to replace both the village hall and the social club.

In 2011, a Steering Committee with representatives of all the partners (AVHT, ASSC, ASPC and, subsequently, ACC) was established to explore options for the development of the site under a joint project. In 2013, following meetings between the Steering Committee and Mid-Sussex District Council (MSDC), an initial business case and project initiation document (PID) were agreed between the partners and the district council.

The purpose of the project was, and remains, to construct a new community centre, the Ansty Village Centre, to replace the existing village hall and the existing sports pavilion facilities in the village. The PID identified three broad aims for the project. These aims and the Steering Committee's progress to date are summarised in **Figure 1** below.

Figure 1: Ansty Village Centre: progress against the aims in the Project Initiation Document

Project Initiation Document - Aims	Progress
<p>1. On the new facility and project outcomes: The provision of, through the new AVC, facilities for the activities of the AVHT and ASSC, changing rooms for the users of the Recreation Ground; and suitable and sufficient car parking. In doing so, to achieve a design for a multi-function community building sympathetic to the landscape surroundings to enhance the environmental and social aspects of the site.</p>	<p>Several potential schemes have been explored. The first full design for the AVC, with a total footprint of 632 m² was granted planning approval by MSDC in 2014. However, potential funders expressed concern about the design and the Steering Committee also felt that the three elements in the design brief (village hall, social club, and sports changing) had led to a complicated and inefficient layout.</p> <p>In January 2016, Macdonald's Design Ltd was therefore appointed to conduct a feasibility study and subsequently to develop an alternative design through to planning approval. This included the provision of the required facilities across two floors by developing the roof space. This reduced the footprint to 436m², while providing 38m² of additional space. The village hall, for example, has been increased from 100m² in the existing and previous designs to 120 m².</p>
<p>2. On governance and operation of the new facility: To establish an overarching charitable incorporated organisation (the AVCT) to run the new Village Centre.</p>	<p>In November 2015 the Ansty Village Centre Trust (AVCT) was registered with the Charity Commission as a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO).</p>

<p>3. On security of tenure for the new facility. To negotiate appropriate arrangements with MSDC and AVHT, respectively, for the occupation and use of MSDC and AVHT land necessary for the project.</p>	<p>In 2012, the ASSC took over MSDC’s lease on the football ground and extended the area of land to build a second cricket ground, increasing the overall area of land in the district dedicated to recreational activity. Consequently, this has allowed MSDC to offer a long leasehold (150 years) on a parcel of land on the main recreation ground. Building on the recreation ground has also offered the opportunity to significantly improve the provision for car parking (from 22 places to 41), a key MSDC objective.</p> <p>Given the obligations on the AVHT trustees for the existing village hall site, as designated land, the AVCT will grant the AVHT a lease on the village hall space in the new building. This will allow AVHT trustees to demonstrate they are replacing the village hall with similar facilities on similar terms, and therefore complying with the principal requirements for disposing of the village hall.</p> <p>These arrangements for occupation are reflected in the draft Lease Heads of Terms.</p>
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4. Why is the new Village Centre needed?

The need for a new Ansty Village Centre is acute. The village hall and social club is now the only public meeting place in Ansty, the village having lost its church, shop, post office and public house in recent years. At the same time the community in and around Ansty continues to grow, with 54 new houses being or planned to be built in the village.

As stated above, the facilities are ageing and no longer ‘fit for purpose’. As a former World War One mission hut, the village hall is dilapidated, unattractive, and unsuitable for hosting activities, such as, dance and exercise clubs and children’s parties. The poor state of the hall and its facilities, for example, the kitchen and toilets (shared with the social club), have prevented the village hall from developing a regular programme of activities beyond a small group of current users.

Similarly, the changing rooms and small clubroom area are inadequate given the activity currently on the recreation ground. This is particularly the case following the increase in the recreational area in 2014 to include a second cricket ground and the growth of women’s cricket on the site.

5. What will be delivered and when?

A new Ansty Village Centre

The project will deliver two modern meeting and event spaces each of 120m² with catering facilities and a bar. The rooms will be available for use by community groups and clubs and local residents. The new facilities will transform Ansty, providing it with an attractive community space and opportunities to diversify by offering new activities to new users.

The Ansty recreation ground already supports a vibrant sporting programme which the project will help to maintain and grow. The new facility offers the opportunity to improve health across wider groups by supporting the delivery an extended range of activities encouraging local people to become more involved in sport and fitness. This includes building on the existing links to local schools to help children and young people participate in sporting and other activities helping them to develop social and practical skills, build relationships and increase confidence.

The facilities in the new building

The facilities in the new Ansty Village Centre (**Stage 1**) will comprise:

- a new 120m² village hall (compared with 78m² at present) with a dedicated catering standard kitchen and improved storage;
- a new 120m² club and function room, (compared with 42 m² at present) with a small kitchen and bar which will provide refreshment and catering for users of the Centre and the recreation ground;
- four team and two officials changing rooms to Sport England specification (20m² area for team changing), to replace the two existing changing rooms which fall well short of the required standards (only 12m² for team changing);
- A snooker room of 60m², a reduction on the current 80 m², but meeting the minimum recommended standard for two tables of 55m²;
- A meeting room of 24m² (currently 17m²) separated from the snooker room by a partition, which can be moved to create a space for spectator viewing when snooker tournaments are hosted; and
- Disabled access throughout the building, including lift access to the first floor.

Once the new Village Centre is built the existing village hall will be demolished and the area used to extend the car park to provide increased parking from 22 to 41 (**Stage 2**).

The final stage in the project will involve the refurbishment/replacement of the existing groundsman's store (**Stage 3**). It is proposed that a feasibility study and design for the refurbished groundsman's store will be developed in early 2020. It is hoped that Section 106 funds available in late 2020 and 2021 will help fund the materials and the specialist contract services to remove the asbestos roof and that the labour will be covered through an 'in kind' contribution from ASSC / ACC.

The elevations of the new Centre are illustrated in **Annex A**. The first and ground floor plans are in **Annex B**. The existing site plan and the proposed site plan are in **Annex C**.

Timetable for Delivery

It was originally planned that the project would start in October 2019, however, the uncertainty over the project funding, the time needed to agree the leases with MSDC, and to clear planning conditions mean that this target will not be met.

Funding conditions have narrowed the window of opportunity for starting the project in 2020. The LEADER grant application, if successful, will require Stage 1 of the project to be delivered in 2020. Also, the planning approval for the project ceases on 13 January 2020, which means that if we are to utilise the LEADER funds the project can start no later than 6 January 2020.

Accordingly, the timetable we are working to is:

Stage 1 – the new Village Centre. Start on 6 January 2020 and to be completed, in accordance with a work programme of just under 9 months, by the end of September 2020.

Stage 2 – the car park extension. Planning conditions require the existing village hall to be demolished within one month of the construction of the Centre being completed. It is therefore expected that demolition will take place in October – December 2020, depending on the conclusion of Stage 1. Due to the availability of funding it is expected that the car park extension will not be completed until April 2021.

Stage 3 – the groundsman’s store. The timetable for the refurbishment / replacement of the groundsman’s store is constrained by the availability of funds and is therefore unlikely to take place before the final quarter of 2021 / first quarter 2022. This stage is also subject to the development of the scheme to refurbish the store and planning permission.

6. Who will benefit from the new Centre?

We expect to see the benefits of the new Centre in the increased level of visits to participate in community and sporting activity, with some 50% of visits from residents of Ansty and the wider Parish. The benefits will also be seen in the increased level of activity delivered by the three partner bodies and an increase in the number of other organisations using the Centre.

Increase in the number of visits

The AVCT has worked closely with its partner bodies (the anchor tenants in the new Centre) to understand the existing level of activity on the site and the potential for growth. Based on our most recent analysis, the village hall, social club, and the adjoining recreation ground attracts some 15,000 visits a year. Broadly this represents 9,000 (66%) visits for community activity and 6,000 (33%) visits for outdoor sport annually. Some 500 people use the facilities regularly, including up to 300 sporting users. This presents a strong foundation for growth.

Based on our current business plan, we estimate that over three years visitors to the Centre and the recreation ground will increase from the baseline of 15,000 to 32,000 visits a year. While outdoor sport is expected to be sustained and to grow slightly, we expect to see more significant growth in community activity reflecting the increased use of the village hall facilities and the clubroom. We anticipate this will also see a change in the mix of activity with 25,000 (78%) visits for community activity and 7,000 (22%) visits for outdoor sport annually.

Visits from Parish residents (the target market)

We plan that some 16,000 (50%) of visits a year will be from residents within the Parish, representing 12,000 from Ansty residents and 4,000 from the wider Parish. Based on this analysis we expect around 46% of Parish residents to visit the Centre at least once a year.

Organisations

The three organisations participating in the AVCT with ASPC will benefit from the project by seeing an increase in the levels of activity and participation:

- The AVHT has targeted an increase in booking hours from c200 hours (less than one hour a day on average) a year currently achieved to 1,400 hours (almost four hours a day) in year one;
- The ASSC social facilities, clubroom and snooker room, will continue to remain open and in use 364 evenings a year. However, with the improvement in the facility and active promotion of the Centre in the Parish, we are targeting a 100% increase in visitor / participation levels over three years from the current baseline of an average of some 10-12 visitors an evening; and

- The improvement in changing and clubroom facilities will support an increase in formal sports sessions (matches / formal training) delivered on the recreation ground from the 170 sessions delivered each year to 200 a year in the future.

The new Centre will also support an increase the number of bodies (local businesses, groups, clubs and societies, and public organisations) who regularly use the Centre. Currently 8 community organisations use the village hall and social club facilities at least once a month. The Centre will be promoted across the local community with the aim of doubling the number of regular users from 8 to 16, with the aim of increasing this to a further 6 organisations over the two following years.

7. How does the project fit with the Neighbourhood Plan?

The project will ensure that a key priority in the **ASPC Neighbourhood Plan 2017** is delivered. As the Plan recognises:

7.7 The Village Centre remains in heavy use, despite having passed its useful life many years ago and being very dilapidated. People make over 6,000 individual visits annually to Ansty to participate in sporting and other recreational activities. Current use is nevertheless limited as the poor state of the building holds back demand and restricts growth

7.8 A long held vision has therefore been to develop a new Ansty Village Centre and bring the Village Hall and Sports and Social Club into a single charitable organisation is in hand (the AVCT). A site has been identified on the Recreation Ground and after wide local consultation, planning permission was granted in 2014 (superseded in January 2017) for a new Village Centre.

Consequently, the Neighbourhood Plan identifies the project as a Parish Council priority:

POLICY AS8: IMPROVEMENT OF COMMUNITY FACILITIES *Proposals that would result in the improved provision of community facilities will be strongly supported. In the case of the Village Centre in Ansty..., this is particularly the case for proposals that would re-provide and improve such facilities on the existing site.*

8. What are the project costs and what other funding has been secured?

a) Project Costs

The current estimate of the project cost is £1.4m, this reflects the February 2019 exercise to update the tenders for inflation for the cost of Stages 1 and 2, professional fees and contingency. See **Figure 2**.

Figure 2: Ansty Village Centre Project Costs

Project Costs	Total	Stage 1	Stage 2	Stage3
		Building	Car Park	Groundsman's Store
Cost	x,xxx,xxx	x,xxx,xxx	xxx,xxx	xx,xxx
Professional Fees - incurred	xx,xxx	xx,xxx	-	-
Estimated Professional Fees	xx,xxx	xx,xxx	xx,xxx	x,xxx
Contingency	xx,xxx	xx,xxx	xx,xxx	x,xxx
Total	£1,406,060	£1,209,060	£137,000	£60,000

The scope of the refurbishment the groundman's store has yet to be defined and costed. A project estimate of £60,000 has been included for this aspect of the project.

Figure 5: Ansty Village Centre Overall Funding Position

	Total	Stage 1	Stage 2	Stage3
		Building	Car Park	Groundsman's Store
Funding Secured	£1,225,260	£1,015,520	£142,000	£67,740
Funding being sought	£200,000	£200,000	£0	£0
Total Funding	£1,425,260	£1,215,520	£142,000	£67,740
Total cost	£1,406,060	£1,209,060	£137,000	£60,000
Balance	£19,200	£6,460	£5,000	£7,740

9. What are the governance arrangements?

As stated above, the overall responsibility for the project rests with the AVCT. It provides a new governance framework as a registered charity following the Charity Commission's charitable incorporated organisation model.

The AVCT has five trustees appointed by nomination which is reconfirmed by the nominating body annually. The five trustees and their respective nominating bodies are:

- Joh Gilley, Chair (ASPC);
- Crispin Salembeni (ASPC);
- Maureen Gibson (AVHT);
- Brian Fletcher (ASSC); and
- John Thorpe (ACC)

The role of the AVCT is to oversee the construction of a new Ansty Village Centre and to take the lead role in its operation. In operating the Centre, the role of the AVCT will be to:

- ensure the Centre is available, well-maintained, accessible and safe for the use of all local people;
- promote the Centre to attract good quality services and activities for users;
- consult with, and respond to the needs of, Ansty residents and users; and
- ensure the Centre is financially sustainable.

The day to day running of the Centre will be delegated to a Management Committee which will be responsible for the delivery of the business plan, the monitoring of performance against budget, and the liaison with two anchor tenants; AVHT and ASSC/ACC.

The AVCT is setting up a small project team to oversee the review and updating of the Centre's business plan, operating model, and day to day running. This team will include representatives from the trust and the partner bodies including James Steadman, John Thorpe and Jo Alma (AVHT trustee, and former managing director at a major investment bank).

10. How will the build be managed?

To ensure the successful delivery of the project, the AVCT has established an expert team to oversee the delivery of the building phase comprising:

- Jason Savage. Jason is an Ansty Resident and works on large residential and office construction projects in London.

- James Steadman. James is an ASPC Councillor and has a professional background in civil engineering and property management.
- Owen Travis. Owen is the ASSC / ACC Treasurer, and has a professional background in construction and project management (now retired)
- David Trench CBE FCIQB. David is also an Ansty resident and has a distinguished professional background in construction management (including the Millennium Dome, the British Library completion, and Ascot Racecourse). David supports the project in a non-executive capacity.

Owen Travis will act as Contract Manager on behalf of the AVCT.

John Thorpe, an AVCT trustee, has a professional background in accounting and audit in central government, and will be responsible for the engagement with funders, including the preparation and submission of the interim and final claims.

Rix & Kay Solicitors have already acted on behalf of the AVCT in setting up the CIO and will be instructed to act as legal advisors on the lease with MSDC and the sub-leases with AVHT and ASSC / ACC.

11. What are the anticipated running costs and how will they be met?

The estimated running costs of the Centre have been derived from an analysis of the existing running costs of the village hall and social club adjusted to take account of known differences, particularly in those areas where new cost will be incurred, for example, lift maintenance. In other areas, because the precise performance of the building is not yet known, the cost estimates have tended to be conservative.

These costings, the underlying assumptions, together with a five-year cash flow forecast have been presented to funders and subject to independent appraisal. The costing shows that the annual cost of operating the Centre could rise to a maximum of £55,000 a year, including an allocation of £5,000 to a maintenance reserve. However, with the experience of running the building we anticipate that energy, insurance and other costs will be lower than projected.

The cost of operating the building will be met primarily by rent and service charges paid by AVHT and ASSC/ACC rising to £50,000 and £6,000 in fundraising and sponsorship. The AVHT will manage the village hall bookings and collecting monies from users. Similarly, the ASSC/ACC will collect subscriptions and match fees from members and operate the bar in the first-floor clubroom.

The rent and service charges will be set to ensure the equitable sharing of costs between the village hall, the other social areas and sports changing. To achieve this, the cost of services into the different areas of the building will be metered separately to ensure an accurate allocation of costs between the principal users.

As a not-for-profit entity, the AVCT is budgeting to balance income and expenditure year on year subject to the maintaining reserves at a level sufficient to meet maintenance charges and to provide the Trust with the necessary working capital to sustain its operation. The financial projections show that by the end of March 2024 the Trust will have allocated £16,000 to a maintenance reserve and maintain a working capital balance of £16,000, approximately equivalent to four months income.

Annex A: Ansty Village Centre Elevations

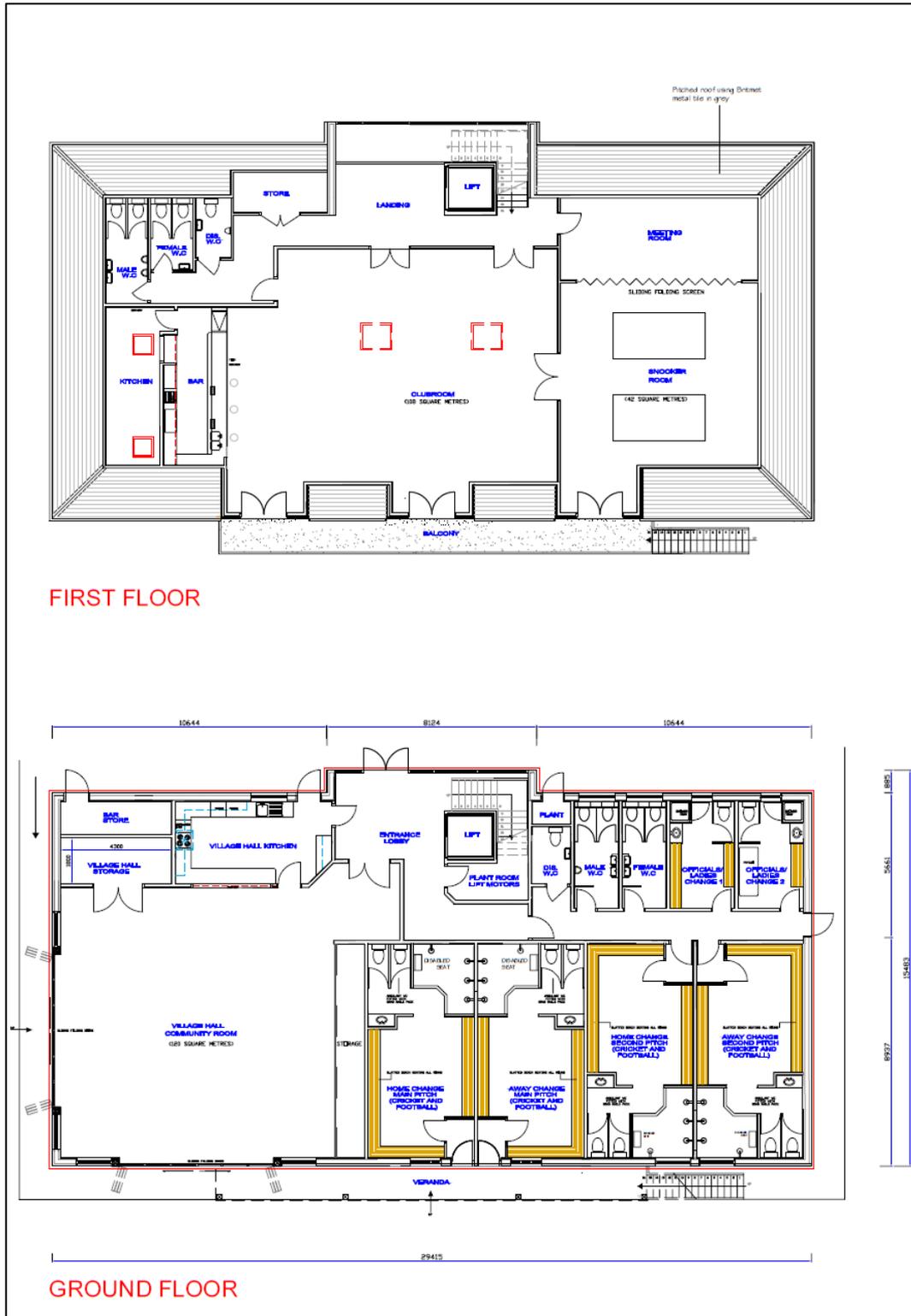
Ansty Village Centre – Car Park Elevation



Ansty Village Centre – Recreation Ground Elevation



Annex B: Ansty Village Centre First and Ground Floor Plans



Annex C: Ansty Village Centre Existing and Proposed Site Plans

