



CHURCH HALL NEWSLETTER

No 2

April 2018

WELCOME

Welcome to the second of our occasional newsletters about the St Michael's Church Hall project. This newsletter is intended to complement other forms of communication that many of you are already engaged with. If you would like to go on the Church Hall email list please contact: churchhall@stmichaelbarnes.org. You can also find information about the government's new data protection regulations and how this affects our communication with you later in this newsletter.

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CHURCH HALL OPEN EVENING *Monday 23rd April, 8.00-9.30pm*

Please come along to our open evening in the Church Hall. It's an informal event where you can look at the work of some of the firms we have been researching, who might be able to fulfil the sort of project we shared and discussed at the last community meeting.

The purpose of the evening is to share information about these companies, show images of their work that might inspire our own, and get feedback on your preferences. We are very keen not to take significant steps forward in design or planning without first sharing our ideas and receiving your comments, so that they can be taken into account at an early stage and throughout.

Do bear in mind that none of the work on display is specific to our project for a new Church Hall. They only show ideas of what might be possible, and we hope you will be as inspired and excited as we have been. What is attractive about most of these firms is that they often work with community institutions like churches and schools. Moreover, they offer an inclusive and comprehensive service from design to delivery using a range of in-house expertise. Come along at any point during the time to see the displays. Refreshments will be provided. We hope to continue showing the information in church and online afterwards.

THE STORY SO FAR ... *recapping the process and milestones along the way.*

First Community Meeting: Last June we got together to reflect on the old project, and think about how to go about a new project. A timeline and process was shared, and we are broadly on track!

Basic Principles: the PCC shared a set of practical criteria to help guide, ground and assess any project as one that;

1. *Supports and enhances the mission of St Michael's.*
2. *Provides a resource to enrich the lives of local people.*
3. *Serves a broad diversity of users.*
4. *Offers a long-term and high-quality solution.*
5. *Sustains and contributes to church finances.*

Vision, Values and Mission: Three statements that express our purpose and aims as a church, into which the project needs to fit.

Mission: A church for all ages. A faith for all people. A place for everyone.

Vision: St Michael's is seeking to be the spiritual heart of the neighbourhood; creating a community of faith, of hope, and of belief in the power of God's love. Come and join us.

Values: Holy— a celebration of worship in the beauty of holiness. Active— reaching out to our communities. Open— welcoming and engaging.

Away Day: The PCC reflected on the nature of mission, and joined by neighbours, hall users and parishioners reflected together on a wide range of relevant information about: other hall projects, community needs, pre-school needs, funders and fundraising, planning issues and constraints, current condition of hall and amenities. We came away with two stand out conclusions. First that the project has the potential to bring the whole community together. Second, all present on the day understood why a new building might be most appropriate in this context, even if it wasn't what they might have preferred.

Community Audit: Sampled the views of the community, hearing how the building has been used in the past, is used now and might be used in the future. What unmet needs might be catered for? Whose voice is not being listened to? What might be done better? Alongside this, members of the PCC had **meetings with key hall users** to discuss their needs for the project. Reflecting on all the information the PCC made some observations:

- A deep concern for the elderly and their care, support and health.
- An awareness of personal and pastoral issues faced by people in our parish, often of a counselling or therapeutic nature.
- Large support for children's events and activities, including nursery and ballet school, but also other needs related to the wellbeing of children.

Out of these first stages of consultation the PCC was able to affirm three concepts to take forwards:

1. *That the project would encompass the needs of existing users and hirers, notably St Michael's Nursery School, alongside any other uses that might arise.*
2. *That a new building will best meet those needs and will be less disruptive, faster to achieve and result in a longer term and higher-quality outcome.*
3. *That the project should in some way reflect a Christian commitment to the less-advantaged and social need in the context of our parish and local area.*

Two Concepts for a new Hall project emerged. Both flexible, multipurpose space. The first financed through loans, fundraising and grants alone. The second financed through loans, fundraising, grants, and one or two flats as part of the hall building that could become a church or community resource in time.

Second Community Meeting: Last November, all these ideas were shared, along with a summary of the issues and concerns about the current building and amenities. People were invited to begin thinking and offering how they might help as we being to move from vision to implementation.

Thank you to everyone who has been part of the process so far and contributed in various ways.

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

On the Open Evening, and afterwards, we will collect your feedback forms and then reflect on your preferences and observations about what you've seen to help us create a draft brief.

We will then use that to focus on a smaller number of firms, and work towards getting some initial designs and plans that take your views into account. There will, of course, be further community consultation and much more detailed work about the financing, feasibility, practicalities, pros and cons of each proposal as we seek to refine any plans and designs. We can then look forward to working together in taking one of these proposals forward with broad support, with perhaps a campaign launch towards the end of 2018!

GENERAL DATA PROTECTION REGULATIONS (GDPR)

As many of you will already know, the government is bringing in new regulations about how organisations store and share any personal details such as email addresses and phone numbers. We are now required to obtain your explicit permission to hold and use your details, and we have to get that permission now (even if you may have given it previously). Please fill in one of the GDPR forms provided. You can read more about how St Michael's uses and stores your information on the website and in a separate leaflet. The **deadline is 25th May**. If you don't give us your consent, then we will have to delete your details and will be unable to contact you after that date! So if you'd like to hear about the new Church Hall project, please return the form before the deadline. *Thank you.*

COMMUNICATIONS

Communication, Vision, Transparency and Consultation were established at the first community meeting as being crucial to this process.

- Focus Group: Representatives of congregation, hall users, neighbours and PCC reflect on the process as it moves forward and make suggestions or express concerns to be responded to.
- Newsletter, dedicated email list, display table in church seek to share information about the project as it is issued.
- A special section of the St Michael's website entitled 'Hall Project' as a place to find out more.

A REFLECTION FROM FATHER STEPHEN

Earlier this month was my second anniversary as Vicar of this parish. I received a card saying, 'Is it easy? No! Is it worth it? Yes!' This felt rather apt. It is a deep belief of mine that the right thing to do is rarely the easiest thing to do, and the most loving is almost always the hardest. We see this in the life of Christ, as he walks a path that is loving but unpopular, hopeful but also challenging. I say this in the context of Eastertide, and it is good that our Open

Evening should take place in this joyful season. In the Gospels, the Risen Christ appears to the disciples, sending them out to share the Good News, and it says at one point 'The Lord worked with them.' (Mark 16.20). It is only because the Risen Christ was with them that they were able to do amazing things for God – and it is the same today. It is easy to get bogged down in the mundane detail of a project, but at its heart is a sense that we can do much more than before, do it differently, and do it better. It is my continued prayer that this project will take us forward as a parish, affirming and valuing what we have received, and being faithful to it, but also doing wonderful things to the glory of God in the service of His people.

