

DATA LABEL: PUBLIC



## **ASSET TRANSFER COMMITTEE**

### **ASSET TRANSFER REQUEST FOR ST. DAVID HOUSE, RETAIL UNIT AND CAFÉ AT 20-24 SOUTH BRIDGE STREET, BATHGATE**

#### **REPORT BY HEAD OF FINANCE AND PROPERTY SERVICES**

##### **A. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

The purpose of this report is to advise the committee that a valid community asset transfer request has been received from Sarajia Islamic Studies and Community Centre Limited in respect of properties at St. David House, 20 South Bridge Street, Bathgate, the ground floor retail unit at 22 South Bridge Street, Bathgate and the former café unit at 24 South Bridge Street, Bathgate and to ask the committee to determine that request on behalf of the council.

##### **B. RECOMMENDATION**

It is recommended that the committee:

1. Notes the receipt of a valid Community Asset Transfer Request from Sarajia Islamic Studies and Community Centre Limited for properties at St. David House, 20 South Bridge Street, Bathgate, the ground floor retail unit at 22 South Bridge Street, Bathgate and the former café unit at 24 South Bridge Street, Bathgate.
2. Approves the community asset transfer request received from Sarajia Islamic Studies and Community Centre on the terms and subject to the conditions set out in this report.

##### **C. SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS**

<b>I Council Values</b>	Caring and compassionate, open, honest, accountable and collaborate, inclusive and adaptive.
<b>II Policy and Legal (including Strategic Environmental Assessment, Equality Issues, Health or Risk Assessment)</b>	This asset transfer request has been processed and will be determined in compliance with the legal requirements of Part 5 of The Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015 and the council's approved Community Asset Transfer Policy and its associated governance arrangements.
<b>III Implications for Scheme of Delegations to Officers</b>	None.
<b>IV Impact on performance and performance Indicators</b>	None.

<b>V Relevance to Single Outcome Agreement</b>	<p>Outcome 4: We live in resilient, cohesive and safe communities.</p> <p>Outcome 5: People most at risk are protected and supported to achieve improved life chances.</p> <p>Outcome 7: We live longer, healthier lives and have reduced health inequalities.</p> <p>Outcome 8: We make the most efficient and effective use of resources by minimising our impact on the built environment.</p>
<b>VI Resources - (Financial, Staffing and Property)</b>	Sarajia Islamic Studies and Community Centre Limited is willing to offer a capital receipt of £600,000 to purchase the subjects as part of their asset transfer request, which would be received by the council during the 2024/25 financial year.
<b>VII Consideration at PDSP</b>	Not Applicable.
<b>VIII Other consultations</b>	The local elected members for the ward have received a copy of this report for information.

## **D. TERMS OF THE REPORT**

### **D.1 Asset Transfer Request Details**

The asset transfer request details are as follows:

Applicant:	Sarajia Islamic Studies and Community Centre Limited.
Subject properties:	<p>St. David House 20 South Bridge Street Bathgate EH48 1TL</p> <p>Former retail unit 22 South Bridge Street Bathgate EH48 1TL</p> <p>Former café 24 South Bridge Street Bathgate Eh48 1TL</p>
Ward:	Bathgate
Local Members:	<p>Councillor William Boyle Councillor Harry Cartmill Councillor Tony Pearson Councillor Pauline Stafford</p>

Lead officer:	Rachel Donald (Property Modernisation and Community Empowerment Officer) Direct dial: 07979724459 Email: <a href="mailto:Rachel.donald2@westlothian.gov.uk">Rachel.donald2@westlothian.gov.uk</a>
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## D.2 Introduction

Sarajia Islamic Studies and Community Centre Limited (SISCCL) have submitted a Community Asset Transfer Request to the council for three properties at St. David House, 20 South Bridge Street, Bathgate, the ground floor retail unit at 22 South Bridge Street, Bathgate and the former café unit at 24 South Bridge Street, Bathgate under the provisions of Part 5 of the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015 (the Act). A copy of that request is included at Appendix 1.

The Act requires that the council must approve the request unless, having regard to the statutory factors, the encouragement of equal opportunities and the observance of the equal opportunity requirements, there are reasonable grounds for refusing it.

Under the Act, the council has a statutory obligation to determine Community Asset Transfer Requests within six months of the request's validation date. In this instance that deadline falls on 23 April 2024.

## D.3 Background

Located in the south-west of the town centre and offering 3,740m<sup>2</sup> of traditional cellar office accommodation over two-storeys, a retail unit and café unit along with secure car parking for around 70 cars, the extent of the properties are shown crosshatched in black on the location plan at Appendix 2.

St. David House was vacated in October 2023 when staff relocated to alternative council facilities in Bathgate and Livingston. In advance of the property falling vacant, Council Executive had declared the property surplus to requirements and agreed that it should be marketed for sale or lease, with any expressions of interest from the community being considered as part of the disposal process. The property, along with the former ground floor retail unit directly below at 22 South Bridge Street, were openly marketed and a closing date for offers was set for 12 noon on 12 October 2023.

On 5 October 2023, prior to the closing date, officers received the abovementioned Community Asset Transfer Request from SISCCL. Under the Act, once an asset transfer request has been made, the council is not allowed to dispose of the property to anyone except the asset transfer applicant, until the request has been considered and decided. This does not apply however if, as in this case, the property was advertised for sale or lease before the request was made. In these cases, an asset transfer request can still be made, but it does not prevent negotiations or proceedings continuing with, or bids being made by, any other party.

A number of commercial bids to purchase were received at the closing date on 12 October 2023. These were for a variety of potential uses that are broadly in keeping with the adopted West Lothian Local Development Plan 2018. The District Valuer (DV) has been instructed to value these properties and none of the commercial bids received at the closing date meet the DV's assessment of market value.

There was also an expression of interest at the closing date from Open Door Scotland Limited (ODSL), a homeless charity providing accommodation, support and advocacy for young people in West Lothian. In their submission, ODSL set out their interest in owning or leasing St. David House and the former ground floor retail unit at 22 South Bridge Street and converting those properties to provide residential accommodation and tenancy support along with other ancillary uses, including a foodbank, charity shop and café.

ODSL stated that they were interested in pursuing a community asset transfer of those properties, but acknowledged their submission was not an asset transfer application and that their proposals were at an embryonic stage, with little of the significant, recommended asset transfer preparatory work having been undertaken. ODSL were advised that their submission to the closing date on 12 October 2023 was not a valid community asset transfer application under Part 5 of the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015 and as such it did not trigger the statutory requirements and provisions of that legislation.

ODSL have been advised that they have the right to pursue asset transfer should they wish to do so and that any valid asset transfer request received by the council would be considered and determined in accordance with statutory provisions and the council's approved Community Asset Transfer Policy. ODSL have not followed up on their initial interest and no asset transfer application has since been received from them.

An update report on the disposal of St. David House, the ground floor retail unit and the adjoining café unit was provided to Council Executive on 7 November 2023 for information. That report advised Council Executive that a valid Community Asset Transfer Request had been received from SISCCCL and that the request would be determined by the Asset Transfer Committee in accordance with approved governance procedures.

#### **D.4 SISCCCL's validated Community Asset Transfer Request**

##### **D.4.1 Details of the proposal**

Under SISCC's proposals, the subjects would be converted for use as an 'open community centre', which they describe as a vibrant, user-led multicultural space open to all, the overarching purpose being to promote wellbeing and connection across the whole of the Bathgate community. The space would be multifaceted (reflecting the different needs of service users) and offer social, educational, religious, cultural and wellbeing activities to bring people and communities together regardless of age, background or faith for the betterment of themselves, those around them and the community in general.

The new facilities would aim to address the needs of the entire community and would focus in particular on young people and the elderly. In addition to supporting faith-based activities and enabling SISCC to better meet the evolving needs of the local Muslim community, the site would also provide a large community space for events and activities alongside some smaller spaces for group work and a fitness space for the whole community. A commercial retail offering and electric vehicle charging points would generate an income to support the charity's operations and provide skills development opportunities for young people

SISCCCL have provided a business plan in support of their community asset transfer request, a copy of which is included at Appendix 3. An index of all the supporting information provided by SISCCCL is included at Appendix 4.



SISCCL's proposal is that they will take full ownership of the three properties from the council. SISCCL initially offered to pay the council £350,000 to purchase the property, but have increased that offer to £600,000 in light of a subsequent market valuation of the properties undertaken by the DV. The DV has placed a combined value of £875,000 on the subjects.

SISCCL acknowledge that their £600,000 offer is less than the DV's stated assessment of value and have pointed to the significant non-financial community benefits that their proposed project would deliver. Those community benefits are set out and quantified in SISCCL's Community Asset Transfer Request.

It is considered that SISCCL would require a change of use planning consent given their intended use of the three properties.

SISCCL have confirmed that they own their existing premises at 5 Whitburn Road, Bathgate and that they are in the process of being gifted title to a second property, a commercial restaurant premises in Bathgate town centre, that property being gifted to them at nil cost by an elder of their community. SISCCL envisage disposing of both these properties going forward, with the proceeds contributing towards the cost of delivering their proposed asset transfer project. Further, Mr. Tariq Asaad, a local businessman and property developer, is leading SISCCL's asset transfer proposals in his capacity as a trustee of the charity and has confirmed that he will personally and legally underwrite the £600,000 cost of SISCCL acquiring the properties at 20.22 and 24 South Bridge Street, Bathgate.

#### **D.4.2 Representations**

In accordance with statutory requirements, the receipt of this Community Asset Transfer Request has been advertised online and on site. There have been thirty-three representations received in support of this Community Asset Transfer Request. There have been no representations received in opposition to the Community Asset Transfer Request.

The council has however received the letter of concern at Appendix 5, which is not opposed to the project itself, but which does raise concerns around the financial aspects of the proposed transaction. The council, via an elected member enquiry, has also received a separate communication from another member of the public who is concerned that disposal of the subjects at the original £350,000 offer would represent the underselling of public assets at time of acute financial challenge for the council.

#### **D.4.3 Market Value**

The DV has been instructed to provide an independent value of what the subjects could expect to achieve were they to be openly advertised for sale on the market. The DV's opinion is that the council could achieve the highest receipts by marketing and selling the properties individually as three separate entities.

The DV considers the market value of the properties to be as follows:

- Offices at 20 South Bridge Street - £450,000
- Large retail unit at 22 South Bridge Street - £350,000
- Former café at 24 South Bridge Street - £75,000
- Combined market value of the three properties = £875,000

#### **D.4.4 Legal Implications**

SISCCL's Community Asset Transfer Request and their constitution were vetted by officers and confirmed as being valid in terms of Part 5 of the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015. Officers therefore issued a formal acknowledgment letter confirming the request's validation date as 24 October 2023.

A title check has been undertaken by Legal Services and that exercise has shown there to be no title restrictions that would prevent the council from disposing of these properties or agreeing to the asset transfer request, should the council wish to do so.

#### **D.4.5 Community Asset Transfer Board evaluation**

In accordance with the council's approved Community Asset Transfer Policy, SISCCL's asset transfer request was considered by the Community Asset Transfer Board ("the Board") on 11 March 2024. The Board, comprising officers from a range of key service areas across the council, evaluated the request using a scorecard approach. A copy of the Board's completed scorecard is included at Appendix 6.

Section 82 of the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015 defines the criteria against which asset transfer requests must be evaluated and determined. Those criteria are set out in detail at Appendix 7 of this report. The Board's evaluation of SISCCL's asset transfer request was in accordance with those stated criteria. Under Section 82(5) of the Act, the council must agree to the request unless there are reasonable grounds for refusing it.

The Board's findings can be summarised as follows.

When evaluated against the statutory outcomes, the Board consider that SISCCL have presented a robust and well prepared application that makes a strong case for the asset transfer of the properties at 20, 22 and 24 South Bridge Street, Bathgate. As evidenced by the scoring in Table 1b of the scorecard, the Board consider that the project will deliver positive outcomes across a wide range of areas and provide new community facilities that will be available to and benefit the whole of the Bathgate community.

The scores in Table 2a of the scorecard reflect the Board's belief that SISCCL are a competent and well-functioning organisation, with a clear vision and effective governance arrangements in place, that they have evidenced effective use of their resources, that their proposed project promotes equality and that it aligns with council objectives.

The Board consider that the anticipated non-financial community benefits that the project would deliver have been clearly identified and quantified and that these, when combined with SISCCL's £600,000 monetary offer, represent Best Value to the council.

The Board are satisfied with SISCCL's financial projections and standing and are content that, with the added security of Mr. Tariq's personal guarantee in place, SISCCL have the resources and skillsets to fund the proposed acquisitions and to successfully deliver and sustain their asset transfer project.

#### **D.4.6 Alternative proposals for the asset**

It is the responsibility of the Board to consider SISCCL's Community Asset Transfer request in the context of possible alternative uses for the asset (including disposal on the open market where appropriate).

The council has no operational requirement for the properties and they were formally declared surplus by Council Executive.

The properties at 20 and 22 South Bridge Street, Bathgate have been openly marketed and none of the commercial offers received at the closing date meet the DV's stated assessment of market value. Those offers do however remain open for acceptance by the council.

Other than the tentative expression of interest from ODSL set out in section D3 above, no alternative community proposals have been presented for the property.

#### **D.4.7 Recommendation**

Committee is recommended to approve the community asset transfer request submitted by SISCCL for the properties at 20, 22 and 24 South Bridge Street, Bathgate subject to the following conditions:

1. SISCCL shall secure any planning permissions that are necessary to enable them to use the properties at 20, 22 and 24 South Bridge Street, Bathgate for the purposes set out in their Community Asset Transfer Request. The transfer will not take place unless those permissions are in place. If those permissions are not in place within six months of conclusion of missives, then the council will have the option to withdraw from the transaction.
2. It shall be a condition of any transfer of ownership that SISCCL will, to the council's satisfaction, demonstrate the delivery of community benefit to the value of £275,000 (the difference between their £600,000 monetary offer and the DV's stated £875,000 market value). SISCCL will be required to deliver the full value of that community benefit within three years from the date ownership of 20, 22 and 24 South Bridge Street, Bathgate transfers to SISCCL. A Standard Security will be granted over the property in favour of the council until such time as that full community benefit has been shown by SISCCL to have been delivered. The council will discharge the Standard Security once it is satisfied that the full value of the community benefit has been delivered by SISCCL.
3. Mr. Tariq Asaad, will act as a personal guarantor and will enter into a legal agreement to underwrite the £600,000 cost of SISCCL's offer to the council.

Committee is recommended to agree the draft Decision Notice included at Appendix 8 and to authorise its issue to SISCCL.

#### **E. Conclusion**

Having taken cognisance of the statutory criteria for determining community asset transfer requests as set out in Section 82 of the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015, the asset transfer request submitted by SISCCL is considered to represent the best available option for the use of this property. There are considered to be no reasonable grounds for refusing that request.

Committee is therefore recommended to approve the community asset transfer request submitted by SISCCCL for 20, 22 and 24 South Bridge Street, Bathgate subject to the conditions set out in section D.4.7 of this report.

## **F. Background References**

Council Executive – 28 November 2017 – Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015: Community Asset Transfer Policy and Governance Review

Council Executive – 7 November 2023 – Disposal of St. David House and adjoining properties

### Appendices/Attachments:

Appendix 1 – SISCCCL Community Asset Transfer Request

Appendix 2 – Plan showing extent of proposed asset transfer area

Appendix 3 – SISCCCL Business Plan

Appendix 4 – Index of supporting information provided

Appendix 5 – Letter of concern

Appendix 6 – Community Asset Transfer Officer Board Scorecard

Appendix 7 - Section 82 Criteria for determining asset transfer requests

Appendix 8 – Draft Decision Notice

Contact Person: Rachel Donald  
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**Patrick Welsh, Interim Head of Finance and Property Services**

Date of meeting: 22 April 2024



## COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT (SCOTLAND) ACT 2015

### ASSET TRANSFER REQUEST FORM

#### **IMPORTANT NOTES:**

**This is a standard asset transfer request form which can be used to make a request to West Lothian Council.**

**You do not need to use this form to make an asset transfer request, but using this form will help you to make sure you include all the required information.**

**You should read West Lothian Council's Asset Transfer Policy: Guidance Note for Applicants before making a request.**

**You are strongly advised to contact West Lothian Council and discuss your proposals with us before making an asset transfer request.**

**When completed, this form must be sent to:**

The Asset Manager  
Property Services  
West Lothian Council  
West Lothian Civic Centre  
Howden South Road  
Livingston  
EH54 6FF

**This is an asset transfer request made under Part 5 of the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015.**

**Section 1: Information about the community transfer body (CTB) making the request**

1.1 Name of the CTB making the asset transfer request

Sarajia Islamic Studies and Community Centre Ltd

1.2 CTB address. This should be the registered address, if you have one.

Postal address:  
5 Whitburn Road Bathgate  
  
Postcode: EH48 1HE

1.3 Contact details. Please provide the name and contact address to which correspondence in relation to this asset transfer request should be sent.

Contact Name: Asaad Tariq  
Postal Address: xxxxxxxxx  
  
Post Code: xxxxxxxx  
Email: xxxxxxxx  
Telephone: xxxxxxxx

We agree that correspondence in relation to this asset transfer request may be sent by email to the email address given above. *(Please tick to indicate agreement)*

*You can ask the relevant authority to stop sending correspondence by email, or change the email address, by telling them at any time, as long as 5 working days' notice is given.*

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1.4 Please mark an "X" in the relevant box to confirm the type of CTB and its official number, if it has one.

	Company, and its company number is .....	SC745694
	Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation (SCIO), and its charity number is .....	SC052208
	Community Benefit Society (BenCom), and its registered number is .....	
	Unincorporated organisation (no number)	

**Please attach a copy of the CTB's constitution, articles of association or registered rules.**

1.5 Has the organisation been individually designated as a community transfer body by the Scottish Ministers?

No

Yes

Please give the title and date of the designation order:

1.6 Does the organisation fall within a class of bodies which has been designated as community transfer bodies by the Scottish Ministers?

No

Yes

If yes what class of bodies does it fall within?

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## Section 2: Information about the land and rights requested

2.1 Please identify the land to which this asset transfer request relates.

*You should provide a street address or grid reference and any name by which the land or building is known. If you have identified the land on the relevant authority's register of land, please enter the details listed there.*

*It may be helpful to provide one or more maps or drawings to show the boundaries of the land requested. If you are requesting part of a piece of land, you must give a full description of the boundaries of the area to which your request relates. If you are requesting part of a building, please make clear what area you require. A drawing may be helpful.*

1. St David. House 20 South Bridge Street Bathgate EH48 1TT

2. 22 South Bridge Street Bathgate EH48 1TL

3. 24 South Bridge Street Bathgate EH48 1TL

The Full building of St Davids Houses

St David House Council Offices over the First and 2nd Floor.

Also the ground retail store referenced as 22 South Bridge Street and the vacant cafe referenced as 24 South Bridge St

Includes the side and rear car park.

Application for the full building.

2.2 Please provide the UPRN (Unique Property Reference Number), if known.

*If the property has a UPRN you will find it in the relevant authority's register of land.*

UPRN: 200004135227 & 135025991 & 200004135228



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**Section 3: Type of request, payment and conditions**

3.1 Please tick what type of request is being made:

for ownership (under section 79(2)(a)) - go to section 3A

for lease (under section 79(2)(b)(i)) – go to section 3B

for other rights (section 79(2)(b)(ii)) - go to section 3C

**3A – Request for ownership**

What price are you prepared to pay for the land requested? :

Please attach a note setting out any other terms and conditions you wish to apply to the request.

**3B – Request for lease**

What is the length of lease you are requesting?

How much rent are you prepared to pay? Please make clear whether this is per year or per month.

Please attach a note setting out any other terms and conditions you wish to be included in the lease, or to apply to the request in any other way.

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### **3C –Request for other rights**

What are the rights you are requesting?

Do you propose to make any payment for these rights?

**Yes**

**No**

If yes, how much are you prepared to pay? Please make clear what period this would cover, for example per week, per month, per day?

Proposed payment: £    per

Please attach a note setting out any other terms and conditions you wish to apply to the request.

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## Section 4: Community Proposal

4.1 Please set out the reasons for making the request and how the land or building will be used.

*This should explain the objectives of your project, why there is a need for it, any development or changes you plan to make to the land or building, and any activities that will take place there.*

Sarajia has been a respected part of the Bathgate community for the past 34 years and operates from a its own small premises in Bathgate, used as a Mosque and education centre. The building is no longer fit for purpose being too small to accommodate the growing community, inflexible to their changing needs and physically inaccessible for some members. Purchase of St David’s will give Sarajia more control over its future growth, development and sustainability. It will enable the organisation to meet community needs better but will also lead to wider regenerative outcomes in Bathgate.

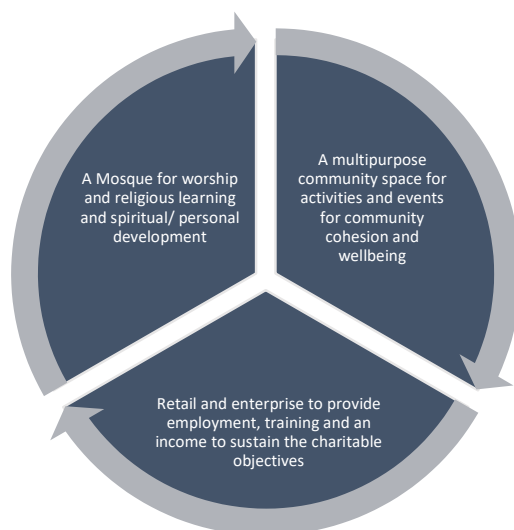
Bathgate is growing with 10,000 new homes being developed in and around the area. Statutory services are being withdrawn and the High Street is in decline. There are no community run centres: the Council run Partnership Centre, whilst an important asset, is not geared towards grass roots community activity. Bathgate is becoming a commuter town with people going elsewhere for work and leisure. Young people and elderly people are particularly disadvantaged with a lack of services available.

We need to give the town a boost and people opportunities to feel a sense of belonging and connect with each to improve themselves and the community.

### Our Vision

Our vision is to create the ‘Bathgate Community Centre’: a vibrant, user-led multicultural space open to all, the overarching purpose being to promote **wellbeing** and **connection**. The space will be multifaceted (reflecting the different needs of service users) and offer social, educational, religious, cultural and wellbeing activities to bring people together regardless of age, background or faith for the betterment of themselves and those around them.

The 3 core elements will be:



## Our key objectives

### *Strategic*

In developing the Bathgate Community Centre, our strategic objectives over the next 3 years include:

1. Extending services to the Muslim community through better Mosque facilities. We will establish a new, fit for purpose Bathgate Mosque and religious studies centre to suit the needs of a growing Muslim community with diverse needs. The Mosque will be fully accessible and large enough to accommodate religious ceremonies and festivals.
2. Widening reach by creating a new space and programme of activity. We will increase our range of provision aimed at all age groups and backgrounds in an affordable and accessible venue. We will create a community hall for large gatherings and events, breakout spaces for smaller group activities focussed on learning and development and create access to a health and wellbeing studio / gym to address health, educational and social inequalities. In doing so, we will contribute to a more resilient community by supporting people to develop their skills and by facilitating connections, help people and organisations be more mutually supportive and opportunistic. Learning and volunteering opportunities, especially for at risk young people, will be embedded throughout the development of the facility, including joinery and decoration, marketing and promotion, event management, facility management, admin and finance.
3. Developing enterprise by stimulating and growing commercial initiatives. We will develop a range of income streams to support the running costs of the facility and our charitable objectives. This will be principally through development of affordable retail space leased to local small businesses but also through EV charging points, gym membership and community space hire. The enterprises will, as far as possible, work synergistically with the wider facility, foster a multicultural environment and be of value to core service users. Our enterprise activity will be sensitive to people and planet.

### *Operational*

To achieve the above, we recognise a need to:

1. To collaborate and build on strategic and operational partnerships to deliver positive outcomes across key areas (work with the 50+ Network, Bathgate Academy, West Lothian Youth Action Project, WLVSG, Bathgate BID, Bathgate Community Development Trust, Town Centre Management Group and others).
2. To redevelop the indoor and outdoor spaces to be attractive, accessible, energy efficient and user friendly.

3. To promote and market our programmes and spaces effectively within the community, including new branding for the inclusive community space.
4. To invest in volunteer training and capacity building to ensure our venue and services are well managed and high quality.
5. To work towards a sustainable business model with longer term funding / investment and some self generated income.

Impact	
Impact	How this will be achieved
Economic development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Creating opportunities for small / start up enterprises through offering low risk commercial space</li> <li>• Creating volunteering, entrepreneurship and employability training opportunities through the facility for young people in particular</li> <li>• Creating a self sustaining community owned social enterprise</li> </ul>
Regeneration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Supporting local businesses which bring value to the community and facility service users and creating a circular economy</li> <li>• Bringing a vacant building back into use and increasing footfall on the Main Street</li> <li>• Revitalising empty shop fronts thereby improving the look of the town</li> <li>• Increasing people's access to a range of services (religious worship, learning opportunities, socialising, fitness, retail)</li> <li>• Creating connections within the community to empower people to have more control over what happens in Bathgate</li> </ul>
Public health	<p>the health of local residents by providing a space for physical activity (gym and hall)</p> <p>oping a programme of outreach exercise (walking groups)</p> <p>ood security through a foodbank for people and families living in poverty</p> <p>lcohol free social events</p>
Social wellbeing	<p>space which promotes integration, where people from all backgrounds can come and feel a sense of belonging and connection</p> <p>isolation in older people by providing an accessible venue and delivering a e of support for the elderly</p> <p>young people to learn and volunteer together through dynamic and affordable grammes</p>
Environmental wellbeing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improving the energy efficiency of a dated building</li> <li>• Installing EV charging points in the car park to support the switch to electric vehicles</li> <li>• Creating a local facility and shops to reduce travel out of town</li> </ul>
Reducing inequalities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Targeting people who face multiple barriers to life chances including vulnerable older people and disadvantaged and excluded young people and providing services which help alleviate poverty (foodbank as an example) and creating referral routes to other providers</li> <li>• Working in partnership with statutory and third sector partners for maximum benefit</li> </ul>

## Activities & Services

Our main offerings within the Community Centre have been structured as follows:

### *Mosque services and religious instruction*

Activity	Detail
5 Daily Prayers including compulsory Friday prayer/ Children's Classes Monday to Friday / Adult learning	<p>These are on offer in our current premises but with restricted numbers and accessibility. The new premises will allow for better and wider participation. We will also be able to redesign our Children's classes to ensure better engagement. Islamic classes for children aim to provide young learners with a foundational understanding of Islam, its teachings, and its values. These classes typically cover a wide range of topics and areas to help children develop a well-rounded understanding of their faith. More information on these can be found in the appendices. Currently, our classes accommodate 30 students each, taking place from Monday to Friday between 4 pm and 6 pm, with a duration of 2 hours per class but this has proved challenging. We aim to reorganize the student groups by age and proficiency level to enhance the learning experience. Additionally, we intend to reduce the class duration from 2 hours to 45 minutes. To accommodate this change, we will allocate time slots between 4 pm and 8 pm, allowing for more flexible scheduling.</p> <p>By adopting this approach, we can better structure the classes, creating smaller groups during each time slot. This arrangement will enable us to focus exclusively on the educational needs of each group. Children's classes will be supplemented with physical exercise in the gym and opportunities to socialize to lead to a more positive experience.</p>
Funerals / weddings and religious festivals inc washing facility	<p>Restricted or not offered in our current facilities, larger facilities will enable us to host much bigger (and in demand) religious gatherings. The provision of fit for purpose washing facilities will be an important addition. We envisage 3 of these types of gathering monthly / annually and will be able to observe and celebrate key events (Ramadan including the iftar (breakfast) and Eid) in a more unified way.</p>
Hosting inter Mosque events and Children's Day Visits to places of cultural and religious significant	<p>With better and larger facilities we will be able to host visiting groups and strengthen connections with the wider Muslim community. We will host forums and learning exchanges. We will expand our programme of outreach educational visits for our younger members to expand their horizons and link in with their classroom studies.</p>
Ladies' Groups	<p>We have 2 groups: one for Quran Classes with over 41 women and a community group chat on what's App for any support or questions and events with 167 Participants. This will be extended and links will be made into wider, mainstream community activity to support integration.</p>

*Wider community services and programme of activities (open to all)*

Activity	Detail
Socials and exercise for the elderly	<p>We will introduce gentle exercise classes (Zumba, yoga, seated keep fit within the studio or community space) and walking groups (outreach with the facility as the meet up point) for older residents. Some classes will be women / men only but generally they will be open to all. In addition to this, we envisage with space available, a small number of social groups will emerge organically over an activity of interest or support need: suggestions have included arts and crafts, digital skills, study and book groups as examples. We will support and facilitate these where necessary but will encourage self-management where possible.</p> <p>We will (potentially in partnership with others) host over 50s social events at key calendar dates- (Eid, Christmas etc) to bring larger groups together.</p>
Physical activity for children and young people	<p>Linked to our own children's classes, we will provide an opportunity to reduce classroom time and encourage pupils to take part in physical activity for a more rounded experience. Arrangements with the gym lease holder could prove mutually beneficial here, with 45 minute fitness slots each evening. Where more formal physical activity options are not available, we will host more informal options such as tennis table and group games.</p>
Skills and learning for young people	<p>From the outset, the Centre will provide skills training through volunteering in different aspects of facility management (event organizing, marketing, admin, DIY and so on) and outreach where links with partner agencies are possible. We will also explore apprenticeship and job potential through the retail offering and the wider Bathgate business community.</p> <p>Once established and appetite tested, our longer term plan is to develop more formal entrepreneurial and apprenticeship opportunities for young people who need positive diversion. Our ambition is to establish Entrepreneurship workshops to support young entrepreneurs with brilliant ideas. Funding for startup businesses would be secured and professional support provided to help market and promote these ventures. Any ideas presented will be carefully analyzed by a panel of business people and we will work together to turn them into reality. Longer term, we are committed to offering free workshops about online E-Commerce and how young individuals can get involved in various platforms like eBay, Amazon, Shopify, Wix, and Social Media Marketing. Our goal is to empower our youth with valuable skills and opportunities for personal and financial growth.</p>
Space hire for community groups	<p>Given the lack of community space in Bathgate and a growing population, we aim to make the facility available to groups for hire on a sessional basis for activities and events and will do so at an affordable rate.</p>
Foodbank	<p>Targeting those experiencing the adverse effects of the Cost of Living crisis. We have been planning this for some time but lacked the space to make this a reality. This could be delivered in partnership with local supermarkets, the Asian food retailers network, the Church network and with our own onsite stakeholders (café, food shops).</p>
Multicultural events	<p>We will host an annual multicultural event such as 'Bring West Lothian Together' or complementary offering to showcase and celebrate diversity within West Lothian. As well as promoting integration across faith and culture, we would also be aiming to bring different generations together and use the event to stimulate ideas for time-bound intergenerational and cross culture projects which could be carried out throughout the year and highlighted at the next year's event.</p>



*Developing enterprise*

Activity	Detail
Leasing commercial space	<p>We will lease the 3 shop units to local businesses, ideally to those which fit our multicultural ethos (Asian foods and products, Polish Deli as examples). It is intended that the 4<sup>th</sup> unit will remain as a café. These offerings would add value to our service users who would be core customers.</p> <p>The largest space is earmarked for gym activities (boxing, floor work and so on) and would be kitted out with a boxing ring, cushioned floor and mirrors. Black Box Muay Thai has expressed interest in leasing the space and more recently, a dance company.</p> <p>Space would be leased at a competitive price and with annual rent reviews: subject to negotiation, rental increases would occur in line with increase in turnover to keep the risk low for lease holders. The units would be managed by a commercial property company.</p>
Provision of charging points	10 electric vehicle charging points will be installed in the car park (mix of rapid and slow connections). Infrastructure and management will be provided by EV under a 25 year contract.
Start up enterprise space for young people	Depending on availability, a smaller meeting space (identified as Mosque ancillary in the plans) will be considered for start up enterprise activity by young people, primarily for access to internet and printing.

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## Benefits of the proposal

4.2 Please set out the benefits that you consider will arise if the request is agreed to.

*This section should explain how the project will benefit your community, and others. Please refer to the guidance on how the relevant authority will consider the benefits of a request.*

The impact of this initiative will be wide ranging:

**Economic development:** Various small businesses will operate from the building, including retailers, activity providers/ fitness instructors and a café. The Centre will offer centrally located facilities easily accessed on foot or by public transport from much of the town. Providing affordable, low risk, small retail units will support small business owners and start ups to thrive. The Centre itself will provide opportunities for skills training and volunteering (including digital) with links to other providers and the business community. This will improve employability and entrepreneurship. Creating a self sustaining social enterprise which directly employs staff (potentially 4 people) and buys services from others will also contribute to economic outcomes.

**Regeneration:** We will bring a vacant building back into use and revitalise empty shop fronts which will improve the look of the town and increase footfall on the Main Street. Local businesses will be supported, bringing value to the community and facility service users and create a circular economy. The Centre will increase people's access to a range of services (religious worship, learning opportunities, socialising, fitness, retail). Creating connections within the community to empower people to have more control over what happens in Bathgate.

**Public health improvement:** The Centre will act towards improving the health of local residents by providing a space for physical activity (gym and hall) and developing a programme of outreach exercise (walking groups). This will directly contribute to physical health but our activities will also foster mental wellbeing by reducing isolation and loneliness. The foodbank will address food security for people and families living in poverty.

**Social wellbeing:** Our plan centres on the importance of integration and cohesion. People from all backgrounds will be able to come together and feel a sense of belonging and connection through the Centre. This will reduce isolation in older people (by providing an accessible venue and delivering a programme of support for the elderly) and support young people to learn and volunteer together through dynamic and affordable activity programmes. Engaging young people and diverting them away from criminal or anti social activity will contribute to a safer Bathgate. This is a development with strong community involvement, both from within the Muslim congregation and the broader community. As with learning and training, volunteering opportunities will be varied.

**Environmental wellbeing:** Our site plan and costings includes provision for improving the energy efficiency of a dated building. We will be installing Bathgate's largest EV charging point in the car park to support the switch to electric vehicles. Establishing a local facility and shops will reduce travel out of town.

**Reducing inequalities:** Our initiative will be inclusive but will aim to provide specific and tailored support to people who face multiple barriers including vulnerable, older people and disadvantaged and excluded young people. Volunteering, learning and social events (affordable or free) will help give people the tools and connections they need to improve their lives. We will directly provide services which help alleviate poverty (foodbank as an example) and creating referral routes to other providers.

## Beneficiaries, Outcomes and Targets

Beneficiaries	Outcomes	Targets
Young people who are facing barriers to opportunity and at risk of disengaging	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>YP have improved skills and knowledge to equip them for adulthood</li> <li>YP feel more confident in themselves and more hopeful about their future</li> <li>YP report feeling less anxious and depressed</li> <li>YP are more physically active</li> <li>YP feel better connected to others</li> </ul>	<p>30 young people regularly attending classes and youth clubs</p> <p>5 young people in volunteering training</p>
Elderly people who are isolated, lonely and facing barriers to accessing mainstream services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>EP report feeling less anxious and depressed</li> <li>EP feel more able to be physically active</li> <li>EP are less isolated and better connected to others</li> <li>EP are able to contribute more fully to community life</li> </ul>	<p>10 EP in walking groups</p> <p>50 EP in social groups</p> <p>10 EP regularly volunteering</p>
Adults and families in the Bathgate area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>People and their families feel more connected to each other</li> <li>People are able to use their interests, skills and talents to better themselves and improve community life</li> <li>People feel healthier and better about themselves</li> </ul>	<p>200 individuals regularly attending the Centre</p>

Based on our intended outcomes and targets, our social value contribution to the local council through the services we will provide amounts to a minimum of £478,495 per annum. Each of these services is categorized as either Priority 5 or 6 for the West Lothian Council, underlining the significance of our contributions to the community's well-being and development. The calculation using the HACT tool can be found in the appendices.

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## Restrictions on use of the land

4.3 If there are any restrictions on the use or development of the land, please explain how your project will comply with these.

*Restrictions might include, amongst others, environmental designations such as a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSI), heritage designations such as listed building status, controls on contaminated land or planning restrictions.*

The organisation intends to apply for a change of use for the first two floors of the building to establish it as a place of worship. We have been in discussions with Tony Irvine, the planning officer, regarding other projects, including 69 Society Place and vacant land in the Bathgate area. The feedback we received was positive, suggesting that the property and facility should be more centrally located within Bathgate Town Centre.

Considering the property's location with its private car park, we anticipate no significant challenges in obtaining approval for the change of use. Moreover, the ground-floor retail space has remained vacant for an extended period, negatively impacting the High Street.

Therefore, the proposed change of use for the first two floors, along with the creation of additional gym, retail, and café spaces on the ground floor, is seen as a significant positive for the local community and West Lothian Council (WLC). This aligns with the Scottish Government Guidelines and MP4 for the area, which emphasise the importance of revitalising and attracting more businesses to the local High Street, thus contributing to the overall economic growth and development of the region.

## Negative consequences

4.4 What negative consequences (if any) may occur if your request is agreed to? How would you propose to minimise these?

*You should consider any potential negative consequences for the local economy, environment, or any group of people, and explain how you could reduce these.*

The only potential drawback we foresee is the possibility of certain groups or organisations disagreeing with our vision. It's important to acknowledge that some individuals may hold negative perceptions towards religious entities. However, with our longstanding presence in the community spanning 34 years and a proven track record of running a successful charity during this time, we are confident that such objections should be minimal.

Furthermore, our project extends beyond religious activities to include a wide range of additional facilities, such as multicultural support, youth clubs, multipurpose spaces, and elderly support. We believe that by organising open days and fun-filled events for the public, we can effectively address any concerns that might arise and demonstrate the positive impact our initiative will have on the community as a whole. We will create a new brand for this initiative, 'The Bathgate Community Centre' which will be home to the Mosque, community centre, fitness studio and shops and café. In doing so, it is hoped the facility is positioned centrally as open, inclusive and welcoming to all. The Centre will have its own website with its own distinct personality with links to other sites (Sarajia / Mosque, the Gym, the Café).

We have letters of support from Councillors, local business people and notes of interest in the commercial spaces (a world food shop and Muay Thai boxing club).

We recognize that community engagement needs to be ongoing. One of our core operational objectives is to collaborate and build on strategic and operational partnerships to deliver positive outcomes across key areas (work with the 50+ Network, Bathgate Academy, West Lothian Youth Action Project, WLVSG, Bathgate BID, Bathgate Community Development Trust, Town Centre Management Group and others). We will continue to engage directly with local people in Bathgate through events and working groups.

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## Capacity to deliver

4.5 Please show how your organisation will be able to manage the project and achieve your objectives.

*This could include the skills and experience of members of the organisation, any track record of previous projects, whether you intend to use professional advisers, etc.*

First and foremost, the inception of Bathgate's Islamic community can be attributed to its founder, Mohammad Ajmal, who initiated this pioneering endeavour as one of the earliest mosques in West Lothian. Approximately 35 years ago, Mr. Ajmal recognised the pressing need for a dedicated facility and worked closely with the West Lothian Council to acquire the property at 5 Whitburn Road.

Mr. Ajmal continues to be an integral part of the charity, sharing a clear vision for advancing the group's mission and objectives.

Our second trustee, Mr. Asaad Tariq, is a local entrepreneur who has admirably led the local charity for the past decade, transforming the facility into an exceptional community centre. As a Bathgate native, Mr. Tariq has consistently championed the best interests of the community, a commitment that has been evident over the years.

In addition to his charitable pursuits, Mr. Tariq boasts a successful business background, having undertaken remarkable residential, student accommodation, and commercial property developments across the UK. He also owns a construction company and is a Q-Assure approved developer, offering a 10-year warranty on new builds and renovations. His expertise extends to mentoring and consulting for various successful businesses, including his current role as a speaker and lecturer on commercial property at a local property education company, The Property Wealth System.

Recently, Mr. Tariq completed his Post Graduate in Governance and Leadership at Napier University and collaborates with the local university to facilitate entrepreneurial workshops for local students.

Our architectural expertise is provided by Stuart Cameron, one of the directors of Cameron Webster Architects in Glasgow. Stuart possesses a deep passion for supporting local community projects and has contributed the facility drawings presented in this application.

The mosque benefits from the dedicated service of local Imams, Mr. Rahman and Mrs. Nusrat, who have been instrumental in shaping its development over the past decade. Both are highly educated individuals who completed their studies at some of the world's top Islamic schools, bringing extensive knowledge and support to the charity.

Our financial matters are overseen by Mr. Bryan Wood and Fiona Struthers of Accountants Plus in Hamilton, one of Scotland's largest accounting firms. They assist in establishing and auditing the charity group's financial operations, with Fiona's extensive experience spanning local charities, incorporated and unincorporated charities, and regulatory compliance with OSCR.

Our board comprises diverse members, and as a part of our commitment to running a successful organisation, we have requested our board members to undergo a skills audit. This process enables us to identify and address any skill gaps necessary for the effective operation of our organisation.

Additionally, conducting a skills audit helps us in achieving diversity on our board, as we actively engage with both younger generations and women. This diversity contributes to the creation of a dynamic and well-rounded board capable of effectively delivering on our Vision, Mission, and Goals.

Lastly, our unwavering local community support spans over three decades and comprises generations who have continually upheld the organisation's mission. This community includes a diverse range of professionals and business leaders who are regular attendees at the mosque.

With this remarkable team, steadfast community, and collaborative efforts with local councillors, we are confident in our ability to make this project an unqualified success, benefiting not only the Muslim community but the entire Bathgate community as a whole.

Going forward the Trustees are aware of the benefits to be gained from seeking external support when required and will make full use of the professional support that can be accessed through third sector agencies such as Business Gateway, Community Enterprise, Just Enterprise, Volunteer Scotland, Evaluation Support Scotland etc.

## Section 5: Level and nature of support

5.1 Please provide details of the level and nature of support for the request, from your community and, if relevant, from others.

*This could include information on the proportion of your community who are involved with the request, how you have engaged with your community beyond the members of your organisation and what their response has been. You should also show how you have engaged with any other communities that may be affected by your proposals.*

Our proposal is underpinned by a year long community consultation and engagement process, alongside desk based research and market appraisal. Community and member engagement is a core element of Sarajia's purpose and central to the way it works. All proposed activities and services within this business plan stem from that engagement.

### Engagement with the Muslim community

The regular Mosque meetings and weekly Open Forums have been used as valuable opportunities for our members and community to engage in open discussions, address various topics, and collectively shape the direction of our organization. These have been supplemented by a public meeting and one to one stakeholder conversations carried out by our Maintenance and Facilities Subgroup, specifically in relation to the St David's site. These subsequently led to a mini series of focus groups with a lens on our younger members and our elderly to understand their needs and how we could address them through improved facilities and services. We have engaged all members of the Mosque in this proposal (around 150 people), from young to old and there is unilateral support for securing this premises. Members have pledged both financial and volunteer support to make it a reality.

### Engagement with the wider community

We have participated in a number of outreach events, including 'Bring West Lothian Together' to look at how to improve interfaith and community cohesion across the region and build social capital within West Lothian but also to create connections with other places. We have used these events to gather feedback on what people think are the local challenges and solutions. We have also held a series of meetings with local business people, Councillors and MSPs. Together, these stimulated ideas about interfaith learning and multicultural offerings, partnership working with local groups and individuals, how to engage young people to help them into positive pathways and how to foster grass roots entrepreneurialism.

Feedback from the community also explored concerns about perception and inclusion: in response to that, we have developed plans to make sure the Centre is not seen as a Mosque which houses a community space, but rather a community space which houses a Mosque: our marketing plan reflects this.

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## Section 6: Funding

6.1 Please outline how you propose to fund the price or rent you are prepared to pay for the land, and your proposed use of the land.

*You should show your calculations of the costs associated with the transfer of the land or building and your future use of it, including any redevelopment, ongoing maintenance and the costs of your activities. All proposed income and investment should be identified, including volunteering and donations. If you intend to apply for grants or loans you should demonstrate that your proposals are eligible for the relevant scheme, according to the guidance available for applicants.*

### Full Detail in Business Plan

#### Capital costs

Alongside the £478,495 per annum community benefit value, we are proposing a purchase price of £350,000 and we estimate a further £250,000 is required for completion of works. The following table sets out the projected expenses for the purchase and initial works. These expenses will not cover costs associated with business operations as this will be covered by the existing running of the charity.

#### Investment and fundraising

To meet these costs, we will sell our premises on Whitburn Road estimated value of £150K. The remaining balance will be achieved using a combination of fundraising and guaranteed investment pledges. The table below shows the various entities that have pledged monies to Sarajia Islamic Studies and Community Centre. The sale of Whitburn Road, together with the guaranteed donations (totaling £250k) will comfortably cover purchase costs

We plan to organise a variety of fundraising events to contribute the costs and expenses associated with the purchase and development of St Davids House. The table below shows the events Sarajia Islamic Studies and Community Centre has planned and the target amount for each event.

#### Revenue assumptions

Sarajia Islamic Studies and Community Centre's financial plan is built on several key assumptions, each contributing to the organisation's sustainable growth and ability to serve the community effectively:

Assumption 1: By creating retail and leisure space for rental, it is projected that a minimum of £60,000 per annum can be generated. This income source will provide a stable financial foundation for the organisation.

Assumption 2: Offering 10 car parking spaces for Electric Vehicle (EV) charging points, with a fully funded installation arrangement, is expected to generate an additional £20,000 per annum for 25 years. This not only supports the community but also adds to the organisation's financial stability.

Assumption 3: Currently, children's classes are running five days a week, two hours per day, at a rate of £20 per month. With the expanded facility and capacity, the organisation aims to increase memberships from 30 to around 100 within 18 months. This growth is expected to generate additional monthly revenue, potentially reaching £2,000 per month by offering an after-school learning centre and utilising the youth centre and Black Box facility.



Assumption 4: The organisation currently relies on donation boxes and online facilities for general donations, averaging around £500 per week with a maximum capacity of 100 attendees on Friday Prayers. With the larger facility accommodating up to 500 people over two floors, it is anticipated that weekly donations will increase significantly. The goal is to achieve approximately five times the current amount, based on an average weekly contribution of £5 per person. This growth is projected to occur over five years, aligning with the expansion of the Muslim community in the area.

Assumption 5: We are also looking to work with charities such as Young Start funding by the National Lottery) and others. We have been working with Martin Thomson from West Lothian Council and Fiona Taylor from COSS on possible future funding sources.

The rationale for these assumptions is supported by demographic trends and population growth in the region. The significant increase in housing developments in Bathgate, Armadale, Fauldhouse, Whitburn, and neighbouring towns has led to a substantial rise in the Muslim population, as indicated by Census and Edinburgh University research. The ongoing construction of affordable and private housing developments further underscores the need for a larger facility to meet the growing demands of the community.

The organisation's financial plan is founded on these assumptions, providing a strategic roadmap for sustainability, growth, and continued support to the community.

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### **Section 7: Other supporting documentation**

To enable the council to fully consider your application, the following supporting documentation must be submitted as part of your application:

- A copy of your organisation's constitution;
- A business plan (that is proportionate to the nature of the asset transfer request);
- Audited accounts (or a financial projection where the applicant has been operating

for less than one year).

- Annual reports (where these are available)

Applicants are advised to refer to the council's Community Asset Transfer Policy Guidance Note for Applicants for further details of what information should be included in these supporting documents. (*insert link here to Guidance Notes*)

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## Signature

Two office-bearers (board members, charity trustees or committee members) of the community transfer body must sign the form. They must provide their full names and home addresses for the purposes of prevention and detection of fraud.

This form and supporting documents will be made available online for any interested person to read and comment on. Personal information will be redacted before the form is made available.

**We, the undersigned on behalf of the community transfer body as noted at section 1, make an asset transfer request as specified in this form.**

**We declare that the information provided in this form and any accompanying documents is accurate to the best of our knowledge.**

**Name** xxxxxxxx

**Address** xxxxxx

**Date** 1/10/2023

**Position** Trustee / Director

**Signature** xxxxxx

**Name** xxxxxxxx

**Address** xxxxxx

**Date** 1/10/2023

**Position** Trustee / Director

**Signature** xxxxxx

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**Checklist of accompanying documents**

To check that nothing is missed, please list any documents which you are submitting to accompany this form.

**Section 1 – you must attach your organisation’s constitution, articles of association or registered rules**

Title of document attached:

**Section 2 – any maps, drawings or description of the land requested**

Documents attached:

**Section 3 – note of any terms and conditions that are to apply to the request**

Documents attached:

**Section 4 – about your proposals, their benefits, any restrictions on the land or potential negative consequences, and your organisation’s capacity to deliver.**

Documents attached:

**Section 5 – evidence of community support**

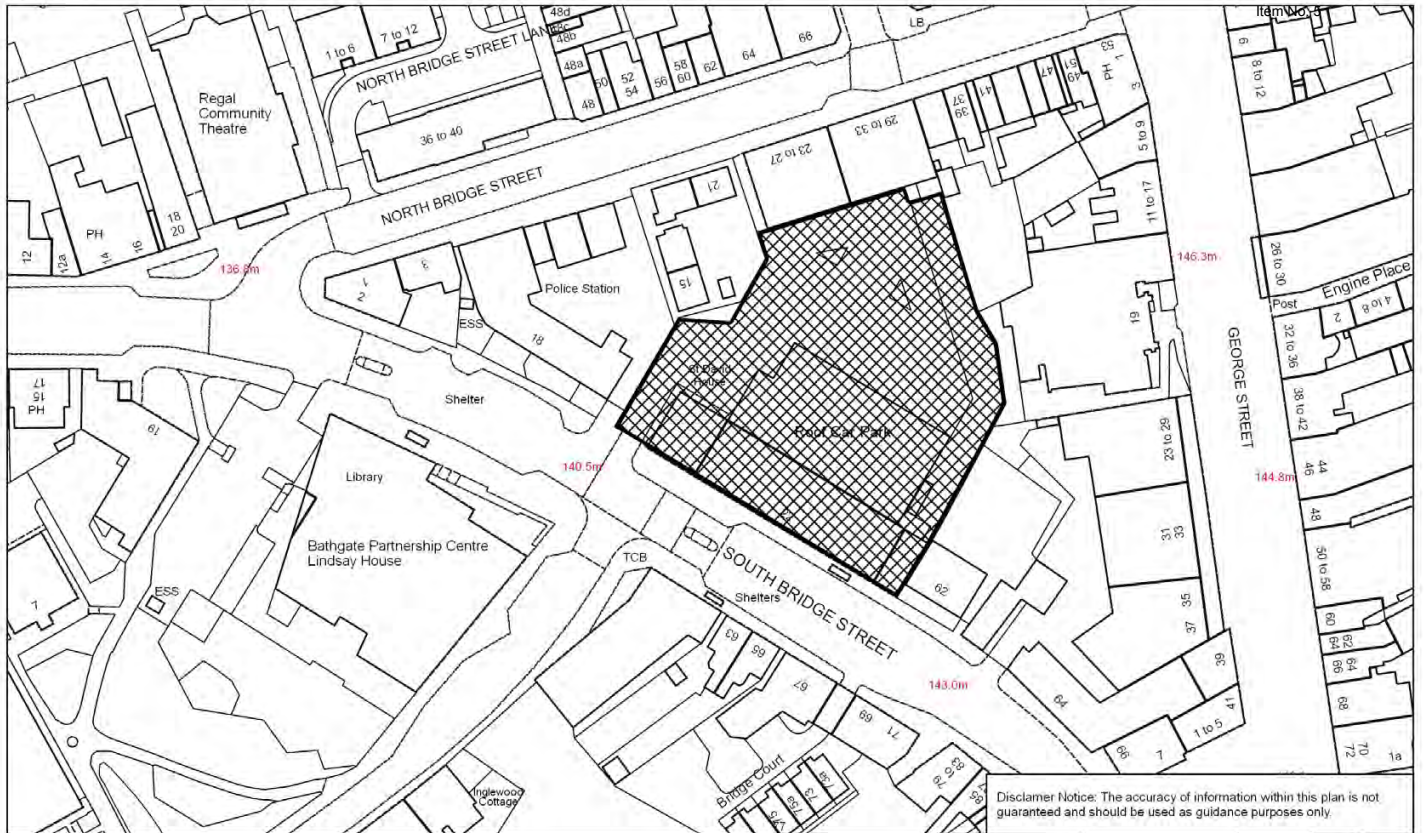
Documents attached:

**Section 6 – funding**

Documents attached:

**Section 7 – supporting documentation**

Documents attached:



Disclaimer Notice: The accuracy of information within this plan is not guaranteed and should be used as guidance purposes only.

	<b>Location Plan of St David House and 22/24 South Bridge Street, Bathgate</b>	Not to Scale	A4	
Property Services, West Lothian Civic Centre, Livingston, EH54 6FF		12/3/2024	Reproduced from the Ordnance Survey mapping with the permission of Her Majesty's Stationery Office. Unauthorised reproduction infringes Crown copyright and may lead to prosecution or civil proceedings. © Crown copyright. All rights reserved. Licence AC00003648533 2024	

# BUSINESS PLAN for St David's, Bathgate

SARAJIA  
ISLAMIC  
STUDIES AND  
COMMUNITY  
CENTRE LTD



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DATE PREPARED  
03/10/2023

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## 1. SUMMARY

Trustees of Sarajia Islamic Studies and Community Centre have prepared this business plan in support of their proposal to take ownership of the St David's site in Bathgate as a community asset. The building is owned by West Lothian Council and being vacant and assessed surplus to requirements, is currently on the market. WLC is open to all offers. Sarajia intends to secure the asset by offering a combination of commercial and community benefits. A formal Asset Transfer Request has been submitted to support this.

Sarajia has its own small premises in Bathgate for use as a mosque and education centre. The building is no longer fit for purpose being too small to accommodate the growing community, inflexible to their changing needs and physically inaccessible for some members. Purchase of St David's will give Sarajia more control over its future growth, development and sustainability. It will enable the organisation to meet community needs better but will also lead to wider regenerative outcomes in Bathgate.

The plan details the group's vision to develop the unused site into the 'Bathgate Community Centre', a multifaceted hub which will be an accessible, inclusive, integrated space attracting service users of all ages and backgrounds from Bathgate and beyond. The sustainability of the premises will be supported through business activity. Specifically, repurposing the site will:

1. Enhance existing Mosque services: allowing Sarajia to expand its provision to better meet the evolving needs of the local Muslim community and creating connections with those further afield.
3. Establish a unified Community Hub: creating a much needed, broader community gathering place that fosters unity among diverse faiths and communities and improves health and wellbeing. It will serve as an open community centre, addressing the needs of the entire community but will particularly focus on young people and the elderly. The site will provide a large community space for events and activities alongside some smaller spaces for group work and a fitness space.
2. Develop commercial initiatives: essentially through small and/ or affordable commercial units (4 in total) within the building and electric vehicle charging ports in the car park. These will generate an income to support the charity's operations, provide skills development for young people (employability, apprenticeship opportunities and volunteering), contribute to West Lothian's Net Zero ambitions, positively impact local businesses and revitalize the High Street.

This business case covers funding and running of the asset over the next 3 years including purchase and building improvements, widening services, extending reach and developing enterprise. Importantly, it sets out the proposal's intended impact on the local community and forms the basis of the purchase to West Lothian Council.

Activities and projects will provide employment and volunteering opportunities for local people and the site's amenities and facilities will be available to local people and community groups, creating a ripple

effect of community benefit. The development proposed will be undertaken in such a way as to ensure the energy efficiency of the buildings for the long term and a respect for the environment that reflects the values and the concerns of the charity and wider community.

The report reflects on the company's proposed business model and plans to raise the purchase price and fund the extensive capital works proposed. Financial projections are appended. In the meantime, Sarajia's Trustees have brought to bear their significant property development experience and have not flinched from projecting the likely capital costs of what is an ambitious project. The organisation has also explored at length how these costs could be met. A plan of capital works is described. Work will begin on remedial repairs to make the building water tight and safe so that spaces can be put quickly to work in service of the group's projects and activities. A fundraising campaign will be launched simultaneously to raise the funds stage by stage for the remainder of the development. Longer term, a sinking fund will be created to ensure preservation and improvement of the building in the long term.

Finally, the report reviews the risks involved in progressing with this proposal. The trustees are aware of the scale of the project they are proposing, and the risks involved, and the report considers where these can be mitigated. The trustees hope the report makes the case that the St David's site has the makings of a significant community asset, and for the multiple benefits that the proposed development will bring to Bathgate.

## 2. BACKGROUND

### 2.1 The Asset(s)

The St David's site is centrally located in Bathgate on South Bridge Street. The total site area covers approximately 0.374 Ha. The sale particulars comprise 2 properties: St David's House and 24 South Bridge Street. The main building has a ground and two upper floors with a high level car park at the rear. The ground floor has historically been used for retail but has been vacant for a number of years. The upper two floors were used for Council staff who have since been relocated. The car park offers space for up to 60 cars and being elevated, provides some accessibility into the upper floors. The smaller of the two buildings sits directly below St David's House. The site is currently owned by West Lothian Council. A formal valuation and conditions survey is not available and there is no guide price for purchase.

A third property within the site, the Bus Stop Café (which closed during Covid) is not listed on the particulars. With an active lease arrangement in place, the Council were not minded to include the Café as part of the sale but it will be declared surplus to requirements by WLC imminently. Sarajia proposed its inclusion to avoid splitting title deeds and complications further down the road and WLC are in agreement. The space is a modest 700sq ft and as it is already fitted out as a café, could be revitalized as such.

A visual inspection of the buildings by Sarajia trustees who have property development experience and discussions with third party property agents believe a purchase price in the region of £350k to be reasonable. The building is dated and requires significant repair including leak repairs and electrical rewiring. Remodeling is required throughout, particularly to achieve Net Zero as well as enterprise aspirations.



## 2.2 The Organisation

Sarajia Islamic Studies and Community Centre has existed as a charity for over 34 years. More recently, it updated its legal form to become an asset locked Company Limited by Guarantee (SC745694) with Charitable Status (SC052208). Its purpose is twofold:

1. to provide a dedicated place of worship and foster youth education with a focus on local culture within the Muslim Community
2. to establish a local Community Centre that embraces and supports individuals of all faiths, cultures, and organizations, with the ultimate goal of cultivating a diverse and multicultural community.

Sarajia is membership led and Trustees are elected from the membership on an annual basis (with a minimum of 3). It currently welcomes around 120 regular visitors each week (full capacity) to its premises at 5 Whitburn Road. It hosts a range of regular activities as well as special events:

- Children Language Classes
- Quran Classes
- Islamic and lifestyle Classes – Included in the above classes
- Ladies Groups
- 5 Daily Prayer congregation
- Friday Prayer congregation
- Facilities for Ramadan
- Facility for Islamic and Cultural events such as Eid
- Funeral Services
- Wedding Services
- Community Support Groups
- Fundraising events for the needy

These are available to all Muslims and the local community as a whole in the Bathgate and West Lothian area. Sarajia currently employs two Imams (one male / one female) but is otherwise operated entirely through volunteer effort.

For further information: [Home | Bathgate Mosque | Scotland \(www.bathgatemosque.com\)](#)

**Strengths & Opportunities analysis for Sarajia**

Our members took part in a recent strengths and opportunities exercise to identify the elements the organization to build on. By leveraging these assets and opportunities, it is intended that the organization will continue to grow, serve its community more effectively, and achieve its mission and goals.

Strengths	Opportunities
<p>1. Community Engagement: The organization has a strong and dedicated core team of trustees, teachers, and leaders who are deeply connected to the local community.</p> <p>2. Longevity: With a history spanning several decades, the organization has a solid foundation and a reputation for reliability and commitment.</p> <p>3. Educational Programmes: The successful Quranic education programs offered by the mosque have attracted thousands of students, demonstrating the effectiveness of the teaching methods.</p> <p>4. Community Unity: The organization has the ability to unite and provide support to a diverse community of different faiths and backgrounds, fostering a sense of togetherness.</p>	<p>1. Membership Growth: Anticipated growth in membership presents an opportunity to expand the organization's reach and impact within the community.</p> <p>2. Facility Expansion: Given the constraints of the current facility, there is a significant opportunity to expand and provide better amenities to accommodate a larger congregation.</p> <p>3. Diverse Programmes: The organization can diversify its offerings, including cultural events, educational workshops, and community outreach, to further engage with a wider audience.</p> <p>4. Collaboration: Collaborating with local authorities, government agencies, and other community organizations can open doors for additional support and resources.</p> <p>5. Technology Integration: Embracing modern technology for online classes, events, and outreach can enhance the organization's accessibility and reach.</p>

	6. Fundraising: Leveraging the organization's strong community ties to raise funds and support from within and outside the community.
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### 2.3 Engagement & research

This proposal is underpinned by community consultation and engagement, alongside desk based research and market appraisal. Community and member engagement is a core element of Sarajja's purpose and central to the way it works. All proposed activities and services within this business plan stem from that engagement.

#### Engagement with the Muslim community

The regular Mosque meetings and weekly Open Forums have been used as valuable opportunities for our members and community to engage in open discussions, address various topics, and collectively shape the direction of our organization. These have been supplemented by a public meeting and one to one stakeholder conversations carried out by our Maintenance and Facilities Subgroup. These subsequently led to a mini series of focus groups with a lens on our younger members and our elderly to understand their needs and how we could address them through improved facilities and services.

#### Engagement with the wider community

We have participated in a number of outreach events, including 'Bring West Lothian Together' to look at how to improve interfaith and community cohesion across the region and build social capital within West Lothian but also to create connections with other places. We have used these events to gather feedback on what people think are the local challenges and solutions. We have also held a series of meetings with local business people, Councillors and MSPs. Together, these stimulated ideas about interfaith learning and multicultural offerings, partnership working with local groups and individuals, how to engage young people to help them into positive pathways and how to foster grass roots entrepreneurialism.

#### Desk based research

Trustees have undertaken a range of desk based research activities to develop the proposal. These included:

- *Community data gathering using an indepth 'Community Insight' tool to pool and review statistics from 22 different datasets about west Lothian and Bathgate more specifically. This helped us understand some of the local challenges better.*

- *Policy* Local and national policies and initiatives were reviewed to influence how our proposal could align and contribute to wider agendas and priorities.
- *Fundability* A review of the funding landscape and investment routes was undertaken to identify potential sources of support.
- *Case studies* Mosques from further afield were consulted about their fundraising and development journeys in a drive to learn lessons from from elsewhere.

#### Market research

Sarajia has viewed the subjects of sale and carried out a comparator exercise to assess the value of the building(s). Trustees have spoken to commercial property agents (DM Hall as an example) to understand the retail market better and where the gaps and opportunities are. EV has also been consulted to shape plans for EV charging points including infrastructure requirements, costs and potential revenue generation. Displacement and duplication has been considered in relation to existing community spaces.

## 3. NEED & DEMAND

### 3.1 Needs of the Muslim community

According to the 2011 Census, there were approximately 1,750 Muslims in West Lothian<sup>1</sup> but this figure is under representative and likely to much higher given the number of Asian families relocating from Edinburgh in search of more affordable housing over the last 10 years. In a wider context, it has been reported that the UK wide Muslim population has increased by a significant 1.2m since the 2011 Census.

Bathgate Mosque was the first in West Lothian and 2 other Mosques have since been established. The Livingston Mosque recently underwent a significant extension to accommodate its growing congregation and is already operating at full capacity. Similarly, the Deans Mosque is at full capacity for Friday prayer despite being only accessible by car. Mosques (or 'Masjids') act as key focal points for the Muslim community: they are important gathering places not just for daily worship but as hubs for people to learn, volunteer and socialize together. They are a critical vehicle for intergenerational activity and important information platforms so people know what is happening locally.

In a hyper local context, our numbers are expanding and our Centre is over extended. Typically, we have members standing in the hall and on the stairs waiting for space within the prayer room. Additional sessions have been organized to alleviate this issue but it has only been partially successful. The premises cannot host key community events (weddings, funerals, festivals) due to space restrictions and some of our less

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<sup>1</sup> According to 2011 Census data

mobile members are unable to negotiate the stairs. These logistical challenges have led to a more fractured community unable to come together as a whole. Some members (particularly the elderly) reported being unable to participate fully in community life and were feeling isolated as a result.

During our consultation, we received valuable feedback from parents in relation to our children's classes. Children often feel fatigued after a long day at school and are unable to fully engage in two-hour after-school classes. Additionally, many children have commitments to various clubs and activities, making it challenging to allocate five days a week to Mosque activities. To address these concerns, parents suggested that a larger facility would allow for more flexible class options to cater to parents' and students' preferences. Rather than committing to lengthy sessions, parents wanted to choose from shorter class blocks that better suit their child's schedule and energy levels.

Finally, our review of services also revealed that young people in our community are dropping away from the Mosque and their studies at around 14-15. Young people in the focus groups reported wanting more engaging activities (not just religious instruction) but we are unable to accommodate this due to the space. During the consultation, families reported concerns about the negative outcomes of this on family life and for the young people themselves. There is a need to provide positive diversionary activities (sports, socialising and entrepreneurial skills development) alongside religious teachings and a need to encourage more intergenerational interaction to strengthen the community.

These issues have now reached a fairly critical point: our members are keen to find a solution and have been pressing for new accommodation for some time. Positively, proactive 'can-do' attitudes and acts of giving (time and money) are embedded within Muslim culture. Given the strength of feeling, members have pledged hands on volunteer and financial support to make this project a reality.

### 3.2 Needs of the wider community

An historic Royal Burgh, Bathgate has faced the same challenges as many of Scotland's old towns. A walk along the High Street reveals a number of vacant shop fronts and there are a number of derelict and unkempt buildings throughout the town. Bathgate is attractive to commuters given its rail and road links and good quality housing, but people tend to travel outside the town to take part in social and leisure opportunities. As statutory services dwindle, support services and wellbeing activities are becoming much more difficult to access and there is a lack of things to do locally. This is particularly so for the young and old. Crime data has not been available, but anecdotally, anti social crimes (drugs, alcohol for example) are pervasive problems.

Bathgate is earmarked for significant development however with plans to link the nearby M8 and M9, and create around 10,000 new homes in and around the town. This will give a significant boost to the local



economy but there is a concern that local services and will not keep pace with the rising population, particularly with statutory provision dwindling.

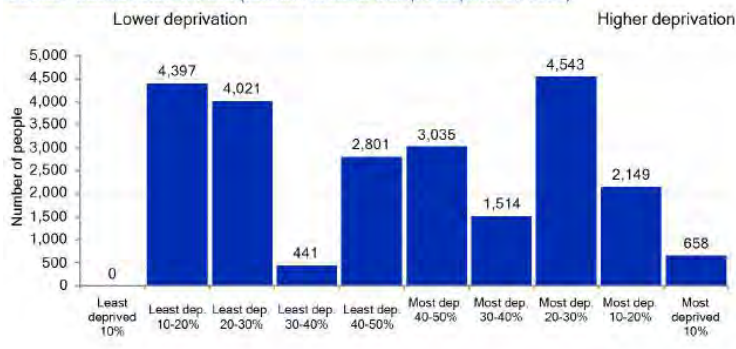
The CRDC score for 'Access to Health Assets and Hazards' shows Bathgate with a higher score than Scotland as a whole, which indicates a poorer health related environment: it has relatively good access to GPs, pharmacies etc but it also has easier access to fast food and gambling outlets, tobaccoists and vape stores as examples.



**SIMD**

Whilst Bathgate scores comparatively well on the Deprivation Index across all indicators, there are still some 7,500 people living in the most deprived 30% deciles across all indicators. Drilling down, indicators which reveal comparatively higher numbers of people in deprivation (30% most deprived or higher) are Education, Health and Crime.

Figure: Number of people in each deprivation decile, Index of Multiple Deprivation 2020  
Source: Scottish Government (Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation 2020)

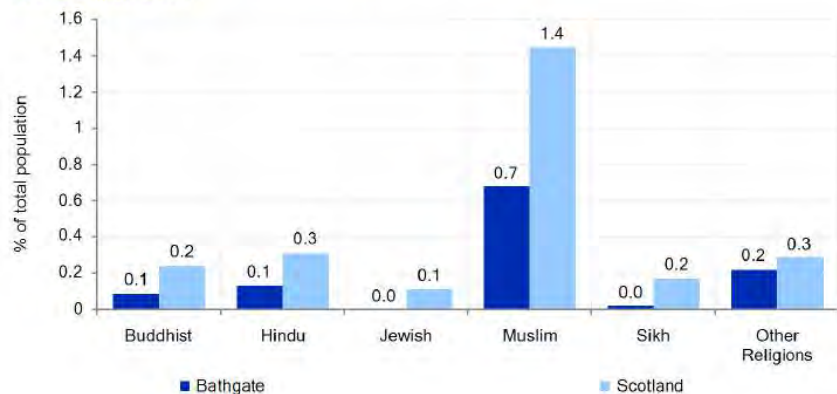


**Ethnic minorities**

Bathgate has a population of just under 24,000: just over 3,000 are over 65 and just over 4,000 are children and young people. It is not a particularly diverse or multicultural town in terms of ethnicity. Nearly 88% describe themselves as 'white British'. Only 0.7% of people identify as Muslim and even smaller numbers practice other non Christian religions.

Opportunities for integration

Figure: Population with non-Christian religion  
Source: Census 2011



and accommodations are limited.

### *Young People*

Youth unemployment is higher in Bathgate than in Scotland as a whole (5.2% v 4.2%)<sup>2</sup>. Pupil attainment is higher than the national average at S4 at the lower levels but drops below average for pupils attaining SC QF Level 5+. This also drops to below the national average at S5 and 6 for attainment across all levels. Positive destinations after school are recorded as lower than the national average for all destinations.<sup>3</sup> There are higher numbers of first time mothers under the age of 19 compared to regional and national statistics. Research found that there are no youth dedicated spaces in or around Bathgate.

From our own perspective, as active members of the Bathgate Community, we have observed a troubling increase in drug and alcohol sales and abuse among the youth and have held discussions with young people to understand their motivations for engaging in drug-related activities.

Our research has revealed that the primary motivator behind their involvement is money. Some youths are driven to sell drugs as a means to earn extra income and we are aware criminal gangs and drug dealers exploit the under 16s to distribute drugs due to leniency within the law.

While some children face additional challenges, such as a lack of parental support or exposure to negative environments, it's crucial to note that even children from stable backgrounds are drawn into this lifestyle due to the involvement of peers.

These conversations have pointed to a need to provide enriching alternatives for young people.

### *Older People & Vulnerable Groups*

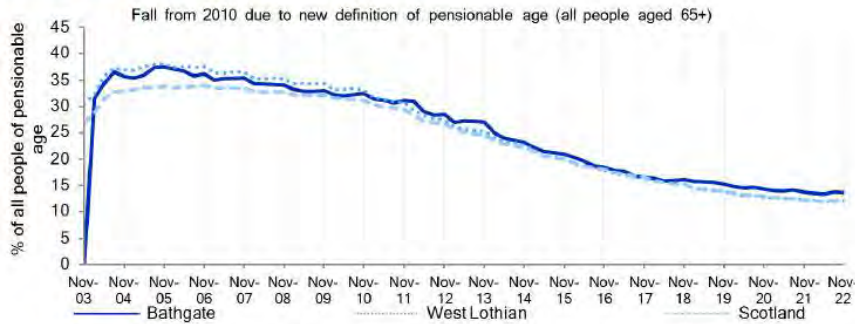
The proportion of older people and vulnerable groups are largely aligned with the national average, however, numbers of people claiming disability benefits are higher in Bathgate than in West Lothian and Scotland as a whole. There are higher numbers of people of pensionable age claiming pension credits compared to the national average. Over 3,500 people in Bathgate report having a life limiting illness. Health and financial concerns are significant barriers to inclusion.

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<sup>2</sup> Source: Department for Work and Pensions

<sup>3</sup> Source: Scottish Government, Analytical Services Unit

Figure: Pension Credit claimants  
 Source: Department for Work and Pensions (Nov-22)



Summary

This data alongside our community conversations point to the need to support young people into positive activity and to harness skills and to support older people in the town to reduce isolation and loneliness and to do so affordably and inclusively. There is also a need to reinvigorate the High Street as a place to shop and socialize and to stimulate community cohesion (particularly in a growing commuter town) by bringing different people together through shared interests and positive interaction.

3.3 Strategic context

Achieving Positive Outcomes is West Lothian's Local Outcomes Improvement Plan (2013-2023). We have considered how Community Asset Transfer and community management of the St David's site will contribute to achieving the plan's outcomes:

Health and wellbeing: we live longer, healthier lives and have reduced health inequalities. Finding a new purpose for the St David's site will create opportunities for people to take part in physical and recreational activity and reduce social isolation and anxiety. Provision of foodbank services within the Centre will address health inequalities.

Economic recovery: our economy is diverse and dynamic and West Lothian is an attractive place for doing business. There is potential for various small businesses to operate from the building, including retailers, a activity providers/ fitness instructors and a café. The Centre will offer centrally located facilities easily accessed on foot or by public transport from much of the town. This will help small and diverse businesses to thrive.

Employment: we are better educated and have access to increased and better-quality learning and employment opportunities. Various learning and training opportunities will be developed at the Centre for people of all ages, with a particular focus on young people. Once established and longer term, apprenticeships will be developed through links with the business community in and around Bathgate. Our

young entrepreneurs' programme will provide hands on training and support for those interested in pursuing self employment.

*Building strong communities: we live in resilient, cohesive and safe communities.* Our plan centres on the importance of integration and cohesion. In line with the SOA, getting people interested and involved in their community (with indicators such as the number of people who volunteer) will be the Centre's core purpose. Engaging young people and diverting them away from criminal or anti social activity will contribute to a safer Bathgate. This is a development with strong community involvement, both from within the Muslim congregation and the broader community. As with learning and training, volunteering opportunities will be varied.

### 3.4 Market research

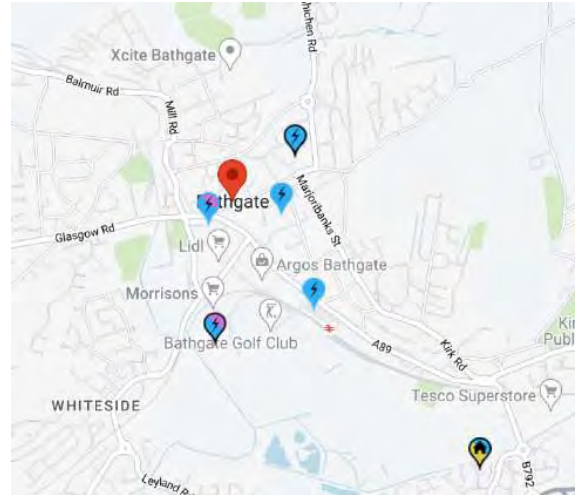
#### *Retail space*

Market analysis of the retail opportunities within Bathgate has been carried out. On the face of it, retail is not looking particularly buoyant locally given the number of empty commercial units available. Conversations with DM Hall and other property agents as well as the Council's town centre redevelopment sector have indicated that demand for large retail units is in decline and too costly for small business owners but there exists a demand for smaller, more affordable enterprise units with less risk attached. It was indicated that smaller spaces pitched competitively would attract good demand: £6 per sq ft was suggested. With a rentable area just under 10,000 sq.ft, this could yield a potential annual rental income of £60,000. In addition, options for step up rents (based on annual reviews / annual turnover) would further reduce risks for lease holders and boost commercial interest. Renting to businesses with commercial synergy was also suggested as a way of increasing foot fall and customer buy in: businesses with a multicultural flavor for example which would appeal to the service users of the building such as Halal butcher, Polish Deli as examples.

Direct consultation with existing business owners further strengthens these assumptions and letters of interest to occupy space have been appended.

#### *Electric charging points*

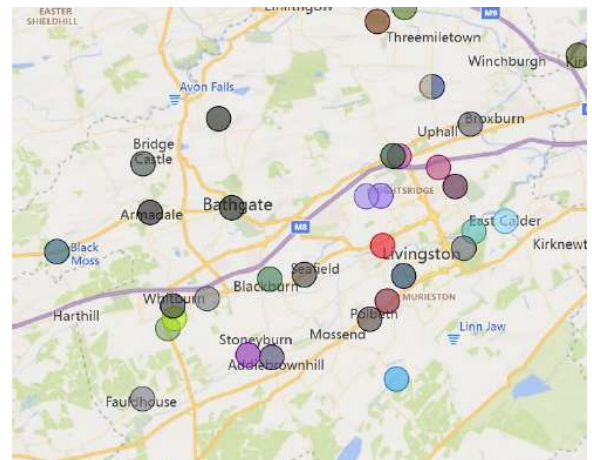
Given the inclusion of a car park in the property particulars, discussions with EV, a national electric vehicle charging provider were carried out to determine the potential for this, including possible revenue generation. There are currently 10 charging points in and around Bathgate<sup>4</sup>, including points on South Bridge Street (1 rapid device- 3 connectors) and East Main Street (1 slow device – 2 connectors). EV predicted a growing demand, particularly with the Scottish Government’s commitment to Net Zero and were confident enough to offer a fully funded 25 year contract on a charging point covering 10 parking spaces. This would be Bathgate’s largest charging point and would yield a total of £2,000 per charging space. This arrangement is projected to generate an annual income of £20,000 for the charity.



### Community Centres

Consideration has been given to duplication and displacement. Currently, Bathgate has no community run centres: the last at Meadowbank Street was closed some time ago and is due to be sold off as surplus stock.

The Bathgate Partnership Centre located close to the St David’s site is owned and managed by the Council. This is an important local resource: a relatively new build, bright and spacious, housing a number of organisations and services under one roof. It offers some meeting space and a range of statutory services. From feedback, there are some barriers including:



- prohibitive cost of the facilities and services for some individuals and groups
- unwelcoming to some local people: youth activities for example are not encouraged
- Over burdensome health and safety / bureaucracy which can be off putting
- Inaccessible times of activities and facilities

<sup>4</sup> [Electric vehicle \(EV\) charging points in Bathgate - Zapmap \(zap-map.com\)](https://zap-map.com)

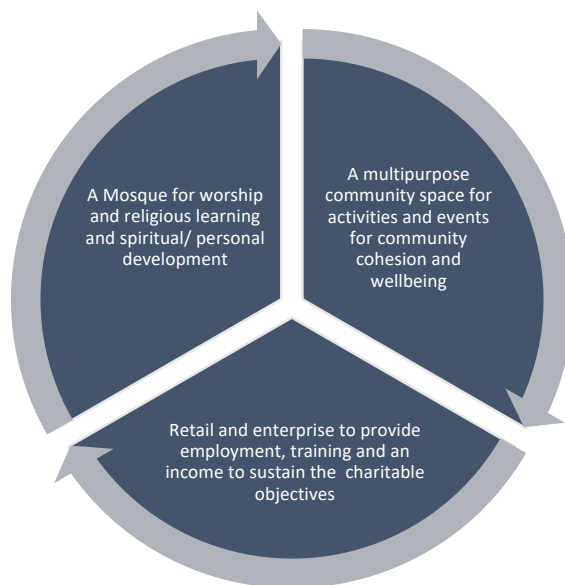
These are important learning points for Sarajia in positioning and managing the St David's site. By offering a more affordable 'grassroots' space, welcoming young people and keeping admin and management nimble, the two facilities could target different audiences and act complementarily.

## 4. WHAT WE WILL DO

### 4.1 Our Vision

Our vision is to create the 'Bathgate Community Centre': a vibrant, user-led multicultural space open to all, the overarching purpose being to promote wellbeing and connection. The space will be multifaceted (reflecting the different needs of service users) and offer social, educational, religious, cultural and wellbeing activities to bring people together regardless of age, background or faith for the betterment of themselves and those around them.

The 3 core elements will be:



## 4.2 Our key objectives

### *Strategic*

In developing the Bathgate Community Centre, our strategic objectives over the next 3 years include:

1. Extending services to the Muslim community through better Mosque facilities. We will establish a new, fit for purpose Bathgate Mosque and religious studies centre to suit the needs of a growing Muslim community with diverse needs. The Mosque will be fully accessible and large enough to accommodate religious ceremonies and festivals.
2. Widening reach by creating a new space and programme of activity. We will increase our range of provision aimed at all age groups and backgrounds in an affordable and accessible venue. We will create a community hall for large gatherings and events, breakout spaces for smaller group activities focussed on learning and development and create access to a health and wellbeing studio / gym to address health, educational and social inequalities. In doing so, we will contribute to a more resilient community by supporting people to develop their skills and by facilitating connections, help people and organisations be more mutually supportive and opportunistic. Learning and volunteering opportunities, especially for at risk young people, will be embedded throughout the development of the facility, including joinery and decoration, marketing and promotion, event management, facility management, admin and finance.
3. Developing enterprise by stimulating and growing commercial initiatives. We will develop a range of income streams to support the running costs of the facility and our charitable objectives. This will be principally through development of affordable retail space leased to local small businesses but also through EV charging points, gym membership and community space hire. The enterprises will, as far as possible, work synergistically with the wider facility, foster a multicultural environment and be of value to core service users. Our enterprise activity will be sensitive to people and planet.

### *Operational*

To achieve the above, we recognise a need to:

1. To collaborate and build on strategic and operational partnerships to deliver positive outcomes across key areas (work with the 50+ Network, Bathgate Academy, West Lothian Youth Action Project, WLVSG, Bathgate BID, Bathgate Community Development Trust, Town Centre Management Group and others).
2. To redevelop the indoor and outdoor spaces to be attractive, accessible, energy efficient and user friendly.

3. To promote and market our programmes and spaces effectively within the community, including new branding for the inclusive community space.
4. To invest in volunteer training and capacity building to ensure our venue and services are well managed and high quality.
5. To work towards a sustainable business model with longer term funding / investment and some self generated income.

### 4.3 Impact

Impact	How this will be achieved
Economic development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Creating opportunities for small / start up enterprises through offering low risk commercial space</li> <li>• Creating volunteering, entrepreneurship and employability training opportunities through the facility for young people in particular</li> <li>• Creating a self sustaining community owned social enterprise</li> </ul>
Regeneration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Supporting local businesses which bring value to the community and facility service users and creating a circular economy</li> <li>• Bringing a vacant building back into use and increasing footfall on the Main Street</li> <li>• Revitalising empty shop fronts thereby improving the look of the town</li> <li>• Increasing people's access to a range of services (religious worship, learning opportunities, socialising, fitness, retail)</li> <li>• Creating connections within the community to empower people to have more control over what happens in Bathgate</li> </ul>
Public health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improving the health of local residents by providing a space for physical activity (gym and hall) and developing a programme of outreach exercise (walking groups)</li> <li>• Providing food security through a foodbank for people and families living in poverty</li> <li>• Providing alcohol free social events</li> </ul>
Social wellbeing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Creating a space which promotes integration, where people from all backgrounds can come together and feel a sense of belonging and connection</li> <li>• Reducing isolation in older people by providing an accessible venue and delivering a programme of support for the elderly</li> <li>• Supporting young people to learn and volunteer together through dynamic and affordable activity programmes</li> </ul>



Environmental wellbeing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improving the energy efficiency of a dated building</li> <li>• Installing EV charging points in the car park to support the switch to electric vehicles</li> <li>• Creating a local facility and shops to reduce travel out of town</li> </ul>
Reducing inequalities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Targeting people who face multiple barriers to life chances including vulnerable older people and disadvantaged and excluded young people and providing services which help alleviate poverty (foodbank as an example) and creating referral routes to other providers</li> <li>• Working in partnership with statutory and third sector partners for maximum benefit</li> </ul>

#### 4.4 Activities & Services

Our main offerings within the Community Centre have been structured as follows:

##### *Mosque services and religious instruction*

Activity	Detail
5 Daily Prayers including compulsory Friday prayer/ Children's Classes Monday to Friday / Adult learning	<p>These are on offer in our current premises but with restricted numbers and accessibility. The new premises will allow for better and wider participation. We will also be able to redesign our Children's classes to ensure better engagement. Islamic classes for children aim to provide young learners with a foundational understanding of Islam, its teachings, and its values. These classes typically cover a wide range of topics and areas to help children develop a well-rounded understanding of their faith. More information on these can be found in the appendices. Currently, our classes accommodate 30 students each, taking place from Monday to Friday between 4 pm and 6 pm, with a duration of 2 hours per class but this has proved challenging. We aim to reorganize the student groups by age and proficiency level to enhance the learning experience. Additionally, we intend to reduce the class duration from 2 hours to 45 minutes. To accommodate this change, we will allocate time slots between 4 pm and 8 pm, allowing for more flexible scheduling.</p> <p>By adopting this approach, we can better structure the classes, creating smaller groups during each time slot. This arrangement will enable us to focus exclusively on the educational needs of each group. Children's classes will be supplemented with physical exercise in the gym and opportunities to socialize to lead to a more positive experience.</p>

Funerals / weddings and religious festivals inc washing facility	Restricted or not offered in our current facilities, larger facilities will enable us to host much bigger (and in demand) religious gatherings. The provision of fit for purpose washing facilities will be an important addition. We envisage 3 of these types of gathering monthly / annually and will be able to observe and celebrate key events (Ramadan including the iftar (breakfast) and Eid) in a more unified way.
Hosting inter Mosque events and Children's Day Visits to places of cultural and religious significant	With better and larger facilities we will be able to host visiting groups and strengthen connections with the wider Muslim community. We will host forums and learning exchanges. We will expand our programme of outreach educational visits for our younger members to expand their horizons and link in with their classroom studies.
Ladies' Groups	We have 2 groups: one for Quran Classes with over 41 women and a community group chat on what's App for any support or questions and events with 167 Participants. This will be extended and links will be made into wider, mainstream community activity to support integration.

*Wider community services and programme of activities (open to all)*

Activity	Detail
Socials and exercise for the elderly	<p>We will introduce gentle exercise classes (Zumba, yoga, seated keep fit within the studio or community space) and walking groups (outreach with the facility as the meet up point) for older residents. Some classes will be women / men only but generally they will be open to all. In addition to this, we envisage with space available, a small number of social groups will emerge organically over an activity of interest or support need: suggestions have included arts and crafts, digital skills, study and book groups as examples. We will support and facilitate these where necessary but will encourage self-management where possible.</p> <p>We will (potentially in partnership with others) host over 50s social events at key calendar dates- (Eid, Christmas etc) to bring larger groups together.</p>
Physical activity for children and young people	Linked to our own children's classes, we will provide an opportunity to reduce classroom time and encourage pupils to take part in physical activity for a more rounded experience. Arrangements with the gym lease holder could prove mutually beneficial here, with 45 minute fitness slots each

	<p>evening. Where more formal physical activity options are not available, we will host more informal options such as tennis table and group games.</p>
<p>Skills and learning for young people</p>	<p>From the outset, the Centre will provide skills training through volunteering in different aspects of facility management (event organizing, marketing, admin, DIY and so on) and outreach where links with partner agencies are possible. We will also explore apprenticeship and job potential through the retail offering and the wider Bathgate business community.</p> <p>Once established and appetite tested, our longer term plan is to develop more formal entrepreneurial and apprenticeship opportunities for young people who need positive diversion. Our ambition is to establish Entrepreneurship workshops to support young entrepreneurs with brilliant ideas. Funding for startup businesses would be secured and professional support provided to help market and promote these ventures. Any ideas presented will be carefully analyzed by a panel of business people and we will work together to turn them into reality. Longer term, we are committed to offering free workshops about online E-Commerce and how young individuals can get involved in various platforms like eBay, Amazon, Shopify, Wix, and Social Media Marketing. Our goal is to empower our youth with valuable skills and opportunities for personal and financial growth.</p>
<p>Space hire for community groups</p>	<p>Given the lack of community space in Bathgate and a growing population, we aim to make the facility available to groups for hire on a sessional basis for activities and events and will do so at an affordable rate.</p>
<p>Foodbank</p>	<p>Targeting those experiencing the adverse effects of the Cost of Living crisis. We have been planning this for some time but lacked the space to make this a reality. This could be delivered in partnership with local supermarkets, the Asian food retailers network, the Church network and with our own onsite stakeholders (café, food shops).</p>
<p>Multicultural events</p>	<p>We will host an annual multicultural event such as 'Bring West Lothian Together' or complementary offering to showcase and celebrate diversity within West Lothian. As well as promoting integration across faith and culture, we would also be aiming to bring different generations together and use the event to stimulate ideas for time-bound intergenerational and cross culture projects which could be carried out throughout the year and highlighted at the next year's event.</p>

Developing enterprise

Activity	Detail
Leasing commercial space	<p>We will lease the 3 shop units to local businesses, ideally to those which fit our multicultural ethos (Asian foods and products, Polish Deli as examples). It is intended that the 4<sup>th</sup> unit will remain as a café. These offerings would add value to our service users who would be core customers.</p> <p>The largest space is earmarked for gym activities (boxing, floor work and so on) and would be kitted out with a boxing ring, cushioned floor and mirrors. Black Box Muay Thai has expressed interest in leasing the space and more recently, a dance company.</p> <p>Space would be leased at a competitive price and with annual rent reviews: subject to negotiation, rental increases would occur in line with increase in turnover to keep the risk low for lease holders. The units would be managed by a commercial property company.</p>
Provision of charging points	10 electric vehicle charging points will be installed in the car park (mix of rapid and slow connections). Infrastructure and management will be provided by EV under a 25 year contract.
Start up enterprise space for young people	Depending on availability, a smaller meeting space (identified as Mosque ancillary in the plans) will be considered for start up enterprise activity by young people, primarily for access to internet and printing.

4.5 Beneficiaries, Outcomes and Targets

Beneficiaries	Outcomes	Targets
Young people who are facing barriers to opportunity and at risk of disengaging	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>YP have improved skills and knowledge to equip them for adulthood</li> <li>YP feel more confident in themselves and more hopeful about their future</li> <li>YP report feeling less anxious and depressed</li> <li>YP are more physically active</li> <li>YP feel better connected to others</li> </ul>	<p>30 young people regularly attending classes and youth clubs</p> <p>5 young people in volunteering training</p>
Elderly people who are isolated, lonely and facing barriers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>EP report feeling less anxious and depressed</li> <li>EP feel more able to be physically active</li> <li>EP are less isolated and better connected to others</li> </ul>	<p>10 EP in walking groups</p> <p>50 EP in social groups</p> <p>10 EP regularly volunteering</p>

to accessing mainstream services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• EP are able to contribute more fully to community life</li> </ul>	
Adults and families in the Bathgate area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• People and their families feel more connected to each other</li> <li>• People are able to use their interests, skills and talents to better themselves and improve community life</li> <li>• People feel healthier and better about themselves</li> </ul>	200 individuals regularly attending the Centre

Based on our intended outcomes and targets, our social value contribution to the local council through the services we will provide amounts to a minimum of £478,495 per annum. Each of these services is categorized as either Priority 5 or 6 for the West Lothian Council, underlining the significance of our contributions to the community's well-being and development. The calculation using the HACT tool can be found in the appendices.

## 5. HOW WE WILL DO IT

### 5.1 Redevelopment and use of the space

The design concept by Cameron Webster Architects (attached separately) sets out our site strategy and proposed site plan. *Note: the plan was developed prior to the agreement to include the Bus Stop Café.* Specifically, spaces will be reconfigured as follows:

Ground floor	Gym and studio spaces for dance, martial arts and keep fit 4 x retail units for commercial rent (1 being a café) 2 x small, multi purpose teaching and enterprise spaces
First floor	Main mosque, washroom and small teaching space / office
Second floor	Multipurpose community hall and event space
Car park	As is but with addition of electric charging points

Our plan is to keep the top 2 floors as they are with a better entrance into the mosque area with a wall to separate the main halls. Ground floor retail space is to be submitted to Building Control to split the unit into multiple units.

This will include:

- Fire Separation

- Electrical Sub Metering or new supplies depending on Scottish Power and our architect's plans.
- Individual Fire Alarms and Intruder Alarms
- Splitting of electrics for lights, sockets etc.
- Shop Front Entrances and access.
- General open space will be provided to the tenants for their own fit outs but we will give them a clean and tidy canvas to work with.

The timeline of milestones for opening the building are as follows:



## 5.2 Governance and management

Saraja reviewed and updated its constitution last year, creating a new legal form as an asset locked Company Ltd b Guarantee with Charitable Status. As such, it has an appropriate legal structure for this initiative. Given its new form, the minimum of 3 trustees have been elected from the Membership with a view to carrying out a skills audit and recruitment drive in the coming months. This will ensure an appropriate, diverse, and complementary mix of skills to create and manage the Bathgate Community Centre going forwards.

The trustees acknowledge the need to regularly review the balance of skills and experience required to steer the Centre as it develops and recruit the requisite skills to the Board.

Current Trustees have experience as trustees of charities or constituted community groups, or in third sector or commercial management roles, and have a full understanding of their roles and responsibilities. Trustees are committed to being hands-on in their involvement.

Having run a facility for the Muslim community for 34 years, there are good governance and management practices already in place which will be expanded. The Board will develop and ensure policies and procedures covering all aspects of the organisation's activities are in place, and a risk register, encompassing governance, health and safety and business risk. The trustees are aware of the need to seek external support when required whether this be from Business Gateway, Just Enterprise or others.

The Board has outlined how it will develop best practice and shared that with the membership. This related to the following areas:

- Membership engagement
- Voting rights and elections
- Transparent governance
- Commitment to diversity and inclusion
- Consultations and community led initiatives
- Feedback mechanisms
- Demonstrating impact

Trustee meetings are currently open to all members to attend should they wish with opportunity for discussion and debate where appropriate.

Sarajia will retain oversight and strategic direction of The Bathgate Community Centre as a whole.

Management responsibilities will be attributed as follows:

- The Mosque: Day to day management will be overseen by Sarajia Trustees with input from the regular volunteers and imams.
- The community space: Day to day management will be overseen by Sarajia Trustees with input and direction from the volunteers and a Subgroup of Centre users (who are not necessarily members of Sarajia but from the wider community).
- The retail space: We will assign management of the commercial property to a Commercial Property Agent in return for a 5% management fee. This will reduce the burden and risk on Sarajia trustees.
- Electrical charging points will be the responsibility of EV under a long term management contract.

By separating management of Mosque / Community Space / Commerce, the responsibilities are much more manageable with less risk attached. The key team involved can be found in the appendices.

#### Staffing

Sarajia benefits from regular and committed volunteer input which is a core part of the practice of Islam. The current Mosque is self sufficient with only 2 staff (imams) employed and paid out of self generated funds. All other activities within the Centre (bookkeeping, cleaning, event organization, fundraising etc) are undertaken through volunteer effort. At the offset, we do not envisage a significant change from

this model and don't foresee the need for Centre staff in the early stages. As Community Centre activity increases, the need for project staff may arise (eg a youth worker or activity coordinator) and we have factored this in to our cash flow forecast. Administration will be as streamlined as possible by embedding digital tools in our operations, such as online booking and payment systems.

### 5.3 Marketing Plan

We will create a new brand for this initiative, 'The Bathgate Community Centre' which will be home to the Mosque, community centre, fitness studio and shops and café. In doing so, it is hoped the facility is positioned centrally as open, inclusive and welcoming to all.

The Centre will have its own website with its own distinct personality with links to other sites (Sarajia / Mosque, the Gym, the Café).

We acknowledge that Sarajia's current promotional strategy is mostly word of mouth and facebook and to attract different demographics, we need to identify and develop distinct user personas to target our promotional activities. Over the next year, we will develop a strategic marketing plan with SMART objectives and marketing collateral (website, social media, flyers, signage etc) to raise awareness of the facility to local people and potential strategic partners and promote our programme of activities effectively. We will monitor the success of this and adapt the plan where needed.

Our marketing strategy will align with our operational milestones and key achievements including;

- Getting the keys
- Starting the capital works
- Opening the facility
- Leasing spaces

We will use the following methods:

- Press Releases: Issue press releases to local media outlets to announce important events, achievements, or initiatives by the organization.
- Events: Host and participate in community events, workshops, and seminars. These provide an excellent opportunity for in-person engagement and networking.
- Social Media: Establish a strong presence on popular social media platforms, such as Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram. Regularly share updates, educational content, and event announcements to engage with our audience online.



- Website: Ensure our organization has a user-friendly and informative website that showcases our mission, services, events, and contact details. Optimize it for search engines to improve online visibility.
- Marketing Materials: Develop visually appealing and accessible marketing materials, including flyers, brochures, and posters, that highlight our programmes and services. Distribute these materials at local community centers, libraries, and relevant events.
- Email Marketing: Create an email list of interested individuals and send regular newsletters and updates.
- Collaborations and Partnerships: Collaborate with local community groups, educational institutions, and other organizations that share similar goal to expand reach and resources
- Community Engagement: Participating in local festivals, fairs, and cultural events. Setting up information booths to connect with potential attendees.
- Feedback and Analytics: Continuously gather feedback from our target audience to understand their needs and preferences. Analyze the performance of our marketing efforts through metrics like website traffic, social media engagement and event attendance.
- Online Advertising: Use paid online advertising, such as Google Ads or social media ads, to target specific demographics and drive traffic to our website or events.
- Volunteer Outreach: Mobilize volunteers from our community as advocates, to help with outreach efforts.
- Building and maintaining a strong online and offline presence will help raise awareness and support for the Bathgate Community Centre.

## 6. FINANCIAL PLAN

### 6.1 Capital costs

Alongside the £478,495 per annum community benefit value, we are proposing a purchase price of £350,000 and we estimate a further £250,000 is required for completion of works. The following table sets out the projected expenses for the purchase and initial works. These expenses will not cover costs associated with business operations as this will be covered by the existing running of the charity.

TABLE: PROJECTED EXPENSES

EXPENSE	QTY	COST	AMOUNT
Purchase Fees			
Purchase price St David House & 22 South Bridge	1	£300,000	£300,000
Stamp Duty	1	£3,500	£3,500
Legal Fees	1	£2,000	£2,000
Purchase Price 24 South Bridge Street (Café)	1	£50,000	£50,000
Stamp Duty	1	£0	£0
Legal Fees	1	£1,000	£1,000
Upgrades			
Retail Section – Ecoline Quote for splitting shop, gym and community hall and fixing of leak from car park.	1	£120,000	£120,000
Install Solar to Roof (Possible Grant or PPA)	1	£25,000	£25,000
Professional Fees	1	£6,000	£6,000
Mosque Upgrade			
Carpet both floors (Mosque Direct Flooring)	1	£20,000	£20,000
Speaker System	1	£12,000	£12,000
Washing Facilities	1	£10,000	£10,000
Contingency 10%	1	£49,850	£49,850
		TOTAL	£599,350

## 6.2 Investment and fundraising

To meet these costs, we will sell our premises on Whitburn Road estimated value of £150K. The remaining balance will be achieved using a combination of fundraising and guaranteed investment pledges. The table below shows the various entities that have pledged monies to Sarajja Islamic Studies and Community Centre. The sale of Whitburn Road, together with the guaranteed donations (totaling £250k) will comfortably cover purchase costs.

TABLE: PLEDGES GRANTED

ORGANIZATION NAME	SPONSORSHIP / PLEDGE AMOUNT
AP Investments – Partial Donation and Partial Loan 0% Interest (as required/ quick access)	£500,000
Mr Mohammad Niaz – Donation of shop sale proceedings (guaranteed gift)	£200,000
Heartland Storage and Distribution Ltd – Donation (guaranteed gift)	£50,000
<b>TOTAL AMOUNT</b>	<b>£750,000</b>

We plan to organize a variety of fundraising events to contribute the costs and expenses associated with the purchase and development of St Davids House. The table below shows the events Sarajja Islamic Studies and Community Centre has planned and the target amount for each event. As a comparison, the Hamilton Mosque was able to raise £2.5m in 2015 towards its building through community efforts: 20 groups of 3 people were formed with specific fundraising targets to meet.

TABLE: FUNDRAISING

EVENT TYPE	ANTICIPATED AMOUNT RAISED
Glasgow Central Mosque – Food and Fundraising Event	£100,000
Edinburgh Central Mosque – Food and Fundraising Event	£100,000
Local Bathgate Mosque – Fun days and Fundraising Events	£50,000
London Central Mosque – Food and Fundraising Event	£50,000

Birmingham Central Mosque – Food and Fundraising Event	£50,000
Manchester Central Mosque – Food and Fundraising Event	£50,000
<b>TOTAL AMOUNT</b>	<b>£400,000</b>

The table below breaks down the sources of funding for Sarajia Islamic Studies and Community Centre and how it will use the funding.

TABLE: FUNDING SOURCE AND USE OF FUNDS

SOURCES OF FUNDING	USE OF FUNDS
Donations and fundraising events held will be held around the UK for the Mosque and Community Centre. This is a very general practice for local places of worship to raise funds.	Funds will be used to acquire the building from the local council and redevelop the facility for the said use as per the architect drawings.
5 Whitburn Road will be sold which is currently owned by the charity and has been used by the charity for over 3 decades. The building will be sold for around £150,000	5 Whitburn Road sales proceedings will be used to top up the shortfall for the above purchase.
AP Investments local business and Entrepreneur is happy to provide the charity up to £500,000 as an interest free loan for up to 10 years.	Funds will be used to purchase the asset from WLC if the council are in need to dispose of the asset quickly. Funds will also be used to bridge the purchase and redevelopment during the fundraising and sale of the existing building.
Mr Niaz one of the founders of the organization has offered to donate £200,000 of the sales of his current commercial property 5 George Place.	The funds will be used to upgrade and create facilities. However, the funding will not be available right away so cannot be used for the purchase. However, if the CAT takes time and the property is sold then the funds can be used.
Young Start Funding (from dormant bank accounts) / Robertson Trust	Help with completing Multi Cultural facility and community centre

### 6.3 Revenue assumptions

Sarajia Islamic Studies and Community Centre's financial plan is built on several key assumptions, each contributing to the organization's sustainable growth and ability to serve the community effectively:

- Assumption 1: By creating retail and leisure space for rental, it is projected that a minimum of £60,000 per annum can be generated. This income source will provide a stable financial foundation for the organization.
- Assumption 2: Offering 10 car parking spaces for Electric Vehicle (EV) charging points, with a fully funded installation arrangement, is expected to generate an additional £20,000 per annum for 25 years. This not only supports the community but also adds to the organization's financial stability.
- Assumption 3: Currently, children's classes are running five days a week, two hours per day, at a rate of £20 per month. With the expanded facility and capacity, the organization aims to increase memberships from 30 to around 100 within 18 months. This growth is expected to generate additional monthly revenue, potentially reaching £2,000 per month by offering an after-school learning centre and utilizing the youth centre and Black Box facility.
- Assumption 4: The organization currently relies on donation boxes and online facilities for general donations, averaging around £500 per week with a maximum capacity of 100 attendees on Friday Prayers. With the larger facility accommodating up to 500 people over two floors, it is anticipated that weekly donations will increase significantly. The goal is to achieve approximately five times the current amount, based on an average weekly contribution of £5 per person. This growth is projected to occur over five years, aligning with the expansion of the Muslim community in the area.
- Assumption 5: We are also looking to work with charities such as Young Start funding by the National Lottery) and others. We have been working with Martin Thomson from West Lothian Council and Fiona Taylor from COSS on possible future funding sources.

The rationale for these assumptions is supported by demographic trends and population growth in the region. The significant increase in housing developments in Bathgate, Armadale, Fauldhouse, Whitburn, and neighboring towns has led to a substantial rise in the Muslim population, as indicated by Census and Edinburgh University research. The ongoing construction of affordable and private housing developments further underscores the need for a larger facility to meet the growing demands of the community.

The organization's financial plan is founded on these assumptions, providing a strategic roadmap for sustainability, growth, and continued support to the community.

## 6.4 Projected cash flow statement

A cash flow forecast for the first 3 years have been appended. These demonstrate that the Centre will be financially sustainable, with sufficient income to increase staffing and create a capital improvement fund to protect the building long term. All profit will be reinvested to support the work of the charity and Bathgate Community Centre.

TABLE: PROJECTED CASH FLOW STATEMENT

CATEGORY / TYPE (INCOME)	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
<b>OPERATING ACTIVITIES</b>			
Class Memberships	£7,200	£14,400	£24,000
General Donations (Friday Collection)	£24,000	£30,000	£36,000
Events	£4,800	£7,200	£7,200
General Fundraiser Events (Donation Box & Website)	£18,000	£21,600	£24,000
<b>TOTAL CASH FLOW FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES</b>	<b>£54,000</b>	<b>£73,200</b>	<b>£91,200</b>
<b>INVESTING ACTIVITIES</b>			
Car Park Electric Charging Facility	£9,996	£19,992	£19,992
Community Space	£4,200	£9,600	£9,600
Commercial Space	£77,292	£150,384	£150,384
Potential Office Space	£6,000	£12,000	£12,000
<b>TOTAL CASH FLOW FROM INVESTING ACTIVITIES</b>	<b>£93,288</b>	<b>£191,976</b>	<b>£191,976</b>
<b>TOTAL CASH FLOW FROM FINANCING ACTIVITIES</b>			
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>£151,488</b>	<b>£265,176</b>	<b>£283,176</b>

CATEGORY / TYPE (EXPENDITURE)	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
Day to Day Expenses			
Salaries Teachers / Others	£31,200	£31,200	£31,200
Events	£3,600	£5,200	£5,200
Property	£3,000	£3,000	£3,600
Cleaning	£6,000	£6,600	£7,200
Health and Safety	£1,800	£1,800	£1,800
Fire/Intruder Contract	£1,800	£1,980	£2,040
Gas/Electric	£18,000	£21,000	£24,000
Recycling	£1440	£1440	£1440
Accountancy Fees	£1,800	£2,100	£2,160
Broadband	£600	£600	£600
Advertising & Marketing	£3,100	£1,440	£1,680
Subscriptions / Licenses	£1200	£1200	£1200
Commercial Agents	£3966	£7512	£7512
<b>TOTAL CASH FLOW FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES</b>	<b>£77,506</b>	<b>£139,072</b>	<b>£143,632</b>
<b>NET INCOME</b>	<b>£ 73,982</b>	<b>£126,104</b>	<b>£139,544</b>

## 6.5 O CSR Accounts / Balance sheet

CATEGORY / TYPE	2023	2022	2021
BALANCE SHEET			
ASSETS	£150,000	£150,000	£150,000
NET CURRENT ASSETS	£6,995	£10,547	£5,001
NET ASSETS	£156,995	£160,547	£155,001
TOTAL FUNDS	£156,995	£160,547	£155,001

## 7. RISK ASSESSMENT

RISK	OUTCOME
Issues to the building which impact Cost of Works	At the outset of our building inspection, our architect conducted an initial assessment. As we progress toward finalizing the acquisition, we intend to carry out thorough structural and condition surveys. This should minimize the likelihood of encountering significant unexpected costs.
Poor uptake of commercial space	Our market research indicates a robust demand for small retail stores. However, in the event of any challenges, we remain open to providing alternative facilities, such as service-based areas. Collaborating with market experts and having received expressions of interest, we are confident in our ability to secure pre-leases for the facility even before the completion of the construction works. Should issues persist, we would review our rent points and conditions to ensure they are as competitive and attractive as possible; this may include more frequent break clauses or an introductory trial period for example.
Issues with funding	Our initial approach involves seeking financial support from the local community as well as mosques across the UK to initiate this project. We are actively engaging with various funding organizations to secure additional backup funds. Additionally, the mosque possesses assets that can be liquidated to cover project expenses. Furthermore, we have successfully negotiated an interest-free loan arrangement to finance the acquisition and potential refurbishment if necessary.
Branding and Mosque conflict with non-religious groups.	The mosque will occupy a distinct facility, with its entrance directly accessible from the main car park level. The remaining amenities will have their access points via the High Street,



	<p>ensuring a clear separation. The retail sectors and gym facility will operate with their own distinct branding and tailored marketing strategies, each catering to specific market needs. This setup allows for separation when necessary.</p> <p>However, our overarching vision, mission, and goal revolve around fostering unity within the community, regardless of faith or culture. By hosting family-oriented events and collaborating with various faith groups and organizations, we aspire to create a diverse and inclusive multicultural hub, all under one roof. While this transformation will take time, our aim is for the mosque to become an integral part of Bathgate, engaging with residents of all ages, transcending its role as a mere place of worship.</p>
<p>Governance issues</p>	<p>The project is managed collaboratively by the community, and the charity places significant emphasis on establishing a robust board with effective governance practices. As a crucial component of our governance framework, we require all members and trustees to participate in Skills Audits. These audits help identify any skill gaps within our team.</p> <p>Our organization's unique strength lies in its community-driven nature, and we firmly believe that our vision, mission, and goals remain the central focus, regardless of individual involvement. In other words, our commitment to our objectives remains unwavering, ensuring the continuity of our mission even if any individual temporarily steps back from active participation.</p>

## APPENDICES

### Appendix 1: Support

Community Engagement can also be seen via our Social Media Platforms.

Facebook and Instagram: @BathgateMosque

Website: [www.bathgatemosque.com](http://www.bathgatemosque.com)

Attached here are the documents that support the information we've provided in the plan:

- Letter from Black Box Mui Thai
- Letter from WWTL
- Letter from DM Hall
- Document for Property Comparable
- Letter from Tom from the "Bring West Lothian Together" organizer.
- Drawings from Architect
- Councilor Letters for support on project.

## Appendix 2: Description of regular children's classes

### 1. Quranic Studies:

- Tajweed: Teaching the proper pronunciation and recitation of the Quranic verses.
- Memorization (Hifz): Encouraging children to memorize selected Quranic verses or chapters.
- Translation: Providing translations of Quranic verses to help children understand the meaning.

### 2. Hadith Studies:

- Introducing children to the sayings and actions of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him).
- Discussing the importance of Hadith in understanding and practicing Islam.

### 3. Aqeedah (Theology):

- Teaching the basic beliefs of Islam, such as the oneness of Allah, the angels, the prophets, and the Day of Judgment.
- Emphasizing the importance of having a strong and correct belief system.

### 4. Fiqh (Jurisprudence):

- Covering the basics of Islamic jurisprudence, including acts of worship, rituals, and daily life practices.
- Teaching the importance of following Islamic laws and etiquettes.

### 5. Islamic History:

- Exploring the history of Islam, including the life of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) and the early Islamic community.
- Discussing key events and personalities in Islamic history.

### 6. Islamic Ethics and Morality:

- Emphasizing the importance of good character, honesty, kindness, and respect for others.
- Teaching Islamic ethics in everyday life.

### 7. Islamic Stories and Parables:

- Sharing stories from Islamic history and literature to impart moral lessons and values.
- Using stories to engage children and reinforce important principles.

### 8. Practical Rituals:

- Demonstrating how to perform daily prayers (Salat), fasting (Sawm), and other religious rituals.
- Encouraging children to practice these rituals and understand their significance.

#### 9. Islamic Art and Culture:

- Introducing Islamic art, calligraphy, and architecture to foster an appreciation for Islamic culture and heritage.

#### 10. Interactive Learning:

- Engaging children through interactive activities, games, and discussions.
- Encouraging questions and critical thinking to promote a deeper understanding of the faith.

#### 11. Islamic Etiquette and Manners:

- Teaching children about proper Islamic etiquette in various social and personal situations.
- Emphasizing the importance of respect, gratitude, and humility.

#### 12. Community and Social Responsibility:

- Encouraging children to participate in community service and charity work to instill a sense of social responsibility.

#### 13. Parental Involvement:

- Involving parents in the learning process, including providing resources and guidance for reinforcing Islamic teachings at home.

#### 14. Assessment and Progress Monitoring:

- Conducting regular assessments to gauge children's understanding and progress.
- Providing feedback and support to help children improve their knowledge and practice.

Good Islamic classes for children aim to create a nurturing and supportive learning environment where young learners can develop a strong foundation in their faith, ethics, and values. Additionally, they should promote a love for learning and a positive attitude towards their religion.

### Appendix 3: Lead Team

The table below shows the organization's lead team members and the function of each member.

TABLE: LEAD TEAM MEMBERS

TEAM MEMBER	FUNCTION
Asaad Tariq	<p>Trustee – Asaad serves as one of the dedicated Trustees at Bathgate Mosque, offering his expertise and commitment for over a decade. As a native of Bathgate, Asaad's involvement with the charitable organization began from a young age, alongside his father. Beyond his charitable work, Asaad has achieved significant success in West Lothian's business landscape, particularly in E-Commerce and property investment.</p> <p>As a property investor and developer, Asaad holds Q-Assure approval for creating new homes and developments, further demonstrating his proficiency in the field. His extensive experience has led to active engagement with the local council on various development projects, advocating for the expansion of our facilities.</p> <p>In addition to his business endeavors, Asaad serves as a business mentor and consultant, contributing to PWS, a prominent property education company in the UK with thousands of enrolled students.</p> <p>Furthermore, Asaad has completed his postgraduate studies in Leadership and Governance at Napier University. Currently, he collaborates with Dr. Miles Weaver from Napier University to establish entrepreneur workshops for graduates and students. This initiative will be a valuable addition, especially in supporting the youth within our community.</p> <p>Within Bathgate Mosque, Asaad plays a pivotal role in managing day-to-day finances and ensuring the organization maintains a robust structure. He serves as one of the primary points of contact for the charity and has been instrumental in its significant growth and development.</p>
Mohammad Ajmal	<p>Trustee – Ajmal stands as one of the original founders of Bathgate Mosque and holds the distinction of acquiring 5 Whitburn Road from WLC approximately 34 years ago. His pioneering efforts played a pivotal role in establishing one of the first Mosques in West Lothian. Over the years, Mr. Ajmal has forged strong collaborations, working closely with influential figures such as Fiona Hyslop and various councilors.</p>

	Even today, Mr. Ajmal remains an integral part of the organization, diligently overseeing its operations and maintaining a steadfast grip on the charity's vision, mission, and objectives. His enduring commitment ensures that the organization continues to flourish and stay true to its core principles.
Mohammad Zarrar	Trustee – Zarrar has devoted more than 15 years to his role as a trustee, offering unwavering support to the local mosque and diligently managing its day-to-day operations. Zarrar is an accomplished local entrepreneur hailing from Bathgate, and he assumes responsibility for overseeing all facets of the charity's administration.
Fida Ur- Rahman	Imam/Teacher – Fida holds his education credentials from one of the world's preeminent institutions in Islamic education. He has faithfully served as an imam within the charity for more than a decade. Fida serves as the prominent figurehead of the organization, responsible for managing general classes and leading the essential prayers at the Mosque.
Nusrat Aziz	Imam/Teacher – Nusrat plays a crucial role in nurturing the female students within the organization, offering top-tier education and Arabic classes. She serves as an exemplary role model within the local community and has been a dedicated member of the Bathgate Mosque for more than 8 years.
Bryan Wood/ Fiona Struthers	Accountants – Bryan and Fiona are affiliated with the Accountants Plus firm located in Hamilton. They have played a pivotal role in the organization by assisting with its incorporation and registrations with OSCR. These seasoned professionals bring a wealth of experience to our organization and are responsible for managing various financial aspects on a daily basis. Their responsibilities encompass maintaining the charity's financial records, conducting audits, handling OSCR account requirements, and managing filings with Companies House. Additionally, they oversee Gift Aid claims and manage the organization's PAYE processes.
Sohaib Rasool	Legal Solicitor – Solicitor working with Curle and Stewart in Glasgow dealing with all legal requirements for the organization.
Amar Mohammad	Chairman – Mr. Mohammad, a native of Bathgate, serves as a dedicated West Lothian Police Sergeant with deep roots in the community. He has been an integral part of Bathgate since his birth and plays a pivotal role in the West Lothian community. Mr. Mohammad serves as an exceptional bridge between Police Scotland and the broader public, fostering strong connections and understanding at the Bathgate Mosque.

Appendix 4: Community Benefit Calculation (HACT tool)

April 2022 - March 2023							
West Lothian Priorities (1 - 8)	Project Activities Outcomes	Key Indicators/measures	No of Individuals	Frequency of Indicators/measures per year	Value of Indicators/measures (£)	Total Annual Value of Outcomes (£)	Evidence of Indicator Value
Priority 5: Improving the employment position in West Lothian	Developing skills and training through volunteer places to build individuals experience and skills capacity supporting their future employability	Number of people who volunteers at least once per month for at least two months	5	1	£1,773.00	£8,865	HACT Social Value Calculator
Priority 6: Delivering positive outcomes on health	Relief from anxiety/depression (youth)	Number of young people who have completed a survey to indicate that they have not had any nights in the last week when they have lost sleep worrying or any days in the last week when they felt unhappy?	5	1	£11,819.00	£59,095	HACT Social Value Calculator
	Improvement in confidence (youth)	Number of young people completing a survey to indicate that they have reduced any feelings of being 'useless'	10	1	£9,283.00	£92,830	HACT Social Value Calculator
	Walking Groups	Number of people regularly participating (at least once a week) for at least two months	10	1	£5,281.00	£52,810	HACT Social Value Calculator
	Relief from depression/anxiety (adult)		5	1	£36,766.00	£183,830	HACT Social Value Calculator
	Access to Internet	Offering library access for free internet	5	1	£2,413.00	£12,065	HACT Social Value Calculator
	Go to Youth Clubs	We have Youth clubs for education purposes currently 30 children with full capacity - Larger Facility estimated to work with 80 Kids Mon-Fri	30	1	£2,300.00	£69,000	HACT Social Value Calculator
					Annual Value of Total Outcomes	£478,495.00	

Appendix 5: Cash flow forecast

Year 1	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total
No of weeks per month	4	4	4	4	5	4	5	4	5	4	4	5	
<b>Income from Mosque Services</b>													
Membership fees	£ 600.00	£ 600.00	£ 600.00	£ 600.00	£ 600.00	£ 600.00	£ 600.00	£ 600.00	£ 600.00	£ 600.00	£ 600.00	£ 600.00	£ 7,200.00
Weddings and funerals	£ 400.00	£ 400.00	£ 400.00	£ 400.00	£ 400.00	£ 400.00	£ 400.00	£ 400.00	£ 400.00	£ 400.00	£ 400.00	£ 400.00	£ 4,800.00
Donations	£ 2,000.00	£ 2,000.00	£ 2,000.00	£ 2,000.00	£ 2,000.00	£ 2,000.00	£ 2,000.00	£ 2,000.00	£ 2,000.00	£ 2,000.00	£ 2,000.00	£ 2,000.00	£ 24,000.00
Mosque fundraising campaign	£ 1,500.00	£ 1,500.00	£ 1,500.00	£ 1,500.00	£ 1,500.00	£ 1,500.00	£ 1,500.00	£ 1,500.00	£ 1,500.00	£ 1,500.00	£ 1,500.00	£ 1,500.00	£ 18,000.00
<b>Income from community space</b>													
Group hire (sessions lets)	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ 500.00	£ 500.00	£ 500.00	£ 500.00	£ 500.00	£ 500.00	£ 3,000.00
Income from activity fees	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ 200.00	£ 200.00	£ 200.00	£ 200.00	£ 200.00	£ 200.00	£ 1,200.00
<b>Income from retail and enterprise</b>													
Retail unit 1	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£470.00	£470.00	£470.00	£470.00	£470.00	£470.00	£2,820.00
Retail unit 2	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£470.00	£470.00	£470.00	£470.00	£470.00	£470.00	£2,820.00
Retail unit 3	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£9,662.00	£9,662.00	£9,662.00	£9,662.00	£9,662.00	£9,662.00	£57,972.00
Café	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£700.00	£700.00	£700.00	£700.00	£700.00	£700.00	£700.00	£700.00	£700.00	£6,300.00
Gym /studio	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£1,230.00	£1,230.00	£1,230.00	£1,230.00	£1,230.00	£1,230.00	£7,380.00
EV charging point	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£1,666.00	£1,666.00	£1,666.00	£1,666.00	£1,666.00	£1,666.00	£9,996.00
Offices	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£1,000.00	£1,000.00	£1,000.00	£1,000.00	£1,000.00	£1,000.00	£6,000.00
<b>Funding from third parties</b>	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>£4,500.00</b>	<b>£4,500.00</b>	<b>£4,500.00</b>	<b>£5,200.00</b>	<b>£5,200.00</b>	<b>£5,200.00</b>	<b>£20,398.00</b>	<b>£20,398.00</b>	<b>£20,398.00</b>	<b>£20,398.00</b>	<b>£20,398.00</b>	<b>£20,398.00</b>	<b>£151,488.00</b>
<b>Expenditure</b>													
<b>Staffing</b>	£2,600.00	£2,600.00	£2,600.00	£2,600.00	£2,600.00	£2,600.00	£2,600.00	£2,600.00	£2,600.00	£2,600.00	£2,600.00	£2,600.00	£31,200.00
Event Expenses (inc opening launch)	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£2,000.00	£150.00	£150.00	£150.00	£1,000.00	£150.00	£3,600.00
Property Expenses	£250.00	£250.00	£250.00	£250.00	£250.00	£250.00	£250.00	£250.00	£250.00	£250.00	£250.00	£250.00	£3,000.00
Cleaning	£500.00	£500.00	£500.00	£500.00	£500.00	£500.00	£500.00	£500.00	£500.00	£500.00	£500.00	£500.00	£6,000.00
Health and Safety	£150.00	£150.00	£150.00	£150.00	£150.00	£150.00	£150.00	£150.00	£150.00	£150.00	£150.00	£150.00	£1,800.00
Fire Contract / INTRUDER	£150.00	£150.00	£150.00	£150.00	£150.00	£150.00	£150.00	£150.00	£150.00	£150.00	£150.00	£150.00	£1,800.00
Gas/Electricity (Utilities)	£1,500.00	£1,500.00	£1,500.00	£1,500.00	£1,500.00	£1,500.00	£1,500.00	£1,500.00	£1,500.00	£1,500.00	£1,500.00	£1,500.00	£18,000.00
Water Rates	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
Recycling Charges	£120.00	£120.00	£120.00	£120.00	£120.00	£120.00	£120.00	£120.00	£120.00	£120.00	£120.00	£120.00	£1,440.00
Accountancy Fees	£150.00	£150.00	£150.00	£150.00	£150.00	£150.00	£150.00	£150.00	£150.00	£150.00	£150.00	£150.00	£1,800.00
Broadband	£50.00	£50.00	£50.00	£50.00	£50.00	£50.00	£50.00	£50.00	£50.00	£50.00	£50.00	£50.00	£600.00
Advertising and Marketing (inc. website launch)	£100.00	£100.00	£100.00	£100.00	£100.00	£100.00	£2,000.00	£100.00	£100.00	£100.00	£100.00	£100.00	£3,100.00
Subscriptions and Licences	£100.00	£100.00	£100.00	£100.00	£100.00	£100.00	£100.00	£100.00	£100.00	£100.00	£100.00	£100.00	£1,200.00
Property management fees	£35.00	£35.00	£35.00	£35.00	£35.00	£35.00	£35.00	£626.00	£626.00	£626.00	£626.00	£626.00	£3,966.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>£5,705.00</b>	<b>£5,705.00</b>	<b>£5,705.00</b>	<b>£5,705.00</b>	<b>£5,705.00</b>	<b>£5,705.00</b>	<b>£10,196.00</b>	<b>£6,446.00</b>	<b>£6,446.00</b>	<b>£6,446.00</b>	<b>£7,296.00</b>	<b>£6,446.00</b>	<b>£77,506.00</b>
Profit/Deficit	£-1,205.00	£-1,205.00	£-1,205.00	£-505.00	£-505.00	£-505.00	£10,202.00	£13,952.00	£13,952.00	£13,952.00	£13,102.00	£13,952.00	£73,982.00
Balance Brought Forward (Cash in Bank)	£20,000.00												
Brought forward	£18,795.00	£17,590.00	£16,385.00	£15,880.00	£15,375.00	£14,870.00	£25,072.00	£39,024.00	£52,976.00	£66,928.00	£80,030.00	£93,982.00	



Year 2	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total
No of weeks per month	4	4	4	4	4	5	4	5	4	5	4	4	5
<b>Income from Mosque Services</b>													
Membership fees	£ 1,200.00	£ 1,200.00	£ 1,200.00	£ 1,200.00	£ 1,200.00	£ 1,200.00	£ 1,200.00	£ 1,200.00	£ 1,200.00	£ 1,200.00	£ 1,200.00	£ 1,200.00	£ 14,400.00
Weddings and funerals	£ 600.00	£ 600.00	£ 600.00	£ 600.00	£ 600.00	£ 600.00	£ 600.00	£ 600.00	£ 600.00	£ 600.00	£ 600.00	£ 600.00	£ 7,200.00
Donations	£ 2,500.00	£ 2,500.00	£ 2,500.00	£ 2,500.00	£ 2,500.00	£ 2,500.00	£ 2,500.00	£ 2,500.00	£ 2,500.00	£ 2,500.00	£ 2,500.00	£ 2,500.00	£ 30,000.00
Mosque fundraising campaign	£ 1,800.00	£ 1,800.00	£ 1,800.00	£ 1,800.00	£ 1,800.00	£ 1,800.00	£ 1,800.00	£ 1,800.00	£ 1,800.00	£ 1,800.00	£ 1,800.00	£ 1,800.00	£ 21,600.00
<b>Income from community space</b>													
Group hire (sessions lets)	£ 500.00	£ 500.00	£ 500.00	£ 500.00	£ 500.00	£ 500.00	£ 500.00	£ 500.00	£ 500.00	£ 500.00	£ 500.00	£ 500.00	£ 6,000.00
Income from activity fees	£ 300.00	£ 300.00	£ 300.00	£ 300.00	£ 300.00	£ 300.00	£ 300.00	£ 300.00	£ 300.00	£ 300.00	£ 300.00	£ 300.00	£ 3,600.00
<b>Income from retail and enterprise</b>													
Retail unit 1	£470.00	£470.00	£470.00	£470.00	£470.00	£470.00	£470.00	£470.00	£470.00	£470.00	£470.00	£470.00	£5,640.00
Retail unit 2	£470.00	£470.00	£470.00	£470.00	£470.00	£470.00	£470.00	£470.00	£470.00	£470.00	£470.00	£470.00	£5,640.00
Retail unit 3	£9,662.00	£9,662.00	£9,662.00	£9,662.00	£9,662.00	£9,662.00	£9,662.00	£9,662.00	£9,662.00	£9,662.00	£9,662.00	£9,662.00	£115,944.00
Café	£700.00	£700.00	£700.00	£700.00	£700.00	£700.00	£700.00	£700.00	£700.00	£700.00	£700.00	£700.00	£8,400.00
Gym / studio	£1,230.00	£1,230.00	£1,230.00	£1,230.00	£1,230.00	£1,230.00	£1,230.00	£1,230.00	£1,230.00	£1,230.00	£1,230.00	£1,230.00	£14,760.00
EV charging point	£1,666.00	£1,666.00	£1,666.00	£1,666.00	£1,666.00	£1,666.00	£1,666.00	£1,666.00	£1,666.00	£1,666.00	£1,666.00	£1,666.00	£19,992.00
Offices	£1,000.00	£1,000.00	£1,000.00	£1,000.00	£1,000.00	£1,000.00	£1,000.00	£1,000.00	£1,000.00	£1,000.00	£1,000.00	£1,000.00	£12,000.00
Funding from third parties	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>£22,098.00</b>	<b>£22,098.00</b>	<b>£22,098.00</b>	<b>£22,098.00</b>	<b>£22,098.00</b>	<b>£22,098.00</b>	<b>£22,098.00</b>	<b>£22,098.00</b>	<b>£22,098.00</b>	<b>£22,098.00</b>	<b>£22,098.00</b>	<b>£22,098.00</b>	<b>£265,176.00</b>
<b>Expenditure</b>													
Staffing (inc activity coordinator & centre manager)	£7,100.00	£7,100.00	£7,100.00	£7,100.00	£7,100.00	£7,100.00	£7,100.00	£7,100.00	£7,100.00	£7,100.00	£7,100.00	£7,100.00	£85,200.00
Event Expenses	£1,000.00	£150.00	£150.00	£1,000.00	£150.00	£150.00	£1,000.00	£150.00	£150.00	£150.00	£1,000.00	£150.00	£5,200.00
Property Expenses	£250.00	£250.00	£250.00	£250.00	£250.00	£250.00	£250.00	£250.00	£250.00	£250.00	£250.00	£250.00	£3,000.00
Cleaning	£550.00	£550.00	£550.00	£550.00	£550.00	£550.00	£550.00	£550.00	£550.00	£550.00	£550.00	£550.00	£6,600.00
Health and Safety	£150.00	£150.00	£150.00	£150.00	£150.00	£150.00	£150.00	£150.00	£150.00	£150.00	£150.00	£150.00	£1,800.00
Fire Contract / INTRUDER	£165.00	£165.00	£165.00	£165.00	£165.00	£165.00	£165.00	£165.00	£165.00	£165.00	£165.00	£165.00	£1,980.00
Gas/Electricity (Utilities)	£1,750.00	£1,750.00	£1,750.00	£1,750.00	£1,750.00	£1,750.00	£1,750.00	£1,750.00	£1,750.00	£1,750.00	£1,750.00	£1,750.00	£21,000.00
Water Rates	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
Recycling Charges	£120.00	£120.00	£120.00	£120.00	£120.00	£120.00	£120.00	£120.00	£120.00	£120.00	£120.00	£120.00	£1,440.00
Accountancy Fees	£175.00	£175.00	£175.00	£175.00	£175.00	£175.00	£175.00	£175.00	£175.00	£175.00	£175.00	£175.00	£2,100.00
Broadband	£50.00	£50.00	£50.00	£50.00	£50.00	£50.00	£50.00	£50.00	£50.00	£50.00	£50.00	£50.00	£600.00
Advertising and Marketing	£120.00	£120.00	£120.00	£120.00	£120.00	£120.00	£120.00	£120.00	£120.00	£120.00	£120.00	£120.00	£1,440.00
Subscriptions and Licences	£100.00	£100.00	£100.00	£100.00	£100.00	£100.00	£100.00	£100.00	£100.00	£100.00	£100.00	£100.00	£1,200.00
Property management fees	£626.00	£626.00	£626.00	£626.00	£626.00	£626.00	£626.00	£626.00	£626.00	£626.00	£626.00	£626.00	£7,512.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>£12,156.00</b>	<b>£11,306.00</b>	<b>£11,306.00</b>	<b>£12,156.00</b>	<b>£11,306.00</b>	<b>£11,306.00</b>	<b>£12,156.00</b>	<b>£11,306.00</b>	<b>£11,306.00</b>	<b>£11,306.00</b>	<b>£12,156.00</b>	<b>£11,306.00</b>	<b>£139,072.00</b>
Profit/Deficit	£9,942.00	£10,792.00	£10,792.00	£9,942.00	£10,792.00	£10,792.00	£9,942.00	£10,792.00	£10,792.00	£10,792.00	£9,942.00	£10,792.00	£126,104.00
Brought forward	£103,924.00	£114,716.00	£125,508.00	£135,450.00	£146,242.00	£157,034.00	£166,976.00	£177,768.00	£188,560.00	£199,352.00	£209,294.00	£220,086.00	

Year 3	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total
No of weeks per month	4	4	4	4	4	5	4	5	4	5	4	4	5
<b>Income from Mosque Services</b>													
Membership fees	£ 2,000.00	£ 2,000.00	£ 2,000.00	£ 2,000.00	£ 2,000.00	£ 2,000.00	£ 2,000.00	£ 2,000.00	£ 2,000.00	£ 2,000.00	£ 2,000.00	£ 2,000.00	£ 24,000.00
Weddings and funerals	£ 600.00	£ 600.00	£ 600.00	£ 600.00	£ 600.00	£ 600.00	£ 600.00	£ 600.00	£ 600.00	£ 600.00	£ 600.00	£ 600.00	£ 7,200.00
Donations	£ 3,000.00	£ 3,000.00	£ 3,000.00	£ 3,000.00	£ 3,000.00	£ 3,000.00	£ 3,000.00	£ 3,000.00	£ 3,000.00	£ 3,000.00	£ 3,000.00	£ 3,000.00	£ 36,000.00
Mosque fundraising campaign	£ 2,000.00	£ 2,000.00	£ 2,000.00	£ 2,000.00	£ 2,000.00	£ 2,000.00	£ 2,000.00	£ 2,000.00	£ 2,000.00	£ 2,000.00	£ 2,000.00	£ 2,000.00	£ 24,000.00
<b>Income from community space</b>													
Group hire (sessions lets)	£ 500.00	£ 500.00	£ 500.00	£ 500.00	£ 500.00	£ 500.00	£ 500.00	£ 500.00	£ 500.00	£ 500.00	£ 500.00	£ 500.00	£ 6,000.00
Income from activity fees	£ 300.00	£ 300.00	£ 300.00	£ 300.00	£ 300.00	£ 300.00	£ 300.00	£ 300.00	£ 300.00	£ 300.00	£ 300.00	£ 300.00	£ 3,600.00
<b>Income from retail and enterprise</b>													
Retail unit 1	£470.00	£470.00	£470.00	£470.00	£470.00	£470.00	£470.00	£470.00	£470.00	£470.00	£470.00	£470.00	£5,640.00
Retail unit 2	£470.00	£470.00	£470.00	£470.00	£470.00	£470.00	£470.00	£470.00	£470.00	£470.00	£470.00	£470.00	£5,640.00
Retail unit 3	£9,662.00	£9,662.00	£9,662.00	£9,662.00	£9,662.00	£9,662.00	£9,662.00	£9,662.00	£9,662.00	£9,662.00	£9,662.00	£9,662.00	£115,944.00
Café	£700.00	£700.00	£700.00	£700.00	£700.00	£700.00	£700.00	£700.00	£700.00	£700.00	£700.00	£700.00	£8,400.00
Gym / studio	£1,230.00	£1,230.00	£1,230.00	£1,230.00	£1,230.00	£1,230.00	£1,230.00	£1,230.00	£1,230.00	£1,230.00	£1,230.00	£1,230.00	£14,760.00
EV charging point	£1,666.00	£1,666.00	£1,666.00	£1,666.00	£1,666.00	£1,666.00	£1,666.00	£1,666.00	£1,666.00	£1,666.00	£1,666.00	£1,666.00	£19,992.00
Offices	£1,000.00	£1,000.00	£1,000.00	£1,000.00	£1,000.00	£1,000.00	£1,000.00	£1,000.00	£1,000.00	£1,000.00	£1,000.00	£1,000.00	£12,000.00
Funding from third parties	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>£23,598.00</b>	<b>£23,598.00</b>	<b>£23,598.00</b>	<b>£23,598.00</b>	<b>£23,598.00</b>	<b>£23,598.00</b>	<b>£23,598.00</b>	<b>£23,598.00</b>	<b>£23,598.00</b>	<b>£23,598.00</b>	<b>£23,598.00</b>	<b>£23,598.00</b>	<b>£283,176.00</b>
<b>Expenditure</b>													
Staffing (inc activity coordinator & centre manager)	£7,100.00	£7,100.00	£7,100.00	£7,100.00	£7,100.00	£7,100.00	£7,100.00	£7,100.00	£7,100.00	£7,100.00	£7,100.00	£7,100.00	£85,200.00
Event Expenses	£150.00	£1,000.00	£150.00	£150.00	£1,000.00	£150.00	£150.00	£1,000.00	£150.00	£150.00	£1,000.00	£150.00	£5,200.00
Property Expenses	£300.00	£300.00	£300.00	£300.00	£300.00	£300.00	£300.00	£300.00	£300.00	£300.00	£300.00	£300.00	£3,600.00
Cleaning	£600.00	£600.00	£600.00	£600.00	£600.00	£600.00	£600.00	£600.00	£600.00	£600.00	£600.00	£600.00	£7,200.00
Health and Safety	£150.00	£150.00	£150.00	£150.00	£150.00	£150.00	£150.00	£150.00	£150.00	£150.00	£150.00	£150.00	£1,800.00
Fire Contract / INTRUDER	£170.00	£170.00	£170.00	£170.00	£170.00	£170.00	£170.00	£170.00	£170.00	£170.00	£170.00	£170.00	£2,040.00
Gas/Electricity (Utilities)	£2,000.00	£2,000.00	£2,000.00	£2,000.00	£2,000.00	£2,000.00	£2,000.00	£2,000.00	£2,000.00	£2,000.00	£2,000.00	£2,000.00	£24,000.00
Water Rates	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
Recycling Charges	£120.00	£120.00	£120.00	£120.00	£120.00	£120.00	£120.00	£120.00	£120.00	£120.00	£120.00	£120.00	£1,440.00
Accountancy Fees	£180.00	£180.00	£180.00	£180.00	£180.00	£180.00	£180.00	£180.00	£180.00	£180.00	£180.00	£180.00	£2,160.00
Broadband	£50.00	£50.00	£50.00	£50.00	£50.00	£50.00	£50.00	£50.00	£50.00	£50.00	£50.00	£50.00	£600.00
Advertising and Marketing	£140.00	£140.00	£140.00	£140.00	£140.00	£140.00	£140.00	£140.00	£140.00	£140.00	£140.00	£140.00	£1,680.00
Subscriptions and Licences	£100.00	£100.00	£100.00	£100.00	£100.00	£100.00	£100.00	£100.00	£100.00	£100.00	£100.00	£100.00	£1,200.00
Property management fees	£626.00	£626.00	£626.00	£626.00	£626.00	£626.00	£626.00	£626.00	£626.00	£626.00	£626.00	£626.00	£7,512.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>£11,686.00</b>	<b>£12,536.00</b>	<b>£11,686.00</b>	<b>£11,686.00</b>	<b>£12,536.00</b>	<b>£11,686.00</b>	<b>£11,686.00</b>	<b>£12,536.00</b>	<b>£11,686.00</b>	<b>£11,686.00</b>	<b>£12,536.00</b>	<b>£11,686.00</b>	<b>£143,632.00</b>
Profit/Deficit	£11,912.00	£11,062.00	£11,912.00	£11,912.00	£11,062.00	£11,912.00	£11,912.00	£11,062.00	£11,912.00	£11,912.00	£11,062.00	£11,912.00	£139,544.00
Brought forward	£231,998.00	£243,060.00	£254,972.00	£266,884.00	£277,946.00	£289,858.00	£301,770.00	£312,832.00	£324,744.00	£336,656.00	£347,718.00	£359,630.00	

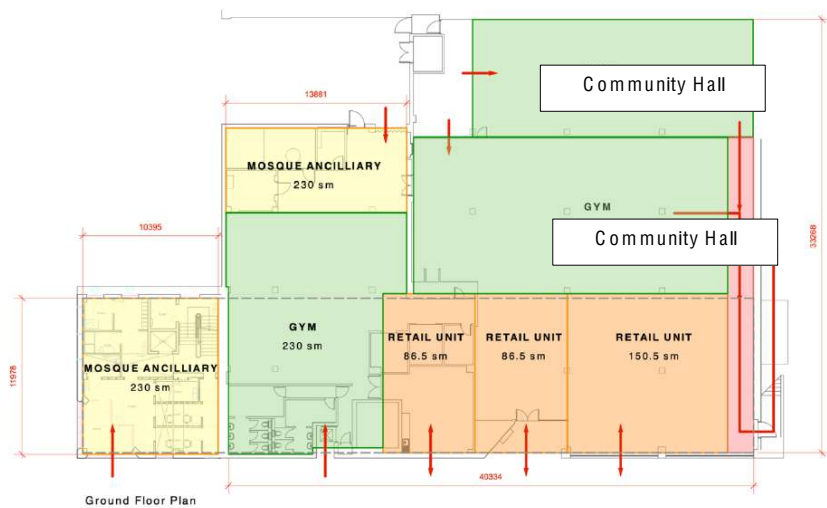
Appendix 6: Architect Plans

**PROPOSED FLOORPLANS**

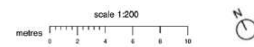
Ground Floor

- 1. Fitness: Multiple gym spaces
- 2. Retail: 3 units on South Bridge St frontage
- 3. Community: Mosque facilities

External access  
→



Ground Floor Plan



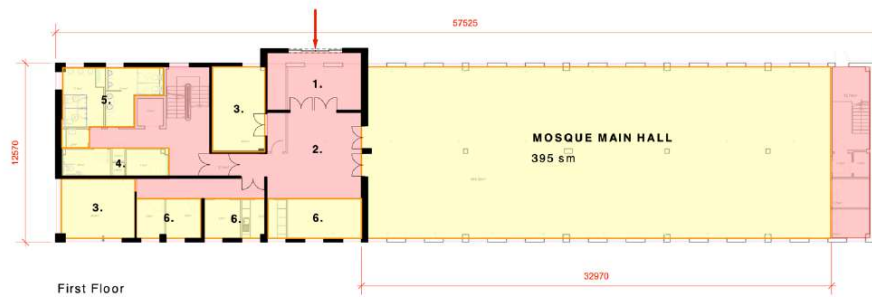
### PROPOSED FLOORPLANS

#### First Floor

First floor to contain main hall of mosque and associated facilities.

#### KEY

1. Entrance: 27sm
2. Lobby: 40sm
3. Classes: 43sm
4. Washing facilities: 14.5sm
5. WC Facilities: 30sm
6. Ancillary: 42.5sm

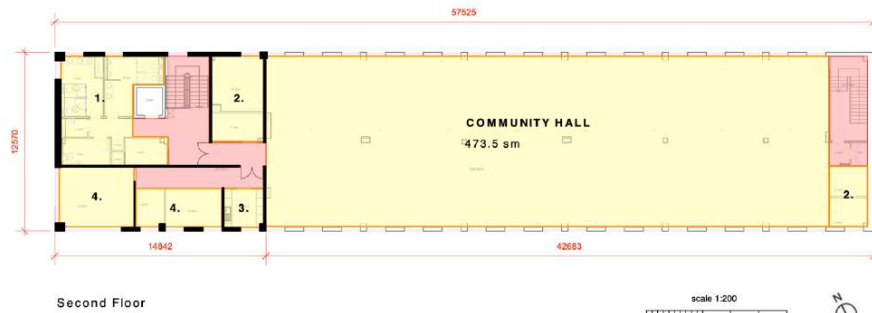


#### Second Floor

Second floor can be configured as a community hall with associated facilities and office spaces.

#### KEY







1. WC and cleaning facilities : 48sm
2. Stores: 34.5sm
3. Kitchen: 8sm
4. Offices: 38.5sm




Appendix 7: Commercial Property Analysis



Commercial Property in Bathgate Currently for LET

 <p><b>South Bridge Street, Bathgate, West Lothian, EH48</b>                  £1,250 pcm                  £13.94 per sq. ft.</p>	 <p><b>George Street, Bathgate, West Lothian, EH48</b>                  £1,500 pcm                  £14.92 per sq. ft.</p>	 <p><b>32 George Street, Bathgate, UK, Bathgate, EH48 1PD</b>                  949 Sq Ft / Retail / Retail - High Street                  TO LET - £14,000.00 per annum                  Available - Last updated: 02 September 2022</p>
Per Sq.ft Rate £13.94	Per Sq.ft Rate £14.92	Per Sq.Ft 14.75
 <p><b>Town Centre Retail Premises, 1 Union Road, Bathgate, EH48 1NS</b>                  755 Sq Ft / Retail / General Retail                  TO LET - £6,000.00 per annum                  Under Offer - Last updated: 04 September 2023</p>	 <p><b>Prominent Town Centre Retail Premises, 58 Hoptoun Street, Bathgate, EH48 4PD</b>                  277 Sq Ft / Retail / General Retail                  TO LET - £3,600.00 per annum                  Under Offer - Last updated: 29 August 2023                  The subjects comprise small ground floor retail premises within a two-</p>	 <p><b>Hot Food Takeaway Business, 8 East Main Street, Uphall, Broxburn, EH52 5DA</b>                  894 Sq Ft / Retail                  FOR SALE                  TO LET - £36,000.00 per annum                  Available - Last updated: 09 June 2022</p>
Per Sq.ft £7.94	Per Sq.ft £31.04	Per Sq Ft £40.28

Appendix 8: Commercial Space Letter of Intent



**Worldwide Tradelink Ltd**

Letter of Interest

Dear West Lothian Council,

I am writing as Mr. Imran, a local businessman who has been in discussions with the local Mosque regarding their expansion plans. I have had the opportunity to review the proposals for St. David's House and their vision for the development.

In light of this, we have formally requested the first opportunity to lease either one or two retail shops within the development. Our intention is to establish a retail "bus stop shop," offering a range of popular items such as confectionery, sandwiches, and other fast-selling products.

We are also deeply enthusiastic about the prospect of establishing a multicultural store that caters to various culinary tastes, including Asian, Polish, African, Bengali, and potentially offering halal butchery products. We firmly believe that this concept harmonizes seamlessly with the existing vision of the Bathgate Mosque and has the potential to function as a comprehensive one-stop shop for the entire local community.

This venture aligns perfectly with our commitment to diversity and inclusivity, and we are eager to explore the possibilities of collaboration to bring this idea to fruition. It is our belief that such a multicultural store can play a significant role in enhancing the culinary experiences and choices available to the community, fostering cultural exchange, and promoting cohesion among residents.

Our track record includes ownership of several retail shops across Scotland, strategically located in high-footfall areas, particularly near bus stops. Notable among these are our successful bus stop shop in Irvine, a retail store in the Irvine Shopping Centre, a retail outlet at Glasgow Central Station and many more.

We are actively looking to expand our operations, and the prospect of securing a shop outside the bus stop in the St. David's House development has piqued our interest. We kindly request that we be kept informed of further developments once the Bathgate Mosque provides feedback on our proposal.

Thank you for considering our interest in this endeavour, and we look forward to the opportunity to contribute positively to the Bathgate community.

Sincerely,

Mr. Imran  
Regards  
Muhammad Imran  
Worldwide Tradelink Ltd  
imran@wwtl.co.uk



Letter of Interest

Dear West Lothian Council,

I am writing to formally confirm that Black Box Muay Thai has expressed a keen interest in leasing a portion of the ground section to expand their facility in Bathgate, specifically at St. David's House. We are thrilled about this opportunity and eagerly look forward to collaborating with Bathgate Mosque in the development of an exceptional multi-cultural facility.

Our shared vision is to create a dynamic and inclusive space that will not only benefit the Bathgate community but also foster cultural diversity and unity. We are genuinely excited about the prospect of working alongside Bathgate Mosque and are committed to contributing to the well-being and growth of the local youth in Bathgate.

This partnership holds great promise, and we are enthusiastic about the positive impact it will have on our community. We appreciate the opportunity to join forces and are dedicated to making this collaboration a resounding success.

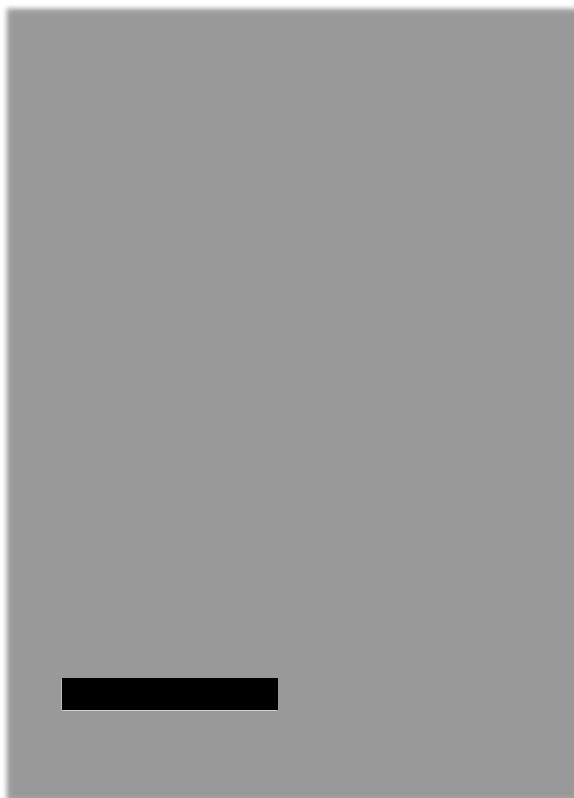
Thank you for your support, and we look forward to the journey ahead.

Sincerely,

Stewart Graham  
Director  
Black Box Muay Thai



Appendix 9: Supporting Letters







TP/GMcC

29 September 2022r

To Whom It May Concern



Councillor Tony Pearson  
Bathgate Ward

West Lothian Council  
Civic Centre  
Howden South Road  
Livingston  
West Lothian  
EH54 6FF

Office Tel: 01506 281751  
Email: [tony.pearson@westlothian.gov.uk](mailto:tony.pearson@westlothian.gov.uk)

Dear Sir/Madam

I write to you to express my full support to Mr Asaad Tariq, a respected local Business man and his plans to purchase the building currently the old premises of the Social Work Department , Menzies Road, Bathgate, West Lothian which is owned by West Lothian Council but currently for sale.

Mr Tariq has advised me if he was the successful candidate in purchasing the building. This would enable the Muslim community an opportunity to have a building which meets all the needs of the Muslim community, crucially to have the facility to enable to pay full respect to their deceased so they can prepare a body before the funeral service begins, as Islamic tradition states for the body to be cleansed prior to the funeral.

The new property would provide disabled access for the elderly, and space for their food bank and a community hub for advice and assistance to the general public and upper level will provide adequate space for Administration purposes.

As one of the local Councillors' for this area, I fully support Mr Tariq in his application as this facility would be an asset and prove beneficial to the community as a whole and it would provide an invaluable opportunity for the local community of all faiths, to come together.

I would like to take the opportunity to thank you in advance and I hope this information is helpful when making an informative decision on Mr Tariq's application.

Kind regards.

Yours sincerely



Appendix 10: Internal Skill Audits

Sarajia Islamic Studies and Community Centre Ltd

Skills Audit

Name: Mohammad Ajmal      Date: 01/01/2023

Administration		
Board/committee experience		
Campaigning		
Change Management		
Charity/voluntary organisation governance		
Administration		
Board/committee experience		
Campaigning		
Change Management		
Conflict resolution		
Customer Care	x	
Enterprise/business development	x	
Facilitating meetings		
Finance	x	Run own company for years
Fundraising	x	
HR/Training	x	
Income generation	x	Help with close groups
Influencing	x	Helped many families and community members with domestic issues
IT/Systems		
Leadership	x	Community leader and trustee for over 40 years
Legal		
Listening	x	Strong listening skills
Marketing	x	Marketing Director in own companies
People Management	x	Supporting families and communities
PR/communications		
Project Management		
Property		
Relationship Management		
Beneficiary of the organisation		
Team development		
Voluntary Sector Experience		
Others	x	Over 40 Years experience

**Motivation**

Do you have a particular interest or reasons for being/wanting to be a trustee with this organisation?

I am the founder member of the Sarajia - I want to create a successful community centre and fulfil the community needs. I want to improve the existing facility

**Diversity**

A diverse board is able to reflect and support the delivery of an organisations' mission. Do you have specific service user experience, social or family experience, background or general interests that will help us better support the goals of the organisation?

Over 40 years experience working with the groups

**Areas of work**

Are there any areas of the work of the organisation you have a particular interest in and/or would like to become more involved in?

I have many skills such as

- Leading Prayers
- Teaching
- Organising events
- Leading groups

Sarajia Islamic Studies and Community Centre Ltd

Skills Audit  
Name: Fida Ur Rahman Date: 01/01/2023

Administration		Dealing with the day to day
Board/committee experience		
Campaigning		
Change Management		
Charity/voluntary organisation governance	x	Running the charity with good governance
Administration		
Board/committee experience		
Campaigning		
Change Management		
Conflict resolution		
Customer Care	x	Dealing with students and public requires strong customer satisfactory which I have been working on for many years.
Enterprise/business development		
Facilitating meetings		
Finance		
Fundraising		
HR/Training		
Income generation		
Influencing		
IT/Systems		
Leadership	x	As an Imam your are involved in the day to day running of the organisation
Legal		
Listening	x	Helping the board and community come together
Marketing		
People Management		
PR/communications		
Project Management		
Property		
Relationship Management	x	Working with local community for many years has built strong bonds
Beneficiary of the organisation		
Team development		
Voluntary Sector Experience		
Others		

Sarajia Islamic Studies and Community Centre Ltd

Skills Audit  
Name: Fida Ur Rahman Date: 01/01/2023

**Motivation**  
Do you have a particular interest or reasons for being/wanting to be a member with this organisation?

Being the Imam and teacher has been the focus of my entire life. I have studied at the top universities to further educate the local community and help the youth and local community.

**Diversity**  
A diverse board is able to reflect and support the delivery of an organisations' mission. Do you have specific service user experience, social or family experience, background or general interests that will help us better support the goals of the organisation?

Leadership with running the local mosque for over 10 years.

**Areas of work**  
Are there any areas of the work of the organisation you have a particular interest in and/or would like to become more involved in?

Working with the local community in order to motivate the community as a whole. Helping with and working with the local community and aspire them to be better people.

Sarajia Islamic Studies and Community Centre Ltd

Skills Audit

Name: Asaad Tariq

Date: 01/01/2023

Administration	x	Booking and working with Xero
Board/committee experience	x	Worked on boards 10+ Years
Campaigning		
Change Management		
Charity/voluntary organisation governance	x	Post Grad in Leadership and Governance
Administration		
Board/committee experience		
Campaigning		
Change Management		
Conflict resolution		
Customer Care		
Enterprise/business development	x	Mentor and business consultation
Facilitating meetings		
Finance	x	Dealing with all types of finance
Fundraising	x	Ran multiple fundraising events
HR/Training		
Income generation		
Influencing		
IT/Systems	x	Vast experience in IT and systemising
Leadership	x	Own businesses
Legal		
Listening		
Marketing	x	
People Management	x	
PR/communications	x	
Project Management		
Property	X	Main business is property and construction
Relationship Management		
Beneficiary of the organisation		
Team development	x	Directorship for over 15 years
Voluntary Sector Experience	x	Working with charities over 10 years
Others		

**Motivation**

Do you have a particular interest or reasons for being/wanting to be a trustee with this organisation?

I want to support the local mosque and expand the facility to become a multi cultural community centre focusing on all groups such as youths and elderly.

**Diversity**

A diverse board is able to reflect and support the delivery of an organisations' mission. Do you have specific service user experience, social or family experience, background or general interests that will help us better support the goals of the organisation?

My father was the founder and helped me support the organisation, I want to create a place of worship and help bring the Bathgate community together as a whole.

**Areas of work**

Are there any areas of the work of the organisation you have a particular interest in and/or would like to become more involved in?

I would like to focus on building a self-sufficient charity that can run on its own. Help grow the facility and fulfil the needs of the local community.

Sarajia Islamic Studies and Community Centre Ltd

Skills Audit

Name: Mohammad Zarrar

Date: 01/01/2023

Administration	x	Have used Excel and software for admin for many years.
Board/committee experience	x	Part of the charity boards for over 10 years
Campaigning		
Change Management		
Charity/voluntary organisation governance		
Administration		
Board/committee experience		
Campaigning		
Change Management		
Conflict resolution		
Customer Care	x	Regular deal with customers at work
Enterprise/business development	x	Experience running own business
Facilitating meetings		
Finance	x	Do my own VAT returns and audits
Fundraising		
HR/Training		
Income generation		
Influencing		
IT/Systems	x	Qualification in IT
Leadership	x	Running my own business and have many employees
Legal		
Listening		
Marketing	x	Accustomed to product merchandise
People Management		
PR/communications		
Project Management		
Property	x	Responsive to property maintenance
Relationship Management		
Beneficiary of the organisation		
Team development		
Voluntary Sector Experience		
Others		

**Motivation**

Do you have a particular interest or reasons for being/wanting to be a trustee with this organisation?

To contribute my experience to further the aims of the charity.

**Diversity**

A diverse board is able to reflect and support the delivery of an organisations' mission. Do you have specific service user experience, social or family experience, background or general interests that will help us better support the goals of the organisation?

I value interacting with people from different backgrounds

**Areas of work**

Are there any areas of the work of the organisation you have a particular interest in and/or would like to become more involved in?

I am keen to contribute in any way to fulfil the charity vision mission and goals. I am wanting to help run the charity organisation as smooth as possible with good governance and diversity.

Data Label: Public

**Appendix 4: Index of supporting documentation provided by the applicant**

No.	Document
1.	Charity audited accounts for 2022
2.	Business Plan
3.	Copy of the applicant's constitution

**Graham Hope  
Chief Executive  
West Lothian Council**

I am writing to you because I have concerns about the proposed sale of the Council's property at St Davids House, South Bridge Street, Bathgate to Sarajai Islamic Studies and Community Centre Limited (SIS&CC).

SIS&CC as Bathgate Mosque have been part of the Bathgate community since 1994. During that time, they have quietly gone about their business politely and peacefully and have earned a good reputation in the town. I have no objections to the purchase based on conduct or reputation.

My concerns lie with the financial aspects of the proposed transaction.

**Purchase Price does not represent value for money.**

In the first instance, I would ask if a purchase price of £350,000 represents sufficient value for property.

According to the Council's website the property consists of the Offices at St Davids House 20 South Bridge Street Bathgate, the shop at number 22 and the café at number 24. The Scottish Assessors Association website quotes the area of each of the premises as:

Offices	1,387 m <sup>2</sup>
Shop	1,266 m <sup>2</sup>
Café	<u>74 m<sup>2</sup></u>
Total	2,737 m <sup>2</sup>

Researching current construction costs for commercial/office building on the internet, a figure somewhere around £2,000 per m<sup>2</sup> would apply. This means that the estimated current cost to build St Davids House offices, shop and café would be in excess of £5,000,000.

I appreciate that this figure will vary depending on individual assessment and that, construction cost and valuation of a building could vary by quite a bit. Earlier this year I did notice though that the Council advertised their offices at 69 Whitburn Road for sale on the NovaLoc web site for £500,000. This office has an area of 636 m<sup>2</sup> less than 24% the area of the St Davids House property. Considering the much larger area of St Davids House I would expect it to value substantially more than the offer made by SIS&CC.

Accepting a selling price of £350,000 would show a lack of confidence in, and would reflect badly on, property values in Bathgate. It would also require the Council to provide the public with a detailed explanation as to why they are selling the property for less than market value.

## **SIS&CC lacks the financial strength to operate/and maintain the property,**

### Financing The Ongoing Operating Cost of ST Davids House

As a charity SIS&CC is registered with and provides financial information to, the Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator (OSCR). The OSCR reference number is SC052208.

OSCR records show that in the year to 31 March 2023 SIS&CC's income was £24,894 against expenditure of £28,446. Income and expenditure in previous years are around the same level, although in most years expenditure does not exceed income.

The Mosque at 5 Whitburn Road Bathgate has an area of 91m<sup>2</sup> and a rateable value of £8,000.

As shown above, the area of St Davids House is 2737m<sup>2</sup>. The rateable values of its 3 properties are:

Number 20 - Offices	£124,750
Number 22 - Shop	£149,250
Number 24 – Café	<u>£ 10,700</u>
	£284,700

SIS&CC would therefore require to meet the additional cost involved with operating and maintaining a property 30 times the floor area of their present Mosque.

While I understand that religious organisations may be exempt from rates, the fact that the rateable value is some 35 times greater than the rateable value of the Mosque gives an idea of the enormous difference in their upsizing project.

Expenditure will increase by a significant amount while any increase in income cannot be guaranteed. According to online statistics Muslim people make up 1% of the population of West Lothian. I would question if there are sufficient followers of the Islamic faith in West Lothian to support SIS&CC in its efforts to achieve the income necessary to make an ongoing success of the project.

It could well be that SIS&CC have invested in a Business Plan which demonstrates that the project is financially viable. With Business Plans the figures are based on estimates. I believe that there has never been a business plan that predicted the related project would not succeed. A high number of projects fail in their early years suggesting that the estimated figures contained in the plans are produced more with enthusiasm than accuracy. The need to show success outweighing reality

SIS&CC's past record does not demonstrate that they can generate the required level of income needed to operate and maintain a premises as large as St David's House. I would therefore be very interested to learn from SIS&CC's Business Plan how they intend to generate this additional income.

May I ask if you intend making the Business Plan available for public scrutiny release?



### Funding the Purchase Price & Development of St Davids House

Turning to funding the purchase. The financial information available to date suggests that SIS&CC does not have the funds available to meet the £350,000. It may be that they can raise it from members but there is the possibility that funds provided will be in the form of loans rather than gifts. These funds could very well come as gifts, but there will be a need for further finance to convert St Davids House to meet the requirements of operating as a mosque.

SIS&CC wound up a previous charity in their name and replaced it with the current charity, with the only noticeable difference being that they now operate as a limited company, Companies House reference SC745694. The Articles of Association on record at Companies House empowers the SIS&CC Limited to borrow money. The normal reason for converting an organisation to a limited company is to protect the members being exposed to financial liability should the company enter liquidation.

Has the Council ascertained whether or not SIS&CC intends to enter some kind of borrowing arrangement, perhaps to fund future development of the property?

Normally a seller would only be interested in receiving payment and would have no interest as to how the buyer sourced the funds to finance the purchase. The normal seller would also have no interest as to the future use of the property after the sale. In West Lothian Council's case however, this is not so. The Council has a duty to act in the best interests of the people of West Lothian, including the town of Bathgate. If SIS&CC overextend themselves and cannot meet their financial commitments, then their operations at St Davids House would cease. The limited company would place itself in liquidation and its members could simply walk away from the situation without obligation. Left neglected St Davids House would fall into a state of disrepair leaving the Council to make the premises safe by "boarding it up". The last thing Bathgate's reputation and image needs is for a major building on the main route through the town to take on the appearance of a derelict property.

The transaction is to take the form of a the Community Asset Transfer and will be covered by the relevant legislation. I understand that to comply with this legislation wider public benefits must be realised by the project. I would therefore expect the Council to make details of these benefits available to the public. Kindly advise me where I can view this information.

I would assume that West Lothian Council will have referred the appearance of as yet unaccountable £350,000 to the appropriate authority that deals with money laundering.

██████████

**COMMUNITY ASSET TRANSFER BOARD**  
**COMMUNITY ASSET TRANSFER REQUEST SCORECARD**

Date of Board meeting: 11 March 2024  
 Community Transfer Body: Sarajia Islamic Studies and Community Centre Limited (SISCCL)  
 Subject Property: St. David House, ground floor retail unit and former café at 20-24 South Bridge Street, Bathgate

<b>Table 1a: Statutory Criteria for Determining Community Asset Transfer Requests</b>	
<p><b>Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015: Section 82</b></p> <p><b>Criteria for determining an asset transfer request</b></p> <p>In reaching its decision, the council must take into consideration the following matters:</p>	<p><b>Board Comments</b></p>
<p>(a) the reasons for the request</p>	<p>The Board has taken cognisance of the reasons for SISCCL's community asset transfer request as detailed in their application. The Board has also fully considered the outcomes that would be delivered as a result of this project being successfully delivered.</p>
<p>(b) any other information provided in support of the request (whether such other information is contained in the request or otherwise provided)</p>	<p>The supporting information provided by SISCCL has been fully considered as part of the Board's deliberations.</p>

(c) whether agreeing to the request would be likely to promote or improve:	<p style="text-align: right; margin-right: 10px;">Item No] 5</p> <p>The Board has considered each of these criteria in turn and, at Table 1a below, SISCCCL's application has been allocated a score relative to how likely the request would be to promote or improve that particular criteria. The Board has considered each of these criteria in turn and, at Table 1a below, SISCCCL's application has been allocated a score relative to how likely the request would be to promote or improve that particular criteria.</p>
(i) economic development	
(ii) regeneration	
(iii) public health	
(iv) social wellbeing	
(v) environmental wellbeing	
(d) whether agreeing to the request would be likely to reduce inequalities of outcome which result from socio-economic disadvantage	The Board has considered this criterion and, at Table 1a below, SISCCCL's application has been allocated a score relative to how likely the request would be to reduce inequalities of outcome which result from socio-economic disadvantage.
(e) any other benefits that might arise if the request were agreed to	The Board has considered this criterion and, at Table 1a below, SISCCCL's application has been allocated a score relative to any other benefits that might arise if the request were agreed to. The Board has considered this criterion and, at Table 1a below, SISCCCL's application has been allocated a score relative to any other benefits that might arise if the request were agreed to.
(f) any benefits that might arise if the authority were to agree to or otherwise adopt an alternative proposal in respect of the land to which the request relates	The Board has considered alternative proposals in respect of the subjects and has taken these into account as a key element of its deliberations.

(g) how such benefits would compare to any benefits such as are mentioned in paragraphs (c) and (e)	The Board has fully considered the advantages and disadvantages of alternative proposals and compared these against SISCCCL's proposal.
(h) how any benefits such as are mentioned in paragraph (f) relate to other matters the authority considers relevant (including, in particular, the functions and purposes of the authority)	The Board has considered how the advantages or disadvantages of alternative proposals would relate to and impact upon other relevant matters, in particular the functions and stated aims of the council.
(i) any obligations imposed on the authority, by or under any enactment or otherwise, that may prevent, restrict or otherwise affect its ability to agree to the request	The Board has considered any existing obligations that may prevent, restrict or otherwise affect its ability to agree to this request.
(j) such other matters (whether or not included in or arising out of the request) as the authority considers relevant.	The Board, as part of its deliberations, has considered all matters deemed relevant to SISCCCL's proposal.
(k) The council must determine the application in a manner which encourages equal opportunities and in particular the observance of the equal opportunity requirements	The Board acknowledges and understands this requirement.
(l) In subsection (f), an "alternative proposal" includes: (i) another asset transfer request (ii) a proposal made by the authority or any other person	The Board understands the meaning of an "alternative proposal" and has accounted for this in its deliberations.
(m) The authority must agree to the request unless there are reasonable grounds for refusing it.	The Board acknowledges and understands this requirement.

<b>Table 1b: Scoring against Statutory Outcomes</b>		
Statutory Outcome	Is the proposal likely to promote or improve the outcome? (Yes / No)	On a scale of 0 – 10, score the impact the proposal will have on that outcome (0 = lowest, 10 = highest)
Economic Development	Yes	7
Regeneration	Yes	8
Public Health	Yes	7
Social Wellbeing	Yes	8
Environmental Wellbeing	Yes	5
Reduce inequalities which result from socio-economic disadvantage	Yes	8
Other positive outcomes	Yes	8
<b>TOTAL SCORE (from a maximum of 70 points):</b>		<b>51</b>

<b>Table 1c: Statutory Outcomes Scoring Evaluation</b>	
<b>Outcome Delivery</b>	<b>Overview</b>
Very strong (a score of 60 or above)	The project will deliver a wide range of positive outcomes and in doing so will significantly benefit the community. Those outcomes are consistent with the evaluation criteria as set out in Section 82 of the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015 and compliment the council's own stated aims and objectives.
<b>Strong (a score of 50 to 59)</b>	<b>The project will deliver positive outcomes across a range of areas and will demonstrably benefit the community.</b>
Moderate (a score of 40 to 49)	The project will deliver some positive outcomes and the community will benefit from those outcomes, however the project is limited in its range.
Weak (a score of 30 to 39)	The application provides little evidence that the community will materially benefit from the proposed project, with only very limited positive outcomes being adequately demonstrated.
Poor (a score of 29 or less)	The application fails to provide evidence that the community will materially benefit from the proposed project.

<b>Table 2a: Community Transfer Body and Project Evaluation</b>					Item No. 5
<b>Theme</b>	<b>Summary</b>	<b>Information Required</b>	<b>Has evidence been provided? (Y/N)</b>	<b>Summarise that evidence</b>	<b>Evidence-based score</b>  Lowest = 0 Highest = 10
1. Vision and Leadership	An organisation will have in place a clear vision and plan for what it will do to contribute to the delivery of improved local and/or national outcomes. This may be linked to one or more local or national priorities.	A clear plan for achieving the intended outcomes, showing links to local or national priorities. Members will show they have the relevant skills and experience to deliver the intended objectives.	Y	SISCCCL are an established and respected organisation with a track record of owning and managing its own property and working with its community to deliver positive outcomes. Their application sets out a clear vision for the project and a pathway for delivery.	7
2. Effective Partnerships	An organisation will show how it, and its partnerships, provides a collaborative approach to the challenges that communities face.	The detail of any partnerships in place to help ensure successful delivery of the intended benefits. Community support is vital and can be shown through a variety of metrics such as surveys, consultations or ballots.	Y	SISCCCL are fully engaged with their community and have used that engagement to inform their activities and priorities. Their proposal sets out their broad intentions to work in partnership with other organisations to deliver positive outcomes for their community.	6

3. Governance and Accountability	An organisation will demonstrate structures, policies and leadership behaviours that support the application of good standards of governance and accountability.	An outline to illustrate that the appropriate structures and policies are in place to help ensure success in the longer-term.	Y	SISCCCL have provided confirmation of their legal structure and demonstrated sound governance arrangements. They have engaged with officers and the Community Support Service to ensure the most appropriate legal structure and governance arrangements are in place.	7 Item No. 5
4. Use of Resources	An organisation will show how its effective management of all resources (including staff, assets, and information) is contributing to the delivery of specific outcomes, highlighted in the national outcomes.	Explain how the body's current and future resources will be used as part of a medium to long term plan (5-10 years). This could include the numbers of employees or volunteers and the maintenance of any asset. This could also include the funding requirements of the group and the sources of funding already in place.	Y	<p>SISCCCL own and operate premises at 5 Whitburn Road in Bathgate and are on the cusp of taking ownership of a further commercial property in Bathgate town centre, which is being gifted to them at nil cost by an elder of their community.</p> <p>They have produced a detailed and robust business plan that identifies anticipated operating costs and projected income.</p> <p>They are making best use of those resources (underpinned by a personal guarantee from one of their trustees) to pay a sum of £600,000 to secure the properties, plus the stated non-financial community benefits delivered by the project.</p>	8

5. Performance Management	An organisation will ensure that robust arrangements are in place to monitor the achievement of its desired outcomes as well as any reporting arrangements.	Outline the way in which a community transfer body will be able to monitor the achievement of its objectives, whether that be recording volunteers time or the amount of benefit achieved as part of the overarching vision. To demonstrate openness and transparency it will be important to report performance to the community.	Y	SISCCCL have provided a business plan which clearly sets out the project's anticipated positive outcomes, however it does not provide great detail as to how those outcomes will be measured.	Item No. 5
6. Sustainability	An organisation will demonstrate an effective use of resources in the short-term and an informed prioritisation of the use of resources in the longer-term in order to contribute to sustainable development. The goal of Sustainable Development is to enable all people throughout the world to satisfy their basic needs and enjoy a better quality of life without compromising the quality of life of future generations.	<p>There are five broad principles of sustainability:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• promoting good governance;</li> <li>• living within environmental limits;</li> <li>• achieving a sustainable economy;</li> <li>• ensuring a stronger healthier society; and using sound science responsibly.</li> </ul> <p>A community transfer body could demonstrate how its future funding or self-financing arrangements are to be achieved. Any proposal could also include any positive impact on the natural environment.</p>	Y	<p>SISCCCL have proven that they can successfully own and operate their own property using their existing resources. They have also provided a business plan that provides detail on projected revenue income and expenditure along with potential sources of capital funding.</p> <p>The project also identifies opportunities to introduce EV charging points and seeks to derive an revenue income from that means.</p>	6



7. Equality	An organisation will demonstrate that consideration of equality issues is embedded in its vision and strategic direction and throughout all of its work.	The transfer body should establish that the different groups within the community have had their different needs taken into account. Request should include where a proposal may be reducing inequalities of outcome from socio-economic disadvantage.	Y	SISCCCL have demonstrated that their proposal seeks to deliver positive outcomes across a wide demographic across multiple communities and has social and cultural equality at its core.	7 <sup>Item No. 5</sup>
8. Alignment with council objectives	The organisation will demonstrate what its proposed outcomes are and how these align with the council's own stated priorities.	The community transfer body will identify each of the outcomes it aims to deliver from the project and will demonstrate how these outcomes align with the councils stated priorities (referencing such documents as the Corporate Plan, Single Outcome Agreement, Local Outcome Improvement Plans, management plans and corporate strategies).	Y	SISCCCL's stated aims and targeted outcomes very much chime with the council's own corporate priorities. The proposal presents an opportunity to further enhance partnership working and compliment council services without duplication.	7
<b>TOTAL SCORE (out of a possible maximum of 80):</b>					<b>53</b>

Table 2b: Community Transfer Body and Project Scoring Outcome		Item No. 5
Evidence	Overview	
Very strong (a score of 70 or above)	Governance and financial arrangements are strong and sustainable. Best Value characteristics are evidenced and contained throughout the overall approach. Related projected benefits are very robust and demonstrate value for money: suitability, effectiveness, prudence, quality, value and the avoidance of error and other waste.	
Strong (a score of 60 to 69)	Governance and financial arrangements are sound and sustainable. Best Value characteristics are in evidence in the proposal. Related projected benefits are demonstrated well and represent value for money.	
<b>Moderate (a score of 50 to 59)</b>	<b>Governance and financial arrangements are in place and acceptable. Best Value characteristics have been considered as part of the proposal. Related projected benefits are acceptable and could lead to value for money.</b>	
Weak (a score of 40 to 49)	Governance and financial arrangements are weak. Best Value characteristics are not well demonstrated in the proposal. Related projected benefits are not based on robust information and demonstrate questionable value for money.	
Poor (a score of 39 or less)	Governance and financial arrangements are poor. There is little evidence of Best Value characteristics in the proposal. Related projected benefits are ill defined and/or unrealistic and do not demonstrate value for money.	

Table 3: Statutory Criteria for Determination: Outcome	
Having taken cognisance of the statutory assessment criteria, does the Board consider that the proposal presented by the applicant represents the best available option for the use of this asset? (Yes / No).	YES
If No, provide details here of the better alternative option: N/A	
Does the Board consider there to be reasonable grounds for refusing this community asset transfer request? (Yes / No)	NO
If Yes, provide details here of the grounds for refusal: N/A	

### **Commentary**

When evaluated against the statutory outcomes, the Board consider that SISCCCL have presented a strong case for the asset transfer of the properties at 20, 22 and 24 South Bridge Street, Bathgate. As evidenced by the scoring in Table 1b, the Board consider that the project will deliver a wide range of benefits and positive outcomes across the Bathgate community and beyond by facilitating and delivering activities that will support regeneration, social wellbeing and health and wellbeing across a wide demographic.

Importantly, SISCCCL have shown evidence of having engaged with their community to understand its needs and priorities and have sought to address these through this project.

The scores in Table 2a reflect the Board's belief that SJCL are a respected, competent and well-functioning organisation. They have a clear vision and effective governance arrangements in place and have evidenced effective use of their resources and that their proposed project promotes equality and that it aligns with council objectives.

In terms of alternative proposals for the subjects, no other community interests have been received and no other asset transfer requests have been lodged. The council has no operational need for the property and it has been formally declared surplus to requirements by the Council Executive. Whilst the District Valuer's assessment of value suggests the council could potentially secure a capital receipt of up to £875,000 from the commercial sale of these properties, the Board consider that the £600,000 price offered by SISCCCL, when added to the identified and quantified non-finance community benefits of the project, comfortably exceeds that £875,000 figure and as such represents Best Value for the council.

The Board are satisfied with SISCCCL's financial projections and standing and are content that, with the added security of Mr. Tariq's personal guarantee in place, SISCCCL have the resources and skillsets to fund the proposed acquisitions and to successfully deliver and sustain their asset transfer project.

The Board consider there to be no impediments (legal or otherwise) that would prevent SISCCCL's request being approved.

The Board consider that SISCCCL's application represents the best available option for the use of this asset.

### **Conclusion and Recommendations**

Having taken cognisance of the statutory criteria for determining community asset transfer requests as set out in Section 82 of the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015, the Board considers that there are no reasonable grounds for refusing the community asset transfer request.

The Board's recommendation to the Asset Transfer Committee is that the community asset transfer request submitted by SISCCCL should be accepted on the following terms:

1. SISCCCL shall secure any planning permissions that are necessary to enable them to use the properties at 20, 22 and 24 South Bridge Street,<sup>5</sup> Bathgate for the purposes set out in their Community Asset Transfer Request. The transfer will not take place unless those permissions are in place. If those permissions are not in place within six months of conclusion of missives, then the council will have the option to withdraw from the transaction.
2. It shall be a condition of any transfer of ownership that SISCCCL will, to the council's satisfaction, demonstrate the delivery of community benefit to the value of £275,000 (the difference between their £600,000 monetary offer and the DV's stated £875,000 market value). SISCCCL will be required to deliver the full value of that community benefit within three years from the date ownership of 20, 22 and 24 South Bridge Street, Bathgate transfers to SISCCCL. A Standard Security will be granted over the property in favour of the council until such time as that full community benefit has been shown by SISCCCL to have been delivered. The council will discharge the Standard Security once it is satisfied that the full value of the community benefit has been delivered by SISCCCL.
3. Mr. Tariq Asaad, will act as a personal guarantor and will enter into a legal agreement to underwrite the £600,000 cost of SISCCCL's offer to the council.

(END)

Appendix 7

**Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015: Section 82**

**Criteria for determining an asset transfer request**

Section 82 of the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015 sets out the criteria for determining asset transfer request made by a community transfer body to a relevant authority.

The authority must decide whether to agree to or refuse the request.

In reaching its decision, the authority must take into consideration the following matters:

- (a) The reasons for the request,
  - (b) Any other information provided in support of the request (whether such other information is contained in the request or otherwise provided),
  - (c) Whether agreeing to the request would be likely to promote or improve -
    - (i) Economic development,
    - (ii) Regeneration,
    - (iii) Public health,
    - (iv) Social wellbeing, or
    - (v) Environmental wellbeing,
  - (d) Whether agreeing to the request would be likely to reduce inequalities of outcome which result from socio-economic disadvantage,
  - (e) Any other benefits that might arise if the request were agreed to,
  - (f) Any benefits that might arise if the authority were to agree to or otherwise adopt an alternative proposal in respect of the land to which the request relates,
  - (g) How such benefits would compare to any benefits such as are mentioned in paragraphs(c)and (e),
  - (h) How any benefits such as are mentioned in paragraph (f) relate to other matters the authority considers relevant (including, in particular, the functions and purposes of the authority),
  - (i) Any obligations imposed on the authority, by or under any enactment or otherwise, that may prevent, restrict or otherwise affect its ability to agree to the request, and
  - (j) Such other matters (whether or not included in or arising out of the request) as the authority considers relevant.
- 4) The authority must exercise the function under subsection (2) in a manner which encourages equal opportunities and in particular the observance of the equal opportunity requirements.
- 5) The authority must agree to the request unless there are reasonable grounds for refusing it.
- 6) In subsection (3)(f), an “alternative proposal” includes:
- (a) Another asset transfer request,
  - (b) A proposal made by the authority or any other person.

Data Label: Public

## **APPENDIX 8: Draft Decision Notice**

### **ASSET TRANSFER UNDER THE COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT ACT DECISION NOTICE**

To: Sarajia Islamic Studies and Community Centre Limited  
5 Whitburn Road  
Bathgate  
EH48 1HE

22 April 2024

This Decision Notice relates to the asset transfer request made by Sarajia Islamic Studies and Community Centre Limited (SISCCL) dated 1 October 2023 in relation to the properties at 20, 22 and 24 South Bridge Street, Bathgate.

West Lothian Council has decided to agree to the request.

The reasons for this decision are as follows:

Having taken cognisance of the statutory criteria for determining community asset transfer requests as set out in Section 82 of the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015, the asset transfer request submitted by SISCCL is considered to represent the best available option for the use of this property. There are considered to be no reasonable grounds for refusing that request.

The following sets out the terms and conditions upon which we would be prepared to transfer ownership of the property to you.

1. SISCCL shall secure any planning permissions that are necessary to enable them to use the properties at 20, 22 and 24 South Bridge Street, Bathgate for the purposes set out in their Community Asset Transfer Request. The transfer will not take place unless those permissions are in place. If those permissions are not in place within six months of conclusion of missives, then the council will have the option to withdraw from the transaction.
2. It shall be a condition of any transfer of ownership that SISCCL will, to the council's satisfaction, demonstrate the delivery of community benefit to the value of £275,000 (the difference between their £600,000 monetary offer and the DV's stated £875,000 market value). SISCCL will be required to deliver the full value of that community benefit within three years from the date ownership of 20, 22 and 24 South Bridge Street, Bathgate transfers to SISCCL. A Standard Security will be granted over the property in favour of the council until such time as that full community benefit has been shown by SISCCL to have been delivered. The council will discharge the Standard Security once it is satisfied that the full value of the community benefit has been delivered by SISCCL.
3. Mr. Tariq Asaad, will act as a personal guarantor and will enter into a legal agreement to underwrite the £600,000 cost of SISCCL's offer to the council.

If you wish to proceed, you must submit an offer to us at the following address above by 22 October 2024:

Scott Hughes (Strategic Property Asset Manager)  
Property Services  
West Lothian Council  
Howden South Road  
Livingston  
EH54 6FF  
Email: [scott.hughes@westlothian.gov.uk](mailto:scott.hughes@westlothian.gov.uk)

The offer must reflect the terms and conditions attached, and may include such other reasonable terms and conditions as are necessary or expedient to secure the lease and then transfer of ownership within a reasonable time.

Right to review

If you consider that the terms and conditions attached differ to a significant extent from those specified in your request, you may apply to the council to review this decision.

Any application for review must be made in writing to the following address by 20 May 2024, which is 20 working days from the date of this notice.

Scott Hughes (Strategic Property Asset Manager)  
Property Services  
West Lothian Council  
Howden South Road  
Livingston  
EH54 6FF  
Email: [scott.hughes@westlothian.gov.uk](mailto:scott.hughes@westlothian.gov.uk)

Guidance on making an application for review is available from Scott Hughes (Strategic Property Asset Manager (contact details above) or online at:

[https://www.westlothian.gov.uk/media/18378/Community-Asset-Transfer-Policy-Guidance-Notes-for-Applicants/pdf/Community Asset Transfer Policy Guidance Notes for Applicants.pdf?m=636487586254470000](https://www.westlothian.gov.uk/media/18378/Community-Asset-Transfer-Policy-Guidance-Notes-for-Applicants/pdf/Community%20Asset%20Transfer%20Policy%20Guidance%20Notes%20for%20Applicants.pdf?m=636487586254470000)