

news *release*

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A £1m Christmas gift for Danesmoor

Christmas has come early in Danesmoor with news that grants totalling more than £1million have been secured to build a new community centre in the area.

The new centre will be known as 'the St. Barnabas' Centre' and will replace the existing St. Barnabas' Church and Church hall on Pilsley Road. It is envisaged the community space will provide room for training, pre-school education and office space as well as continuing to be the local church and housing many local community groups and organisations.

Cash for the project was secured with the help of the Economic Development Team at North East Derbyshire District Council which was able to help the local community access funding from a range of government and European funding channels.

It is planned that work will begin in the new year and the community centre will be completed by November 2007.

The project is the culmination of a long battle to bring much needed community space to the hard-pressed village. Rev Matthew Barnes Chair of the Centre Management Group and vicar of St. Barnabas', said: "I know some people will feel very sad at the loss of the old Church but with a new building the potential for wider community benefits are enormous. This centre will be for the whole community – in time it's something I believe everyone in Danesmoor will use and be very proud of".

The St. Barnabas' Centre management committee was formed over three years ago to tackle the problem of poor quality meeting space in the area. The group draws a membership from a coalition of community leaders, residents and representatives from local groups and is run under the leadership of the local church. The group has received significant support and advice from both LINKS and NEDDC in developing the project to this point.

NEDDC Council leader, Graham Baxter, said: "I am absolutely delighted for the people of Danesmoor who have been trying for a long time to fund a new community centre.

"It is very gratifying that the Council was able to use its expertise to help this project. Staff in our Economic Development Team were able to provide professional advice to assist the steering group to access national and European funding channels and manage to secure a fantastic £1m to allow this scheme to finally come to life."

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North East Derbyshire MP, Natascha Engel, a longstanding supporter of the project, said “It’s wonderful to see what can be achieved when local communities pull together. This project has been a real team effort by committed local people. I’m glad to have played a part”.

The Bishop of Derby the Rt. Rev Dr Alastair Redfern, said: “I’m delighted that the Church can use its space so imaginatively in the service of the community. The Church always strives to be at the heart of any neighbourhood, this new building is a very tangible demonstration of that commitment’.

The £1,044,025 of funding to build the centre has been secured from a number of funders including: £280,000 from the Coalfields Regeneration Trust, £183,000 from the East Midlands Development Agency, £150,000 from the Big Lottery Fund (National Lottery), £120,000 European Regional Development Fund, £117,000 from the Alliance SSP, £50,00 from WREN, £50,000 from North East Derbyshire District Council, £45,000 from Biffaward, £26,000 from Surestart, £8,000 from Clay Cross Parish Council, £10,000 from Viridor Credits, Lovells as well as other local contributions. Many local firms have pledged support in other ways.

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