



COMMUNITY BID & BUSINESS PLAN V2

Heath Barn, St Johns Road, Boxmoor, Hemel Hempstead, HP1 1NP

Submitted to Hertfordshire County Council

Submitted by

Our Heath Barn CIC

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August 2026

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Executive Summary

Our Heath Barn CIC respectfully requests Hertfordshire County Council's support for this community bid to consider a Community Asset Transfer of Heath Barn, St Johns Road, Boxmoor, Hemel Hempstead. We present:

- A credible, values-led organisation with a professional team including a RIBA architect with vast experience of high profile community focused heritage projects.
- A consistent track record of community engagement since 2023 which continues to grow
- A fully costed, nine-phase restoration and development plan (£603,955) based upon workings by Hugo Hardy and heritage surveyor, Mark Battram.
- A well-considered and detailed and viable vision which will meet the needs of local people.
- A detailed operating financial model demonstrating full self-sufficiency by Operating Year 3 and a c.£152,000 annual surplus from Operating Year 5, without ongoing grant dependency
- An Our Heath Barn Social Value Calculator demonstrating a £1:£15.2 SROI ratio — £2.27 million in net social value per year and £770,000+ in modelled annual savings to HCC, NHS ICB and DWP statutory budgets
- Demonstrated community mandate – hundreds of financial donors to the crowdfunder, 221 CCBS investor commitments, and MP and local councillor support
- A mission grounded in peer-reviewed evidence on the health benefits of arts, creativity, and social connection, aligned with Dacorum Borough Council's own corporate plan and the Five Ways to Wellbeing framework
- Full alignment with Dacorum Core Strategy (Policy CS27) — community use is the use consistent with the buildings' listed status, group value, and 500-year social history
- A funding strategy achieving a total of £162,000 structured around a sensible sequencing giving priority to restoration first, match funding for NLHF and AHF to unlock larger funds, with funds being actively raised from the community share offer. As part of this, Our Heath Barn CIC is able to offer a fixed cash sum of £77,000 towards the acquisition of the building and land — demonstrating a firm and tangible financial commitment to the Council at the point of transfer.

Full details for every aspect mentioned above, follow within this document.

Introduction

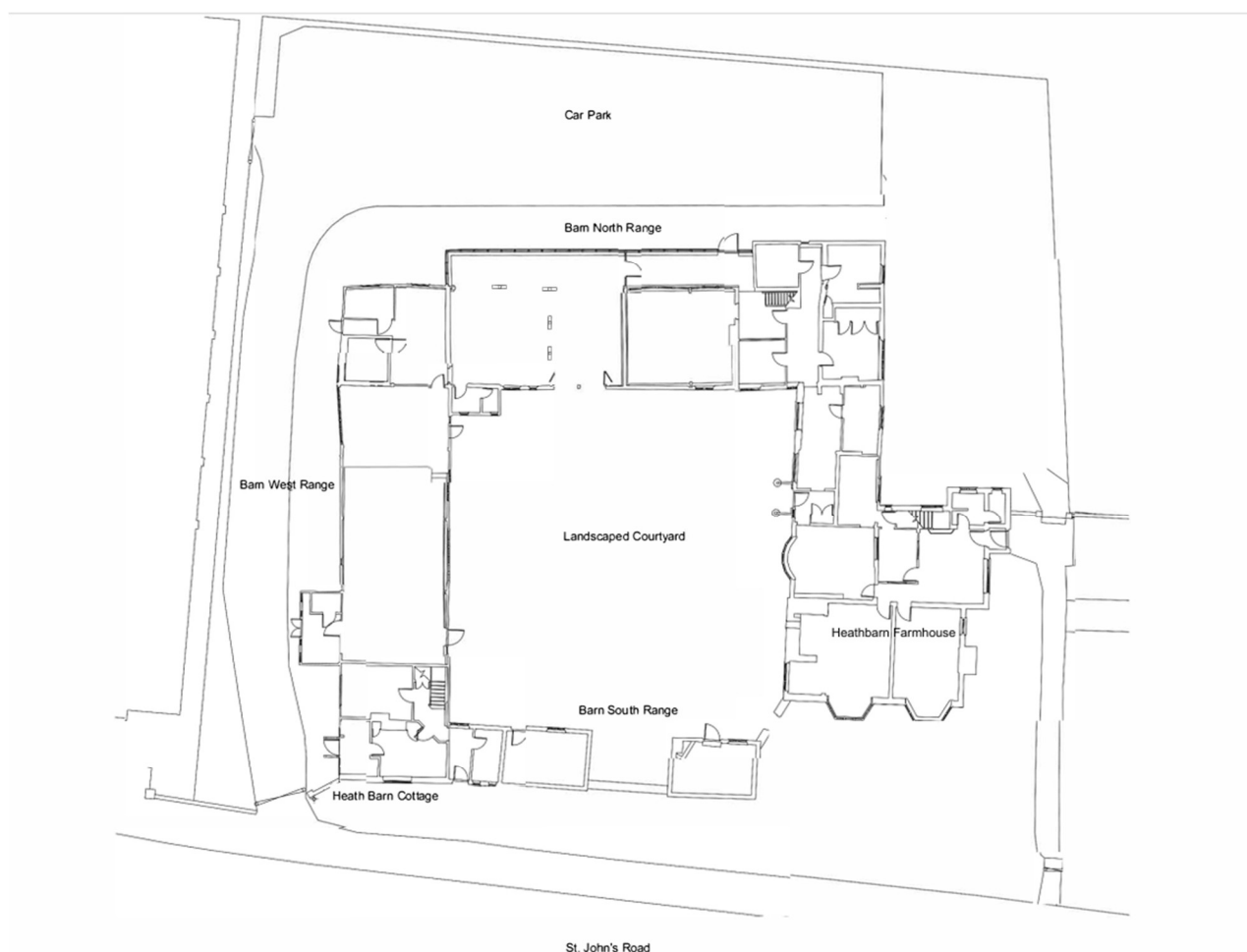
Our Heath Barn CIC — Community Bid & Business Plan V2

Hertfordshire County Council — August 2026

The building

Heath Barn is a Grade II listed, 16th-century heritage complex at the heart of Boxmoor, Hemel Hempstead — one of the oldest buildings in the area, arranged around a historic courtyard that has served this community for over 500 years. As a working farm, a music school, a venue for celebrations, and a gathering place for generations of local families, it is irreplaceable. It is also, right now, at risk.

We know Hertfordshire County Council needs to dispose of Heath Barn quickly, but we feel there are more sympathetic and better suited uses for the site which avoid entire conversion to residential. Our community sees the potential of the building given its past use and is excited about the opportunities it holds for local people of all ages.





The opportunity

Our Heath Barn CIC is asking Hertfordshire County Council to support our bid to secure Heath Barn as a permanently community-owned arts and wellbeing hub and café — a place that reduces loneliness, supports mental health, celebrates creativity, and gives Boxmoor and Hemel Hempstead a heritage asset they can be proud of for generations to come.

Having discussed our approach with the Council, we are prioritising the allocation of funding to pre-development and match funding costs connected to restoration and repair works. Our proposal is structured precisely around this sequencing: restoration and development costs of £603,955 funded primarily through the National Lottery Heritage Fund and Architectural Heritage Fund, with match funding already being assembled, and acquisition funded from residual fundraising and funds raised from the community share offer. A decision from Hertfordshire County Council is the single enabling step that unlocks everything that follows.

The case

The need is real and evidenced. Heath Barn is a heritage building, a community health intervention, and a financially self-sustaining venue, all in one.

The split-use approach — the most viable route forward.

Careful analysis by Hugo Hardy (Chartered Architect) and Councillor William Allen has concluded that neither sole community use nor full residential conversion is financially viable on its own. The split-use model — community use of the barns, with sensitive residential conversion of the farmhouse and east wing upper floor — resolves both constraints: it provides a financial return to HCC while releasing the barns for community use at a level that unlocks National Lottery Heritage Fund and Architectural Heritage Fund grants.

Critically, the farmhouse is the oldest and most architecturally significant part of the site, and we are committed to ensuring its conversion is handled with the care and expertise it deserves. Our Heath Barn CIC is confident it can identify and work with developers who have a genuine track record of preserving historic buildings sensitively — and we have access to a wide range of heritage expertise, through those already supporting the proposal (see letters of support), who know this building well. This would take a little time to bring together fully, but we believe it is entirely achievable and are committed to making it happen.

The financial model is robust. Heath Barn becomes fully operationally self-sufficient by Operating Year 3, generating a surplus of c.£152,000 per year from Operating Year 5 — without ongoing grant dependency. Every revenue assumption has been benchmarked conservatively against comparable local venues, with clear and evidenced headroom to grow.

The financial projections draw on detailed modelling of all revenue streams, a comprehensive cost schedule, and a ten-year forecast. An interactive model (Heath Barn Combined v5) has been used to test the café and catering assumptions.

The social return is transformational. Our Social Value Calculator — built on the HACT UK Social Value Bank, HM Treasury Green Book valuations, and PSSRU Unit Costs of Health & Social Care 2024 — demonstrates a return of **£15.20 for every £1 invested**, generating £2.27 million in net social value per year and over £770,000 in direct annual savings to HCC, NHS and DWP statutory budgets. The potential is enormous — and it begins the moment the doors open.

Through our proposal, we can help more people benefit from the historic environment — using heritage to improve civic pride, prosperity and wellbeing for the communities of Boxmoor and Hemel Hempstead for generations to come.

The team and the community

Our Heath Barn CIC is not a campaign group. It is a structured, professionally supported Community Interest Company — in the process of becoming a Charitable Community Benefit Society — that has been building towards this moment since 2023. Our core team combines expertise, and our professional advisers have been engaged and contributing to the restoration programme and cost planning throughout.

Behind the team stands a community that has already voted with its feet, its voice, and its money. 378 donations have been made to our Crowdfunder campaign, raising £17,232. 221 pledges from individuals and businesses committed to the Community Share offer amount to a combined total of over £160,000. We also have a mailing list of over 700 people and a social media following of 1,500 — a growing network of supporters ready to become members, volunteers and customers the moment the doors open.

The campaign has attracted vast press coverage — locally, regionally and nationally — and the support of David Taylor MP, all three Boxmoor ward councillors, Dacorum Borough Council, The Hemel Hempstead School, the University of Hertfordshire, heritage professionals including a former Head of Buildings for the National Trust and a specialist timber-framed building conservator, and a six-times Grammy-nominated musician who learned to play guitar in this building as a teenager. Letters of support have been received from many local organisations and businesses, a full set of which is included as a separate supporting document with this bid.

Plunkett UK's national data shows that community businesses have a 94% long-term survival rate — more than double the private SME equivalent. This is the model that works.

The ask

We are ready. The community is behind us. The funders are waiting. The building needs us now.

We would very much welcome the opportunity to work closely and swiftly with Hertfordshire County Council to advance towards an agreeable sale of this asset to the community, that cares deeply about it — its history, its ongoing legacy, and its future as a place stewarded for local people for many years to come. Heath Barn has served Boxmoor for 500 years. With the Council's support, it can serve the next 500.

PART ONE – THE VISION

1.1 The Opportunity

Our Heath Barn CIC is submitting this bid to Hertfordshire County Council to secure Heath Barn — a Grade II listed, 16th century heritage property at St Johns Road, Boxmoor, Hemel Hempstead, HP1 1NP — for sustainable community use as an arts and wellbeing hub and café.

Having discussed our approach with the Council, we are prioritising the allocation of funding to pre-development and match funding costs connected to restoration and repair works, with match funding assembled to support major grant applications to the National Lottery Heritage Fund (NLHF) and the Architectural Heritage Fund (AHF). Once these seed-funding costs are secured, we then contribute towards acquisition of the land and building. Our proposal is structured precisely around this sequencing.

Heath Barn has served Boxmoor for over 500 years — as a working farm, a music school from 1950 to 2019, and a gathering place for generations of local families. Without community intervention, it faces permanent loss to private residential conversion. This bid seeks to prevent that outcome and place the building into permanent community stewardship.

1.2 Our Mission and the Case for Community Action

Our mission is to build community and a sense of belonging in Boxmoor and Hemel Hempstead by providing creative opportunities for meaningful social interactions across different age groups, **thereby reducing loneliness and social isolation.**

This mission is grounded in well-evidenced need. The proportion of Dacorum's population aged over 65 is projected to rise from 17.4% in 2021 to 23.3% by 2043. Research consistently shows that social isolation carries serious, well-documented health risks, and that prolonged isolation in older adults increases dementia risk by up to 27%. Children and families face their own pressures: the first five years of a child's life are now understood to be foundational to lifelong mental and physical health, yet accessible, high-quality intergenerational spaces in Hemel Hempstead are severely lacking.

Arts, creativity, and heritage engagement are well-evidenced contributors to wellbeing. A 2019 World Health Organisation review concluded that arts engagement helps prevent the onset of mental illness, supports child development, and contributes to age-related physical and cognitive resilience. The National Academy for Social Prescribing identifies arts and heritage organisations as ideal partners for GP-led social prescribing — and Heath Barn is precisely positioned to fulfil that role for Dacorum.

Historic England's own research evidence base provides compelling independent support. Their evidence demonstrates that people form rich and meaningful connections to historic places — a concept known as 'place attachment' — and that this attachment fosters belonging, promotes resilience during challenging times, and strengthens communities through shared experiences. A UCL study of 11,112 adults across England (Mak, Gallou and Fancourt, 2023, commissioned with Historic England) found that people living in areas with a greater density of listed buildings experienced measurably higher levels of social capital — including stronger personal relationships, civic engagement, and community trust. For a Grade II listed building like Heath Barn, the evidence suggests the building itself is a community health asset, independent of what happens inside it.

"A society that fails to value communality — our need to belong, to care for one another — is a society facing away from the essence of what it means to be human." — Dr Gabor Maté, The Myth of Normal (2022)

Our legal structure — Charitable Community Benefit Society

Our Heath Barn is in the process of establishing a Charitable Community Benefit Society (CCBS) — a step up from our current CIC status that we are taking deliberately and strategically, with the support of Co-operatives UK, who have granted us access to their Start a Co-op business support programme.

Support from Co-operatives UK and Plunkett UK

Co-operatives UK is the national trade body for co-operative enterprise in the UK, and through their Start a Co-op programme they have granted Our Heath Barn access to dedicated expert support — covering governance, legal structure, business planning, and community share registration. In addition, Plunkett UK has been commissioned by Co-operatives UK to provide Our Heath Barn with 21 hours of specialist support through adviser Alison Macklin, (*please see Letters of Support document*) covering the writing of our Model Rules and the formal setup of our Community Shares offer. Together, this means we are establishing our Charitable CBS with expert guidance from two of the most respected organisations in the community business sector. Through this support, we will also be connected with Stretford Public Hall near Manchester as our peer mentor organisation — a

heritage building that was successfully revitalised for community use and acquired through a community share offer, enabling it to become a Charitable Community Benefit Society. As a heritage venue with a directly comparable journey, Stretford Public Hall represents an exceptionally well-aligned model for what Our Heath Barn is seeking to achieve, and we look forward to drawing on their experience as we progress through our own transition.

Model Rules — the bedrock of the CBS

A central part of establishing our Charitable Community Benefit Society is the drafting of our Model Rules. As Plunkett UK describes, Model Rules are *living documents that form the bedrock of the business relationship with members based on trust and fairness; and the contractual basis which legally protects your society*. They are not a bureaucratic formality — they are the legal foundation on which everything else is built.

For Our Heath Barn, the Model Rules will set out in legally binding terms: how the CBS is governed; how members join, vote and participate; how the board is elected and held accountable; how surplus is used for community benefit; and how the statutory asset lock ensures the building can never be sold or transferred away from community ownership without the consent of members and the regulator. They are the document that makes our commitment to permanent community stewardship not just a statement of intent, but a legal obligation.

With Alison Macklin of Plunkett UK guiding us through this process, we are confident our Model Rules will be drafted to the highest standard — ensuring the CBS is properly constituted, FCA-registered, and HMRC-recognised as a charity from the outset; and that our share offering to the community will also be of the highest standard, achieving recognised Community Shares Standard Mark accreditation.

Why a Charitable Community Benefit Society for Heath Barn

A Charitable Community Benefit Society is a specific and powerful legal structure that combines the democratic, member-owned ethos of a co-operative with the full tax advantages of charitable status. It is registered with the Financial Conduct Authority (FCA) and recognised by HMRC as a charity — meaning it sits in a distinct category that is more advantageous than either a standard CIC or a non-charitable CBS. The key benefits it brings to Our Heath Barn are:

- No corporation tax liability — as a recognised charity, all trading surpluses are protected from corporation tax, meaning every pound of operating surplus can be reinvested into the building and the community
- 80% mandatory business rates relief — as a charitable body, with potential for full 100% discretionary relief from Dacorum Borough Council, significantly reducing our operating cost base
- Gift Aid eligibility — donations to Our Heath Barn can be worth 25% more at no additional cost to the donor, making every pound raised through crowdfunding and community giving go further
- VAT recovery on restoration costs — registration enables us to recover VAT on substantial parts of the renovation programme, potentially saving tens of thousands of pounds on the £603,955 development budget
- Community share offer — unlike a CIC, a CBS can issue withdrawable shares to the public without the expensive financial promotion requirements that apply to companies. This is the legal mechanism that allows us to offer community members the opportunity to become founding member-owners from as little as £100
- One member, one vote — every member of the CBS has an equal democratic vote in how Heath Barn is run, regardless of how many shares they hold. This is a founding principle of the

co-operative model and ensures Heath Barn remains genuinely community-controlled for generations

- **Statutory asset lock** — the assets of a CBS are permanently locked for community benefit. Even if the organisation were ever dissolved, the assets could not pass to private individuals but must transfer to another community or charitable body. This gives funders, grant bodies and the council confidence that the building will remain a community asset in perpetuity.
- Stronger funder confidence — the combination of charitable status and the CBS structure is increasingly preferred by major grant funders including the National Lottery Heritage Fund and the Architectural Heritage Fund, both of which we are targeting. Charitable status is often a requirement or strong advantage for heritage grant applications

By contrast, our current CIC status — while a necessary and useful stepping stone — does not carry charitable tax relief, is not eligible for Gift Aid, and does not have the same standing with major heritage funders. The transition to a Charitable CBS, guided by Co-operatives UK, is therefore not administrative housekeeping: it is a material step that unlocks significant financial advantage and demonstrates to Hertfordshire County Council and grant bodies that we are building an organisation structured for long-term, permanent community stewardship.

Why Community Businesses Succeed — The Plunkett UK Evidence

Plunkett UK is the national charity dedicated to supporting community-owned businesses across the UK, with over 100 years of promoting the community ownership model. Their annual flagship report *Community Ownership: A Better Form of Business* provides the most comprehensive evidence base for the sector — and the case it makes is compelling.

99%

five-year survival rate for community businesses
vs 39% for private SMEs — ONS data

56p

in every £1 spent stays in the local economy
vs 40p for large private businesses

The contrast with private business is stark. Based on 828 community businesses currently trading across the UK, Plunkett's research shows that community businesses are not just more resilient than conventional SMEs — they are fundamentally different in how they serve their communities. Because they are owned and governed by the people who use them, they align decisions with local need rather than shareholder return. They employ around 5,000 people and mobilise 20,000 volunteers nationally. Their combined turnover reached an estimated £166 million in 2024. And critically, the long-term survival rate across all community businesses is 94% — more than double the private SME equivalent of 39%.

Nationally, 122,000 people have invested £55 million into community-owned businesses through community share offers of exactly the type Our Heath Barn is establishing. For every £1 spent with a community business, 56p stays in the local economy — compared with just 40p for large private businesses. This is the model that creates genuinely resilient, locally-rooted economic and social infrastructure.

Source: Plunkett UK — Community Ownership: A Better Form of Business (2025 Impact Report) | plunkett.co.uk. Please also reference their Letter of Support in the Letters of Support Document provided separately.

1.3 Our Vision for Heath Barn

We propose to transform Heath Barn into a financially self-sustaining, community-owned heritage venue built around six complementary uses:

Community café	North Barn — 40 covers indoors and out, open to all; central to our mission to reduce loneliness and build social connection across generations
Creative workshops & gallery	Addressing Hemel Hempstead's severe shortage of creative outlets — arts and crafts for wellbeing, singing, mindfulness and intergenerational programmes
Therapy & wellbeing rooms	Two ground-floor treatment rooms plus a dedicated child and family therapeutic space; supporting social prescribing in partnership with local GP surgeries
Heritage event & wedding venue	West Barn exclusive hire — the primary commercial income stream, priced significantly below comparable heritage venues, with a clear pathway to higher rates as reputation builds
Artist studios & residencies	Affordable, much-needed workspace for local creatives, supporting artists in residence and a gallery for local artists to exhibit their work
Weekend markets & walled garden	Activating the courtyard and garden for community markets, outdoor events and intergenerational play

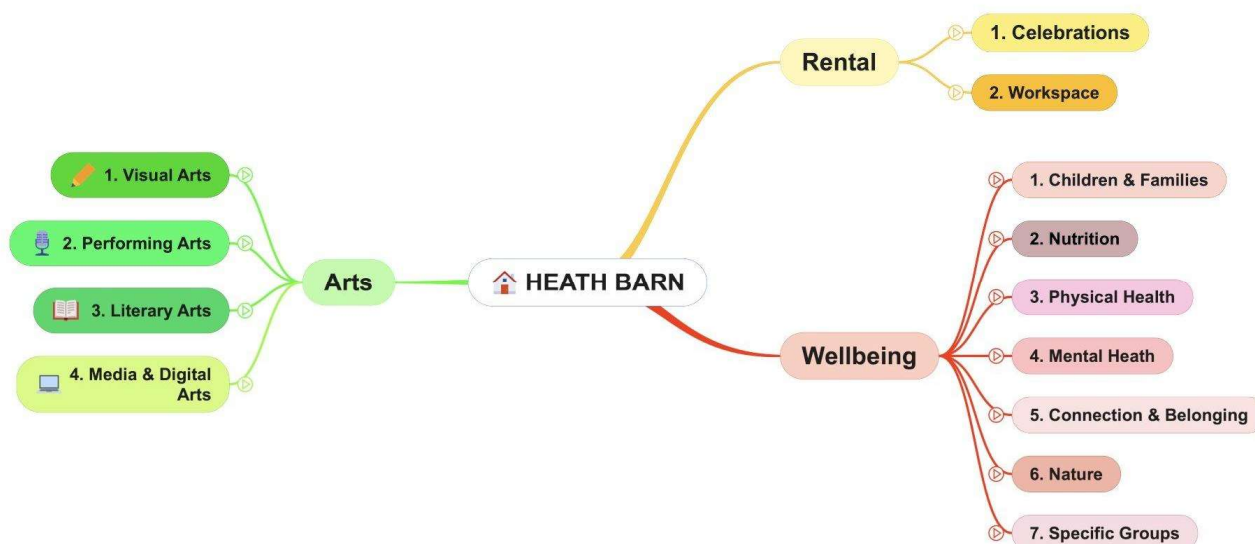
The programming model draws on an evidence-based, phased approach to community engagement: beginning with children and families, expanding to the older generation (including intergenerational programmes, befriending schemes, and dementia-friendly activities), and then broadening to young people and other groups. This is not merely a facilities offer — it is a deliberate, structured community health intervention for Dacorum.

Heath Barn's heritage character — listed courtyard, historic beams, walled garden — makes it unlike anything else in Hemel Hempstead. Our market research shows comparable heritage venues (notably Headstone Manor Great Barn in Harrow) command £5,000–£7,700 per day for exclusive hire; our opening rate of £3,000 is priced to build volume and reputation, with clear evidence-based headroom to increase as the venue establishes itself.

Location filming — an additional income opportunity. Dacorum is one of the most active filming locations in the Home Counties, with Warner Bros. Studios Leavesden and a well-established local film and TV production infrastructure bringing significant screen industry activity to the area. Heath Barn's 16th century listed fabric — authentic timber framing, historic rooflines, the walled courtyard, and the distinctive magnolia tree — would make it a highly attractive location for period film, television, and commercial production. Location managers consistently seek out genuinely historic buildings that cannot be replicated on a studio set. This represents a potentially significant additional revenue stream that has not been included in the current financial projections, offering upside beyond the base case model. It also aligns Heath Barn with the wider creative economy of Hertfordshire and strengthens the cultural and economic case for the building's future use.

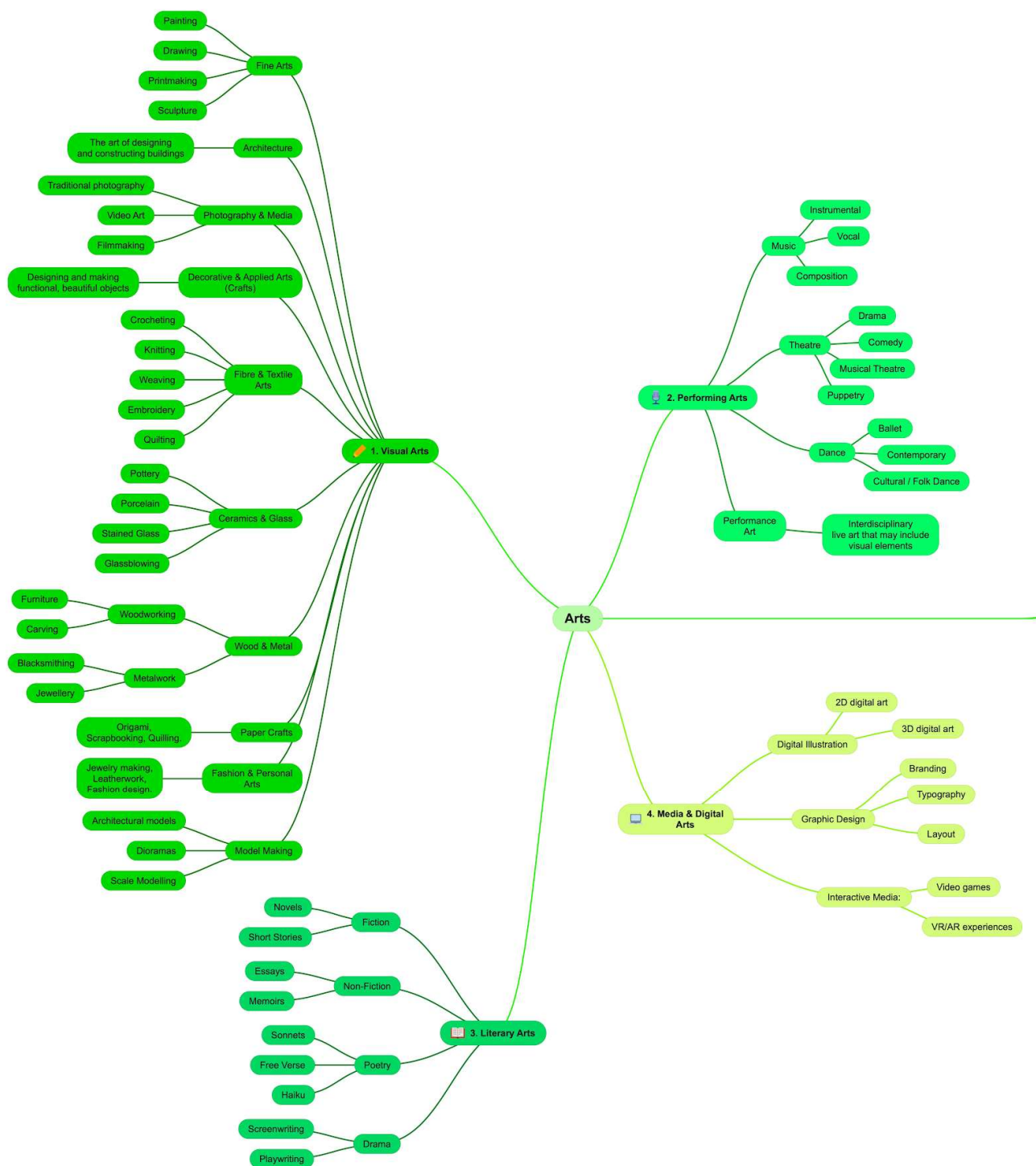
The Heath Barn Programme

Heath Barn's programme is built around three complementary pillars: Arts, Wellbeing, and Rental. Together they create a venue that is active seven days a week, accessible to all ages and backgrounds, and financially self-sustaining. Each pillar reinforces the others — the arts programme builds community, the wellbeing offer supports health and resilience, and rental income funds the mission.



Heath Barn's three-pillar programme: Arts, Wellbeing, and Rental

Pillar 1: Arts



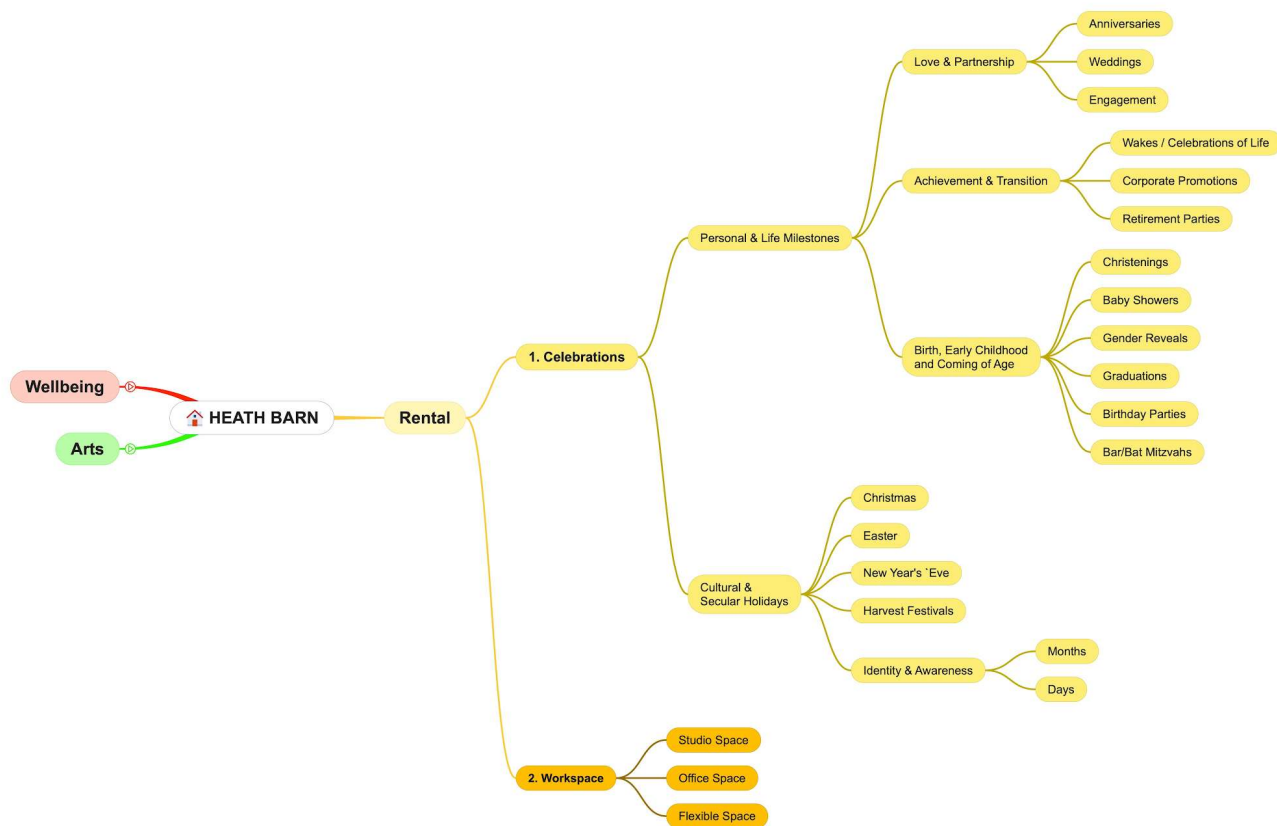
Arts programme — Visual Arts, Performing Arts, Literary Arts, and Media & Digital Arts. Not all aspects are likely to be available from day one, but the above shows our aspiration in this area.

Pillar 2: Wellbeing



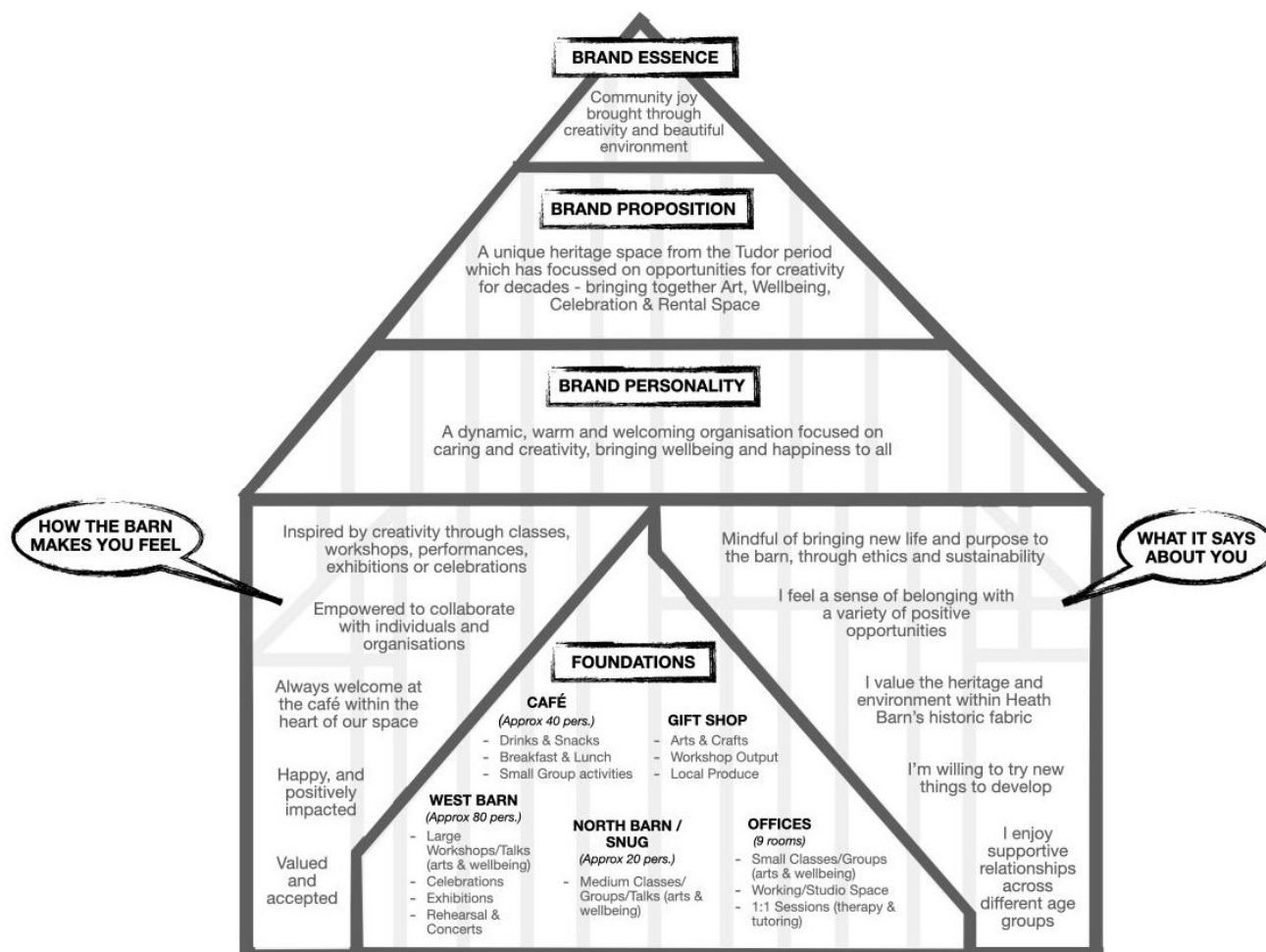
Wellbeing programme — seven categories spanning physical, mental, social and family health. Not all aspects are likely to be available from day one, but the above shows our aspiration in this area.

Pillar 3: Rental



Rental programme — Celebrations and Workspace

Barn Framework



Draft version of a framework to communicate the “whys” and the “whats” for Heath Barn, which will be developed as the business grows.

PART TWO – THE COMMUNITY

2.1 Heritage Significance

The Heath Barn complex comprises three separate but grouped, Grade II listed buildings on the National Heritage List for England, each with its own Historic England list entry, all designated 16th or 17th century in origin and all listed for group value:

Building	List Entry	Grade	Historic England listing description (summary)
Heath Barn	1251174	II (GV)	<i>C16 or C17, altered. Timber frame, plaster infilling and brick nogging, some weatherboarding. Old tiled roofs. Included for group value.</i>
Heath Farmhouse	1251155	II (GV)	<i>C16 or C17. Part of the grouped listing with Heath Barn and Heath Barn Cottage. Included for group value.</i>
Heath Barn Cottage	1251157	II (GV)	<i>C16 or C17, much altered. Front wall of flint rubble with red brick dressings. Side elevation timber framed with whitewashed brick nogging. Old tiled roof with gable end to road. Included for group value.</i>
GV = Group Value. All three entries confirm that Heath Farmhouse, Heath Barn Cottage and Heath Barn form a group. Source: National Heritage List for England — historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1251174			

It is thought the buildings are the second oldest in Boxmoor. Built using traditional timber-framed construction and stone, they are arranged in a continuous square around a central courtyard — described by Historic England as a fine example of planning. Barns of this structure and age are specific to Hertfordshire and the East of England.

Conservation Officer Assessment — The Significance of the Farmhouse

In her assessment of the planning application for residential conversion, Helen Cal Fernandez, Conservation Officer at Dacorum Borough Council, set out concerns about the heritage statement submitted by the applicant's consultants (Turleys). Her observations are highly significant: they confirm that the heritage significance of this building group has been actively underplayed in the case for residential conversion — and that the buildings, particularly the farmhouse, may be considerably more significant than even the current listing fully captures. This comment is echoed in the letter by Heritage Consultant (Rory Cullen), see supporting letter.

“

The conservation team are very concerned that the rating of significance ascribed to the cottage and farmhouse as being 'low' was raised at pre-application stage but not addressed. There is clear evidence of early framing, much of it intact within the farmhouse — the timber frame at first floor level within the two front rooms would suggest a late 15th or early 16th century date. Two full bays remain but it seems as if the third bay has been truncated at some point. It is not clear whether this front part was originally built as an open hall or whether it contained a floor originally — the former is likely.

Conservation would like the internal fabric of all parts of the Heath Barn site to be assessed in detail by a specialist in timber frame buildings so that the significance of this listed building group can be more fully understood.

All buildings on the site are of high significance by their nature as listed buildings, but the farmhouse is of particular architectural interest.

■

— Helen Cal Fernandez, Conservation Officer, Dacorum Borough Council

This assessment is remarkable for two reasons. First, it directly contradicts the heritage statement submitted in support of residential conversion — the Conservation Officer's own view is that the significance of the farmhouse was underplayed. Second, it indicates that the buildings may be even older than the current listing suggests: late 15th century framing would predate the current 16th century listing date, potentially making these among the oldest buildings in Hertfordshire. Our proposal — to restore and reuse the buildings with full specialist timber frame assessment — directly fulfils the Conservation Officer's own recommendation.

Our commitment, as part of the restoration programme, is to commission exactly the specialist timber frame assessment that Helen Cal Fernandez calls for — building a far fuller understanding of the significance of the farmhouse before any works are undertaken. This is the approach that responsible heritage stewardship demands, and that residential conversion would never deliver.

SAVE Britain's Heritage — Buildings at Risk Register

In June 2025, Heath Barn was formally added to the **SAVE Britain's Heritage Buildings at Risk Register** — one of the most authoritative independent registers of endangered historic buildings in England, compiled continuously since 1989.

SAVE Britain's Heritage is a registered charity founded in 1975 by a group of architectural historians, journalists and planners. It is widely regarded as the strongest independent voice in historic building conservation in England, and its Buildings at Risk register carries significant weight with Historic England, the National Lottery Heritage Fund, planning authorities, and the public. Inclusion on the register is not automatic — it reflects a considered assessment that a building is vacant, that its future is uncertain, and that it is at genuine risk of loss. Our Heath Barn CIC nominated Heath Barn for inclusion on the register.

Heath Barn's inclusion on the SAVE Britain's Heritage Buildings at Risk Register in June 2025 is independent, expert confirmation that this building is at risk and that action is urgently needed. It also strengthens our case to heritage grant funders — NLHF and AHF both give significant weight to Buildings at Risk status when assessing applications.

The SAVE register highlights historic buildings that are vacant and whose future is uncertain, with the central aim of raising awareness and advocating for their retention and reuse. In 2025 — SAVE's 50th anniversary year — access to the register was made free to all for the first time. Heath Barn sits precisely within the type of building SAVE exists to protect: a Grade II listed, publicly owned heritage asset, empty since 2019, at risk of irreversible loss through inappropriate residential conversion.

The full register is available at: savebritainsheritage.org/buildings-at-risk

A Brief History of Heath Barn

The timeline below draws on Historic England listing records, a Freedom of Information request to Hertfordshire County Council (Reference 5088249, March 2025), the letter of support from The Hemel Hempstead School, and the Our Heath Barn CIC community and historical research programme.

Period	History
16th–17th century	The Heath Barn complex is constructed using traditional timber-framed construction and stone, arranged in a continuous square around a central courtyard. Historic England describes this as ‘a fine example of planning’ and notes that barns of this structure and age are specific to Hertfordshire and the East of England. The buildings are thought to be the second oldest in Boxmoor. All three buildings — Heath Farmhouse, Heath Barn Cottage, and Heath Barn — are designated Grade II listed on the National Heritage List for England.
For several centuries	Heath Barn operates as a working farm serving the Boxmoor community and owned by farmer George Leach. The site and its courtyard form a central part of the agricultural and social landscape of Boxmoor for generations. It was then owned by Mr and Mrs Enthwhistle and run as a school
1923	Lieutenant Colonel Frederick Sadlier Brereton CBE RAMC moved to Heath Barn. Born in 1872, Brereton studied medicine at Guy’s Hospital before gaining first place in the entrance examination to the Army Medical Staff in 1896. He served as a medical officer to the 2nd Scots Guards during the Boer War and again with the RAMC during the First World War, attaining the rank of Lieutenant Colonel. He was awarded the CBE in 1919. Alongside his military career, Brereton made anatomical figures for the medical profession and was a prolific author of adventure books for boys, writing more than 50 titles; many now held in the Dacorum Heritage Trust archive. Brereton made alterations to the façade of the farmhouse at Heath Barn, adding in the bay windows which remain today. In 1927, he became Mayor and Bailiff of Hemel Hempstead. On his death in 1957, he left specific instructions that Heath Barn be sold to The Hemel Hempstead School as a space for the nurturing of the performing arts — a bequest that shaped the building’s cultural identity for the following six decades.
April 1963	Hertfordshire County Council acquires the freehold of the property for £28,000, as confirmed by a Freedom of Information request submitted by Our Heath Barn CIC in March 2025 (Reference 5088249). The property is leased to The Hemel Hempstead School, honouring Colonel Brereton’s bequest, for use as a centre for the performing arts and musical education. Brereton’s wife, Isobel continues living there until her death.
1950s onwards	Heath Barn serves students of The Hemel Hempstead Grammar School, later Hemel Hempstead School and the wider community for approximately 70 years. Eric McGavin serves as music Director for 18 years at Heath Barn. McGavin was a significant figure in British music education — a researcher into the history and manufacture of woodwind and brass instruments, whose career and archive are now held by the Horniman Museum and Gardens in London as the dedicated Eric McGavin Collection, comprising over 440 photographs, manuscripts and research materials documenting his work with music students and his long association with Boosey & Hawkes. Historical research also establishes that the adjacent Boxmoor Playhouse was originally part of the Heath Barn farm site — recorded as ‘Heath Barn Theater’ — and that a 1970s promotional flyer confirms the site hosted events for the Dacorum and Chiltern Potters Guild, evidencing an arts association predating Our Heath Barn CIC’s vision by at least 50 years. During the 1960s and 1970s, and the building becomes central to the musical lives of generations of young people across Boxmoor and Dacorum.
1970 onwards	Alongside its role as a music school, Heath Barn becomes a beloved venue for community celebrations in Boxmoor. Wedding receptions, christenings, and other family and community gatherings take place in the building throughout this period — a tradition fondly recalled by many local residents and noted in the letter of support from Reverend Michael Macey of St John’s Church, whose parishioners frequently held receptions at the barn following marriages and baptisms next door. In the 1990s Dacorum Music Services move to Heath Barn.
1 November 2016	Hertfordshire County Council statutorily transfers the freehold of the majority of The Hemel Hempstead School site to the school, as a consequence of the school’s change to foundation status. Heath Barn is not included in this transfer and remains in HCC

	ownership. Upon completion of the new music facility, the lease of Heath Barn to the school ends and the County Council holds the building in vacant possession.
May 2019	Heath Barn closes. Hemel Hempstead school music and Dacorum Music service move to the newly built on site building. HCC subsequently seeks to dispose of the property to recoup costs associated with providing the new music block and refurbished science laboratories at the school. Since closure, the building has incurred ongoing holding costs to the Council — totalling £129,919 between 2019 and 2025. See the accompanying HCC Holding Costs Schedule (2019–2025) submitted as a supporting document.
November 2023 Our Heath Barn campaign begins July 2023 Our Heath Barn CIC is set up	Due to high public interest (over 200 formal objections) Heath Barn goes to DBC Development Management Committee for review. Planning application: 24/00075/FUL and 24/00076/LBC — one of the largest objection responses to any planning application in recent Dacorum history. September 2025: Approval is given for change of use to five residential plots.
February 2026	Following three years of campaigning, Hertfordshire County Council offers the CIC an exclusive period to submit a community bid. This document is that bid.



DACHT : 1995 - Brereton was elected as Mayor and Bailiff of Hemel Hempstead in 1927. This is a copy of the photograph, which hangs in the Civic Centre at Hemel Hempstead.

Colonel Brereton CBE RAMC, Mayor and Bailiff of Hemel Hempstead, 1927. His bequest transferred Heath Barn to The Hemel Hempstead School for the performing arts.



Eric McGavin and the Heath Barn wind ensemble — McGavin was conductor of the wind orchestra at Heath Barn through the 1960s and 70s.

HEATH BARN, BOXMOOR, HERTS

London 24 miles. In a charming position overlooking a common.
AN EXCEPTIONALLY INTERESTING 17th-CENTURY FARMHOUSE
(Carefully converted and fully modernised)



containing hall, cloakroom, 3 reception rooms, 4 principal bedrooms, bathroom. Also self-contained portion of 2 reception rooms, kitchen, 3 bedrooms, bathroom.

Cottage, garages, tithe barn and buildings. All services.

Excellent garden, orchard and paddock of about 3¼ acres.

FREEHOLD WITH VACANT POSSESSION

which will be offered for sale by auction (unless sold privately meanwhile) by Humbert & Flint in conjunction with P. W. Poulter, at The Bell Hotel, Two Waters, Hemel Hempstead, on Wednesday, November 18, 1953, at 3 p.m.

Particulars and Conditions of Sale may be obtained from the:
Vendor's Solicitors: RICHARD FURBER & SON, 8, Gray's Inn Square, London, W.C.1. (Chancery 8494/6)

Joint Auctioneers: **HUMBERT & FLINT**, 6, Lincoln's Inn Fields, London, W.C.2. (Chancery 3121-5). **P. W. POULTER**, 15, Belmont Road, Hemel Hempstead, Herts. (Boxmoor 763).

2.2 Evidenced Community Support

Evidence of need: 517-respondent community survey (November 2023); 227 business and organisation respondents; 206 formal planning objections; site visits to three comparable operating organisations; market rate benchmarking against two comparable heritage venues (Appendix A).

Our Heath Barn Community Survey — November 2023

In November 2023, Our Heath Barn conducted a formal survey of local residents. With over 500 responses, this represents one of the most substantive pieces of community evidence gathered in support of any asset bid in this area. The results were unambiguous:

Survey Question	Yes	Respondents
Would Heath Barn convert well to five or more private dwellings?	9%	514 respondents
Would change of use and modern upgrades alter the listed building detrimentally?	89%	515 respondents
Would it be better to restore the site for community use?	95%	517 respondents
Is maintaining public access to publicly owned buildings important to you?	95%	518 respondents
Would you welcome an inclusive community hub focused on arts, wellbeing and local business?	97%	517 respondents

What the community said it needs

When asked what Boxmoor and Hemel Hempstead would most benefit from, respondents to the November 2023 survey chose from a list of options — and the results map directly onto the Heath Barn vision:

What the community said it needs	% wanting this	Respondents
Arts, creative and studio spaces	73%	372
A variety of community spaces for hire	58%	297
Space for exhibitions, displays and performances	64%	326
Opportunities to connect in safe support groups	55%	280
Therapeutic, creative and wellbeing services for individuals and families	65%	332
A space for cross-generational groups and connections	54%	274
A retail space selling local art, crafts and produce	41%	212
Spaces for co-working, remote working or hosting business meetings	35%	180
A space for small, independent businesses to operate from	39%	201

Business and organisation interest

Of the 227 respondents who identified as running a local business or community organisation, the most sought-after opportunity was using the café as a meeting place (73%), followed by hiring medium rooms for meetings, classes or workshops (34%), renting medium/large rooms for classes or workshops (28%), and hiring a large room for events or exhibitions (25%). This direct business demand validates the commercial revenue assumptions in our financial model.

Wider community mandate

The survey evidence sits alongside a broader and growing body of community support:

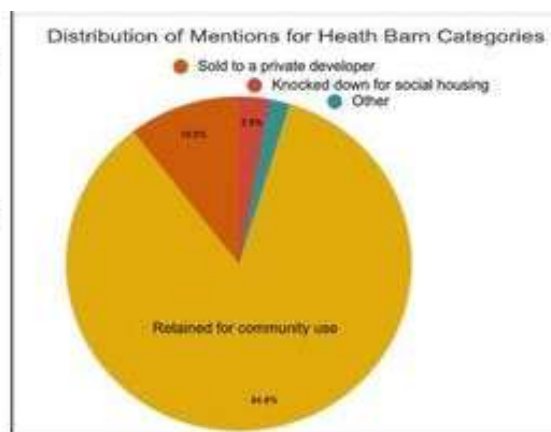
- 206 formal objections lodged against Dacorum Borough Council planning applications 24/00075/FUL and 24/00076/LBC to convert Heath Barn to private residential use — one of the largest objection responses to any planning application in recent Dacorum history
- £17,232 raised through the Crowdfunder campaign from 378 donors, with every contribution formally recorded as evidence of community support
- £160,000+ committed through the Community Share offer from 221 individuals and businesses
- Over 700 people on our mailing list and over 1,500 followers across social media
- David Taylor MP and local councillors providing public backing
- A Facebook poll on the Boxmoor Councillor's page found that 84.8% of more than 1,000 respondents favoured Heath Barn being retained for community use — with 83.2% overall favouring an outcome that retains the heritage and public value of the site

Residents overwhelmingly want these Grade II listed buildings to be preserved and repurposed for community use, with 83.2% favouring an outcome that retains the heritage and public value of the site.

Context

Heath Barn is a 16th-century Grade II listed building that has remained unused since 2019. The survey asked residents for their preferred future use of the site and offered four options:

- Retained for community use
- Sold to a developer for private housing
- Demolished to create new social housing
- Provide an alternative suggestion



Distribution of Mentions for Heath Barn Categories — Boxmoor Councillor's Facebook survey, 2025 (1,000+ respondents). 84.8% retained for community use; 10.5% sold to a private developer; 2.9% other.

- Additional financial support confirmed: £10,000 from an individual donor; £10,000 from RSK; £5,000 from Eckoh; £3,000 from the Jennifer Worth Literary Trust; £500 from Boho Boxmoor; £500 from The Boxmoor Playhouse

In Their Own Words — Voices from the Crowdfunder

The following comments were left by donors on the Our Heath Barn Crowdfunder campaign. They represent just a small selection from 378 donors, and together they tell the story of what this building means to Boxmoor and Hemel Hempstead — across generations, across different relationships with the building, and with a consistent, unmistakable message.

“

Heath Barn was central to my development as a musician growing up in the 1970s. Eric McGavin was an inspirational conductor of the wind orchestra. It was a special environment.

— Crowdfunder supporter

“

My children benefited from using this space... now it's time to see my grandchildren use it.

— Crowdfunder supporter

“

A Mother's Day gift to my mum, the second year without her. She supported me learning to play musical instruments and would have loved to support a place like this.

— Crowdfunder supporter

“

I'm glad I have the chance to support this vitally important campaign to save the iconic Heath Barn. Too many lovely buildings in Hemel have been destroyed to make way for concrete monstrosities. Let's preserve this historic, beautiful building.

— Crowdfunder supporter

“

Creating a space for social cohesion has got to be the right thing. Don't let it go — when it's gone, it's gone.

— Crowdfunder supporter

“

Heath Barn is a unique set of buildings that have so much to offer to Hemel Hempstead community life going forward, with firm foundations in the past. Too much has been lost to the future already.

— Crowdfunder supporter

“

Good luck with the fundraising. Heath Barn has been an important hub for music making for myself and my children and I would love to see it continue to have a part in the community.

— Crowdfunder supporter

“

As a local resident and business owner, I would love to see this space renewed to its former glory and become the heart of the community.

— Alice, Peony & Magnolia

”

Community needs inclusive spaces now more than ever, and we should value our heritage buildings by making them accessible to all.

— Crowdfunder supporter

”

Wishing you success in restoring this delightful old building — to be treasured. I may still have a lino cut of the building, an opportunity to get out of the art class at Hemel Grammar and connect with this place, 60 years ago.

— Crowdfunder supporter

”

Donation on behalf of Marion Cowe, for Boxmoor's cultural life and heritage.

— Crowdfunder supporter

”

We need more pride in our town and its heritage. Too much has already been lost. Good luck in your quest.

— Crowdfunder supporter

Organisational Endorsements & Professional Testimonials

The Hemel Hempstead School — Headteacher Neil Hassell & School Community

LETTER OF SUPPORT

The Hemel Hempstead School — Heath Barn's immediate neighbour and its custodian for several decades — writes in support of the bid on behalf of its students, staff, governors and alumni. The letter reveals a significant piece of heritage history: when Colonel Bretton CBE RAMC, a former mayor of Hemel Hempstead, died in 1957, he left specific instruction that Heath Barn be sold to The Hemel Hempstead School as a space for the nurturing of the performing arts. The 'Save Heath Barn' movement, the letter argues, continues that legacy. Full letter in appendix D.

"Heath Barn is deeply rooted in the history of this town, pre- and post-Jellico, and in the history of our school. We were proud and careful custodians of the Barn for several decades and generations of young people fell in love with music and performance in that beautiful Grade II listed space. The 'Save Heath Barn' movement seeks to continue that legacy and ensure that one of the few buildings of any architectural merit in the town continues to be a place for all, for music, for laughter, for communities, and for future generations of memories to be made."

— Neil Hassell, Headteacher, The Hemel Hempstead School, on behalf of students, staff, governors and alumni, 22 May 2026

Dacorum Borough Council

FORMAL LETTER OF SUPPORT

On 11 May 2026, Diane Southam, Strategic Director – Place and Communities at Dacorum Borough Council, wrote formally to Our Heath Barn CIC confirming that **Dacorum Borough Council supports the aims of the Our Heath Barn CIC**, and that the proposals align with the three thematic priorities of DBC's recently launched Arts and Culture Strategy:

- Creative Health — to prioritise initiatives that improve wellbeing through creative activity
- Connecting Communities — to bring communities together and facilitate stronger collaborative working across the cultural and heritage sector
- Places and Spaces — to put culture at the forefront of improving local places and support spaces for creative activity to thrive

A formal letter from Diane Southam, Strategic Director – Place and Communities, confirming that Our Heath Barn's proposals align with Dacorum Borough Council's Arts and Culture Strategy priorities. Full letter in appendix D.

University of Hertfordshire — Heritage Hub

LETTER OF SUPPORT

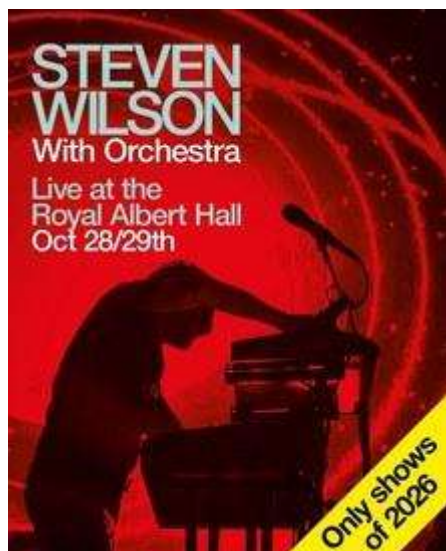
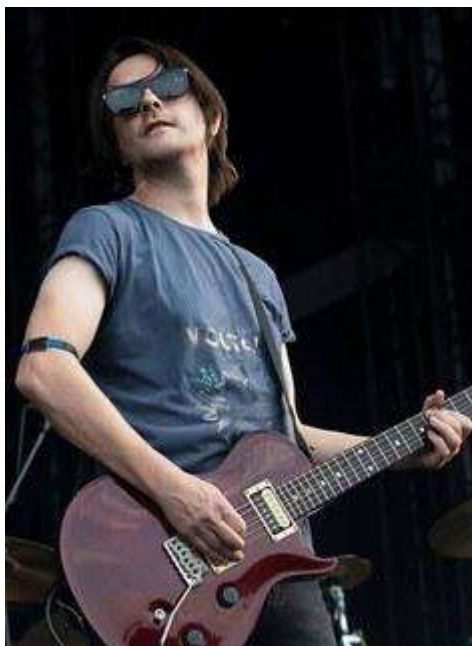
"The Heritage Hub at the University of Hertfordshire supports initiatives that combine conservation with community benefit, and we believe this project represents an exemplary case of that principle in action. We would welcome opportunities for future collaboration, including student engagement, research, and public programming associated with the site."

— University of Hertfordshire Heritage Hub

Full letter in appendix D.

Steven Wilson — Six Times Grammy Nominated Musician & Producer

Steven Wilson grew up in Hemel Hempstead and learned to play guitar in Heath Barn as a teenager in the 1980s. He went on to become one of the most critically acclaimed British musicians and record producers of his generation — Grammy nominated six times and described by Rolling Stone magazine as 'the most successful British artist you've never heard of'. He is founder of Porcupine Tree, has collaborated with artists including Hans Zimmer and Ninet Tayeb, and regularly sells out venues including the Royal Albert Hall. His connection to Heath Barn is personal, specific, and deeply rooted.



Steven Wilson
Six times Grammy nominated
musician & producer

”

I was a teenager in Hemel Hempstead during the 80s and have the fondest of memories of my earliest guitar lessons in Heath Barn (taught by Mr. Rance!)

Hearing what I was playing inside the walls of a building with such a sense of history made it feel even more like a rare privilege to be able to express myself through music.

Places like Heath Barn are not just functional, they are inspirational.

”

— Steven Wilson, six times Grammy nominated musician and producer

Sally Taylor — Chair, Herts Visual Arts



Sally Taylor
Chair, Herts Visual Arts

“

As Chair of Herts Visual Arts, I have noticed over the years a lack of spaces for artists to create. Studio areas are lacking, or too expensive, leaving artists struggling to find areas to work in, exhibit their work and run workshops. This is especially true in Dacorum where artists always struggle to find venues so they can take part in Herts Open Studios, leaving this part of the county unrepresented.

— Sally Taylor, Chair, Herts Visual Arts

Brian Doran — Curator, Art in the Nave | Former Chair, Dacorum Arts Partnership



Brian Doran
Curator, Art in the Nave
Former Chair, Dacorum Arts Partnership

“

Infrastructure is more than roads and utilities. Social and cultural infrastructure — places where people gather, create, learn, and collaborate — underpins resilient communities. Residential development may deliver short-term housing gain, but it cannot replace the long-term civic value of a shared public asset. Once community space is removed, it is rarely recovered.

— Brian Doran

Hemel Hempstead Local History Society & Museum

“

Examples of Hemel's rich history are few in number, with far less on show and accessible. It's vitally important to our local heritage that Heath Barn becomes a community asset to be enjoyed and available to us all.

— Hemel Hempstead Local History Society & Museum

The Jennifer Worth Literary Trust — Suzannah Worth & Juliette Walton

LETTER OF SUPPORT

“Heath Barn could be brought back to life as a place that offers a safe and welcoming space, where people of all ages and from all walks of life can experience cultural enrichment and gain a sense of well-being. Therefore, we whole-heartedly support the campaign to save Heath Barn.” — Suzannah Worth & Juliette Walton

The Jennifer Worth Literary Trust — founded on royalties from *Call the Midwife* — has donated £3,000 to the campaign and pledged annual support for running costs if the bid succeeds. Both of Suzannah Worth’s daughters attended Heath Barn as the Dacorum Music School from the age of four. Full letter in appendix D.

David Taylor MP — Hemel Hempstead Constituency

LETTER OF SUPPORT

“The campaign to secure [Heath Barn] for community use is well organised, strongly backed, and rooted in a serious and credible vision for stewarding an important historic asset for public benefit... I would urge the Council to recognise both the strength of the case and the scale of local backing behind it.”

— David Taylor MP, Hemel Hempstead

Full letter in appendix D.

Hugo Hardy — RIBA Chartered Architect

LETTER OF SUPPORT

“In my professional opinion, community ownership offers the most responsible and heritage-appropriate future for Heath Barn. It aligns with conservation best practice, reflects the wishes of the local community, and ensures that this important listed building will continue to play a meaningful role in the life of Boxmoor. I therefore strongly encourage Hertfordshire County Council to support the community purchase of Heath Barn.”

— Hugo Hardy, RIBA/Arb Chartered Architect, 22 May 2026

Hugo Hardy is the RIBA Chartered Architect who has been actively engaged in the Heath Barn project for three years, providing architectural and conservation guidance throughout. His letter confirms his commitment to supporting the restoration at community rates if the bid succeeds. Hugo’s community project portfolio is extensive: it includes the award-winning restoration of Rectory Lane Cemetery in Berkhamsted (National Lottery Heritage funded; Green Flag Award 2025; two Landscape Institute Awards for Excellence; RIBA MacEwen Award runner-up); the ongoing restoration of Frogmore Paper Mill in Apsley following a devastating arson fire; the Elgiva Theatre extension in Chesham; the Chesham Moor Gym & Swim renovation; the Berkhamsted Neighbourhood Plan; Berkhamsted Castle visitor centre feasibility; a Dacorum Heritage Trust archive museum; the Cheddington Community Pavilion; and proposals to reinstate the historic Hemel Pavilion at The Bury alongside the AViD community group. His work consistently combines heritage sensitivity with community benefit — precisely the approach Heath Barn requires. Full letter in appendix D.

Louis Curtis — Timber Building Conservation Specialist, Breakspear Conservation

LETTER OF SUPPORT

“It is my experience that community-led stewardship of historic buildings, where properly structured and professionally guided, consistently delivers better conservation outcomes than conversion to private residential use. The Our Heath Barn CIC has impressed me with the seriousness of its intentions, the breadth of local support it has mobilised, and its evident understanding that heritage expertise must be embedded in this project from the outset, not bolted on later. I would commend their bid to the panel without reservation.”

— Louis Curtis, MSc Timber Building Conservation, BSc Historic Building Conservation, IHBC, Breakspear Conservation, 21 May 2026

Independent specialist endorsement from a qualified timber building conservation expert (MSc Timber Building Conservation, IHBC) who visited the site. His letter confirms that the historic significance of the building can be maintained and enhanced through the community use envisaged, and that community-led stewardship consistently delivers better conservation outcomes than residential conversion. Full letter in appendix D.

Sunnyside Rural Trust

LETTER OF SUPPORT

On behalf of Sunnyside Rural Trust, I am very pleased to write a letter of support acknowledging your efforts to steward Heath Barn to the benefit of the community and express our sincere hope the project is successful. It is well placed to serve a diverse community and significant number of people in Hemel Hempstead and surrounding areas. Sunnyside would be a willing support and partner in this exciting development. We are keen to lend our horticultural skills and time to ensure the gardens are restored and support the work inside. We wish you well in your endeavour and are happy to support in any way we can.

— Keely Siddiqui Charlick MBE, Chief Executive, Sunnyside Rural Trust, 1 June 2026

Keely Siddiqui Charlick MBE is Chief Executive of Sunnyside Rural Trust — a Queen’s Award-winning registered charity supporting over 180 people with learning disabilities daily across five sites in Dacorum. Sunnyside has offered to partner with Heath Barn on garden restoration and horticultural activities. Full letter in appendix D.

Rev Mike — St John’s Church, Boxmoor

LETTER OF SUPPORT

I write on behalf of the Ecclesiastical Parish of Boxmoor to thank you and your fellow campaigners on the fantastic work you have done in pursuing Heath Barn as a community centre within Boxmoor. Heath Barn has a long history within our community as a place for all people to come together. Many of my parishioners and congregants have exceptionally fond memories of Heath Barn as a venue for their Reception following a Marriage Service or Baptism in St John’s Church. To the best of my knowledge, Boxmoor — unlike other areas of the town — does not have a community focused centre which is not either political, religious, or privately owned or for members. To have somewhere where people from all walks of life could come together would be a great asset to this community. Our Heath Barn, if successful, would be a most welcome sign and act of transformation in our community and would help to build relationships, reduce isolation, and strengthen our community. We — the Church in Boxmoor — and I personally, fully support and encourage you.

— The Reverend Michael Macey, Vicar of Boxmoor & Rural Dean of Hemel Hempstead, 1 June 2026

The Reverend Michael Macey writes on behalf of the Ecclesiastical Parish of Boxmoor — encompassing St John’s Boxmoor, St Stephen’s Chaulden and St Francis’ Hammerfield. As Vicar of Boxmoor and Rural Dean of Hemel Hempstead, he confirms that Boxmoor currently lacks a non-

partisan community space and endorses Heath Barn as a vital act of community transformation. Full letter in appendix D.

Hemel Hempstead Theatre Company (HHTC) — The Boxmoor Playhouse

LETTER OF SUPPORT

“Projects such as this are about more than preserving a building — they are about investing in the identity, creativity, and pride of our town. Heath Barn has the potential to become a place that Hemel Hempstead can truly be proud of: a collaborative, inclusive, and inspiring hub for arts, culture, and community activity. We feel so strongly about the importance of this project succeeding that HHTC has also made a financial donation in support of the campaign.”

— Katie Lovell, Chair, Hemel Hempstead Theatre Company (HHTC), 24 May 2026

Endorsement from Heath Barn’s immediate neighbour and natural creative partner. The letter notes the practical importance of the community bid for the Playhouse’s fire evacuation arrangements (which have historically depended on access to Heath Barn land) and sets out the significant potential for collaboration — rehearsal space, performance venue, and shared cultural offer. HHTC has also made a financial donation to the campaign. Full letter in appendix D.

Eckoh

LETTER OF SUPPORT

“Heath Barn is more than just a beautiful 500-year-old building... the opportunity to restore it and bring it back to life, creating a welcoming space for people to gather, create, and connect, is something we feel very passionate about... In support of this vision, we are pleased to offer a financial pledge of £5,000.00 towards the preservation and development of the site.”

— Eckoh

Eckoh UK Limited, a Hemel Hempstead-based technology business employing over 200 people, has pledged £5,000 to the Our Heath Barn campaign. Lisa Kemp, Head of HR, writes on behalf of the company confirming their commitment to the project and offering ongoing volunteer support. Eckoh has been based in Hemel Hempstead for more than 25 years. Full letter in appendix D.

RSK Group

LETTER OF SUPPORT

“We are pleased to write to confirm our pledge from our RSK Foundation of £10,000 in support of the above project. We are delighted to contribute towards this initiative which we know enjoys the support of several of our colleagues locally who have told us of the positive impact it will have.”

— RSK Group

RSK Group, a global environment, engineering and technical services company, has donated £10,000 through its RSK Foundation. The letter is from Nigel Board, Chief Operating Officer, and confirms RSK’s permission to be named publicly as a supporter of the project in all relevant materials. Full letter in appendix D.

“Every possible alternative needs to be explored before public buildings are lost from community use and converted to housing.” — Councillor William Allen

Rory Cullen — Heritage Consultant, Cullen Conservation

LETTER OF SUPPORT

"I have now been able to inspect the internal fabric and I have to say that this building is a veritable historic gem which would be destroyed by anything other than sympathetic repairs and communal use, as advised by Historic England, BS 7913 and best heritage practice... I am therefore in complete support of the proposals put forward by Our Heath Barn community bid, which would safeguard its sustainable future for the long term."

— Rory Cullen MSc (Bldg Cons), IHBC, FCIQB, Director, Cullen Conservation, 1 June 2026

Rory Cullen is a Heritage Accredited Conservation Professional and former Head of Buildings for the National Trust. Having inspected both the external and internal fabric of Heath Barn, he concludes the building is of exceptional significance whose historic interest would be compromised by anything other than sympathetic repair and community use. He specifically notes that the recent heritage statement submitted in support of the residential planning application does not fully recognise the significance of many rare surviving elements of the building. Full letter in appendix D.

The Box Moor Trust — Patrick Schneiders, Chair

LETTER OF SUPPORT

"Your vision to place Heath Barn in the hands of the community and create a shared space where individuals and groups can come together will benefit the community by fostering connection, reducing isolation, and strengthening community cohesion... Retaining the historic Heath Barn for public benefit, under community stewardship, would ensure that its story remains part of the shared identity of Hemel Hempstead rather than becoming inaccessible within private development."

— Patrick Schneiders, Chair, The Box Moor Trust, 3 June 2026

The Box Moor Trust is a registered charity (No. 206142) whose beneficiaries are the residents of Hemel Hempstead and Bovingdon. The Chair writes to confirm the Trustees' support for the Our Heath Barn CIC vision, noting the positive impact accessible community spaces have on people's lives, and expressing the hope that Heath Barn's story will remain part of the shared identity of Hemel Hempstead under community stewardship. Full letter in appendix D.

Boxmoor Ward Councillors — William Allen, Simy Dhyani and Claire Hobson

LETTER OF SUPPORT

"As the Borough Councillors for Boxmoor ward, we are writing to share our complete support for Our Heath Barn's objective of keeping this much-loved local building in community ownership... Heath Barn would fill the deficit created by Boxmoor being the only neighbourhood in the town that lacks a community centre within its ward boundaries."

— William Allen, Simy Dhyani and Claire Hobson, Councillors for Boxmoor, Dacorum Borough Council, 1 June 2026

The three Dacorum Borough Councillors for Boxmoor ward write jointly in full support of the community ownership objective. Their letter sets out the benefits of Heath Barn as a wellbeing hub, heritage asset, arts venue, and community asset — and notes that a Facebook poll on the Boxmoor Councillor's page found 84.8% of over 1,000 respondents favoured Heath Barn being retained for community use. They also note that Boxmoor's strong upsurge of local identity — evidenced by the highest proportion of residents in Hemel Hempstead seeking parish status in the Council's Community Governance Review — is a clear driver of the community's wish to steward Heath Barn. Full letter in appendix D.

Boxmoor Good Neighbours — Debbie Goldthorpe and Trustees

LETTER OF SUPPORT

"We are so committed to the contribution Heath Barn can make to local elderly residents' quality of life that we would like to be shareholders within the cooperative ownership model proposed by Our Heath Barn. At our AGM on Saturday 20th June our membership will be voting on a motion to pledge £500 to the Our Heath Barn cooperative. Hopefully, this gives you a sense of the strength of our conviction."

And subsequently wrote again

"I am delighted to inform you that at our Annual General Meeting last Saturday, our membership passed a motion to pledge £500 to the Our Heath Barn Cooperative with a resounding majority. We are extremely keen to be part of your vision and delivery at Heath Barn and look forward to the possibility of being a shareholding member of the cooperative."

— Debbie Goldthorpe and the Trustees of Boxmoor Good Neighbours, 2 June 2026

Boxmoor Good Neighbours is a small local charity supporting elderly people in Boxmoor with transport to medical appointments, gardening, odd jobs, and social activities. The trustees wrote in full support of the community bid and later wrote again to confirm that their membership has passed a motion to pledge £500 to the Our Heath Barn Cooperative. Full letters in appendix D.

Juliette Walton — Birmingham Children's Trust (18+ Care Leavers Service)

LETTER OF SUPPORT

"Community projects like this can offer NEET young people the opportunity to gain vocational skills and experience, confidence, professional and social networks and inclusion... It is wonderful to talk to such impassioned people as those leading Our Heath Barn; their plans to include some of the most marginalised young people in the community are admirable and must be supported."

— Juliette Walton, Project and Performance Manager, 18+ Care Leavers Service, Birmingham Children's Trust

Juliette Walton writes in her professional capacity as Project and Performance Manager for the 18+ Care Leavers Service at Birmingham Children's Trust. She highlights the particular value of community projects such as Heath Barn in providing vocational skills, social networks, confidence, and inclusion for NEET (Not in Employment, Education or Training) young people. Her letter endorses Our Heath Barn CIC's commitment to including marginalised young people in the community programme. Full letter in appendix D.

Joanna Phillips — JP Holistic Health

LETTER OF SUPPORT

"As a wellbeing practitioner, I cannot imagine a more perfect place to work than at Heath Barn. A Community Arts and Wellbeing Hub in this vibrant and well-loved location would provide a unique, safe and collaborative base to work from. I would value the chance to work alongside other health and wellbeing professionals, creating supportive networks and helping other local businesses to thrive."

— Joanna Phillips, Holistic Health and Somatic Therapy JP Holistic Health

Joanna writes as a local business owner and therapy practitioner. Her letter sets out a specific commitment to use the building — hiring one of the small rooms on multiple days each week, running group health coaching programmes in the medium rooms, and delivering talks and workshops in the West Barn. She also makes the heritage case, describing Heath Barn as a rare example of 16th-century architecture that deserves to be restored and returned to the community. Jo is involved in the OHB campaign and is committing her own business to the building. Full letter in appendix D.

James Lark — OhMyArt

LETTER OF SUPPORT

“We should be nurturing this talent within Hertfordshire, creating opportunities for people to develop and establish themselves locally rather than allowing the absence of suitable spaces and opportunities to become a reason for that talent to look elsewhere... I would welcome opportunities for OhMyArt and other local creative practitioners to contribute to its programme and development where appropriate..”

— James Lark, Founder and Artist, OhMyArt

James Lark is a practising artist and creative educator with over two decades of experience in education, and founder of OhMyArt, an organisation established to broaden access to art and creativity across local communities. His letter positions Heath Barn within Hertfordshire's wider creative ecosystem — connecting education, professional practice and the community, and giving emerging talent somewhere to establish itself locally rather than leave the county. He confirms his interest in contributing to the Heath Barn programme through OhMyArt. James is involved in the OHB campaign and is committing his own business to support of the building. Full letter in appendix D.

Melissa Linsey — Dacorum Heritage Trust

LETTER OF SUPPORT

“We are delighted to have the opportunity to support the work of Our Heath Barn to save these historic buildings and provide a much needed creative space within Boxmoor and Hemel Hempstead.

Recently we have been working with young people within Hemel Hempstead as we move to celebrate this New Town's 80th anniversary. One of the most common feedback through this project is the want for creative spaces to explore art and music. This community arts and culture project will provide such a space for these young people.

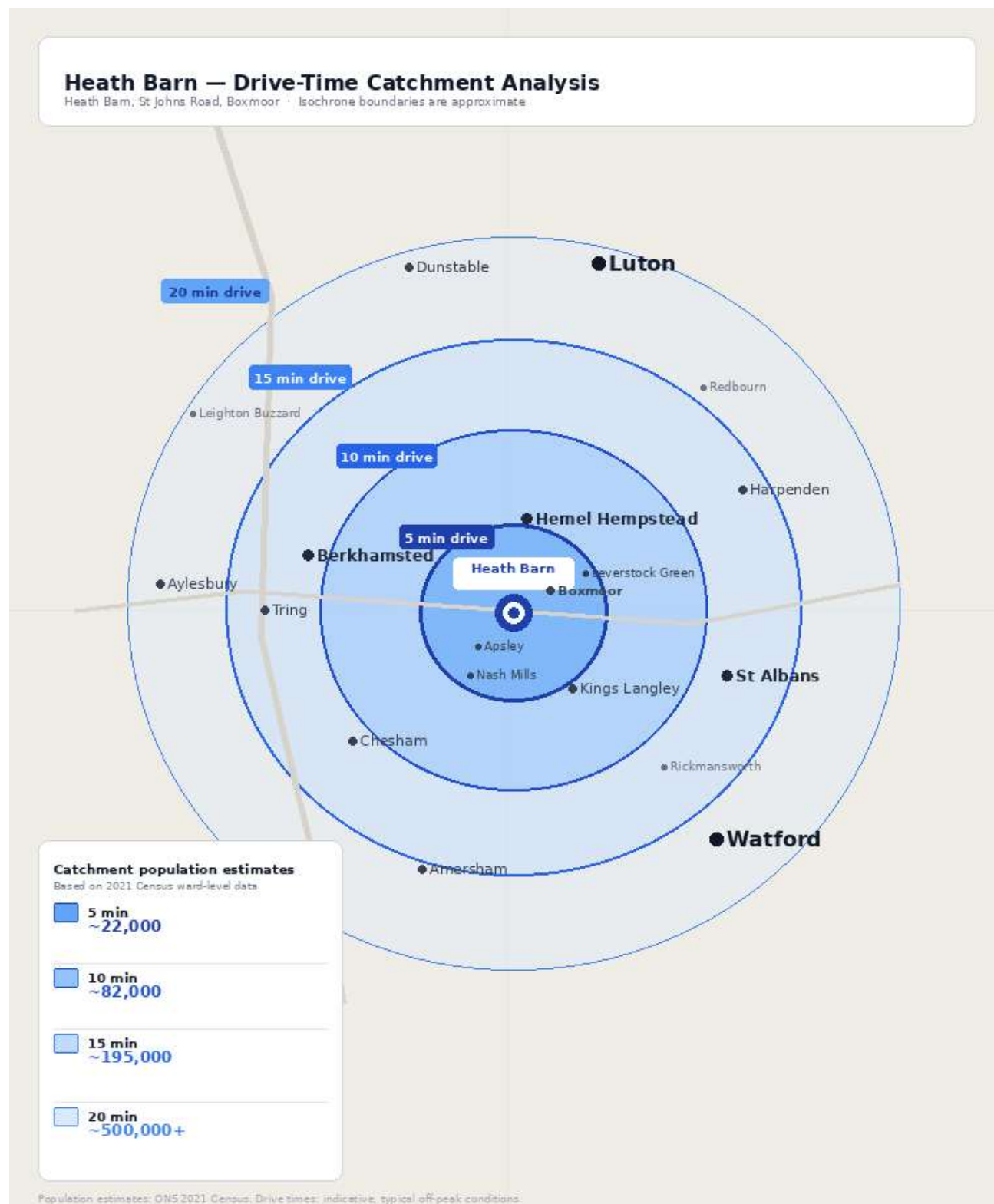
We welcome this work in conserving these historic barns and providing a community arts venue.”

— Melissa Linsey, Museum Manager – Dacorum Heritage Trust.

Dacorum Heritage is the accredited museum for Dacorum. Unlike traditional museums with public galleries, it exists as a museum store with visiting by appointment. Dacorum Heritage has been based, since 1993, in a converted fire station in Berkhamsted where it houses in excess of 130,000 artefacts relating to the history of the Borough. It covers a wide time period from Neolithic times (around 6,000 years ago), through to the present day and gives a wonderful insight into the long history and culture of the Dacorum area. Dacorum Heritage provides heritage services to the borough funded by offering affordable, inclusive arts and heritage activities to encourage all to take an active interest in their heritage. Full letter in appendix D.

2.3 Catchment and Partner Analysis

Heath Barn sits at the geographic heart of one of Hertfordshire's most accessible locations — on St Johns Road in Boxmoor, within easy reach of Hemel Hempstead town centre, Hemel Hempstead railway station, and the A41 and M1 corridors. The drive-time analysis below demonstrates the scale of the population within realistic reach of the building.



Drive-time catchment analysis — Heath Barn, St Johns Road, Boxmoor. Population estimates based on ONS 2021 Census ward-level data.

Active travel, public transport and the e-bike scheme

For residents within Boxmoor, the immediate town centre and Apsley — the approximately 22,000 people within the 5-minute drive boundary — we actively encourage walking and cycling as the primary means of reaching Heath Barn. The site is centrally located on St Johns Road, flat, and directly connected to the Grand Union Canal towpath and local cycle network. Heath Barn is approximately 10 minutes' walk from both Hemel Hempstead town centre and Hemel Hempstead railway station. We will provide secure cycle parking from the outset and promote active travel in all our marketing and communications.

Car parking. Heath Barn has parking for approximately 12 cars on site. In line with our commitment to active travel and our community-first ethos, parking will be managed to prioritise those with the greatest need: spaces will be allocated first to those hiring the venue and to visitors with accessibility requirements. We will communicate this policy clearly on our website and in all booking and event information and will work with neighbours and the local authority to manage any wider street parking impacts as the venue grows.

Electric bike hire — coming to Dacorum. In February 2026, an electric bike hire scheme was given approval for the Dacorum borough, in partnership with HeRTS IQ and their Growth Investment Fund — funded through the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) paid by developers for new development in Dacorum. The scheme will offer a fleet of electric bikes available for residents, workers and visitors to hire for short journeys, providing a practical and sustainable alternative to short car trips. Planned as a three-year trial with the option to extend for a further two years, the scheme is specifically designed to improve connections between rail stations, employment areas, the town centre and local neighbourhoods — including connections between Hemel Hempstead station and destinations like Heath Barn itself. This scheme directly supports our ethos: healthier and more active travel, reduced carbon emissions, improved air quality, and replacing short car journeys with sustainable alternatives.

Public transport. Heath Barn is well served by Hertfordshire's Lynx bus network — the county-run bus service connecting Hemel Hempstead with surrounding towns and villages across the 10, 15 and 20-minute catchment zones. For visitors travelling from Berkhamsted, Kings Langley, Tring and the wider area, bus and rail are viable alternatives to the car, and we will promote these routes clearly on our website and in our event communications.

Catchment summary

Zone	Area covered	Est. population	Preferred access
5 min	Boxmoor, Apsley, town centre	~22,000	<i>Walk or cycle — actively encouraged</i>
10 min	Hemel Hempstead wider urban area	~82,000	Bus, cycle or short drive
15 min	Berkhamsted, St Albans, Harpenden, Tring, Chesham	~195,000	Car or train (Hemel Hempstead station)
20 min	Luton, Watford, Aylesbury fringe, Dunstable	~500,000+	Car or rail

The wedding and event hire market — the primary commercial income stream for Heath Barn — is particularly well served by the 15 and 20-minute catchments. St Albans, Harpenden, Berkhamsted and the wider Dacorum and Three Rivers areas represent a large and relatively affluent population within easy reach, with strong demand for high-quality heritage event venues. Our benchmark research confirms that comparable venues within this catchment (notably Headstone Manor in Harrow and The Great Barn in Ayot St Lawrence) command premium rates — validating our financial model's conservative opening-day pricing.

Audience Clusters — Visit Mission Analysis

Understanding who comes to Heath Barn — and why — is as important as understanding how many people live within reach. Different audiences arrive with fundamentally different motivations, different needs, and different relationships to the space. The framework below identifies six distinct “visit mission” clusters: the primary audience types Heath Barn is designed to serve. These clusters are not mutually exclusive — the same person may shift between them on different visits — but each cluster has a distinct profile, a distinct offer requirement, and a distinct value to the long-term sustainability of Heath Barn.

Critically, the clusters are interdependent. Hosts generate footfall that benefits the café and gift shop. Visitors become regulars. Students become connection-seekers. The cluster model reflects how a genuinely thriving community venue actually operates — not as a single-use facility, but as a living ecosystem of overlapping purposes.

Cluster	Who they are	Visit mission	What they need from Heath Barn	Value to Heath Barn
1. Hosts	Individuals or businesses hiring space for events, private functions, professional services, office use, or location filming. Drawn primarily by the quality and character of the space.	To secure a distinctive, well-managed heritage venue that enhances their event, service, or brand. The space itself is the product.	Flexible, high-quality, well-presented spaces. Professional booking and support. Reliable infrastructure (AV, catering options, parking). Confidence that their event is in safe hands.	The primary commercial revenue driver. Hosts underpin financial sustainability and generate secondary spend through the café and shop. They also act as ambassadors, bringing new audiences (Visitors) who may become regulars. Critical to the viability of clusters 3–6.
2. Drop-in Customers	Café visitors, gift shop browsers, and passing trade. Consumer-led, walk-in, unplanned. May be local residents, canal walkers, school-run parents, or people accompanying others to an event.	A quality café experience, interesting retail, and the pleasure of spending time in a beautiful historic setting. Low commitment, high atmosphere.	Welcoming, well-run café with quality food and drink. Attractive retail. Easy access and a relaxed, unhurried atmosphere. Awareness of what else is on — a programme board that invites them to return.	Steady daily revenue through café and retail. The highest-frequency cluster and a key driver of the building's sense of life and activity. Drop-in customers are also the most likely to graduate into Students, Connection-seekers, or future Hosts.
3. Visitors	Guests of Hosts attending private events; attendees at public talks, exhibitions, or performances; people exploring the building and its heritage for the first time.	To attend a specific event, occasion, or cultural programme. The visit is purposeful and time-defined. The building is experienced as context for something else — but the quality of	A well-presented, easy-to-navigate venue. Clear wayfinding and a warm welcome. Comfortable café and facilities. Awareness of the building's story — interpretive materials that create a	Volume and diversity. Visitors broaden Heath Barn's reach beyond its immediate regular audience and are the most important pipeline for converting new people into Students, Drop-in

		the setting matters.	memorable first impression and an incentive to return independently.	Customers, and Connection-seekers. They also generate secondary café and retail spend on the day.
4. Students / Self-developers	Participants in arts classes, skills workshops, craft sessions, music tuition, or other structured learning. Attending for personal development, creative expression, or the acquisition of new skills. All ages.	To learn, practise, and grow in an inspiring environment. The quality and character of the setting is part of the motivation. Regular, recurring attendance is typical — these are loyal, committed participants.	A diverse, well-curated programme of classes and workshops with skilled tutors. Accessible pricing. Well-equipped, purpose-appropriate spaces. A welcoming community feel that distinguishes Heath Barn from a commercial studio.	Reliable, recurring programme income. The core of Heath Barn's community identity and the primary audience for NLHF and AHF grant reporting. Students are also the cluster most likely to transition into Connection-seekers over time, deepening their relationship with the building and its community.
5. Clients / Patients	People attending for therapeutic or wellbeing support — whether through group workshops (art therapy, mindfulness, movement) or one-to-one treatment sessions. Often referred via GP social prescribing, NHS pathways, or self-referral.	Confidential, calm, and professionally managed wellbeing provision. A non-clinical environment that reduces the anxiety often associated with formal healthcare settings. Discretion, safety, and genuine therapeutic benefit.	Dedicated, appropriately furnished therapy rooms with privacy and acoustic separation. A warm but unobtrusive welcome. Proximity to the café as a gentle transition space before or after a session. A building that communicates safety and calm.	The cluster most directly evidenced in SROI and public health impact reporting. Therapy room rental provides reliable income from practitioner hirers (who are themselves a sub-set of Hosts). Underpins the NHS social prescribing pathway and the case to HCC, ICB and DWP for statutory savings.
6. Connection-seekers	People attending primarily for human connection and a sense of belonging — regardless of the specific activity. Older adults, new parents, those experiencing loneliness or social isolation. The activity is the vehicle; community is the destination.	To feel welcome, known, and part of something. To be in a safe space with other people. The activity may be secondary to the warmth and reliability of the environment — knowing that Heath Barn will be there, and that familiar faces will be too.	Consistent, low-barrier programming. An inclusive “warm space” offer with no expectation of purchase or participation beyond showing up. Trained, empathetic staff and volunteers who recognise regulars. A building that communicates “you are welcome here” from the	The cluster with the highest social impact per visit and the strongest contribution to SROI reporting. Directly addresses loneliness, mental health, and social isolation — the outcomes most valued by NHS, HCC, and NLHF funders. Also the cluster most likely to become advocates, volunteers, and

			moment someone arrives.	long-term supporters of the organisation.
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The cluster model and financial sustainability. Hosts and Drop-in Customers are the primary revenue-generating clusters and the commercial engine of Heath Barn. Visitors, Students, Clients, and Connection-seekers are the community and impact clusters — the ones that justify grant funding, generate SROI, and fulfil the charitable mission. In a healthy, well-run Heritage Arts and Wellbeing Hub, these clusters reinforce one another: commercial activity subsidises the community offer; the community offer deepens the building’s reputation and drives more Hosts and Visitors. This is not a tension to be managed — it is the model.

2.4 Wider Partnerships and Policy Alignment

Heath Barn is not conceived as a standalone venue. It is designed to anchor a network of collaboration with local organisations who are already doing important community work. We plan to develop partnerships with:

- Local GP surgeries and health professionals — positioning Heath Barn as a social prescribing destination aligned with NHS 'Arts on Prescription' frameworks
- Local schools — providing intergenerational, therapeutic and creative programmes for children and young people
- Sunnyside Rural Trust, Hemel Hempstead Theatre Company (HHTC), The Box Moor Trust, Liberty Tea Rooms, and DENS — as fellow community anchors with complementary missions. Keely Siddiqui Charlick MBE, Chief Executive of Sunnyside Rural Trust, has written in support of this bid, offering to contribute the Trust's horticultural expertise to restore the gardens at Heath Barn (see Letters of Support)
- Local churches and faith communities — we have an established and long-standing relationship with St John's Church, Boxmoor, whose Vicar, the Reverend Michael Macey, has written in strong support of this bid. The Reverend Macey notes that many of his parishioners hold fond memories of Heath Barn as a venue for receptions following marriages and baptisms at St John's, and that the two buildings have historically served as natural neighbours at the heart of Boxmoor's community life. He writes on behalf of the Ecclesiastical Parish of Boxmoor — encompassing St John's Boxmoor, St Stephen's Chaulden and St Francis' Hammerfield — and endorses Heath Barn as a vital, non-partisan community space that complements rather than competes with the pastoral and social work of the local church. We will seek to develop this relationship further, exploring joint programming, shared audiences, and mutual referral — particularly around mental health, isolation, and community celebration
- Dacorum Borough Council — whose corporate plan commits to making Dacorum an age-friendly place, and whose Five Ways to Wellbeing framework (Connect, Be Active, Keep Learning, Take Notice, Give) is directly embodied in our programme

Learning from Comparable Organisations

In developing our operational model, we have visited and drawn learning from three comparable community organisations across the region. Each offered direct insights into programming, income mix, governance, and the realities of running a community heritage and wellbeing space.

Queens Park Arts Centre, Aylesbury — A community arts centre operating from a Victorian building, combining a gallery, studios, workshop programme, and events hire. Queens Park Arts offered valuable insight into how heritage buildings can sustain a varied arts offer, manage listed building constraints, and build earned income through studio lettings and event hire alongside grant funding.

Sunnyside Rural Trust, Hemel Hempstead — A neighbouring social enterprise in our own town, Sunnyside provided direct local learning about operating a wellbeing and green-space programme within Dacorum — including navigating local authority relationships, managing volunteers, and delivering therapeutic activities for people with complex needs. Sunnyside has also provided a letter of support for this bid.

The Sadie Centre, Letchworth Garden City — A holistic wellbeing centre offering therapy, movement, and community classes from a welcoming, multi-room space. The Sadie Centre informed our thinking on the therapy room and treatment space model — in particular how to structure room hire for independent practitioners (physiotherapy, counselling, osteopathy) to generate reliable income while building a coherent, trusted wellbeing offer for the local community.

We have also received communications from supporters connecting us with other organisations including The Settlement in Letchworth Garden City, The Anstice in Telford, Thame Barn Centre in Oxfordshire and The Great Barn at Headstone, Harrow. We are very grateful through Co-operatives UK to be linked with Stretford Public Halls near Manchester who will be our peer mentor- as a heritage building that was revitalised for community use and purchased through Community shares enabling them to become a Charitable Community Benefit Society, we are incredibly aligned and look forward to talking to them further.

Our bid is also directly aligned with statutory planning policy at local level.

Dacorum Local Plan to 2041 — Pre-Submission Version (November 2024)

The Dacorum Local Plan to 2041 was submitted to the Government for examination in March 2025 and is expected to be adopted in 2026. Though not yet adopted, it represents DBC's most current and considered statement of planning intent for the borough through to 2041 — and our proposals align strongly with several of its key chapters:

- Chapter 7 — Historic Environment: The plan presents Dacorum Borough Council's approach to protecting and enhancing heritage assets across the borough. It includes policies on Designated Heritage Assets and Non-Designated Heritage Assets. Heath Barn, as a group of three Grade II listed buildings, is precisely the type of designated heritage asset these policies are designed to protect.
- Chapter 10 — Healthy Communities, Community Facilities (page 116): The Local Plan includes specific policy on community facilities — the physical spaces that allow communities to come together, access services, and participate in cultural and social life. Heath Barn's proposed use as a café, arts hub, therapy space, and event venue is exactly the kind of community facility the Local Plan seeks to protect and expand in Dacorum.
- Chapter 10 — Community Stewardship and Management (page 117): This is a dedicated policy area covering the long-term stewardship and community management of assets in Dacorum — the mechanism by which the Local Plan seeks to ensure community assets remain in active, community-led use. Our proposed Charitable Community Benefit Society structure, with its statutory asset lock, one-member-one-vote governance, and permanent dedication to community benefit, is the model the stewardship policy is designed to support and encourage.
- Chapter 4 — Social Value (page 64): The Local Plan includes a specific social value policy — one of the very few local plans in Hertfordshire to do so. Our SROI analysis, demonstrating a £1:£15.2 return and £770,000+ in annual Exchequer savings, directly speaks to this policy's requirements for development to demonstrate positive social value to the community.
- Chapter 5 — Climate Change and Sustainable Design: The Local Plan requires new development to demonstrate the highest standards of sustainable design. Our sustainability approach — adapted reuse of an existing historic fabric rather than demolition and rebuild, passive design principles, and renewable energy — is inherently the most sustainable option for this site.

The Dacorum Local Plan to 2041 represents DBC's planning vision for the next fifteen years. Our Heath Barn's proposed use — community stewardship of a designated heritage asset, delivering social value, community facilities, and sustainable adaptive reuse — fulfils the policy intent of Chapter 7, Chapter 10, and Chapter 4 of that plan simultaneously. Residential conversion fulfils none of them.

The formal letter of support from Diane Southam, Strategic Director – Place and Communities at Dacorum Borough Council, dated 11 May 2026 (submitted as a supporting document), explicitly confirms that the Our Heath Barn proposals align with Dacorum Borough Council's recently

launched Arts and Culture Strategy — the three priorities of which (Creative Health, Connecting Communities, and Places and Spaces) map directly onto the community facilities and social value objectives of the emerging Local Plan to 2041.

Historic England's guidance publication Heritage Works for Creative Businesses provides strong institutional confidence in precisely the kind of project we are proposing. The guidance notes that around a quarter of all UK creative businesses already operate from heritage conservation areas, and that listed buildings attract significantly more creative firms than modern alternatives. Successful precedents cited include Birmingham's Custard Factory and Halifax's Dean Clough.

We also have a clear aspiration: to become a model of best practice for an inclusive community and creative hub in Hertfordshire, inspiring other towns to invest in conscious, meaningful community connection and being ambitious about creating dynamic spaces for local people to feel proud of.

Local Government Reorganisation — Policy Context

Our Heath Barn CIC is aware that Hertfordshire is currently undergoing a significant process of Local Government Reorganisation and that a Government decision is expected in summer 2026. Following the Government's statutory invitation in February 2025, all 11 Hertfordshire councils jointly submitted proposals for unitary authority models in November 2025.

Given this process has a direct bearing on decisions about Hertfordshire County Council's owned assets and because it is a material part of the policy context within which this bid is being considered, we believe it reinforces the importance of a timely resolution around ownership and a possible asset transfer. Our concluding section addresses this point directly.

2.5 Demographic and Market Intelligence

The following data, drawn from the 2021 ONS Census, the Index of Multiple Deprivation, and local authority intelligence for Dacorum, presents a detailed picture of who lives in Heath Barn's catchment. The data confirms what campaign supporters already know: Hemel Hempstead is a town with significant need alongside real social energy — a community with the will, the people, and the proximity to make Heath Barn thrive.

Population and demographics

Indicator	Dacorum / Hemel Hempstead	Relevance to Our Heath Barn
Total population (Dacorum borough, 2024)	161,420	<i>Large local population within 20-min drive, with 95,961 in Hemel Hempstead alone</i>
Population growth (Dacorum, 2011–2021)	+7.8% (approx.)	<i>Growing catchment — demand for community facilities is increasing</i>
Median age	38 years	<i>Active working-age population; strong potential for daytime café, evening events and weekend programming</i>
Under-10s (Dacorum, 2021)	12.6% of population	<i>~20,000 children — major audience for family workshops, creative sessions and holiday activities</i>
Over-65s (Dacorum, 2021)	17.4% (rising to est. 23.3% by 2043)	<i>Rapidly growing older population — core audience for dementia-friendly sessions, wellbeing groups and the café</i>
Families with dependent children	~35% of households	<i>Large family audience for intergenerational and weekend programming</i>
Gender split	50.9% female / 49.1% male	<i>Broadly even; consistent with community hub engagement patterns nationally</i>

Social need, deprivation and health

Indicator	Dacorum / Hemel Hempstead	Relevance to Our Heath Barn
Index of Multiple Deprivation	Hemel Hempstead contains pockets of significant deprivation, particularly in central town wards, alongside more affluent suburban areas — a mixed picture	<i>Our accessible pricing model and 'warm space' provision directly addresses need in deprived wards; the wider catchment includes significant spending power for commercial offer</i>
Loneliness / social isolation	Nationally: 7.1% of adults experience chronic loneliness; 1 in 4 older adults feel isolated. WHO estimates 5–15% of adolescents experience loneliness	<i>Heath Barn's programme — café, dementia-friendly sessions, new parent groups, arts workshops — directly addresses all three loneliness risk groups identified in the data</i>
Health — self-reported good/very good health	Below national average in central Hemel Hempstead town wards (62% vs national avg ~74%)	<i>Stronger case for NHS social prescribing pathway — below-average health outcomes in the immediate catchment make Heath Barn's wellbeing offer more impactful and more fundable</i>

SEND prevalence	Dacorum has above-average SEND needs; HCC SEND Local Offer covers the borough	<i>Strong latent demand for SEND-inclusive creative and therapeutic provision — a gap Heath Barn can fill</i>
No qualifications (central Hemel wards)	~36% of residents (national avg 18.3%)	<i>Significant pool of adults who would benefit from accredited Step2Skills courses and accessible creative learning</i>

Economic profile and spending power

Indicator	Dacorum / Hemel Hempstead	Relevance to Our Heath Barn
Average household income (Dacorum)	~£38,000–£42,000 (above England average of ~£35,000)	<i>Dacorum is broadly an above-average income area — supporting the commercial case for café, event hire and workshop revenue</i>
Occupational profile (Hemel Hempstead)	Professional 16.4%; associate professional 14.7%; managers/directors significant — strong white-collar employment base	<i>Daytime footfall from professionals; demand for co-working and business meeting space; strong wedding and events market</i>
Car ownership	1.49 cars per household (national avg 1.23)	<i>Above-average car ownership supports the case for the 15 and 20-min catchment being genuinely accessible; cycle and walk travel equally viable for the immediate zone</i>
Commuter patterns	Significant commuter population to London (40 min to Euston); also major local employment at Maylands Business Park and Warner Bros. Leavesden	<i>Daytime population differs significantly from resident population — opportunity for after-work events, evening classes, and weekend weddings targeting London commuter spending power</i>
Home ownership rate	38.65% own or mortgage (below national avg — mixed tenure)	<i>Mixed-tenure area confirms need for accessible community space that works for renters and owners alike; not exclusively an affluent offer</i>
Affluence categories	Mixed: affluent suburban commuter belt in Boxmoor, Leverstock Green, Berkhamsted; areas of deprivation in central town wards	<i>Dual market: premium commercial offer for events/weddings (affluent catchment) + accessible community programme (deprived catchment) — both served by one building</i>

Young people, families and education

Indicator	Dacorum / Hemel Hempstead	Relevance to Our Heath Barn
School-age population (5–18)	Approx. 24,000–28,000 across Dacorum (est. from census age bands)	<i>The Hemel Hempstead School is immediately adjacent to Heath Barn — direct partnership opportunity for after-school arts, music and workshop provision</i>
Young families (0–4 age group)	12.6% of population under 10 (Dacorum 2021)	<i>Significant early years audience — new parent peer support groups and sensory/creative play for under-5s directly serve this cohort</i>
Teenage demographics	~8,000–10,000 aged 13–18 in Dacorum (est.)	<i>Identified gap in evening and creative provision for teenagers; Heath Barn's</i>

		<i>music, arts and performance offer addresses this directly</i>
Young people not in education, employment or training (NEET)	Hemel Hempstead has above-average NEET risk factors in some wards	<i>Volunteering pathways, apprenticeships and creative skills courses provide a route for NEET young people — supported by HCC Step2Skills</i>
SEND prevalence	Above Hertfordshire average in Dacorum; HCC SEND Local Offer active	<i>Dedicated SEND-inclusive provision with specialist therapeutic support is one of Heath Barn's most distinctive and needed programme strands</i>
Ethnicity diversity	86.8% White; 5.8% Asian; 3.4% Mixed; 2.8% Black; 1.2% other (Dacorum 2021, becoming more diverse)	<i>Growing diversity reinforces the case for accessible, inclusive programming with active outreach to underrepresented communities</i>

Volunteer and civic potential

Nationally, around 27% of adults volunteer formally at least once a month (NCVO 2023). Hemel Hempstead's occupational and demographic profile — with a large professional and semi-professional working population, significant retiree community, and strong established civic networks (Box Moor Trust, Sunnyside Rural Trust, Hemel Hempstead Theatre Company) — suggests volunteer potential well above this average. Our own campaign is evidence of this: 378 donations raising £17,232 through our Crowdfunder, 221 community investors and businesses pledging over £160,000 through our CBS share offer, and hundreds of volunteer hours already given by community members to the campaign itself. The demographic data confirms that the people who would volunteer at Heath Barn — retired professionals, working parents, young creatives — are on the doorstep.

The data presents a compelling dual picture: Hemel Hempstead is an above-average income area with strong commercial spending power — supporting the wedding, event and café revenue model — while also containing pockets of real social deprivation and need, particularly among older residents, young families, and those without qualifications. Heath Barn is uniquely positioned to serve both: a premium heritage venue for events, and an affordable, funded community hub for those who need it most. These are not competing audiences — they are the same town.

Sources: ONS 2021 Census; Index of Multiple Deprivation; Dacorum Borough Council Joint Strategic Needs Assessment; NCVO Civil Society Almanac 2023; NHS England social prescribing data; HCC Corporate Plan 2025–2028.

2.6 Community in Action — A Visual Record

The following photographs document the sustained, grassroots campaign that has built up around Heath Barn since 2023 — from the community rally and heritage walks, to fundraising events, MP visits, and a series of public meetings held across Boxmoor and Hemel Hempstead.

The Community Rally — Boxmoor, 2024



Residents rally outside Heath Barn with placards in support of community use



Supporters march across Blackbirds Moor carrying their campaign signs



'Make spaces for Art' — one of the many handmade placards at the rally



Lisa Timms talking about Heath Barn on the Boxmoor heritage walk lead by HHTC chair Mike Atkins

Political Support & Public Outreach



David Taylor MP joins Lisa and illustrator Katharine Harper for the 'digi board' switch on in the Marlowes Shopping centre April 2026



David Taylor MP visits Heath Barn May 2025

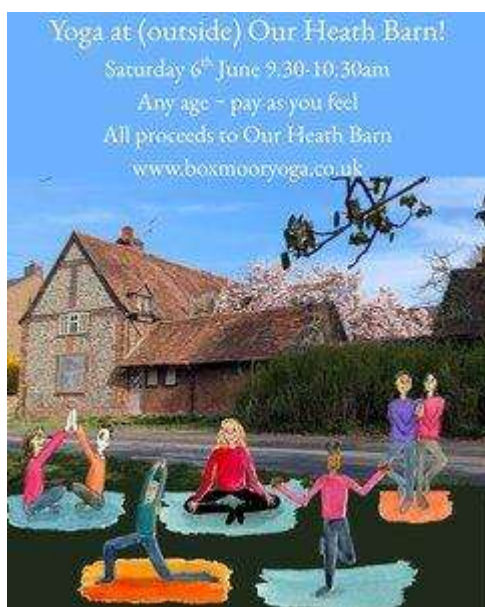
Heath Barn Unlocked — Fundraising Events Programme



An evening fundraising event at Fishery Wharf Café Summer 2025 — one of several 'Heath Barn Unlocked' evenings



Fundraising event at The Boxmoor Playhouse April 2025 — a neighbouring venue and natural partner



Community yoga fundraiser — 'pay as you feel', all proceeds to Our Heath Barn



Lisa Timms addresses a full room of local residents and supporters at a public meeting May 2026

Heath Barn Quiz Night — Fundraising Events Programme



A packed quiz night fundraiser which raised £1400— community support in action for Our Heath Barn

Public Meetings — Demonstrating Sustained Engagement



A packed public meeting at The Boxmoor Playhouse — Tuesday evening session May 2026



Thursday public meeting — Dave Catlin presenting the financial case and fundraising roadmap May 2026

2.7 Media Coverage

The Our Heath Barn campaign has attracted sustained, independent media coverage across print, digital, national and local broadcast platforms. Coverage spans two Gazette & Express front pages, a mention in Private Eye, BBC News online, and multiple regional outlets — as well as appearances on Radio Dacorum and the Berko & Beyond podcast. This level of media interest is independent evidence of the public significance of this building and this bid.

Print — Hemel Gazette & Express





Hemel Gazette & Express — Front Page

'BARN HOUSES?' — Plan to turn 400-year-old buildings into homes put forward by council

Wednesday 6 March 2024



Hemel Gazette & Express — Page 4

Plans to turn 400-year-old Heath Barn into homes | Will Durrant, Local Democracy Reporter

hemeltoday.co.uk



Hemel Gazette & Express — April 2026

'Now or never' to save Boxmoor's hidden gem, as MP backs Our Heath Barn campaign | Ben Phelan

hemeltoday.co.uk | April 2026

Print — Plans to Dispose Article



Plans to dispose of Grade II site in Hemel announced by county council

Deborah Price, Local Democracy Reporter

Hertfordshire County Council has drawn up plans to 'dispose' of Grade II listed Heath Barn, in Hemel Hempstead, which has been earmarked for residential development.

But even if the decision is taken to sell the site, the community group Our Heath Barn could still be granted time to pull together a bid for the landmark buildings – before any general marketing begins.

Heath Barn, which is believed to be one of the oldest sets of buildings in Hemel Hempstead, was formerly used by the county council as a music centre.

disposal, they considered whether Our Heath Barn should be given time to work on their bid before the launch of more general marketing.

Initially, the proposal had been that the CIC would have three months to submit a viable bid, in parallel with the site being openly marketed.

But the cabinet also considered a suggestion that a 'window' should be allowed for the CIC, before the land was generally marketed for sale.

Ultimately, however, the decision on any next steps will be taken by a future meeting of the council's cabinet.

Presenting the initial proposal, they considered whether Our Heath Barn should be given time to work on their bid before the launch of more general marketing.

Addressing the panel, Cllr England highlighted questions that had been raised about the council's valuation of the site and the impact this could have on future development.

He suggested a proposal was being considered that could include residential development and community use, and called for the CIC to be allowed a three-month window, with open marketing of the site delayed until the end of that time.

"I don't think that a window can be allowed for the CIC if the site is openly marketed at the same time," he said.

"So I would like the open marketing of the site to be delayed to the end of that

Hemel Today — 'Plans to dispose of Grade II site in Hemel Hempstead announced by county council' | Deborah Price, Local Democracy Reporter

Private Eye



and CORNERS

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Tyrone, the childhood home of "All Things Bright and Beautiful" lyricist Cecil Frances Alexander, which featured in Eye 1658 after yet another arson attack; Milltown House was previously used as part of Strabane Grammar School and was still owned by EANI but was for sale at the time of the fire.

WITH the growing cost and complication of maintaining listed buildings, it's little wonder many cash-strapped local councils are keen to offload those they have inherited.

Hertfordshire county council (HCC), for example, has decided to sell the 500-year-old Heath Barn, one of the oldest buildings in Hemel Hempstead. The grade 2-listed building has been empty since 2019 and has been granted planning permission for conversion into housing by Dacorum borough council. A community group is bidding to buy it to use as a café and events centre.

Tellingly, the HCC report on the sale notes it is now council policy to dispose of grade 2-listed buildings "due to the associated costs and constraints".

There are also questions over Exeter city council's ownership of Topsham Museum, currently facing a second year of closure for

GUTTED: Crevenagh House in Omagh

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Heath Barn featured in Private Eye's 'Nooks and Corners' heritage column — noting that HCC's own report states it is now council policy to dispose of Grade II listed buildings 'due to the associated costs and constraints'.

Online — Regional & National Digital Coverage



BBC Sign in Home News Sport Weather iPlayer

NEWS

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England Local News Beds, Herts & Bucks

'It's now or never' to save Grade II listed barn

LISA TIMMS

Heath Barn is believed to be one of the oldest sets of buildings in Boxmoor

BBC News

Campaign to stop sale and turn Boxmoor barn into community hub

2025 | [bbc.co.uk/news/articles/cdxdgq4gwx0o](https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/cdxdgq4gwx0o)

Hemel Today

'Now or never' to save Boxmoor's hidden gem, says David Taylor MP backing Our Heath Barn campaign

April 2026 | [hemeltoday.co.uk](https://www.hemeltoday.co.uk)

Watford Observer

Our Heath Barn protest — converting 16th century site to homes

2025 | [watfordobserver.co.uk](https://www.watfordobserver.co.uk)

Watford Observer

'Now or never' for 'hidden gem' Heath Barn amid flats plan

2026 | [watfordobserver.co.uk](https://www.watfordobserver.co.uk)

Essex Live

'This 400-year-old barn in Hemel Hempstead should belong to the community,' campaigners say

2024 | [essexlive.news](https://www.essexlive.news)

MyNewsMag

SAVE OUR BARN: Hemel residents urged to get involved in project to save beloved barn

2025 | [mynewsmag.co.uk](https://www.mynewsmag.co.uk)

Hemel Today

Council wants to turn Boxmoor's 400-year-old Grade II listed Heath Barn into new homes | Will Durrant, Local Democracy Reporter

2024 | [hemeltoday.co.uk](https://www.hemeltoday.co.uk)

Hemel Today

Plans to dispose of landmark Grade II site in Hemel Hempstead announced by county council | Deborah Price

2025 | [hemeltoday.co.uk](https://www.hemeltoday.co.uk)

Broadcast & Podcast



Radio Dacorum

Lisa Timms interviewed on Radio Dacorum about the Our Heath Barn campaign and community vision — reaching Dacorum's community radio audience across Hemel Hempstead and the surrounding area



Berko & Beyond Podcast

The Our Heath Barn campaign featured on the Berko & Beyond podcast — a local podcast covering community stories across Berkhamsted and the wider area

Video and Podcast — Watch and Listen

Our Heath Barn's campaign has produced compelling media content that brings the building, the community and the vision to life. We encourage the council to watch and listen before or alongside reading this bid:

YOUTUBE

Heath Barn — The Time is Now

youtube.com/watch?v=qgDO84PT6B4

Our campaign film — a compelling short introduction to Heath Barn, the community's vision, and why the time is now. Recommended as a first introduction to the bid for anyone unfamiliar with the building or the campaign.

PODCAST

Berko & Beyond — Episode 8

Turning a 16th-Century Barn Into a Local Community Hub

youtube.com/watch?v=fZ8ebvmfDnE

A full-length podcast conversation about the Heath Barn project, the community's journey, and the vision for the building — on the Berko & Beyond podcast. An in-depth companion to this bid for anyone who wants to hear directly from the team.

PART THREE – THE DELIVERY

3.1 Governance and Team

Our Heath Barn is led by a team of local professionals with expertise spanning heritage, sustainability, design, wellbeing, business, education and the arts. Each member brings substantive relevant experience and a deep personal commitment to the project.

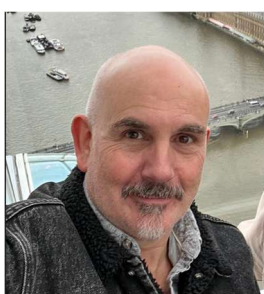


Lisa Timms
*Campaign Lead &
Director, Our Heath Barn
CIC*

Lisa believes passionately that accessible, beautiful spaces change how people feel, and that our environment shapes us as individuals. She brings imaginative problem-solving, deep local roots and an ability to inspire collective action to everything she does.

Lisa's career spans Senior Production Co-ordinator at Cath Kidston, the founding of First Mummies Club — delivering creative workshops to parents of young children — and delivering creative programmes at The Heather Club for people living with memory loss and dementia. In October 2025 she became a Trustee of The Box Moor Trust, where she leads on CAPE (Communities, Arts, Profile and Events).

Leading the Heath Barn campaign has been her most exciting and passion filled project to date. As founder and Campaign Lead of Our Heath Barn, Lisa has assembled and led the multidisciplinary team from the outset. Through a combination of community engagement, communications strategy and extraordinary personal commitment, she has secured unwavering support from local businesses and individuals — demonstrating beyond doubt that the community wants Heath Barn in community ownership.



Dave Catlin
Commercial & Design

Dave is a retired business owner. His business was a successful design consultancy specialising in the planning of public and community space, with a portfolio spanning many leading brand environments. He translates strategic intent into spatial and visual reality — aligning floor planning, interior concept design, customer interpretation and programme structure to ensure that how a space feels and how it functions work together.

His contribution to the Heath Barn project includes the detailed floor plans that extend and complement the architectural drawings, the interior concept sketch visuals that have communicated the future vision to supporters and funders alike, and a significant creative input to the vision, reach and impact sections of the bid.

Dave brings both commercial rigour and creative imagination to the project — an essential combination for a venue that must serve community and commercial purposes with equal conviction.



Gill Broadbent
Business & Finance

Following a 20-year career in software development and technical consultancy; in 2005, Gill founded (still active) Waterproof World — an online retail business importing Scandinavian outdoor clothing for children — growing it quickly from a home-based start-up to a dedicated premises with an employed team.

Gill's connection to Heath Barn is personal — her wedding reception, her son's christening and her children's first love of music all happened within these walls.

She brings her analytical and entrepreneurial experience to the Heath Barn project. Her work has encompassed detailed revenue and cost modelling across income streams. Her personal connection has been matched by her professional rigour — every number in this bid has been scrutinised by her.



Joanna Phillips
Wellbeing & Co-founder

Jo brings a professional background in primary education, therapeutic support and medicine to the campaign. She co-founded Our Heath Barn alongside Lisa and co-wrote the original project proposal. She also authored the planning objection letter used by over 200 people to challenge the residential development proposals — a document that helped demonstrate the breadth and depth of community opposition.

A holistic Health Coach and trainee Somatic Experiencing Practitioner, Jo has contributed a distinctive and comprehensive health and wellbeing strategy to the bid — setting out a programme of therapeutic and community activities that positions Heath Barn as a genuine asset for public health, aligned with NHS and local authority wellbeing priorities.



Astrid Ricketts
Sustainability

Astrid is a sustainability consultant with extensive experience helping organisations translate environmental and social challenges into credible commercial strategy. She also works with organisations on the equally pressing challenge of workplace wellbeing, through nutrition, lifestyle and behaviour change.

With seven years as a school governor and a longstanding record of supporting community-led initiatives, Astrid brings both specialist expertise and personal conviction to the project. She has authored the sustainability strategy and Social Return on Investment (SROI) sections of the bid, quantifying the wider public value that Heath Barn will generate for the community, the NHS and local public services.



William Allen
Political & Education

William has represented Boxmoor ward on Dacorum Borough Council for over seven years and served as Hemel Hempstead Mayor in 2023–24. A History teacher specialising in support for young people with behavioural difficulties and autism, he is also a former charity CEO and a current board member of Dacorum Heritage Trust, Community Action Dacorum and Boxmoor Good Neighbours.

William introduced the team to heritage architect Hugo Hardy at the outset of the campaign in September 2023 and has been a tireless advocate ever since. He brings an unparalleled depth of civic knowledge and local connections to the project — assets that have been instrumental in securing political and institutional support for the bid.



Kate Schwarz
Culture & Heritage

Kate has 20 years of experience in the culture and heritage sector, including senior roles at Historic England where she had strategic oversight of the £20.7m NLHF-funded restoration of Shrewsbury Flaxmill Maltings — a Grade I listed building transformed into a visitor centre, offices and community spaces — and the £95m High Street Heritage Action Zone programme, which regenerated 67 historic high streets across England.

She also spent five years in the Middle East supporting the development of a new national museum for the United Arab Emirates. As a Boxmoor resident, Kate brought her specialist knowledge directly to bear on the Heath Barn campaign, writing the Expression of Interest for Our Heath Barn's National Lottery Heritage Fund application.



James Lark
Arts

James is a fine artist, educator and founder of OhMyArt, with over two decades of experience as both a practising artist and art educator. Through workshops, courses and community programmes, he designs creative experiences that make art accessible to all — removing barriers to participation and building the confidence, curiosity and wellbeing that sustained creative practice supports.

James features in the Our Heath Barn campaign video and has been a vocal public advocate for the project, bringing both professional credibility and genuine personal conviction to the campaign's arts and creative programme strategy.



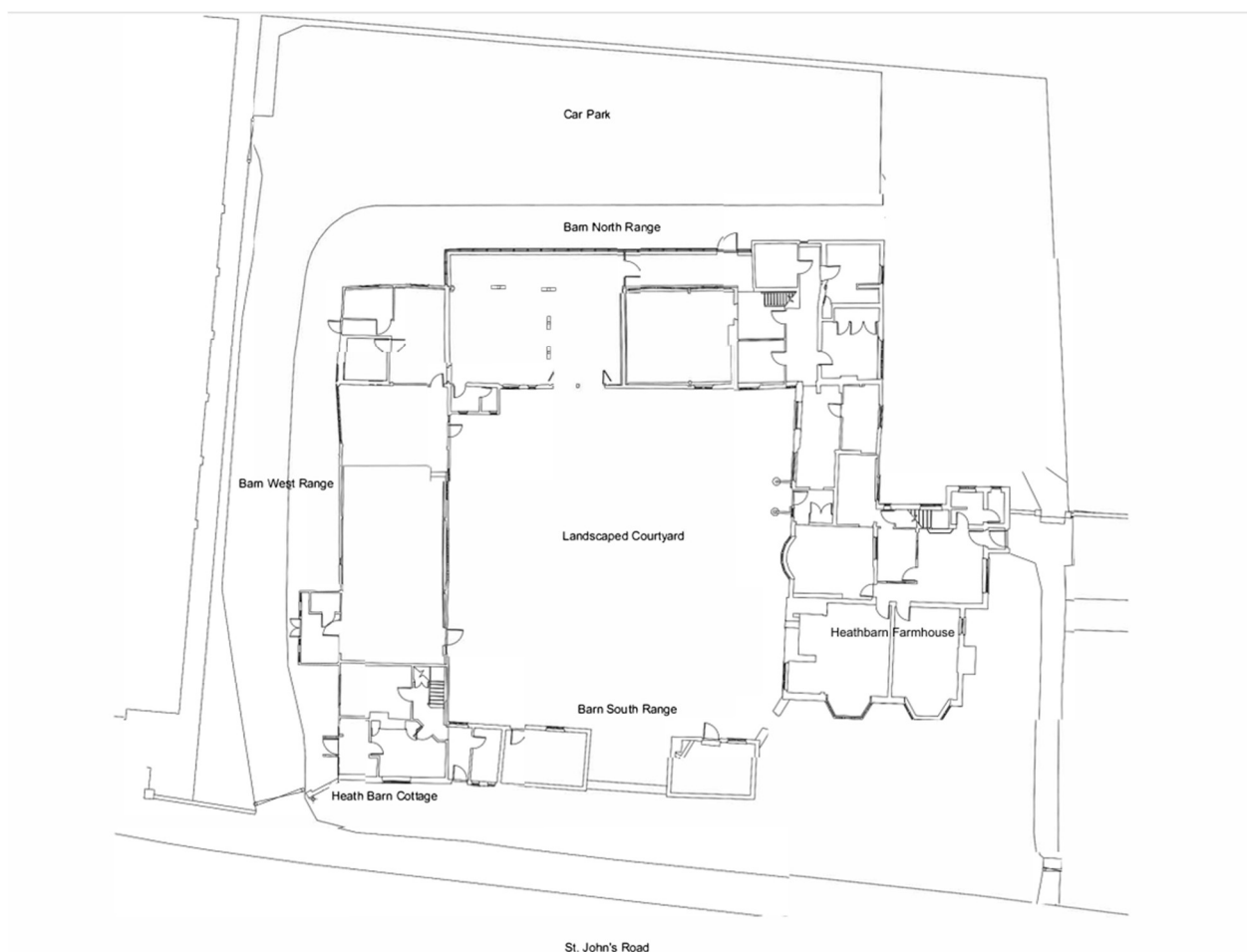
Claire Gillespie
Play & Creative
Director Our Heath Barn
CIC

Claire is a coach, speaker and founder of The Cardboard Shed, and previously ran Oglee Poglee — an award-winning creative business for children. A Director of the Our Heath Barn CIC since July 2024, she has shaped the organisation's communications from the ground up — designing the website and printed materials distributed to 2,000 local homes, giving the campaign a coherent visual identity that resonated with hundreds of supporters.

Claire thinks boldly and strategically, and brings an instinct for imaginative, community-centred ideas that has been invaluable in translating the campaign's ambitions into communications that people respond to.

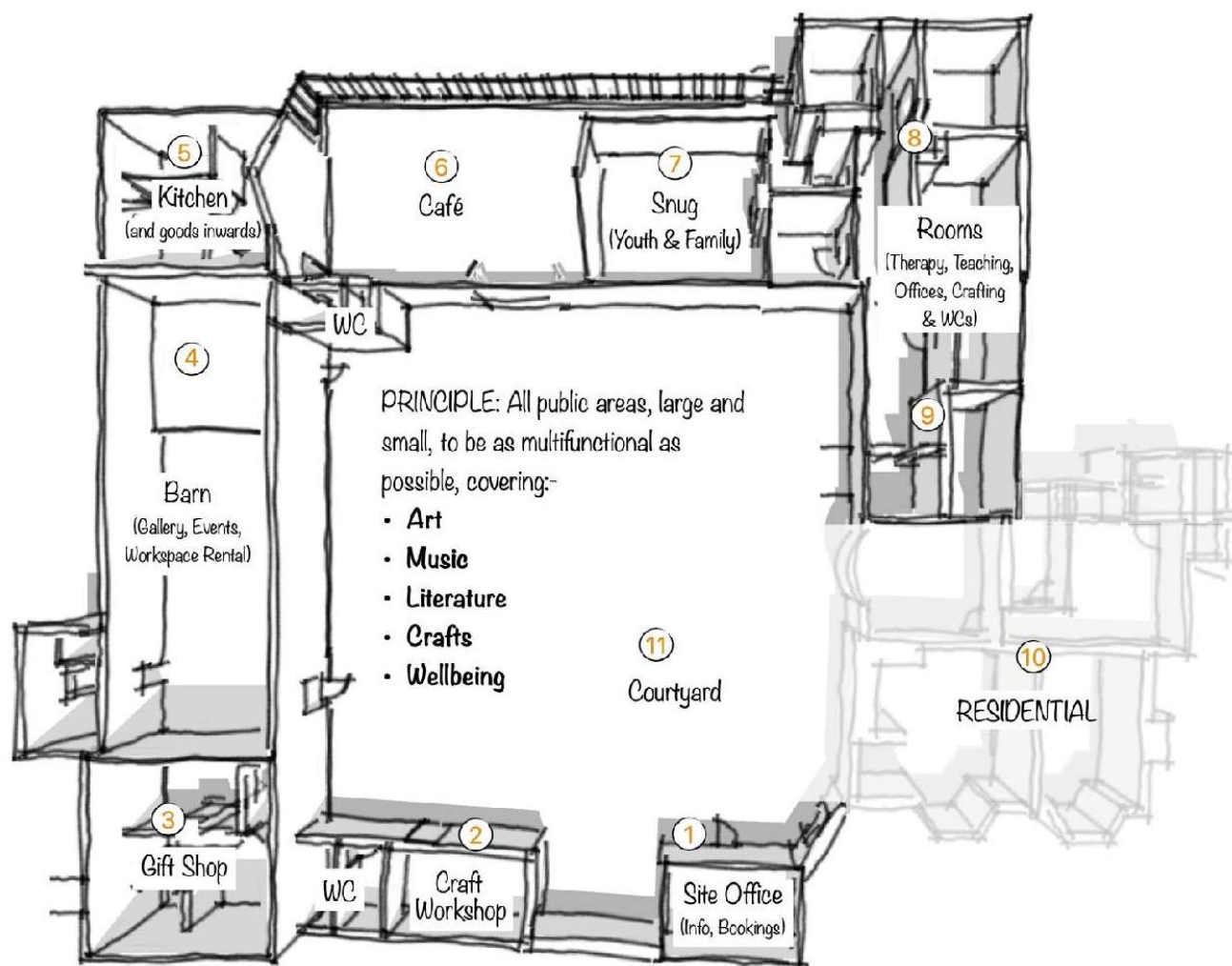
3.2 Technical Plans & Visuals

This section presents the architectural vision for Heath Barn and split use. Below is the full site. Further visualisation of the restored building show how the community and residential elements of the proposed split-use scheme would be arranged across this site.

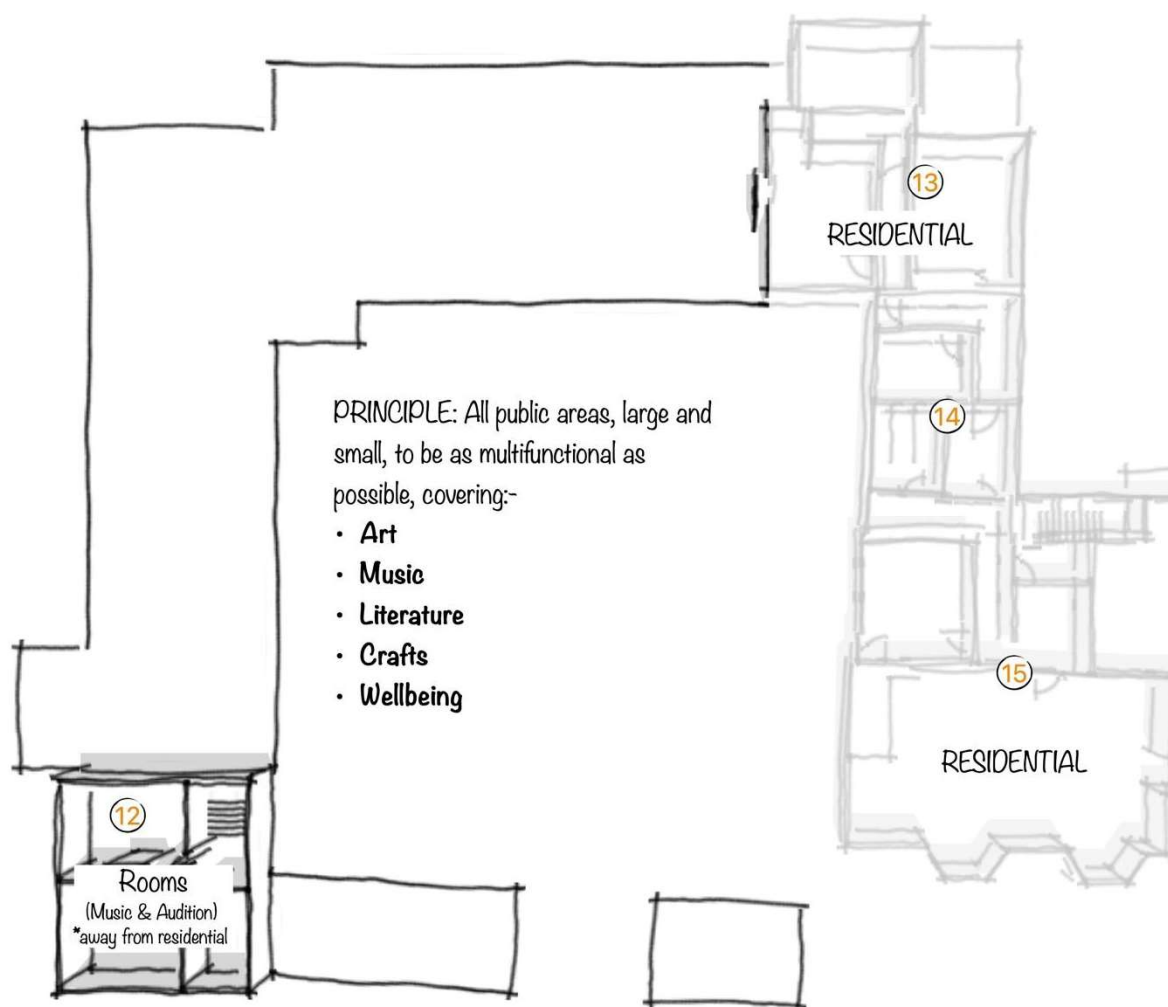


Concept Floor Plan Sketches

The concept sketches below illustrate the proposed use of each space across the ground and first floors of the community portion of the building. The guiding principle noted on both drawings: all public areas to be as multifunctional as possible, covering Art, Music, Literature, Crafts and Wellbeing. The layout drawings help show the proposed split-use scheme would be allocated across the site. Community elements — café/dining, snug, therapy rooms, workshop, retail/shop, and open-plan office/craft rental — are concentrated in the barn elements. Residential elements (two- and three-bedroom flats) occupy the farmhouse and east wing upper floor, which have the most suitable character and access for domestic use.



Ground Floor



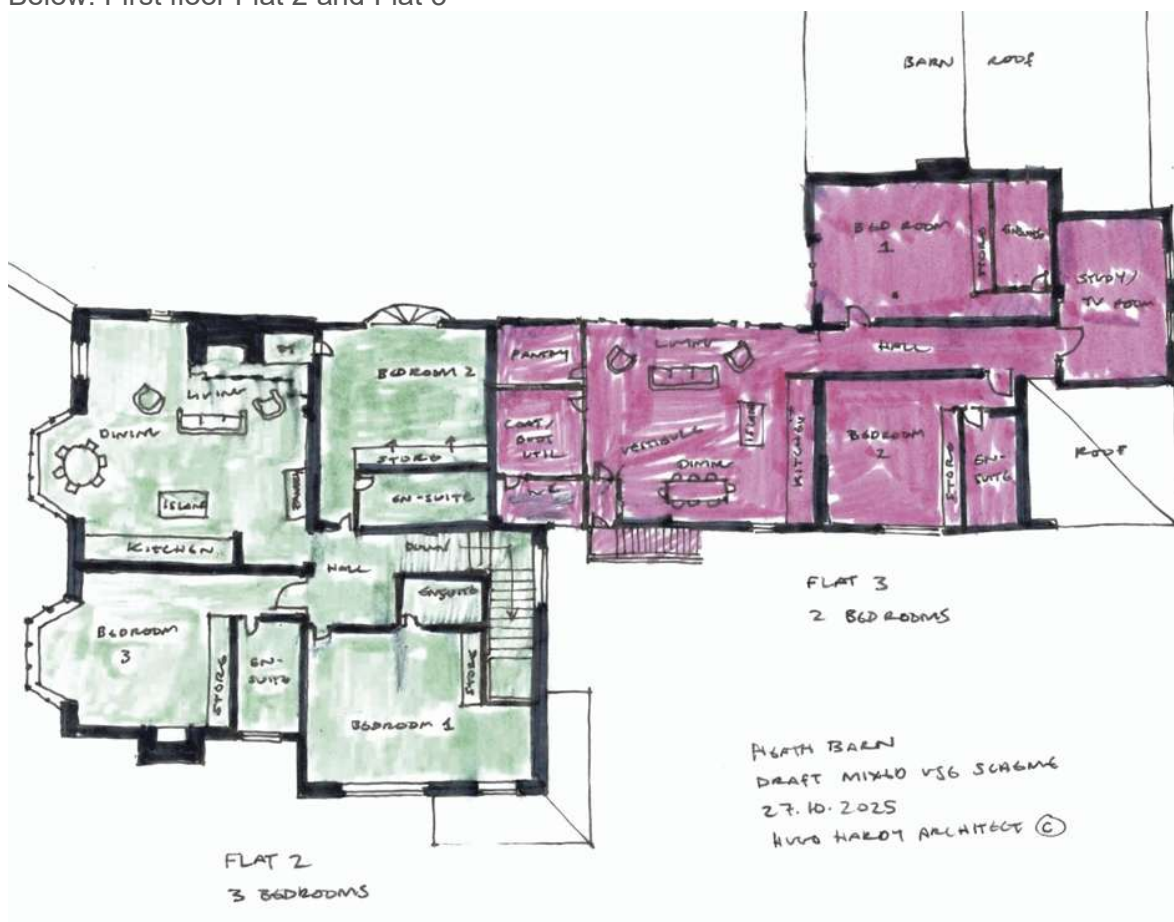
First Floor

The following architect sketches illustrate the proposed layouts for the residential portion of the building, across ground and first floor of the farmhouse and first floor of the east wing.

Below: Ground floor – Flat 1 and entrance to 1st floor Flat 2



Below: First floor Flat 2 and Flat 3



Interior Visualisations



3D visualisation of Heath Barn restored

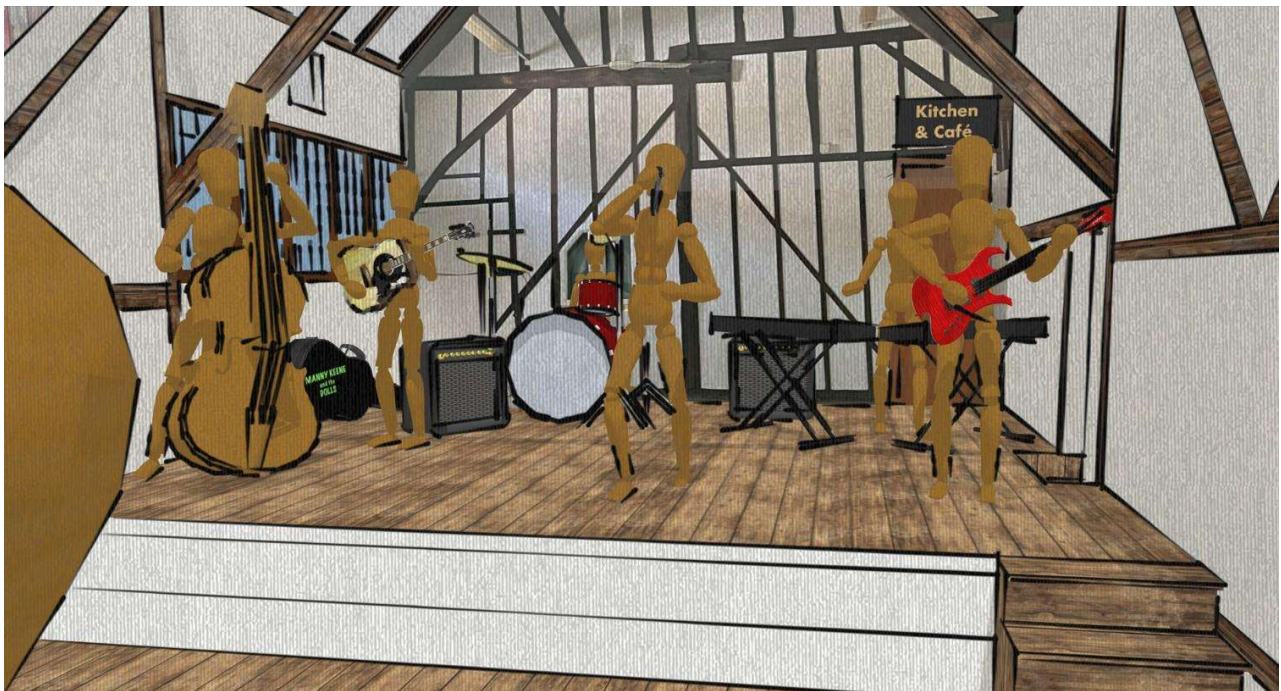
West Barn and North Barn concept sketches

These visuals help demonstrate the range of uses for the west barn and the vision for the north barn space as a thriving café.



The West Barn is such a flexible space, it makes a welcoming environment for workshops...

... as it also does for exhibitions or performances...





... as well as more intimate gatherings like a book club, right up to full-hall events such as a Wedding reception. West Barn is at home to them all.

The Café area will be situated amongst the aging beams and frames that serve to give the space so much character. The existing glazed wall at the rear allows for a bright and comfortable area to dwell, and the existing bifold doors open onto what will be a beautiful courtyard.



3.3 Options Appraisal - The Viability Case for the Split-Use Approach

The proposed split-use layout — community use of the barns, residential use of the farmhouse and east wing upper floor — has been developed by Hugo Hardy (Chartered Architect) and Councillor William Allen following careful analysis of all development scenarios. Their analysis, set out in full in the supporting document 'Saving Heath Barn as both a Heritage and a Community Asset', concludes that neither sole community use nor full residential conversion is viable on its own, and that a collaborative split approach is the most constructive route that delivers both a financial return for HCC and a genuine community and heritage outcome:

- Sole community use could be considered financially unrealistic given the level of value HCC needs to extract, making community-only acquisition unachievable without a high level of grant support
- Sole residential conversion of the full site is not viable — Mark Battram MRICS notes that full residential conversion would require all the restoration costs plus approximately £1 million more in Operating Year 1 alone to form domestic dwelling standards across the non-residential barn spaces
- The split approach concentrates residential development on the farmhouse — the part of the site previously residential and most cost-effectively converted back — while releasing the barns for community use at a price that allows NLHF, AHF, and heritage grants to be unlocked
- Keeping the courtyard as a unified community space is consistent with the Grade II listing status and avoids the fragmentation that five separately-owned private units would permanently cause
- HCC achieves a better financial outcome — avoiding the significant risk that a developer pays over the odds, cannot develop viably, and the building falls further into disrepair in private hands
- The barns are not cost-effective for residential conversion, but they are ideal for community use — and their community use is precisely what makes them eligible for the conservation grants that can fund the restoration programme

'HCC can only maximise the value it gains from conversion to residential by development of the farmhouse, on the basis that having been residential previously, this element is most easily and cost-effectively transformed back into housing. The heritage value of the barns is best preserved by releasing them for continued community use, thereby drawing in investment from Lottery Heritage and other conservation sources requiring community access.' — Hugo Hardy, Chartered Architect, and Councillor William Allen, Boxmoor Ward

Finding the Right Developer — Our Approach to the Residential Element

Our Heath Barn CIC does not view the residential element of the split-use proposal as a drawback. We view it as an opportunity — provided the right partner is identified. We are particularly mindful that the farmhouse is the oldest and most architecturally significant part of the building group, and that its conversion must be approached with genuine sensitivity and specialist expertise. We are committed to working proactively with Hertfordshire County Council to find a partner who is genuinely suited to a project of this nature, and we believe that early, open dialogue about what that partnership looks like is essential to the success of the whole scheme.

The right partner for the residential element of Heath Barn is not a standard volume housebuilder. It is someone with a genuine track record of preserving and converting historic buildings in a sympathetic way — one who understands that the building they are working within is Grade II listed, that it sits alongside an active community hub, and that the relationship between the two uses will need to be managed thoughtfully and collaboratively over many years. Our Heath Barn CIC is confident it can help identify such a partner. We have access to a wide range of heritage expertise through the professionals and organisations already supporting this proposal — people who know this building, understand its significance, and share our commitment to seeing it treated with the

care it deserves (see letters of support). Bringing the right partnership together will take a little time, but we believe it is entirely achievable. We would specifically look to identify a partner who:

- Have a demonstrable track record in sensitive mixed-use heritage conversion projects
- Have experience working alongside community or cultural anchor tenants in shared historic buildings
- Run programmes or policies that accommodate community-facing uses — for example, developers affiliated with the Good Economy, or those with commitments to community benefit in their planning obligations
- Understand the acoustic, access, and scheduling implications of an active community programme — including dance classes, music rehearsals, workshops and weekend weddings — running alongside residential occupation
- Are open to early and ongoing dialogue with Our Heath Barn CIC about how the shared site will operate in practice

We are aware that a busy community venue and private residential accommodation in close proximity requires careful management — of noise, access routes, parking, event scheduling, and the overall character of the site. We do not minimise this. But we are equally clear that these challenges are not insuperable, and that they are entirely normal for mixed-use heritage schemes across the country. The key is choosing the right partner from the outset and establishing a clear, mutually agreed framework for how the site will operate.

We therefore request that Hertfordshire County Council engages with Our Heath Barn CIC as an active partner in the selection process for the residential element — not as a passive observer. We are not asking to control that process, but we are asking for a genuine seat at the table. Through our links with Co-operatives UK, our existing network of heritage professionals, and the expertise of those already supporting this bid, we believe we can play a genuinely useful role in identifying a partner who is the right fit — not just commercially, but in terms of their values and their approach to sensitive heritage work. The long-term success of the whole scheme depends on the community and residential elements working in harmony, and that harmony is most likely to be achieved when the right partner understands and respects the community mission from the very beginning of their involvement.

We do not view the mixed-use nature of this proposal as a compromise. We view it as a model. Done well, with the right developer partner, Heath Barn can demonstrate that heritage, community and residential uses are not in competition — they are complementary.

Feasibility of Sole Community Use – the Single-site Option

Our principal proposal has been based on a split site: Our Heath Barn acquiring the barns and community spaces, with the farmhouse element converted to residential use by a development partner, providing the Council with an additional capital receipt.

However, we have not been approached by any developers during the bid process with an interest in working co-operatively with us. We understand, therefore that the Council may receive credible offers for the whole site, and that a single transaction to a single purchaser may be simpler to conclude and easier to present to members. We would not wish the Council to conclude that a community outcome is only available in a split-site form, so we have included a proposal for Our Heath Barn to purchase the whole site which can be seen in **Appendix E**. Funding option and transfer of ownership from HCC would be as proposed in this document.

We are not asking the council to prefer this option, but we are asking that it be put before members, so that if the Council is minded to conclude a single transaction for the whole site, a community outcome remains on the table.

3.4 Sustainability Strategy 2026–2030

Our Heath Barn's Sustainability Strategy 2026–2030 sets out how the organisation will operate in a way that is environmentally responsible, socially inclusive and economically resilient. It is aligned to the United Nations' 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and to Hertfordshire County Council's Sustainable Hertfordshire Strategy 2026–2028, which commits to environmental leadership, community empowerment and prudent strategic action. The full strategy is submitted as a supporting document to this bid.

Sustainability is embedded in the very nature of this project. Restoring and reusing a 500-year-old listed building — rather than converting it to housing — is inherently the most sustainable option for this site, saving an estimated 280 tonnes CO₂e in embodied carbon compared to residential conversion. Everything else flows from that founding principle.

Four Pillars

Environmental	Heritage-sensitive retrofit; LED lighting; renewable electricity tariff Curated pollinator courtyard garden; no pesticides on site Zero-single-use-plastic café; surplus food redistribution; reclaimed materials Water-efficient fittings; rainwater harvesting; chalk stream protection Active travel actively promoted; secure cycle parking; Lynx bus and Dacorum e-bike hire scheme (approved Feb 2026, HeRTS IQ/CIL-funded)	Social	Actively seek funding so that all activities are accessible to all Dementia-friendly sessions; new parent peer support; SEND-inclusive programming NHS social prescribing partnership; free wi-fi and digital skills access
Governance	Charitable CBS: one member, one vote democratic governance Annual sustainability report mapped to all 17 SDGs; open financial reporting Comprehensive safeguarding policies for all spaces and activities	Economic	Flexible spaces for local artists and small businesses Real Living Wage as pay floor; apprenticeships and volunteering pathways Local supplier procurement policy; Hertfordshire Growth Hub partnership

Alignment with HCC Priorities

The strategy aligns with HCC's Corporate Plan 'On Your Side' (2025–2028) across all five priorities: sustainable and thriving communities, economic growth, children and young people, adults and health, and responsible council. Specific HCC programmes referenced include Sustainable Hertfordshire 2026–2028, the Hertfordshire Climate Change & Sustainability Partnership, the Nature Recovery Partnership, Step2Skills, the SEND Local Offer, WasteAware, Hemel Hempstead 2050, the Local Transport Plan, and the River Bulbourne and Grand Union Canal corridor stewardship programme. All 17 UN Sustainable Development Goals are addressed in the full strategy, each mapped to a specific Our Heath Barn activity and a corresponding HCC programme.

Active travel and the Dacorum e-bike scheme. Heath Barn's central location on St Johns Road makes it directly accessible on foot, by bicycle, and via the Lynx bus network. We are also well positioned to benefit from the Dacorum electric bike hire scheme approved in February 2026 — a

HeRTS IQ Growth Investment Fund initiative funded through the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) paid by developers for new development in the borough. The scheme offers a fleet of e-bikes for residents, workers and visitors, improving connections between Hemel Hempstead station, the town centre, employment areas and neighbourhoods — directly supporting our sustainability commitments around active travel, carbon reduction, improved air quality and replacing short car journeys with healthier alternatives. As a three-year trial with an option to extend for a further two years, it is a timely and practical addition to Dacorum's sustainable travel infrastructure that Heath Barn is well placed to promote and benefit from.

Restoring and reusing a 500-year-old listed building is itself the most sustainable choice. The full Our Heath Barn Sustainability Strategy 2026–2030, aligned to the UN SDGs and Sustainable Hertfordshire Strategy 2026–2028, is submitted as a supporting document to this bid.

PART FOUR – THE FINANCIALS & RISKS

4.1 Restoration & Development Cost Plan

The restoration and development cost plan has been prepared based on figures provided by Hugo Hardy (architect) and Mark Battram (chartered surveyor) from their professional assessment of the buildings. Their estimates were for restoration and development for the full Heath Barn site, including the areas earmarked for residential development. On top of these restoration costs, we have also incorporated realistic fit-out costs.

Based on the Hardy/Battram estimates, the full development programme for the community facility at Heath Barn— from pre-acquisition legal set-up through to a fully operational venue — is costed at **603,955**, excluding acquisition. The full breakdown of these costs is included in appendix C.

Site and Space Plan

The original professional cost estimates covered the restoration and development of the entire Heath Barn site.

Costs relating solely to the areas proposed for residential development were removed from the estimate. Costs associated with the cottage alone were fully included in the estimate. The remaining restoration and development costs, which benefit both the community and residential areas, were then apportioned based on their respective floor areas.

The community restoration costs were estimated to be 72% of the total shared estimated costs, on the basis of apportionment of cost by relative area.

Area	% of site
Community areas + site office	72.2%
Residential wing	27.8%
Total site	100%

The Nine-Phase Restoration Journey

The development of Heath Barn, from acquisition through to becoming a fully operational venue, is divided into nine distinct phases. Each phase has its own timeline, activities and associated costs. Understanding this phased approach is essential for effective cash flow management and ensuring that funding is available when required.

The programme begins with legal set-up and pre-planning feasibility work, followed by the planning application, technical investigations, detailed design, and pre-restoration enabling works. The largest expenditure occurs during the main restoration phase (Phase 8), which is scheduled for Months 12–20 and accounts for approximately 80% of total project costs. The programme concludes with the non-structural fit-out phase, during which the internal spaces are completed and prepared for operation.

This phased delivery model enables funding to be drawn down in stages, aligning expenditure with grant funding milestones, project progress and key delivery outcomes. This approach helps minimise financial risk while ensuring that sufficient resources are available throughout the project lifecycle.

#	Phase	Timing	Description	Amount
1	Acquisition			
2	Pre-Acquisition Set Up	Before exchange	SPV / CBS legal set-up. Minimal cost (£500). Foundational legal work.	£500
3	Early Feasibility & Pre-Planning	Months 0–3	Fire consultant, CDM, QS, engineers, topographical survey. Can we do this at all?	£4,000
4	Planning Application	Months 0–8	Architectural fees, pre-app, planning submission, miscellaneous. First major spend spike.	£15,649
5	Pre-tender / Technical Investigation	Overlaps late planning	Soil & contamination, drainage survey, QS PCSA, further engineering. Reduces restoration risk before committing.	£8,000
6	Post-Planning / Pre-Restoration Set-up	After planning consent	Full design team engaged: architect, structural engineer, QS, M&E, Building Control. Costs accelerate.	£33,491
7	Pre-Restoration Compliance & Enabling	Ready to break ground	Acoustics, scaffold licence, party walls, insurance, surveys. Nothing happens on site yet.	£17,000
8	Restoration Phase	Months 12–20	The main works. Community share including 25% contingency. Building shell handed over at end of this phase.	£429,750
9	Finance Costs	Running alongside Phases 5–7	Arrangement, exit, broker fees, legals, PM, valuation. Modest but must be planned.	£4,115
10	Non-structural Fit-out	After shell handover	Café, kitchen, West Barn, cottage, snug, therapy rooms, disabled WC. Venue becomes operational.	£91,450
GRAND TOTAL (excluding acquisition)				£603,955

Restoration works

The main restoration works (Phase 8) are budgeted at £429,750, comprising the community 72% share of the surveyor's minimum estimate (£338,800) plus £5000 demolition and a 25%% contingency (£85,950). The contingency bridges the gap between Mark Battram's optimistic and pessimistic scenarios. Key works include roofing, external walls, windows and doors, internal floors, woodwork and joinery, plasterwork, electrical works, heating and hot water, and the cottage restoration.

Long-term stewardship

Mark Battram's survey identifies a 5 to 20 year programme of further structural and fabric works totalling £408,600 (for the community share). These are fully provisioned in our operating model by reserving £4,271 per month from Operating Year 3 — demonstrating that we have planned seriously for the obligations of heritage stewardship.

Fit-out

The £91,450 fit-out budget covers all spaces post-shell-handover: the community café (40 covers), a fully itemised commercial kitchen specified to support both daily operations and catering for up to 70+ covers on exclusive event days, the West Barn event space, therapy rooms, snug, cottage rooms, artist studio, and accessible toilet provision.

Funding strategy — aligned to the Council's preferred approach

Hertfordshire County Council asked us to work backwards: establish what it will cost to bring Heath Barn into good working order, secure the funding needed to do that, and only then determine what we can offer for acquisition. This is exactly the approach we have taken.

Since our original submission we have met the National Lottery Heritage Fund, and their advice has reshaped how we propose to fund the programme. The change is significant and it works in the Council's favour, so we set it out in full below.

The two-stage approach recommended by the National Lottery Heritage Fund

We submitted an Expression of Interest to NLHF early and deliberately, so that the Council would have evidence of funder engagement before its decision. The Expression of Interest was not passed at panel, and NLHF offered a feedback meeting, held on 13 August 2026 with Judith Carruthers, Senior Engagement Manager for the Midlands and East, and attended by the Council's Head of Asset Disposals.

"It's definitely not a 'no'. It falls right into our wheelhouse. It's just about managing risks and starting a track record." — Judith Carruthers, NLHF

NLHF confirmed the project has a clear heritage focus and articulates all four of their investment principles well. Their concern was not the merits of the scheme but the risk inherent in a newly formed organisation taking on a historic asset. Their recommended answer is a two-stage funding route, and we have adopted it:

Stage one — Development grant, under £250,000. NLHF's programme for grants below £250,000 is decided regionally rather than nationally: no Expression of Interest, a Project Advisory enquiry followed by a single-round application, assessed in around eight weeks by the Head of Region under a monthly funding allocation. A first stage development grant would fund the design work, surveys, technical investigation and planning application — and, critically, it establishes the track record NLHF needs to see before considering a larger award.

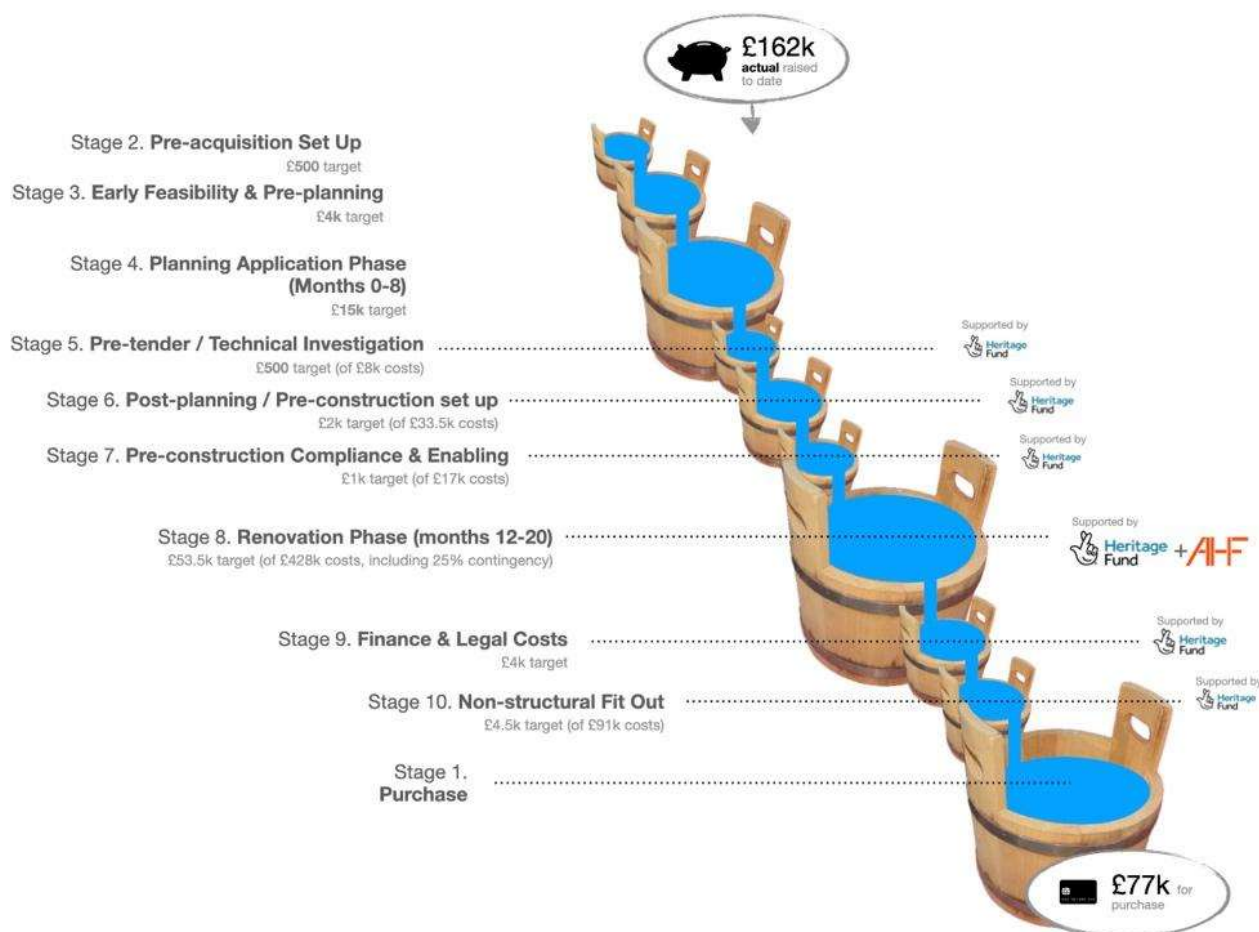
Stage two — Delivery grant, £250,000 to £1 million. With the development phase complete, a fully worked-up scheme and a track record established, we would apply to the main programme for the restoration and fit-out. This application would require ownership by OHB CCBS, or a long lease.

The Council as lead applicant. On 26 August 2026 NLHF confirmed, following consultation with their Head of Investment, that **Hertfordshire County Council should be the lead applicant for the development grant**, on the basis that the Council owns the building and there is no guarantee to them at this stage that Our Heath Barn will take it on. OHB would resource and deliver the work; the Council would be applicant of record. NLHF described a local authority working in partnership with a community organisation, with the asset transfer occurring through the project, as *"our ideal scenario"*.

This is the mechanism that resolves the difficulty both parties identified: no heritage funder can commit capital before ownership, and the Council reasonably will not transfer without evidence of funding. A partnership application breaks that deadlock.

The Fundraising 'Piggin' Buckets Model

The graphic below, produced for V1 of this bid showed our approach to funding visually. Each development stage is a bucket. We fill them in sequence using community-raised funds. Each time a bucket is full, the relevant grant is triggered. Once all development and restoration buckets are filled, any remaining funds flow into the final bucket: what is available for acquisition.



For this, our updated bid V2 approach to funding, the principle remains unchanged — community funds fill each stage bucket in turn, and each full bucket unlocks the grant behind it. What changes is the rate: a single 5% match for NLHF across the programme, in place of the blended 12.5% our original NLHF/AHF split required on the restoration phase.

Bid V2 Staged Funding Breakdown — (25% Contingency on Stage 8)						
Stage	Community match	Total cost	NLHF grant	AHF grant	Timing	Source
Stage 2: Pre-acquisition Set Up	£500	£500	—	—	Pre-acquisition	Community only
Stage 3: Early Feasibility & Pre-planning	£200	£4,000	£3,800	—	Pre-acquisition	Development
Stage 4: Planning Application (Months 0–8)	£782	£15,649	£14,867	—	Months 0–8	Development

Stage 5: Pre-tender Investigation	£400	£8,000	£7,600	—	Months 0–8	Development
Stage 6: Post-planning / Pre-construction	£1,675	£33,491	£31,816	—	Months 8–12	Development
Stage 7: Compliance & Enabling	£850	£17,000	£16,150	—	Months 8–12	Development
Stage 8: Restoration Phase (25% contingency)	£21,488	£429,750	£408,262	—	Months 12–20	Delivery 5%
Stage 9: Finance & Legal Costs	£4,115	£4,115	—	—	Months 12–20	Community only
Stage 10: Non-structural Fit-out	£4,572	£91,450	£86,878	—	Months 20–28	Delivery (5%)
TOTAL	£34,582	£603,955	£569,373	—		94% grant funded
<i>Stage 8 : base restoration (community 72% share) £338,800 + demolition £5,000 = £343,800 base. 25% contingency = £85,950. Total Stage 8 = £429,750. Community match assumed 5% (100% NLHF) = £21,488</i>						

The community match required for bid V2 vs. V1 falls from £85,219 to £34,582. For every £1 of community money committed to the programme, we unlock approximately £16.50 of grant funding — against £6 under our original proposal.

Using this new approach to funders, here's how we are proposing to apportion our fundraising:

	Original structure (V1 of our Bid)	Two-stage NLHF route (V2 of our Bid)
Community funds available	£162,000	£162,000
Acquisition offer	£77,000	£77,000
Grant match funding required	£85,219	£34,582
Legal fees on acquisition	—	£5,000
Holding costs, first six months	—	£8,000
Project management & working capital to bridge grant instalments	—	£37,418

Key Grant Funders — Eligibility and Alignment

The funding strategy still targets two primary heritage grant funders, each of which Heath Barn is well positioned to access. Both require ownership or a long lease to be in place before a capital grant can be awarded — which is precisely why a decision from Hertfordshire County Council is the essential first step.

National Lottery Heritage Fund — primary funder, two-stage route

The UK's largest dedicated heritage funder, distributing £282.9 million in England in 2023/24. Heath Barn meets all four Heritage 2033 investment principles, and NLHF have confirmed both the project's eligibility and the route to funding it. Kate Schwarz, a member of our team, has a track record of successful NLHF applications, as does our architect Hugo Hardy — who has a proven track record in high-profile, community focussed heritage restorations, including the renovation of Frogmore Paper mill in Apsley and the multi award-winning National Lottery Heritage Funded restoration of Rectory Lane Cemetery in Berkhamsted, both awarded substantial grants from the National Lottery Heritage Fund. We are additionally engaging a consultant experienced in NLHF submissions.

Architectural Heritage Fund — retained as an alternative and as a lender

The AHF remains available to us on two separate bases.

As a grant funder: AHF Capital Grants require 20% match funding and ownership or a long lease of at least 25 years. AHF wrote to us in July 2026 confirming they cannot consider an application before ownership, and inviting us to re-engage once the building is secured. They have highlighted that they receive a high volume of applications and that their current programme prioritises listed buildings on the Heritage at Risk Register located in town centres within the 30% most deprived areas. Heath Barn is listed and has been vacant since 2019. We are seeking clarification on how the Heritage at Risk criterion applies, since Historic England's national register does not include Grade II secular buildings outside London; Heath Barn is on the SAVE Britain's Heritage Buildings at Risk Register.

As a lender: AHF is the UK's only specialist lender for historic buildings, and their lending is assessed on project viability and security rather than on those programme priorities. We have received a positive initial response on our suitability for an AHF loan, and further meetings are scheduled. This route remains fully open regardless of the outcome of any grant application.

The proposed transfer sequence

Following discussion with the Council's Head of Asset Disposals and NLHF, this is proposed transfer sequence, which breaks the previous deadlock of OHB not being able to apply for grants without ownership of the property. Two points require the Council's agreement, and both arise from the funder's requirements rather than our preferences.

The Council would be lead applicant for the development grant. As set out above, NLHF confirmed on 26 August 2026 that Hertfordshire County Council should lead this application, on the basis that the Council owns the building. Ownership is not required of Our Heath Barn at this stage precisely *because* the Council leads. We would resource and deliver the work; the Council would be applicant of record.

A legal interest must be in place before the delivery grant is applied for. The delivery grant funds the restoration itself, and no heritage funder will commit capital of that scale to a building the applicant does not control. Either the asset transfers, or the Council grants a long lease of 25 years or more, before that second application is made. NLHF accept a long lease for this purpose.

	Indicative timing
The Council makes a formal commitment to transfer Heath Barn at the agreed price and heads of terms	Month 0
The Council, as lead applicant, submits the NLHF development grant application, gives explicit support as landowner to the planning application, retains the asset, and provides access for surveys	Months 0–3
The development grant funds Stages 3 to 7 — early feasibility, the planning application, pre-tender investigation, post-planning design and compliance works. Our Heath Barn delivers this work and contributes the £500 Society set-up cost and the 5% match of £3,907	Months 0-12
Planning consent and listed building consent granted	Month ~ 12
The asset transfers, or a long lease of 25 years or more is granted	Month 13 onwards
With a legal interest secured, the Society applies for the NLHF delivery grant. On award, restoration begins	Month 13 onwards

A detailed programme is at Appendix F, showing development complete by early 2028 and the venue opening in mid-2029.

Holding costs during this period. Through the development phase the Council continues to hold the building and carry its cost. We recognise this — the Council has incurred £129,919 between 2019 and 2025 — and we would be willing to meet the Council's reasonable holding costs from the date of formal commitment, funded from the community share offer.

Restoration Phase Grant Timing Gap Analysis

The delivery phase totals £521,200, of which for an NLHF delivery grant £495,140 would be the grant (5% matched funding is required for grants exceeding £250k). Heritage grants are typically paid in arrears against certified costs, so the Society may need to pay contractors before reclaiming. The maximum theoretical exposure is £495,140, though in practice it is considerably lower.

Mitigation 1 — Staged drawdowns. NLHF release funding in tranches against agreed milestones rather than solely in arrears. Negotiating an initial tranche at commencement would reduce peak exposure substantially.

Mitigation 2 — Working capital from the share offer. At our optimum share target the Society holds its own working capital and requires no bridging facility at all. This is the primary reason for setting a target above the minimum.

Mitigation 3 — AHF Heritage Impact Fund loan. As contingency, a loan of approximately £155,000 at 7.5%, with repayment deferred for four years and repaid over eight, would provide sufficient working capital through the restoration. For further details see the modelling at our [AHF loan calculator](#). AHF have indicated the project aligns well with their lending criteria.

4.2 Operating Financial Case

The operating financial model for Heath Barn has been developed through detailed bottom-up analysis of every income stream, a comprehensive cost schedule, and a ten-year cash flow projection. This chapter sets out how the model was built, what it shows, and why its conclusions are robust. The full financial model is provided as Appendix B.

4.2.1 Methodology

The financial projections for hire income are grounded in systematic market research and a detailed analysis of Heath Barn's spaces and operational characteristics.

The process began by cataloguing every hireable space within the building and benchmarking each against comparable venues in the local area. This produced a set of hire rates that are both market-tested and defensible, forming the pricing foundation for the entire revenue model. A full comparator analysis is provided in Appendix A.

In developing that pricing framework, two distinct markets were identified that Heath Barn is well placed to serve. The first comprises premium commercial uses — weddings, exclusive corporate hire, and location filming — which command higher rates and make a material contribution to financial sustainability. The second comprises community-focused uses, priced to remain accessible and directly aligned with the Society's charitable objects. Both are planned for and priced from the outset; neither is treated as secondary.

A key operational decision concerned exclusive-access bookings. Rather than lease the café to a third party — which would have complicated venue-wide hire and reduced financial control — modelling of the café and catering activities led the Society to conclude that Heath Barn should operate its own café with an employed team. On days when a hirer takes exclusive access to the venue, the café closes and the same team provides in-house catering instead. This model eliminates the cost of an external catering contractor, simplifies the guest experience, and — as the detailed café and catering modelling demonstrates — generates a meaningful catering margin that strengthens the overall financial case.

Utilisation targets were set for each space, expressed as the proportion of available days or hours expected to be occupied in a steady-state year, and balanced across uses to maximise both social and financial return. These targets are ambitious but evidence-based, informed by the comparator research and by what similar community heritage venues have achieved in their established years.

Critically, the model does not assume that those steady-state targets are met from opening day. A three-year operating ramp-up is projected, in which utilisation builds progressively as the venue establishes its reputation, develops its hirer relationships, and grows its community profile. Operating Year 1 projections are deliberately conservative; full utilisation is modelled from Operating Year 4 onwards.

To bridge the cash shortfall during the establishment period — when costs are largely fixed but income is still building — the model includes a loan facility repaid over the first four years of operation. The facility is sized to cover the projected deficit without creating undue financial pressure, and the model demonstrates it is fully repaid from operating surpluses before Operating Year 5. One further deliberate assumption shapes the cost base in the early years. The Battram surveyor's report identifies approximately £410,000 of anticipated maintenance works required over a 5 to 20-year horizon — works that are important but not immediately critical. In Operating Years 1 and 2, no provision is made for these longer-term costs. From Operating Year 3, a monthly provision of £4,271 is added to the cost base (equivalent to spreading the full programme over ten years). This staged approach keeps the establishment-period cost base manageable whilst ensuring the building's long-term maintenance obligations are fully planned for and funded from Year 3 onwards — a responsible, evidence-based approach to heritage stewardship.

4.2.2 Revenue Model

Heath Barn carries a deliberately diverse portfolio of twenty income streams, reducing dependency on any single source. The table below shows the full schedule with maximum monthly potential and ramp-up projections through to full target (Operating Year 4) utilisation.

Revenue stream	Maximum Annual Income (if 100% utilised)	Forecast Annual Income Operating Yr 1	Forecast Annual Income Operating Yr 2	Forecast Annual Income Operating Yr 3	Forecast Operating Yr 4 (at target utilisations)
West Barn – Saturday weddings (max 15/yr)	£45,000	£0	£22,500	£33,756	£45,000
West Barn – Friday weddings (max 5/yr)	£14,000	£0	£2,800	£5,600	£14,000
West Barn – exclusive conferences (max10/yr)	£20,000	£4000	£12,000	£16000	£20,000
Location filming (3-day block, £4,000 total)	£4000	£2,000	£4000	£4000	£4,000
West Barn – non-exclusive hire	£197,076	£59,124	£78,828	£78,828	£78,831
Cafe – North Barn (target net profit)	£18,000	£0	£5,400	£18,000	£15,000
Catering – sit-down meal (target 20 events/yr)	£20,004	£0	£9,996	£15,000	£16,667
Catering – wedding evening buffet (target 15/yr)	£10,812	£0	£5,412	£8,112	£9,012
Catering – cafe-day evening buffet (at 20/yr)	£12,924	£2,580	£6,456	£9,696	£10,767
North Barn snug (£30/hr, 8hr/day)	£67,572	£16,896	£20,268	£20,268	£27,028
Therapy rooms – hourly hire (x2 rooms)	£69,120	£13,824	£20,736	£20,736	£20,736
Therapy rooms – long lease (x2)	£24,000	£12,000	£18,000	£24,000	£24,000
Child and family therapeutic space	£18,000	£3,600	£3,600	£5,400	£5,400
Welcome office / local produce sales	£600	£0	£600	£600	£600
Cottage rooms – hourly hire (x3)	£103,680	£0	£0	£31,104	£31,104
Cottage – long lease (x3)	£36,000	£0	£0	£36,000	£36,000
Artisan / artist-in-residence space	£4,800	£960	£1,920	£2,880	£3,360
Weekend market (bi-weekly)	£6,000	£0	£2,400	£4,200	£4,200
Forest school garden hire	£600	£0	£300	£600	£600
Hanging art / sculpture commission	£1,200	£0	£480	£960	£960
TOTAL ANNUAL INCOME	£673,388	£114,984	£211,164	£327,264	£367,260

Operating Year 1: The venue opens with room hire, the snug, therapy rooms, and early cafe operations. Catering events and the full wedding programme build from Operating Year 2. This is deliberately conservative — earlier activation of any stream would accelerate the path to surplus.

Café and Catering Model

The cafe is central to Heath Barn's community mission and to its financial model. It operates six days a week from the North Barn, closing only on exclusive-access event days when the kitchen team pivots to catering. The model has been built and stress-tested using the Heath Barn Combined v5 interactive modelling tool. (ref <https://ohb-catering-model-v5.netlify.app/>)

Parameter	Value	Notes / basis
Seats	40	32 indoors plus outdoor seating; community groups, cafe regulars, visitors

Covers per seat per day	2.3x	Over a 9-hour operating day
Average spend per head	£9.00	Deliberately conservative — community use lowers average; upsell opportunities raise it
Food and drink cost %	32%	Standard cafe gross margin target
Days open per week	6	Closed on full exclusive-access event days
Core annual staffing cost	£130,161	NLW £12.71/hr, 15% employer NI (April 2025), net of £10,500 Employment Allowance
Catered sit-down meals/yr	20	70 covers at £44/head — exclusive-access event days
Wedding evening buffets/yr	15	100 covers at £14.50/head — incremental cost only, team already on site
Cafe-day evening buffets/yr	20	100 covers at £14.50/head — team extends their cafe day
Combined catering/head	£58.50	£44 meal + £14.50 buffet — highly competitive vs market rate of £80-£120/head

Staff sharing is the most important cost efficiency in the model. The same core team — manager, head chef, kitchen assistant, and two front-of-house staff — serves both the cafe and all catering events. On exclusive wedding days the cafe closes and the team pivots to the event at zero additional fixed staffing cost. Evening buffets on wedding days are the highest-margin activity in the entire model: the team is already on site and the only incremental cost is food and a small overtime allowance.

West Barn exclusive hire

The West Barn is the primary income-generating space for exclusive events. Three hire categories are modelled: Saturday weddings at £3,000 per event (maximum 15 per year); Friday weddings at £2,800 per event (maximum 5 per year); and Monday exclusive hire for conferences and facilitated workshops at £2,000 per day (maximum 10 days per year). Our wedding rates are benchmarked 40–60% below comparable heritage venues (notably Headstone Manor Great Barn, £5,007–£7,734/day) — a deliberately conservative position that builds volume and reputation in the early years, with clear evidence-based headroom to increase rates as the venue matures. On all exclusive-access days the snug, café and garden are closed to other activities. Non-exclusive hire at £50/hour provides additional income on remaining days.

The annual cap on wedding bookings is a deliberate choice, balancing revenue generation against the Society's charitable purpose. We anticipate demand will be strong: Heath Barn's proximity to local churches and the Register Office at The Forum gives it a natural advantage, and there is no comparable venue locally offering the same character for a wedding reception.

Validation from comparable operating venues. Rather than rely on desk research alone, we approached two operating heritage barn venues — the Thame Barn Centre in Oxfordshire and Headstone Manor Great Barn in Harrow — and asked them to review our assumptions directly. Both responded in detail.

Our wedding target sits comfortably between the annual volumes the two venues achieve. On pricing, Thame Barn Centre described our rates as *"very reasonable"*; on volume, Headstone Manor advised that we *"wouldn't have a problem in hitting that target within the 4 years of operating"*. Both also pointed to demand for pre-wedding events, private parties and anniversary celebrations — income streams we have not modelled at all, and which represent genuine upside.

On conference and corporate hire, Headstone Manor noted that this is an area they find difficult, and identified the reason as the absence of in-house catering — a constraint Heath Barn does not share. Thame Barn Centre, which does cater in-house, described our target of ten conference days

a year as *"very reasonable"*, citing strong corporate demand for away days since Covid and with the advent of home working. Our in-house catering model is therefore not merely a margin decision: it addresses the specific limitation a comparable venue identifies in its own corporate offer.

Both venues also raised practical points we have taken on board — defining hire windows clearly to allow for setup and cleaning turnaround, and budgeting properly for the wear that frequent large events impose on a historic building. The latter supports the routine maintenance provision carried in our cost model from opening.

Two further features are intended to distinguish Heath Barn in the local wedding market. First, free corkage will be offered alongside our own in-house catering — a benefit that carries real value for couples and their families, and one that few comparable venues provide. Second, we propose to work in partnership with Boxmoor Playhouse for full-day and evening receptions, with the daytime reception held in the West Barn and the evening celebration — bar, disco or live band — hosted at the Playhouse. This partnership extends our capacity for larger events without requiring additional space or investment at Heath Barn itself.

We are confident that demand will exceed the self-imposed cap on wedding bookings. Should the Society's financial position require it in future, this upper limit can be reviewed — but we consider the current cap the right balance between commercial return and the Society's founding purpose as a charitable community venue.

Therapy rooms and other income streams

Two ground-floor therapy and treatment rooms are offered on an hourly basis (£15/hour) and 2 more on a long-term lease arrangement (£250/week each). The snug provides a flexible space (£30/hour). The cottage (Phase 2, from Operating Year 3) adds three further rooms on similar bases, contributing approximately £5,592/month at full utilisation. Other income streams — artisan studio, weekend market, garden hire, and art commissions — provide supplementary revenue that diversifies the income base without requiring significant additional staffing.

4.2.3 Monthly Operating Costs

The table below sets out the full monthly operating cost schedule at current (2026) prices. Inflation is not modelled on the basis that revenue is assumed to increase broadly in line with costs over the period. Cafe and catering staffing costs (£130,161/year core staff, plus agency costs) are captured within the cafe model and are not duplicated here.

Cost item	Monthly (£)	Notes / basis
Water rates	£164	Architect estimate
Electricity	£1,300	Estimate — excludes cafe (which is included in the cafe model); real quotes recommended before opening
Gas	£800	Estimate — excludes cafe
Telephone / broadband	£150	Business line estimate
Printing and stationery	£100	Architect estimate
IT costs	£500	Volunteer support anticipated — may reduce
Audit and accountancy	£200	Architect estimate
External bookkeeping	£1,000	Including cafe
Health, safety and security	£100	Architect estimate
Marketing and signage	£500	Architect estimate
Building insurance	£750	Estimate — heritage rebuild value

Contents insurance	£150	Estimate — £60k-£70k contents
Public liability insurance	£200	Estimate — £10m cover
Employer's liability	£75	Planning figure
Gardening services	£250	Architect estimate; volunteer support hoped for
Cleaning services	£1,020	Architect estimate
Ongoing maintenance	£800	Architect estimate
Business rates	£0	Charitable CBS — 80% mandatory + discretionary relief
Corporation tax	£0	No corporation tax as registered charity
Admin assistant salary	£2,000	Monthly salary
Site / venue manager salary	£3,000	Partially shared with cafe management
Employer NI (manager + admin)	£625	15% above £5,000/yr secondary threshold (April 2025)
Long-term maintenance provision	£4,271	From Operating Year 3 only — Battram survey identifies ~£410k works over 10 years

Cost summary	Monthly	Annual
Operating Years 1-2 (no long-term building maintenance provision)	£13,684	£164,208
Operating Years 3+ (including long term maintenance provision)	£17,955	£215,458
Cafe and catering staffing (separate — no double count)	£10,847	£130,161

4.2.4 Ten-Year Financial Forecast

Key financial milestones

Operating Year 1	Revenue £115k	Deficit (£79k)	Loan required £100k
Operating Year 2	Revenue £211k	Surplus £18k	Loan repaying
Operating Year 3	Revenue £327k	Surplus £83k	Cumulative +£22k
Operating Year 4+	Revenue £367k	Surplus £123k	Self-sustaining

Full ten-year forecast

Operating Year	Yr 1	Yr 2	Yr 3	Yr 4	Yr 5	Yr 6	Yr 7	Yr 8	Yr 9	Yr 10
Annual revenue	£115k	£211k	£327k	£367k	£367k	£367k	£367k	£367k	£367k	£367k
Operating costs	-£164k	-£164k	-£215k	-£215k	-£215k	-£215k	-£215k	-£215k	-£215k	-£215k
Loan repayment	-£29k	-£29k	-£29k	-£29k	nil	nil	nil	nil	nil	nil
Net surplus/(deficit)	-£79k	£18k	£83k	£123k	£152k	£152k	£152k	£152k	£152k	£152k
Cumulative position	-£79k	-£61k	£22k	£145k	£297k	£448k	£600k	£752k	£904k	£1,056k

Year-by-year commentary

- Operating Year 1 — The venue opens with a limited offering: room hire, the snug, therapy rooms, early cafe operations, and location filming. Catering events do not begin until Operating Year 2. A deficit of £79,000 is expected and is bridged by the £100,000 operating loan.
- Operating Year 2 — Catering events begin and the full cafe programme is in operation. Utilisation increases across all spaces. A surplus of £18,000 is achieved after loan repayments of £2,418/month. The cumulative deficit reduces to -£61,000.

- Operating Year 3 — Inflection point. The full catering and wedding programme is in operation and the cottage opens (Phase 2). The long-term maintenance provision (£4,271/month) is added to costs. Despite this, a surplus of £83,000 is achieved and the cumulative position turns positive at £22,000.
- Operating Year 4 — Target utilisation is reached. Annual surplus of £123,000 after the final year of loan repayments. Revenue plateaus at £367,000 reflecting full utilisation of all modelled spaces.
- Operating Year 5 onwards — The operating loan is fully repaid. Annual surplus of £152,000 is available entirely for long-term building stewardship and endowment building. The ten-year cumulative surplus exceeds £1 million.

4.2.5 Loan Requirement

To bridge the Operating Year 1 cash shortfall while the venue establishes trade, the model includes a £100,000 operating loan on the following indicative terms:

Parameter	Value
Lender	AHF loan or equivalent mission-aligned lender
Amount	£100,000
Term	4 years
Indicative rate	7.5%
Monthly repayment	£2,418 (£29,016/year)
Final repayment	Operating Year 4
Cumulative positive	Operating Year 3 (£22,056)

The acquisition cost, mandatory immediate renovations, and Phase 1 fit-out are funded separately through crowdfunding, membership subscriptions, and grants — and do not form part of the operating loan or the operating profit and loss account.

4.2.6 Strategic and Financial Assumptions

Strategic assumptions

- Charitable CBS status achieved prior to acquisition
- Acquisition, mandatory immediate renovations, and Phase 1 fit-out funded externally (crowdfunding, membership, grants) — not from operating income
- Cafe run in-house for maximum flexibility and margin; not franchised or leased
- Cafe team shares staffing with catering events — maximising staff efficiency and catering profitability
- Cottage renovation (Phase 2) funded externally; cottage income begins Operating Year 3
- Exclusive hire weddings use the West Barn, garden, cafe kitchen, and snug — reducing availability of these spaces on event days. Utilisation targets set in concert to balance financial and social return
- Heath Barn becomes an established, bookable filming and events location within 2 years of opening

Financial assumptions

- No inflation modelled — costs and revenues assumed to move together over the period
- No corporation tax (charitable status)
- Business rates at zero (mandatory 80% plus full discretionary relief assumed)
- Cafe and catering target profit figures are stated inclusive of VAT effect (conservative: no input VAT offset modelled)
- Room hire income treated as VAT-exempt (VATA 1994 Schedule 9 Group 1)

- Core cafe and catering staff costs (£130,161/year) are separate from the monthly overhead schedule and are not double-counted. Calculated at NLW £12.71/hr (2025/26), 15% employer NI above £5,000/yr threshold, net of £10,500 Employment Allowance
- Long-term maintenance provision (£4,271/month, Battram report) added from Operating Year 3; no provision in Operating Years 1-2
- The manager role (£3,000/month) is partially shared between site management and cafe operational management

4.2.7 Sensitivity and Risk

- **Revenue shortfall:** If utilisation in Operating Years 1–2 is below forecast, the loan requirement increases but long-term viability is not threatened. Each 10% shortfall in Year 2 revenue (approximately £21,000) extends the loss period without affecting the Year 3+ surplus trajectory (see 4.4.2.3).
- **Wedding and event bookings below forecast:** The model's wedding-linked income — Saturday weddings, Friday weddings, catered sit-down meals and wedding evening buffets — represents 23.1% of mature revenue, so the venue is not wedding-dependent. Stress-testing all these four income streams at half their modelled utilisation in every year reduces revenue by £19,070 in Operating Year 2, £29,305 in Year 3 and £42,340 from Year 4 onwards (11.5% of mature revenue). Even under this test the venue remains viable: the peak funding requirement rises by only £1,134 to £79,806, still within the planned £100,000 facility; cumulative surplus is reached in Operating Year 4 rather than Year 3; and the mature annual surplus remains £109,466. Confidence in the base case rests on rates benchmarked 40–60% below the nearest comparable heritage venue (Headstone Manor Great Barn, £5,007–£7,734 per day), free corkage alongside in-house catering, a proposed partnership with Boxmoor Playhouse extending capacity for full-day and evening celebrations, and proximity to local churches and the Register Office at The Forum. (see 4.4.2.5)
- **Utility costs:** Electricity and gas estimates should be verified with an energy consultant before opening. A 50% increase in utilities adds approximately £12,600/year to costs — material but manageable against the Year 3+ surplus of £83,000+.
- **Café performance:** The model targets 2.3 covers per seat per day at £9.00/head. If average spend falls to £7.00/head, monthly café net profit falls from £1,500 to approximately £800. Catering income compensates substantially — the café and catering model are deliberately interdependent.
- **Living wage uplift:** If average hourly wages rise from the National Living Wage (£12.71/hr, 2025/26) to the Real Living Wage (£13.45/hr), total staff costs increase by approximately £9,160/year. To maintain the same net profit targets, the café price per head rises from £9.00 to £9.43 (+43p) and the wedding meal price from £44.00 to £45.08 (+£1.08). Both remain highly competitive in the local market.
- **Wedding and exclusive-hire caps as a revenue lever:** The annual caps on wedding and exclusive-hire bookings (15 Saturday weddings, 5 Friday weddings, 10 exclusive-hire days) are self-imposed rather than capacity constraints, deliberately set below anticipated demand to balance revenue generation against the Society's charitable purpose. Should utilisation of other income streams fall short of target, these caps can be reviewed and increased within the West Barn's physical capacity — providing a readily available lever to protect income without requiring new investment. The base case financial model should therefore be regarded as conservative rather than reflecting the venue's full income potential.
- **Upside potential:** The model does not capture Gift Aid on donations, grant income from social prescribing partners, revenue from accredited courses, or the full upside from location filming as the venue registers with location agencies. These could materially improve the financial position beyond the base case.

4.3 Social Return on Investment

What is SROI and why does it matter here?

Social Return on Investment (SROI) quantifies the full public value of investment in a community asset. Our Social Value Calculator — built using the HACT UK Social Value Bank v7, HM Treasury Green Book WELLBY valuations, and PSSRU Unit Costs of Health & Social Care 2024 — models 800 beneficiaries across seven outcome categories in Operating Year 1–2 (conservative estimate, with 25% deadweight applied). It indicates a ratio of £15.2 for every £1 invested, potentially generating £2.27 million in net social value per year and over £770,000 in direct annual savings to HCC, NHS ICB and DWP statutory budgets. The full calculator and briefing note are available as supporting documents.

Headline results

SROI Ratio	Net Social Value / yr	Gross Social Value / yr	Exchequer Saving / yr
£1 : £15.2 <i>For every £1 of operating cost</i>	£2,273,250 <i>After 25% deadweight adjustment</i>	£3,031,000 <i>All outcomes before deadweight</i>	£770,000+ <i>Direct savings to HCC, NHS ICB & DWP</i>

The Our Heath Barn Social Value Calculator models 800 beneficiaries across seven outcome categories — a deliberately conservative Operating Year 1–2 estimate. A 25% deadweight adjustment has been applied throughout (standard Social Value UK practice). Comparable SROI studies of community wellbeing and social prescribing interventions in the UK report ratios ranging from £3.40 to £24 for every £1 invested; our ratio of £15.2:1 sits comfortably within that evidence base. At full programme maturity, with 5,000+ annual beneficiaries, the calculator projects social value of £14.2 million per year.

Social value by outcome

Outcome	Unit Cost	People	Gross Value	Heath Barn Activity
Loneliness & social isolation	£8,100	200	£1,620,000	<i>Workshops, dementia sessions, peer support</i>
Improved mental wellbeing	£1,500	400	£600,000	<i>Arts & wellbeing, social prescribing</i>
Dementia & carer support	£3,500	50	£175,000	<i>Dementia sessions, carer respite</i>
Postnatal isolation	£2,000	60	£120,000	<i>New parent peer-support, drop-ins</i>
Volunteering regularly	£3,400	40	£136,000	<i>Volunteer programme across all operations</i>
Employment & skills gain	£13,000	20	£260,000	<i>Apprenticeships, Step2Skills, creative pathways</i>
Child therapy & SEND	£4,000	30	£120,000	<i>Child therapy suite, SEND-inclusive programming</i>
GROSS TOTAL (before 25% deadweight)		800	£3,031,000	

What this means for Hertfordshire County Council specifically

Beyond the social value to individuals, a subset of the SROI figure suggests direct Exchequer savings — money that HCC, the NHS Hertfordshire & West Essex ICB, and the DWP would otherwise need to spend on statutory services:

Outcome	Est. Public Purse Saving	Mechanism
Loneliness reduction (200 people)	£320,000+	Fewer GP appointments, reduced A&E, lower adult social care demand
Mental wellbeing improvement (400 people)	£180,000+	Avoided IAPT/CAMHS referrals and reduced GP demand
Dementia & carer support (50 people)	£120,000+	Delayed residential care placement; PSSRU 2024 residential dementia care: £38,500/yr
Child therapy / SEND (30 children)	£90,000+	Avoided CAMHS referrals and reduced EHC Plan escalation costs for HCC
Employment pathways (20 people)	£60,000+	Reduced Universal Credit dependency; lower DWP and HCC adult services burden
ESTIMATED TOTAL EXCHEQUER SAVING	£770,000+/yr	<i>Conservative estimate — direct savings to HCC, NHS ICB and DWP</i>

For every pound HCC invests in supporting Our Heath Barn, it is likely to save substantially more in reduced demand on its own statutory services. The Our Heath Barn Social Value Calculator and SROI briefing note are available as supporting documents to this bid.

4.4 Risk Assessment and Mitigation

Including the “what if” analysis requested by Hertfordshire County Council Property Department

Our Heath Barn presents this risk assessment in a spirit of honesty and transparency. We believe that a frank acknowledgement of what could go wrong, set alongside credible plans for dealing with it, is more persuasive to funders and decision-makers than an overly optimistic picture — and more useful to the Council in reaching a decision.

This section sets out the risks to the project and what we have done about each of them. The section has been substantially strengthened since our original submission, following our review meeting with the Head of Disposals on 1 July 2026. It now contains the full sensitivity analysis the Council asked us to produce.

It is written to be read at two levels. Section 1 is a summary register — every risk, its likelihood, its impact, and a short answer. Sections 4.4.2 to 4.4.6 then set out the detail behind the risks that matter most, with the figures and workings in full. Readers who want the overview need only read Section 1; those who want to interrogate the numbers will find them in the sections that follow.

A note on terms

A few financial terms recur in the tables that follow. Rather than repeat explanations throughout, they are set out here once, in plain language.

Operating Year	A year of trading after the venue opens. Operating Year 1 is the first twelve months of trading. These are distinct from the development years that precede opening, during which the building is being restored and earns nothing.
Net result	What is left in a given year after all operating costs and any loan repayments have been met. A figure in brackets, such as (£78,671), is a loss.
Cumulative position	The running total of every year’s result since opening. It starts negative because the first year loses money, and turns positive once later surpluses have paid back those early losses.
Peak funding need	The largest sum the Society needs to have available at any single moment — the low-water mark of its bank balance before trading income turns things around. It is not the total of all the losses added up; it is the deepest point those losses reach cumulatively. In the base case the venue loses £78,671 in Operating Year 1 and then makes a surplus every year afterwards, so the lowest the balance ever goes is £78,671 at the end of Year 1. From that point the position only improves, so this is the figure that must be covered — by a facility, by share capital, or by cash in hand.
Facility	An agreed arrangement with a lender that makes a sum of money available to borrow, up to a set limit — rather like an authorised overdraft. The money is not handed over up front: the Society would draw only what it needs, when it needs it, and would normally pay interest only on the amount actually drawn. The “£100,000 facility” referred to throughout is the operating loan arranged to cover the trading deficit of the early Operating Years. A facility need not be borrowed money: if the community share offer reaches its optimum target, share capital would provide this working capital instead and no loan would be required.
Coverage (e.g. “2.03×”)	How many times over the venue can afford its loan repayment in a given year. It is the operating surplus divided by that year’s repayment. At 2.03× the venue earns just over twice what it needs to pay, so there is comfortable margin. Lenders normally require a minimum of 1.25× — income at least 25% above the payment — before they will lend at all.
Deferral / interest rolled up	A period during which no loan payments are made at all. Interest still builds up and is added to the amount owed, so the debt grows during this time. It is used to keep costs out of the years when a venue cannot yet afford them.
Amortisation	Repaying a loan through regular instalments that cover both the interest and the sum borrowed, so that the debt reaches zero by the end of the term.

4.4.1 Risk Register

Risks marked with a section reference are examined in full later in this document.

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigation
A. The building and its restoration			
Further structural or fabric issues identified on detailed heritage survey	Medium	High	Our initial survey provides a strong baseline, but we acknowledge that more thorough pre-contract investigation is required before committing to the final restoration programme. As part of the development phase multiple surveys will be undertaken to ensure that delivery costings and timescales are accurate (Appendix F Draft Project Plan). We have increased our contingency from 12.5% to 25% specifically to reflect the uncertainties inherent in heritage restoration, and the survey range from optimistic to pessimistic has been fully modelled in our financial projections.
Construction cost increases or material price inflation	Medium	Medium	All cost estimates are at April 2026 prices, and the 25% contingency provides a material buffer. Procurement will be phased to allow retendering if required. Where specialist materials are needed for the Grade II listed fabric — traditional brickwork, lime mortar, historic joinery — we will engage specialists including HG Matthews, traditional brickmakers based locally in Bulbourne, Tring, to source appropriate materials and minimise cost uncertainty.
Planning delays or listed building consent hurdles	Medium	Medium	Hugo Hardy is an experienced heritage architect who has worked extensively with listed buildings. Pre-application discussions with Dacorum Borough Council's Conservation Officer will be initiated early to identify and resolve issues before formal submission. The SPAB will be consulted on sensitive elements — particularly window replacement and openings — to ensure our approach is consistent with best conservation practice. Community use is the building's historic use of some seventy years and aligns with Dacorum Core Strategy CS27. Our nine-phase programme and Draft Project Plan (Appendix F) carries sufficient time-contingency to absorb delays without triggering financial covenant breaches.
Protected species — bat roost	Low–Med	Medium	A single common pipistrelle was identified roosting between the wooden boarding and windowpane of the Farmhouse, confirmed following three bat emergence surveys carried out in accordance with best practice (ecological assessment submitted with applications 24/00075/FUL and 24/00076/LBC). Hertfordshire Ecology confirmed on 29 July 2025 that the roost is of low conservation significance and raised no objection, subject to a bat mitigation licence. Given that low significance, the site can be registered under a consultant's Bat Mitigation Class Licence (Keith Seaman's BMCL) rather than requiring a full individual licence — a straightforward, well-established process. Works will not commence without the licence in place.
Protected species — breeding birds	Low	Low–Med	Hertfordshire Ecology advises that clearance and development works be carried out between October and February inclusive, avoiding the breeding bird season. Where this is not possible, a pre-development check by a suitably experienced ecologist must be carried out no more than 48 hours before works begin, and works delayed if active nests are found. Our nine-phase programme will align primary clearance works with the October–February window wherever possible, and our team will commission pre-development checks as required.
Window replacement and specialist conservation works	Medium	Medium	The historic windows are a particularly sensitive element of the Grade II listing. We will engage specialist conservation contractors for all window works, guided by SPAB guidance on historic glazing and joinery. No like-for-like replacements will be undertaken without prior agreement with the Conservation Officer, and where windows are beyond repair, replacements will match the original materials and profile exactly.
B. Funding the restoration			
Development grant application unsuccessful	Low–Med	Medium	The development application sits below NLHF's £250,000 threshold and is decided regionally, under the Head of Region's monthly allocation, rather than by the national quarterly committee. It is a smaller ask, assessed more quickly and against a lighter process, and it is the route NLHF themselves recommended to us. Were it unsuccessful, the feedback would be available within weeks rather than months and the application could be revised and resubmitted without the loss of a funding round. The Society would in the meantime continue to fund early design work from its own resources, as it has done throughout. More detail on various funding routes → Section 4.4.3
NLHF or AHF application requires more than one submission	Occurred	Low–Med	This has already happened at Expression of Interest stage, and the outcome is encouraging. Our EOI to the National Lottery Heritage Fund was not passed, and NLHF offered a feedback meeting — held on 13 August 2026 with Judith Carruthers, Senior Engagement Manager for the Midlands and East, and attended by HCC's Head of Asset Disposals.

			NLHF confirmed the project “falls right into our wheelhouse”, that we have a clear heritage focus, and that we articulate all four of their investment principles well. Their concerns were about how the case was presented and about the risk inherent in a newly formed organisation — not about the merits of the project or its eligibility. Both funders operate pre-application and development stages designed precisely to work this through, and we have engaged with both early enough to do so. Kate Schwarz, a member of our team, has a track record of successful NLHF applications, as does our heritage architect Hugo Hardy, and NLHF confirmed that heritage expertise among our founders mitigates the organisational track-record concern. We are also engaging a consultant experienced in NLHF submissions to support the next application. → Section 4.4.3.2
The Council is unable or unwilling to act as lead applicant	Low	High	NLHF have confirmed, following consultation with their Head of Investment, that the Council should be lead applicant for the development grant , on the basis that it owns the building. This is a dependency rather than a risk we can mitigate alone, and we have set it out plainly for that reason. Our Heath Barn would resource and deliver all of the work; the Council would be applicant of record. We are seeking written confirmation from NLHF of precisely what the role entails — liability, fund-holding and the mechanism for novating the grant on transfer — so that the Council’s legal and finance teams can consider it on a full picture.
Delivery grant application unsuccessful	Low–Med	High	The delivery application is made after the development phase is complete, with a fully worked-up scheme, a completed options appraisal, and — critically — a delivered NLHF-funded project behind us. That track record is the specific thing NLHF told us was missing. Should it nonetheless fail, three independent alternatives remain: an AHF capital grant, an AHF loan for which we have already had a positive initial response, or full loan funding, which the operating model can service without any grant at all. → Section 4.4.3
C. Trading and operations			
Operating revenue materially below forecast	Medium	Medium	Tested at 30% below forecast for five consecutive Operating Years. The venue still recovers and returns to surplus; the answer is a larger facility, not a failed project. → Section 4.4.2, Scenario A
Wedding and event income builds more slowly than modelled	Medium	Low–Med	Tested with all four wedding-linked income streams at half their modelled bookings throughout. Peak funding need rises by just £1,134, and the venue still reaches surplus. These streams are only 23.1% of mature revenue. → Section 4.4.2, Scenario C
Opening delayed by 12 months	Medium	Low–Med	Based on our draft project plan, this is an unlikely scenario, but it has been tested with a full additional year of holding costs. Because the operating facility is drawn only from opening, a delay adds £16,000 to the development budget rather than to the Operating facility, which remains unchanged at £78,671 with its full £21,329 of headroom intact. → Section 4.4.2, Scenario B.
Operating costs exceed projections in Operating Years 1–2	Medium	Medium	The £100,000 facility provides a bridge through the establishment period. Revenue assumptions have been benchmarked conservatively against comparable venues, with direct input from the Thame Barn Centre and Headstone Manor Great Barn. The charitable CCBS structure — no corporation tax, 80% mandatory business rates relief, volunteer support, Gift Aid eligibility — significantly reduces the operating cost base relative to a standard company. The model has been stress-tested against lower-revenue scenarios.
Security, vandalism and deterioration between transfer and works	Medium	Medium	A costed holding budget of £16,000 a year has been added to the funding ask, achievable through owned rather than rented equipment, appropriate insurance cover, and the volunteer presence that community ownership makes possible. → Section 4.4.4
D. The Society and the community			
Society insolvency — the building falls into disrepair	Low	High	Several layers of protection: the statutory asset lock — under which a successor body can be named if required — together with the funded maintenance provision and lender step-in rights. → Section 4.4.5
CCBS registration delayed beyond the decision timeline	Low	Medium	Registration is in progress with Co-operatives UK and Plunkett UK support. The CIC provides interim legal continuity, and a written registration timeline is available to the Council.
Community interest or fundraising momentum decreases	Low	Medium	The campaign has maintained sustained engagement since 2023 and has already secured £162,000 in community commitments — support that has proved resilient through repeated timeline changes. The CCBS member structure, once established, creates a body of invested stakeholders with both a financial and a democratic stake in the outcome. Regular open meetings, transparent reporting and the fundraising events programme will maintain involvement, and the community share offer launch provides a concrete milestone and reignites the community momentum.

Local government reorganisation disrupts the disposal	Low	Medium	HCC has confirmed there is no instruction to delay, and that completing the disposal ahead of reorganisation is in the Council's own financial interest. An October decision sits well ahead of any transfer of assets to a successor authority.
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4.4.2 Revenue Sensitivity — the “what if” analysis

At the request of HCC Property, we have stress-tested the operating model against three adverse scenarios. Each asks a different question, and each was chosen because it reflects a concern raised directly in our review meeting.

Scenario	The question it answers
A — Revenue 30% below forecast	What if the venue simply trades less well than we expect, across the board, for a prolonged period?
B — Opening delayed by a year	What if planning, procurement or construction runs late and we hold an empty building for an extra year before it can earn anything?
C — Wedding streams halved	What if the events business takes much longer to establish than modelled — the specific concern that venues take time to build demand because people want to see a space before booking it?

4.4.2.1 How the tests were built

Two features of the model determine how these stress tests behave, and it is worth being precise about both.

- **Café and catering costs flex with activity.** These streams enter the model as net contribution — the figure carried into the accounts is already net of food costs (32% in the café, 35–38% on catering) and of the event staffing those activities require. When a stress test reduces café or catering activity, the associated variable costs fall proportionally with it. They are not held flat.
- **One qualification.** Core café staffing is a fixed cost within that net figure, so a proportional reduction understates the true fall in contribution; in practice management would flex rosters in response. The catering lines are unaffected, as those events are genuinely incremental — casual staff are added only when required, and the core team is already on site.
- **The fixed cost base does not flex.** The monthly overhead schedule — utilities, insurances, cleaning, gardening, IT, bookkeeping, marketing, the administrator and site manager salaries, and from Operating Year 3 the £4,271 maintenance provision — is held constant in every scenario, at £13,684 a month rising to £17,955. Room hire income (West Barn, snug, therapy rooms, cottage) carries almost no variable cost, so any reduction in those streams falls straight through to the bottom line.

Two further choices make the tests harsher than reality is likely to be:

- **No management response is assumed.** The tests model what happens if the Board does nothing — no repricing, no marketing push, no adjustment to the self-imposed booking caps, no reduction in discretionary spend.
- **The maintenance provision stays fully funded.** Even in the worst scenario, the £4,271 monthly provision for the surveyor's long-term works remains in the cost base from Operating Year 3. We have not balanced the books in any scenario by deferring building care.

The figures below should therefore be read as a floor rather than a forecast.

4.4.2.2 Summary — all three scenarios

All rows below are Operating Years — years of trading after the venue opens. Figures in brackets are losses.

	Base case	A: Revenue –30% (Operating Yrs 1–5)	B: Opening delayed by 1 year	C: Wedding streams halved
Holding year before opening – extra development phase cost	—	—	(£16,000)	—
Operating Year 1 net result	(£78,671)	(£113,037)	(£78,671)	(£78,671)
Operating Year 2 net result	+£17,936	(£45,412)	+£17,936	(£1,134)

Operating Year 3 net result	+£82,792	(£15,388)	+£82,792	+£53,487
Operating Year 4 net result	+£122,790	+£12,611	+£122,790	+£80,450
Operating Year 5 net result	+£151,806	+£41,627	+£151,806	+£109,466
Cumulative position turns positive	Op Year 3	Op Year 6	Op Year 3	Op Year 4
PEAK FUNDING NEED	£78,671	£173,837	£78,671	£79,806
Funding response required	£100k facility (as planned)	£100k facility + £75k extension	£100k facility unchanged £16k added to dev budget	Within £100k facility

In three of the four columns the peak funding need sits within the £100,000 working capital facility already planned; only the most severe revenue scenario requires more. The cost of a delay falls on the development budget rather than the operating facility, because the facility is drawn only from the point the venue opens.

4.4.2.3 Scenario A — revenue 30% below forecast for five years

This is the most severe test, and the one that most directly answers the Council's question about what happens if the business simply underperforms. It assumes the venue achieves only 70% of modelled revenue in every one of its first five Operating Years — not a slow start, but sustained underperformance across every income stream simultaneously.

The venue does not fail. It loses money for longer: the deficit persists into Operating Year 3, and the cumulative position does not turn positive until Operating Year 6, three years later than the base case. Peak funding need rises from £78,671 to £173,837.

What it would mean. The practical consequence is that the £100,000 facility would need to be extended by around £75,000. That extension sits comfortably within the Society's demonstrated borrowing capacity: at the 1.25× coverage lenders typically require, the mature operating surplus supports annual debt payments of up to £121,445 — equivalent to borrowing of roughly £750,000. A £175,000 facility is well inside that envelope. The consequence of sustained underperformance is therefore a larger loan, not an insolvent project.

4.4.2.4 Scenario B — opening delayed by twelve months

This tests what happens if planning, procurement, ecological survey windows or construction run late and the Society holds an empty building for an additional year before it can trade.

The effect is contained and easy to state: the venue incurs one additional year of holding costs — budgeted at £16,000 for insurance, monitored CCTV, inspections and upkeep (see Section 4.4.4) — and then trades exactly as modelled. Every Operating Year performs identically to the base case; they simply begin twelve months later.

	Base case	Scenario B
Extra holding year before opening	—	(£16,000)
Operating Year 1 net result	(£78,671)	(£78,671)
Cumulative position at end of Operating Year 1	(£78,671)	(£94,671)
PEAK FUNDING NEED	£78,671	£94,671
Headroom within the £100,000 facility	£21,329	£5,329
Cumulative position turns positive	Operating Year 3	Operating Year 3

Peak funding need rises by exactly the cost of the extra holding year, from £78,671 to £94,671 — still within the planned £100,000 facility, with £5,329 to spare. Self-sufficiency is still reached in Operating Year 3 of trading. The delay costs money and patience, but it does not require additional borrowing and it does not weaken the underlying business.

4.4.2.5 Scenario C — wedding and event income at half the modelled level

This scenario responds directly to the point raised in our July meeting: that wedding venues typically take time to build demand, because couples want to see a space before they book it, and because bookings are often made a year or more in advance.

We have tested it hard. All four wedding-linked income streams are halved — not capped at half, but reduced to half of whatever the model assumed at each stage of the ramp-up. So a stream modelled at 75% utilisation in Operating Year 3 is tested at 37.5%.

Revenue stream	Annual cap	Utilisation as modelled (Op Yr 1 / 2 / 3 / 4+)	Utilisation when halved (Op Yr 1 / 2 / 3 / 4+)	Revenue lost from Op Yr 4
West Barn — Saturday weddings	15/yr	0% / 50% / 75% / 100%	0% / 25% / 38% / 50%	£22,500
West Barn — Friday weddings	5/yr	0% / 20% / 40% / 100%	0% / 10% / 20% / 50%	£7,000
Catering — sit-down meal	20 events/yr	0% / 50% / 75% / 100%	0% / 25% / 38% / 50%	£8,333
Catering — wedding evening buffet	15 buffets/yr	0% / 50% / 75% / 100%	0% / 25% / 38% / 50%	£4,506
TOTAL — all four streams				£42,340

Utilisation means the proportion of the annual cap actually booked. Catering figures are shown net of VAT, consistent with the underlying model. The £42,340 annual reduction from Operating Year 4 equals 11.5% of mature revenue.

The result is contained. Peak funding need rises by just £1,134 — from £78,671 to £79,806 — and remains comfortably inside the planned £100,000 facility. The return to cumulative surplus slips by a single year, from Operating Year 3 to Operating Year 4. The mature annual surplus remains £109,466.

The reason the impact is so modest is structural: these four streams together account for 23.1% of mature revenue. Heath Barn is deliberately not a wedding venue with some community activity attached. The café, room hire, therapy rooms and long-term leases carry more than three-quarters of the business, and none of them depends on the events market.

4.4.2.6 Why we are nonetheless confident in the wedding assumptions

The stress test shows we do not need the wedding programme to perform as modelled. We do, however, have good reasons to expect that it will:

- Rates are benchmarked 40–60% below the nearest comparable heritage venue — Headstone Manor Great Barn in Harrow charges £5,007–£7,734 per day against our £3,000 Saturday rate.
- Free corkage is offered alongside in-house catering, a benefit rarely available at comparable venues and one that carries real value for couples and their families.
- A proposed partnership with Boxmoor Playhouse would extend capacity for full-day followed by large evening celebrations — daytime reception in the West Barn, evening bar and music at the Playhouse, with potential buffet catering by OHB — without additional investment at Heath Barn.
- The location is unusually well placed, close to several local churches and to the Registry Office at The Forum, with no comparable heritage venue in the immediate area.
- Our booking caps (15 Saturday weddings, 5 Friday weddings, 10 exclusive-hire days) are self-imposed to protect community access, not physical limits. If income needed strengthening, the Board could raise them within the West Barn's capacity — a lever available in the opposite direction to this stress test.

Peer validation. Two comparable heritage barn venues have reviewed our assumptions directly. Our target of 20 weddings a year sits between the Thame Barn Centre, which runs summer Saturday only weddings, and Headstone Manor Great Barn, which has 37 weddings and pre-wedding events booked this year. Thame Barn described both our exclusive hire pricing and our target of 10 conference days as “very reasonable”; Headstone Manor advised that we “wouldn’t have a problem in hitting our wedding target within the 4 years of operating”, whilst commenting that the absence of in-house catering as the likely reason their own conference bookings underperform — a constraint Heath Barn would not share. Both venues also pointed to private parties and anniversary celebrations as a market we have not modelled. Further detail is at Section 4.2.

4.4.3 Funding Fallback — what happens if the grants do not come

The Head of Disposals identified this as the risk the panel will focus on most closely, and it is a fair one: the Society takes ownership, progresses through planning, and then cannot secure the capital to complete the restoration. The building would be no better off, and arguably worse.

Our answer has three parts.

- First, the funding is now sought in two stages rather than one, following NLHF's own advice: a development grant applied for jointly with the Council before transfer, and a delivery grant applied for once the Society owns the building. Whilst NLHF have stated that they would require HCC to be lead applicant for the development phase grant, this smaller first application is lighter weight, decided regionally, and would build the track record NLHF have told us that they need to see in order to proceed with a larger delivery grant.
- Second, the strategy remains deliberately diversified — beyond NLHF we have opportunities with the Architectural Heritage Fund as both grant funder and lender, with Arts Council England and the Pilgrim Trust, through the community share offer, and with the Queen Elizabeth Trust fund, targeted on building community, which will begin funding in early 2027.
- Third, we have modelled four independent funding routes in full. The plan does not stand or fall on any single funding decision.

The nine-phase programme also allows us to proceed incrementally — completing phases that are funded while continuing to pursue funding for later ones — rather than requiring all capital to be in place before any work begins.

Reading the coverage figures. Several tables in this section show a figure such as “2.03×”. This is coverage — how many times over the venue can afford that year's loan repayment from its operating surplus. Higher is safer. Lenders normally require at least 1.25× before they will lend, meaning income must exceed the repayment by at least a quarter. Every route below is tested against that benchmark.

4.4.3.1 The four routes at a glance

Route	External funding	Community	Total interest over the loan's life	Status
1. Two-stage NLHF (<i>anchor plan</i>)	NLHF £569,373 grant	£34,582	£0	the route NLHF themselves recommended: a development grant led by the Council, then a delivery grant once the Society holds a legal interest.
2. Hybrid — Two stage NLHF grants + AHF grant for the balance	£324,232 NLHF grant + £258,701 AHF grant	£21,022	£0	As per route 1 for delivery, but 2 funders for development, NLHF essentially providing matched funding for AHF
3. Two stage NLHF grants + AHF loan for the balance	NLHF £324,232 grant AHF loan £245,141	£34,582	c. £339,319	Similar to route 2, but AHF provision via loan. (Community contribution could be maximised to reduce long term debt)
4. Full loan funding	£531,955 loan	£72,000	£1,058,000	Fully modelled; viable at 1.43× minimum coverage with a four-year deferral. Wholly independent of grant programme criteria

4.4.3.2 What we have learned from the heritage funders

We submitted an Expression of Interest to the National Lottery Heritage Fund early and deliberately, so that the Council would have evidence of funder engagement before its October decision. The EOI was not passed at panel. NLHF offered a feedback meeting, which was held on 13 August 2026 with Judith Carruthers, Senior Engagement Manager for the Midlands and East, and attended by HCC's Head of Asset Disposals.

We set the outcome out here in full, because we think it strengthens rather than weakens our case — and because the meeting produced something the Council may find directly useful. We regard it as the start of our engagement with NLHF, not the end of it.

“It’s definitely not a ‘no’. It falls right into our wheelhouse. It’s just about managing risks and starting a track record.” — Judith Carruthers, Senior Engagement Manager, National Lottery Heritage Fund, 13 August 2026

What NLHF confirmed is already strong:

- A clear heritage focus, and a project of a kind NLHF actively funds.
- All four of NLHF’s investment principles — saving heritage, inclusion, environmental sustainability and organisational sustainability — articulated well. In their words, “that’s not an issue here”.
- The right kind of activity: the transfer of a historic asset from a local authority to a community group is precisely the pattern NLHF supports.
- Heritage expertise among our founders directly offsets the lack of organisational track record — NLHF were explicit that this “absolutely helps”.
- Our decision to raise the restoration contingency to 25% was independently validated: NLHF look for “a sensible 20–25% contingency”.

What NLHF asked us to strengthen, and what we are doing:

What NLHF asked us to strengthen — and what we have found on re-examination. In two important respects the work NLHF identified as missing had in fact already been done, but was not reachable within a 200-word Expression of Interest. The remedy is therefore presentational rather than substantive. In one respect — the organisational risk — NLHF have themselves proposed the answer.

NLHF feedback	Our response
Costs were presented by RIBA stage; NLHF needs a clear split between Development Phase and Delivery Phase	The cost plan is being restructured into NLHF’s two-phase format, with capital works, professional fees, project management, contingency, inflation and evaluation shown separately in each phase.
Project management costs were missing — NLHF describe a project manager as “a big must”	Project management is being added as an explicit line in both phases. We should also have made clearer that several members of our team already hold project management experience which we intend to deploy.
It was unclear whether the acquisition sat inside or outside the application	The acquisition will sit outside the grant application. NLHF advised this is the cleaner route, and it avoids the additional requirements — including an independent valuation — that apply where acquisition forms part of a project.
Evidence of need was not visible within the Expression of Interest.	The evidence exists and is substantial. Our bid documents a community survey attracting over 500 responses, with demand data recorded option by option; 227 responses from businesses and organisations specifying how they would use the building; 206 formal objections to the residential planning application; and learning drawn from site visits to three comparable operating organisations. None of this was reachable within 200 words. It is being published online and linked from the resubmission, with a short summary paragraph at the front so that an assessor can see the scale of it immediately.
An options appraisal had not been seen	Section 3.3 of our bid is an options appraisal in substance. It sets out all three development scenarios — sole community use, sole residential conversion, and the split-use approach — tests each for viability, and reaches a reasoned recommendation, drawing on the professional judgement of our heritage architect and of a Dacorum Borough Councillor with relevant experience. Again, we will draw attention to it for further submissions.
A Development Viability Appraisal would be required for the Heritage Enterprise route	Our bid establishes the conservation deficit in substance: the chartered surveyor’s assessment that residential conversion would cost in the region of £1 million more than restoration for community use. A Heritage Enterprise application would require this restated formally, with independent end-value valuations. We are reviewing the published guidance to establish whether Heritage Enterprise or the open programme is the better fit and will confirm before the delivery application is made.

The core concern: a newly formed organisation taking on a historic asset	NLHF have proposed the answer themselves. Following consultation with their Head of Investment, they have confirmed that Hertfordshire County Council should act as lead applicant for the development phase, on the basis that the Council owns the building. This places the funder's risk with an established authority while Our Heath Barn resources and delivers the work. Completing that phase then provides the delivered track record NLHF need before the delivery application. NLHF also confirmed that heritage expertise among our founders directly offsets the organisational concern — including Kate Schwarz's senior Historic England background and our architect, Hugo Hardy's extensive heritage development experience including NLHF-funded restorations of Frogmore Paper Mill and of Rectory Lane Cemetery in Berkhamsted.
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Two routes forward:

- **The under-£250,000 route.** NLHF's programme for grants under £250,000 requires no Expression of Interest — a Project Advisory enquiry, then a single-round application assessed in around eight weeks. Critically, it does not require ownership of the building. It would fund scoping, options appraisal, further survey work and market testing, and would establish exactly the track record NLHF is looking for.
- **Resubmission.** The main programme EOI can normally be resubmitted three months after the last submission, restructured in line with the feedback above.

How the funding deadlock is resolved. Asked what would most reduce their risk concern, NLHF were unambiguous: a partnership with the Council, with the asset transfer occurring through the project, was described as “our ideal scenario”. On 26 August 2026 NLHF went further, confirming after consultation with their Head of Investment that the Council should act as lead applicant for the development grant, since it owns the building. This is now the basis of our proposal. It resolves the difficulty both parties had identified: no heritage funder can commit capital before ownership, and the Council reasonably will not transfer without evidence of funding. A partnership application at stage one breaks that deadlock, and transfer then enables the delivery application at stage two.

The Architectural Heritage Fund — the same message, independently

The AHF grants team wrote to us in July 2026, setting out what would need to be in place before an application could be considered. Their position is consistent with NLHF's on the central point.

- **Ownership or a long lease must be in place first.** AHF are not able to consider development or capital grants until ownership or a long lease is in place, and they review eligible projects on their individual merits as applications are submitted.
- **We have been invited to re-engage.** AHF wished us well in our negotiations with the Council and asked us to get in touch if we are successful in securing the building.
- **Current programme priorities.** AHF have highlighted that they are receiving a high volume of applications, and that their current programme prioritises buildings which are listed, on the Heritage at Risk Register, vacant or underused, and located in town centres within the 30% most deprived areas. Heath Barn is listed and has been vacant since 2019. Whilst Boxmoor is not in the 30% most deprived areas, some neighbouring parts of Hemel Hempstead: Highfield, Grovehill, Warners End, Corner Hall, Town Centre all do fall within that definition.

We are seeking clarification from AHF on how the Heritage at Risk criterion applies in our case. Historic England's national Register does not include Grade II secular buildings outside London, so Heath Barn is not eligible to appear on it; it is, however, on the SAVE Britain's Heritage Buildings at Risk Register, and we are asking whether that or a local authority register satisfies the criterion.

Separately, AHF's lending is assessed on project viability and security rather than on these programme priorities — and we have already received a positive response to our initial enquiry about our suitability for an AHF loan. Routes 2 and 3 of the funding ladder therefore remain fully available to us.

What both funders agree on, and why it matters. Both national heritage funders have confirmed in writing that they cannot commit capital before ownership or a long lease is in place. This is not a feature of our bid; it is how heritage funding works, and it means no community organisation bidding for any building anywhere in England can satisfy a test of “show us the grant money before we transfer”. What has changed since our

original submission is that NLHF have identified the way through: a development grant, applied for jointly with the Council before transfer, which does not require OHB ownership at this early stage and which establishes the track record needed for the delivery application afterwards. We would welcome the chance to discuss it.

4.4.3.3 Route 1 — the two stage anchor plan NLHF grants for development and delivery

Our anchor plan is the two-stage route NLHF recommended. Stage one is a development grant of £74,233 — below the £250,000 threshold, decided regionally rather than nationally, and not requiring ownership (described in detail in Section 4.1). It funds design development, surveys, technical investigation and the planning application, and the Council would act as lead applicant. Stage two is a delivery grant of £495,140 (alongside matched funds from the community of £26,060) for the restoration and fit-out, applied for once the Society owns the building or holds a long lease.

4.4.3.4 Route 2 — NLHF development grant, with NLHF and AHF grant sharing the delivery phase

This route keeps the development phase exactly as set out in Route 1, and splits the delivery phase between the two national heritage funders. It carries no debt at all, and it reduces the community's committed contribution further than any other route we have modelled.

The development phase proceeds unchanged: an NLHF development grant of £74,233 with a community match of £3,907, applied for by the Council as lead applicant. For the delivery phase, a second NLHF application of £249,999 — again below the £250,000 threshold and decided regionally — is matched by 5% from community funds, and the balance of £258,701 is met by an AHF Capital Grant.

The arrangement works because each funder's partnership funding requirement is satisfied by the other, albeit this model is assuming that NLHF funding is agreed before AHF funding, and therefore it demonstrates matched funding from the community for the NLHF delivery grant. AHF Capital Grants require 20% partnership funding and fund up to 80% of eligible costs. Here the NLHF grant and community match together provide £262,499 — just over half the delivery phase — comfortably exceeding AHF's requirement, while the AHF grant itself represents 49.6% of the phase, well within their 80% ceiling. Neither funder's money is being counted twice, and neither is a National Lottery distributor to the other, so the restriction on Lottery-to-Lottery matching does not arise.

Source	Amount	Phase
NLHF development grant	£74,233	Development
Community match — development	£3,907	Development
NLHF delivery grant	£249,999	Delivery
Community match — 5%	£12,500	Delivery
AHF Capital Grant	£258,701	Delivery
Community — Society set-up and finance costs	£4,615	Not grant-eligible
TOTAL	£603,955	

The community's committed contribution falls to **£21,022**, against £34,582 under Route 1 and £85,219 under our original structure. For every £1 of community money committed, this route draws down approximately **£27.70** of national heritage grant funding. After the £77,000 acquisition, £5,000 of legal fees and £8,000 of holding costs, **£50,978 of community funds would remain in reserve** — available to strengthen delivery, to bridge grant instalments paid in arrears.

Both NLHF applications sit below the £250,000 regional threshold, and the AHF grant of £258,701 is well within their £500,000 maximum. No application would reach a national quarterly committee, and no borrowing would be required at any stage.

Why this is not our anchor plan. On the numbers this is the strongest route available, and we would pursue it gladly. But it depends on an AHF capital grant, and AHF have told us their current programme prioritises

listed buildings on the Heritage at Risk Register located in town centres within the 30% most deprived areas. We therefore regard an AHF capital grant as possible rather than probable.

4.4.3.5 Route 3 — the hybrid: Two NLHF grants (<£250k tier) with an AHF loan

This route shows what funding would look like if we applied for an NLHF grant (<£250k tier) for development, and then again for delivery, with the balance of delivery funding then coming from an AHF loan. The scenario is set out here because it produces a fully funded programme without a single NLHF application reaching the national quarterly committee.

Whilst an AHF grant would be our preferred option, if the AHF capital grant were unsuccessful, the AHF also lends, on terms more flexible than high street bank rates and designed specifically for heritage projects of this type. Provision via an AHF loan of £245,141 for the balance of delivery produces a route that is comfortably affordable, because the NLHF grant continues to do the financial heavy lifting. We have already received a positive response to our initial enquiry about our suitability for an AHF loan.

Source	Amount	Note
NLHF development grant	£74,233	95% of the £78,140 development phase
Community match — development	£3,907	5%
NLHF delivery grant	£249,999	At the regional ceiling
Community match — delivery	£26,060	5% of the £521,200 delivery phase
AHF loan	£245,141	Below £250,000
Community — Society set-up and finance costs	£4,615	Not grant-eligible
TOTAL	£603,955	

The community contributes £34,582 in total. After the £77,000 acquisition, £5,000 of legal fees and £8,000 of holding costs, **£37,418 remains in reserve.**

Servicing the loan. With terms as follows: 8% interest, with repayment deferred through the development period and the first two Operating Years and interest added to the balance — the loan stands at £333,512 when repayment begins in Operating Year 3.

Repayment is deferred for four years — through the development period and the first two Operating Years, with interest added to the balance rather than paid — and then repaid in instalments over fifteen years from Operating Year 3:

Period	What happens to the loan	Annual repayment	Operating surplus	Left after repayment	Coverage
Development (c. 2 yrs)	Money drawn down; interest added to balance	—	—	—	—
Operating Yrs 1–2	No payments; interest still accruing	—	(£78,672) / £17,936	unchanged	—
Operating Yr 3	Repayment begins (balance £333,512)	£38,964	£82,791	£43,827	2.12×
Operating Yr 4	Repaying	£38,964	£122,790	£83,826	3.15×
Operating Yrs 5–17	Repaying	£38,964	£151,806	£112,842	3.90×
Operating Yr 18+	Loan fully repaid	—	£151,806	£151,806	—

Coverage never falls below 2.1× — well above the 1.25× minimum most lenders require — and the loan is cleared entirely by Operating Year 17. Total interest over the lifetime of the loan is approximately £339,000.

A variant of this route uses all of the community raised funds for delivery funding alongside NLHF grant, which would require an AHF loan of just £199,201 for the balance. Against the previous scenario, borrowing £46,000 less saves about £64,000 in interest paid over the lifetime of the loan and lifts the weakest-year coverage from 2.12× to 2.61×. The cost is that every pound of community money is committed, leaving no reserve — where the previous structure held £37,418 back.

4.4.3.6 Route 4 — funding the entire restoration by borrowing

This route assumes that every grant application fails and the Society funds the entire programme by borrowing. We model it not because we expect it, but because it is the most searching test available of whether the plan is sound.

The borrowing requirement is the programme cost less what the community can contribute. Of the £162,000 raised, £77,000 is committed to acquisition, £5,000 to legal fees on transfer and £8,000 to holding costs, leaving £72,000 available for the works. The balance — **£531,955** — would be borrowed.

Because the building earns nothing during restoration, no repayment is possible until the venue is trading. The structure below therefore defers all payment for four years — the development period plus the first two Operating Years — with interest accruing and added to the balance. The debt grows during this time, from £531,955 to **£723,719** by the point repayment begins.

Period	What happens to the loan	Annual repayment	Operating surplus	Left after repayment	Coverage
Development (c. 2 yrs)	Drawn down; interest added to balance	—	—	—	—
Operating Yrs 1–2	No payments; interest still accruing	—	(£78,672) / £17,936	unchanged	—
Operating Yr 3–4	Interest only	£57,898	£82,791 / £122,790	£24,893 / £64,892	1.43x/2.12x
Operating Yr 5–24	Repaying capital and interest	£73,712	£151,806	£78,094	2.06x
Operating Yrs 25+	Loan fully repaid	—	£151,806	£112,842	—

The stepped structure matters. Repaying capital from Operating Year 3 would give coverage of only 1.12x, below the 1.25x minimum lenders require. Paying interest alone for two years while the venue matures lifts the weakest year to 1.43x and holds it above 2x thereafter.

Why we have modelled it. The cost is severe: approximately **£1.06 million** of interest over the life of the loan, and roughly half the mature operating surplus committed to debt service for two decades — money that would otherwise fund community programming and the building's long-term care. But the route works, and that is its purpose. It demonstrates that the Society's ability to restore Heath Barn and keep it in repair does not depend on any grant decision at all.

4.4.3.7 Borrowing capacity — the headroom behind all of this

The figures above rest on a single underlying measure: how much debt the mature operating surplus can afford to service. At the 1.25x coverage lenders typically require, a surplus of £151,806 supports annual payments of up to £121,445 — equivalent to borrowing of approximately £750,000. Every scenario in this document, including the most adverse combination of stress test and full-loan funding, sits within that envelope.

4.4.3.8 Alternative transfer structures

We recognise that members may prefer to see funding certainty evidenced before an unconditional freehold transfer. We are therefore open to discussing a conditional lease, or a transfer with reversion, under which the Council retains protection while the Society secures its funding. Our objective is the community stewardship of Heath Barn; we are not doctrinaire about the legal route by which that is achieved.

4.4.4 Holding the building before works begin

The Head of Disposals identified a gap in our original submission: we had not budgeted for the cost of holding the site between transfer and the start of works. Vacant buildings attract vandalism and trespass, particularly during school holidays, and those costs escalate quickly once a site is known to be empty. We accept the point and have costed it.

Our budget is £16,000 a year. That is materially below what the Council has been paying, and the difference is not wishful thinking — it comes from two specific decisions set out below, plus the volunteer presence that community ownership makes possible and commercial ownership does not.

Holding costs are a development-period cost and belong in the development budget alongside professional fees and surveys. Our current cost plan does not yet carry a separate line for them; we are adding one, at £16,000 per year for the period between transfer and the commencement of works.

4.4.4.1 The holding budget

Item	Annual	What it covers
Insurance (unoccupied, listed, restricted perils)	£8,000	Cover against fire, lightning, explosion and similar catastrophic loss. See 4.2.
CCTV monitoring and 4G connectivity	£1,200	Ongoing monitoring service and mobile data for owned cameras
Utilities	£900	Power to alarm and camera systems, and frost protection
Professional inspections (quarterly)	£400	Formal documented inspections; volunteers cover weekly checks
Repairs and make-good allowance	£2,000	Prompt repair of any damage, before it worsens or invites more
Grounds upkeep materials and skip hire	£500	Materials only; volunteer labour
Sub-total	£13,000	
Contingency (23%)	£3,000	
TOTAL ANNUAL HOLDING COST	£16,000	

One-off capital cost, to be met from the development budget rather than this annual figure: purchase and installation of the CCTV system, estimated at £1,500–£3,000.

4.4.4.2 How the cost is kept to this level

- **Owned equipment rather than rented towers.** Rented security towers are priced for short construction hires and typically cost £250–£450 a month including monitoring — £3,000 to £5,400 a year, every year. Buying a solar or 4G camera system outright costs £1,500–£3,000 once, after which only the monitoring service and connectivity are payable. Over a two- or three-year hold this is by far the larger saving, and it moves the equipment cost into the development budget where it properly belongs.
- **Restricted-perils cover rather than full cover.** Insurance for empty buildings typically runs 30–80% higher than for occupied ones, and full all-risks cover on a Grade II listed complex would be expensive. But the building is about to be stripped and restored. What matters is protection against catastrophic loss of the historic fabric — fire, lightning, explosion — not theft cover on an empty shell. Restricted-perils cover meets that need at a fraction of the cost.
- **A specialist heritage insurer.** Ecclesiastical and other heritage-focused insurers understand listed-building risk in a way generalist unoccupied-property insurers do not, and price it more sensibly. Three quotes are being obtained.

4.4.4.3 What volunteer presence contributes

This is where community ownership has a genuine advantage over any commercial purchaser, and it is worth being explicit about why it reduces cost rather than merely sounding good:

- **Weekly inspections at no cost.** Insurers commonly require documented weekly inspections of vacant property, and a single missed inspection can invalidate a policy. Our volunteers can carry these out at no cost, and the documented regime itself attracts a lower premium.
- **Early detection of problems.** A burst pipe found within days rather than weeks is the difference between a modest repair and a five-figure claim. Regular presence is the cheapest form of protection there is.
- **A cared-for appearance.** Mown grass, cleared gutters, no graffiti and visible activity change the risk profile of a site. The school-holiday vandalism the Council has experienced is largely a function of a building looking abandoned. It will not look abandoned.

- **Local eyes on the building.** The campaign has an active mailing list of over 700 local people, many of whom live within sight of the building. Problems will be reported quickly.

The site also continues to qualify for 0% business rates during the vacant period, confirmed by HCC Property on 1 July 2026.

4.4.4.4 Status of these figures

To be confirmed. These are researched market estimates, not quotations. Insurance is the single largest line and the main variable — market rates for unoccupied commercial and listed property span a wide range, and where we land within it depends on the cover level, the inspection regime and the insurer. Indicative quotes are being requested from Ecclesiastical Insurance, specialists in Heritage buildings.

4.4.5 Keeping the building in repair — in perpetuity, and in insolvency

The sale particulars set a specific test for community bidders. A purchaser must demonstrate not only that it can put the property into a state of repair consistent with its listed status, but that it can keep it there indefinitely — and community groups are asked to address what happens if the organisation itself becomes insolvent.

This is a reasonable requirement and we have answered it in three layers. The first funds repair while the Society is trading normally. The remaining three address what happens if it is not.

4.4.5.1 In operation — repair is funded as a first-order cost

The financial model treats building maintenance as a fixed obligation, not a residual. From opening, £800 per month is budgeted for routine maintenance. From Operating Year 3, a further £4,271 per month is provisioned against the chartered surveyor's full 5–20 year schedule of works — the £408,600 community share of the identified programme, spread over ten years.

That provision is inside every figure in this document, including every stress test. We have not balanced the books in any adverse scenario by deferring building care. By Operating Year 5 the venue generates £151,806 a year, and the surplus above the maintenance provision accrues to reserves and long-term stewardship.

4.4.5.2 In structure — the statutory asset lock

The Charitable Community Benefit Society carries an asset lock registered with and enforced by the Financial Conduct Authority. Heath Barn cannot be sold for private benefit, cannot be distributed to members, and cannot be extracted by anyone with an interest in the Society. On any winding-up, the freehold must pass to another asset-locked charitable body with similar purposes. The wording of the asset lock particulars allow us to choose an appropriate successor body nearer the time.

This is a stronger protection than a guarantor. A personal or corporate guarantee is only as good as the guarantor's solvency at the moment it is called upon. The asset lock is a permanent feature of the Society's constitution, enforceable by the regulator, and cannot be weakened by a future board.

4.4.5.4 In finance — lender step-in rights

Any lender in the funding stack takes security over the freehold, and heritage and charity lenders structure that security with step-in arrangements designed to transfer a distressed community project to another community operator rather than to force a sale on the open market. This is standard practice among the mission-aligned lenders the Society would use, and it adds a further layer of continuity protection.

4.4.5.5 Taken together

The three layers answer the same question from different directions. While the Society trades, repair is funded from operating income. If the Society fails, the asset lock ensures the building passes to another charitable body rather than to creditors or private hands. A named successor means that body is identified in advance. And any lender's security is structured to keep the building in community use rather than to liquidate it. The building cannot be orphaned.

4.4.6 A note on building condition at handover

Our offer is subject to confirmation that Heath Barn has been maintained responsibly during the period it has been in the Council's care and would be conditional on the outcomes of a full, independent condition survey carried out prior to exchange. This is a point we hope to discuss in more detail with the Council directly.

We would be failing in our duty of transparency if we did not acknowledge that we hold correspondence — spanning more than three years — raising concerns about the condition of the building during the period it has been vacant. Concerns were raised in communications from our architect Hugo Hardy, from Our Heath Barn CIC Director Lisa Timms, and from Rory Cullen approximately one year ago.

We are also aware that a high security fence was erected at the site in May 2026, some six years after the building was last in active use and understand this was constructed in direct response to ongoing concerns raised by Dacorum Borough Council's Conservation Officer, Helen Cal-Fernandez. The erection of a significant new fence on a Grade II listed site — at a point when no active development or restoration programme was under way — is itself indicative of the deterioration concerns that have accumulated over this period.

We raise this not to be adversarial, but because any responsible community bid must be clear about what it is acquiring. We remain fully committed to the restoration of Heath Barn and believe the building can be brought back into outstanding community use. But the scope and cost of that restoration must reflect the actual condition of the building on the day of transfer — and we would expect the Council to engage openly with us on this question as part of any agreed heads of terms.

Conclusion

A final word on timing. We are conscious that Hertfordshire is mid-way through a process of Local Government Reorganisation, with vesting day for new unitary councils set for 1 April 2028.

We believe it is in everyone's interest — the community's, the Council's, and the building's — that a decision on Heath Barn is reached before that transition gathers pace. Hertfordshire County Council is the authority that has owned and been responsible for this building throughout its modern history. A decision made now carries the full democratic legitimacy and institutional clarity that the building deserves. We are not seeking to create pressure — we are simply noting that the window for a clean, considered decision is now, and we are ready to receive one.

Heath Barn has served Boxmoor for 500 years. With the Council's support, it can serve the next 500. We are ready. The community is behind us.

Many of us are already solving problems and creating change in our communities. We ask Hertfordshire County Council to look to us as knowledgeable collaborators. Our Heath Barn CIC wants to be a partner that helps create a solution that works for everyone.

Lisa Timms

Lead, Our Heath Barn CIC
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August 2026

Key References & Supporting Documents

- SAVE Britain's Heritage — Buildings at Risk Register (Heath Barn added June 2025)** | savebritainsheritage.org/buildings-at-risk
- National Lottery Heritage Fund — Heritage 2033 strategy and investment principles** | heritagefund.org.uk/about/heritage-2033-our-10-year-strategy
- National Lottery Heritage Fund — Heritage Grants £250,000 to £10 million** | heritagefund.org.uk/funding/national-lottery-heritage-grants-250k-10m
- Architectural Heritage Fund — Heritage Revival Fund** | ahfund.org.uk/grants/England/
- Historic England — National Heritage List: Heath Barn (Entry 1251174)** | historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1251174
- Historic England — National Heritage List: Heath Farmhouse (Entry 1251155)** | historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1251155
- Historic England — National Heritage List: Heath Barn Cottage (Entry 1251157)** | historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1251157
- Historic England — Evidence of the Value of Heritage to Society** | historicengland.org.uk/advice/caring-for-heritage/social-impact/indicators/research-evidence/
- Historic England — Heritage Works for Creative Businesses** | historicengland.org.uk/whats-new/news/guide-to-developing-creative-industry-hubs/
- Our Heath Barn Sustainability Strategy 2026–2030** | Submitted as supporting document — aligned to UN SDGs and Sustainable Hertfordshire Strategy 2026–2028
- Our Heath Barn Social Value Calculator & SROI Briefing Note** | Submitted as supporting document
- Our Heath Barn Development & Restoration Costs (Hardy / Battram, April 2026)** | Submitted as supporting document
- Our Heath Barn Business Plan v2 (May 2026)** | Submitted as supporting document
- CIC 36 — Declaration on Formation of Our Heath Barn CIC (28 June 2024)** | Submitted as supporting document — signed by all three founding directors; Companies House registration record
- Letter of Support — Neil Hassell, Headteacher, The Hemel Hempstead School (on behalf of students, staff, governors and alumni), 22 May 2026** | Submitted as supporting document
- Letter of Support — Dacorum Borough Council (Diane Southam, Strategic Director – Place and Communities), 11 May 2026** | Submitted as supporting document
- Letter of Support — Hugo Hardy, RIBA/Arb Chartered Architect, 22 May 2026** | Submitted as supporting document
- Letter of Support — Louis Curtis, MSc Timber Building Conservation, IHBC, Breakspear Conservation, 21 May 2026** | Submitted as supporting document
- Letter of Support — Katie Lovell, Chair, Hemel Hempstead Theatre Company (HHTC) / Boxmoor Playhouse, 24 May 2026** | Submitted as supporting document
- Appendix A — Comparative Local Room Hire Rates (May 2026)** | Submitted as supporting document
- Mak, Gallou & Fancourt (2023) — Social capital and historic built environment, UCL / Historic England** | doi.org/10.1177/17579139221145609
- WHO (2019) — What is the evidence on the role of the arts in improving health and well-being?** | [Regional Office for Europe Health Evidence Network Synthesis Report 67](https://www.euro.who.int/en/health-topics/mental-health/news-and-events/2019/04/what-is-the-evidence-on-the-role-of-the-arts-in-improving-health-and-well-being?lang=en)
- Hertfordshire Local Government Reorganisation — hertfordshire-lgr.co.uk** | [Government decision expected summer 2026; vesting day 1 April 2028](https://hertfordshire-lgr.co.uk)
- Heath Barn — The Time is Now (campaign film)** | youtube.com/watch?v=qgDO84PT6B4
- Berko & Beyond Podcast — Episode 8: Turning a 16th-Century Barn Into a Local Community Hub** | youtube.com/watch?v=fZ8ebvmfDnE
- Plunkett UK — Community Ownership: A Better Form of Business, 2025** | plunkett.co.uk/better-business-report-2025/
- Plunkett UK — Updating Your Model Rules** | plunkett.co.uk/updating-your-model-rules/
- HACT UK Social Value Bank v7 (Simetrica-Jacobs)** | [Aligned to HM Treasury Green Book Supplementary Guidance \(2022\)](https://www.hact.org.uk/2022/05/12/hact-uk-social-value-bank-v7/)
- Dacorum Local Plan to 2041 (Pre-Submission, November 2024) — Chapters 7, 10 and 4** | dacorum.gov.uk/docs/default-source/strategic-planning/dacorum-local-plan-to-2041.pdf

Heath Barn

Our Heath Barn Charitable Community Benefit Society

Appendix A: Comparative Local Room Hire Rates

Introduction

This appendix sets out a survey of room hire rates charged by comparable venues in the Boxmoor and wider Hemel Hempstead / Berkhamsted area. It supports the revenue assumptions contained in the Heath Barn Business Plan by demonstrating that the proposed Heath Barn hire rates are:

- Competitive with, and in many cases below, comparable local venues
- Significantly below heritage-equivalent venues of similar character and standing
- Well-positioned to attract bookings whilst leaving meaningful room for future rate increases as the venue establishes its reputation

Rates were collected in May 2026 from publicly available sources and direct local research. All rates are exclusive of VAT unless stated.

1. Local Community & Church Halls

The following venues represent Heath Barn's direct competition for regular hourly community hire — meetings, classes, rehearsals, children's activities, and small social events. These are the venues that prospective hirers will compare Heath Barn against for day-to-day bookings.

Venue	Space	Day rate	Evening rate	Notes
Catholic Church — Parish Centre	Main hall	£24/hr	£36/hr (after 6pm)	Mon–Sun 8am–10:30pm. 2-hr minimum. Charity/regular discounts available.
Catholic Church — St Joseph's Hall	Hall	£16/hr	£16/hr	Mon–Sun 8am–10:30pm. Single flat rate.
Boxmoor Playhouse	Main Hall (tables/chairs)	£30/hr	£45/hr	Mon–Fri daytime. Sat all day £75/hr. Kitchen & toilets included. 2-hr minimum.
Boxmoor Playhouse	Main Hall / Theatre style	£50/hr	£60/hr	Fri/Sat £85/hr. Stage included. Auditorium 200; dining 120. Technical & bar staff extra.
Boxmoor Playhouse	Whole day – events/weddings	£850/day	£850/day	Mon–Sun flat-rate whole-day hire.
St John's Church	Full Hall	£32.50/hr	£32.50/hr	From Jan 2026.
St John's Church	Hall 1 (larger)	£18.75/hr	£18.75/hr	From Jan 2026.

St John's Church / St Francis Hall	Hall 2 / smaller hall	£17.50/hr	£17.50/hr (occ.) / £11–£12.50/hr (reg.)	Seasonal rates apply (summer/winter). Regular hire significantly discounted.
Boxmoor & Warners End Community Centre	Main Hall	£28/hr	£31.50/hr	Fri/Sat evening block (6pm–11:45pm) £335. Sat from 1pm £475. Children's parties £45/hr.
Boxmoor & Warners End Community Centre	Room 1 or 2	£15/hr	£15/hr (weekday)	Sat day £22/hr; Sat eve £23/hr; Sun £28/hr.
Boxmoor & Warners End Community Centre	Both Rooms 1 & 2	£25/hr	£25/hr (weekday)	Sat day £31/hr; Sat eve £34/hr; Sat block £250. Kitchen only: £23/hr.

Key observation: Heath Barn's proposed non-exclusive West Barn hourly rate of £50/hour sits at the top of the community hall market — in line with the Boxmoor Playhouse theatre rate and above all church halls. This premium is justified by the heritage character of the building, access to the garden and courtyard, and the quality of the planned fit-out. The North Barn snug at £30/hour is competitively priced against St John's Full Hall (£32.50/hr) and well above the smaller room rates, reflecting its character and therapeutic setting.

2. Comparable Heritage Event Venues

For exclusive-access wedding and event hire, the most relevant comparator is Headstone Manor Great Barn in Harrow — a listed heritage barn of comparable character to the Heath Barn West Barn, operating as a premium exclusive-hire wedding venue. This provides the clearest like-for-like market benchmark for Heath Barn's exclusive event pricing.

Venue	Rate	Notes
Headstone Manor Great Barn (Harrow)	Apr–Oct: Mon–Thu £6,350 / Fri–Sun £7,734 (incl. bank hols)	All-day exclusive hire. Heritage listed barn. Free corkage, external catering only
Headstone Manor Great Barn (Harrow)	Nov–Mar: Mon–Sun £5,007	Off-peak rate. Ceremony charge £262 additional. Early access from 7am: £159.
Headstone Manor Great Barn (Harrow)	Day before / de-rig: Mon–Thu £523 / Fri–Sun £1,568	Set-up and breakdown days billed separately. All prices inclusive of VAT.
Thame Barn Centre (Thame)	May–Aug: Saturday, exclusive use £2,500	Catering option available, and paid bar option only
Thame Barn Centre (Thame)	Large barn, day before or non-exclusive hire £1,400	Catering option available, and paid bar option only

Key observation: Headstone Manor charges £5,007–£7,734 per day for exclusive barn hire — before catering, staffing or any other extras. Heath Barn's proposed Saturday wedding rate of £3,000 sits 40–60% below this benchmark, a deliberate strategy to build volume and reputation in the venue's early years while offering strong value to local couples.

Heath Barn's offer compares favourably beyond price alone. Free corkage is included alongside in-house catering — a benefit rarely offered at comparable venues — and a proposed partnership with Boxmoor Playhouse extends capacity for full-day and evening celebrations, with a daytime reception in the West Barn and an evening bar, disco or live band hosted at the Playhouse. Combined with Heath Barn's proximity to local churches and the Register Office at The Forum, and the absence of any comparable heritage venue nearby, this positions Heath Barn strongly against a well-established, higher-priced market alternative.

The model demonstrates clear headroom to raise rates to £4,000–£5,000 per event as the venue establishes itself, which would add £20,000–£50,000 to annual revenue at 15–20 events per year — headroom the base case financial model does not assume, but which underlines the conservative nature of the current projections.

3. Serviced Office & Meeting Room Comparators

Heath Barn's therapy rooms, cottage rooms, and snug are also competing in the small office and meeting room market. The following rates have been gathered from providers in the Hemel Hempstead and Berkhamsted area to benchmark the proposed Heath Barn long-term lease and hourly hire rates for these spaces.

Location / provider	Per desk / hot desk	Private suite (~100 sq ft)	Notes
Hemel Hempstead (Maylands / corporate hubs)	£195–£350/month	£500–£850/month	All-inclusive (Regus, Spaces, BizSpace). Parking generally included. Prices ex-VAT.
Berkhamsted (boutique / central)	£250–£450/month	£750–£1,100+/month	Character buildings and premium hubs. Parking scarce and often extra. High demand / fast-moving.
D-Lab, Berkhamsted (Clarence Road)	£155–£250/month (desk)	£19/hr (meeting room)	Hot desk £25/day; coworking from £155/month includes locker, 24/7 access & free meeting room use.
The Maylands Building, Hemel	Hot desk ½-day £23 / full day £45	Day office (1–2 people) £119/day	Modern, high-spec. Monthly private office from ~£500–£600/month. No mention of parking surcharge.
Breakspear Park (Regus), Hemel	—	£550–£700/month (est.)	Landmark M1 location. All-inclusive. Premium corporate environment.

Key observation: Heath Barn's proposed therapy room rate of £15/hour is below the local serviced office market, appropriate for a charitable venue offering therapeutic and community use and highly attractive to independent practitioners. The long-term lease rate of £1000/month per room, however, sits towards the top of the comparator range for a private serviced suite, and well above the hot-desk rates shown here. This reflects the distinct nature of the Heath Barn offer: practitioners are not renting a generic desk or office, but a heritage-setting therapy or consulting room with the benefit of a community wellbeing environment, café and gardens on site, and no shared corporate overheads. The rate is positioned as a premium, character-led alternative to standard serviced office space, consistent with the specialist therapeutic use these rooms are intended for — with headroom to moderate pricing where needed to secure occupancy in the early years.

4. Heath Barn Proposed Rates — Summary Comparison

The table below brings together all Heath Barn revenue streams and positions each against the most relevant local market benchmark.

Heath Barn space / use	Proposed rate	Comparable market rate	Positioning
West Barn – Saturday exclusive hire (wedding)	£3,000/day	£5,007–£7,734/day (Headstone Manor)	Significantly below comparable heritage barn. Strong value proposition for local couples, including free corkage. Room to increase as reputation builds.

West Barn – Friday exclusive hire (wedding)	£2,800/day	£5,007–£7,734/day	Same as above. Friday pricing deliberately lower to drive bookings on a less competitive day.
West Barn – non-exclusive daytime hire	£50/hr	£28–£50/hr (community halls)	At the top of the community hall market, reflecting character, space, heritage, and garden access. Competitive vs Boxmoor Playhouse (£50/hr theatre).
West Barn – evening hire	£50/hr	£31.50–£75/hr	Below Boxmoor Playhouse Saturday (£75/hr) and well below Headstone Manor day rate. Strong value position.
West Barn – Monday exclusive conference	£2,000/day	£500–£850/month (serviced office)	Per-day conference rate; not directly comparable to monthly office. Includes full venue, garden, and kitchen access.
North Barn snug – hourly hire	£30/hr	£15–£32.50/hr (community halls)	In line with St John's Full Hall. Justified by heritage character, garden access, and quality of fit-out.
Therapy / treatment rooms – hourly	£15/hr	£15–£19/hr (D-Lab meeting room)	Market rate. Long-term lease option (£250/week) provides attractive certainty for practitioners.
Cottage rooms – long lease	£1000/month/room	£500–£1,100/month (serviced office)	In line with serviced office rates and reflecting its position as a premium, character-led alternative — heritage setting, wellbeing environment, no corporate overheads
Catering – sit-down meal	£44/head	£80–£120/head (typical caterer)	Substantially below market rate. Reflects in-house kitchen efficiency and shared staff model. Significant upsell opportunity. Room to increase as reputation builds.
Catering – evening buffet	£14.50/head	£20–£35/head (typical)	Competitive. Builds volume and keeps overall per-head package (£58.50) very attractive. Room to increase as reputation builds.
Location filming	£4,000 per 3-day block (~£1,333/day)	£1,500–£3,500/day (heritage barn)	Conservatively modelled at the low end of the range. Strong upside as location becomes established with agencies.

5. Conclusions

The market survey supports the following conclusions for the Business Plan:

- Heath Barn's proposed rates are carefully positioned below, or in line with comparable market rates across all use types — reducing the commercial risk in the establishment phase while remaining financially viable
- The exclusive wedding hire rate (£3,000/day) represents the most significant pricing opportunity: at 40–60% below the Headstone Manor benchmark, there is clear evidence that rates can be increased substantially as the venue's reputation grows
- The non-exclusive hourly rate (£50/hr) is competitive and justified by the heritage character of the building — hirers will be paying a modest premium over church halls in exchange for a significantly more distinctive environment
- Catering rates (£44/head meal + £14.50/head buffet = £58.50 combined) are highly competitive against the broader catering market (typically £80–£120/head), providing a strong commercial proposition for wedding and event clients, alongside a very attractive free corkage offer.
- Therapy room and cottage room rates are appropriate for the charitable / community positioning, and are in line with the serviced office market — making them attractive to practitioners and reducing void risk.
- Location filming is conservatively priced at the low end of the heritage property market (£1,333/day equivalent), with clear upside as Heath Barn registers with location agencies and builds a track record

Overall, the pricing strategy adopted in the Business Plan is conservative and evidence-based. It prioritises occupancy and community access in the early years, with a clear pathway to revenue growth through rate increases as the venue establishes itself. The competitive positioning across all use types de-risks the Operating Year 1–2 establishment period and supports the path to financial self-sufficiency by Operating Year 3.

Sources: Catholic Church Boxmoor parish rate card; Boxmoor Playhouse website (May 2026); St John's Church hire fees schedule (January 2026); Boxmoor & Warners End Community Centre hire schedule; Headstone Manor website (April 2026); D-Lab Berkhamsted; The Maylands Building; Regus/Spaces Hemel Hempstead; local market research.

All rates are as published or quoted in May 2026. Rates are exclusive of VAT unless stated. Heath Barn rates are as per the Heath Barn Revenue by Year V4 financial model.

Appendix B: Financial Business Plan

Heath Barn

Appendix B: Financial Business Plan

Supporting detail for Section 4.2, Operating Financial Case

How to read this appendix. Section 4.2 of this bid sets out the operating financial case: the methodology, the ten-year forecast, the loan requirement, sensitivity analysis, grant funders and key assumptions. This appendix does not repeat that material. It provides the underlying detail that sits beneath it — the space-by-space description of the venue, the full hire rate card, utilisation and revenue by individual stream, and the itemised cost schedule. Read Section 4.2 first; use this appendix to interrogate the numbers behind it.

B.1 The Venue

B.1.1 Building overview

Heath Barn is a heritage building located in Boxmoor. The site comprises several distinct spaces, each with its own commercial potential:

- West Barn — the primary event space, suitable for exclusive-access weddings, conferences, and facilitated events
- North Barn (café) — approximately 10m × 7.5m, configured as a community café with c.32 indoor seats plus outdoor seating (average 40 covers year-round)
- North Barn snug — approximately 6m × 5.4m, suitable for smaller meetings and therapy sessions
- Therapy / treatment rooms — four ground-floor rooms, two targeted for hourly hire and two for long-term therapeutic tenancy
- Child and family therapeutic space / protected courtyard
- Welcome office — front-of-house and potential local produce / plant sales
- Cottage — three rooms, suitable for short-term hire or long-lease residential or office use (Phase 2)
- Garden — available for forest school hire, weekend markets, and outdoor event extensions

B.1.2 Legal structure and charitable status

Heath Barn will be operated by a Charitable Community Benefit Society (CCBS). This structure delivers significant financial benefits:

- Business rates: 80% mandatory relief as a charitable CBS, with potential for 100% discretionary relief from the local authority
- Corporation tax: no liability as a registered charity
- Gift Aid and donation eligibility, maximising the value of community support
- VAT: registration from the point of acquisition enables recovery of VAT on substantial parts of the renovation programme. Room hire income is expected to be VAT-exempt; café and catering income is standard-rated at 20%

B.1.3 Phase 1 and Phase 2

- Phase 1 (opening): West Barn, North Barn café, snug, therapy rooms, welcome office, garden
- Phase 2 (once established): Cottage renovation and letting, additional catering events

Acquisition costs, mandatory immediate renovations, and Phase 1 fit-out are to be funded through the community share offer, crowdfunding and grant applications. Cottage renovation (Phase 2) is similarly planned as externally funded, not from operating income.

B.1.4 Exclusive hire — West Barn

The West Barn is the principal income-generating space for exclusive events. Three distinct hire categories are modelled:

- Saturday weddings: £3,000 per event, capacity 15 per year (site closed to other activity on these days)
- Friday weddings: £2,800 per event, capacity 5 per year (site closed to other activity on these days)
- Monday exclusive hire — conferences, facilitated workshops, corporate: £2,000 per day, 10 days per year

Non-exclusive hire of the West Barn (at £50/hour, up to 14 hours/day, 5.9 days/week) provides additional income on days not blocked for exclusive events.

B.1.5 Location filming

Heath Barn's heritage character makes it an attractive location for film and television production. The model assumes one filming engagement per year: a 3-day block at £4,000 total (£1,333/day equivalent), generating approximately £333/month on an annualised basis. Market research indicates a heritage barn with good vehicle access commands £1,500–£3,500/day from mid-budget productions, meaning the model is deliberately conservative with clear upside as the venue registers with location agencies.

B.1.6 Café — North Barn

The café is central to Heath Barn's community mission and is modelled as a financially self-sustaining operation. Detailed modelling demonstrates that the £1,500/month target net profit is achievable with the following parameters:

Parameter	Value	Notes
Seats	40	32 indoors + outside seating in summer
Covers per seat per day	2.3×	Over a 9-hour operating day
Average spend per head	£9.00	Intentionally conservative — community use (coffee groups etc.) will lower average; upsell opportunities (afternoon teas, breakfasts, lunches) will raise it
Food & drink cost %	32%	Standard café gross margin target
Days open per week	6	Closed on full exclusive-access wedding days
Fixed overhead / week	£400	Café utilities not in main running cost sheet; shared insurances, broadband and marketing reduce this further over time
Core annual staffing cost	£130,161	Wages + employer NI at 15% (April 2025 rate) above £5,000/yr threshold, net of £10,500 Employment Allowance. Based on NLW £12.71/hr (2025/26). Head chef likely above NLW; manager salary partially shared with site management. Café & catering staff not in the main monthly overhead schedule
Catered sit-down meals / year	20	70 covers at £44/head — exclusive access wedding/event days
Wedding evening buffets / year	15	100 covers at £14.50/head — run after wedding meal, team already on site
Café-day evening buffets / year	20	100 covers at £14.50/head — team extends their café day
Combined wedding catering / head	£58.50	£44 meal + £14.50 buffet — very competitive vs market rate of £80–£120/head

Staff sharing is central to the café model. The same core team (manager, head chef, kitchen assistant, two front-of-house staff) serves both the café and all catering events. On exclusive wedding days the café closes and the team pivots to the event at zero additional fixed cost. Evening buffets on wedding days are the highest-margin activity in the entire model — the team is already on site, and incremental cost per event is minimal.

B.1.7 Catering events

Building on the café kitchen and team, Heath Barn will offer catering for its exclusive-access events. Three catering formats are modelled:

- **Sit-down wedding breakfast / event meal:** 70 covers at £44/head, target net profit £1,000 per event after allocated staff and food costs. 20 events per year; food cost modelled at 35%.

- **Wedding evening buffet:** 100 covers at £14.50/head, run after the sit-down meal on wedding days. 15 events per year; incremental cost only, as the team is already on site.
- **Café-day evening buffet:** 100 covers at £14.50/head, on normal café days. 20 events per year; the core team extends their day, with only overtime and one casual staff member incremental.

Combined catering cost to wedding clients is £58.50/head, highly competitive against a market rate of £80–£120/head.

B.1.8 Therapy and treatment rooms

Two ground-floor therapy/treatment rooms are offered on both an hourly hire basis (£15/hour) and a long-term lease arrangement (£1,000 per room per month). Long-term leases provide reliable baseline income; hourly hire captures occasional and growing demand.

B.1.9 Cottage

The cottage (three rooms) is a Phase 2 development, assumed to open in Operating Year 3. Rooms are modelled on both hourly hire (£15/hour) and long-term lease (£1,000 per room per month). Once operational, the cottage contributes approximately £5,592/month at full utilisation.

B.1.10 Other income streams

- Artisan / artist-in-residence studio: £100/week, 70% utilisation when established
- Weekend market: bi-weekly Sunday market with access to garden and West Barn, £125 per session
- Forest school garden hire: £50/session
- Hanging art and sculpture: 20% commission on sales, estimated £80/month at establishment
- Welcome office / local produce: small-scale retail, £50/month

B.2 Revenue Model

The methodology behind these figures — market benchmarking, the two-market pricing framework, and the progressive ramp-up assumption — is set out in Section 4.2.1. This section provides the underlying detail: the rate charged for every space, the utilisation assumed for every stream in every year, and the resulting revenue.

B.2.1 Hire rate card

Space / stream	Hire type	Rate	Notes
EXCLUSIVE-ACCESS EVENT HIRE — WEST BARN			
West Barn — Saturday wedding	Exclusive, per event	£3,000/event	Maximum 15 events/year
West Barn — Friday wedding	Exclusive, per event	£2,800/event	Maximum 5 events/year
West Barn — conferences & facilitated workshops	Exclusive, per day (Mondays)	£2,000/day	Maximum 10 days/year
Location filming	Exclusive, per booking	£4,000/3-day booking	Equivalent to c. £1,333/day; assumed 1 booking/year
West Barn — non-exclusive hire	Per hour	£50/hour	Available on all non-exclusive days
HOURLY HIRE — OTHER SPACES			
North Barn snug	Per hour	£30/hour	Approx. 6m × 5.4m; 8 hrs/day available
Therapy / treatment rooms (×2)	Per hour	£15/hour	Ground floor; independent practitioners and community groups
Cottage rooms (×3)	Per hour	£15/hour	Phase 2 — available from Operating Year 3
Child & family therapeutic space	Per hour	£15/hour	Protected courtyard space; up to 5 hrs/day
LONG-TERM LEASE (MONTHLY)			
Therapy / treatment room (×2 available)	Long-term lease, per room	£1,000/month	Benchmarked against local serviced-office and consulting-room rates (Appendix A)
Cottage room / office (×3 available)	Long-term lease, per room	£1,000/month	Phase 2 — available from Operating Year 3
OTHER / COMMUNITY USE			
Artisan / artist-in-residence studio	Weekly rate	£100/week	—
Weekend market	Per session (bi-weekly Sunday)	£125/session	Access to garden and West Barn
Welcome office / local produce	Ad hoc / revenue share	Rate to be confirmed	Small-scale, community-facing use
Forest school garden hire	Nominal community rate	£50/session	Outdoor/garden use for children's groups
Hanging art / sculpture display	Commission on sales	20% commission	Not a space-hire rate — included for completeness

B.2.2 Utilisation by revenue stream — Operating Years 1 to 10

The table below shows, for each revenue stream, its maximum annual capacity and the percentage of that capacity assumed to be utilised in each Operating Year.

Revenue stream	Maximum annual capacity	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y6	Y7	Y8	Y9	Y10
West Barn – Saturday weddings	15 weddings/year	0%	50%	75%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
West Barn – Friday weddings	5 weddings/year	0%	20%	40%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
West Barn – exclusive conferences	10 days/year	20%	60%	80%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Location filming	Up to 3 bookings/year	50%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
West Barn – non-exclusive hire	4,270 hours/year	30%	40%	40%	40%	40%	40%	40%	40%	40%	40%
Café – North Barn	40 seats, 6 days/week	0%	30%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Catering – sit-down meal	20 events/year	0%	50%	75%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Catering – wedding evening buffet	15 buffets/year	0%	50%	75%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Catering – café-day evening buffet	20 buffets/year	20%	50%	75%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
North Barn snug	2,440 hours/year	25%	30%	30%	40%	40%	40%	40%	40%	40%	40%
Therapy rooms – hourly (×2)	4,992 hours/year	20%	30%	30%	30%	30%	30%	30%	30%	30%	30%
Therapy rooms – long lease (×2)	2 rooms @ £1,000/mo	50%	75%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Child & family therapeutic space	1,300 hours/year	20%	20%	30%	30%	30%	30%	30%	30%	30%	30%
Welcome office / local produce	Available capacity	0%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Cottage rooms – hourly (×3)	7,488 hours/year	0%	0%	30%	30%	30%	30%	30%	30%	30%	30%
Cottage – long lease (×3)	3 rooms @ £1,000/mo	0%	0%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Artisan / artist-in-residence	Weekly @ £100/week	20%	40%	60%	70%	70%	70%	70%	70%	70%	70%

Weekend market	Bi-weekly @ £125	0%	40%	70%	70%	70%	70%	70%	70%	70%	70%
Forest school garden hire	Monthly @ £50	0%	50%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Hanging art / sculpture commission	Monthly @ £100	0%	40%	80%	80%	80%	80%	80%	80%	80%	80%

Several streams are modelled at well below 100% even at maturity — notably the snug, hourly therapy rooms and non-exclusive West Barn hire. This is deliberate conservatism in the base case, not a capacity constraint, and represents further upside not captured in the forecast.

B.2.3 Revenue by revenue stream — Operating Years 1 to 10

Derived from the utilisation percentages in B.2.2 and the rates in B.2.1. Café and catering rows are shown net of VAT (+1.2), consistent with the underlying financial model; all other streams are VAT-exempt room hire.

Revenue stream	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10
West Barn – Saturday weddings	£0	£22,500	£33,750	£45,000	£45,000	£45,000	£45,000	£45,000	£45,000	£45,000
West Barn – Friday weddings	£0	£2,800	£5,600	£14,000	£14,000	£14,000	£14,000	£14,000	£14,000	£14,000
West Barn – exclusive conferences	£4,000	£12,000	£16,000	£20,000	£20,000	£20,000	£20,000	£20,000	£20,000	£20,000
Location filming	£2,000	£4,000	£4,000	£4,000	£4,000	£4,000	£4,000	£4,000	£4,000	£4,000
West Barn – non-exclusive hire	£59,123	£78,831	£78,831	£78,831	£78,831	£78,831	£78,831	£78,831	£78,831	£78,831
Café – North Barn	£0	£4,500	£15,000	£15,000	£15,000	£15,000	£15,000	£15,000	£15,000	£15,000
Catering – sit-down meal	£0	£8,333	£12,500	£16,667	£16,667	£16,667	£16,667	£16,667	£16,667	£16,667
Catering – wedding evening buffet	£0	£4,506	£6,759	£9,012	£9,012	£9,012	£9,012	£9,012	£9,012	£9,012
Catering – café-day evening buffet	£2,153	£5,383	£8,075	£10,767	£10,767	£10,767	£10,767	£10,767	£10,767	£10,767
North Barn snug	£16,892	£20,271	£20,271	£27,028	£27,028	£27,028	£27,028	£27,028	£27,028	£27,028
Therapy rooms – hourly (x2)	£13,824	£20,736	£20,736	£20,736	£20,736	£20,736	£20,736	£20,736	£20,736	£20,736
Therapy rooms – long lease (x2)	£12,000	£18,000	£24,000	£24,000	£24,000	£24,000	£24,000	£24,000	£24,000	£24,000
Child & family therapeutic space	£3,600	£3,600	£5,400	£5,400	£5,400	£5,400	£5,400	£5,400	£5,400	£5,400
Welcome office / local produce	£0	£600	£600	£600	£600	£600	£600	£600	£600	£600
Cottage rooms – hourly (x3)	£0	£0	£31,104	£31,104	£31,104	£31,104	£31,104	£31,104	£31,104	£31,104
Cottage – long lease (x3)	£0	£0	£36,000	£36,000	£36,000	£36,000	£36,000	£36,000	£36,000	£36,000
Artisan / artist-in-residence	£960	£1,920	£2,880	£3,360	£3,360	£3,360	£3,360	£3,360	£3,360	£3,360
Weekend market	£0	£2,400	£4,200	£4,200	£4,200	£4,200	£4,200	£4,200	£4,200	£4,200
Forest school garden hire	£0	£300	£600	£600	£600	£600	£600	£600	£600	£600
Hanging art / sculpture commission	£0	£480	£960	£960	£960	£960	£960	£960	£960	£960
TOTAL ANNUAL REVENUE	£114,552	£211,160	£327,266	£367,265	£367,265	£367,265	£367,265	£367,265	£367,265	£367,265

B.3 Cost Model

B.3.1 Monthly operating costs

The table below sets out the full monthly cost schedule. All costs are at current (2026) prices. The model does not include inflation, on the basis that revenue is assumed to increase broadly in line with costs over the period.

Cost item	Monthly (£)	Notes / basis
Operating costs		
Water rates	£164	Architect estimate
Electricity	£1,300	Estimate; excludes café (in café model)
Gas	£800	Estimate; excludes café
Telephone / broadband	£150	Business line estimate
Printing, stationery	£100	Architect estimate
IT costs	£500	Volunteer support anticipated
Audit & accountancy	£200	Architect estimate
External bookkeeping	£1,000	Including café
Health & safety / security	£100	Architect estimate
Marketing / signage	£500	Architect estimate
Building insurance	£750	Estimate — heritage property rebuild value
Contents insurance	£150	Estimate based on £60k–£70k contents
Public liability insurance	£200	Estimate for £10m cover
Employer's liability	£75	Planning figure
5–20yr repairs (Battram report, over 10 yrs)	£4,271	c. £410k further works identified by surveyor
Gardening services	£250	Architect estimate; volunteer support hoped for
Cleaning services	£1,020	Architect estimate
Ongoing maintenance	£800	Architect estimate
Business rates	£0	Charitable CBS — 80% mandatory + discretionary relief
Corporation tax	£0	No corporation tax as registered charity
Sub-total operating costs	£12,330	
Salaries		
Admin assistant	£2,000	
Site / venue manager	£3,000	Part may be shared with café management
Employer National Insurance	£625	15% above £5,000/yr secondary threshold (April 2025)
Sub-total salaries	£5,625	
TOTAL MONTHLY COSTS (established)	£17,955	From Operating Year 3 (incl. long-term maintenance)
Pre-established running (Operating Years 1–2)	£13,684	Full maintenance provision added from Operating Year 3

B.3.2 Notes on specific costs

- Utilities:** Electricity and gas estimates are based on the full volume of the building and its low thermal efficiency. Café utilities are excluded, being captured within the café model's fixed overhead. These estimates should be verified with an energy consultant before opening; a 50% increase would add approximately £12,600/year — material but manageable against the Operating Year 3+ surplus.
- Repairs provision:** The Mark Battram surveyor's report identifies approximately £410,000 of further maintenance works required over a 5–20 year horizon. This is provisioned at £4,271/month from Operating Year 3. No provision is made in Operating Years 1–2, which reduces the cost base during the establishment period when the identified works are not yet due.
- Salaries:** The manager salary (£3,000/month) is partially shared with café management responsibilities. Core café and catering staffing (£130,161/year) is modelled separately and is not included in the monthly overhead schedule above, avoiding double-counting. That figure uses NLW £12.71/hr (2025/26), employer NI at 15% above the £5,000/yr secondary threshold, net of the £10,500 Employment Allowance.
- Volunteers:** A number of cost lines (gardening, bookkeeping, IT, cleaning) are expected to benefit from volunteer support, potentially reducing actual expenditure below the modelled figures.
- Business rates:** The charitable CBS structure provides 80% mandatory relief. Full discretionary relief from Dacorum Borough Council is possible, potentially reducing this cost to zero.

B.3.3 VAT and tax position

The model assumes:

- Charitable CBS status: no corporation tax liability
- Business rates at zero (mandatory + full discretionary relief)
- VAT registration from acquisition, enabling recovery of VAT on substantial parts of the renovation programme
- Room hire income: VAT-exempt (under VATA 1994 Schedule 9 Group 1)
- Café and catering income: standard-rated at 20%. Target profit figures in the model are stated inclusive of VAT effect (i.e. scaled down to reflect the VAT cost on revenue). No offset for input VAT on catering purchases is included — a conservative treatment.

VAT advisory note. The structure of wedding contracts (room hire vs. catering) requires careful attention. Where these are genuinely separate supplies under separate contracts, different VAT treatment may apply. This should be reviewed with a specialist VAT adviser before pricing structures are finalised.

Financial modelling produced using the Heath Barn Revenue by Year V6 model. The ten-year forecast, loan requirement, sensitivity

Appendix C: Development and Restoration Costs

Heath Barn

Development & Restoration Costs

Please note that this appendix has not been updated for V2 of this bid document.

Discrepancies from Bid V2 4.1 Restoration and Development include:

- *Phases are named 1-10 in 4.1 with phase 1 being acquisition. This means that phases referenced in this appendix as 1-9 are equivalent to 2-10 in the main body.*
- *This appendix references our original primary funding plan, which was self-funded development and planning stages and then equal sized grants from NLHF and AHF, for delivery/restoration phases. We have subsequently been advised against this approach by NLHF, and our new primary plan is referred to in the main document.*

Introduction

This section sets out the full development and restoration cost plan for Heath Barn, from pre-acquisition through to the point at which the venue becomes fully operational. It is a working document for internal team review and will form part of the Heath Barn Business Plan.

The cost plan has been prepared by Hugo Hardy (architect) and Mark Battram (surveyor) and is based on their professional estimates for the restoration works required to bring Heath Barn into community use. All figures exclude acquisition costs, which are to be funded separately through the crowdfunding campaign, membership, and grant applications.

Key Figures at a Glance

£78,140	£429,750	£91,450	£603,955
Building shell (excl. restoration & fit-out)	Restoration Phase (incl. 25% contingency)	Fit-out costs (all spaces)	GRAND TOTAL (excl. acquisition)

1. The Nine-Phase Restoration Journey

The development of Heath Barn from acquisition to operational venue follows nine distinct phases. Each phase has its own cost profile and timing. Understanding the phasing is critical to managing cash flow and ensuring that funding is in place at the right times.

#	Phase	Timing	Description
1	Pre-Acquisition Set Up	<i>Before exchange</i>	Community Benefit Society legal set-up. Minimal cost (£500).
2	Early Feasibility & Pre-Planning	<i>Months 0–3</i>	Fire consultant, CDM, QS, engineers, topographical survey. Can we do this at all?
3	Planning Application	<i>Months 0–8</i>	Architectural fees, pre-app, planning submission. First major professional spend.
4	Pre-tender / Technical Investigation	<i>Overlaps late planning</i>	Soil & contamination, drainage survey, QS PCSA, further engineering. Reduces restoration risk before committing.

5	Post-Planning / Pre-Restoration Set-up	<i>After planning consent</i>	Full design team: architect, structural engineer, QS, M&E, Building Control. Costs accelerate.
6	Pre-Restoration Compliance & Enabling	<i>Ready to break ground</i>	Acoustics, scaffold licence, party walls, insurance, surveys. Nothing on site yet.
7	Restoration Phase	<i>Months 12–20</i>	The main works. ~80% of total spend. 25% contingency included. Total £429,750.
8	Finance Costs	<i>Running alongside Phases 5–7</i>	Arrangement, exit, broker fees, legals, PM, valuation. Modest but must be planned.
9	Non-structural Fit-out	<i>After shell handover</i>	Café, kitchen, West Barn, cottage, snug, therapy rooms, disabled WC. Venue becomes operational.

Cash flow note: The two largest spend events are Phase 3 (planning, £19,649 professional fees) and Phase 7 (restoration, £429,750 including 25% contingency). Phases 1–6 and 8 total approximately £78,155. Fit-out (Phase 9) is a further £91,450.

2. Site & Space Overview

The cost plan covers the community-use proportion of the Heath Barn site. The site has been professionally assessed and the community/residential split established by floor area:

Area	Floor area (sq m)	% of site
Community areas + site office	443	72.2%
Residential wing	171	27.8%
Total site	614	100%

All restoration cost estimates in the financial model use the 72% community proportion as the basis for apportionment, except for the cottage restoration (£40,000) which is fully allocated to the community, and the main farmhouse damp works which are fully allocated to the residential wing and excluded from the community model.

3. Full Cost Schedule

Every line item in the development cost plan, organised by phase. All figures at May 2026 prices, excluding VAT.

Item	Cost	Phase	Notes
PLANNING FEES			
Architectural fee	£9,149	3. Planning (Month 0–8)	
Fire consultant	£1,000	2. Early Feasibility	
Pre-construction CDM fee	£500	2. Early Feasibility	
Pre-planning QS work	£1,500	2. Early Feasibility	
Pre-planning engineers work	£500	2. Early Feasibility	

Planning pre-app	£1,500	3. Planning (Month 0–8)	
Planning submission	£2,500	3. Planning (Month 0–8)	
Topographical survey	£500	2. Early Feasibility	
Miscellaneous	£2,500	3. Planning (Month 0–8)	
SUBTOTAL — PLANNING FEES	£19,649		
PRE-TENDER INVESTIGATIONS			
Soil & contamination investigation	£2,500	4. Pre-tender	
QS work (PCSA)	£1,500	4. Pre-tender	
Pre-tender planning work	£1,500	4. Pre-tender	
Pre-tender engineers work	£1,500	4. Pre-tender	
Drainage survey	£1,000	4. Pre-tender	
SUBTOTAL — PRE-TENDER INVESTIGATIONS	£8,000		
POST-PLANNING DESIGN FEES			
Architect	£16,991	5. Post-Planning	
Structural engineer	£5,000	5. Post-Planning	
QS & contract admin	£2,500	5. Post-Planning	
M&E (mechanical & electrical)	£3,500	5. Post-Planning	
Building control fees	£3,000	5. Post-Planning	
Restoration CDM	£2,500	5. Post-Planning	
SUBTOTAL — POST-PLANNING DESIGN FEES	£33,491		
PRE-RESTORATION COMPLIANCE & ENABLING			
Acoustics	£2,500	6. Compliance & Enabling	
Scaffold license	£5,000	6. Compliance & Enabling	
Party walls	£2,500	6. Compliance & Enabling	
Insurance	£2,000	6. Compliance & Enabling	
Surveys	£5,000	6. Compliance & Enabling	
SUBTOTAL — PRE-RESTORATION COMPLIANCE & ENABLING	£17,000		
RESTORATION WORKS (PHASE 7)			
Restoration costs (community 72% share)	£338,800	7. Restoration Phase	
Demolition & landscaping	£5,000	7. Restoration Phase	
Contingency @ 25% (on £343,800)	£85,950	7. Restoration Phase — heritage risk buffer	

SUBTOTAL — RESTORATION WORKS (PHASE 7)	£429,750		
OTHER COSTS			
CBS / SPV set-up fee	£500	1. Pre-Acquisition	
SUBTOTAL — OTHER COSTS	£500		
FIT-OUT COSTS (PHASE 9)			
Café fit-out	£19,630	9. Non-structural Fit-out	
Kitchen equipment	£16,770	9. Non-structural Fit-out	
West Barn	£10,000	9. Non-structural Fit-out	
Cottage ground floor (shop/welcome)	£20,000	9. Non-structural Fit-out	
Cottage first floor (rooms)	£2,100	9. Non-structural Fit-out	
Snug	£3,000	9. Non-structural Fit-out	
East Wing ground floor (therapy)	£5,250	9. Non-structural Fit-out	
Site office	£700	9. Non-structural Fit-out	
Cottage extension / workshop	£5,000	9. Non-structural Fit-out	
Disabled toilets	£9,000	9. Non-structural Fit-out	
SUBTOTAL — FIT-OUT COSTS (PHASE 9)	£91,450		
FINANCE COSTS (PHASE 8)			
Arrangement fee	£1,342	8. Finance Costs	
Exit fee	£895	8. Finance Costs	
Broker fee	£895	8. Finance Costs	
Legals	£447	8. Finance Costs	
PM fee	£447	8. Finance Costs	
Valuation	£89	8. Finance Costs	
SUBTOTAL — FINANCE COSTS (PHASE 8)	£4,115		
GRAND TOTAL — ALL PHASES (excluding acquisition)			£603,955

4. Restoration Works Detail — Phase 7

The restoration works represent approximately 80% of total project spend. The 25% contingency (£85,950) reflects the inherent uncertainty of heritage restoration on a Grade II listed building and provides robust headroom against the pessimistic cost scenario. Community match is 12.5% (split 50/50 between NLHF at 5% and AHF at 20%).

Work item	Min (whole site)	Max (whole site)	Community 72% min	Community 72% max
INTERNALS				
Internal walls & ceilings	£40,000	£40,000	£28,800	£28,800

Floors & coverings	£95,000	£95,000	£68,400	£68,400
Woodwork & joinery	£55,000	£55,000	£39,600	£39,600
Plasters & decorations	£65,000	£65,000	£46,800	£46,800
Heating & hot water	£30,000	£50,000	£21,600	£36,000
Electrical	£20,000	£50,000	£14,400	£36,000
Cottage restoration	£40,000	£40,000	£40,000	£40,000
Damp works — main farmhouse	£0	£70,000	—	—
EXTERNALS				
Roofing & chimneys	£40,000	£40,000	£28,800	£28,800
Rainwater goods & gullies	£8,000	£8,000	£5,760	£5,760
External walls	£25,000	£25,000	£18,000	£18,000
Windows & doors	£27,000	£27,000	£19,440	£19,440
Land clearance & damp mitigation	£10,000	£10,000	£7,200	£7,200
TOTAL RESTORATION (community 72%)	£455,000	£575,000	£338,800	£374,800
Contingency @ 25% (on £343,800 incl. demolition)	—	—	£85,950	£85,950
PHASE 7 TOTAL (restoration + demolition + 25% contingency)	—	—	£429,750	£429,750

The 25% contingency (£85,950) is well-judged for a Grade II listed heritage restoration. The difference between the optimistic (£338,800) and pessimistic (£374,800) community scenarios is £36,000 — the contingency of £85,950 covers this gap entirely and provides an additional £49,950 of headroom against unforeseen heritage risk.

5. Long-term Works — 5 to 20 Year Horizon

In addition to the immediate restoration works, Mark Battram's survey has identified a programme of longer-term structural and fabric repairs that will be required over the next 5–20 years. These are not funded from the development budget but are provisioned in the revenue model at £4,271/month from Operating Year 3 of operations (based on the community 72% share of £408,600 spread over 10 years, plus ongoing maintenance arising).

Long-term work item (5–20 year horizon)	Min (whole site)	Max (whole site)	Community 72% min	Community 72% max
Structural works to West Range	£75,000	£75,000	£75,000	£75,000 *
Structural works to North upper Range	£35,000	£35,000	£35,000	£35,000 *
Structural works to North lower Range	£25,000	£25,000	£25,000	£25,000 *
Full roof recover (some roofs)	£100,000	£100,000	£72,000	£72,000
Internal rewiring	£40,000	£40,000	£28,800	£28,800
Further plaster renewals & improvements	£50,000	£50,000	£36,000	£36,000

Separate heat sources for areas	£150,000	£150,000	£108,000	£108,000
Rainwater goods & soakaways (full solution)	£40,000	£40,000	£28,800	£28,800
TOTAL 5–20 YEAR FORESEEABLE WORKS	£515,000	£515,000	£408,600	£408,600

The long-term works total of £408,600 (community share) is provisioned at £4,271/month in the operating cost model from Operating Year 3. This is a significant and non-negotiable cost of heritage stewardship — it is the price of being responsible custodians of a listed building. The business plan treats this provision seriously: it is not deferred or ignored, and its inclusion from Operating Year 3 is one of the main drivers of the higher cost base in the established years.

6. Fit-Out Costs — Phase 9

6.1 Space-by-space fit-out

Following shell handover (end of Phase 7), each space requires fit-out to make it operational. The table below sets out the budget and specification for each space.

Space	Budget	Specification notes
Cottage first floor (3 rooms)	£2,100	Multifunctional basic office-type chairs or simple armchairs. Flat-pack storage (IKEA level), simple tables. Warm lighting, soft textures (rugs, curtains), consistent colour palette for a welcoming therapy/meeting feel.
West Barn	£10,000	Needs detailed specification — flexible event space with basic AV, blackout capability, and moveable furniture. Allowance is indicative.
Cottage ground floor (shop / welcome)	£20,000	Needs detailed specification — welcome/reception function combined with local produce or gift retail. Allowance is indicative.
Snug	£3,000	Beanbags (40%) + basic soft seating (60%), flat-pack storage units, minimal styling. Acoustic softness priority: rugs, subtle lamps, nothing fixed, limited clutter.
East Wing ground floor (4 therapy rooms)	£5,250	Multifunctional basic office-type chairs or simple armchairs. Flat-pack storage, simple tables. Warm lighting, soft textures, consistent palette — good chair comfort essential for therapeutic use.
Site office	£700	Basic office chairs, flat-pack storage, simple table. Functional only.
Cottage extension / workshop (pottery)	£5,000	1–2 pottery wheels (mid-range), solid wedging/work table (wood or stainless). Heavy-duty shelving. Clay-safe sink + trap system (essential). Good extraction ventilation. Waterproof/wipe-clean wall surfaces. Serious hobbyist / micro-studio standard.
Disabled toilets	£9,000	Full accessible WC installation. May overlap with plumbing scope in restoration works — confirm with QS to avoid double counting.
TOTAL FIT-OUT (excl. café & kitchen)		£55,050

Fit-out philosophy: The approach across all spaces is deliberately low-cost and adaptable — flat-pack furniture, off-the-shelf equipment, and volunteer-friendly installation where possible. The café and kitchen are the exception, where commercial-grade equipment is non-negotiable for operational reliability and food hygiene compliance.

6.2 Café & kitchen equipment schedule

The café and kitchen fit-out (£36,400 combined) is the most detailed and specified element of the fit-out. Each item has been selected to meet the operational requirements of a community café running alongside event catering for up to 70+ covers. The full equipment list is set out below.

CAFÉ FIT-OUT				
Item	Location	Position	Dimensions	Price
Espresso machine (2 or 3 group)	Café counter	Counter	850×565×525mm	£2,500
Coffee grinder(s)	Café counter	Counter	600×270×440mm	£800
Knock box(es)	Café counter	Counter	300×500×100mm	£130
Water boiler	Café counter	Counter	456×349×696mm	£620
Hot chocolate machine	Café counter	Counter	280×410×465mm	£550
Chiller cabinet(s) — display	Café counter	Counter	700×560×670mm	£550
Ambient display cabinets	Café counter	Counter	600×350×490mm	£1,200
Back bar fridge (drinks)	Café counter	Floor	900×545×900mm	£600
Hygiene sink	Café counter	Counter	384×333×138mm	£400
EPOS system	Café counter	Counter	—	£800
Cupboards for storage	Café counter	Wall/floor	—	£290
Waste bins	Café counter	Floor	490×400×810mm	£290
Café furniture (tables & chairs)	Café space	Floor	TBC	£3,000
Counter / servery	Café space	Floor	TBC	£5,000
Sideboard	Café space	Floor	TBC	£900
Accessibility suite	Café space	Floor	TBC	£2,000
CAFÉ TOTAL				£19,630
KITCHEN EQUIPMENT				
Item	Location	Position	Dimensions	Price
Bakery (convection) oven	Kitchen work room	Counter	460×550×355mm	£720
Soup kettle(s)	Kitchen work room	Counter	312×312×410mm	£315
Toaster	Kitchen work room	Counter	500×237×212mm	£230
Blender(s) ×2	Kitchen work room	Counter	485×362×313mm	£1,920
Hot plate (induction hob ×4)	Kitchen work room	Counter	700×800×330mm	£450
Extractor hoods and fans	Kitchen work room	Wall	1200×1200×600mm	£2,000
Commercial oven	Kitchen work room	Floor	900×815×700mm	£2,450
Warming oven	Kitchen work room	Floor	1400×700×850mm	£600
Preparation sink	Kitchen work room	Floor	1500×600×900mm	£380
Storage fridges	Kitchen work room	Floor	1340×810×2000mm	£1,050
Griddle	Kitchen work room	Floor	465×525×200mm	£800
Preparation counter(s)	Kitchen work room	Floor	Made to measure	£995
High speed dishwasher	Kitchen work room	Floor	570×600×830mm	£1,900
Glassware washer	Kitchen work room	Counter	400×495×590mm	£900
Catering trolley(s)	Kitchen work room	Floor	845×525×940mm	£675
Hygiene sink	Kitchen work room	Counter	384×333×138mm	£400
Cleaning equipment store	Kitchen work room	Floor	610×457×1830mm	£380
Insect killer	Kitchen work room	Hanging/wall	350×86×272mm	£55
Staff lockers	Kitchen work room	Floor	300×300×1800mm	£550

KITCHEN TOTAL	£16,770
CAFÉ & KITCHEN COMBINED TOTAL	£36,400

The kitchen specification supports both café daily operations and event catering. The commercial oven, warming oven, high-speed dishwasher, and catering trolleys in particular are sized for event use, not just café. This avoids the need for additional equipment hire on wedding and event days and significantly reduces variable costs per catered event.

7. Summary & Funding Framework

7.1 Total cost summary

Cost category	Amount
Total planning fees	£19,649
Total pre-tender investigations	£8,000
Total post-planning design fees	£33,491
Total pre-restoration enabling	£17,000
Total restoration works (incl. contingency)	£429,750
Total SPV / legal set-up	£500
Total fit-out (all spaces)	£91,450
Total finance costs	£4,115
GRAND TOTAL — ALL PHASES (excluding acquisition)	£603,955
of which: Restoration works (Phase 7 — community 72% share)	£338,800
of which: Café & kitchen fit-out (Phase 9)	£36,400

7.2 Key risks and mitigations

- Restoration cost overrun: 25% contingency (£85,950) included. Heritage works carry inherent uncertainty — early engagement of the main contractor on a pre-construction services agreement (PCSA) helps de-risk.
- VAT on restoration works: heritage restoration may qualify for reduced or zero-rated VAT on some elements. Specialist VAT advice should be obtained before procurement. Charitable CBS status supports a strong VAT recovery position.
- Planning consent risk: pre-application engagement (budgeted at £1,500) reduces but does not eliminate this risk. The listed building and conservation area context requires careful management.
- Scope creep in fit-out: West Barn (£10,000) and Cottage ground floor (£20,000) are currently noted as "needs definition". These should be specified before Phase 9 begins to avoid budget pressure at the end of the programme.

Disabled toilets: the £9,000 budget may overlap with plumbing scope in the restoration works. This should be clarified with the QS to avoid double counting.

Appendix D - Letters of Support

Community Bid & Business Plan — Hertfordshire County Council

This document compiles the letters of support received by Our Heath Barn CIC in connection with its community bid to Hertfordshire County Council for the acquisition and restoration of Heath Barn, St Johns Road, Boxmoor, Hemel Hempstead.

	Organisation / Individual	Status
1	Dacorum Borough Council — Diane Southam, Strategic Director	ENCLOSED
2	David Taylor MP — Hemel Hempstead Constituency	ENCLOSED
3	The Hemel Hempstead School — Neil Hassell, Headteacher	ENCLOSED
4	Hemel Hempstead Theatre Company (HHTC) — The Boxmoor Playhouse	ENCLOSED
5	The Box Moor Trust — Patrick Schneiders, Chair	ENCLOSED
6	Boxmoor Councillors	ENCLOSED
7		ENCLOSED
8	Rev Michael Macey — St John's Church, Boxmoor	ENCLOSED
9	Boxmoor Good Neighbours	ENCLOSED
10	Plunkett UK	ENCLOSED
11	University of Hertfordshire — Heritage Hub (Prof Katrina Navickas)	ENCLOSED
12	Hugo Hardy — RIBA Chartered Architect	ENCLOSED
13	Rory Cullen — Heritage Consultant	ENCLOSED
14	Louis Curtis — Breakspear Conservation	ENCLOSED
15	Sunnyside Rural Trust — Keely Siddiqui Charlick MBE	ENCLOSED
16	Juliette Walton — Birmingham Children's Trust (18+ Care Leavers)	ENCLOSED
17	Eckoh	ENCLOSED
18	RSK — Nigel Board, Chief Operating Officer	ENCLOSED
19	Joanna Phillips — JP Holistic Health	ENCLOSED
20	James Lark — OhMyArt	ENCLOSED
21	Melissa Linsey — Dacorum Heritage Trust	ENCLOSED
19	Steven Wilson — Grammy-nominated musician & producer	Quote in bid
20	Sally Taylor — Chair, Herts Visual Arts	Quote in bid
21	Brian Doran — Art in the Nave / Dacorum Arts Partnership	Quote in bid
22	Hemel Hempstead Local History Society & Museum	Quote in bid

Date 11 May 2026
Your Ref Our Heath Barn
Our Ref Our Heath Barn
Contact Diane Southam

Direct Line 01442 228440



The Forum
Marlowes
Hemel Hempstead
Hertfordshire
HP1 1DN

Telephone 01442 228000
www.dacorum.gov.uk
D/deaf callers, Text Relay:
18001 + 01442 228000

Dear Lisa Timms

Dacorum Arts and Culture Strategy

I am writing to confirm that Dacorum Borough Council (DBC) supports the aims of the Our Heath Barn CIC.

We are aware that the Heath Barn site is owned by Hertfordshire County Council and that the 'Our Heath Barn' campaign has been given a small window of time to raise funds and demonstrate local public support for keeping the building for the community.

I can confirm that the aspirations of the Heath Barn Campaign align with the priorities of Dacorum Borough Council's recently launched Arts and Culture Strategy. Our Strategy has three thematic priorities: Creative Health – to prioritise initiatives that improve wellbeing through creative activity; Connecting Communities - to bring communities together and facilitate stronger collaborative working across the cultural and heritage sector; Places and Spaces – to put culture at the forefront of improving local places and support spaces for creative activity to thrive. The Strategy highlights that Dacorum Borough Council will work in partnership with relevant local organisations and stakeholders to help realise its vision.

The Our Heath Barn proposals to convert the building into a space for community and creative activity would clearly align with these priorities, and we wish you luck with your ongoing campaign.

Please note that any Planning Applications put forward to DBC in relation to the Heath Barn site are treated on their own merits in accordance with DBC's separate function as a Local Planning Authority.

Yours Sincerely

Diane Southam



Strategic Director – Place and Communities

DAVID TAYLOR MP

Member of Parliament for Hemel Hempstead



HOUSE OF COMMONS
LONDON SW1A 0AA

James Barber
Hertfordshire County Council
Farnham House,
Six Hills Way,
Stevenage
SG1 2FQ

29 May 2026

Dear James Barber, Head of Disposals| Property | Resources at HCC

I am writing to offer my strong support for the Our Heath Barn bid package and to thank Hertfordshire County Council for providing an exclusive window for the community to make its case for Heath Barn. This is a welcome opportunity to demonstrate the merits of a community-led future for this important 16th-century Grade II listed building.

Heath Barn has clear potential as a community space of real value to Boxmoor and the wider Hemel Hempstead area. The campaign to secure it for community use is well organised, strongly backed, and rooted in a serious and credible vision for stewarding an important historic asset for public benefit.

The proposal to create an Arts and Wellbeing Hub and café would preserve the building while giving it a sustainable long-term purpose. It would also support local businesses, artists, community groups and schools, helping to ensure that this heritage asset remains active, accessible and useful for generations to come.

The level of public support is unmistakable. The campaign is gaining wider recognition, with recent coverage from the BBC and the Hemel Gazette helping to underline the importance of this opportunity.

Taken together, this shows that Boxmoor and Hemel Hempstead want this building to be retained and revived as an Arts and Wellbeing Hub for the community. I would urge the Council to recognise both the strength of the case and the scale of local backing behind it, and to continue working constructively with the Our Heath Barn team of volunteers as this process moves forward.

Thank you again for the opportunity and for the engagement shown by officers with the Our Heath Barn team. The Council's willingness to listen to the community offers a genuine chance to secure a positive and lasting outcome for Heath Barn.

Yours sincerely

David Taylor

Tel: 01442 816885
Email: david.taylor.mp@parliament.uk
Facebook: [@davidtaylor4hemel](https://www.facebook.com/davidtaylor4hemel)
www.david4hemel.org

DAVID TAYLOR MP

Member of Parliament for Hemel Hempstead



HOUSE OF COMMONS
LONDON SW1A 0AA

David Taylor MP
Member of Parliament for Hemel Hempstead

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www.david4hemel.org

The Hemel Hempstead School, Heath Lane, Hemel Hempstead, Hertfordshire HP1 1TX
Telephone: 01442 390100
Email: admin@hhs.herts.sch.uk
Website: www.hhs.herts.sch.uk
Headteacher: **Neil Hassell BEng(Hons) NPQH NPQEL FCCT VR**

Cllr Steve Jarvis
Leader
Hertfordshire County Council
22nd May 2026

Dear Cllr Jarvis,

Save Heath Barn

We write, as a school community, in support of the 'Save Heath Barn' movement, to whom you have generously given time to fundraise and make proposals for the future of this important local landmark.

Heath Barn is deeply rooted in the history of this town, pre- and post-Jellico, and in the history of our school. We were proud and careful custodians of the Barn for several decades and generations of young people fell in love with music and performance in that beautiful Grade II listed space.

We support the proposal for Heath Barn to become a local centre for the performing arts, community learning, and a cultural and gathering place for all peoples, at the heart of this community.

Hemel Hempstead is woefully served with such places, compared with other Hertfordshire conurbations like Watford and St. Albans, despite being home to nearly one-hundred-thousand people.

When Colonel Bretton CBE RAMC, a former mayor of this town, and noted children's author, died in 1957, he left instruction that Heath Barn be sold to The Hemel Hempstead School as a space for the nurturing of the performing arts and that his once private home should serve the whole community in its future.

The 'Save Heath Barn' movement seeks to continue that legacy and ensure that one of the few buildings of any architectural merit in the town continues to be a place for all, for music, for laughter, for communities. and for future generations of memories to be made.

With kind regards, and on behalf of,

The students, staff, governors and alumni of The Hemel Hempstead School.



Boxmoor Playhouse
72 St Johns Road
Hemel Hempstead
Hertfordshire
HP1 1NP
Email hhtc.chairman@gmail.com

James Barber
Head of Disposals
Hertfordshire County Council
james.barber@hertfordshire.gov.uk

24 May 2026

Dear James,

I am writing in support of the “Our Heath Barn” project and its ambition to secure the future of Heath Barn in Hemel Hempstead as a vibrant community and cultural asset.

The preservation of Heath Barn for community use is of particular importance to the wider local arts and performance community, including the relationship it has historically shared with the nearby Boxmoor Playhouse. Previously, the Playhouse held a licence for access to the Heath Barn car park, which supported the use of the Playhouse fire exit and formed an important part of the venue’s evacuation arrangements. Any future residential development of the Barn site could jeopardise these established fire evacuation plans and create significant operational challenges for the theatre.

Beyond these practical considerations, the potential opportunities presented by the “Our Heath Barn” project are incredibly exciting. The vision for the Barn aligns closely with the values and aspirations of the local creative and community sectors. There is enormous potential for collaboration between our venues, including the use of the Barn as rehearsal space, an intimate performance venue, and a welcoming place for artists, audiences, and community groups to gather.

The inclusion of café and meeting facilities would further strengthen the cultural offer in the town centre, creating opportunities for people to meet before and after performances, encouraging social connection, and helping to build a stronger and more connected artistic community in Hemel Hempstead.

Projects such as this are about more than preserving a building — they are about investing in the identity, creativity, and pride of our town. Heath Barn has the potential to become a place that Hemel Hempstead can truly be proud of: a collaborative, inclusive, and inspiring hub for arts, culture, and community activity.

Cont.,

We feel so strongly about the importance of this project succeeding that HHTC has also made a financial donation in support of the campaign.

I sincerely hope the “Our Heath Barn” project is given every opportunity to succeed and to deliver lasting benefits for the people of Hemel Hempstead.

Yours faithfully

Katie Lovell
Chair HHTC



Our Heath Barn CIC

ourheathbarn@outlook.com

3rd June 2026

Dear Our Heath Barn,

Re: Heath Barn, Boxmoor

I am writing on behalf of the Box Moor Trust to confirm that the board of Trustees support the vision of Our Heath Barn CIC to safeguard Heath Barn, a 500 year old local landmark, preserving both its heritage and its social value for generations to come.

Your vision to place Heath Barn in the hands of the community and create a shared space where individuals and groups can come together will benefit the community by fostering connection, reducing isolation, and strengthening community cohesion. At a time when such places are increasingly scarce, this initiative represents a positive investment in the wellbeing of local residents.

As a charity working closely with our beneficiaries - the residents of Hemel Hempstead and Bovingdon - we see the positive impact that accessible, welcoming community spaces can have on people's lives.

Retaining the historic Heath Barn for public benefit, under community stewardship would ensure that it's story remains part of the shared identity of Hemel Hempstead rather than becoming inaccessible within private development.

We wish you luck with your campaign, and look forward to seeing the future of Heath Barn.

Yours sincerely

P. Schneiders

Patrick Schneiders
Chair

65 St Johns Road
Hemel Hempstead
Herts HP1 1QQ

c/o Lisa Timms, Our Heath Barn Campaign
154 St Johns Road
Hemel Hempstead
Herts HP1 1NR

1st June 2026

For the attention of James Barber, Herts County Council

As the Borough Councillors for Boxmoor ward, we are writing to share our complete support for Our Heath Barn's objective of keeping this much-loved local building in community ownership. That the Cooperative model, based on community ownership, is proving so popular is clear evidence that the residents of Boxmoor and surrounding areas strongly support this outcome.

The benefits of Heath Barn being a community asset are numerous, including:

- As a wellbeing hub, Heath Barn supports Dacorum Borough Council's Art and Leisure strategy and ensures that Hemel Hempstead residents will enjoy enhanced access to arts and well-being facilities. The health and social benefits for many residents is enormous;
- As a heritage asset, Heath Barn's rare historic charm has provided a focal point for the creativity of over ten thousand local pupils in the time it acted as the music and drama department for The Hemel Hempstead School. Its value as a creative coordinate in the heart of the community is incalculable both in the past and moving forward;
- As an arts venue, Heath Barn will contribute to the arts and leisure 'campus' created by surrounding organisations, such as Boxmoor Playhouse, Hemel Sports Centre, St Johns Church, Boxmoor Cricket Club and Box Moor Trust's Blackbirds Moor;
- As a community asset, Heath Barn would fill the deficit created by Boxmoor being the only neighbourhood in the town that lacks a community centre within its ward boundaries.

The once thriving shops in Boxmoor village have dwindled and the local community increasingly looks for new ways to express its distinctiveness. The Borough Council's recent review of Community Governance showed that the proportion of Boxmoor residents wanting to be a parish was upwards of ten times the proportion of Hemel Hempstead residents wanting to be a parish. This upsurge of identity in Boxmoor is a clear driver of the community's wish to run Heath Barn.

We look forward to working very closely with Our Heath Barn as a community asset and even more so, if it becomes a focal point for a future parish.

Yours sincerely,

William Allen, Simy Dhyani and Claire Hobson
Councillors for Boxmoor on Dacorum Borough Council

Monday 1 June 2026

Re: Heath Barn Regeneration Project

Dear Lisa

I write on behalf of the Ecclesiastical Parish of Boxmoor to thank you and your fellow campaigners on the fantastic work you have done in pursuing Heath Barn as a community centre within Boxmoor. Heath Barn has a long history within our community as a place for all people to come together. Many of my parishioners and congregants have exceptionally fond memories of Heath Barn as a venue for their Reception following a Marriage Service or Baptism in St John's Church.

To the best of my knowledge, Boxmoor – unlike other areas of the town – does not have a community focused centre which is not either political, religious, or privately owned or for members. To have somewhere where people from all walks of life could come together would be a great asset to this community. As a church we are committed to transforming our community through our work within the community. We are in the process of exploring with The Church Urban Fund various ways in which we can alleviate levels of poverty within Boxmoor, especially relational poverty where 26% of the parish's population are living on their own. Our Heath Barn, if successful, would be a most welcome sign and act of transformation in our community and would help to build relationships, reduce isolation, and strengthen our community.

Congratulations also for the phenomenal amount raised to date for this project. It shows the depth of affection, need, and commitment in this community to building a stronger and more united community. In this, we – the Church in Boxmoor – and I personally, fully support and encourage you. Please be assured of our continued prayers and support for this project, and for you and your colleagues.

Every Blessing

Mike

The Reverend Michael Macey
Vicar of Boxmoor
Rural Dean of Hemel Hempstead



9 Horsecroft Road,

Hemel Hempstead HP1 1PZ

Boxmoor

c/o Lisa Timms, Our Heath Barn Campaign
154 St Johns Road
Hemel Hempstead
Herts HP1 1NR

2nd June 2026

For the attention of James Barber (Herts County Council),

Boxmoor Good Neighbours is a small charity supporting elderly people living in the community of Boxmoor. We help our neighbours with transport to medical appointments, gardening, odd jobs and social activities to help with their well-being and keep them connected with the community.

The vision Our Heath Barn has for The Hemel Hempstead School's music department would be ideal for our neighbours and we would very much like to be able to run activities and meetings at Heath Barn if it remains in community use. We, therefore, are in full support of the campaign to keep this wonderful building accessible to the public.

We are so committed to the contribution Heath Barn can make to local elderly residents' quality of life that we would like to be shareholders within the cooperative ownership model proposed by Our Heath Barn. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] Hopefully, this gives you a sense of the strength of our conviction.

We very much hope that Herts County Council will work with Our Heath Barn to facilitate transfer of the building to the community.

Yours sincerely,

Debbie Goldthorpe and the Trustees of Boxmoor Good Neighbours.



Supporting rural community-owned businesses

The Quadrangle,
Woodstock,
Oxfordshire,
OX20 1LH
5 June 2026

To James Barber,

Ref: Heath Barn

I am writing in support of Our Heath Barn, who are Community Business members of Plunkett UK.

Plunkett UK is a national charity which promotes and supports community-owned businesses nationwide. We provide practical support to help communities establish and run a wide range of community owned businesses throughout the UK, including shops, pubs, woodlands and many things in-between. We also carry out communications, research, policy and advocacy on behalf of our membership, to raise the profile of the sector and to strengthen their operating environment.

Community projects such as this are an excellent example of how community-owned businesses can create inclusive and innovative spaces that make a real impact in their local communities. They act as a focal point for the community to bring people together, as well as improve the health and wellbeing of the local area. Although not registered charities, CBS operate on a not-for-profit basis and often pursue charitable purposes for the public benefit.

The working group, like most other community businesses wishes to set up its registered legal structure as a Community Benefit Society (CBS) to comply with best practice, democratically owned by the community and with the aim of serving the broader interests of the community on a not-for-profit basis – any modest profits are re-invested into the immediate local community.

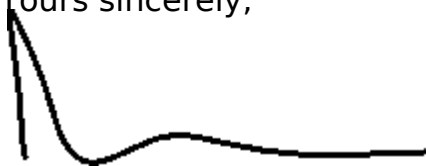
Plunkett will support the group with their application and ensure the group are complying with all the legal requirements necessary to set up their legal structure.

When community businesses are run democratically like this, on the basis of one-member-one-vote, they show great resilience. They act as a focal point for the community to bring people together as well as improve the health and wellbeing of the local area. Community businesses take care to involve people

of all backgrounds, particularly looking out for those most vulnerable in society - they often know who these people are - and can play a unique and active role in addressing isolation and loneliness. The creation of employment and volunteering opportunities also helps promote community spirit and rural regeneration, enabling residents to contribute to their local area.

Community businesses rely very much on the goodwill of generous people they are not aiming to make large amounts of profit and as you are probably aware hospitality and retail are going through a challenging time particularly with tight margins, high rental and increased minimum wage commitments which is why many commercial businesses cannot make it work within small communities, however Community businesses have a high chance of success and I hope that you will be able to negotiate with the group. I would emphasise that, without community businesses, many rural communities would be much poorer and more isolated. The group hoping to run The Heath Barn can make a huge difference and provide a friendly social hub and vital services for the whole community.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Alison Macklin'. The signature starts with a large, stylized capital 'A' and flows into a cursive script.

Alison Macklin
Community Business Manager

Plunkett UK | The Quadrangle | Woodstock | Oxfordshire | OX20 1LH
01993 630022 | www.Plunkett.co.uk | [@Plunkett_UK](https://www.instagram.com/plunkett_uk)
Registered VAT No: GB 663 6381 18

Plunkett UK is the operating name of Plunkett Foundation, a company limited by guarantee (No:00213235), Registered Charity No: CC313743 (England and Wales) and SC045932 (Scotland)



University of Hertfordshire,
Hatfield, Herts, AL10 9AB
uh.heritage@herts.ac.uk

5 May 2026

On behalf of the University of Hertfordshire Heritage Hub, I am writing to express our support for the community-led campaign run by Our Heath Barn CIC to secure the future of Heath Barn in Boxmoor, Hemel Hempstead.

Heath Barn is a Grade II listed building of considerable historical and architectural significance. As a rare surviving example of a late medieval timber-framed structure, it contributes meaningfully to the historic landscape and collective memory of the local area. Its long-standing use as a place of learning, music, and community activity further enhances its cultural value beyond its physical fabric.

From a heritage perspective, continued public access and engagement are critical. Buildings such as Heath Barn derive much of their significance from their social history and communal function. Retaining and enhancing this role would not only safeguard the building's fabric but also its intangible heritage-its stories, associations, and identity within the community.

The Heritage Hub at the University of Hertfordshire supports initiatives that combine conservation with community benefit, and we believe this project represents an exemplary case of that principle in action. We would welcome opportunities for future collaboration, including student engagement, research, and public programming associated with the site.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Katrina Navickas".

Prof Katrina Navickas
Director, UH Heritage Hub



Assets & Estates Department
Hertfordshire County Council
County Hall
Pegs Lane
Hertford
Hertfordshire
SG13 8DQ

Dear James Barber,

22nd of May 2026

I am writing to express my strong professional support for the community bid from “Our Heath Barn”, to purchase Heath Barn in Boxmoor.

As a conservation-minded architect with more than twenty years’ experience working with historic buildings and community-led heritage projects, I believe that community ownership represents the most appropriate, sustainable, and publicly beneficial future for this important listed site. My practice is grounded in the principles of sensitive repair and long-term stewardship, informed by my training with the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings (SPAB) and decades of work on heritage assets across Hertfordshire and the Chilterns.

I have been actively involved in the Heath Barn campaign for the past three years, providing architectural and conservation guidance to help shape a viable and responsible future for the building.

Throughout my career, I have had the privilege of working on several award-winning and nationally recognised community heritage projects. These include the restoration of Rectory Lane Cemetery in Berkhamsted, a project that transformed a neglected historic burial ground into a vibrant public space and has since received multiple awards for its community-led approach. I was also involved in the first phase of the restoration of Frogmore Mill in Apsley, helping to safeguard the world’s oldest mechanised paper mill and an industrial heritage site of exceptional significance.

In addition, I have contributed to community masterplans in Chesham and Berkhamsted, working collaboratively with residents, local groups, and stakeholders to shape long-term visions for community spaces and historic town centres.

These projects demonstrate the transformative potential of community-driven stewardship when supported by professional conservation expertise, and I firmly believe that Heath Barn has the same potential.

Heath Barn is one of Boxmoor’s most historically significant buildings, with elements dating back to the Tudor period and later phases that chart the area’s agricultural and domestic evolution. Its vernacular architecture, including traditional timber framing and historic brickwork, represents a rare survival in Hemel Hempstead and contributes deeply to the character of Boxmoor.

Equally important is its position within the historic and social landscape. Heath Barn sits at a natural crossroads between St John's Road, the moor, and the wider Boxmoor Trust lands. It forms part of a network of community assets including the Boxmoor Playhouse, Sportspace and the athletics facilities, The Hemel School, St John's Church, and the cricket and community pavilions on Boxmoor. Together, these institutions create a cohesive community corridor, and restoring Heath Barn as a community-friendly space would strengthen these connections and reinforce the building's longstanding role as a focal point of local identity.

Over the past three years, the Heath Barn campaign has achieved an exceptional level of community mobilisation. The group has secured significant donations from residents across Hemel Hempstead, launched a community share offer enabling local people to take a direct financial stake in the building's future, and built a broad base of support spanning Boxmoor, Apsley, Chaulden, and the wider Hemel community. The campaign has demonstrated sustained commitment through events, outreach, volunteer work, and public engagement. This level of participation is rare and speaks to the deep emotional and historical connection local people feel toward Heath Barn. It is clear that the community is not only willing but eager to take responsibility for the building's future.

Should the community bid be successful, I am committed to supporting the restoration of Heath Barn at community rates, ensuring that the project is professionally managed, conservation-led, and fully compliant with listed building standards. My aim is to help deliver a scheme that respects the building's historic fabric while enabling it to serve as a vibrant, inclusive community space for generations to come.

In my professional opinion, community ownership offers the most responsible and heritage-appropriate future for Heath Barn. It aligns with conservation best practice, reflects the wishes of the local community, and ensures that this important listed building will continue to play a meaningful role in the life of Boxmoor. I therefore strongly encourage Hertfordshire County Council to support the community purchase of Heath Barn and to recognise the exceptional opportunity this presents for heritage preservation, community cohesion, and long-term public benefit.

Thank you for your consideration. I would be pleased to provide further architectural or conservation input if required.

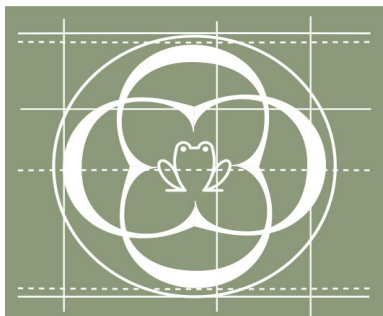
Yours sincerely,



Hugo Hardy Architect
RIBA/Arb Chartered Architect
www.hugohardyarchitect.com
T: 07881428701

E-mail: hugo_hardy@hotmail.com
Residence Address: 50 Parkhill Road, Boxmoor, Hemel Hempstead, HP11TP





CULLEN

CONSERVATION

Rory C Cullen
Cullen Conservation
'Thorneywood'
1A Warwick Close
Aston Clinton
Bucks HP23 6AA

Tel: (07825) 262716

Email: rory@cullenconservation.org

1st June 2026

James Barber
Head of Disposals
Property Resources
Hertfordshire County Council
Robertson House
Second Floor
Stevenage
Hertfordshire HP1 1DN

Dear Sir

Future of Heath Barn, Hemel Hempstead

I write as a Heritage Accredited Conservation Professional and longstanding former Head of Buildings for the National Trust to express my continuing concern for the future of Heath Barn.



Registered address: 'Thorneywood', 1A Warwick Close, Aston Clinton,
Bucks HP22 5JF

Contact: 07825 262716 / rory@cullenconservation.org

Page 1

I was able to inspect the external fabric a few months ago and subsequently expressed my concern to Philip Stanley (Head of Development Management for Dacorum Borough Council) about the deteriorating condition and proposed development plans. In my wide and lengthy experience, the legible historic plan form and significance would be ruined by a Developer and cannot be justified in heritage terms.

I have now been able to inspect the internal fabric and I have to say that this building is a veritable historic gem which would be destroyed by anything other than sympathetic repairs and communal use, as advised by Historic England, BS 7913 and best heritage practice.

To this end I was also dismayed by the recent Heritage Statement undertaken for the building, as it simply does not recognize the full significance of many rare surviving elements of the building.

I am therefore in complete support of the proposals put forward by *Our Heath Barn* community bid, which would safeguard its sustainable future for the long term and would be entirely in accord with Historic England's Conservation Principles and key Heritage Values.

The opportunity to progress this should be firmly grasped, as this would be in the best interests of the building and the community, safeguarding its future without compromise by ensuring its significance is retained.

Yours sincerely

Rory Cullen *MSc (Bldg Cons), IHBC, FCIQB, CIOB Certified Heritage Practitioner, High Level Conservation NVQ Assessor*

Director, Cullen Conservation



Breakspear Conservation Limited
The Cottage, Kitters Green,
Abbots Langley, Hertfordshire, WD5 0ET

07834 833638 | 01923 268428
www.breakspearconservation.com
info@breakspearconservation.com

FAO James Barber- Hertfordshire County Council.

21/05/2026

Heath Barn, St John's Road, Boxmoor, Hemel Hempstead, Hertfordshire.

I write in support of the Our Heath Barn community bid for the above property. I visited the building recently and write on the basis of that site visit, and my professional background in the conservation and repair of historic timber-framed buildings.

Heath Barn is a building of genuine significance, a rare surviving timber-framed courtyard complex whose historic fabric and long continuity of community use together confer a heritage value that, in my view, is not fully reflected in its recent heritage statement.

From a timber building conservation perspective, the structure presents both real challenges and considerable opportunity. With appropriate specialist involvement from an early stage encompassing condition survey, significance assessment and a phased programme of repair, I am satisfied that the historic significance could be maintained and enhanced in a way that is wholly compatible with the community use envisaged. Indeed, an active and well-supported community use is likely to be one of the most sustainable long-term outcomes for a building of this type.

It is my experience that community-led stewardship of historic buildings, where properly structured and professionally guided, consistently delivers better conservation outcomes than conversion to private residential use. The Our Heath Barn CIC has impressed me with the seriousness of its intentions, the breadth of local support it has mobilised, and its evident understanding that heritage expertise must be embedded in this project from the outset, not bolted on later.

I would commend their bid to the panel without reservation.

I am happy to be contacted should you wish to discuss any aspect of the above.

Yours faithfully,

Louis Curtis

Louis@breakspearconservation.com

MSc Timber Building Conservation, BSc Historic Building Conservation, IHBC.



SUNNYSIDE RURAL TRUST LETTER OF SUPPORT

Dear Lisa,

1st June 2026

On behalf of Sunnyside Rural Trust, I am very pleased to write a letter of support acknowledging your efforts to steward Heath Barn to the benefit of the community and express our sincere hope the project is successful.

It is well placed to serve a diverse community and significant number of people in Hemel Hempstead and surroundings areas. Sunnyside would be a willing support and partner in this exciting development. We are keen to lend our horticultural skills and time to ensure the gardens are restored and support the work inside.

I hope this letter helps add weight to your case and for those that do not know Sunnysdie, here is an overview. Sunnyside Rural Trust is a registered charity that supports young people and adults with learning disabilities by offering training and employment opportunities within a social enterprise setting. We offer a wide range of employment opportunities including growing and selling fresh produce e.g. fruit, vegetables and salads; poultry keeping; PAT testing; gardening design and maintenance; allotment makeovers; warden services; and growing and selling a wide range of plants including Dacorum Borough Council bedding plant contract. We sell our produce and services through our 3 farm shops, local networks, regular markets stalls and local events.

We support over 180 people with learning disabilities every day. The impact we have:

- For every £1 spent with Sunnyside it saves £11 on statutory funding.
- In the UK only 4.8% of people with learning disabilities are in any kind of paid employment. Sunnyside has 14 people with learning differences in employment.
- We support the physical, emotional and mental wellbeing of our trainees by building self-esteem and confidence alongside skill development.
- We are absolutely dedicated to providing training, opportunities and work to vulnerable young people and adults.
- We specialise in growing peat free, pollinator friendly and drought tolerant perennial plants. We have a successful landscape business which includes

Patrons – Lady Arabella Stuart-Smith, Dr Emma Claire Sweeney and John Driver CEng MIET

Registered Office: c/o Civic Centre, 161-163 High Street, Berkhamsted, HP4 3HD

Telephone: 01442 863364 Email: keely@sunnysideruraltrust.org.uk

Website: www.sunnysideruraltrust.org.uk

Registered Charity No. 1004264 Registered in England & Wales No. 2600844

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We invest in people Gold

design, growing the plants (100% peat free), garden install and maintenance. This includes wildflower meadow and biodiversity enhancement.

Our sites:

Activity Centre - based in Berkhamsted off Ivy House Lane. It offers a purpose built facility where we cook the vegetables and fruits we grow on site. It has 6 acres, comprising gardens, allotments, heritage fruit orchards, coppice and willow plantations. AC offers services to people with learning disabilities and people with dementia.



Hemel Food Garden – based at Two Waters Rd, just off the canal in Hemel Hempstead. This is where we grow DBC's, Kings Langley and various cemetery bedding plant contracts. On site we have a successful café, bakery, farm shop and garden centre. We run a repair shed in partnership with Community Action Dacorum (CAD).

Northchurch – based on 7 acres at the bottom of Northchurch allotments, New Road. NC was our first service and to commemorate 30 years in 2020 we have built a new courtyard surrounded by new buildings. We will continue to grow veg across the site as well as offer animal therapeutic courses from the new stables (we have rescued a small number of pigs, goats and sheep), care for 350 chickens and offer excellent training facilities. It has a farm shop on site that sells our produce including eggs, apple juice, jams and chutneys. We run a repair shed in partnership with Community Action Dacorum (CAD).



Orchard Nursery – Bedmond, which houses our perennial growing structures. Tom Stuart Smith is a prominent garden designer who has commissioned us to grow a number of his high profile designs. We grew the entire stock for his iconic horticultural hero display at RHS Hampton Court 2021.



Sunnyside café @ The Forum – Hemel Hempstead.

We operate a café at Dacorum Borough Council's headquarters. We supply a daily menu, barista coffee and selection of meals and cakes.



Patrons – Lady Arabella Stuart-Smith, Dr Emma Claire Sweeney and John Driver CEng MIET

Registered Office: c/o Civic Centre, 161-163 High Street, Berkhamsted, HP4 3HD

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We invest in people Gold

We wish you well in your endeavour and happy to support in any way we can.



Keely Siddiqui Charlick, MBE
Chief Executive
Sunnyside Rural Trust
C/o Civic Centre
161 -163 High Street
Berkhamsted
Herts HP4 3HD
keely@sunnysideruraltrust.org.uk

WWW.SUNNYSIDERURALTRUST.ORG.UK



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Website: www.sunnysideruraltrust.org.uk

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INVESTORS IN PEOPLE™
We invest in people Gold

To whom it may concern,

I was really pleased to be consulted about the Heath Barn proposals in light of my work with young people, particularly those that are NEET - Not in Employment, Education or Training. Community projects like this can offer NEET young people the opportunity to gain vocational skills and experience, confidence, professional and social networks and inclusion. There are organisations like VIY that already have the infrastructure to work with Our Heath Barn on such a project <https://volunteerityourself.org/>

It is wonderful to talk to such impassioned people as those leading Our Heath Barn ; their plans to include some of the most marginalised young people in the community are admirable and must be supported.

Best wishes

Juliette Walton

Project and Performance Manager - Employment Education and Training

18+ Care Leavers Service
Birmingham Children's Trust
One Avenue Road, Birmingham, B6 4DU
PO Box 15980
Birmingham
B2 2UH

Mob: 07825 117 381

My working days are Tuesday to Friday.





2nd June 2026

From: **Eckoh (UK) Limited.**

Telford House
Corner Hall
Hemel Hempstead
Herts HP3 9HN

Email: Lisa.kemp@eckoh.com

Dear Andrew Fisher,

Ref: Save Heath Barn Campaign.

Support for the Preservation and Future of Heritage of Heath Barn.

We are writing to share our wholehearted support for the preservation and revitalisation of Heath Barn, St John Road, Boxmoor, a place that holds such meaning and history for the local community. As a local medium-sized business employing just over 200 people, 170 of whom are based across the UK we have been based in Hemel Hempstead for more than 25 years, we feel a connection to the area and its history. Over time, we have seen the town change and grow, and whilst this brings many benefits, it also makes it even more important to protect the hidden gems like **Heath Barn** that quietly contribute so much to the character and identity of the local community.

Heath Barn is more than just a beautiful 500-year old building, for many it is part of a bigger story, the making of a memory and the opportunity to restore it and bring it back to life creating a welcoming space for people to gather, create, and connect is something we feel very passionate about. We have seen the potential vision to restore and transform the barn into a creative space with a café, function rooms, workshops, a theatre and performance spaces, and facilities like these dedicated to the community is both exciting and full of promise for the future.

We truly believe this project has the potential to bring lasting benefits to the area, creating opportunities for all ages, local people, and visitors to the area, supporting the arts, nurturing skills, and giving the community a space it can be proud of.

It will help ensure that the Heritage site is not only preserved but continues to play an active and meaningful role in the everyday lives for generations to come.

In support of this vision, we are pleased to offer [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] We make this commitment with genuine enthusiasm and a shared belief in what this project can achieve.



We would also be very glad to stay involved when we can, whether through ongoing volunteering opportunities or helping to champion the project more widely.

Finally, we would like to say "Thank you" for the commitment and dedication that is being shown in bringing this important project forward. We are proud to support it and look forward to seeing it grow into something truly special again for the community.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Lisa Kemp".

Lisa Kemp
Head Of HR



26th May 2026

Our reference: RSK Foundation, Confirmation of Pledge

Spring Lodge
172 Chester Road
Helsby
Cheshire
WA6 0AR
UK

Telephone: +44 (0)1928 726006
Fax: +44 (0)1928 725633
www.rskgroup.com

Our Heath Barn Pledge

Dear Lisa

We are pleased to write to confirm our pledge from our RSK Foundation of  in support of the above project. We are delighted to contribute towards this initiative which we know enjoys the support of several of our colleagues locally who have told us of the positive impact it will have.

In addition, we are happy for RSK Group to be acknowledged and named publicly as a supporter of the project in any relevant materials, publications, or communications.

Please do not hesitate to contact us if you require any further information or documentation in relation to this pledge.

We wish you every success with the project and look forward to seeing its progress.

Yours Sincerely,



Nigel Board
Chief Operating Officer





James Barber
Head of Disposals
Hertfordshire County Council

18th August 2026

Dear James,

I am writing to offer my wholehearted support for the Our Heath Barn campaign, which aims to save and revitalise the beautiful Heath Barn site in Boxmoor, for the benefit of our community.

Just over three years ago, I began dreaming of an inclusive community space in Hemel Hempstead that would provide health and wellbeing services for families and individuals of all ages. At the same time, Lisa Timms was dreaming of saving Heath Barn and turning it into an Arts and Community Hub. These two visions came together, along with the hopes of many others, and Our Heath Barn was born.

I am a holistic Health Coach and I am currently undertaking further training in Somatic Experiencing (SE™), which is a therapeutic approach for trauma resolution. As a wellbeing practitioner, I cannot imagine a more perfect place to work than at Heath Barn. A Community Arts and Wellbeing Hub in this vibrant and well-loved location would provide a unique, safe and collaborative base to work from. I would value the chance to work alongside other health and wellbeing professionals, creating supportive networks and helping other local businesses to thrive.

The huge variety in spaces available offers so much potential. My intention would be to hire one of the small rooms for multiple days each week and potentially rent office space or work in the café at other times. The medium-sized rooms would be ideal for running group health coaching programmes during the day or evening. I would also intend to run talks and workshops in the larger West Barn.

The Grade II Listed Heath Barn buildings undoubtedly deserve to be saved and returned to the community. It is immensely important that we collectively work to restore and, where necessary, repurpose our historic spaces. Heath Barn is a rare and beautiful example of 16th Century architecture in our town. It has played a vital role in the educational, creative and cultural journey of so many groups and individuals. As a small business owner who cares deeply about our community, it would be an honour to work there and play an active role in the continuing legacy of this very special place.



jphillips@jp-holistichealth.com



[@jp.holistic.health](https://www.instagram.com/jp.holistic.health)



[Joanna Phillips | Holistic Health](https://www.facebook.com/JoannaPhillipsHolisticHealth)



[Joanna Phillips](https://www.linkedin.com/in/JoannaPhillips)



We are grateful for the engagement of Hertfordshire County Council throughout our campaign and hope this bid demonstrates the strength and feasibility of our vision and the strategy with which we plan to bring this vision to life.

Many thanks for your time and consideration.

Yours sincerely,

Joanna Phillips

Joanna Phillips | Holistic Health



jphillips@jp-holistichealth.com



[@jp.holistic.health](https://www.instagram.com/jp.holistic.health)



[Joanna Phillips | Holistic Health](https://www.facebook.com/JoannaPhillipsHolisticHealth)



[Joanna Phillips](https://www.linkedin.com/in/JoannaPhillips)



To whom it may concern,

LETTER OF SUPPORT FOR THE HEATH BARN COMMUNITY OWNERSHIP BID

I am pleased to offer my unequivocal support for the proposal to secure Heath Barn for community ownership.

I write as a local practising artist, creative educator and founder of OhMyArt, an organisation established to broaden access to art and creativity across our communities. My professional experience spans more than two decades in education, alongside my current work as an artist and creative practitioner. This combination has given me a particular understanding of the importance of accessible creative opportunities, strong community infrastructure and the development of emerging talent.

Alongside preserving a building of such importance and cultural significance to the local area, the opportunity presented by Heath Barn is considerably greater. Its potential lies in creating a meaningful and sustainable creative resource that could make a lasting contribution to the cultural, social and educational life of the local area and to Hertfordshire more broadly.

Hertfordshire has a significant and well-established relationship with the creative industries. The county is home to an extensive network of artists, makers, designers, performers, educators, creative businesses and cultural organisations, alongside schools, colleges and universities that are nurturing the next generation of creative talent. This provides a strong foundation from which further creative development can take place. The challenge is ensuring that this talent has the opportunities, networks and environments necessary to develop and flourish.

Talent does not develop in isolation. Young people benefit from opportunities to explore creative disciplines beyond the classroom. Students leaving college or university need opportunities to develop their practice, gain experience and establish professional networks as well as exposure to a diverse community of creatives and artists. Emerging artists require accessible environments in which to exhibit, collaborate, experiment and engage with audiences. Equally, established practitioners and members of the wider community benefit from opportunities to share knowledge, skills and experience. The provision of high-quality, accessible creative spaces is therefore an important investment in both cultural and economic development.

Heath Barn has the potential to fulfil an important role within this wider creative ecosystem by creating meaningful connections between education, professional practice and the wider community. A community-led creative space could provide opportunities for local artists to share their expertise, provide platforms for emerging practitioners and enable residents of all ages to engage directly with creative activity. It could create a setting in which people can learn from one another, develop skills, build confidence and establish connections that may otherwise never take place.



This matters because the value of creativity extends well beyond the artwork itself. Participation in the arts can develop confidence, communication, imagination, critical thinking and collaboration. It can support wellbeing and social connection, while providing opportunities for individuals to develop skills, discover interests and, in some cases, identify pathways into further education, professional practice or employment within the creative industries.

For young people in particular, exposure to practising artists and authentic creative environments can be transformative. It can help them recognise that creative ambition can lead to meaningful opportunities and careers within a diverse and evolving sector. We should be nurturing this talent within Hertfordshire, creating opportunities for people to develop and establish themselves locally rather than allowing the absence of suitable spaces and opportunities to become a reason for that talent to look elsewhere.

This is where the potential of Heath Barn becomes particularly significant. Rather than viewing creativity as an additional community activity, the development of Heath Barn provides an opportunity to recognise it as an integral part of a thriving community and as a valuable component of Hertfordshire's cultural and economic future. There is also a profound social and inclusive dimension to this opportunity. Creativity can provide an unusually accessible means of participation and expression for people from all backgrounds. For those who are marginalised, vulnerable or disadvantaged, art can offer a means of communication, self-expression and connection that conventional forms of communication cannot always provide. It can transcend barriers of language, confidence, circumstance and experience, enabling people to explore identity, communicate feelings and experiences, find a voice without necessarily having to articulate those things in words, and it can also provide something equally important: belonging.

A creative environment can bring people together around a shared activity rather than around their differences. It can provide a space where individuals feel able to participate, contribute and be recognised, while difference is understood as something that enriches a community rather than creates division. This is an important aspect of the potential future of Heath Barn. A welcoming and accessible creative environment could enable people who may not ordinarily encounter one another to share experiences, develop relationships and participate on an equal footing.

My own work through OhMyArt is founded on the principle that access to creativity should be broad, inclusive and welcoming. Art should not be perceived as something reserved for those who have received specialist training or who already identify themselves as artists. People should have opportunities to engage with creativity at every stage of life and at whatever level is appropriate to them. The value of a community creative space is therefore not simply in the activities that take place within it, but in the opportunities it creates for people to participate, contribute, develop and connect. That principle is closely aligned with the potential future of Heath Barn.

There is also a compelling intergenerational dimension to the proposal. A place with the character and history of Heath Barn provides an opportunity to connect the heritage of the local area with its creative future. It can enable people to understand and value what has come before while creating space for new ideas, new practitioners and new experiences to emerge.



Securing Heath Barn for community benefit provides the opportunity for its future to be shaped around long-term local value and participation. It creates the potential for residents, artists, creative organisations and community groups to have a genuine stake in the life and development of the space. For me, this is not simply about protecting a valued local asset, it's about investing in people, it's about investing in the young people who are discovering their creative potential, the students developing their skills, the emerging artists seeking opportunities to establish themselves, the established practitioners willing to share their expertise, and the members of the wider community who may simply need the opportunity and encouragement to discover what creativity can offer them. Hertfordshire already possesses considerable creative talent. The opportunity now is to nurture it, connect it and provide the environments in which it can flourish. Heath Barn has the potential to make a meaningful contribution to that ambition.

As a local artist and creative educator, I would welcome the opportunity for Heath Barn to become a place where creative practice is visible, accessible and actively connected to the community. I would also welcome opportunities for OhMyArt and other local creative practitioners to contribute to its programme and development where appropriate. My support is therefore both professional and personal. I believe strongly in the principle that communities should have access to places where creativity, learning and participation can flourish, and I believe Heath Barn presents a particularly valuable opportunity to achieve this locally.

I therefore offer my full professional support for the community ownership bid and strongly encourage those responsible for determining the future of Heath Barn to recognise the significant cultural, educational, social and economic opportunity presented by its proposed community use.

As a local artist, creative educator and advocate for accessible arts provision, I would be proud to see Heath Barn secured for the community and given the opportunity to develop into a place where creativity, learning, inclusion and participation can thrive for generations to come.

I wholeheartedly support the bid to secure Heath Barn for community ownership and am proud to add my voice to those advocating for its future.

Yours faithfully,

James Lark
Founder & Artist
OhMyArt



5th June 2026

To whom it may concern,

Re: Our Heath Barn

We are delighted to have the opportunity to support the work of Our Heath Barn to save these historic buildings and provide a much needed creative space within Boxmoor and Hemel Hempstead.

This is a time when all aspects of the heritage of Dacorum is at risk, and this is small aspect of our heritage is part of a wider mosaic of heritage to be saved.

Recently we have been working with young people within Hemel Hempstead as we move to celebrate this New Town's 80th anniversary. One of the most common feedback through this project is the want for creative spaces to explore art and music. This community arts and culture project will provide such a space for these young people.

We welcome this work in conserving these historic barns and providing a community arts venue.

Best wishes

MK Linsey

Melissa Linsey

Museum Manager

Appendix E

The Whole-Site Option — acquisition of Heath Barn in its entirety

A single transfer of the complete site to community ownership, with no residential element

1. Why we are presenting this option

Our principal proposal envisages a split site: Our Heath Barn acquiring the barns and community spaces, with the farmhouse element converted to residential use by a development partner, providing the Council with an additional capital receipt.

We understand, however, that the Council may receive credible offers for the whole site, and that a single transaction to a single purchaser may be simpler to conclude and easier to present to members. We would not wish the Council to conclude that a community outcome is only available in a split-site form.

This appendix therefore sets out a fully costed alternative: Our Heath Barn acquiring the entire site. We have modelled it to the same standard as our principal proposal, using the same professional cost base and the same operating methodology. It is a genuine, deliverable option, not a gesture — and in two important respects it is a stronger one.

In summary. Under this option our acquisition offer rises from £76,781 to £91,230, and the Council would deal with a single purchaser for a single title, with no dependency on our finding a residential development partner. The entire Grade II listed complex would pass into permanent community ownership under a statutory asset lock.

2. What we would acquire

The complete Heath Barn site — the West Barn, North Barn and snug, the farmhouse, the cottage, the courtyard and gardens — with no part converted to private residential use.

Under our principal proposal, the spaces coming into community use account for 72% of the site by area, with the remaining 28% converted to residential. The whole-site option therefore takes on roughly two-fifths more space than the mixed-use scheme, and the costs below have been scaled accordingly.

That scaling has not been applied mechanically. Some works belong to specific parts of the building and have been costed directly rather than apportioned by area — the restoration of Heath Barn Cottage (£40,000) and the structural works to the West and North ranges (£135,000) are wholly community works and are carried in full under either scheme, while the damp works to the main farmhouse (£70,000) fall outside the community scheme entirely and are picked up only under the whole-site option. Costs which genuinely vary with floor area — internal walls, floors, joinery, plastering, heating, electrical, roofing, rainwater goods, external walls, windows and land clearance — are apportioned by area.

The site would be brought into use in three phases:

Phase	Spaces	Opens
Phase 1	West Barn, North Barn café and snug, ground-floor therapy rooms, welcome office, garden	Operating Year 1
Phase 2	Farmhouse — upstairs therapy rooms, four ground-floor creative offices, upstairs conference room, child and family therapeutic space	Operating Years 3–4
Phase 3	Cottage — three rooms for hourly hire and long lease	Operating Year 4

Phasing matters: it allows the venue to open, trade and build its reputation from Phase 1 while later phases are still being funded and worked up. The Society is not required to complete the whole site before any income begins.

3. The development and restoration programme

Costs below are the professional estimates prepared by Hugo Hardy RIBA and Mark Battram, at April 2026 prices and including a 25% contingency on construction.

A note on the basis. The construction figure below is taken from the pessimistic end of the surveyor's range for the whole site (£575,000 before demolition and contingency), rather than the optimistic end (£455,000). On the optimistic basis, whole-site construction would be £573,750 rather than £723,750, and the total programme £757,705 rather than £907,705. We have presented the higher figure deliberately: we would rather the Council assessed this option against a cautious cost estimate than a flattering one.

Cost element	Amount	NLHF phase
Planning	£19,649	Development
Pre-tender investigation	£8,000	Development
Post-planning design fees	£33,491	Development
Fees after planning	£17,000	Development
Construction (incl. 25% contingency)	£723,750	Delivery
Fit-out (including £9,750 for additional farmhouse therapy rooms)	£101,200	Delivery
Society set-up	£500	Community-funded
Finance costs	£4,115	Community-funded
TOTAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME	£907,705	

3.1 What the additional cost buys

The whole-site programme is £305,000 more than our principal proposal at the figures presented. The difference is accounted for as follows:

Element	Additional cost	Note
Farmhouse and residential-wing construction	Included in the £575,000 whole-site figure	Apportioned works across the additional 28% of floor area
Damp works to the main farmhouse	Up to £70,000	Excluded from the community scheme entirely as a residential cost; carried in full under the whole-site option
Additional therapy rooms, farmhouse side	£9,750	The only fit-out difference between the two schemes
Contingency at 25% on the larger construction figure	£59,050	25% applied consistently in both schemes

Planning, pre-tender, post-planning and professional fees are identical in both schemes because both were costed at the full-site level from the outset. No uplift is therefore required for the whole-site option, and our principal proposal carries the same fee provision notwithstanding its smaller footprint.

4. How it would be funded

Following our meeting with the National Lottery Heritage Fund on 13 August 2026, we would approach the funding in two separate stages rather than as a single application. This is a direct response to NLHF's advice, and it is what makes the whole-site option viable.

4.1 Stage one — NLHF Development grant

NLHF's programme for grants under £250,000 is decided regionally rather than nationally: no Expression of Interest, a Project Advisory enquiry followed by a single-round application, assessed in around eight weeks. NLHF advised us directly that beginning here would establish exactly the track record they need to see from a newly formed organisation. As set out in Section 4.1, NLHF have confirmed that the Council would act as lead applicant for this stage, with Our Heath Barn resourcing and delivering the work.

Because the total programme exceeds £250,000, NLHF require 5% partnership funding on every phase, including this one. The advantage of the smaller route is speed, sequencing and the level at which the decision is taken — not a reduction in the match requirement.

We would apply for the development phase in full — planning, pre-tender investigation, post-planning design and professional fees:

	Amount
Development phase cost	£78,140
Community match funding at 5%	£3,907
NLHF Development grant sought	£74,233
Purpose	Planning application, surveys, options appraisal, design development, professional fees

4.2 Stage two — NLHF Delivery grant

With the development phase complete, a fully worked-up scheme and a track record established, we would apply to the main programme for the delivery phase — the construction and fit-out:

	Amount
Eligible delivery cost (construction and fit-out)	£824,950
Community match funding at 5%	£41,248
NLHF Delivery grant sought	£783,703

At £783,703 the delivery grant sits within NLHF's £250,000–£1 million band, where the partnership funding requirement is 5%. It remains below the £1 million threshold at which the requirement rises to 10% — a point we have deliberately kept in view in sizing the ask.

4.3 What the community funds

Our community has raised £162,000. Under this option it would be applied as follows:

Application	Amount
Development phase match funding (5%)	£3,907
Delivery phase match funding (5%)	£41,248
Holding costs — twelve months from transfer	£16,000

Society set-up costs	£500
Finance costs	£4,115
Sub-total committed to the development programme	£65,770
Legal fees on acquisition	£5,000
AVAILABLE FOR ACQUISITION	£91,230
TOTAL COMMUNITY FUNDS	£162,000

4.4 The funding package in full

Source	Amount	Share
NLHF Development grant	£74,233	7.3%
NLHF Delivery grant	£783,703	76.8%
Community funds — development programme and holding	£65,770	6.4%
Community funds — acquisition and legal fees	£96,230	9.4%
TOTAL PROJECT	£1,019,936	100%

Grant leverage. For every £1 of community money committed to the development programme, this structure draws down £13 of national heritage grant funding — a leverage ratio of 13.0:1. The community's £162,000 would unlock a total project of over £1 million.

5. What this means for our acquisition offer

	Principal proposal (split site)	Whole-site option
Community funds raised	£162,000	£162,000
Less: committed to the development programme	(£85,219)	(£65,770)
Less: legal fees on acquisition	—	(£5,000)
ACQUISITION OFFER	£76,781	£91,230

The acquisition offer rises by £14,450 — an increase of 19% — despite the development programme being half as large again. This is not sleight of hand: it is the direct consequence of the single 5% match applying across the whole programme, replacing the blended 12.5% match that the split-site NLHF/AHF structure required on the restoration phase. The whole-site figure is stated after providing a full twelve months of holding costs and the legal fees on acquisition, neither of which is separately provided for in our principal proposal.

6. The operating case

The whole site supports a materially larger operating business: twenty-eight income streams rather than twenty, including four creative offices, an upstairs conference room, additional therapy rooms and the cottage. The ten-year projection below uses the same methodology, the same conservative utilisation assumptions and the same cost basis as our principal proposal.

	Op Yr 1	Op Yr 2	Op Yr 3	Op Yr 4	Op Yr 5	Op Yr 6+
Annual revenue	£110,953	£207,560	£329,066	£496,072	£508,744	£508,744
Operating costs	(£221,652)	(£221,652)	(£221,652)	(£295,224)	(£295,224)	(£295,224)
Loan repayment	(£66,120)	(£66,120)	(£66,120)	(£66,120)	(£66,120)	—
Net result	(£176,820)	(£80,212)	+£41,294	+£134,728	+£147,400	+£213,520
Cumulative position	(£176,820)	(£257,032)	(£215,738)	(£81,010)	+£66,390	growing

Operating costs include the full long-term maintenance provision for the whole site — £6,131 a month from Operating Year 4, funding the £515,000 of works the surveyor identifies as foreseeable across the whole site over the next 5–20 years, provisioned over seven years.

Key operating figures

	Amount
Peak funding requirement	£257,032, at the end of Operating Year 2
Working capital facility modelled	£275,000 over five years at 7.5% (£5,510 per month)
Headroom within the facility	£17,968
Cumulative position turns positive	Operating Year 5
Mature annual surplus	£213,520 from Operating Year 6
Demonstrated borrowing capacity at maturity	Approximately £1.74 million at lender-standard 1.25× coverage

The mature surplus of £213,520 is 41% larger than under our principal proposal. That surplus funds the building's stewardship in perpetuity and provides very substantial headroom against adverse trading — the whole site could service more than six times the working capital facility modelled here.

7. Social return — a materially larger public benefit

Our principal proposal is assessed in Section 4.3 of this bid at a Social Return on Investment of £15.20 for every £1 invested, generating £2.27 million of net social value a year and over £770,000 in direct annual savings to Hertfordshire County Council, the NHS and DWP budgets. Those figures are modelled using the HACT UK Social Value Bank, HM Treasury Green Book WELLBY valuations and PSSRU Unit Costs, with 25% deadweight applied.

The whole-site option increases that return, for a straightforward reason: it brings the entire building into community use rather than 72% of it, and the spaces it adds are disproportionately those which generate social rather than commercial value.

7.1 What the additional space delivers

Additional space	Social value it generates
Two further therapy and treatment rooms (farmhouse)	Additional capacity for social prescribing referrals, talking therapies and counselling — the highest-value outcomes in the SROI model, and the ones which generate direct savings to NHS and adult social care budgets
Child and family therapeutic space	Dedicated provision for families, postnatal groups and SEND programming, in a protected setting adjoining the courtyard
Four creative offices (farmhouse ground floor)	Affordable workspace for local artists, makers and micro-businesses — supporting the creative economy identified as a priority in the Dacorum Local Plan
Conference and meeting room	Community meetings, adult education, training and partner-organisation use, at

(farmhouse first floor)	accessible rates
Cottage rooms	Further flexible space for community groups, practitioners and hire

7.2 The scale of the increase

We have not re-run the full SROI model for the whole-site option, and we would not want to present a restated figure without doing so properly. On a simple proportionate basis — scaling by the increase in community floor area — the whole site could generate in the order of £3.1 million of net social value a year and approximately £1.07 million in annual statutory savings.

A conservative estimate. We believe a proportionate scaling understates the true increase. Social value does not scale with floor area; it scales with programme. The spaces the whole-site option adds are weighted towards therapy, family provision and creative workspace — the uses which carry the highest social value per beneficiary in the HACT framework and which generate the direct statutory savings — rather than towards commercial hire. A full restatement would follow the same methodology as Section 4.3 and would be provided to the Council on request.

The wider point is simple. Under our principal proposal, 28% of Heath Barn passes permanently into private ownership and does not provide community benefit. Under the whole-site option, every square foot of a Grade II listed building that has served this community for five centuries continues to do so — in perpetuity, under a statutory asset lock.

8. The two options compared

	Principal proposal (split site – ref 4.1)	Whole-site option
Site acquired	Barns and community spaces only	Entire site
Residential element	Farmhouse converted by development partner	None
Development programme	£603,955	£907,705
Grant funding sought	£569,373 (NLHF, two stages)	£857,936 (NLHF, two stages)
Community committed to development	£34,582	£65,770
Grant leverage	16.50×	13.0×
Acquisition offer to the Council	£76,781	£91,230
Development partner required	Yes	No
Number of transactions for the Council	Two	One
Operating loan	£100,000	£275,000
Cumulative position positive	Operating Year 3	Operating Year 5
Mature annual surplus	£151,806	£213,520
Heritage asset in community ownership	Majority	Entire site

We should be straightforward about the trade-off. Under the split-site proposal the Council would also receive a capital receipt from the residential element, which the whole-site option forgoes. Against that, the Council would receive a higher direct offer from us, deal with one purchaser rather than two, avoid the conditionality and delay inherent in our finding and contracting a development partner, and secure the whole listed complex in permanent community use. Which balance the Council prefers is properly a matter for members.

9. Risks specific to this option

The whole-site option is larger, and we would not present it as risk-free. The material differences from our principal proposal are these:

Risk	Impact	How we would manage it
A larger grant ask from a newly formed organisation	High	This is precisely the concern NLHF raised with us, and precisely why the two-stage structure exists. The development-phase grant is small, uses NLHF's lighter-touch process, and is designed to build the track record before the substantial ask is made. We are following the route NLHF themselves recommended.
The delivery grant does not follow the development grant	High	Success at stage one does not guarantee stage two. Mitigated by the phased build: Phase 1 can be completed and trading while later phases are funded. The Society's borrowing capacity at maturity — approximately £1.68 million — means debt remains a genuine fallback rather than a theoretical one.
A larger working capital facility (£275,000 rather than £100,000)	Medium	Peak requirement of £257,032 sits within the facility with £17,968 headroom. The facility is fully repaid by Operating Year 5, and mature surpluses cover the repayment more than three times over.
Longer to reach cumulative surplus (Operating Year 5)	Medium	A consequence of building out three phases rather than one. The trade-off is a mature surplus 36% larger, reached on the same trajectory.
Greater holding and security exposure across a larger site	Medium	Twelve months of holding costs are budgeted at £16,000 within the community contribution. Volunteer presence, monitored CCTV and appropriate insurance keep this contained, as set out in Section 4.4.4 of our Risk Assessment.
Three-phase delivery is operationally more complex	Low–Med	Phasing is a mitigation as much as a risk: it converts a single large commitment into three smaller ones, each of which can proceed as funding allows.

10. What we would ask of the Council

We are not asking the Council to prefer this option. We are asking that it be treated as available.

- **First**, That the whole-site option be placed before members alongside our principal proposal, so that if the Council is minded to conclude a single transaction for the entire site, a community outcome remains on the table.
- **Second**, That the Council engage with us on the NLHF development-grant route. NLHF confirmed that their under-£250,000 programme does not require the applicant to own the building, but does require the owner to be involved — and they are confirming whether a local authority could act as lead or joint applicant. This is the practical mechanism by which the funding deadlock both parties identified can be broken before transfer, rather than after it.
- **Third**, That we be permitted to discuss a conditional structure — a lease with option, or transfer with reversion — if members would prefer to see the development grant secured before the freehold passes. Our objective is the community stewardship of Heath Barn; we remain open on the legal route.

11. Assumptions to be confirmed

In the interests of transparency, the following underpin the figures above and are being confirmed:

- That 5% partnership funding applies to both the development and delivery phases, the total programme exceeding £250,000. The under-£250,000 route is taken for its speed and regional decision-making, not for any reduction in the match requirement.
- That the development and delivery phases may be pursued as two separate applications rather than as two stages of a single award. NLHF advised the smaller application first as a route to establishing track record.
- That the delivery-phase eligible cost of £824,950 is accepted in full, and that the grant remains below the £1 million threshold at which partnership funding rises to 10%.

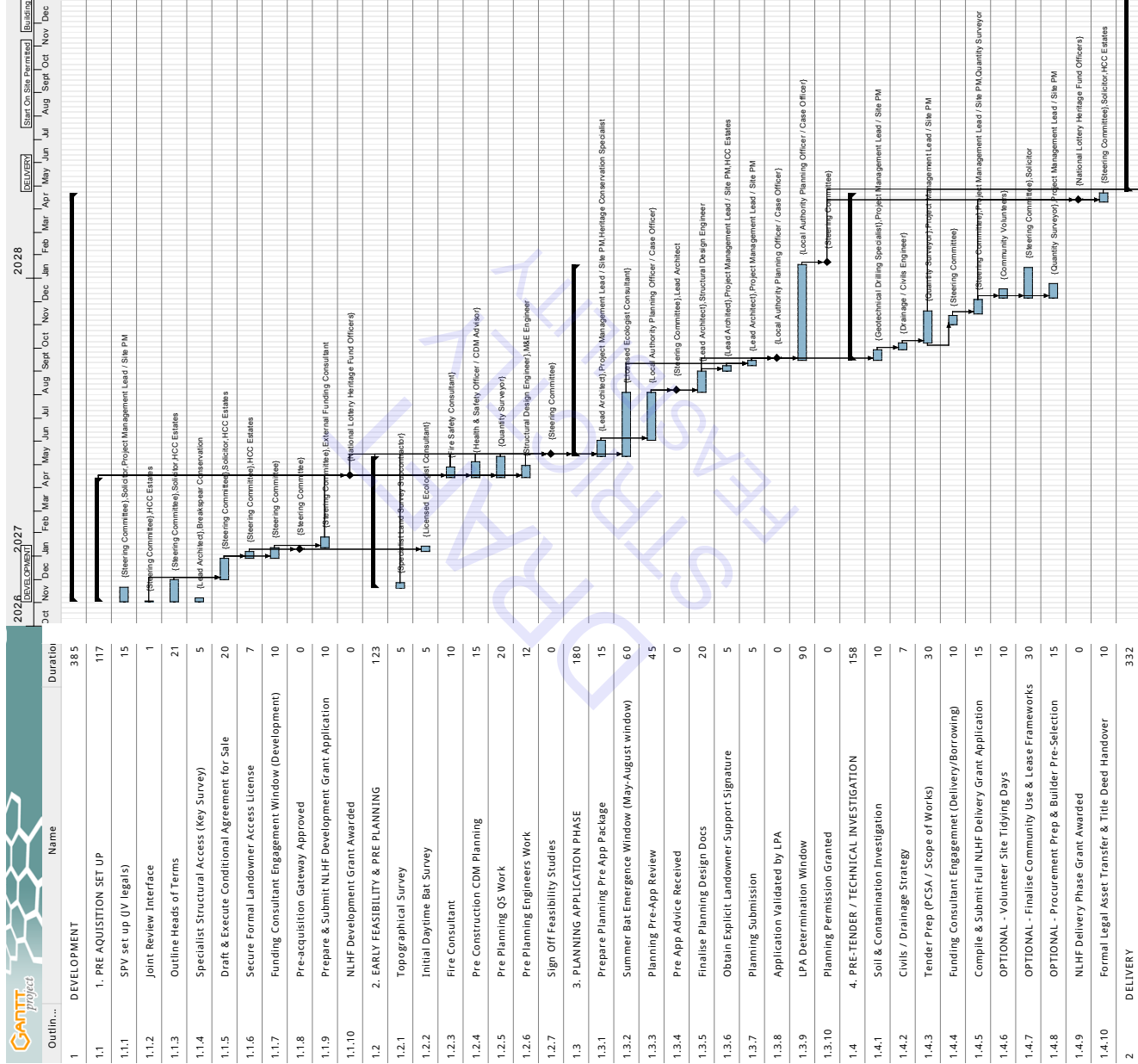
- That twelve months of holding costs at £16,000 is adequate for the period between transfer and the commencement of works. This covers insurance, monitored CCTV, utilities, inspections and a repairs allowance; quotations are being obtained.
- Area-based scaling reflects the community spaces representing 72% of the site under our principal proposal. Operating costs which vary with the size of the building — utilities, insurances, cleaning, maintenance — are scaled accordingly; telephone, IT, printing and marketing are held at existing levels.
- Legal fees on acquisition are provided at £5,000 and will be confirmed once heads of terms are agreed.
- The allocation of costs between NLHF's development and delivery phases follows the logic that the development phase runs to the point of being ready to start on site. Our cost plan also carries a RIBA-stage classification which splits these differently; the two will be reconciled with NLHF before submission.

Every figure in this appendix is drawn from the same professional cost base, the same revenue model and the same methodology as our principal proposal. We have modelled the whole-site option because we believe Heath Barn should remain in community hands in whatever form the Council finds deliverable — and because, having been given one opportunity to make this case, we would rather present every credible route to a community outcome than only the one we happened to think of first.

Prepared August 2026. Development costs from the Full Site cost plan (April 2026 prices, 25% contingency). Operating projections from the Heath Barn Revenue by Year — Full Site model. Funding structure follows advice received from the National Lottery Heritage Fund on 13 August 2026.

Our Heath Barn - Community Arts & Wellbeing Hub

Gantt Chart



IMPORTANT NOTES

1. Planning vs. Construction

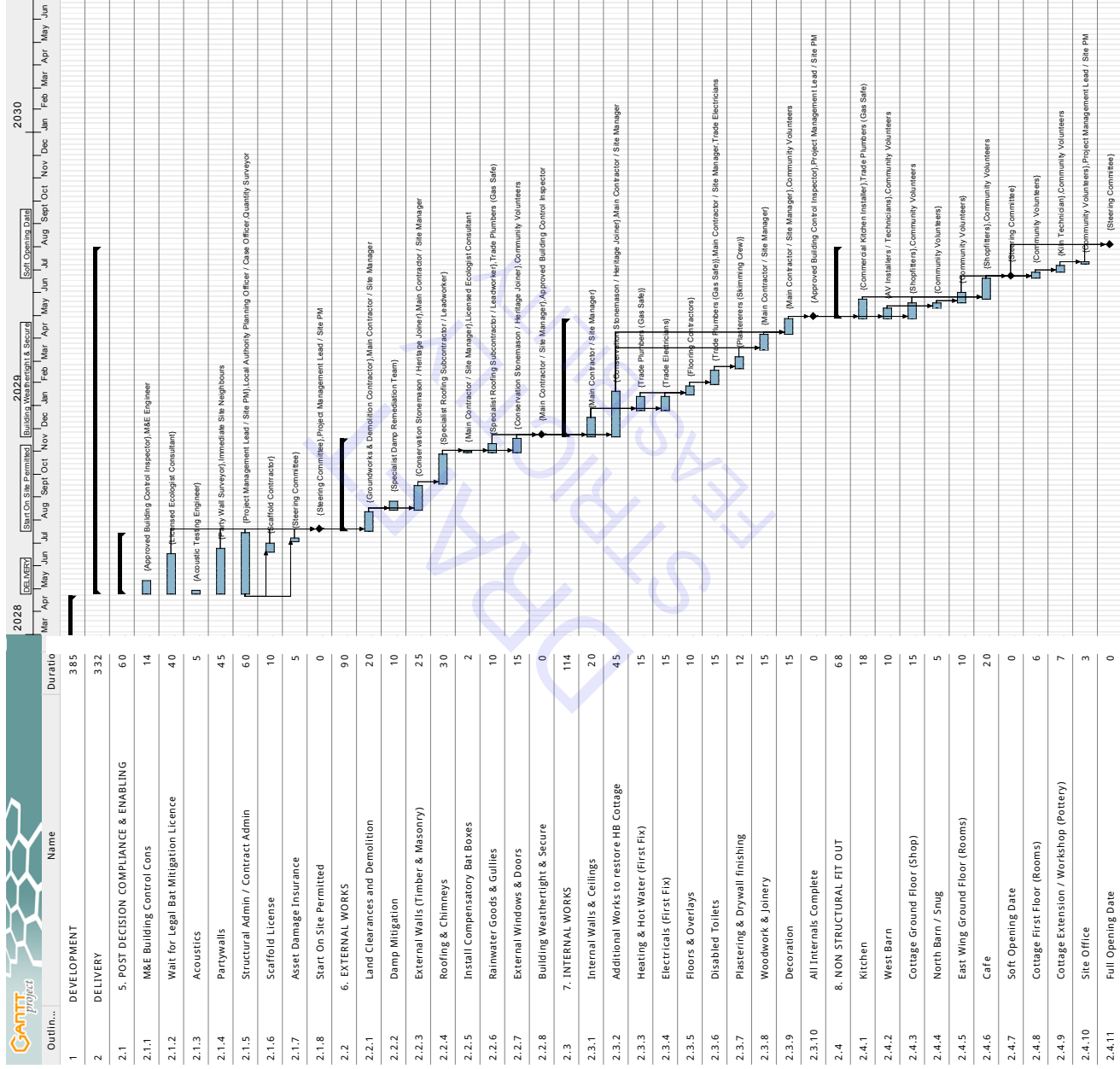
Durations: Typically the Development stage would be shorter and steeper than the Delivery phase. We've cushioned this development phase due to the numerous "handshakes" required for a listed asset transfer (e.g., the 90-day LPA window, NLHF assessment boards, and seasonal bat surveys).

2. Technical Work 'At Risk': Advancing tasks like soil testing, drainage strategy, and fire consultation carries a minor risk prior to full consent. However, the total cost exposure is relatively small (~£12k), and the data remains permanently valid. More importantly, we are ensuring builder tender packs are ready to drop the moment permissions clear.

3. Client vs. Contractor Programmes: RIBA advice is for the client not to calculate contractor activity. We certainly won't be dictating on-site timelines to the builders down the line, as this draft operates strictly as a high-level feasibility model to stress-test our funding gates, protect our cash flow, and establish a realistic approximation for our October 2029 public opening.

Our Heath Barn - Community Arts & Wellbeing Hub

Gantt Chart



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