

## **PRESS RELEASE**

### **Shephalbury field preserved through deal between NHC and The Coptic Orthodox Church Centre in the United Kingdom**

A deal between North Hertfordshire College and The Coptic Orthodox Church Centre in the United Kingdom has ensured that an important piece of Stevenage land will be preserved for community use.

The plot, which is adjacent to the Church in Shephalbury, is owned by the College and used to provide community sport facilities. Through the deal the Church will assume ownership of the plot, preserving the land for community use. NHC will reinvest the proceeds of the sale in teaching and learning resources for its students.

#### **His Grace Bishop Angaelos, General Bishop of the Coptic Orthodox Church in the United Kingdom said:**

“The Coptic Orthodox Church Centre has been part of the life of Stevenage for the last 25 years through its presence in the historic and iconic Shephalbury Manor. Valuing and celebrating this presence and the relationships formed, we look forward to our future collaboration with all our local institutions, including Stevenage Borough Football Club and the Stevenage Football Academy, that occupies the land and has been a valued neighbour since its establishment. We look forward to continuing to serve the good of this community in every way we can.”

#### **NHC Principal Matt Hamnett said:**

“We are delighted to conclude a deal that will preserve the land for use by the local community under the stewardship of the Church. Our ownership of the land was something of a strategic anomaly. We exist to deliver fantastic teaching for our students and employer customers, not to be a landowner.

We will reinvest the proceeds of the sale to create ever-better teaching and learning facilities across the College’s campuses in Stevenage, Hitchin and Letchworth Garden City. We are working on some really exciting developments that would not be possible without this investment.”

**ENDS**

**The Coptic Orthodox Church  
Communications and Media Office**  
Tel: +44 (0)20 7193 7076  
E-mail: [Media@CopticCentre.com](mailto:Media@CopticCentre.com)

**Matt Hamnett**  
**CEO, Hart Learning Group**  
**Principal, North Hertfordshire College**  
Tel: 07771772474  
Email: [mhamnett@nhc.ac.uk](mailto:mhamnett@nhc.ac.uk)