

A Statement of Need (SoN) outlines the particular circumstances of your church at this point in time, giving context to your proposals and providing evidence from which to draw justification for the changes you wish to make to your listed building. It is therefore likely to include information about recent, current and potential use, responsible persons and available resources, your vision and mission, as well as the role / connections you have with your local area / community. The SoN may highlight both challenges and opportunities, and will clearly define the aims of your project, presenting a brief Options Appraisal for realising them along with an assessment of risk and mitigation measures.

Some general points:

- **A SoN should be ~500 words over 2 pages** (~1500 for large projects) for the purposes of applying for Listed Building Consent; if more than 1500 words include an executive summary
- **Use bullet points**, tables and illustrations (such as graphs) where possible
- **'Need' should be evaluated** on a sliding-scale (e.g. Low – High) to create a hierarchy of priority within the project aims; these may be re-evaluated as circumstances change
- **Any sources of information used to produce a SoN should be referenced** in order to enable both an assessment of reliability and further research in the future (see below)

Producing a SoN, early in your project can be useful in outlining the core principles around which your project will develop. Not only will this enable you to brief and manage your professional advisor with clarity, it will also aid in decision-making and the efficient resolution of any issues which may arise.

A SoN should present an evaluation of the following according to current and potential impact and sustainability, identifying the precise need associated with them:

- **Introduction** – Give a brief summary of your church's community and context
- **Vision and Mission** – Give a brief summary of your church's mission, values and vision. This should be no more than a few sentences / < 5 bullet points and may reference a full mission and/or vision statement submitted with your application.
- **Activities** – Give a brief overview of the activities which take place at or supported by your church as well as any you intend to support in the future ensuring you give an impression of their diversity: include the total number of people attending, their demographics, hours and frequency of activity, building requirements etc.. Reference a separate, full activity run-down.
- **Facilities** – Give a brief overview of buildings' spaces, equipment, and access at your church property, giving an assessment of their condition, level of use and any barriers to this.
- **Resources** – Summarise the people capacity / skills available to support and coordinate church activities / maintenance / building projects. Give key points regarding church finances.
- **Other contributing factors** – Summarise other factors affecting the need to undertake the project, with particular emphasis on why it is important that the project take place now.
- **Aims** – Referring to specific points raised in the above sections, list the needs which your project will address, expanding on this to identify key aims associated with each.
- **Options** – List the options available to deliver these aims, rating each according to core measures of desirability, feasibility and viability for your particular circumstances.
- **Conclusion** – Summarise your aims, restating the specific needs which they seek to address, and giving a clear statement regarding the sustainability and timeliness of the project.

Section notes / further guidance / things to think about

- **Introduction**
 - Describe your church's context / local area: how rural/urban, built-up or green is it? What is the population, deprivation index, employment level, demographics? List local amenities / entertainment. (Sources: deprivation [indices](#) / [maps](#); [census data](#))
 - How representative is your church of this? Describe the worshipping, local and wider communities, your relationship/links with them, and how many people form each
- **Mission / Vision**
 - [Read more](#) about the Baptists Together vision and values and how you can use these
- **Activities**
 - In order to summarise the activities supported by your church, write a full activity run-down. This may include: worship and outreach activities, activities which support the running of the church or other organisations / groups, and any use of buildings by other parties (e.g. community services, polling, event bookings). Note their frequency, average attendance and facility requirements (e.g. hot drinks, acoustic separation, table for 8 etc.) as well as facilities and resource used (e.g. volunteer hours, including time for set up/cleaning, qualifications needed, income/outgoings (£) etc.) using specific facts and figures wherever possible. Summarise this in your statement using key examples.
- **Facilities**
 - Give a quick impression of your church and site by including a layout plan and key photos of the most relevant views/spaces/facilities. List pertinent points about use condition and fitness for purpose: a full list is included in the activity run-down.
- **Resources**
 - Resources include people, skills, finances and other goods/services e.g. catering. Use as many specific facts and figures as possible; this section should give evidence that you will be able to ensure both project completion, and delivery of its outcomes. Comment on resources' sustainability (especially if volunteer/unpaid)
- **Other contributing factors**
 - Detail any other factors relevant to the need to make changes to your building now; this may include time-limited opportunities e.g. developments in the area, expressions of interest from external parties or changes posing a threat e.g. funding cuts.
- **Aims**
 - In order to define your aims, identify the specific challenges/opportunities arising from your circumstances as described in the previous sections, referencing relevant points
 - If there are more than 3 needs evaluate each according to relevant factors of priority
 - **Note:-** this should be a brief explanation of your needs, not solutions! Although it is tempting in this section to launch into a description of the physical changes you are planning to make, this section should be about the amenity you are trying to provide/facilitate – this is important because there are probably a number of different ways of providing this so explaining what is at the root of the project is crucial. e.g. instead of saying we need a kitchen, explain specifically the need you are trying to answer with the project: i.e. we need a facility to provide 50 people with hot refreshments including food; this occurs 3 times a week after services and once a month after events OR, we need a facility to provide 5 people with soft drinks – each of these 'kitchens' would require a quite different solutions!
 - This should always make reference to your Quinquennial Inspection and any items requiring attention urgently and in the short-medium term
 - Having identified the needs you will address, define resultant **aims**
 - **Note:-** Aims will be outcomes the project hopes to achieve, not the specific outputs i.e. "Be able to accommodate..." not "install / change / remove ..."

Options

- There are lots of considerations which weigh in the balance of a building project, especially when it involves a listed building; acknowledging that you have considered different options for solving the need identified, assessing their merit in terms of the various factors which are guiding the project (Note:- at this stage these are overall options which would help define a brief for a professional advisor/architect)
- Desirability** – does this answer our aims? What are the nice to haves and what are the must haves?(answers aims; missional impact); **Feasibility** – can we actually achieve this? Do we have the resources? Can we continue our activities through the build phase? (cost; project management; build disruption; heritage impact; timescale); **Viability** – is this sustainable? Will we be able to implement our vision once built – what evidence is there of this? Can we guarantee that we will have the people and financial resources? What will the outgoings and income be? How sure are we of the business model? (income potential; timeliness; longevity; risk - e.g. is a high-cost option high risk because it will involve a large loan without substantial evidence in a business plan that you can pay it back; is an option which fails to address accessibility issues high-risk in terms of the longevity of the project...)
- Present this in a table with a simple rating against each of the factors (i.e. high, medium, low, colour-coded e.g. red, yellow, green or vice versa), to assess pros/cons. Note:- this should always include an evaluation of doing nothing, as well as anything you might already have tried. e.g.*:

	Missional impact	Cost	Heritage Impact	Income potential	Risk	Longevity	Desirability	Feasibility	Viability	Overall
1: Tea point	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	Low	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate-High	Moderate
2: Catering Kitchen	High	High	High	High	Moderate	High	High	Low	Moderate-High	Moderate
3: Do nothing	Negative	None	None	None	High	Low	Low	High	Low	Low

**note:- this table includes suggested columns only – use any appropriate to evaluating your project; an explanatory notes column to explain ratings may be helpful or necessary.*

Conclusion

- A brief description of your chosen proposal and justification for this. Include:
 - How the option scored in the options evaluation table
 - Points around risk, timeliness and sustainability
 - Any other relevant concluding points