

Proposal

Introduction and Context

When we originally circulated the questionnaire, lots of people said to me “I think we should knock the building down and start again !”

Obviously these comments were meant humorously but the fact that the joke was repeated by many people made me realise that many people have been at a loss as to what we could possibly do to make sense of the buildings we have inherited and make them more suitable for 2015 and beyond.

Knocking the buildings down and starting again would certainly allow us to create a building that would work for us now butlet me tell you it would cost a fortune.

I think the idea of knocking down and rebuilding is out of the question for financial reasons and many other reasons too.

It is useful to make such comparisons because it gives us a notion of what good value and good steward-ship looks like for us with our own buildings.

In other words we can use these and other examples as a yardstick to guide our decision making.

Thank you to all of you who responded to our questionnaire about the buildings.

Many of you have included suggestions for improvements in your responses so thank you for all your suggestions and ideas.

I have spent a lot of time over the past several months (if not years) thinking about ways to improve our building so receiving your responses was very interesting and stimulating. Some ideas have confirmed some of my own thoughts – some have caused me to ditch my ideas because better ideas have come forward.

The proposal I want to outline today is an attempt to incorporate as many of the best ideas as possible in a scheme that addresses as many of the issues we have raised, as possible.

This proposal does not attempt to deal with the refurbishment of the Chapel itself but it does try to tackle the issues that have been highlighted in the rest of the building.

I have come to the view that we should regard the refurbishment of the Chapel itself, as Phase 2 of the overall refurbishment plan, to be tackled later, after Phase 1 has been completed.

At present, of course, we have only the vaguest idea about costs so my hope is:-

- that we might agree tonight **what we would like to see** and
- then proceed over the next few months to work out **how much it might cost**.

It follows therefore that we won't be making any real decisions today.

Those will come after we have an agreed scheme and an accurate estimate on costs.

As I said, we are several months from that point.

Today's task then, our first step, is to see if we can agree what we would like to achieve.

Then we will set about costing that proposal, as accurately as we can...that will be our second step.

When we have an agreed scheme and accurate costs, we will need to think about how we might raise the money to proceed. So raising the money will be Step three.

And I'm sure I don't have to tell you, that we don't have a spare £ X,000 sitting in the bank to spend on these plans.

But can I also make the very important point that it is highly likely we will be able to obtain grants and funding from external sources towards these improvements. This is particularly true of Phase 1 because it is focussed on the facilities we make available to Community groups so if anyone feels they'd like to be involved in seeking out such funding on our behalf, please speak to me afterwards. That would be a really valuable contribution to the projectdidn't someone once say “the pen is mightier than the circular saw and the paintbrush”

The final step, step four, will be getting the work done.

So if I may, I'd like to try to describe the Proposal to you :-

In the Upper porch

- we will insulate the walls and ceiling and install secondary glazing to the windows
- we will install two x electric convactor heaters
- we will improve the visibility into chapel by fitting doors with clear glass panels and replace the opaque glass in the side panels
- we will carpet the floor and introduce some seating
- we will update the light fittings and
- we will redecorate

I have estimated that this work will cost in the region of £2500 but this needs to be checked.

In the Lower Porch, Lower Hall and Stage

- we will remove the walls of the lower porch and make it part of the lower hall
- we will raise the floor level in the lower hall so it's at the same height as the stage creating one single floor from the bottom of the stone steps from the Upper porch right through to the toilets and double doors at the back.
- we will block off the existing door onto the street and also the door onto the side passage
- we will create a new entrance onto the street to serve as the main entrance to the Lower Hall and also an emergency exit. This will be done by extending all three existing window openings downwards by approx. 3 feet (to pavement level - more or less)

The two windows nearest the river will be glazed in clear glass to provide the transparency that was mentioned earlier and the window furthest up Church Street will become the new entrance doorway. This will have a pair of outward-opening fully glazed UPVC doors.

I have calculated that the threshold of this new entrance will be approx. 360mm below stage level so 360mm below the level of the new floor. So access to the Lower Hall from the pavement will be via two steps for the able bodied or via a DDA compliant ramp, for anyone in a wheelchair or with a pushchair or buggy.

- In the Lower Hall itself, we will insulate the floor, walls and ceiling
- we will remove the gas heaters and replace them with a hot water heating system – radiators or underfloor loops - which will heat the space, efficiently and silently.
- we will install two Velux window over the stage to provide natural light in that area
- we will compensate for the loss of the stage by creating a retractable stage that can be raised above the general floor level when necessary and lowered again when not in use.
- we will remove the curtain track and wings that currently divides the room in half.
- we will install new lighting and increase the number of power sockets throughout the room
- we will install a PA system and a screen and retain and if possible improve the Loop system
- we will finish the whole floor in laminate or something similar
- then we will redecorate !

Returning for a moment to the porch area, for a moment...we will replace the narrow, steep, stone steps from the Upper porch with a full width timber staircase which will be carpeted and also have a central bannister rail.

These steps will incorporate a clever trap door to allow access to the meter cupboard

Toilets

- We will re-configure and refurbish the toilets to provide three unisex toilets, each of which will be large enough to have a toilet and wash hand-basin - and we will, of course, retain the disabled toilet. So, in total, there will be four toilets, not three. This will mean losing a small area from the back corner of the current stage but I think the gain is greater than the loss.

Kitchen

- I think we should enlarge the kitchen by knocking through into the den. I know this is going to be tricky for all sorts of reasons and at this stage I don't have a detailed plan for this, but I don't think we should really leave the kitchen as it is. So the new kitchen
 - will have more space.....perhaps twice as much as it currently has
 - it will house all the things it currently houses plus
 - it will have a commercial dishwasher
 - it will have space for the fridge and
 - it will have a dumb waiter
 - the CH boiler will not be moved but will find itself in the enlarged kitchen

So we will create a plan that does all this and deals with all the problems and then we will cost it.

Den

- the Den will be retained much as it is.... however it will of necessity be slightly smaller, but still a good size room.
- we will aim to insulate the walls and consider whether to keep or replace the heaters.

Lounge and Librarywill be untouched !

The staircase and landing will be redecorated.

The Bible Class / Coffee Room

- the ceiling will be insulated and if possible the external walls too.
- the gas heaters will be replaced with hot water radiators, fed from the boiler below.
- the room will be redecorated.

The Outside

At present, there are a number of different ideas and I suggest we get some idea of costs for each and then we can as a church decide which we prefer.

Since there seems to be consensus about improving the signage, we will try to come up with some designs and wording and some prices which we can put to a church meeting and hopefully proceed.

So that is the Proposal....are there any questions?

If you are willing, I'd like your permission to work up the detail of these proposals and then price them as accurately as we can.

When we have done that we will come back to the Church with detailed costings and some of our suggested next steps.

Can I have a show of hands....those in favourThank you.