

MEETING: 22/09/2016

Ref: 13295

ASSESSMENT CATEGORY - Making London More Inclusive

St Peter's Bethnal Green

Adv: Jack Joslin

Amount requested: £100,000

Base: Tower Hamlets

(Revised Request: £99,620)

Benefit: Tower Hamlets

Amount recommended: £87,620

The Charity

St Peter's Bethnal Green became a registered charity in 2013 but has stood as a Church of England parish church since 1841, aiming to meet the spiritual, social and cultural needs of the community. In addition to religious services and other activities its current social/community offering includes: SPEAR an award-winning coaching programme helping disadvantaged young people into employment or training; and a gardening club. It also hosts meetings of local community groups; operates as a collection centre for Tower Hamlets Foodbank; and provides facilities for the local Parish Nurse to provide general health advice and education.

The Application

St Peter's Bethnal Green is a Grade II listed church in Tower Hamlets. Decades of underinvestment in the fabric of the building have reached the point where a major refurbishment is now necessary. This application is informed by a recent access audit, supported by City Bridge Trust, which outlined a number of improvements that could be made to the building to improve its accessibility. Funding is sought to improve the access of the building and construct a new accessible toilet close to the entrance. This will be the first part in a tiered project to improve the facilities and renovate the church.

The Recommendation

St Peter's Bethnal Green is a community hub sitting right in the heart of Bethnal Green. In addition to being a place of worship the church hosts employment and training courses for local young people, offers a parish nursing scheme and is regularly utilised by other community organisations in the area. This application closely fits your making London More Inclusive priority as it will be providing access improvements to an existing community building. A revised project budget, submitted by the organisation, has been included in Appendix A to the application form. Funding is recommended at a reduced rate as the applicant applied for contingency costs on top of the access improvements and related project costs, which falls out of your policy.

£87,620 for access improvements to St Peter's Bethnal Green.

Funding History

Meeting Date	Decision
26/11/2015	£1,683 for the costs of commissioning an independent access audit and appraisal and related works management.

Background and detail of proposal

In 2015 the governing body of St Peter's considered several options for the future of the site. The building has been in decline and is in need of improvements in order to make it more welcoming and inclusive to all members of the local community. It was decided to proceed with a multi-million pound Heritage Lottery Fund project to completely overhaul the building. Unfortunately this fell through due to rising building costs and it was decided by the board to pursue a smaller more discreet refurbishment programme.

This application is to fund the first phase of the tiered refurbishment project. Your funding is sought to build a new accessible toilet facility; improve the accessibility of the entrance with a power-assisted door and ramps; installation of a hearing loop; and associated building costs. The first phase of the project is separate from the rest of the planned refurbishment that will take place in stages when funds are available.

Financial Information

Forecast income for the 31 December 2016 is £275,355 of which £198,898 (72%) was confirmed as at 30 June 2016.

2015 income included initial stage funding of £96,265 from the Heritage Lottery Fund and expenditure included a spend of £116,776 on the design phase of the original proposed development. This project was aborted in 2016 as the Heritage Lottery Fund advised the church to withdraw from the development phase as they were not in a position to proceed to the delivery phase.

Cost of generating funds in 2014 and 2015 relate to costs of providing hire and license facilities. 2016 includes these costs together with an allocation of the cost of a part time fundraiser and other direct fundraising costs. The church has taken on board the need to allocate costs accordingly going forward.

Year end at 31 December	2015 Independently Examined Accounts £	2016 Budgeted £
Income and Expenditure		
Income	344,690	275,355
Expenditure	361,689	275,183
Unrestricted Funds Surplus / (Deficit)	(1,616)	5,261
Restricted Funds Surplus / (Deficit)	(15,383)	(8,089)
Total Surplus / (Deficit)	(16,999)	(2,828)
Surplus / (Deficit) as a % of turnover	(4.9%)	(1.0)%
Cost of Generating funds (% of income)	20,613 – 6%	26,540 – 1.8%
Free unrestricted reserves		
Free unrestricted reserves held at Year End	46,718	51,979
How many months' worth of expenditure	1.5	2.3
Reserves Policy target	90,420	68,793
How many months' worth of expenditure	3	3
Free reserves over/(under) target	(43,702)	(16,814)