

Turret Times Special – 24th June 2017 Update on The Building Project –HAP (Holcombe Accessibility Project)

The original ideas as shown in the architect's schematic drawings were outlined in the Turret Times of February 2016.

The **final architect's plans** contained a **development**, (highlighted below in **bold**) and the November 2016 Turret times contained an invitation to meet after church to talk everything through, and to contact steering group members if it was not possible to attend. The plans were also described in church. (The relevant extracts from the TT's are available at the back of the church, but please remember the development.) The architect's plans have been on display in the church from Nov 2016 until very recently, but at this point the DCC felt it appropriate to remind everyone of the development.

Summer 2016 editions of the Turret Times had mentioned a further legacy. We should know details of this before the end of Summer 2017. In the light of possible extra funding, in the summer of 2016, the DCC decided to revisit some ideas that had originally been discarded to prune cost. These ideas were incorporated into the architect's plans (which have been on display) and were presented as above and to any who took up the offer to contact the steering group. Groups - the Choir, gardeners, cleaners and flower arrangers- were consulted.

The development involved the following:

1. moving the office from the current flower room to the current kitchen with the outside store knocked in to create a larger room. In the original drawings it was not liked by either the architect or the Diocesan office, (too cramped, no outside light or ventilation)
2. A good quality wooden shed to house the garden implements, in front of the outside east wall of the church.
3. The flower room becomes a dry store with ample space for choir robes etc (which in the previous plans had been lacking) as well as cleaning items.
4. On the left of the entrance in the lobby, there is a butler sink and storage for flower arranging items concealed behind appropriate wooden doors etc.
5. The new office has an outside wall and an external (not a roof) window.
6. **The DCC agreed to create a facility common in most churches, namely a doorway through to the chancel from the office, using the current window. Once done, it would not significantly alter the view looking down the church. The architect has taken great care over the specification of the stonework.**

The DCC realised that this was a departure from the original description where it was said that the church would not be affected – hence the meetings and offer to explain the enhanced plans.

The advantages of this are many:

- access from the location of the safe to the altar for setting up,
- exit route from the office avoiding those assembling in the church room, important if meeting is sensitive.
- additional means of exit in any emergency providing an exit from the area of the choir stalls, organ and altar. (*This latter was brought into sharp focus when the churches received instructions to review evacuation procedures following the murder of the French priest. This exit could not be an official fire escape as it involves an office but it could be used in an emergency.*)
- It would make some activities much safer e.g. large groups of children in that area (crib service, Messy Church etc). There would have to be steps into the chancel as are found in most older churches because of the difference in floor level, but anyone there would have negotiated steps, and there are ways of ensuring they are not a hazard.. This meets building regs approval and the Diocesan office have called the project a very good one.

We want people to understand that whilst the work is in progress, Health and Safety may dictate that access to the building is limited. The Archdeacon is aware of this and has given permission to worship elsewhere. It is not uncommon for this to happen whilst churches are renovated. The church would not be “closed” but practically we may not be able to use it. This might apply at some points even if we were only replacing the vestry roof, which needs to come off in its entirety. Written in to the contract with the builder would be the provision to hold a funeral at 2 weeks' notice, and for times when the Memorial Garden could be accessed. The main part of the church garden would be off limits to the builders. At times there would be no water and no usable toilet. A skip will be needed in the road. Everything will have to be cleared out of the vestries, which would apply even with just the roof work. The DCC philosophy has been that as we have to make a mess, do as much as possible. We know the organ needs to be protected, and, as the organ loft goes under the vestry roof, that would apply to a simple re- roofing project.

We do not have dates yet but the time is getting nearer when we will be committing ourselves. We would not commit to a builder without the funds, but there is a possibility that might be sooner rather than later. We do not know timescales, but we are hopeful for October. **Please talk to us if you have any further questions or comments.** This is exciting. It will be hard work, but short time pain for the benefit of us, the community, and those to come. We are stewards for the future. Please keep on praying.
Chris, Bill, Mike, Mike, Brian, Steve.

PS – a big thank you to all the group, but particularly for the convenor, Mike Burden, for all his hard work. Chris