

THE OASIS, HUGGLESCOTE



**A place of peace and refreshment in
Hugglescote in the midst of a busy world**

The Oasis, at 67 Central Road, Hugglescote, had its official opening on Saturday 17 May 2014 when tea, coffee and cakes were served all day. This new community facility, developed by Hugglescote Baptist Church, provides the church with an opportunity to make new connections with the community and is ideally situated in the main shopping area in the village.

A number of years ago the church building in Hugglescote was demolished and that released some funding, allowing the church to purchase and redevelop this

former chemist's shop on Central Road. Church services on a Sunday take place at 10:30 in Hugglescote Community Centre but The Oasis gives the church new opportunities to be more involved in the community. The church realised that for many people, coming in to a church service without knowing anyone at the church is often a daunting prospect, whereas coming in to a café style setting is much more accessible. Rather than holding on to our funds in the hope of one day building a traditional church building for worship, we felt that God was calling us to think differently and focus on mission in a different context.

The Oasis opens on Wednesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays as a café with refreshments and light lunches available, providing a relaxing and peaceful oasis where people can take time out from their busy lives to meet friends, chat with volunteers, and reflect on life and faith. Other activities developed in time. In partnership with Heartland Youth For Christ we opened Escape, an after-school drop in café for young people. We began a monthly Messy Church in the room above the café, and we began a weekly group for women –



Wednesday Women – as a meeting place for crafts, chat and relaxing. In our first Christmas at the Oasis, we offered a full Christmas lunch and two carol singing sessions using the Silent Night resources for remembering the World War 1 truce.

The meeting room upstairs can comfortably accommodate 10 to 12 people and there is also a smaller room designated as a prayer room for those wishing a



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quiet retreat. The garden at the rear of the property will be brought into use over the summer months. The Revd Peter Lanigan, the minister of the church, has been very encouraged that the Hugglescote Baptist fellowship, a relatively small group with Home Mission funding to support a part time pastor, nonetheless have a big heart for mission. They have been willing to take on this exciting challenge of running a cafe several times a week and other events in The Oasis as appropriate. "It has also been great to see that as we

have moved out in faith, volunteer help from other churches in the village has been given – and from those who are not yet Christians. We are convinced that God will provide all that we need for the running of this centre."

The Oasis is all about making connections with people at street level, providing a listening ear and an encouraging word, and responding to the needs that emerge.

Peter Lanigan
Hugglescote Baptist Church

Please pray:

- » Give thanks for the way in which funds have been used to enable Hugglescote Baptist Church to open The Oasis
- » For the volunteers and all those who come to The Oasis - for deepening friendships and opportunities to reflect on life and faith together
- » For the young people who come to Escape - the drop-in cafe - and for the courage to invite friends to join them
- » For the families who come to the monthly Messy Church - that they will discover more about God as they have fun together
- » For the women who come to Wednesday Women
- » For continued support from volunteers from other churches, so that The Oasis will become a vital space for a growing number of people in the community

More information is available at
www.hugglescotebaptist.org.uk