



**the  
venue  
@COWLEY**

**Supporting information**  
for organisations interested in  
the opportunity of managing  
the Venue@Cowley.

**Submission of expressions of  
interest deadline:**

19 December 2017

[venuecowley.co.uk/  
management](http://venuecowley.co.uk/management)



**More information?** Contact Julie Bielby on 01249 466054 or [julie.bielby@greensquaregroup.com](mailto:julie.bielby@greensquaregroup.com); or Richard Grant on 01865 782573 or [richard.grant@greensquaregroup.com](mailto:richard.grant@greensquaregroup.com).



GreenSquare



## Introduction

GreenSquare is inviting expressions of interest from community-focused organisations wishing to take over the management of the Venue@Cowley, a community facility in the heart of Cowley. The building is owned and run by GreenSquare, a housing association, also based in Barns Road.

## General

The Venue@Cowley opened in June 2016 and now has a busy timetable of bookings from a wide range of organisations and individuals. During this time, the Venue@Cowley has built up an image and identity which we would expect to maintain.

It has a Main Hall with a partition which closes to make Rooms 1 and 2; Room 3, similar in size to Room 1; and Room 4, the smallest room. There is a kitchen, three toilets and a disabled toilet, disabled access throughout and hearing loops in Rooms 1, 2, 3 and 4.



# Bookings

Bookings are usually made online through the website [www.venuecowley.co.uk](http://www.venuecowley.co.uk).

There are three levels of charge: Commercial, Agencies, and Community. Invoices are sent out monthly. It is possible to pay by card, but no cash is taken. Room availability can also be found on the website calendar, as well as a range of other information, including our conditions of hire.

	Room	Capacity
	Kitchen	
	Main Hall	Standing 60 Theatre style 60 Classroom style 50 Boardroom style 20
	Room 1	Standing 36 Theatre style 30 Classroom style 20 Boardroom style 16
	Room 2	Standing 21 Theatre style 18 Classroom style 14 Boardroom style 14
	Room 3	Standing 36 Theatre style 30 Classroom style 20 Boardroom style 16
	Room 4	Standing 8 Boardroom style 8

## Restrictions on bookings



Because of its location – below the Barns Place residential apartments, which are owned/managed by GreenSquare – the Venue@Cowley has a strictly adhered to closing time of 10.30pm, with clear up and out by 11pm; alcohol is allowed only in very restricted circumstances. We have a good relationship with residents and the Barns Place Residents' Association.

## Current occupancy levels

Over 20 bookings weekly are common, and 30+ bookings have been known. This is partly seasonal; for example August is much quieter than October.

We have received bookings from a wide range of organisations. The Workers Educational Association use Room 4 as an office three days a week, and organise free classes aimed at local people (eg ESOL, community interpreting, creative writing, and office skills).

Various organisations use the venue for training, events and meetings – these include Oxfam, Oxfordshire County Council, and the NHS.

Other bookings include a quarterly Police Community Forum; learning disability groups; two church groups on Sundays; two local residents' associations; and various other organisations offering training and cultural opportunities to their customers or the public. There are yoga classes two evenings a week, and there is an expectation that there will be a growing number of activities for local people.





## Day-to-day management arrangements



This level of activity requires significant planning and preparation: detailed arrangements for opening and closing; moving chairs and tables and opening/closing the partition; supplying the projector, screen and flipcharts; purchase of supplies; and monthly invoicing.

Weekends and evenings are covered by the cleaner caretaker who works 10 hours a week, and some regular users have been given keys. There is a fob system for the electronic doors which allows hirers to access the building independently.

## The Venue website

GreenSquare created and currently manages the Venue@Cowley website. Should the new management organisation wish to carry on using this website, there are options for transfer.

## Our offer

GreenSquare will pay for planned maintenance and repairs, including boiler servicing, fire alarm and emergency lighting tests, waste disposal and building insurance. The management organisation will be responsible for the contents of the building, and for minor incidental repairs. You will offer us a proposal for day-to-day running of the Venue; paying and managing the caretaker; running bookings; and invoicing. In return for these activities, the management organisation will keep the bookings income – this was £22,000 in the first year. GreenSquare will insure the building, but will not insure the contents, activities or employment.

## Possible annual projected expenditure / income

Below is a possible annual income and expenditure projection; this is based on the original business plan for the Venue@Cowley and current experience.

Tendering organisations can follow this projection – or adapt it according to their view of how the successful day-to-day running of the Venue will be achieved. (What isn't included in the calculation is the office space and rooms available for use by the management organisation.)

Expenditure	GreenSquare	Management organisation
Wages: cleaning / caretaking (10 hrs/wk) evenings and weekends		£6,500
Water		500
Business Rates	✓	
Utilities		1,500
Minor repairs		1,000
Supplies		750
Publicity		1,000
Waste	✓	
Sinking fund for major repairs and planned maintenance	✓	
Managing bookings, invoices, daytime presence		✓
Building insurance	✓	
Employers, contents, public liability insurance		1,000
Income		
Bookings (first year figure)		22,000*
Solar panel income	✓	

\*Monthly takings in second year are averaging £3000

# Marketing and Community Development Worker

GreenSquare will employ a Marketing and Community Development Worker for 15 hours a week until June 2021. This person will work with the Venue@Cowley and Northway Community Centre and be managed by GreenSquare. This postholder can work with the management organisation to market the facility and encourage community engagement with the centre.

## Management arrangements with GreenSquare

GreenSquare will draw up a lease and management agreement with the incoming management organisation; the length of lease is to be agreed but is likely to be for an initial period of three years.

## Governance

### *The Venue@Cowley Stakeholders' Group*

This group oversees the running of the Venue and is composed of representatives of local organisations, including two local residents' associations (Barns Place and Cowley Airfield); Ark T; representatives of user groups; as well as Oxford City Council, who produced a list of requirements for the running of the Venue when awarding the development contract to GreenSquare in 2012. The successful tenderer will be expected to report to the six-weekly meetings of the Stakeholders' Group.



### *Governance responsibilities of the managing organisation*

- Ensure that the facility remains available to local groups. While it is anticipated that the managing organisation will want some use of the facility for their own activities, they would need to ensure that the facility remains a space that is available to the community.
- Ensure that hirers are not predominantly commercial.
- Work with the Stakeholders' Group to ensure that the facility attracts a diverse range of users that reflects the community of Cowley. We would ask that users of the community centre comply with the Equality Act 2010 and ensure the centre is open to all members of the community.

## ***Cowley ward profile from 2011 Census and OCSI Report 2017***

- In 2011, Cowley had a total population of 6,562. The area has seen above-average population growth with 1,102 more residents than in 2001. The 2017 population is 6,805.
- Compared with Oxford as a whole, Cowley ward had a much lower proportion of full time students than the city average (7% compared with 22% in 2011).
- Between 2001 and 2011, there was an increase in ethnic minority residents, mainly of “other white” and South Asian backgrounds. The area remains more ethnically diverse than Oxford as a whole and proficiency in speaking English is below average. One third of residents were born outside the UK.
- 21% of children are living in poverty in Cowley ward compared with 19% across England (2017).
- 34% of households have no car in Cowley compared with 26% across England (2017).
- Residents of working age (excluding students) are more likely to be in routine and semi-routine occupations than average.
- Almost three quarters (73%) of households in Cowley live in semi-detached and terraced houses but there has been an increase in the number of flats in the area, including in converted houses. The proportion of non-student households of multiple occupation (HMOs) was above the city average in 2011.
- The proportion of those claiming out of work benefits in Cowley ward is just above the Oxford average. (Thanks to Social Research Officer Oxford City Council, and Oxford Consultants for Social Inclusion.)

*The above is a summary, we can forward you the full demographic report of Cowley on request, contact [julie.bielby@greensquaregroup.com](mailto:julie.bielby@greensquaregroup.com) or [richard.grant@greensquaregroup.com](mailto:richard.grant@greensquaregroup.com).*

## **The Tender – key dates and visiting arrangements**

Apart from the requirements and objectives listed above, GreenSquare is allowing tenderers the freedom to say how they see the Venue being run.

Circulate information about the offer: **from 20 November 2017**

Submission of expressions of interest deadline: **19 December 2017**

Interviews: **Last week in January or early Feb 2018**

Starting: potentially **from April**

*If you would like to visit the Venue@Cowley, please make an arrangement with the Marketing and Community Development Worker, Richard Grant:  
[richard.grant@greensquaregroup.com](mailto:richard.grant@greensquaregroup.com) or 07769 640253 / 01865 782573.*