

## Q. Why do we need a new building?

A. The existing band room on Dewsbury Road was originally a wartime temporary structure, which is crumbling, and will not last many more years. Continuing increase in player numbers requires larger facilities.

## Q. Can we rebuild on the existing site?

A. Unfortunately, no. Calderdale Planning have confirmed that an application for a new rehearsal facility would be refused. A major reason is that we are unable to provide off-road parking for the users.

## Q. What do we plan to build?

A. The essential design features include two large high quality band rooms, plus tuition rooms for small group practices, which can all be used simultaneously, and office, kitchen, and storage facilities,. A social area, community room, and recording studio will give the building extra flexibility.

## Q. Will the building only be for the Band?

A. No. From the outset it was decided that the community should also be given the opportunity to use the building, and we have decided this is best achieved if we promote the music centre for any type of acoustic music. By supporting community activities we also greatly strengthen our business plan, and enhance the prospects of securing the required funding.

## Q. Where will the music centre be built?

A. In Elland town centre. Calderdale Council supports our ideas, and has agreed in principle to transfer the Upper Timber Street car park to the Band on a 125 year lease. This site (behind Whitakers Opticians) will be an ideal central location for community access. We have submitted a detailed business plan to progress this under the Community Asset Transfer Scheme, and the Council will vote on our application during 2016.

## Q. What will it cost?

A. The building will cost nearly £600k, but including professional fees, VAT, landscaping and contingency the total cost could be up to £900-1000k. The exact cost will not be known until we commission detailed design.



## Q. Where will the money come from?

A. We hope to secure most of the money from capital grant awards. We will be seeking large grants from the Lottery Communities Fund, the Arts Council, and others. We believe the business plan presents a strong case, which has a good prospect of attracting grant support. The existing Dewsbury Road site would eventually be sold, and the proceeds put towards the new asset.

## Q. What does the business plan say?

A. The plan covers the first five years of the music centre operation. We will support increased brass band activities, plus concerts, tuition, and ensemble activities for various musical genres under the name 'Elland Music'. The Band has a national reputation for excellence in brass band tuition, and we plan to extend this quality to other areas. Other users will pay subscriptions or attendance fees to contribute to the costs. We will also further increase our support for local primary schools, in partnership with The Brooksbank School.

## Q. How will the music centre be run?

A. As far as possible we intend to run the music centre much as we do the current headquarters, as a community building managed and run by the Band and the community, and staffed by volunteers. The size and flexibility of the building will allow other activities to run alongside Band rehearsals. Additional volunteers

will be needed, particularly to cover for longer opening hours, and some of these are expected to be drawn from the other users who participate.

**Q. When will the music centre be built?**

A. Calderdale Council first has to approve our business plan before leasing the site to The Band. We expect this decision in Autumn 2016. Detailed design, planning approval, and fundraising must then be completed before construction can start. We hope to start work in 2017, with the building opening about one year later.

**Q. Will the music centre be viable?**

A. Yes. The new building will be well insulated, and energy efficient, so the running costs will be manageable. Staff costs will be kept to a minimum by extending the current methods of using volunteer support. Worst case analysis shows that, even if other paying users do not appear, the building will still be financially sound.

**Q. Will it be possible to hold concerts?**

A. Yes. The two large rehearsal rooms will be separated by movable acoustic walls, which fold away to make a concert venue, suitable for audiences of up to around 200, thus providing important additional revenue.

**Q. What happens if the music centre fails?**

A. As mentioned above, we do not believe that can happen. However, to guard against unforeseen disaster, the management structure will be changed to separate the risk from the Band. Thus, even if the music centre is dissolved, the Band would still retain their equipment, and would continue.

**Q. Who will own the music centre?**

A. The Band will own the title to the music centre, and if the Band contributes towards the construction then they will also own some of the equity. Terms of grant awards would determine any other claims on the asset.

**Q. Will the Council take possession of the music centre?**

A. No. When the lease for the site is signed we will also sign a Joint Working Agreement with the Council, which commits us to supporting activities for the community. In return the site will cost us nothing. The Council has no interest in running the music centre, but would be there to advise and help ensure we support the Elland community.

**Q. Will the Band be locked out of rehearsals?**

A. No. All users must be allowed fair opportunity to use the facilities but, as there are two full size rehearsal rooms, with proper planning the Band should be able to ensure that rehearsal space is booked as required.

**Q. Is it true the Band will have to pay rent?**

A. Yes. At present the Band pays ALL the costs of the band room. With the music centre the Bands must continue to pay a fair contribution towards the running costs (electricity, gas, water, insurance, maintenance, etc). Other users will also pay their share. The easiest way to calculate this is as a fee per rehearsal.

**Q. What alternatives are there?**

A. The Band could not afford to purchase a site, which would cost around £200k. Grants are not available for land purchase, so a new build would only work if the site purchase was financed by a wealthy benefactor. A lower cost option could be to rent or purchase a building for use only as a rehearsal facility, but capital grants are almost certainly unobtainable if the building is purely for Band use. Purchase is likely to require in excess of £250k, which is currently beyond the Band's capability. Renting brings contractual problems if the building needs to be modified.

**More details are given in the Outline Business Plan, which is available for inspection in the band room.**

**Please e-mail comments to: [howard.varley@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:howard.varley@hotmail.co.uk), or leave a note with the timesheets.**