



Living
OASIS

*A vision for
the high street*



Introducing The Nationwide Christian Trust

The Nationwide Christian Trust is based at Mulberry House, High Ongar in Essex. There are four core aspects to our ministry.

Firstly, we run a programme of events, both day and residential, providing teaching and ministry throughout the year. If you would like to receive a programme please call a member of our team on 01277 365398 option 4.

Secondly, in order to support people throughout the UK, we operate a prayerline Monday to Friday, 9am - 7pm on 0844 576 8876. This has proved to be a valuable source of encouragement and ministry to a wide range of people.

Thirdly, we provide training seminars for local churches throughout the UK covering four core aspects:

- *Training for small group leaders.*
- *Effective engagement with the bible (this includes an hour and a half seminar which covers the whole bible called 'Word in One').*
- *Discovering your gifts and implementing them in local church life.*
- *Developing a strategy for mission.*

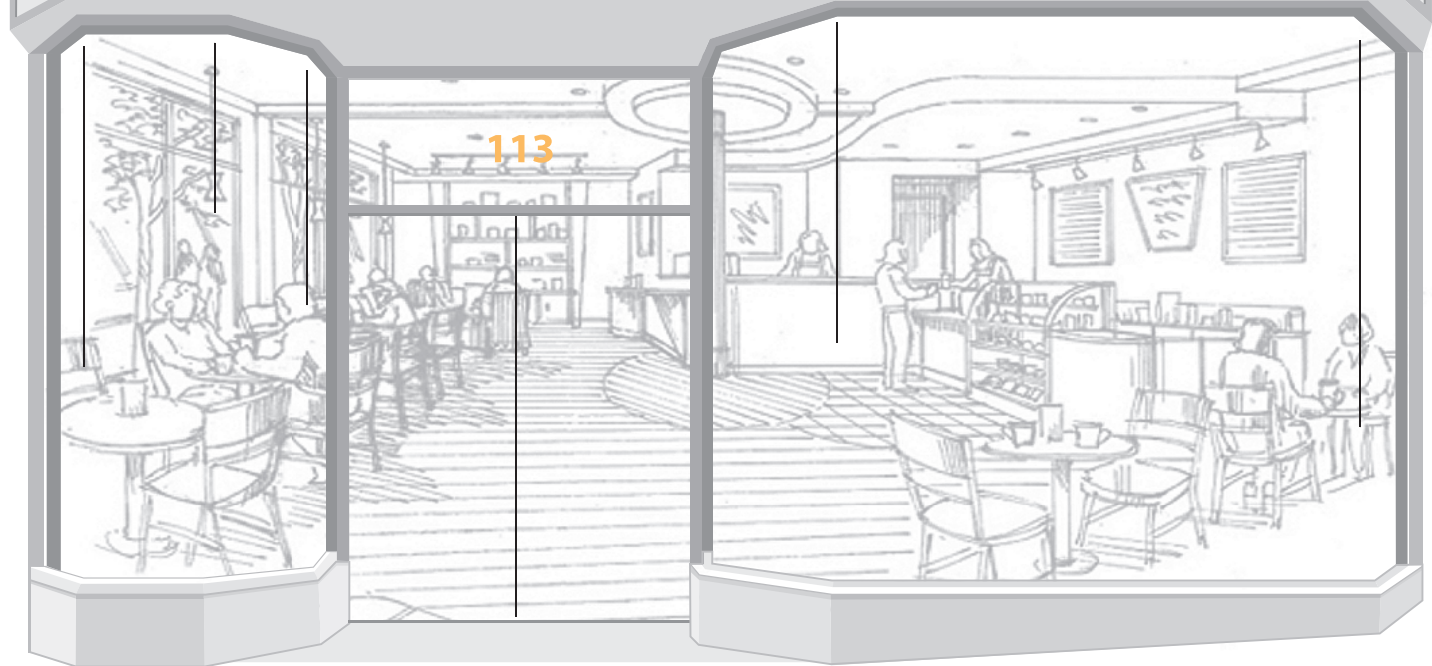
Fourthly, we produce a wide range of resources, the first of which was a daily bible reflections booklet called Living Light. Over subsequent years we have added a wide range of study booklets, audio bible studies on CD, greetings cards and testimony and teaching DVDs. To obtain a catalogue please call 0845 050 4566.

We are constantly seeking God's mind as to the future vision He has for us and it is in light of this that Living Oasis has come into being.

Our Vision:

“To provide a Christian presence on our High Streets, connecting with Christians and non Christians, fulfilling a mission objective, and providing a resource for Churches as they seek to impact their local communities.”

Living OASIS





LIVING OASIS: Impacting the Community

A clear mandate by Jesus to His followers was to be “salt and light in a dark and tasteless society”. This command is one which has found numerous expressions through the centuries as Christian men and women have sought to effectively impact the communities within which God has placed them.

Sadly all too often we have been guilty of “waiting for people to come to us”, yet when we look at the life of Jesus, we see a man out in the market place, engaging with people as they went about their daily routines. This is our vision for “Living Oasis” venues.

Part of the problem

Up until now, many of the struggling Christian bookshops have retained a very narrow focus, namely they have simply focussed on Christian books and resources, and thereby the predominance of customers have been Christians. This has greatly reduced their viability on the High Street because no matter how attractive the shop front, and no matter how well laid out the stock is, the fact remains, there is little or no reason why a non Christian would go in. We have to find another way to increase the footfall.

A way forward

It is naive to think that any given model or programme can simply be replicated throughout the country assuming that if it works in one place it will

be effective in all the others. Therefore as we look at each of the stores throughout the UK, we will be seeking to create a place which is relevant to that place and works in that context. That being said there are some general ideas lying behind our thinking.

Increasing footfall

We will be working with Store managers and local Christians to find imaginative ways of increasing the footfall into the stores. What's more, we will be exploring possible ways the premises can be used outside normal opening times for other imaginative projects or events.

Mindset

We will be seeking to envision local people towards a way of thinking which moves from Maintenance to Mission. We want these shops to not simply be places which people occasionally visit, but instead are in a dynamic way being strategically used for the work of the Kingdom.

Partnering

We will be seeking to draw local churches on board to become stake holders in these opportunities, and get involved in a number of different ways.

Specialist shops are under pressure in Harrogate as elsewhere. Some have been forced to shut down but now comes news of a rescue plan for the long established Christian bookshop in Commercial Street.

Financial problems in the parent company led to the sudden closure of Wesley Owen Books and Music in January.

However thanks to the Nationwide Christian Trust it will be given a new lease of life and plans to reopen in February. This will come as an enormous relief for churches and many individuals in the Harrogate area who have relied on it for Christian books, cards, gifts, music and a host of other resources that mainstream shops do not keep in stock.

Julie Jowett
Regional Manager and Manager of
the first Living Oasis Store in
Harrogate



Clear Sky thinking

As has already been stated, we are not looking to simply impose a pre-determined model onto each of the shops, however we have some general ideas which we are currently thinking through.

A Coffee Shop

We believe it is vital to increase and broaden the footfall into the shops. In order to do this, we will be exploring the feasibility and appropriateness of creating a coffee shop at the front end of the premises. This we believe would meet the needs of many shoppers and passers by, irrespective of their view of Christianity. We would see these coffee shops serving high quality coffee and light refreshments in a relaxed, warm, welcoming and comfortable environment. Wi Fi would be available and a variety of seating styles provided to meet the needs of the varied people groups who would come in.



We believe this could be a key way of expanding the number of people who come in.

A Bookshop



posters, song books to Children's dvd's, we will seek to provide for a diversity of interests and needs.

We are well aware of the competition which comes from Amazon, and how tempting it is for people to buy things through this channel. However, consider why many people will buy fair trade products even when they cost slightly more. The reason, they believe that it is important to support the cause this represents. In the same way we hope to encourage local Christians to think in the same way, that it is really important for them to support their local Christian bookshop, if they believe it is of value within their community.

We certainly would not lose sight of the importance of the bookshop element, and within each store there will be a wide selection of Books, DVD's, CD's and gifts on sale. From Bibles to

It comes as no surprise that I have a similar vision for Leeds as Ray and The Nationwide Christian Trust. God is challenging us to expand our existing vision to one of community.

Excited?

You bet, and thinking big for Jesus.

Here I am Lord, use me!

Karen Spence
Manager of Wesley Owen Store
in Leeds

The Nationwide Christian Trust has been the answer to many prayers and I'm really excited about the prospect of working with people who have a vision and a heart for God.

Sue Barrett
Manager of Wesley Owen Store
in Nottingham



A Lounge

For many people who are not Christians, the prospect of entering into a formal church building can be a daunting prospect, and prevents many from doing so. How then can we connect with people in a group context? We will be exploring the feasibility of creating a lounge area in which small groups can meet in a neutral location. Such a resource could be used in many and varied ways. It could be developed by a church into a café church venue once a week. Someone else might have a vision to form a ladies group to meet informally once the children have been dropped at School. A church leader might want a neutral venue to have a meeting with someone he or she is building a relationship with. And what about in the evenings? A place to get a group of teens together, or to run an enquirers group. The possibilities are endless, and we will be looking for imaginative ideas being developed by both churches and individuals.



Something for Children

It is fair to say that for many parents, one of the greatest challenges whilst out at the shops is keeping the children occupied whilst they try to relax with a coffee. Acknowledging this to be the case, we would be looking at creating “child-friendly zones” in which children can play safely, watch DVD’s and enjoy a drink and biscuit. Once again the scope and scale of this being developed will depend greatly on the size and layout of each store, but at very least, we would hope that a small area suitable for, and attractive to the children, would be generated.



LIVING OASIS: Partnering with us

If you share our vision, and sense the value and importance of maintaining a Christian presence in our high streets, then there are a number of ways which we would encourage you to get involved in this project.

Prayer: we would ask you to commit to praying regularly for all involved in this work. Pray for the staff involved at Mulberry House, as well as those involved in each of the local areas. Pray too that the Churches in each area would catch a vision for the mission potential of these venues, and start to see how they could be used most effectively for the expansion of God's Kingdom.

Presentation: we would be delighted to come and visit your church to share the vision we have for these shops, and start exploring with you imaginative ways the venue could be used in mission. An invitation could be from an individual church or a group of Churches. It could be a Sunday, or equally mid week.

People: There will be many ways that individuals will be able to help us in these projects, in a voluntary capacity. We would be very keen to hear from people who might be willing to give of their time and expertise.

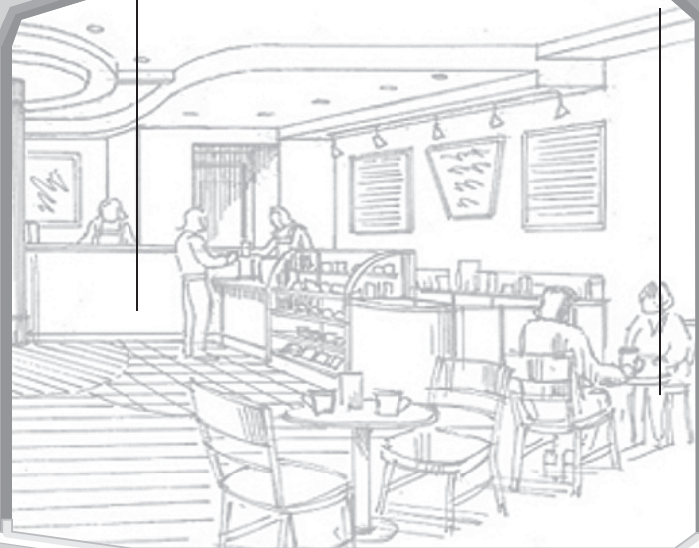
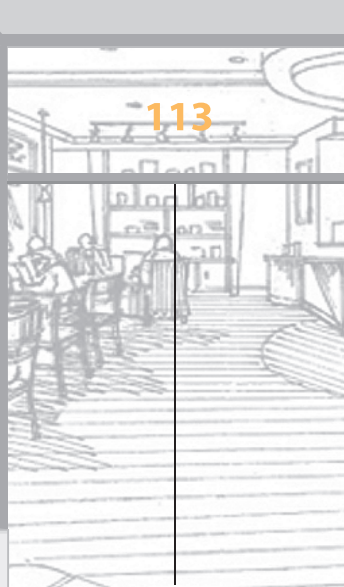
Financial Support: it is a substantial challenge to redefine the focus of these shops and we need the financial support of local churches and individuals to see them come into being and be effectively sustained.

Please indicate on the attached form how you believe God wants you to respond to this initiative, and then return it for the attention of Andy Twilley, to;

Mulberry House, Chelmsford Road, High Ongar CM5 9NL

Living ASIS

113



Living Oasis Response Form (fill in both sides)

*Please tick the sections which apply. Once completed please return to:
Living Oasis, Mulberry House, Chelmsford Road, High Ongar, Essex CM5 9NL in
the envelope provided.*

Title: Mr/Mrs/Miss/Ms/Revd/Dr

Forename.....Other Initials.....

Surname.....

Address.....

.....

.....Post code.....

Email Address.....

Date.....Telephone No.....

PRAYER: I will pray regularly for all aspects of this initiative.

PRESENTATION: we would like to arrange for you to come and do a presentation at our Church. Please call me to discuss when this could be arranged for.

PEOPLE: there are people I know who might be willing to be involved. Please call me to discuss.

FINANCIAL SUPPORT: I / we would like to support this project financially with:

A one off gift A regular gift by Standing Order

Is this a Personal Gift On behalf of a Church

If on behalf of a church, which Church?.....

.....

CREDIT/DEBIT CARD

I wish to give by: *(Please delete as appropriate)* Access / Visa / Eurocard / Mastercard / Solo / Switch
Card Number:

Valid from: /

Expires end: / Issue Number: *(Switch Only)*
Month Year Month Year

Enter the last 3 numbers on the reverse of your card on the signature strip

Name on Card.....I wish to give £.....

Cardholder's signature.....

STANDING ORDER FORM

Pay Nationwide Christian Trust the sum of £.....monthly/quarterly/annually *(circle your choice)* starting from:..... / / 2010 until further notice.

Your Bank Account Details

Bank Account Number: Bank Sort Code:

Bank Name.....Bank Address.....

.....

.....Post Code.....

Signature.....Date.....

Payable to Barclays Bank, Enfield Branch, 20 The Town, Enfield, Middx EN2 6LY
(Sort Code 20-29-77) for the credit of Nationwide Christian Trust Acc. No. 40963275

Standing Order Reference: *(Nationwide Christian Trust use only)*

Completing the declaration below makes your donation even more valuable in support of NCT

GIFT AID DECLARATION

If you have previously completed a Nationwide Christian Trust Gift Aid Declaration form - please ignore.

I want Nationwide Christian Trust to treat all donations made from 1st of January of the year in which I sign this declaration, as Gift Aid donations and continue to do so, until I notify otherwise.

Signature.....Date.....

Gift Aid Notes for reference

1. You can cancel the declaration at any time by notifying us - it will then not apply to donations you make on or after the date of cancellation or such later date as you specify.
2. You must pay an amount of income tax and/or capital gains tax at least equal to the tax that we reclaim on your donations in the tax year (currently 25p for each £1 you give).
3. If in the future your circumstances change and you no longer pay tax on your income and capital gains equal to the tax that we reclaim, you can cancel your declaration (see note 1).
4. If you pay tax at the higher rate you can claim further tax relief in your Self Assessment tax return.
5. If you are unsure whether your donations qualify for Gift Aid tax relief, ask your local tax office for leaflet IR113 Gift Aid.

Our Vision:

*“To provide a Christian presence on our High Streets,
connecting with Christians and non Christians, fulfilling a
mission objective, and providing a resource for Churches as
they seek to impact their local communities.”*



Living Oasis Limited, Mulberry House, Chelmsford Road, High Ongar, Essex CM5 9NL

Tel: 01277 365398 Fax: 01277 362200

www.livingoasis.co.uk