

Frequently asked questions about the proposed Reordering

We hope that this paper provides answers to some of the questions you may have.

Following the Diocesan Chancellor's decision of 2018 to the faculty application the PCC decided to reappraise the scope of the project whilst keeping to the three key objectives: welcome, flexibility and accessibility. The Building for the Future Committee was tasked to revisit every aspect of the original project. This project will enable us to use the church seven days a week alongside the church centre.

Church Building

Why are we changing the building? We are not building for ourselves - we're building for the next generation and beyond and we pray this will be used by God to introduce many to the saving news of the Lord Jesus Christ. The drive for the reordering grows out of our commitment to planting churches, training leaders and growing Fulwood.

What will the renewed building feel like? It will be a warm, light, welcoming, comfortable and flexible building. There will be better access, more circulating space at the back, toilets with baby changing facilities and a small refreshment servery. The floor will be flat throughout, with a raised dais at the front. Underfloor heating will heat the building more evenly and effectively. New lighting will provide good and even illumination, enhancing the architecture.

Will the building look different? In many ways we hope so! At the same time, we want to keep it very recognisable. The pillars and arches will still be there as will the cross. It represents an important item in the present building, and its location will not change. By moving from pews to chairs we can bring the church family nearer to those leading the services.

How will the capacity of the building be affected? Moving from pews to chairs will affect capacity at very large events. However, the small reduction in capacity will be offset by greater comfort and flexibility.

What will the seats be like? The proposal is to replace the pews with high quality, comfortable, stackable chairs. Over 10% of the chairs will have arms (not currently shown on the presentation photos). This will allow us to use the building in better ways. The selected 'Howe' chair is extensively used in church and cathedral settings. For the last few weeks there has been a row of Howe chairs in church and feedback from users has been very positive with many comments on comfort levels.

Will we be selling the pews? We have recently started to consider options for disposal of the pews and there is further work to do to define an approach. However, we certainly are not intending for the main contractor to dispose of them unless we specifically instruct them. There may be the opportunity for church family to express an interest and we would also like to consider any needs of our ReNew South Yorkshire network.

What will happen to the organ? The organ is being retained.

What about the font? The font will remain where it is.

What about storage space? There will be secure storage for musical equipment at the top of the south aisle. There will also be a furniture store at the top of the south aisle, as well as further storage at the back of the south aisle.

Is the glazed screen in church fixed or moveable? The glazed screen is soundproof and fully retractable running on quality tracks underneath the north balcony. When not in use the screen will be stored under the balcony in the north-east corner.

How will the BFTF project improve our carbon footprint? The installation of a modern energy efficient heating system together with the installation of double glazing will reduce our use of natural gas. The installation of LED lighting will reduce our use of electricity. So overall the BFTF project will reduce our carbon footprint.

How will disabled access be improved? Independent access will be improved by removing part of the boundary wall on Canterbury Avenue and creating a wide flat entrance path to the North church entrance or into the church centre. There will also be a disabled access toilet and a new permanent ramp is to be created to give access on to the dais. The insertion of a lift in the church centre will provide easy access between the ground floor and the hall; the two most frequently used parts of the building.

The steps up to the dais look quite challenging for those with mobility constraints. Will there be any handrails? Yes, there will handrails on either side of the dais. Also, there will be a ramp up to the side of the dais which will have rails on both sides.

Will there be toilets in the church building? Yes, there will be four toilets at the back of church (west end), one of which will be fully accessible and include baby changing facilities.

How well will carpet tiles handle the challenges of catering events. We are confident that the recommended brand of carpet tiles will be hard wearing and of industrial quality. We have not yet agreed the colour. We are anticipating having patterned or flecked carpet tiles in the church as this will help 'hide' stains. We may also have a darker colour in front of the servery. One advantage of carpet tiles over carpet is that we can replace small areas if and when these become worn or dirty.

What events will happen in the reordered church building? The adaptability of the new building will mean that we will use it in a whole variety of new ways. All ages and stages can now make use of the building, seven days a week. The servery will now allow for catered events. The moveable soundproofed screen in the north aisle will allow for different groups to meet at the same time.

How will we do communion? The front of church will look similar and the communion table will be restored and retained. The moveable communion rail will also be retained for future use. Communion could still be done from the front or from a number of points around the building as we have done on occasions.

What about 8am communion? There will be a moveable screen which will allow the space under the north balcony to become a separate area. This space could be used for the 8am communion service.

The fly-through did not show a projector screen. Please confirm whether this is part of the AV solution. Also, will we have the technology to 'live stream' events in the church building? We will be installing projection facilities (supplemented with a small number of TVs) with a fully retractable motorised screen in the east end. Technology to enable live streaming is part of the enhanced AV solution. Additionally, ahead of BFTF, we are installing technology to enable live-streaming in the very near future.

During construction

How long will the building work take? Once contractors are appointed and begin we expect construction work to take 9 months beginning with alterations in the church centre.

Where and how will we meet during the building work? While construction work is taking place in the church building we will use the church centre for Sunday services. We acknowledge we may also need to use other locations to accommodate all our activities on a Sunday- we will identify an approach which will cater for everyone.

Has consideration been given to how the potential lifting of Covid restrictions enabling the church family to meet may align with the planned closure of church? We are conscious the church family will want to meet together as soon as possible. We are expecting to use the church centre to meet as a family whilst the church is closed.

What will happen to weddings and funerals during the building work? We are still working towards a detailed plan for weddings and funerals during the building work.

What will be the impact on traffic and parking during the building work? We must expect some disruptions as contractors will require access to the site and need deliveries, but we hope to keep these to a minimum by allowing a work base in the upper car park. We will extend the coned off areas on Canterbury Avenue to permit parking for the less mobile as near to the entrance as possible.

Church Centre

Why do we need another catering kitchen? The existing catering kitchen was always intended to serve up to 100 comfortably for events in the hall. As our catering requirements have developed to support ministry in different areas with different meals its location and size cause a significant challenge as well as health and safety issues. A ground floor facility will vastly improve our provision for multiple events at the same time or for larger numbers we can have both kitchens working in tandem.

Have the committee considered the practicalities of moving large volumes of hot food from the new kitchen to the church, especially in wintery weather? Yes, Fiona Lockwood and the catering team have considered this in detail. We expect to purchase heated, shuttered trollies of industrial design in order to transfer food. The path between the centre and church will be approximately double its current width and will be considerably flatter and will have a non-slip resin finish.

When the church has been renovated, the church centre will look pretty drab. Can we give the church centre a facelift? Areas such as the west end of the lounge and the re-purposed servery area will obviously be decorated as part of the BFTF project. The rest of the church centre is outside the scope of the project. However, there is no reason why this can't be done subsequently – especially as we have 'held-off' on some aspects of maintenance pending confirmation of the scope of the building project.

Courtyard

How many graves will need to be moved? There is no plan to move any graves. Headstones will be laid flat, protected and covered. Monuments will be re-sited within the graveyard. Following an extensive consultation process with known relatives, the Diocese and Sheffield City Council we have been granted permission to make this area safer, more welcoming and accessible.

What will happen if there are any archaeological finds? As part of the permission we have received to work in the graveyard there will be a watching archaeologist to oversee the work.

Why is the courtyard smaller? The courtyard area remains the same size as originally envisioned but we have increased the landscaping to the sides of the path.

Can we ensure that landscaping of the courtyard is done in a way that increases biodiversity?

Yes, we will definitely take that as an action. The specific details of the landscaping have not yet been agreed so we have the opportunity to ensure this is considered. We are also conscious that any landscaping scheme must be low maintenance.

I am disappointed that the link building is not going to be built. Could it still be built in the future?

Nothing that is being done in the construction of the courtyard will prevent the link building being built in the future. Planning permission has been granted for its construction. When the scope of the re-ordering work was revised after the refusal of faculties at the end of 2018 the committee considered options in their decision making including a reduced scheme covered walkway. It was realised that infrastructure and foundations for such would need replacing should a more permanent structure be built further down the line. Therefore, it was recommended to PCC not to include as it wouldn't be value for money.

Funding

Is it a wise investment? It's been a whole generation since any change has taken place in the building; with the poor heating, leaking roofs, poor access and lack of modern amenities, the option to do nothing really doesn't exist. We believe the proposed changes are appropriate, theologically sound and financially manageable.

If requested, will funds previously given be returned? Paul Houghton our Treasurer explains - following detailed consultation with the Charities Commission, the original project is not deemed to have 'failed' and the current project scope is a revision of the original proposal. As such, it is not legally possible to return any funds previously given to the BFTF project.

What will we do if we do not raise all of the required funding? Paul Houghton our Treasurer explains – if we fall short of the required funding, we will have a number of options including allocating some of our 'reserves' or we could borrow to bridge any remaining gap. Any such decisions would be taken by the PCC.

Are the DAC (Diocesan Advisory Committee) aware of the imminent cut-off for the church to reclaim gift aid and are they responding appropriately? There is no dependency on the DAC for us to make this re-claim. With DAC support for all of the technical aspects of the project, the PCC have approved that we should proceed to submit the claim in the next few weeks ahead of the cut-off.

Is there a financial contingency plan in place? Yes, in our cost estimates we have allowed a prudent level of contingency.

Is this the right time to proceed with the project? The PCC and staff team considered this matter thoughtfully and prayerfully and on balance considered it was right to proceed with the project. Our leaky building will only deteriorate further, the heating become more unreliable and we need to improve accessibility. The building work is focussed on furthering the work of gospel proclamation in providing: welcoming, flexible and accessible surroundings both for now and for the next generation.

Whilst Covid-19 is an interruption to our normal pattern of assembling for worship on Sundays, it is also an opportunity to proceed with the work whilst the church building cannot be used for Sunday worship.

Are we getting less for more?? In 2015 the project was estimated to cost in the region of £2.75m, the same project costed today would be in the region of £4m.

The 2020 project delivers all the important changes...and more

- To the church:
underfloor heating, double glazing, blinds to south aisle, improved lighting, AV, toilets, servery, redecoration, new electrics, new seating, new flooring, flexible seating, improved entry points, storage. (Alongside this we will be repairing the roof)
- To the centre:
lift and new catering kitchen
- To the entrance:
welcoming landscaped entrance with wide level path drawing people into the centre of the site

There will be many other questions – please send your questions and thoughts to:
buildingforthefuture@fulwoodchurch.co.uk