

Saville Community Centre

Voluntary Sector Accommodation - Response to consultation

As part of the further consultation on proposed closures and redevelopments of community centres, we would like to include information on current centre activities and users, along with your response in the report back to Safer Stronger Select Committee and Mayor and Cabinet.

Community Centre: The Saville Centre – Lewisham Pensioners Forum

| Day | Group/ user | Type of session/ activity | Number of users/ attendees | Types of users | Session fees/ charges | Additional requirements/ user restrictions |
|--|--|--|----------------------------|--------------------------------|---|---|
| <i>Example: Monday</i> | <i>Dance ltd</i> | <i>Line dancing class</i> | <i>15</i> | <i>Older people (aged 50+)</i> | <i>£5 per session</i> | <i>Some limited mobility users</i> |
| Monday Weekly | LPF | Monday Project - Varied: Ukelele, Singing, Art, Digital Exclusion "buddy" sessions, Knit and Knatter | Up to 30 | People 55+ | £1.00 am £1.00 pm | Former Saville Club lunch group members attending and arriving by Dial-a-ride, plus others |
| Tuesday Bi-monthly | LPF | Volunteers supporting the work of LPF – mail out and stuffing etc | Up to 10 – | People 55+ | | |
| Tuesday Bi Monthly | LPF Executive Trustees | Strategic and Governance of LPF | Up to 15 | People 55+ | | |
| Tuesday or Wednesday Bi Monthly | LPF "Save Our NHS" Campaign Group meetings | Open to all older people – Information/ discussion and campaign on NHS and other health issues | Up to 30 | People 55+ | Attendees make a voluntary contribution of approx £1 to mailing costs, etc. | |
| Tuesday Occasionally – about twice a year when Civic | Pensioners Action Group | Interest and campaign group able to target issues of concern | Up to 60 | People 55+ | | Majority BME membership LPF provides low level support to PAG with room hire and copying |

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| Suite unavailable (this appears to be becoming a more frequent occurrence) | | to Black and Minority Elders because of its membership base | | | | |
| Thursday Weekly | Saville Lunch Club | Socialising, lunch, bingo | Up to 24 | Age range between 70-95 | | Group for less mobile older people including members relocated from St Andrews and St Laurence Lunch Clubs. Many arrive by Dial a Ride. |
| Sunday – twice a year 2012-2014 (on hold in 2015) | Forum Fundraising Booksale | Fundraiser for Forum – essential non restricted funds. | Up to 150 | Primarily students and 30-40, with a significant number of families with children | Free entry (unlike many other book-sales) | This would be impossible without the use of cellar storage. The book-sales also offer a service to our members who are many of them down-sizing and are pleased to donate, especially as the Forum arranges collection by staff or volunteers. |
| Mondays to Thursdays | LPF | Open Office | 1 to 2 staff and a regular and constant flow of older people dropping in. | 50+ | Obviously no charge – facilitates sign-posting and can lead to low-level assistance. | The location of the office on a main thoroughfare at ground level with windows where information can be displayed is key to this provision. See one of the comments in Appendix 3 |
| Mondays to Thursdays | General | Open hall with booklet and information stand | Monitored by LPF staff and users groups | All ages | Drop in to review leaflets – and much LBL information | As above |

Lewisham Pensioners Forum would also like to register the following:-

- The Saville Centre has a longstanding reputation as a community facility, its central location supported by excellent transport links and good mobility standards means that it has for over 50 years provided an attractive place for older people to come together in a user-friendly environment to enjoy social gatherings, events, activities and public meetings. Utilisation of the Saville Centre has been supported by a variety of voluntary sector groups and volunteers who have a shared vision of furthering the wellbeing and social interests of groups and individuals who share characteristics protected by the Equalities Act 2010.
 - The Council has confirmed that The Saville Centre satisfies the definition of an asset of community value because the current use of the building furthers the social the social wellbeing of the social interests of the local community and that it is realistic to think that there can continue to be a main use for the building which will further the social wellbeing or social interests of the local community.
 - Application to register the Saville Centre as a Community Asset was approved on July 27th 2015.
 - The Saville Centre has for over 50 years provided a welcoming centre of activity for older people and the wider community. A non forum member recently coming into the office to purchase tickets for Pensioners Day told us how she and her husband had celebrated their wedding at the Saville in 1963 – one of the first mixed marriages in the borough.
 - The Saville Centre is perfectly located between Lewisham and Catford Town Centres and the Hospital offering a visible window of advertisement for passing pedestrians telling them what is taking place in the Saville and elsewhere. The presence of the LPF office in the front of the building supports and sustains a welcome and informed response to requests for help and advice from older people, enhanced by the handing out of the Directory of Information for Older People, funded by the Positive Ageing Council and used by professionals, individuals, carers and family members. (See Appendix 1)
 - The Saville Centre supports Digital Inclusion projects for older people – As part of its digital inclusion work LPF was awarded funding from the 2014/2015 Rushey Green to install WiFi at the Saville Centre and in partnership with the Community Interest Company MyCompleteFocus the building has held weekly tutored and drop in digital sessions for older people supported by a variety of voluntary IT buddies. (See Appendix 1)
 - The Saville Centre supports Community Events including the really popular Book Sales where ALL the community are invited to donate and the ALL community are invited to buy – A MUCH LOOKED FORWARD COMMUNITY EVENT (See Appendix 1)
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- The Saville Centre has and will continue to support a range of partnership projects open to ALL older people in Lewisham, including:
 - What do you need to know about Will Writing – with Co-op Funeralcare
 - Understanding 'Digital' with a POP Up Techy Tea with Community Connections and MyCompleteFocus funded by the Positive Ageing Council
 - Libertea – Marking 800 years of the Magna Carta as part of the Parliamentary Outreach Project
 - London Borough of Lewisham to consult with on the proposed changes to charging for adult social care
 - 'Our Healthier South East London', Presentation by the Chair and Chief Officer of the CCG on an *'Issues Paper'* which sets out a range of challenges faced by the NHS in south east London.
 - Save Lewisham Hospital Campaign – The Saville Centre and its facilities played an integral role in the day to day operations of the campaign to save Lewisham Hospital enabling the community and users of the building to get involved and have a voice (See Appendix 1)

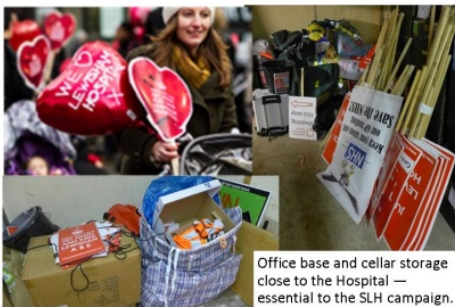
- Making Good Use of the Saville Centre - LPF fully accepts that the Council wants to ensure better use of its buildings. However, LPF feels strongly that a failure in recent years to make full use of the office space and hall will negatively impact on financial assumptions about income generation. There have been regular and constant enquiries to rent both office space and the hall and all have been signposted to the Council. For whatever reason the potential of the Saville has in recent years been untapped. LPF has supplied the Council with information to support this.

- Existing User Groups want to be a part of a community solution so that their members will, with their help, continue to be active members of Lewisham's community. (See Appendix 2 Saville Centre In Use)

The Saville Centre, 436 Lewisham High Street—a highly visible and accessible community asset



The Saville Centre (and LPF) played an essential role in the Save Lewisham Hospital Campaign (and one which will be needed again). It was a drop off point for huge print deliveries and collecting point for leafleteers. Above top right are the PLUS clients decorating display letters for a rally, and the "Sholley" march to the hospital (with Heidi Alexander) and "Buggy Army" that went to Westminster 14 February 2013 made their preparations and set out from here.



Office base and cellar storage close to the Hospital — essential to the SLH campaign.

Information hub: people call in off the main street to look at the leaflets and passers by study the windows.



The Saville is light and airy and a pleasure to work in. Right: sponsors and volunteers stuff 600 "Information Bags" for the annual Pensioners Day. Below: teams work on the bi-monthly mail-out to LPF members and over 150 community groups and LBL sheltered schemes.



The "Monday Project" has just been started up with significant legacy funding from an EU grant and a small contribution from the Rushey Green Assembly that was used to bring WiFi to the Saville Centre. Ukuleles, singing, knitting, the newly popular adult colouring and a "digital surgery" with potential for more work being developed with MyCompleteFocus, Community Connections and others to address the issues of digital exclusion among the elderly in a low-key and acceptable way.



Regular use by social groups and others



A traditional bingo session and the Saville Knitters have a giggle.



Volunteers in the kitchen.

Book sales held as fundraisers—assistance from Police Cadets and enjoyed by all ages.



Sorting for the book sale in the week before and the buzz of activity on the day itself.



The Saville garden in use for the bric a brac and toy stall, and the police cadets who are regular helpers.



Tea and fancy cakes make the book sales a nice day out—and at one the SLH campaign had a tiny table to collect signatures to the current petition.



One-off events—left a small group gossiping at the NPC Dignity Day, below a Hustings (with purpose-made bunting) and right a couple of volunteer parties, one with a student harpist recruited from Trinity.





Lewisham Pensioners Forum Fundraiser
Big Book Sale 

With the generous and practical support of
Harradines South London based removals &
 storage for over 40 years 020 3124 1811 


Free Entry Hardbacks: (mostly) 50p to £2
 Paperbacks: 25p or five for £1
Sunday 6 July - 11 to 3
The Saville Centre

436 Lewisham High Street, SE13 6LJ
 (a couple of blocks south of the hospital—street parking on
 Sunday and on lots of bus routes from Catford or Lewisham)

**Come browse, come buy—a huge range
 of books sorted for easy searching...**

Fiction A-Z / Biography / History / Cookery / Self-Help
 Science / Literature / Childcare / Sport / Politics / Economics
 Travel / Memoirs / Film & TV / Music / Children's / etc., etc.

**We plan to keep adding fresh stock during the
 day so please "bring" as well as "buy"**

 **Also: "pop-up cafe" with tea,
 coffee, squash and cake,
 plus toys, puzzles and bric-a-brac**

*For more information and to arrange collection if you
 have books to donate please phone 020 8690 7869*

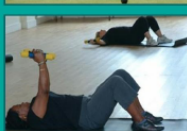


**Older People's Information Network Directory
 for Lewisham—Second Edition 2014**



**The Positive Ageing
 Council**
 London Borough of Lewisham 

 **Lewisham
 Pensioners
 Forum**



A Partnership Project in Action—Weekly
 Digital Inclusion sessions at the Saville made
 possible with funding to install Wi-Fi from
 the Rushey Green Assembly

Appendix 3 – The Forum and other users were asked to consider alternatives – the Leemore Centre, the Irish Centre and the St. Laurence Centre.

A: Contrasting the Saville Centre with the Irish Centre and the Leemore.

1. It is fantastically easy to reach by bus from all parts of the Borough – buses stop less than 80 yards away coming in one direction or the ones on the other side of the road can be reached via pedestrian refuges, and a little bit further away is the light controlled pedestrian crossing by the hospital. (So better and safer than either of the suggested alternatives.)
2. It is highly visible on a main road so the access “feels” safe – you’re walking in full view of a lot of passers-by. (Again both Leemore and the Irish Centre are situated on side streets.)
3. It has easy disabled access and is all on the ground floor level. (In contrast to the Leemore where currently all users except the daily mental health group are directed up a side entrance, along a narrow path with trip-hazards at ankle height, and then expected to summon an external lift.)
4. Unlike the Leemore, the Saville is small - so that one set of vulnerable users won’t feel threatened or overwhelmed by other clients and noise.
5. Unlike the Irish Centre, there is no barrier or sense of exclusion created by its name, and the unintended message that it is a space for the use of one specific community.
6. The Saville is easier than either the Leemore or Irish Centre to access by car/taxi/dial-a-ride. Simple directions to give (“a couple of blocks south of the hospital”) and user parking right in front of the building. The Leemore is really quite difficult to find (all no right turns, blocked off streets and roads going round right-angles so you lose all sense of direction) and there is no parking outside the Irish Club (one of the Forum staff got an automatic camera-generated ticket for pausing for five minutes to unload heavy speakers for the Black History Month event the Forum put on there last year).

B. Unsolicited comments from visitors to the Saville Centre, calling into the office in passing

“Vintage and gorgeous – look at the parquet floor, how marvellous!”

“Just coming from the hospital and walking up to Aldi’s”

Comment on the St. Lawrence Centre “So many other activities going on you feel like you are in a train station.”

C. We asked the Cardiac Support Group (who have also responded separately) for their views

St. Lawrence Centre

“out of way”

“other groups meeting”

Leemore Centre

“no-one knows it”

“out of way”

Irish Centre

“Few know it”

“Is it just for Irish?”

PLACE (site of former Ladywell Leisure)

“Will it be permanent?”

“Need access”

“Good position – High Street & Hospital –bus routes”

“But what will facilities be?”

[Forum staff also tried to get to the consultation on the use of the ground floor at PLACE but at first it was not open – no times given in Lewisham Life – and on the second occasion no-one was available for discussion. No response has been received to enquiries submitted via the website. In principle it could be an alternative to the Saville – has many of its advantages – but concern about how long what is there will be in situ. and it would not have the storage that is so crucial to some of the Forum’s activities and, in particular, the support given to the Save Lewisham Hospital Campaign.]

Saville Centre

“Central and accessible – but no convenient road crossing”

“Light and bright”

“Comfortable”

“Disability friendly”

“Suitable toilet & kitchen”

“Close to hospital – for heart patients”

“One large room – no other groups at same time”

“Exclusive – no nuisance from other rooms”

“On main road but quiet”

“Convenient for pick-ups”

“Seating outside in case of early arrival in pleasant grassy surrounds”

“Office of LPF for advice”

Dear Liz

That was a useful meeting this afternoon and it was good to meet people from other organisations, as well as to hear the Council's point of view. As we discussed sending in submissions from voluntary organisations and their members, the following is a copy of an email I recently sent to Cllr Walsh which sets out our position:

PLUS is a charity, founded in Lewisham in 1981 to support local adults with learning disabilities. As part of our work we run a drop-in session at the Saville Centre each Friday where people have the chance to maintain contact with friends, stay in touch with our support service and take part in social and creative activities. These sessions are valuable as a means of staying in contact with people with disabilities who do not receive statutory-funded services and also as an alternative social outlet for people who do. This service was previously funded by Lewisham Council as part of our community development work but is now paid for by PLUS out of our reserves.

Over the past three years, the Council has withdrawn all of its £240,000 annual community development funding to us but we have managed to continue to provide a reduced level of service based on the activities that are cheapest to run. We do this by drawing from reserves and by charging some users for attendance. This year, the Council has withdrawn a further £73,000, forcing us to close our Carers' Support Service, which provided valuable support for families in the Borough who are main carers for an adult with a learning disability. I understand your point about the pressures from central government but each step taken to reduce support for the most vulnerable is both an injustice and a step closer to crisis for each individual and their family.

We have a number of concerns about the proposal to close the Saville Centre and transfer activities to other venues, particularly the Lewisham Irish Centre and Leemore.

- One of the main reasons we are able to continue with our Friday drop-ins is the extremely reasonable price for hiring the Saville Centre, for which we pay around £30 a day. We also run a group at the Irish Centre which costs £25 an hour to hire. This is a rate which would be likely to make our Friday sessions non-viable.
- We are concerned at the negative impact of the loss of any community resource in the Borough at a time of population growth
- The loss of the Saville Centre would be damaging for Lewisham Pensioners Forum as it is part of LPF's identity which would be difficult to re-create elsewhere. Many of the people who use our service are of pension age and have good relationships with LPF.
- I doubt whether the Irish Centre has the capacity to take on all the bookings currently at the Saville Centre in addition to its existing commitments. I understand that the Saville Centre is currently in use five days a week.

- The name of the Irish Centre indicates that it is a resource for a particular group, rather than for everyone. This may off-putting for some people.

Best Regards,

Colin Turnbull
Deputy Chief Executive



Every Friday




embrace the positive

DROP-IN

This group helps me to build relationships.



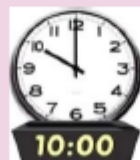
Description:

Come along to the drop in to meet your old friends, make new ones, play games, cards or listen to music in a friendly setting. While you are here, have a cup of tea and light snack. The drop in can also be a place to come if you need simple advice and we can signpost you to other services.

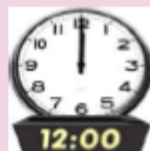
Entrance fee of £3



Start time:



End time:



There are light refreshments available, which you will need to bring some money for.

At The Saville Centre, 436 Lewisham High Street, SE13 6JL

