

Applicant: North East Abingdon Community Association (NEACA)

Background

On 25 May 2004 the Abingdon Area Committee considered a grant application from NEACA for a grant towards the cost of providing a multifunctional facility for educational and recreational use and awarded a grant of £50,000.

The application was also considered by the Executive on 4 June 2004 and an award of £25,000 was made from the Lottery and Other Grants Support Fund to help NEACA in its application to the Lottery for a major portion of the project funding.

As fundraising for a large-scale project can take several years, the project was divided into three phases. Phases I and II and part of Phase III have been carried out. Following the unsuccessful outcome of NEACA's Lottery bid, the Phase III extension was put on hold so that other funding could be raised and alternative solutions explored.

Current situation

After researching various options NEACA has decided not to proceed with an extension to the existing building but to go ahead with the construction of a log cabin produced by Cabinco and a refurbishment of the current facilities.

The log cabins are being used widely for the provision of community facilities and additional classrooms. They are purpose-designed, economic to build, heat and maintain. The log cabin can be made and delivered within eight weeks from the date of the order which would mean that, subject to planning permission being granted, the cabin could be built before the end of the financial year.

The refurbishment would include the installation of a new heating and ventilation system and bringing the existing hall up to modern standards in terms of décor, thus making it more attractive for the use of local residents on a daily basis. Previous use has been restricted due to pre-school activities.

The estimated cost is £230,000 for the purchase and installation of the cabin, the cabin furnishings, the new heating and ventilation system and refurbishment of the current hall.

The financing of the revised Phase III project is as follows:

Funding source	Amount
NEACA Phase III Fund	£55,000
ORCC	£9,000
WREN	£50,000
Loan to be repaid by Social Club	£41,000 (or £91,000 if WREN application is unsuccessful). Note: for the Phase II extension a loan of £76,000 was repaid over a period of 10 years.
VWHDC grant, subject to approval of its use for revised project	£75,000 (£50,000 from Abingdon Area Committee and £25,000 from Lottery and Other Grants Support Fund via Executive)
TOTAL	£230,000

The funding awarded to NEACA by the District Council has been accrued for three financial years as a result of the setbacks in fundraising. NEACA is still committed to achieving the original aims of the project, namely to provide the pre-school with dedicated and appropriate facilities; to engage young people in valuing their local facilities and area and reduce anti-social behaviour, to provide young people and the elderly with somewhere safe to meet, and to encourage understanding and acceptance between differing elements of the local population. There are clear benefits for the community if the project could be completed without further delay.