



Saxmundham & District
Community Interest Company

A New Fromus Centre

2016 Saxmundham Survey Report

DOCUMENT DESCRIPTION

The document reports on the findings, and recommendations, arising from a research project conducted by The Saxmundham & District Community Interest Company (SADCIC) into the social/economic needs and wants of various stakeholders of the community, centred on Saxmundham, Suffolk.

The survey covered virtually all residential households in Saxmundham, as well as a special focus on hirers and users of the current Fromus Centre. This research took place over January / February, 2016, with the analysis and reporting carried out in March / April.

This mass survey was designed to refine ideas generated by a previous consultation exercise, conducted at a public exhibition in December, 2015.

These findings will be used to help form the basis of an Action Plan, and, Business Plan, to direct further activities of the social enterprise, and partners, including the making of funding bids for a new Fromus Centre – as the current one is due to be demolished. The current major focus is the specification and construction, of a modern, purpose-built “Community Enterprise Centre” – as a community hub for everyone in Saxmundham.

For more information, and the latest news, on The Saxmundham & District Community Interest Company, please visit the website: www.saxcommunity.co.uk

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**Produced by the volunteer directors of
The Saxmundham & District Community Interest Company
(SADCIC)**

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NB. The main quantitative findings are contained in “Survey Findings”, but to get a strong qualitative flavour of the responses, please check “Illustrative Comments”

An electronic copy of the full survey report can be downloaded from
The Saxmundham & District Community Interest Company’s website:

www.saxcommunity.co.uk

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- **A very respectful 17% of Saxmundham households responded to the SADCIC survey and, of those, an overwhelming 90% wanted a new Fromus Centre.**
- **Common reasons given were that Saxmundham has never had a modern community hub and local amenities were described as limited, outdated, grim, depressing etc.**
- **There was widespread recognition that Saxmundham had grown very rapidly in recent years - virtually doubled in the last 20 years - and even now was living with no less than 3 major new house building sites.**
- **There was also a fear that all the recent gains from the current Fromus Centre activities, and outcomes, would virtually all be lost, if the current centre was demolished without a new and improved one in its place.**
- **40% of respondents said that at least one member of their household used the current Fromus Centre - due to be demolished - on a regular basis.**

The Saxmundham & District Community Interest Company (SADCIC) was established in 2007, to help regenerate Saxmundham, with the aim to create assets in the community and make a profit, in the long-term - but not for private gain. All profits would be ploughed back into community service. All the SADCIC directors are unpaid volunteers.

SADCIC was formed with the encouragement, and seed corn funding, from Suffolk Coastal District Council, and local support from Saxmundham Town Council.

Early on, SADCIC started working with Suffolk County Council (SCC) on a joint project to take over the redundant Saxmundham Middle School and turn it into a Community Enterprise Centre. But, these plans had to be abandoned when, in October 2011, the Government granted the Woodbridge-based charity The Seckford Foundation Free School Trust the go-ahead to proceed with their plan for a Saxmundham Free School - education taking priority over community use, in the case of a building with previous education use.

However, in preparation, SCC had already invited SADCIC to take over the building and facilities management of the greatly underutilised 'Saxmundham Community Resource Centre', from Suffolk County Council.

In the next 3 years, SADCIC refurbished and rebranded the building the Fromus Centre (after the river running through the local area) and increased the number of hirers sevenfold, increased the hiring revenue tenfold and, by the end of the first three years, SADCIC realised savings of 30% on the previous SCC running costs. And the success of attracting new hirers and users has continued to grow.

However, the 45-year old building is now beyond economic repair, has asbestos issues with its construction, and has very high running costs. SCC plan to develop the site for housing and demolish the current single-story building of c.1,000 sq. m – without replacing it. But they have signed an MOU with SADCIC to work together on producing a new purpose-built Fromus Centre, still on site, to be owned and managed by SADCIC – before the old building is demolished – with SADCIC responsible for raising the funds, but with a contribution from SCC.

To this end, SADCIC embarked on a consultation project with the c.5,000 residents of Saxmundham. This started with a 2-day public exhibition with some architectural drawings and floor plans to stimulate qualitative feedback on the concept. The output then fed into a mass postal survey of virtually all Saxmundham households.

The survey sought to get a quantified response to the proposed new Fromus Centre and its possible facilities and uses.

The survey returned a very respectful 17% response rate, with an overwhelming 90% wanting keenly to see a new Fromus Centre – see the ‘Illustrative Comments’ section for the full raw responses...

Common reasons given were that Saxmundham has never had a modern community hub and local amenities were described as limited, outdated, grim, depressing etc. And, as a result, there was a fear that all the recent gains from the current Fromus Centre activities, and outcomes, would virtually all be lost if the current centre was demolished without a new and improved one in its place.

There was widespread recognition that Saxmundham had grown very rapidly in recent years - and even now was living with no less than 3 major new house building sites – and with so many newcomers coming to live in the town, there was nowhere modern and large enough where people of all ages could socialise, learn and meet others. A new Fromus Centre would be a powerful addition to limited local amenities, and a building residents could be proud of and one that was attractive to visit.

35% of households had an adult over 60 years of age.

Nearly 25% of respondents lived alone...

40% of respondents replied that they (or a member of their household) had visited the current Fromus Centre to make use of the weekly and activities.

The top 5 meetings / activities, attended at the current Fromus centre, in ranked order, were;

1. The pop-up SMILE Café (weekly)
2. Dance classes (weekly)
3. Weight-loss classes (weekly)
4. Parents & Toddlers group (weekly)
5. University of the Third age (U3A) (monthly)

The responses relating to facilities that respondents wanted to see in a new building were as follows, in ranked order:

- 94% wanted to see Meeting Rooms for hire (for up to 20 people)
- 81% wanted to see On-site Parking
- 79% wanted to see a Main Hall
- 70% wanted to see Disabled Access & Toilets
- 69% wanted to see a Modern Kitchen for Catering & Training
- 65% wanted to see a Café
- 65% wanted to see Stage / Lighting and sound systems / film screen projector - for performing arts (dance, drama & music), conferences & film shows / live broadcasts
- 60% wanted to see a Keep Fit Room / Gym

The responses relating to activities/ clubs that respondents most wanted to see in a new building were as follows, in ranked order:

Strong Interest (25% +)

- 50% Adult Education & Training
- 45% Exercise / Keep Fit Sessions
- 42% Cafe
- 40% Film Club / Cinema
- 35% Dancing – ballet / tap / disco / Zumba

- 33% Live Entertainment (eg drama / comedy / music / dance)
- 31% Lunch Club for Senior Residents
- 30% Cooking Courses
- 28% Martial Arts / Tai Chi / Pilates / Yoga Classes
- 26% Indoor Sports
- 26% Holiday Play Schemes

9% of respondents offered to volunteer to help progress developments with new building and activities to place in it.

NEXT STEPS / RECOMMENDATIONS

1. In the light of the survey findings, SADCIC to review the layout of the new Fromus Centre with its key partners – Leading Lives, Realise Futures and Suffolk County Council.
2. SADCIC to review the design of the new Fromus Centre with the key hirers of the current Fromus Centre.
3. Work with new volunteers to form working parties, relating to the new building and new activities – with some activities starting up at the current Fromus Centre.
4. SADCIC to source revised architectural drawings and seek costings from a quantity surveyor. 'Green' the new building as much as possible to reduce running cost and contribute to improving environmental factors.
5. SADCIC to seek written confirmation of the land lease and building footprint from SCC.
6. SADCIC to approach the Big Lottery Fund to make a grant bid.
7. Investigate software to build up community data base of residents and their interests, an online e-news/marketing bulletin capability and an online payments system – to support running, and managing, of live education, training and entertainment events.
8. Encourage, and promote, a greater mix of inclusive health and wellbeing activities.
9. As a start, encourage and promote a monthly friendship / lunch club for those retired, and especially those living alone.

SADCIC BACKGROUND

The Saxmundham & District Community Interest Company (SADCIC)

“The Saxmundham & District Community Development Partnership Ltd” (SADCDP) was formed in February 2007 and, after several public meetings, it converted into a Community Interest Company (The Saxmundham & District Community Interest Company - SADCIC) in December 2007 - to underline the fact that it was a social enterprise – a business with a social aim. In the longer term, it plans to achieve commercial sustainability through trading activities. Any assets the company eventually acquires will remain the property of the company and any future potential profits will be ploughed back into the company – for the benefit of all in the local community.

SADCIC is a non-political and non-sectarian organisation run on democratic principles. It strongly advocates the concepts of promoting equality, fairness openness and accountability - treating all people according to their needs. No individual, or group, will be unjustifiably discriminated against. SADCIC is committed to regenerating the area and helping to create a vibrant and thriving district, for the wellbeing of all those who want to live, work and enjoy leisure pursuits in Saxmundham and district.

SADCIC has a board of directors who represent various community interests but make decisions for the benefit of the whole community. The directors are all unsalaried volunteers.

The current volunteer directors are:

Name	Telephone
Colin Dennison (Treasurer)	602275
Steve Palmer (Secretary)	603072

Phil Peeling+	604584
Jeremy Smith	602107
Don Tricker+ (Chairman)	604005
+ = founding directors	

Community Development Companies

Thus SADCIC is a “community development company” and while there is no one model for community development companies they are all enterprises with social objectives and are actively engaged in the regeneration of an area, whilst ensuring that the benefits are returned to the community. They are concerned with the long term regeneration of an area in its widest sense - with its economy, its environment, its facilities and the services and the 'spirit' of its communities. They seek to be financially self-sufficient and independent - not just relying on grants. They aim to create assets in the community and make a profit - but not for private gain. The creation of local community development companies is actively encouraged by the Government and SADCIC was formed with the encouragement and seed corn funding from Suffolk Coastal District Council and local support from Saxmundham Town Council.

Scope of Work

Responding to local needs, community development companies make things happen in their community, e.g. community/resource centres, business start-ups, managed workspace, recycling, environmental improvements, management of public space, advice and debt counselling,

welfare advice, energy efficiency advice, family support, child care services, community grants schemes, affordable housing, volunteering, job training, youth work, micro-credit, supplementary education, community safety, transport schemes, festivals and arts activities, sports and leisure, community cafes and restaurants, food markets, healthy living schemes.

SADCIC has been formed not to supplant other enterprises and activities but to address needs and wants which are not being addressed, as determined by all members of the wider community.

Partnerships

SADCIC is not directly connected to, or run by, the local town council or district council. However, in pursuing its aims to support the well-being of the local community, The Saxmundham & District Community Interest Company actively seeks to work in partnership with other public sector, private sector and third sector organisations.

Research & Consultations 2007 -11

Throughout 2007 SADCIC conducted an audit of local amenities and facilities, and consulted with residents, and other local organisations, on their needs and wants. Two major public consultations were held – one with other local agencies, bodies and groups, and one with the general public. Both meetings were held in the Market Hall, Saxmundham. From this work, SADCIC has compiled a local “Profile”, including an audit of existing facilities and local groups and organisations, and a list of stakeholder requests. This work then needed further quantitative research to draw up a list of priority requirements.

In June and July, 2008, SADCIC embarked on a major postal survey of all c. 5,500 households in the IP17 postcode area, centred on Saxmundham. This generated a 19% response rate, with an overwhelming 92% of respondents, supporting the development of a new multi-function “Community Enterprise Centre” for Saxmundham. Both the research report - and the ensuing Saxmundham Community Plan, produced by The Civic Trust – can be found on the SADCIC website.

Other Suffolk towns and villages have shown that these improvements are possible and SADCIC is determined that Saxmundham is not to be left behind to degenerate into a “dormitory town”, with diminishing local opportunities and facilities.

CURRENT FROMUS CENTRE BACKGROUND

Prior to 2011

The Joint Project Board that the Saxmundham & District Community Interest Company (SADCIC) had been working on with Suffolk County Council - to transform the redundant Saxmundham Middle School into a Community Enterprise Centre - was suspended in October 2011, when the Government granted the Woodbridge-based charity The Seckford Foundation Free School Trust the go-ahead to proceed with their plan for a Saxmundham Free School.

2011-14

However, in parallel, SADCIC were invited by Suffolk County Council to take over the building and facilities management of the greatly underutilised 'Saxmundham Community Resource Centre'. The plan was to build up a community centre ready to transfer into the refurbished Saxmundham Middle School. SADCIC were tasked with reducing the running cost of the building, while stimulating greater use of the facilities by local community groups. The building is sited in a quiet cul-de-sac with its own grounds and free car parking, close to the A12 and Saxmundham rail station and, in recent years. SADCIC moved into the building in October, 2011 with a 3-year lease. This is a leading example of SCC's "Our Place" initiative, where local communities determined their own positive use of SCC buildings.

SADCIC sourced some initial funding to revamp the décor and introduce some more new furniture to make the building space more attractive to potential hirers and users. The main hall and meeting rooms were repainted, the hall has had a complete new floor laid, audio-visual facilities were installed in the hall, more new tables and chairs were delivered, new crockery was ordered, key lighting inside and outside of the building was replaced, the building frontage was repaired and cleaned up, and the grounds were enhanced with some improved landscaping.

At the same time very affordable hire charges were introduced to make these facilities attractive to local community – and, still to this day of reporting rooms can be hired for as little as £4 per hour.

To underline these changes, and its wider targeted audience, the building was renamed the Fromus Centre.

The SADCIC volunteer directors invited other local enterprises to collaborate with them to create a vibrant centre for the local community to enjoy leisure, social, health and training activities. The first collaboration was with Leiston High School (now Alde Valley Academy) led to a Business Studies student producing a Marketing Plan to promote the Fromus Centre as well as collateral marketing materials in the form of a website (www.fromuscentre.org.uk) and designs for a promotional leaflet and poster.

There was a celebration “Funday at the Fromus Centre” launch on Saturday July 7th 2012 and all local community groups and bodies are invited to join in. The day was a big success and reported on the new Fromus Centre website.

In addition, the Rotary Club of Saxmundham & District have added a new hand wash basin and double-sink unit to the old kitchen, supporting their work with the PASTEL Community Interest Company, in running the pop-up SMILE Café in the Fromus Centre. When not in use by the SMILE Café, these added facilities are available to other users for function catering and celebration events.

During this period, SADCIC increased the number of hirers sevenfold, hiring revenue was increased tenfold and by the end of the first three years, SADCIC realised savings of 30% on the previous SCC running costs.

The newly refurbished Fromus Centre now hosted groups ranging from Parent & Toddlers to University of the Third Age and from various youth groups to an IT club for the over 50's. As well as community groups, the Fromus Centre also hosted various formal and informal training activities ranging from flower arranging to training child-minders and supporting those adults seeking employment. Facilities were provided for counselling people with anxiety and depression, as well as for large consultation meetings and even a number of family celebratory parties.

And, every week the pop-up SMILE Café caters for between 25 - 50 vulnerable adults, carers and support workers and those living alone.

SADCIC has also sponsored events on the green outside the building involving various forms of entertainment such as providing several Morris dancing groups, a traditional Punch & Judy Show and a BBQ with an indoor licensed café, with live music – all to provide Saxmundham residents, of all ages, with the opportunity eat, drink and be merry, together.

SADCIC, managed entirely by local volunteers, has in these years built up the current centre into a thriving, and sustainable, community hub for Saxmundham, catering for a range of uses and for all ages and backgrounds.

At the end of 2014 The Saxmundham & District Community Interest Company (SADCIC) signed an extended 5-year lease to manage the community Fromus Centre for another 5 years.

2015 – Present day (May 2016)

And in 2015 - in recognition of this success - SADCIC and SCC entered into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to work together on bigger and better things for Saxmundham in the coming years. The main aim is the eventual provision of a brand new purpose-built Community Enterprise Centre on the site - to be built before the old Fromus Centre is demolished in preparation for housing development.

Using this valuable experience, SADCIC has been working on producing a draft outline specification and design for the new Fromus Centre, with the aim of work starting on it in 2017.

In December 2015, SADCIC embarked on a consultation and research exercise with local residents to help refine these plans and to build a business case.

The current building, owned by Suffolk County Council, has 3 social enterprise tenants – SADCIC, Leading Lives and Realise Futures, with a current bias towards providing activities and services for disadvantaged and vulnerable adults of the area.

The new Fromus Centre will again house the 3 enterprises but it will be owned and managed by SADCIC, with a lengthy lease on the land on which it stands, granted by Suffolk County Council.

Meanwhile SADCIC continues to sponsor local events including the 2015 and 2016 Sax Music Fests and, at the Fromus Centre, SADCIC hosted a Saxmundham Wellbeing Fair and provided a spring pantomime of Dick Whittington and his Cat. All reported on the Fromus Centre website.

Moving Forward

The current Fromus Centre is due for demolition when SCC develops the whole site in the coming years. The plan is for the new Fromus Centre to be built before the old one is demolished - so that there is no disruption to the growing number of regular community groups and activities using the current building. The new, purpose-built building will aim to serve the whole community - with a wider range of activities and events, as driven by consultation with all Saxmundham households.

To kick off the project, SADCIC embarked on a consultation and research exercise with local residents to help refine these plans. This started with 2 drop-in public exhibitions in December of last year, followed by a postal survey of all Saxmundham households from mid-January to mid-March in 2016 and some visits to some new large village halls in Suffolk and Norfolk to learn from others, which concludes in June.

The analysis of all this research took place over April / May, with the full report due to be completed by early June. The report will be distributed to key stakeholders and a copy placed in the Saxmundham library - as well as being put on the SADCIC website for all to see.

Funding bids to finance the new building will start in July, once the initial Business Plan has been completed.

The current building is owned by Suffolk County Council and has 3 social enterprise tenants – SADCIC, Leading Lives and Realise Futures – all with a social aim, thus ensuring a strong inclusive delivery of services and activities.

The new Fromus Centre will again house the 3 enterprises but it will be owned and managed by SADCIC, with a lengthy lease on the land on which it stands, granted by Suffolk County Council.

Having signed a Memorandum of Understanding with SADCIC, Suffolk County Council (which owns the whole site) is working with SADCIC to provide an optimum solution for all.

SURVEY OBJECTIVES & TECHNICAL INFORMATION

Survey Objectives:

1. Discover the general level of community support for the proposed new, purpose-built Fromus Centre, as a community hub.
2. Help refine the possible facility specification, by assessing the various levels of demand, by local residents, for various wants and needs.
3. Capture any other comments, queries, suggestions and potential volunteers to help deliver this quest.

Target Respondents & Survey Methodology

For simplicity and with a limited budget, SADCIC opted for a mass postal survey of all Saxmundham. A simple questionnaire was designed which could be completed with 20 minutes and combined with other documents into a sealed package.

The package (in a white C4 envelope) comprised 4 items:

1. An A4 explanatory letter from the Chairman of SADCIC
2. An A4 set of draft drawings and floor plans of a possible new Fromus Centre.
3. An A3 questionnaire (folded to A4)
4. C5 printed and stamped pre-paid envelope

The letter, drawings, questionnaire and C5 envelope were stuffed into the C4 envelope which was then sealed and inserted into the monthly free magazine 'Saxmundham News', which was delivered free to virtually all Saxmundham households, bearing in mind that there are currently 3 major house building sites in Saxmundham.

The contents of the survey package can be seen in the next section...

THE QUESTIONNAIRE & Associated Documents

Dear Resident,

For the past 4 years, the community facilities at the current Fromus Centre have been managed by the local volunteers of The Saxmundham & District Community Interest Company. (SADCIC).

We have successfully turned the rather neglected former county council's 'Community Resource Centre' in to a well-developed community hub. It is now used by all sorts of local residents and families accessing a range of activities and events provided by local clubs, groups and organisations. However, the building is dated and due to be demolished...

SADCIC recently negotiated with Suffolk County Council, and our partners Leading Lives and Realise Futures, to design and build a new Fromus Centre, on the site - to be managed by SADCIC and with funding raised by SADCIC. Our proposed new community hub, in Seaman Avenue, plans to be opening some time in 2018/19, and we want to make sure that this brand new building provides modern facilities and services that meet your needs.

This is a great opportunity to provide a modern purpose-built building, and facilities, to meet the needs and wants of our community. We believe that every individual matters and that we are stronger as a community when we socialise, learn and laugh together. We want to offer a wider range of services and activities, including the current ones – to support local residents achieve their goals and improve community engagement, education & training and wellbeing.

So would you please take the time to study the enclosed outline plans, fill in the short questionnaire with your comments and suggestions and return your completed questionnaire in the pre-paid envelope provided, by the end of February. Your feedback will help shape the new Fromus Centre...

Kind regards & A Happy New Year!

Don Tricker

Volunteer Director & Chairman

The Saxmundham & District Community Interest Company

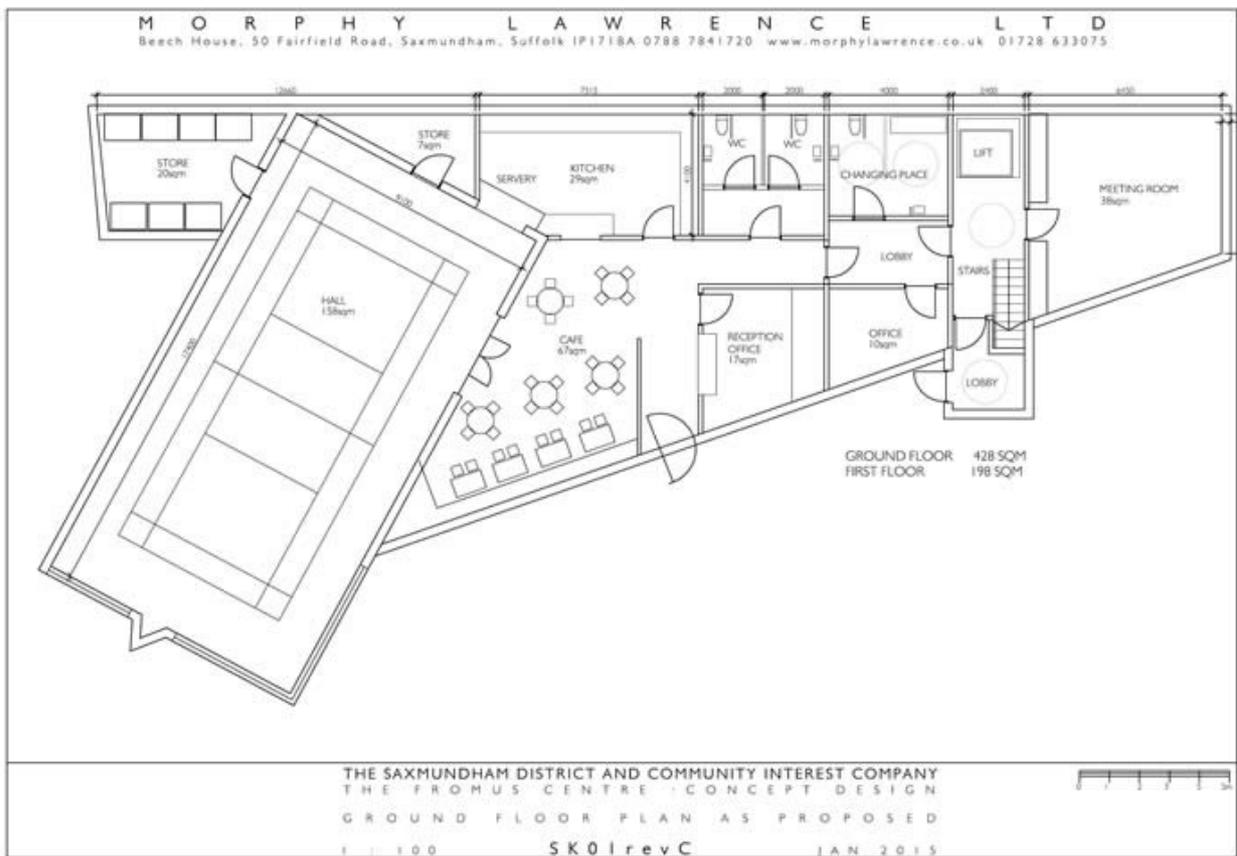
www.saxcommunity.co.uk

The Proposed New Fromus Centre for Saxmundham



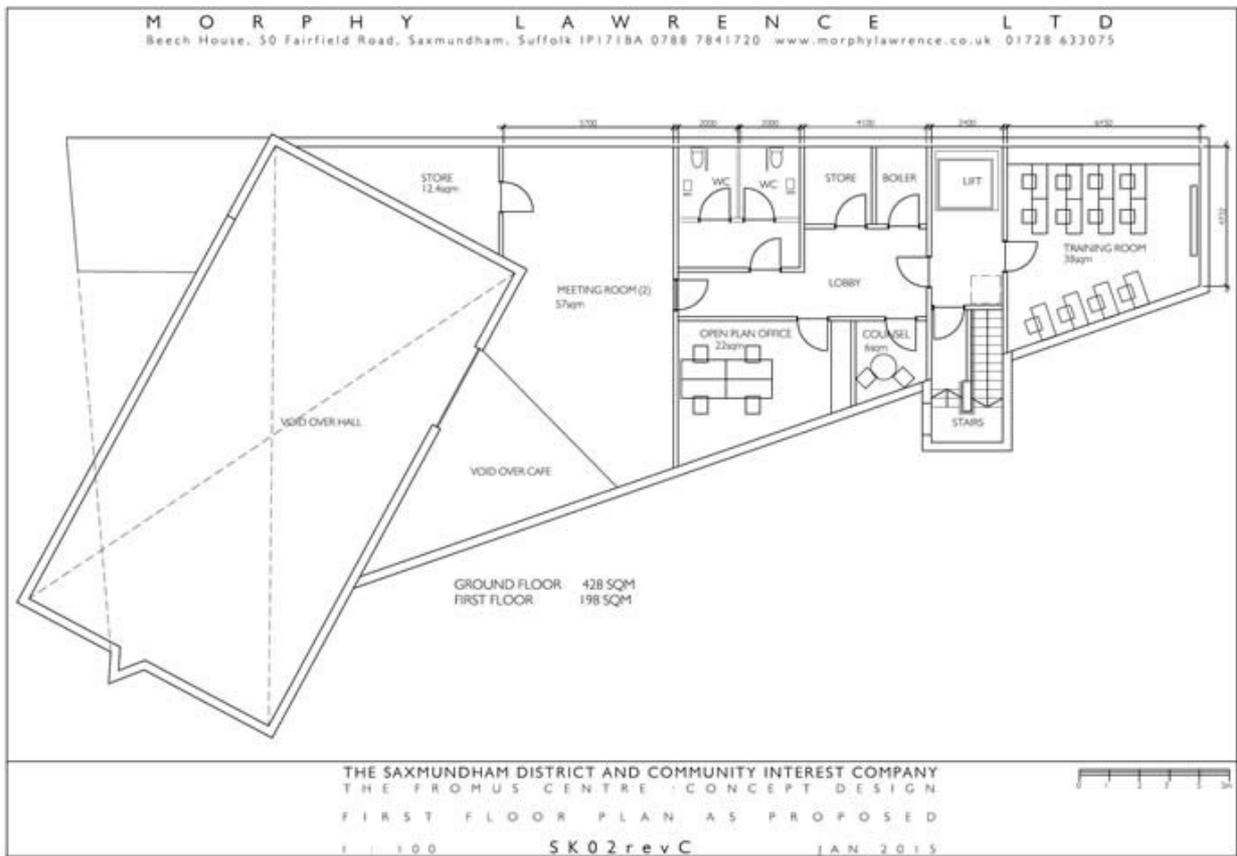
Proposed Floor Plan for the Ground Floor

This is essentially the area for general community use and could provide a hall, storage, teaching kitchen, cafe, meeting room and toilets. The cafe occupies the entrance foyer and could operate 9am - 2pm Monday to Friday, allowing the area to be used for other activities in the afternoon and evening.



Proposed Floor Plan for the First Floor

This is the area occupied by the other two social enterprise tenants - Realise Futures and Leading Lives. They would be paying SADCIC rent and thus help to make the building self-sustaining. On this floor there would be a multi-media training centre primarily focussing on work-related training to help the unemployed and others to change jobs, offices, toilets and activity rooms for adults with learning disabilities. This floor would be accessed by both stairs and a lift.



SADCIC Survey Questionnaire for the proposed New Fromus Centre for Saxmundham

1. How many people are there in your household? Please place a tick in the correct box.

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5
- 6
- 7 or more

2. What age groups are represented in your household? Please place ticks in the correct boxes.

- 12 or under
- 13- 18
- 19- 25
- 26 – 40
- 41- 60
- 61- 80
- 81- 100
- Over 100

3. Do you (or any member of your household) use any of the services provided by the current Fromus Centre, in Seaman Avenue? Please place a tick in the correct box.

- Yes
- No (If no, please go to question 6).

4. Over the last 6 months, on average, how often have you (or any member of your household) use the current services at current Fromus Centre? Please place a tick in the correct box.

- Every week
- Once a month
- Two or Three Times
- Once

5. Which facilities / services do you (or any member of your household) use at the current Fromus Centre? Please place ticks in the correct boxes.

- Parent & Toddlers group
- Brownies / Guides
- Youth Groups for Special Needs (PASTEL / SCYPPS)
- Social Club for adults with Special Needs (Mingle)
- Pop-up SMILE Café
- Singing Social Group
- Cooking Social Group
- Computer / IT Club for Social Use (equipment and applications eg Skype, Social Media)
- Careers & Job Club
- Work-related Training Courses
- Dance Classes for all ages
- Weight-loss Groups
- University of the Third Age meetings (U3A)
- Private Birthday / Anniversary Parties
- Business Meetings / Conferences

6. Do you feel that Saxmundham needs a modern, purpose-built community hub, such as the proposed brand new Fromus Centre?

- Yes, Definitely
- Yes, Probably
- Not fussed one way or the other
- Probably Not
- Definitely Not

Why do you say that? Please specify...

7. What facilities would you like to see at a brand new Fromus Centre?

- On-site Parking
 - Disabled Access & Toilets
 - Modern Kitchen for Catering & Training
 - Café
 - Main Hall
 - Stage / Lighting and sound systems / film screen projector - for performing arts (dance, drama & music), conferences & film shows / live broadcasts
 - Meeting rooms for hire (for up to 20 people)
 - Multi-media Training room
 - Keep Fit Room / Gym
 - Community recording / 'Broadcasting' facility
 - Anniversary / wedding facilities?
 - Other? (please specify)
-
-

8. What 7 additional activities would you, or your household, want to see? Please place a tick in your 7 chosen boxes.

- Adult Education & Training
- Art Workshops
- Band / Music Lessons
- Basic Reading / Writing & Maths Courses
- Bingo / Quizzes
- Book / Poetry / Writing Groups
- Cafe
- Coffee Mornings
- Community Radio / Recording
- Conferences
- Cooking Courses
- Creative Writing / Book Club
- Dancing – ballet / tap / disco / Zumba

- Drama / Theatre Group
- Exercise / Keep Fit Sessions
- Film Club / Cinema
- Financial & Legal Advice Clinic
- Fitness Club
- Games - Cards / Backgammon / Scrabble
- Handicrafts - Knitting / Sewing
- Health & Wellbeing
- Holiday Play Schemes
- Indoor Sports
- Knitting
- Language classes
- Live Entertainment (eg drama / comedy / music / dance)
- Live Broadcasts (eg music / singing / dance / drama)
- Lunch Club for Senior Residents
- Making Friends / 'Speed Dating '
- Martial Arts / Tai Chi / Pilates / Yoga Classes
- Outings
- Photography Club
- Private space for 1:1 meetings with specialist workers
- Social Media and Internet use Training
- Weddings and Anniversary Celebrations
- Wellbeing classes

If you have any further comments/suggestions about the proposed Fromus Community Centre, we would love to hear them...

Please tell us a bit about yourself...

Are you:

- Male
- Female

Are you aged?

- 12 or under
- 13- 18
- 19- 25
- 26 – 40
- 41- 60
- 61- 80
- 81- 100
- Over 100

Please tick these boxes if:

- You would like to be added to the SADCIC contact list - to be informed about upcoming events, activities and courses.
- You would like to volunteer to help support SADCIC, or any providers of services

Name:

Address:

E-mail:

Phone Number:

NB> Your information will remain anonymous and not be passed to third parties. It will be aggregated with all the other responses.

Thank you very much for taking part in this survey
and helping to improve the community amenities for everyone

- For further information about the current Fromus Centre, please visit
www.fromuscentre.org.uk

- For further information about The Saxmundham & District Community Interest Company (SADCIC) and plans for the new Fromus Centre, please visit: **www.saxcommunity.co.uk**

SURVEY FINDINGS

Around 1,700 questionnaires were distributed to virtually every household in Saxmundham, in mid-January, via the free monthly magazine 'Saxmundham News'. The final number of respondents returning a completed questionnaire was 288 – a very respectable c.17% response rate.

74% of respondents were female and 26% male.

The age distribution of respondents was as follows:

- 12 or under
- 13- 18
- 2% 19- 25
- 10% 26 – 40
- 44% 41- 60
- 38% 61- 80
- 6% 81- 100
- Over 100

These 288 responses represented households with a total of 695 persons. The most common numbers of residents per household were 2 and 4. Nearly 25% of respondents lived alone.

17% of households represented in the survey had young adults (up to age 18). 35% of households had an adult over 60 years of age. Thus, those households with someone aged 19-59 equated to nearly half.

40% of respondents replied that they (or a member of their household) had visited the current Fromus Centre to make use of the weekly and activities.

Of these, 65% visited on a weekly basis and 13% on a monthly basis. The remainder attended for special meetings or events. This was for the period July-Dec, 2015 ('in the last 6 months')

The top 5 meetings / activities, attended at the current Fromus centre, in ranked order, were;

1. The pop-up SMILE Café (weekly)
2. Dance classes (weekly)
3. Weight-loss classes (weekly)
4. Parents & Toddlers group (weekly)
5. University of the Third age (U3A) (monthly)

Respondents were then asked whether feel that Saxmundham needs a modern, purpose-built community hub, such as the proposed brand new Fromus Centre? And, the response distribution was as follows:

✓ **71% said 'Yes, Definitely'**

✓ **19% said 'Yes, Probably'**

? 7% said 'Not fussed one way or the other'

x 2% said 'Probably Not'

x 1% said 'Definitely Not'

So an overwhelming 90% of respondents were in favour of the proposed new Fromus Centre.

Most of the 'Not fussed one way or the other' were from elderly respondents, while a number of the 'Yes, Probably's were from newcomers, moving into one of the three major housing developments in the town.

NB. For verbatim responses from respondents qualifying their response, please see the section 'Illustrative Comments'.

Those respondents who wanted the proposed new Fromus Centre were asked what facilities they would like to see at a brand new Fromus Centre.

The responses were as follows, in ranked order:

- 94% wanted to see Meeting Rooms for hire (for up to 20 people)
- 81% wanted to see On-site Parking
- 79% wanted to see a Main Hall
- 70% wanted to see Disabled Access & Toilets
- 69% wanted to see a Modern Kitchen for Catering & Training
- 65% wanted to see a Café
- 65% wanted to see Stage / Lighting and sound systems / film screen projector - for performing arts (dance, drama & music), conferences & film shows / live broadcasts
- 60% wanted to see a Keep Fit Room / Gym
- 37% wanted to see Anniversary / Wedding facilities
- 35% wanted to see a Multi-media Training room
- 25% wanted to see a Community Recording /Radio 'Broadcasting' facility
- 13% wanted to see other miscellaneous facilities eg a Bar

NB. This was a multiple response question.

Respondents were then asked for the top 7 clubs / activities that would like to see at the new Fromus Centre.

In ranked order, the aggregated response was:

Strong Interest (25% +)

- 50% Adult Education & Training
- 45% Exercise / Keep Fit Sessions
- 42% Cafe

- 40% Film Club / Cinema
- 35% Dancing – ballet / tap / disco / Zumba
- 33% Live Entertainment (eg drama / comedy / music / dance)

- 31% Lunch Club for Senior Residents
- 30% Cooking Courses
- 28% Martial Arts / Tai Chi / Pilates / Yoga Classes
- 26% Indoor Sports
- 26% Holiday Play Schemes

Moderate Interest (15-24%)

- 24% Fitness Club
- 22% Drama / Theatre Group
- 20% Financial & Legal Advice Clinic
- 20% Art Workshops
- 19% Community Radio / Recording
- 19% Band / Music Lessons
- 18% Bingo / Quizzes
- 18% Handicrafts - Knitting / Sewing
- 18% Health & Wellbeing
- 16% Coffee Mornings
- 15% Weddings and Anniversary Celebrations
- 15% Wellbeing classes
- 15% Social Media and Internet use Training
- 15% Language classes

Minor Interest (up to 14%)

- 13% Basic Reading / Writing & Maths Courses
- 12% Photography Club

- 11% Games - Cards / Backgammon / Scrabble
- 10% Creative Writing / Book Club
- 10% Outings
- 9% Making Friends / 'Speed Dating '
- 9% Private space for 1:1 meetings with specialist workers
- 9% Book / Poetry / Writing Groups
- 9% Conferences
- 7% Live Broadcasts (eg music / singing / dance / drama)
- 6% Knitting

NB. This was a multiple response question.

At the end of the survey:

- ✓ 42% of respondents wanted to receive update progress information.
- ✓ 9% of respondents offered to volunteer to help progress developments with new building and activities to place in it.

ILLUSTRATIVE COMMENTS

Listed below are unprompted verbatim responses from those respondents who gave a reason for wanting to see a new Fromus Centre. They are presented in the order in which they arrived.

Several added wishes of good luck!

Lots more people here now due to new housing estates and we, as a community, need some facilities. There is not much at the moment.

Sax is growing at such a rate and needs to keep up with the times, especially for the young.

A great chance to bring a diverse community together in a fantastic new building, for families to go to socialise in a safe friendly environment and bring all ages together.

Essential for young people and families.

Larger functions could take place in a community hall

Needs to be updated and people of all demographics should be made aware.

Communities need places to meet, learn, socialise etc. in facilities that show they are valued.

With the isolated nature of the area and cuts to budgets, it is vital that a community hub / centre exists.

If current buildings are left to fester and decay then we will suddenly find ourselves without the resources that a community needs to continue to grow.

To replace existing facilities.

The town has very little facilities at the moment. I need a centre accessible to all age groups and with a variety of options.

Growing town.

Saxmundham has been growing sharply in recent years. The population increase needs more and better facilities. We are fast becoming a town without a village attitude.

There is no modern hall or function room in Saxmundham.

Because currently it is lacking.

Although I live on my own, I have grand children who have nowhere to really go to meet their friends in a safe environment.

Currently no central facility.

I don't need the centre (yet) but there are many who do need the facilities.

To provide better and more up-to-date facilities for any group that requires its own space at reasonable cost.

The population of Saxmundham has probably doubled in recent years and we need facilities to keep abreast of these changes.

Not enough facilities for enjoyment, leisure, learning.

Good for the community.

A small hall with plenty of parking.

It will give a wide range of help for many sectors of the community.

Anything that brings communities together is a good thing.

The existence of the Market Hall, tatty though it is, has provided an excuse for doing nothing for years.

The old building is badly lacking and the new design looks splendid and I'm sure I'd use it regularly.

Nothing to do in Saxmundham.

People from all walks of life often need companionship or somewhere to meet other like-minded people to interact with. This would be ideal.

Saxmundham needs a place for people of all ages to meet, have fun, meet friends, doing great stuff. Let's hope that this new Fromus Centre gives Saxmundham a landmark to be proud of.

As Saxmundham has been growing the facilities have not. This hub would be ideal and hopefully will be fully supported by the local community.

More for the community.

We need more interests and course for all age groups, especially teenagers.

There may be new things there that would be of interest to me (working and single).

We need a modern community building for use by families and individuals for a variety of uses and to bring the community together.

Not enough facilities in this town.

Saxmundham has grown out of its facilities.

Saxmundham needs an up-to-date centre as the present 'town hall' is pretty grim and could well be used for other facilities eg the library. Parking must be an absolute must. Without it success could be limited.

For youth club, community activities and training.

The building needs updating

Single 60+ year olds are 'typecast' and sadly local activities on offer for me do not appeal.

Sax has grown significantly and needs more community resources.

To fit in with the up and coming new town and new residents.

Good location. Cater for everyone. Modern facilities.

Need a central meeting place for use by all.

Saxmundham is growing at a faster rate than its infrastructure.

The old building will be demolished leaving many members of the community very disadvantaged as many day / evening activities will be stopped because there are no other facilities in the area.

Needs updating.

The town needs a leisure centre of some sort and much more in the way of night life.

Saxmundham needs somewhere for the community to get together and offer amenities that Saxmundham does not have.

Saxmundham is expanding and so needs some new places and venues for meeting and keeping in touch.

Sax is a growing town, with a population of various ages. Being quite rural it's important for people to access a variety of facilities locally.

We need a place like this.

With increasing population in Saxmundham, having a central community hub is vital to meet growing social needs of all community members. Ideal position near school and Children's Centre.

Mother / baby activities, disabled and elderly.

Like many people in Saxmundham I want something to do and somewhere to meet.

The only other community hub is the Market Hall which currently needs refurbishment. Its facilities are very limited and there is no immediate parking.

With more people coming into the area, a community hub is needed.

At present there is no 'community hub' in Sax with adequate parking facilities.

It is hoped that a new Fromus Centre would be more widely advertised with what is on offer and have a rich mix of services / activities available for the community.

Very limited premises in town to access for social events at reasonable prices/ suitability / licensed

It would be an asset for the town in the future.

Anything that adds to the community in Sax is a good thing. We need facilities to bring the community together with more people moving here.

I think it does if the facility has broad enough appeal – perhaps including a youth club?

It is important, especially with increased numbers of housing in the town, that there are community hubs where people can meet and get to know each other.

It would be a place or centre to bring people together and build up a sense of community.

As currently, nowhere really for group activities or for people to meet.

At present facilities are dated some unattractive eg Gannon rooms or clearly a school which isn't particularly welcoming to an adult group.

The current Fromus Centre is old and needs to be updated.

Sax has a lot of potential, and talent from young and old needs to be encouraged and a centre like this is the way forward.

As good as the centre is, it is a bit dated. It needs updating to appeal to wider groups.

New layout looks better.

It would be lovely to have a well-designed town meeting place.

The community has grown and there is not sufficient accommodation to accommodate the growth of the town. The market Hall is very old and outdated.

A town the size of Saxmundham needs a community centre for multi-use as a facility for all. This would be invaluable for ensuring the community comes together for events and activities.

Because at present there is no such facility. Especially needed for teenagers.

To get people out of loneliness and help youngsters to cope with life.

Community cohesion and support.

The community is growing rapidly across all age groups and I think it will be well used, if people are aware of what's on offer. I think that regular advertising and 'open days' eg Charity and sporting events, Queen's 90th birthday etc. will help the centre to succeed.

Lots of new developments mean new residents – good to have a place to meet and participate together.

Current facilities are very dated. New facility would also provide a training hub, which could have multiple functions.

We moved to Sax last spring – hence the 'probably' response. Building a sense of community, responsibility and togetherness is essential to the wellbeing of the town.

Limited facilities (Market Hall) in the town and the need for a new building.

There are no facilities of this kind in Saxmundham for an ever growing population.

It would fulfil a need.

I have moved from London to Saxmundham and have found outdated classes ie keep fit, Zumba etc. also a gym would be nice.

People need to meet like-minded people and socialise and to learn hobbies etc.

The town needs to move forward with all this new housing.

Saxmundham is desperately short of community buildings which can be used to provide basic services and amenities.

It would provide a focal point for shared activities, thereby making a more cohesive community.

Would be nice to see a modern facility for the growing Saxmundham population

Not much other provision currently

I know people who use the current centre and I think it would be a great asset for the town.

Somewhere for young and old to go for exercise or to meet new people.

The town is rapidly expanding with new housing developments and a purpose-built community hub could offer a wonderful facility for a diverse range of local people with different needs.

In the last 10-15 years technology has leapt forward in leaps and bounds with the Internet, Facebook, social media...It is important that Saxmundham has a central meeting place so that the community can meet FACE-TO-FACE and enjoy a new Fromus Centre that hopefully will be built.

Let's trust its doors will be open for help to the homeless in our area and assistance and guidance for refugees who are settled here and need aid and compassion.

Small town that is growing in numbers, without increase in activities

Market Hall is old and a new hall would be beneficial for all members of the community.

The population is increasing because of all the new housing - so many new facilities will be needed

To promote a close community

To engage all age groups in a positive manner

Sax lags behind other small towns in Suffolk in terms of facilities / leisure venues etc. Given the expansion of the town in recent years there is a pressing need for a large, modern community facility to accommodate the town's growing needs.

Always good to have an up-to-date centre providing for all the community, to bring them together.

Saxmundham needs a modern venue. Current ones are dilapidated

In a rapidly-expanding town, a building built decades ago, for another purpose, is now not fit for today. A carefully planned, purpose-built facility would much better serve the community.

For a growing town the facilities are no longer adequate.

We are a growing town with both young and old residents that could benefit from services you offer.

The centre is well used and is very quickly running out of space. The toilet facilities are quite basic and not very appealing.

Because a community cannot function fully without the means to gather together.

Because the current users of the centre will have nowhere to go / meet if this centre closes and lots of these groups depend upon this centre and would disband as they may not be able to move elsewhere.

Because the current building is quite dated and not necessarily suitable for current requirements.

We need better facilities as the ones in the current building are very outdated.

Good to have a central building to house many varied activities.

A place for the elderly to meet, opportunity to take classes, can only be a benefit to the town.

Saxmundham is a growing community. It needs a stronger local point, a centre where young and old feel welcome and valued.

Saxmundham has a great opportunity to develop a bright, vibrant new centre for an ever-increasing population.

I feel the centre offers so much but could offer so much more to people in rural locations. It is a hub within the community and has the potential to reach so many more people.

I moved here from Lostwithiel, Cornwall (*c.3, 000 population*) and the community centre was well used and should be used as a model.

To give Saxmundham a 'heart'

The current building is rather 'tired' and seriously needs updating. Perhaps a newer building would be more cost-effective eg heating etc.

For local residents such as myself, local families, children, older residents etc.

Due to the expanding town and the new housing it requires a hub to reflect this – modern facilities and larger rooms.

As this current Fromus centre has had its days. It has served its purpose and it's now time for some modern services.

Need a new building – this one keeps leaking.

The facility needs much better signage from all access roads.

The current one is expensive to run and dated.

The town has grown massively since I was employed in the 60's and 70's and badly needs a community type facility with good parking and MODERN.

The current Fromus Centre meets so many needs. If we didn't have this facility in Saxmundham it would be really missed by people of all ages and varying needs.

With new builds the local community has become fractured. This facility will hopefully bring people together.

All the things that already take place there would benefit from a purpose-built centre.

A community hub needs a good location and parking and this one fits the bill.

There is nothing much in Saxmundham. You always have to travel for anything interesting or good.

Would also be good for a youth worker for children that have nowhere to go to help them keep out of trouble.

There is not enough space in Saxmundham for group activities.

Such little facilities for young families and groups to meet together, especially with catering. For example, the Sax library is not an alternative, being mostly unsuitable and too small.

It is used for a wide variety of activities and interests and, if there is no centre, Saxmundham doesn't have the capacity to hold these groups.

To improve commitment and participation in Saxmundham. The town like so many other small ones with large developments is in danger of becoming a 'dormitory' town.

Essential to provide for community activities.

It serves the community and is a vital link to people, services and a community base.

Other local buildings have limited facilities and are old and depressing. We need something we can be proud of. Some local village halls in the area put us to shame.

I understand that this land is required for building, so it will be necessary for a new centre to be built. We really must have a community centre!

Because of the impact it can and will have on people's lives.

The level of use that the Fromus Centre experiences indicates a local need. I can't think of another local facility that offers the same at the same times.

This building is well used. Therefore there is a need. Many others would join if other facilities were added.

To meet members of the community. To keep the older population in touch with others.

There is a lack of usable space with different size rooms. We have moved room as our group has expanded.

It is a very important facility with a group for young mums from 25+ families meeting EVERY WEEK. Parents need to get together with others where the children are happy and safe.

Because we don't currently have one! If the current building was more attractive and up-to-date, people might be more inclined to use it for private parties etc.

Updated facilities will help bring the community together.

A centre for community use in a small but growing town like Saxmundham could only be a good thing.

Saxmundham is expanding and it's a great facility for everyone.

Saxmundham has an expanding population and needs a centre for all the activities people need and enjoy.

Good place to draw diverse parts of the community together. Useful facilities for groups.

Because Saxmundham has no such facility at the moment.

A purpose-built facility for learning, advice, fitness and social interaction.

Here is the additional unprompted verbatim miscellaneous list of additional building facilities that some respondents wanted to see. They are presented in the order in which they arrived.

A local trust shop for grocery items.

Drop –in centre for older citizens to make contacts and read newspapers and talk. Older people need to meet and escape social isolation.

A games room.

A library

Clubs or meeting venue for young adults somewhere they can be supervised and safe.

Help Desk.

Reasonably priced licensed bar for certain events.

Outdoor play area.

It would be great to have an indoor space for parents to wait for children.

Licensed premises for music and alcohol.

Public access to computers. At the moment just the library and they shut Monday / Thursday.

A special room designated for Sax youth ie a place to go on their own.

A large hall for up to 80 people is urgently needed for organisations such as the Sax Horticultural Society, Local History Groups etc.

A medical clinic for visiting medical specialists.

Badminton court in the main hall.

Mental health services for young people eg therapy / counselling – nearest place is Ipswich (!!!) which is not helpful for young people who have full-time working parents.

Job Club.

More activities for the weekend for families and children and for working adults, who cannot do things during the week.

After funeral meeting room for refreshments.

Adult outside fitness equipment

Doctors' surgery needs more space – maybe move some clinics here?

Outside area for café

Outside play area for children

Indoor play area for children.

Parking for the new centre needs to be better than what is currently offered. Also needs proper disabled parking and drop off zone.

Outdoor seating and BBQ area for families to use for social gatherings.

Looking at the plans you have included, you only seem to have allowed 5 toilets. If you intend having functions in the centre you will probably need to increase this.

Is the current proposed site large enough for this growing community?

Swimming pool.

Band / music practice space for hire

Facilities for people with physical impairments and learning disabilities

Children's soft play room.

The choice of seating should ensure comfort is not compromised. The Market Hall seats, in my husband's view, discourage attendance.

Venue for a fortnightly farmers market

Community garden

Allotments

More modern facilities.

Facilities to support carpet bowls such as storage available for mats and equipment (balls etc.)

I would like to see a stage in the large hall. This would provide a space for performers of plays and shows.

The provision of a large screen would be great for use as a cinema.

Baby facilities, including a feeding room.

Saxmundham is up and coming and needs to keep up with demand. Activities need to be advertised better.

There are more houses being built but not much social interaction. Why build more houses if there's not enough provision for kids. The bus service is ridiculous in Saxmundham.

Whatever the outcome of the survey, one thing is especially necessary ie SIGNAGE allied to a memorable logo.

We use the Fromus Centre! I can see nothing wrong with the current building but I feel very strongly that, if it has to be demolished, a new centre should be built.

The population of Saxmundham is growing and getting quite diverse. We definitely need a new built community hub to meet peoples' increasing needs.

Saxmundham needs to be more than a pop-in centre for Waitrose shoppers.

Current facilities are inadequate – particularly the Market Hall

Here is a list of additional unprompted verbatim miscellaneous clubs / activities that some respondents wanted to see. They are presented in the order in which they arrived.

Community choir.

Indoor table-top sales in winter months (Nov-Mar). Would be a fund raiser to help towards upkeep of the centre and possibly with a cake stall and refreshments.

Line dancing classes.

Mental health support and sign-posting to CAB, CAMHS etc.

Old boys shed club.

A group for younger mums (18-25), as other groups can be very daunting.