

Community Insight: OASIS Community Centre and Gardens

Based on the estate of Kilton in Worksop, Nottinghamshire, the OASIS Community Centre and Gardens opened in July 2011, after a small community group decided to take on the derelict Kilton Youth Centre and an abandoned recreation ground.

Led by Pastor Steve Williams and the New Life Church, the community group spent three years raising around £475,000 to restore the building and recreation ground, developing them into a multi-purpose community centre facility and community park and garden offering a thriving haven of activities and events for people of all ages.

Facilities available at the redeveloped centre, which was funded through grants, awards and individual gifts, include:

- A community café room, including a play corner and soft seating area.
- A fully equipped children's room for pre-school and primary school children.
- A hygiene suite, including a shower, disabled toilet, changing table and hoist.
- A fully equipped kitchen able to cater for small and large events.
- A computer room with six computer stations, interactive whiteboard and printers.
- An administration office and meeting room, which can hold 70-80 people.

Outside the facilities of the community garden include:

- A children's play area with slides and climbing equipment, trim trail for primary school children, soft play area for pre-

school children and an inclusive play area suitable for children with disabilities.

- Sensory, herb and rose gardens and a wildlife meadow,
- A gazebo and Eden style dome greenhouse.
- An orchard growing apples, pears, cherries, apricots, hazelnuts, plums damsons and almonds, alongside small garden plots which children can adopt.
- A car park with 40 spaces.

Although only recently opened, the centre already hosted a range of charities, community groups and educational programmes including:

- The SHE project, a therapeutic women's group.
- Primary school children's club OASIS Kids.
- Nature Quest Club and Workshops, enabling children to deal with the natural world around them.
- Older people's resource centre and lunch club Face 2 Face.
- Arts and crafts workshops for all ages through OASIS Arts.
- A Community Arts Theatre (CAT), teaching children and young people visual arts.

Other activities hosted at the centre include a dementia group, gardening workshops, holiday clubs, catering and youth projects and IT training.

Initially developed by a group of less than 30 volunteers with an average income of £7,000 from the local area, OASIS is an example of how abandoned community buildings and land area can successfully be brought back to life.

Community Insight:
Umbrella

Since opening the project has become the hub and heart of its local community, considering the needs and enhancing the lives of everyone it services.

This ethos has been taken further with the development of the OASIS Community Forum, which gives a voice to its members enabling them to influence the future direction of the project and be completely involved in its work.

For further information on OASIS visit www.oasisproject.co.uk.