

A beacon in Middlesbrough

"A faith-filled and risky vision." That's how Stephen Sutton described his church's desire to open a new community centre. Stephen is the minister of Coulby Newham Baptist Church in Middlesbrough, which felt it had been given a vision from God to open a new community centre called the Beacon.

That vision was supported by the local Home Mission funding team, whose prayerful and financial backing helped make it happen. The church worked hard to transform the building, formerly owned by the Council, and create a bright, modern, welcoming place now equipped for a range of community projects. It's home to a café Monday to Thursday, a foodbank distribution centre on Mondays, Alpha and much more.

"The Home Mission team were absolutely incredible," continues Stephen. "We've now got an incredible community centre that's been refurbished and looks beautiful. All sorts of different community impact projects are happening there. The church is growing, we've celebrated baptisms, and I've just submitted what I think will be our last ever Home Mission application."



The Cairn

The Cairn is a new community of God's people, birthed from the resources of Knowle West Baptist Church.

The Cairn is the name of Phil and Alice Lawrence's home in Knowle West – and it is the primary location for the mission life of the Cairn community. A number of activities take place there – such as the Guitar Club (a bit like a home group with guitars where together people can explore a spiritual journey and beef up their guitar skills); Man Friday, a monthly men's breakfast, where between 10-15 people come to talk about life, its meaning, and to have a good breakfast. Around half of these men also connect in with Fusion, a community men's group in Knowle West.



On Sunday mornings around a dozen people gather at Phil and Alice's for informal worship. Beyond this, good inter-church relationships are developing, with the setting up of a Christians Against Poverty resource in South Bristol, something Phil is involved with.

Phil believes that there is currently a spiritual openness among those they are reaching out to.