



ABC OASIS Challenge – The Brief

“Making A Difference For God & With God”

Background

Andover Baptist Church's history goes back to the early nineteenth century. It's most recent building, on the Folly Roundabout, was completed in 1982, containing a remarkable vision for hosting an increased attendance, and provision for ever-changing audio/visual requirements, with a multi-functional dimension (several size rooms to be used for children & youth activities, community meetings, etc.).

Since then, the church membership and attendance have increased to the point where we are at 90% capacity for our family-oriented 11:00 service, where the church is used every day of the week for both church and community purposes, including a pre-school and blood donors. Therefore, our capacity to grow is restricted to a large degree by our physical capabilities.

In addition to that, several areas of the church building are at the stage where they would require significant investment in order to keep it simply in good working and living condition, without necessarily enhancing it for usage (roofing, compliance with disability-access regulations, kitchen, etc.). A general refurbishment is also very desirable.

Vision & Values

Reaching

Our vision is to build “Capacity 4 Growth”, believing that God wants us to grow numerically and spiritually through reaching the people of Andover for Christ, and discipling them to become all that God wants for them. Historically, the church has reached out to the whole town (indeed, located on the high street), and beyond into rural locations, so there is no real geographic aspect to our ministry. This also means that the various services we offer, the social action we are involved in, the outreach points are not geared specifically to a certain population group, but are aimed at making a difference for God (and with God!) with the people He brings us. As such, flexibility in the use of our premises will be a significant feature of any future building. We wouldn't therefore want to limit God's purpose for us over the next 15-20 years, and would envisage a building that would cater for a membership of 1500-2000 over that period. In terms of our gathered worship, that could be achieved with a building that caters for 750-800 people (with later on the possibility of running multiple services, multi-site options, and possibly adding new seating), combined with small groups that meet in various locations across the town, as we become a church OF small groups.

Resourcing

A key aspect of this vision is for us to be an 'Antioch' church, a 'resourcing centre' that is at the heart of community life in Andover, and equips other churches in the surrounding area and beyond (through training material, conferences, high-quality video and recorded material).

Renewing

We are also passionately committed to creation care as part of our mission, so environmental considerations will be of prime importance. In all things, we want to develop excellence, giving

God our utmost capability, and believe that our physical facilities are integral to us building that 'Capacity 4 Growth', and achieving the God-given potential we have been blessed with.

So the key values which will help guide our choices are:

- Capacity 4 Growth: we will not make choices that limit our capacity for growing
- Flexibility: we will not make choices that overly limit the options and services we can offer
- Stewardship: we will not make choices that compromise our commitment to stewarding God's creation and the world around us.
- Accessibility: we will not make choices that compromise our ability to welcome people of all ages, backgrounds, especially those with disabilities or special needs.

Accommodation (key areas)

1. Outside space

As the current building is limited in its outside visibility and impact, we would like our building to make a statement to the community as a light, stunning, welcoming place of worship, that ties in with the Vision for Andover's aspirations of being a town where people "move to, not away from." They recognise that "buildings shape our town centres, facilities enhance our lives, plans inspire and motivate us but it is the people that give a town its spirit and identity." We want our buildings to be a reflection of our people, those that make a difference with and for God, in the power of His Spirit. Part of that would be an external sign of our belonging as God's people, and the incorporating of the stained glass window from our original building, providing a link to the past.

The outside grounds (if any are left!) would benefit from landscaped and low-maintenance visually attractive gardens, with attractive notice boards and signage (including a name for the building: '.....[Name].....: home of Andover Baptist Church', emphasising that WE are the church, not the building!

We would need an area that it accessible to van for loading/unloading equipment.

2. Worship Space/Sanctuary

At present, we cater for roughly 280 adults and children in our 11:00 services, with the capacity to open-up back doors for an extra 220 or so seats for special services.

There are currently no conference/concert facilities in Andover that cater for more than 280-300 people, so there could be the option to offer the sanctuary as a concert/conference venue.

Our key requirement however, is to provide a space for gathering for worship that is *light, inspirational, comfortable* and *flexible*. We would like the capacity to seat 750 people, with, if possible, flexibility to accommodate future growth.

Other requirements would be:

- Baptistry, with good access to changing-room space, and visibility
- Flexible & comfortable seating (possibility of being removed, and layout amended if required)
- Good all-round visibility and acoustics from all areas of sanctuary, including PA loop.
- AV, lighting and recording capability (ideally with sound/visuals/lighting desk situated in direct line of stage)
- Black-out capacity
- Flexible staging, including area in sanctuary for those taking place in service
- Discreet areas for people to be prayed for (side chapel, or corridor space)
- Full access for disabled (including catering for the visual-and-hearing-impaired)
- Easy access to storage/vestry
- Crèche area that has visibility of service, and sound incorporated (and is

soundproof!)

3. Chapel/Reflection area

An enhancement to our present situation would be to have a separate area that becomes a chapel, a place of prayer and cultivating the 'spiritual-engine' of the whole community. This would ideally:

- Be easily accessible, preferably near the entrance.
- Reserved for this purpose.
- Comfortable, warm and inviting. The lighting should be soft, with fittings fixed fairly low, and maybe include space for lighting candles?
- Seating a smaller gather (70-80?), but with flexibility, allowing different forms of prayer and creative expression (space on walls for expression, creative arts, etc...)

4. Entrance point

We would require there to be a single, main entrance point with a threshold that is easy to cross, light and inviting. This would be the key to making good first impressions, with the following requirements:

- A welcoming and uncluttered desk/reception area
- A couple of sofas, seating area, and chairs with arms for our senior members.
- Neat and tidy display area, including screens for evolving information
- Contemporary, with artwork (but minimal)
- Accessible to wheelchairs & prams (with 'pram-parking' clearly sign-posted or available)
- Ability to cater for large numbers of people coming in and out, particularly for Sunday services, funerals and weddings.

5. Mingling area, foyer

This area would be key to the informal, social life of the church, allowing the different groups to come together and to allow single point of access to the different parts of the building (may determine the shape of the building). This should have drinks facilities that are always available as well as cleverly-placed display and notice facilities (electronic and paper). This would give us the possibility of getting to any part of the building without having to go through another room, disturbing others. (May include several café-style chairs/tables)

6. Resource Centre

Together with our desire to be an "Antioch" (resourcing) church, comes the responsibility to produce quality training, communication, worship resources. In keeping with the visual age we are part of, the provision of a small recording/editing studio will become a critical aspect of church life.

7. Office Space

On the basis of the church growing 2.5 times, and with the current level of staff at 6 (2 FT, 4 PT), we would need office that caters for a staff of around 12, all with internet, phone access. This could probably best be achieved through hot-desking, with an office space reserved for senior minister, confidential meeting-room, and sufficient storage for books, paperwork, etc... Coffee and drinks-making facilities would be crucial to the functioning of the office.

The offices should be clearly sign-posted, and not too far from reception. There should be a clear 'waiting area' (reception or otherwise) if people are waiting for appointments.

8. Meeting Space

From surveys carried out with the community and internally, it appears that ABC caters for a wide-range of needs and situations. We currently have:

- 6 rooms catering for around 12 adults (15 children?), including staff reception area upstairs
- 1 room catering for 5-6 adults (counselling room)

- 1 room catering comfortably for 40 adults.
- 1 sports hall catering for around 30-40 children.

This is around a total of 120 adults, or 150 including children.

We would need sufficient rooms to cater for additional growth, we would need to cater for around 300 adults, or 375 including adults (on the rough basis of 2.5x growth), around 18 meeting rooms. Storage and flexibility will be the keywords for meeting the needs of those using the rooms (including maybe 1 room to include PCs for training purposes). Some of the larger rooms could have partitioning, to give us the flexibility and different options.

The rooms should include (maybe combining several features):

- For 3-4 rooms, pull-down screens and visual-projector capacity (built-in computers/video projection?)
- Flexible desk and chairs
- Adequate but "non-glare" lighting.
- A counselling room with comfortable seats, and a more "intimate" feel
- A sports hall/youth facility (including possibly in-built climbing wall?), with appropriate storage
- An area dedicated to children's work (see below)
- Space to serve meals (accessible from the kitchen) for 50-60 people (Seniors 'Platinum Fellowship', Alpha, etc...), maybe in a hall that is 2/3rd size of sanctuary.

9. Pre-School (tbc after discussions)

In an ideal world, and in order to bless and grow the children that are such a vital part of ABC's mission, we would love to have a dedicated children's work/Pre-School area, that contains flexible seating for children (30), messy space, outdoor play area, etc.. This could also be used by the CABC groups. Easy storage is a major feature here. Access to outdoor area (with water outside/tap) is required. Careful consideration should be given to pram 'parking' and throughfare, especially for pre-school and mothers & toddlers groups, as well as adequate nappy-changing/baby facilities, and one if not two children's toilets (mini-size!).

10. Kitchen

Catering is a crucial need for churches who are interacting with their community. We currently provide meals for 50-60 people twice a month, and this service will continue, if not grow. The new building will therefore require space that is used by authorised and trained groups, complying with all the necessary Health & Safety Acts. Drinks facilities should be available throughout the building, not just limited to the kitchen. It should have several access points, notably open to mingling area.

11. Environmental & Accessibility Considerations

As stewardship of the environment is a key aspect of our mission, we would like to make the ecological and sustainable aspects of ABC's building a major communication and outreach tool, however this is best achieved. This may for example involve outstanding BREEAM certification, waste-recycling during building, use of building materials, rain-harvesting (for Wcs?) and whatever measures are deemed to be good stewardship at a reasonable cost.

In terms of accessibility, we would require the building to satisfy all current DDA regulations, whilst again making this a mission opportunity and demonstration of God's love to all.

Transport planning and car-parking will be a significant dimension of a new building. Current access is inadequate for our existing number of church attendees, let alone a 2.5-fold increase! The feasibility study should include investigating ways of minimising impact on neighbours, looking at other parking possibilities, whilst fulfilling our sustainable ambitions (including the provision of a push-bike 'parking' area!). A drop-off point for minibus(es) should be included, and consideration of secure parking for at least one minibus, as well as an area for loading/unloading equipment, with easy access to the sanctuary.

12. Funding

The current gross annual income of ABC is £210,000. The church has no significant assets other than the building and the manse. It also has no significant debt.

We would look to source the money for the project through a variety of ways:

- Church giving! Our experience from visits to other churches suggests that, with a clear vision and faith, our church may raise of the order of £1,000,000 over three years from our congregation. This equates to an average of £4,000 per current member.
- Possible sources of loans, including Baptist Union (whose maximum is £700,000), with interest and capital to be repaid from future giving and future growth in the congregation. However we want to pass on an asset for the next generation and not create a debt burden. Debt servicing would also compromise the availability of future resources for ministry and growth.
- Investigating the possibility and feasibility of building flats/houses as a way of offsetting costs.
- Investigating other potential sources of funding streams or grants from trusts or from bodies concerned with sustainability and environmentally-friendly projects, though our experience from visits to other churches suggests that grant funding is very limited and unlikely to be significant.

13. Maintainability

The design of the building should seek to minimise maintenance where possible. All parts of the building and fittings which may need attention from time to time should be accessible without use of platforms or towers, I.e. light bulbs in high ceilings, mechanically operated windows.