

Cowley Community House

How did you hear about this Community House idea? *from an accommodation agency?*
via a church body of some sort?
directly from us or our website?
other? . . .

Could you imagine it suiting you (in the past, present or future)? *'Y' or 'N'*

Please rank from 1 - 5 the attractiveness of :
affordable accommodation
community living
Christian focus
mentored engagement in community service / activism
the fact that all four are combined

What, if anything, would have been (or would be) most likely to put you off applying, assuming you were free to come to Oxford?

A bit about you, if we may :

Gender : Age :

Christian, or still searching?

Where might you have been (might you be) finding the rent from (salary, grant, bursary, other . .)

Where are you living now?

Your name and/or contact email/postal address *(not required unless you're interested in being kept in touch with progress)*

Any other queries or comments :

MARKET RESEARCH

have you been, *or*
 might you in future be

LOOKING for ACCOMMODATION?



Could our proposed Community House have been (or might it be) what you were looking for?

Who are we?

The United Reformed Church at Temple Cowley, Oxford

What we would be offering :

- a furnished private room in a church building redeveloped to house a community of about 18 people
- at an affordable market rent (equivalent to good standard private room with shared facilities)
- for between one and four years.
- a large communal kitchen and refectory, quiet room, community room, laundry facilities etc.
- in the centre of Cowley, Oxford : good nearby facilities (shopping centres, leisure centres, health centre, library). Regular buses into busy cosmopolitan East Oxford (1 mile) and Oxford centre (2½ miles)
- **above all : a unique and rich opportunity for personal development at many levels – see below**

What sort of Community?

Residence would be open to all people ‘on their own’ (i.e. not couples), regardless of age, race, nationality, gender, disability or sexual orientation, but subject to interview. The common ‘house language’ would be English. A Christian faith-commitment would not be a requirement, but it would be a ‘Christian community’ : that is, a community run on Christian principles, whose members – at least for their period of residence – would be expected to commit to active exploration of a Christian lifestyle. There would be an obligatory weekly House Meeting and Community meal, likewise (by mutual agreement) meetings for worship/study/meditation.

The dream is of a community that broadens and deepens members’ experience in every way, helping people to discover themselves and their place in the world and preparing them for ‘servant leadership’.

Working for change

With regular one-to-one guidance and support from an experienced mentor, each member of the Community would be required to take on one voluntary commitment outside the House :

- to some form of community service (e.g. helping at the new Emmaus Community for formerly-homeless people next door, supporting housebound elderly people, assisting with the local Child Contact Centre, supporting asylum seekers/refugees *etc etc.*)
- to some form of social or environmental activism, or campaigning work (e.g. inter-faith relations, party politics, evangelism, cycle campaigning, awareness-raising on mental health issues, peace activism, helping at the Christian Aid office *etc. etc.*)

Where possible, this service would be offered through the churches (especially the United Reformed Church) in Oxford and their related networks. Some residents may by negotiation be exempted from this commitment if their paid employment both fits the criteria of community service/activism and is particularly personally demanding (for example, a newly-qualified teacher in their first post). In some circumstances, it could (by negotiation with the relevant academic institution) constitute the practical part of a course of study.

The dream is of a community that enables positive *change* – in the community member, in the world, and in the church.

Send us your thoughts

If we are to persuade our potential backers that there is enough demand for this sort of ‘accommodation plus’ we need as many responses from people as we can get.

We would be very grateful if you would :

- complete the quick questionnaire on the ‘Community Research’ page of our church website : www.urctemplecowley.org.uk. Other contact details may also be found there.
- the same questionnaire is reproduced overleaf. You could post it to The Secretary, Temple Cowley United Reformed Church, Oxford Road, Oxford OX4 2ES