

## Family Life Centre Report, Nov 2018

### Background

Midway through 2017, the PCC authorised a task group to explore setting up a St T's Family Life Centre, which would aim 'to share God's love from the heart of the city' by offering support to families under pressure in our community.

### Team

The Family Life Centre (FLC) Task Group first came together in January 2018 and includes:

- Jon Scamman (vicar),
- Katharine Shentall (warden and LEA support to school governors, then Church Manager),
- Emma Dixon and Sarah Evans (Children and Families' Pastors),
- Jessica Fitton (Pre-school Supervisor),
- Anne Gager (Lecture in Inclusive Education, now warden),
- Amanda Topps (social worker),
- Gregor Smith and Amy Peatman (primary school teachers),
- Jill Bundy with additional input from Naomi Parsons (both educational psychologists)

### Research

To date, the team has carried out two main forms of research:

#### 1. Models of Good Practice:

We conducted visits to three churches who have built up good practice in this area over many years:

- Hesketh Bank Christian Centre, 19<sup>th</sup> March. They offer PEEP (an early years child development programme which involves parents/carers interacting with their child and forming peer friendships for adult and child alike), which has grown from 5 families to 95 families over the past 9 years.
- Romiley Life Centre, 16<sup>th</sup> April. This New Wine church offers a café and Christian bookshop run by volunteers from church and community, alongside conference rooms, prayer room, stay and play room, and counselling rooms. In their centre, they host a wide variety of community organisations, from the NHS to counselling and support groups, with rooms charged at commercial rates for funded groups, and offered for free to community groups who have no funding.
- Stirling Baptist Family Life Centre, 26<sup>th</sup> April. This is a therapeutic ministry reaching into the community run by Stirling Baptist Church, offering family and play therapies, counselling, a listening service, support groups, and which hosts a 3<sup>rd</sup> sector hub and offers affordable room hire.

#### 2. Community needs assessment

This has been carried out through online research and a series of interviews, meetings and visits, including:

- Parish Nursing Seminar, St Thomas Church Kendal, 22<sup>nd</sup> March, hosted by Alison Scott (Lead Nurse Morecambe Bay NHS trust), Alison Fleetwood (GP and Healing Advisor for Carlisle Diocese), and Vernon Ross (Archdeacon of Westmorland)
- Sarah Baines, Integrated Care Community Development Lead for Lancaster
- Inspector James Martin, Head of Neighbourhood Policing
- Adrian Wolton, Chaplain at Ripley St Thomas CE Academy
- David Barnett, Morecambe Bay Listening Service (offered through GP surgeries)
- Little Fishes toddler group survey led by Sarah Evans and Emma Dixon
- Tigerlily Trust, charity which supports those who have lost a baby
- West End Impact, Morecambe

- Interview with parents / carers of children at Refresh
- Interview with Wenda Tyrer and Louise Jefferson, Lancashire Children and Family Well-being Services
- Interview with Dr Andy Knox, Director of Population Health, Morecambe Bay CCG

### **The need for early intervention: 2 snapshots from the national picture**

On 6 February 2018, the [BBC website](#) published an article entitled, '*Poorest areas face biggest cuts to children's services*' which said,

'Mary, not her real name, knows all about the consequences of family breakdown. She has taken a relative's two children into her home in Birmingham and believes that with earlier intervention from social services they would still be living with their mother.

But, she says, social workers took action only once the family had reached crisis point. Earlier help, perhaps in the form of parenting classes or counselling for the children's mother or even budgeting and cooking classes of the sort available in many council-run children's centres would have made a big difference, she says. "It would have made a lot of difference. It maybe would have helped probably keep the family together and not have it broken up the way that it is," she says.

Birmingham City Council's deputy leader, Brigid Jones, said the council had been required by the government to make cuts of more than £642m since 2010. "Faced with incredibly difficult choices, we chose to protect and increase funding to our child-protection service. And sadly this has inevitably meant cuts for other services across the council, even those we would normally consider vital, like children's centres."

[According to the Observer newspaper \(2 Sept 2018\)](#), councils in England during 2017 had to spend £816 million more on children's social care than they budgeted for, as the annual number of referrals to children's social care has increased by 100,000 in a decade. The number of children in care has risen by 12,000 in a decade. Children are now entering care at a rate of 90 a day. Councils have had to increase spending on children's social care by almost 10% in 4 years, while cutting their overall spending by 49% since 2010. Rachel Dickinson, vice-president of the Association of Directors of Children's Services said, 'We are having to cut the very services that tackle the root causes of the problems children and families face and prevent them from reaching crisis point.'

The Observer comments, 'Social workers report that families actually now need to fall deeper into crisis before qualifying for help... As cash-starved councils have desperately tried to protect their emergency provision for children in most serious crisis, they have had to cut funding for the early-intervention services that prevent families ending up at the door of social services in the first place – by 40% on average. Austerity has ravaged the network of children's centres that the Labour government set up to support families with young children – a third have closed since 2009. Moreover, cuts have affected the domestic violence and mental health services so critical in supporting struggling parents to be able to provide a safe home for their children – domestic violence and mental health issues are two of the most common reasons for referral to children's services.'

## Seeing the Local Picture: Increasing Need + Decreasing Provision amongst Children and Families

Lancaster (including Morecambe) has a rising population, and the number of children aged 0-15 is predicted to rise continuously over the next decade. Ten of our neighbourhoods fall within the ten percent 'most deprived' in England<sup>1</sup>. There are several communities in Lancaster which experience high levels of antisocial behaviour, family breakdown and financial difficulties, and Morecambe has some of the very poorest post codes in the country. The cyclical deprivation and all the experiences which accompany poverty are leaving families coasting towards crisis.

Following a national pattern, Lancaster saw the closure of its Sure Start centres in the last few years, but has also seen significant erosion of other children's services. In 2017, Lancaster's Domestic Abuse early support service for children closed. The Appletree Centre, which used to have a full programme of daytime and evening activities, now offers only three activities a week through the Children and Family Wellbeing Service, namely – Baby Massage (x2), and Stay, Play, and Learn (x1). Currently there is a consultation taking place concerning closure of two children's centres (Appletree and Halton) in an effort to save a further £1.2m.

One of the prominent needs in our city is support for those who suffer from isolation and loneliness. Research shows that lacking social connections is as damaging to our health as smoking 15 cigarettes a day<sup>2</sup>. Services that offer support to those suffering from mental health issues often have long waiting times, and the support they can offer is usually short-term. The Lancashire Well-Being Service is limited to 6 sessions of support to each client, while the waiting time for adult counselling in Lancashire is typically 8-9 months.<sup>3</sup>

In terms of Lancashire County Council's continuum of need<sup>4</sup>, many of the services that offer prevention or early intervention are the ones that have had their funding cut the most (Levels 2 + 3). The Lancashire Children and Family Well-being Service focuses solely on families at Level 2, offering targeted intervention for 12-18 weeks, rather than long-term holistic support.

## Pan - Lancashire Continuum of Need



<sup>1</sup> Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government – Indices of Multiple Deprivation, 2015

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.campaigntoendloneliness.org/about-loneliness/>

<sup>3</sup> Interview with David Barnett, Listening Service, Lancaster Medical Practice, 11 Sept 2018.

<sup>4</sup> <http://www.lancshiresafeguarding.org.uk/media/15006/pan-lancs-continuum-of-need-july-2017-.pdf>

### **The Case for a Family Life Centre Focusing on Children and Families:**

We at St Thomas' Church are uniquely placed within our locality to lead a Christian faith-based outreach to families under pressure within our city. With approx. 250 under-18's attending services and activities each month at St Thomas' Church, we have significant strengths and experience in supporting families in Lancaster and Morecambe. From a Christian perspective, faith-sharing with children and young people has a disproportionate impact on life-long faith:

- According to a recent ComRes poll<sup>5</sup>, 40% of adult practising Christians came to faith before the age of 4, and 76% before the age of 18.

However, other forms of interventions made while children are at a young developmental stage also have a disproportionate impact on their life-long outcomes. For instance:

- Unicef explains the importance of healthy development in the earliest years of life, saying 'The first 1,000 days of life - the time spanning roughly between conception and one's second birthday - is a unique period of opportunity when the foundations of optimum health, growth, and neurodevelopment across the lifespan are established... While the human brain continues to develop and change throughout life, the most rapid period of brain growth and its period of highest plasticity is in the last trimester of pregnancy and the first two years of life.'<sup>6</sup>
- The government is preparing a paper called 'First Thousand Days' which is an evidence-based study around the importance of parenting in the pre-school years.
- The Communication Trust reports, 'If I have a poor vocabulary when I'm five, I'm more than twice as likely to be unemployed in my thirties as a similar child with a good vocabulary, and I'm one and a half times more likely to have mental health problems.'
- Marvin Rees, Mayor of Bristol, quoted Department of Health figures in a New Wine seminar (summer 2017) when he said: '50% of lifetime mental health problems start before the age of 14, of which 50% are preventable.'

**So we recommend that the Family Life Centre has an intentional focus on supporting under-18's and their families.**

#### **One ministry amongst many**

N.B. The Family Life Centre will be only one ministry amongst many offered by St Thomas' Church, including 3<sup>rd</sup> Age ministry amongst seniors, student ministry to Lancaster's two universities, homeless ministry, etc. But for clarity and focus, we recommend that the Family Life Centre be an identifiable outreach ministry that is intentionally focused on supporting families under pressure, and specifically under-18's and their families.

The Family Life Centre will link with St Thomas' Pre-school and St Thomas' Children and Families Ministry (Junior Church, Messy Church, Refresh, Holiday Club, etc) as one of an interacting triad of outreach ministries from St Thomas' Church into our community.



<sup>5</sup> ComRes interviewed 8,150 GB adults aged 18+ between 17th and 31st March 2017, of which 4,190 identified as Christians.

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.unicef-irc.org/article/958-the-first-1000-days-of-life-the-brains-window-of-opportunity.html>

### Theological Basis for a Family Life Centre

As a church, our vision is to 'share God's love from the heart of the city.'

- In the Great Commission, Jesus sent his followers out to make disciples of all nations (Mt 28.19), teaching us to obey everything he has commanded us.
- Jesus taught us to pray that God's kingdom comes on earth as it is in heaven, and we believe that the kingdom of God encompasses the renewal of all things (Mt 19.28).
- Jesus said, 'I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full,' (John 10.10)

So we believe that the gospel of Jesus Christ is good news for the whole person – body, mind, and spirit. Our response to this gospel imperative is to share God's love in word and action, seeking to offer Christian care that meets people at their point of need – whether that be physical, emotional, mental, or spiritual – by introducing them to the healing love of God in a practical and holistic way.

We feel called to express our Christian faith by developing a Family Life Centre that embodies:

**Compassion** – when Jesus looked at the crowds, he had compassion on them because they were harassed and helpless (Matthew 9.36). This compassionate ministry is to be offered regardless of faith response – e.g. when Jesus healed ten lepers and only one returned to thank him, he did not reverse the healing for the other nine; the sower in the parable scattered the seed on all kinds of terrain. God calls us to respond with the same compassion today, in order to support families under pressure. 'People don't care what you know until they know that you care.' (Bill Wilson, Metro World Child)

**Confidence** – we want to help people to lay sure foundations for healthy family lives. This will include offering practical support such as parenting courses, listening services, and early years development activities to help them become confident in their own family life. These will be offered to people with no-strings attached, regardless of ethnicity, religion, orientation, etc.

However, as Christians, we believe that a living relationship with Jesus Christ is the best foundation for life, and so we will be unafraid to share our Christian faith where appropriate, and invite people to church events, to give them opportunities to lay a sure foundation of faith in Jesus in their lives:

- So this is what the Sovereign Lord says, 'See, I lay a stone in Zion, a tested stone, a precious cornerstone for a sure foundation; the one who relies on it will never be stricken with panic.' Isaiah 28.16
- 'He will be the sure foundation for your times, a rich store of salvation and wisdom and knowledge; the fear of the Lord is the key to this treasure.' Isaiah 33.6
- 'But in your hearts revere Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect, keeping a clear conscience, so that those who speak maliciously against your good behaviour in Christ may be ashamed of their slander.' 1 Peter 3.15-16

**Blessing:** As people of faith, we believe that we have the opportunity to work for the health and well-being of our city, and to earn the favour of those around us. We want to show people that the church is an influence for good, and that Christians are kind, sincere, trustworthy, and *for* them.

- 'Seek the peace and prosperity of the city to which I have carried you into exile. Pray to the LORD for it, because if it prospers, you too will prosper.' (Jeremiah 29.7)
- 'All the believers were together and had everything in common. They sold property and possessions to give to anyone who had need... They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, praising God and enjoying the favour of all the people' (Acts 2.44-47)

**Goodness** – we believe that showing God’s love in action by supporting families under pressure is a good in itself, whether or not the people we reach come to church. In the parable of the sheep and the goats, Jesus teaches, ‘Whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.’ (Mt 25.40). Much though we want to see the church grow through people becoming followers of Jesus, we are primarily kingdom people, who are called to work as ‘yeast in the dough’ (Matthew 13.33) to influence the whole of our society for good.

### Guiding principles:

The Family Life Centre will be developed with these guiding principles:

- **Distinctively Christian and Open to All.** The Family Life Centre exists as an expression of God’s love for our city, and so we will be open about the Christian faith that motivates us, and often invite people to church events and activities that may be of interest to them. However, the Centre will be open to any family in need, regardless of ethnicity, religion, orientation, etc, and the services offered by the Family Life Centre can be accessed with no strings attached, without proselytising, or pressure.
- **Proactive and Reactive:** the Family Life Centre aims to be ‘proactive’ in helping families lay good foundations for healthy family life, but will also offer ‘reactive’ responses by offering additional support for families who face additional pressures.
- **Partnership, not Duplication:** Wherever possible, we will seek to form good working partnerships with others in our city who are working towards the same goals. We will aim to avoid unnecessary replication of services already on offer from other agencies, charities, or faith communities.
- **Expert Input plus Supportive Community:** The Family Life Centre will seek to offer access to expert input, which will of necessity be time-limited. Alongside this, however, we will seek to offer longer-term supportive communities that will give ongoing support that will remain in place after the expert input has finished.
- **Focused for greatest impact** – we recognise that we cannot offer the same range of resources offered by government funded agencies. So we will focus our efforts on the areas most affected by funding cuts, namely prevention and early intervention, to help stop families under pressure from coasting into crisis (working primarily at Level 1 on the Lancashire Continuum of Need). We will primarily focus on supporting younger families for greatest impact, particularly in the early stages of the establishment of the Family Life Centre.
- **Sustainable and Consistent.** We are committed to starting small and growing at a sustainable pace, both in human and financial resources. Inspired by Asset Based Community Development (ABCD), we will start with what is in our hand, and ensure that future growth is not rendered vulnerable by an over-reliance on short-term grants, so that we can offer a sustained and reliable service to the community.

### What could the Family Life Centre look like?

This is an outline of what the Family Life Centre could look like, taking account of the key initiatives that the team felt were appropriate, and delivered in a way that is shaped by our guiding principles.

	Laying a Sure Foundation	Prevention	Early intervention
<b>Core Family Life Centre Activities</b> 	PEEP – Early Years Education Programme  Close links with St T's Pre-school  School-age Engagement (tbc)	Parenting Courses – eg Circle of Security  Relationships Courses (e.g. Marriage Course)	Parish Nursing  Listening Service  Safe Families for Children
			
<b>Supporting Church-based Groups</b>	Church-based groups: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Little Fishes;</li> <li>- Messy Church</li> <li>- Refresh;</li> <li>- Who let the Dads Out?</li> <li>- Holiday Club;</li> <li>- Summer Fun Day;</li> <li>- Junior Football</li> <li>- Light Explosion</li> <li>- Alpha Course</li> </ul>	CAP Money Management Course  CAP Life Skills Courses	Support Groups, e.g. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Bereavement support</li> <li>- Mental health needs</li> <li>- Parents of children with special needs</li> <li>- Female survivors of domestic abuse</li> <li>- Post-natal depression support group</li> </ul>
			
<b>Partner Agencies</b>	St T's Community Café, offering work experience for volunteers  St T's 'Safe Space' provision for community groups to host drop-ins.	Counselling organisations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- family therapy</li> <li>- play therapy</li> </ul>	CAP Debt Centre Olive Branch NHS ICC CVS – Third Sector Hub

## How could the Family Life Centre be funded?

The Family Life Centre could be funded by a variety of sources: e.g.

- parental fees;
- government funding,
- grants;
- church giving;
- volunteers
- Social enterprise, operating on break-even basis from income
- External agencies, with their own sources of funding

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<b>Partner Agencies</b>	St T’s Community Café, offering work experience for volunteers  St T’s ‘Safe Space’ provision for community groups to host drop-ins.	Counselling organisations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- family therapy</li> <li>- play therapy</li> </ul>	CAP Debt Centre Olive Branch NHS ICC CVS – Third Sector Hub

**Set up Costs:** Annual budget of £2,500: to include PEEP training costs (£400 each), laptop, Listening Service volunteer training (£75 per volunteer)

### Potential Staffing:

- Family Life Centre Manager – 20 hours a week (0.5 FTE) – recruiting and overseeing volunteers in the Listening Service, running Parenting Courses, liaising with community partners (ICC, CVS, etc) and recruiting and managing the rest of the FLC team.
- Parish Nurse – 10 hours a week (0.25 FTE)
- PEEP Practitioners – 10 hours a week between them, but paid by parental subs and grants
- Volunteers – to run the Listening Service, Support Groups, CAP courses, and Relationship Courses

If FLC Manager and Parish Nurse were paid by church on staff salary (NJC scale 5 Points 22-25, £21,074-£23,111), this would equate to ¾ of a full-time post = £17,500 pa approx, cost to church.

**Total annual cost to church: approx. £20,000 pa**

## **Five Year Plan: How could we establish the Family Life Centre?**

### **Year 1: Develop the Core Activities**

#### **Establish a Family Life Centre Committee:**

- to determine the operating model for the FLC: should it be a separate charity, or remain part of St T's accounts and governance?
- To appoint the Family Life Centre Manager with a genuine occupational requirement to be a practising Christian.
- To supervise the FLC Manager, and offer regular support, review, envisioning, and accountability
- To report regularly to the vicar and PCC

**Appoint part-time Family Life Centre Manager**, employed by St T's church, paid from church giving until such time as other income enables them to be paid from other sources, and with genuine occupational requirement to be a practising Christian.

#### **Family Life Centre Manager's first responsibilities would be to establish the Core Activities:**

- Develop clear channels of communication with the Pre-school and Children and Families' team, including appropriate invitations and publicity for church-based events.
- Appoint and supervise PEEP practitioners, who will promote and establish the PEEP educational programme.
- Appoint and supervise part-time Parish Nurse, employed by Church, paid from church giving until grant income can be found, and with genuine occupational requirement to be a practising Christian.
- Recruit volunteers to establish Listening Service, and organise training (Acorn Trust) of volunteers, so that by the end of year 1, volunteers are ready to begin.
- Link with partner agencies, such as ICC, CVS, Olive Branch, Bowerham School, and other churches, to build relationships, promote the FLC, and further develop the operating model for the FLC.
- Train to lead Parenting Course, and liaise with St T's Marriage Course volunteer team to run this regularly.
- Contact Safe Families for Children organisation to explore St T's becoming a Lancaster hub.

### **Years 2-3: Develop the Supporting Groups:**

- Establish Listening Service
- Start Safe Families for Children in Lancaster
- Recruit and supervise volunteers to run CAP Money Management and CAP Life Skills
- Work with Children and Families' team to establish 'Who let the Dads Out?'
- Work with other St T's staff to develop a Triangle of Support for families in need (mentor, befriender, and practical assistance)
- Work as a catalyst to help support groups get established, and be promoted through the FLC
- Develop school-aged engagement for children and young-people.

### **Years 4-5: Develop the Partner Agencies**

- Help to design St T's Community Café, and input into appointment of Café Manager (to be supervised by Church Manager)
- Seek out appropriate Counselling Agencies to offer family and play therapy, or encourage church members to train professionally, to offer this ourselves.
- Work with Church Premises Manager to use the new-build community centre to enable 'Safe-Space' hosting (at no cost to community groups) alongside market-rate conferencing.

### Family Life Centre 5 Year Plan

Already exists Year 1 Years 2-3 Years 4-5	<b>Laying a Sure Foundation</b>	<b>Prevention</b>	<b>Early intervention</b>
<b>Core Activities</b>	St T's Pre-school  PEEP – Early Years Education Programme	Parenting Courses – Circle of Security  Relationships Course	Parish Nursing  Listening Service  Safe Families for Children
<b>Supporting Groups</b>	Links to Church-based groups: - Little Fishes; - Messy Church - Refresh; - Who let the Dads Out? - Holiday Club; - Summer Fun Day; - Junior Football - Light Explosion - Alpha Course	CAP Money Management Course  CAP Life Skills Courses	Triangle of Support: Mentor, befriender, practical assistance  Support Groups, e.g. - Bereavement support - Mental health needs - Parents of children with special needs - Female survivors of domestic abuse - Post-natal depression support group
<b>Partner Agencies</b>	St T's Community Café, offering work experience for volunteers  St T's 'Safe Space' provision for community groups to host drop-ins.	Counselling organisations - family therapy - play therapy	CAP Debt Centre Olive Branch NHS ICC CVS – Third Sector Hub

#### Proposal to PCC, 19 Nov 2018

The Family Life Centre Task Force commends this report to the PCC for consideration, and recommends the following:

- That the PCC adopt this report as the basis for founding the St Thomas' Family Life Centre.
- That 2019 become Year 1 of the proposed five-year plan for developing the FLC.
- That the PCC authorise the setting up of a Family Life Centre Committee as a PCC sub-group to meet 6 times a year from January 2019 onwards. This will act as the steering group to establish and oversee the FLC, and will include the vicar and at least one other PCC member.
- That the PCC authorises the FLC Committee to make an appointment of a paid FLC Manager on a half-time basis, aiming to start in the role shortly after Easter 2019. The FLC Manager will develop further proposals to bring to the PCC for future appointments, including a Parish Nurse, for a potential Sept 2019 start. Total estimated cost to church: £17,500 pa, though grants will also be explored.
- That the PCC authorise a budget for the Family Life Centre of £2,500 in 2019 to enable training of PEEP practitioners, Listening Service volunteers, and other set up costs e.g. laptop for FLC manager.

### **Appendix 1: Brief Explanations of Initiatives suggested for the Family Life Centre**

The FLC task force felt that the following initiatives should be considered for eventual inclusion within the Family Life Centre over the next five years:

- St Thomas' Pre-school, offering pre-school care to 2-5 year olds in a Christian environment.
- PEEP early years education programme, designed to work alongside our pre-school. This programme helps parents/ carers to interact well with their children, forming strong emotional bonds at an early age, and fostering crucial early mental development amongst children of pre-school age. It also teaches numeracy, literacy, and social skills to the children, while helping parents/carers form mutually supportive communities.
- Safe Families for Children is a new and growing national initiative founded by Sir Peter Vardy which enables churches to help families in the community who are 'on the edge of care' by working with social services to offer a) host homes for brief respite care - 14 days max; b) family friends to mentor and befriend a family; and c) resource friends, offering practical assistance and much-needed supplies for families. This initiative has had significant success in reducing the number of children being taken into care, thanks to early intervention which is spearheaded by the church, and done in partnership with the social services, who make the referrals.
- Invitations to relevant church-based events can include Little Fishes; Messy Church; Refresh; Who let the Dads Out? Holiday Club; Summer Fun Day; Light Explosion, Alpha course, etc.
- Parenting Courses – e.g. Circle of Security Early Intervention Parenting Programme, as used at St Mary's Bryanston Square.
- Marriage Course – offered through the church
- Triangle of Support: this would offer three forms of simultaneous support to people facing multiple challenges, and includes a mentor, a befriender, and offers of practical assistance from a wider team. This has been developed by St Thomas' Norwich (STN).
- Parish Nursing – this would integrate health care with Christian spirituality, with a primary focus on children and families. The Parish Nurse would work alongside existing church groups; offer clinics as part of the Family Life Centre, and work in partnership with the NHS Integrated Care Community.
- Listening Service – this would be offered alongside all aspects of church life, as well as the Family Life Centre and the Pre-school. But it could also be offered into secondary schools, and to clients referred from the Parish Nurse. The Listening Service would aim to be a highly responsive service, offering 'unconditional listening' to clients within a fortnight of request.
- Counselling and therapy – e.g. family therapy, play therapy. This could be offered through partner agencies, as suitable partners are found.
- CAP Money Management Course: this short-course teaches basic financial money-management skills.
- CAP Life Skills – this teaches a more comprehensive set of skills, including cooking on a budget.
- Support Groups – as part of our commitment to offer not just short-term expert input, but also longer term supportive communities, we will work to establish a number of ongoing support groups, including:
  - Bereavement support
  - Mental health needs
  - Parents of children with special needs, potentially using material by Care for the Family, including a course called 'Time out for Parents – Children with Special Needs' and Additional Needs Support Befriending
  - Post-natal depression support group
  - Support Group for female survivors of domestic abuse

- Community café, offering a) excellent food and drink, b) drop-in space for people who want to talk, and c) work experience/help with isolation for volunteers. We would aim to run the café with a volunteer team, overseen by a paid manager, aiming to operate on a break-even basis.
- Safe space provision for community groups to host drop-ins. The policy would be to charge for room hire if the group is funded, but offer it free of charge if group is grass-roots and unfunded, helps the community, and works in line with church's aims.
- Suggested Partnerships: The Family Life Centre would actively work in partnership with a growing number of other agencies, charities, and faith communities, including:
  - CAP Debt Centre
  - Olive Branch
  - NHS Integrated Care Community
  - Lancaster CVS (Community and Voluntary Solutions) – the local Third Sector Hub

## **Appendix 2: Opportunities offered by St T's City-Centre Location**

We at St Thomas' Church are well placed within Lancaster to offer city-centre premises for the Family Life Centre, as well as other services. The church premises are accessible via multiple bus-routes, is a 'pram-push' away from several estates, and is readily available to people popping into town for the shops.

- Inspector James Martin, Head of Neighbourhood Policing, said that 'the City Centre of Lancaster is a focal point, so to have central provision to offer support services around family need would be incredibly beneficial to stop families from coasting towards a crisis.'
- Wenda Tyrer, Team Leader for Lancaster's Children and Family Well-being Services, told us that it would be very helpful to be able to use our premises in the city-centre to host drop-in services since the closest centre they have to us is Lune Park.
- Sarah Baines, Development Lead for the NHS Integrated Care Community told us that from an NHS perspective, our city-centre location could be very useful for a wide variety of services, from carer-support groups to exercise groups for the frail and elderly, to respite care for people living with dementia.