

Advice bureau forced to move

Susie Weldon

After 20 years at St John's Cathedral in Central, the Community Advice Bureau has been asked to move out to make space for more church activities.

The move means that the bureau, which is the only English-speaking advisory service for newcomers in Hong Kong, is likely to face a big increase in its costs.

Since it was established at the cathedral in 1974, the bureau has either paid no rent or, in recent years, only a nominal

rent. Regular users and members of the bureau are understood to have been shocked by the request that it leave the cathedral premises.

The bureau's director, Jacquelyn Hodkinson, was keen to express gratitude to the cathedral for its past help.

"They [the cathedral] have been extremely generous to us," Hodkinson said.

"They were instrumental in setting us up and we are extremely lucky to have been here in such a central location for so long."

Hodkinson said the bureau

had been told the cathedral needed the space for its own activities because it was expanding its ministry.

The bureau is now looking for a benefactor to help with the anticipated rise in costs or to provide office space.

Hodkinson said the bureau wanted office space in as convenient a location as Central but was concerned about rents.

One of the bureau's last activities at the cathedral will be the charity card and handicraft sale, which takes place from tomorrow to Saturday.