

NEW EDUCATION CENTRE FOR SUSSEX WILDLIFE TRUST

Location: Henfield, West Sussex, United Kingdom

Client: Sussex Wildlife Trust

Services: Business Plan



Business plan for the Sussex Wildlife Trust's new education centre

Project Objectives:

- The Sussex Wildlife Trust's headquarters at Woods Mill, West Sussex, has long been the focal point for the Trust's schools programme and is increasingly used by the SWT's outreach and lifelong learning teams. With a growing number of school visits each year, the standard of the existing premises was sadly inadequate.
- To continue to deliver a high quality programme of education and outreach work, a new purpose-built education facility was needed. The Trust asked Acorn, with associates PLB, to establish the financial implications of the proposed facility through a feasibility assessment and business plan.

Our Recommendations:

- We worked closely with the staff and Trustees to prepare the business plan, reviewing various options for the development based on a detailed analysis of the main markets for environmental education in Sussex. Our assessment of the viability of the project was based on establishing capital and revenue costs, staff and management required in the new centre and potential risks.
- Building a new purpose-built centre at the southern end of the car park was chosen as the most suitable development to provide facilities for both the education and life-long learning teams.
- Locating the building away from the main building minimised disturbance to office work by school groups and allowed for the creation of a new access route and bridge leading straight into the nature reserve.