

## **Note for Project Team Meeting- Thursday 27<sup>th</sup> July.**

1. Prior to Covid Nick M and I had meetings with representatives from the Parish Council (including Margaret Bell- local councillor) and representatives from the 3 schools in Hartshill. All were very supportive and interested in our project ideas.

We also met Andy Duncan; consultant employed by the Diocese as a Church Building Funding Support Officer and following that meeting, we developed a draft Vision Statement.

We also met Michael Brandsma, Vicar of St Mary's Atherstone to talk about their project and specifically on their heating proposals.

2. Prior to Covid the PCC considered the project ideas at two meetings- 18<sup>th</sup> November 2019 and 10<sup>th</sup> February 2020. At the latter one the draft Vision Statement was discussed, and the following resolution was passed- *The PCC would look more closely at option 6 with a view to sharing it with congregation, going forward with a feasibility study and refining the vision statement.*

Option 6 is-

*Convert the church building into a multi-use building so that it can be used for worship purposes as at present but make it available to the wider community for one-off and regular events such as use of the local schools, concerts, arts exhibitions, and sports clubs, at times when the church building is not used for worship purposes.*

Some members of the PCC were not happy with the idea of using the church for sporting activities. Another concern was with the removal of pews.

An update report was made by Nick M to the PCC on 17<sup>th</sup> April 2023 and Nick also introduced the project to the APCM. Nick's report to the PCC identified the following steps which were endorsed by the PCC-

- Speak with the Parish Council to understand what plans may lie ahead for the Village that would align with or present challenges to our proposals.
- Engage with a professional to draft a formal feasibility report/proposal (Grant funding may be available for this)
- Re-connect with the schools to let them know our plans.

3. Nick M, Stacy and I had a meeting with representatives the DAC in March. The main points arising from that are-

- It is recommended we obtain advice from DAC Heating Advisor Peter Bemrose regarding heating options.
- It is important that we articulate the need for the reordering part of the proposals based on the vision statement and to support the wider needs of the community.

The DAC identified that the pews were part of a 1930s reordering scheme done by a now eminent architect. We will need to put forward a robust case for their removal.

- An Architect will need to provide a full specification for the repairs as part of the faculty application.
- Claire Strachan in a note of the meeting set out the next steps which we can consider at our project team meeting.

4. Nick M and I met Andy Duncan at the end of May and the main points arising from that are-

- Andy is excited by our project and wants to help subject to his time constraints. He is willing to attend meetings and consultation events.
- Andy would like to help with our communication plan by providing examples of survey examples (in a subsequent e mail he said he was in the process of preparing a community survey for us).
- If project design fee expenditure is needed, we may be able to apply to the National Churches Trust for 50% grant (we could also apply to the Diocese Church Improvement Fund which Stacy has provided details of)
- The Church Building is listed so we can apply for a VAT refunded from the Listed Places of Worship grant scheme.
- Grants for renewables are hard to come by but we may be eligible for a grant of up to £25K from the Diocese Net Zero Fund (part of the details Stacy has supplied)
- Local History and a possible Heritage Group could unlock National Lottery Heritage funding for repairs and restoration.
- Andy will work on a 1-page vision statement to underpin the communication plan. Andy recently has done that- both Nicks have comments on that and have not been back to Andy yet.

5. Nick M and I (Sally also joined us) met with our Church Architect Steven Matthews (as part of Quinquennial Inspection) earlier in July. We went through the list of works for the Church Project. Steven was extremely helpful in giving advice on those works. The main outcomes arising from that (not already covered above) are-

- Steven said lots and lots of churches are facing the same challenges as us in maintaining their buildings. He also recognised the need to avoid lots of upfront fees on such things as feasibility/needs studies and other reports which eat into our limited finances. That includes any architectural involvement (see DAC outcome above). We agreed his involvement would only be likely if there were specific building works such as a new boiler house. Steven recommended exploring housing any new boiler within the church building.

- Each work identified in the list could be seen as a separate project all leading to the overall vision for the Church Building. This would help with applying for grants and in using expertise in each field e.g. heating and windows. We could prioritize those separate projects and even within them not do everything at once- e.g. the worst windows (mainly on southern side) could be tackled first, redecoration could be done in phases to help funding.
- We should consider becoming a member of Warwickshire and Coventry Historic Churches Trust (WCHCT) at a cost of £50. They do fund raising and give grants towards works to preserve churches.
- Steven has the name of a Window conservation specialist who may be able to provide a specification on the basis that the firm be included in the tendering process for the work.
- Steven also has a contact for a Grants advisor.

6. I think the main purpose of our meeting today is to consider in the light of the above advice and outcomes the steps we need to take next and who does what.

Nick B-B