

St John's Church, Broadbridge Heath, Sussex

Community Hall

For the St John's Church family, their new community hall is the culmination of over a decade of determination, planning, fund-raising and lots of enthusiasm.

The Client

St. John's is a growing, Anglican Church serving the people living in Broadbridge Heath and the wider Horsham community. Its original hall, built in the 1960s had served the church well but had deteriorated over the years and was in desperate need of replacement.

The Brief

A modern, energy efficient facility that would serve the various needs of the community was required. It also had to be sympathetic to the main church in design.

Church members funded the project through their own efforts and, as funds grew, an architect was appointed. He proposed a design for a steel framed two storey building linked to the main church. However by the time sufficient funds had been raised the cost had escalated by over 30%. A more modest scheme was substituted and a committee made up of suitably qualified church members formed. Six design and build contractors, three timber frame and three conventional building specialists, were invited to tender:

The Specification

Using the plans for the original two-storey building as a starting point, the architects at Plus Design and Build (PDB) proposed a square structure with all functions surrounding a central main hall, a glazed lantern feature echoing the design of the main church.

Following a rigorous selection process in which each submission was judged in six key areas, PDB's proposal came out ahead and, following a visit to see similar projects, the contract was awarded to them.

The plans for the new community hall were approved by Horsham District Council's planning committee but with 23 conditions attached. These included landscaping demands to minimise the ecological impact on flora and fauna, demands on the building's integrity and restrictions on the materials used. There was also a tree preservation order in place and as a result, none of the foundations could come within the canopy of the preserved tree.

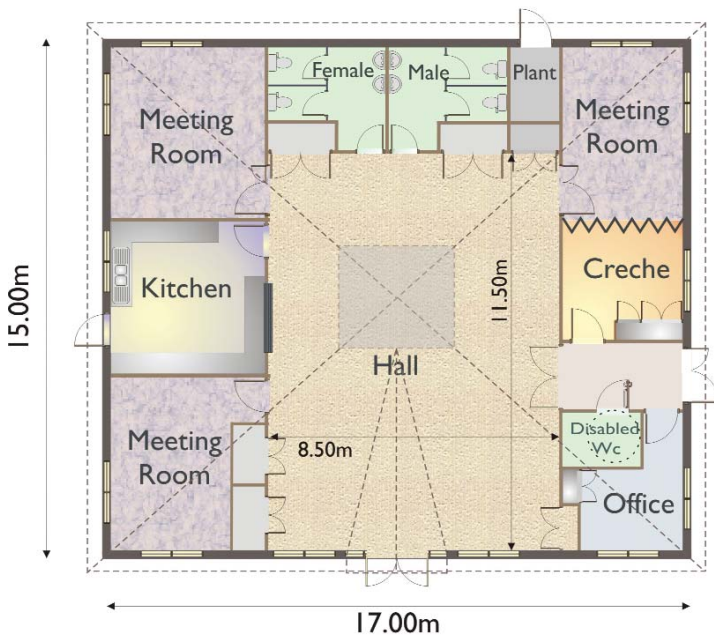
The form of the new timber framed building is square with a high vaulted grey concrete tiled roof which rises to a glazed lantern apex. The back and side walls are faced externally with red brick whilst the front features a large glazed dormer entrance and four full height windows which create a distinctive sight to those who pass on the main road.

The timber frame is clearly expressed internally; the exposed high vaulted ceiling is constructed from glulam beams and trusses which combine with the glazed lantern to give a light airy, open feel in the communal areas.





FLOORPLAN



The glazed entrance leads directly into the main hall, the social hub of the building. This hall is a flexible area for concerts, meetings, mother and toddler groups, keep fit sessions etc and is used extensively by many clubs and societies. It can accommodate up to 110 conference style. Leading off the main hall are three smaller meeting rooms, kitchen, toilets, accessible toilet, plant room and an office.

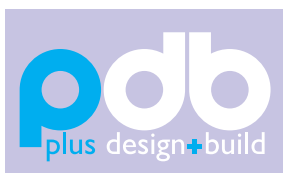
The building is in a residential area and on a very restricted site bounded by a busy road on its front aspect. Tight to its boundaries, many challenges were confronted during the build programme including the handling of the timber trusses, columns and other building materials. Precisely timed deliveries, expert programming and production planning enabled the project to progress smoothly.

Client Benefits

The building has been designed to be sustainable environmentally, socially and financially. A business plan for the hall will mean that the income it generates through room hires will hopefully give it financial independence.

A spokesman for St John's said: "We are delighted with our new hall which has quickly become a focal point for community and church activities. It is a popular venue for a whole spectrum of groups, catering for a wide range of people – from babies and toddlers to the older people in our community."

Client: St. John's Church
Location: Broadbridge Heath, Sussex



Plus Design and Build Limited
Riverside Business Park Bakewell Derbyshire DE45 1GS
01629 816770 admin@plusdesignbuild.co.uk
www.plusdesignbuild.co.uk