



the next chapter.

*Gateway Church
beyond the Pandemic.*



Our Journey so far...



2002

A new church for Ashford.

The church started in 2002 when Graham and Sue Hall sensed the call of God to leave King's Church Norwich and move to Ashford, starting public Sunday meetings at the Stour Centre.



2007

Reaching out to serve Ashford.

2007 saw the start of the Gateway Furniture and Baby Equipment Project. This supported thousands of people in need across Ashford before closing in 2016.



2011

ACC join Gateway.

2011 saw a remarkable thing happen! Ashford Community Church's leadership team, led by Richard Burgess, felt led by God to join with Gateway Church.



2017

Welcome home!

In 2017 we purchased the old Wyvern School in Clockhouse and renamed the building the Riverside Centre.

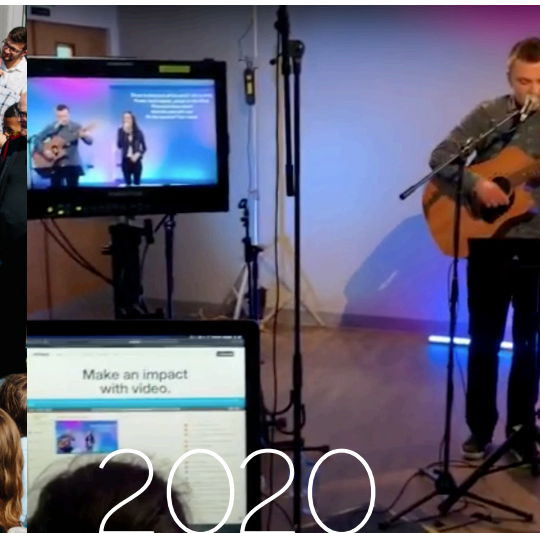


2019

New beginnings

In February 2019 we began the process of moving to the Riverside, launching a second Sunday meeting here.

November 2019 was a key moment in the journey of the church as Graham handed on the leadership of the team to Barney.



2020

A year of challenge.

As the first national lockdown hit in March 2020, Sundays and groups moved online.

The Riverside Centre became a vital hub for serving the community through the food bank, Give a Gift and weekly support groups.

new focus.

The Covid-19 Pandemic has effected all of us, shaking the fabric of our society. Yet, amongst the challenges we have faced, God has been at work in our church family. We have seen new people join us, learnt new ways of being together, through the use of technology, and had the opportunity to demonstrate and share the good news of the Kingdom with many around us.

As we now see a path forwards with the hope of meeting together again, we having been asking ‘*what next for Gateway?*’

At the end of the current crisis, we will be left with it's knock-on effects. Financial hardship; mental health issues; family breakdowns; unemployment. **With crisis comes opportunity.** We have an incredible opportunity to share the good news of the Kingdom and the hope of the Gospel with our community. As a church we believe God is now preparing us for this new phase.

We know our vision! To be a people who,

- Love God
- Love one another
- Love the world

But how do we see that vision expressed in the season ahead?

A people who love God

We will be a people:

- Committed to presence centred, Spirit filled worship
- Who encounter God when we meet
- Focused on the gospel - Jesus' gospel is central in our meetings, our groups and our lives.
- With a reputation for being 100% Spirit and 100% Word.

A people that love one another

We will be a family:

- that is radically diverse - single, married, young, old, rich, poor, black, white - Gateway is a place that all can call home and be part of the family.
- growing as Jesus' disciples, living sacrificially and in ever greater obedience to Jesus.
- That raise disciples who go and make disciples.
- that grow and release leaders
- serving the wider body of Christ through resourcing other churches and organisations, locally and trans-locally.

A people who love the world

*“they will **rebuild** the ancient ruins and **restore** the places long devastated; they will **renew** the ruined cities that have been devastated for generations.”*
Isaiah 61:4

We want to:

- **reach** the communities we live in with the good news as we each partner with Jesus to extend His Kingdom.
- see lives **rebuilt** and **renewed** through projects, services, groups, and ministries.
- be a church where the broken are **restored**. Where those in despair meet Jesus and are transformed into world changers.

the Riverside Centre.

The Riverside Centre is an amazing God given resource. However, the Riverside Centre is not the outcome of our vision but rather a means of achieving all God is calling us to in the next season.

Over the past year we have completed work on the 'back rooms' which are now fully ready to host children and youth work and used by mid-week groups and ministries.

‘you have a quiver of **arrows of hope** for the community around you’

*Prophecy from Dave Eyeington, New Life Church
Milton Keynes, October, 2019*



Café.

We are going to develop the east side of the building and outside area into a café and a dedicated play area for children.

We aim to create a café that becomes a hub for local community life. A place where people can build meaningful relationships, access relevant groups and experience the love of Jesus. The café will be an important mission field opportunity for the church, serving as a central point of access for many groups and courses which we run.

In the first year we expect the cafe to act as a hub for the following church ministries:

Ministries already set up and running pre-covid

- Parent and toddler group
- ESOL course
- Alpha
- Chronic pain

New ministries we would like to offer through the café

- Debt advice group
- Parenting course
- Over 60s book group
- New business/entrepreneur group
- Mental health drop in service



Phase 1 Completion.

We have already begun work on extending the hall through removing the 'lounge'. This has increased capacity from 100 to 140. We are now looking to complete the Phase 1 project to incorporate what was the 'encounter room'.

Extending into this space will move our capacity from 140 to 180-200.

Completing this phase will enable the church to meet at the Riverside Centre over two meetings with space to grow as we prepare for the bigger project of extending the hall to 400.

How this effects Sundays when we regather.

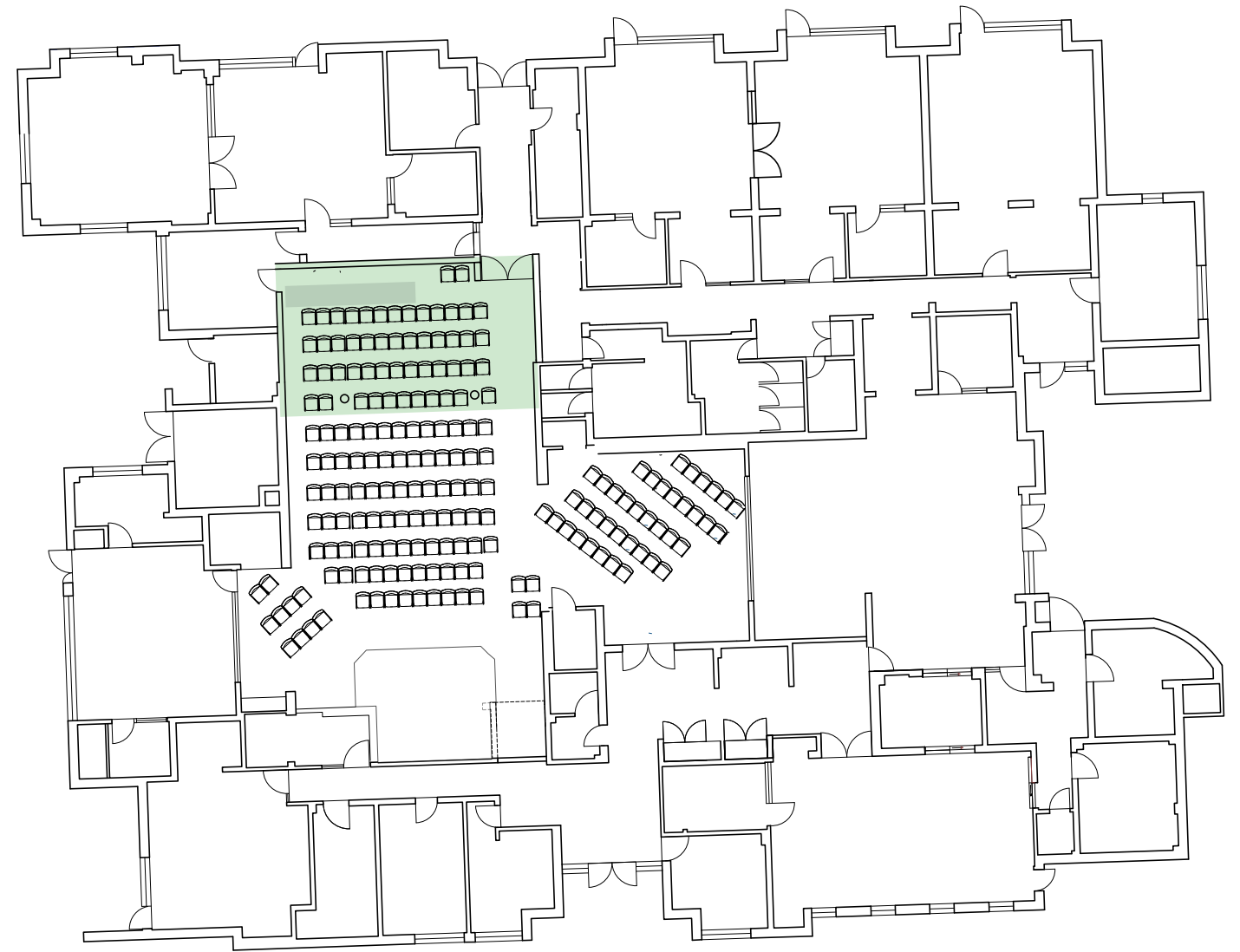
When we are able to return to public Sunday meetings we expect to be meeting at the Riverside Centre over two meetings.

Costs & Timescale

We expect the completion of this project to cost between £100-130k

'Architects plans, new designs, ratio getting bigger, **influence getting bigger**...an apostolic **launchpad**, a **resource centre** for many different places'

Prophecy - Julian Adams, 2013



Phase 2 Extension to 400.

‘God is lifting any sense of smallness, and **it’s time for a big vision to grow...** there is a **new momentum** coming and there is some form of **explosive expansion** coming to you...’

Prophecy from LifeSpring Horsham, November, 2019

By 2025 we hope to have completed extending our auditorium to accommodate 400 people.

At this stage we also hope to extend the café area to seat 100. This will enable it to be used for mid week events and other ministries.

*We are at the **early** stages of planning this phase but we have included an indicative drawing which is subject to change and development.*

Estimated costs & Timescale

The cost of this project will be in the region of £750k - 900k

We are hoping to complete **Phase 2** by 2025.



How to get involved.

In prayer.

One way that we can all get involved is through prayer. As we approach a new season together, let's seek God for His presence among us and for His Kingdom to come through us.

Serving

As we look to launch the café and relaunch Sundays there will be more and more opportunities to step out in faith to serve and lead.

Giving

To complete Phase 1 of our building extension and to set-up and fund the café for its first year we are looking to raise £35k. We are asking everyone who calls Gateway home to prayerfully consider how we might give into our faith target. We are providing two ways to give - up front at one of our gift days or through a monthly commitment.

Gift Days

We will be hosting two gift days, 18th April & 9th May, where we will have an opportunity for you to give online.

Monthly commitment

If you would like to make a monthly commitment, you can do that by filling in the following form and setting up a standing order with your bank.

Give out of what you have

We recognise that your personal circumstances will affect how you are able to give. If this is a difficult time for you financially, please do not feel under any obligation - we believe you should only give out of what you have. Feel free to ask for prayer on a Sunday or in your group, or to talk to a leader if you are struggling financially or with debt.

Gift Aid - An extra 25% for free

If you are a UK taxpayer we are able to claim an extra £2.50 from the Inland Revenue for every £10 you give, at no cost to you, from the tax you have paid or will pay. Please fill in the Gift Aid section of the Commitment & Gift card if you are a UK taxpayer and have not done so before.

Find out more

To understand more about our approach to giving and the different ways you can give please visit - <https://www.gatewaychurchashford.co.uk/giving>