

Churches: there's life in there yet!



CONTACT

Graham Smith
07467 955294
graham.smith@rapleys.com

Within the Charities sector of Rapleys we have had a number of church buildings to sell recently. We have come to expect a strong response from a diverse range of faith groups when these redundant buildings are in a city. Lately, however, rural locations have proved to be equally stimulating in responses. This is some cheer when we are equally well aware of some churches that have been struggling to keep the doors open.

All around we see closures along the high street which have left empty retail buildings. Can we find a silver lining here? Usually a church does not want to relocate; location, location, location after all! However, by integrating our ecclesiastic specialists with other teams at Rapleys, between planning, retail agency and charities consultancy, we have a one-stop-shop formula that we are finding to be of great interest to clients.

This collective approach has resulted in a number of groups being introduced to empty retail units or warehouses. Out of town retail or commercial parks can be attractive where travel and parking can be easily provided, but the location remains close. In some cases we have considered shared occupation on different days of the week.

Rapleys are currently instrumental in working with a number of churches who have existing property suitable to facilitate the development of

their site to gain new facilities. The sale of part of the site is the primary funder for a new church. Not everybody is so fortunate to have such circumstances however. Therefore, the acquisition of redundant buildings might be a worthwhile consideration as an opportunity, at a preferential price or at a reduced rental. In either case there is the likelihood of follow up with a change of planning use application and maybe a conversion to suit.

The creation of new space for church activity, possibly in support of the neighbourhood, demonstrates the integration of church life with that of its community. For example, we have recently agreed many tenancies for preschool companies.

Should anything in the above strike a chord and you would like to enquire further, please contact [Graham Smith](#) in the first instance for either an introduction to the charities consultancy or any other department at Rapleys.