

Relocation of Office to the first floor of Watch Oak

This paper requests the Board's approval to relocate the ECF Office (currently on the ground floor of the Watch Oak, Chain Lane, Battle) to more spacious premises on the first floor of the same building. The attached costings set out the current and projected annual costs; in summary, there would be an increase of approximately £4,700 pa in the ECF's annual running costs. If the proposal is approved, we intend to ask the PIF and/or Chess Trust trustees to cover the one-off removal, refurbishment, shelving, floor reinforcement etc costs. An estimate of £1,300 was previously given for floor reinforcement in the main room, but this will depend on its use and will need to be further investigated. Shelving requirements will have to be further investigated as this can vary greatly depending on the quality of finish.

The costings provide a comparison between the current office accommodation on the ground floor versus the proposed accommodation on the first floor to house the Office and to replace the Safestore facility for the Library. The cost of the new accommodation will be offset by the costs of the current office and the costs of the Safestore facilities for the Library. Both the Office and the Library will be housed in more appropriate surroundings and provide members with access to the Library, much of which can be displayed.

The benefits of the relocation, which will increase the space available to us from 433 sq ft to 936 sq ft plus the access to the loft spaces, are as follows:

- 1. The problem of the library will be solved whilst we remain at Battle at a modest extra cost; the majority of the material will be made available for public display, and there will be ample storage facilities if required for duplicate material and archives in the two lofts to which we will have access.**
- 2. A separate room will be made available for activities such as meetings and library research visits (next to impossible with the present facilities).**
- 3. Extra office space will be made available for, for example, on-site accounting and bookkeeping work and for meetings (also next to impossible with the present facilities).**
- 4. The ECF will acquire a more presentable public face for third party visits (the present facilities are singularly unfit for purpose in this regard).**
- 5. Larger and fit for purpose accommodation will have been acquired with no need to move the ECF Office away from Battle.**
- 6. The ECF staff will benefit from the lighting, window frame and glass refurbishments that the landlord is currently carrying out on the first floor premises. The proposed premises will provide considerably improved accommodation for the staff and visitors which are intended to improve the image of the Federation.**