



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 Management and Development 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: Unit 4 Murraysgate Industrial Estate Whitburn

Post Code: EH47 0LE

Email: asaap@ap-investments.com

Telephone: 01506 634389 / 07450799999

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.

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?

Community Controlled Body

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

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? :

Proposed price £350,000

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.

Proposed rent: £ per

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.

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.

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, WLVSIG, 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"> • Creating opportunities for small / start up enterprises through offering low risk commercial space • Creating volunteering, entrepreneurship and employability training opportunities through the facility for young people in particular • Creating a self sustaining community owned social enterprise
Regeneration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supporting local businesses which bring value to the community and facility service users and creating a circular economy • Bringing a vacant building back into use and increasing footfall on the Main Street • Revitalising empty shop fronts thereby improving the look of the town • Increasing 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	<p>improving the health of local residents by providing a space for physical activity (gym and hall)</p> <p>developing a programme of outreach exercise (walking groups)</p> <p>improving food security through a foodbank for people and families living in poverty</p> <p>organising alcohol free social events</p>
Social wellbeing	<p>providing a space which promotes integration, where people from all backgrounds can come together and feel a sense of belonging and connection</p> <p>reducing social isolation in older people by providing an accessible venue and delivering a range of support for the elderly</p> <p>encouraging young people to learn and volunteer together through dynamic and affordable programmes</p>
Environmental wellbeing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improving the energy efficiency of a dated building • Installing EV charging points in the car park to support the switch to electric vehicles • Creating a local facility and shops to reduce travel out of town
Reducing inequalities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 • Working in partnership with statutory and third sector partners for maximum benefit

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 4th 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.

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"> YP have improved skills and knowledge to equip them for adulthood YP feel more confident in themselves and more hopeful about their future YP report feeling less anxious and depressed YP are more physically active YP feel better connected to others 	<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"> EP report feeling less anxious and depressed EP feel more able to be physically active EP are less isolated and better connected to others EP are able to contribute more fully to community life 	<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"> People and their families feel more connected to each other People are able to use their interests, skills and talents to better themselves and improve community life People feel healthier and better about themselves 	<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.

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.

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.

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.

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*)

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 Asaad Tariq

Address 5 Whitburn Road Bathgate EH48 1HE

Date 01/10/2023

Position Trustee / Director

Signature 

Name Mohammad Ajmal

Address 5 Whitburn Road Bathgate EH48 1HE

Date 01/10/2023

Position Trustee / Director

Signature 

DATA LABEL: PUBLIC

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: