

Using the church while the new hall is built

User groups for the hall, and the church itself, will be using the church for meetings while the building work progresses. The Property Committee has now agreed the following items to enable this to happen:

The path through the graveyard will be extended through a new entrance in the stone boundary wall, so that users of the car park will be able to walk up from the car park, through the graveyard, on a smooth path without steps, to the Manchester Road door. We are thinking about erecting some form of lych gate in the gap in the wall, and maybe a couple of benches inside the wall, to improve the appearance and usability of the space. The stone posts at the west end entrance will be moved back about 2 metres, and the stone walls re-built, and the gates widened, to make a wider and safer drive into and out of the Lecture Room entrance. At the same time the corner wall of the grave-yard, which has been recently damaged, will be re-built on a curve slightly further back, so that there is better visibility coming out of the car park.

There will be a small sink and worktop with cupboards in the back corner of the organ room, in the corner under the new loft, so that coffee and refreshments can be served in the church. We will install a new water boiler, and a filter coffee machine, to improve the use of the space. We will put some of the church chairs in. We will sort out the floor levels and lay some carpet in the organ room, so that it feels nicer. We are not planning to decorate before we have decided eventually how we want to use the old organ room. We have agreed to purchase new folding lightweight tables to replace the old tables in the hall, and a storage trolley for them. We will be able to use the new tables in the hall when it is re-built. The toilet below the minister's vestry will be re-commissioned.

Quinquennial Inspection

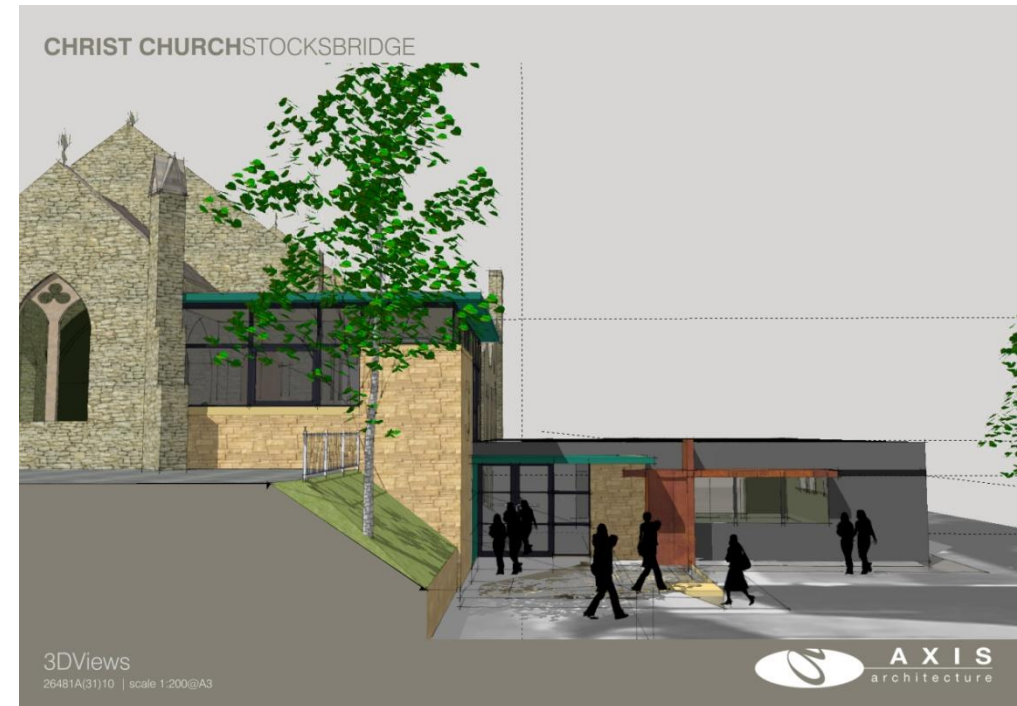
The recent inspection did not tell us anything we didn't know already, and not raised any expensive items. The Property Committee will be working through at its next meeting the programme of actions needed to comply.

Mission and Service

Both the URC and Methodist Churches need us to set out clearly how our vision for mission and service requires and justifies all this work and effort and money. So the finalisation of the Statement of Mission and Service is really important. It will be agreed at the next Leadership Team, after the recent consultation. Thank you to everyone who responded.

Jon P. Lucas Jr

Christ Church Stocksbridge
A URC/Methodist Local Ecumenical Partnership



We've got planning permission !

Re-development Update 2 : April 2013

2nd edition of this Occasional Newsletter

Here is the second edition of the regular Building Development Update that I promised in February that we would publish every couple of months to make sure everyone is up-to-date on developments. The Property Committee met at church this week to consider arrangements for the new organ, the new hall and how we plan and proceed through the next stage.

Planning Permission and other consents

Last week we had the official letter from the Sheffield City Council Planning Department, advising that we have been granted full planning consent for the hall and link building. There are the standard conditions for detailed drawings for some elements, (windows, doors etc.) and that we cannot use the hall without having the toilets and accessible lift also built at the same time. They want to see and be able to agree in writing the detailed drawings for the new glass doors on the Manchester Road doors, and we must have 36 parking spaces. This is a real step forward and now we can prepare drawings for tender.

The United Reformed Church has now given consent from the Property Committee for the building changes, and from their Finance Committee for the fund-raising plan. They will want to see and advise on the detailed plans when they are available, but this means we have the go-ahead from the national church that is responsible for the building.

The Methodist Circuit also gave its consent this week at the Circuit Leadership Team to the fund-raising plan. They have to do this to enable the release of the £50,000 held in Sheffield and Manchester from the sale of Wesley. The Methodist District now has to give its consent, and we have worked with London last week to get this building into their systems as an LEP owned by the URC, so that from last week we are able to progress this. We will have to discuss the plans also with the relevant members of the new Sheffield single circuit, which comes into operation in September, as they will be taking over responsibility then for the Methodist input.

A lot of people have been involved in all this, and especial thanks should be given to David Hurrell and Mike Clarke, with Nilam Buchannan's help, who have put a lot of worry and effort into getting us this far.

New Notice-board

The new modern, highly visible notice-board to declare ourselves to the public as 'open for them' has been ordered and will arrive in a month or so, to be erected at the corner of the churchyard near the top of the drive.

Organ Loft

Roy Ashmore has now built the new organ loft ready for the delivery of the organ, with help from Julian Smith, and he has made a wonderfully sound and discreet loft, high up in the organ room. He is now going to build cupboards underneath.

Mark Rotchell has been busy with the Organ builder to finalise details and get the contract for the new organ in place. The organ builder will be coming soon to check out the loft, and plan the installation of the speakers. He told us this week that the builders now have a date in May for delivery, a little earlier than we had expected, so we have to get on and finish the organ loft ready for May/June installation.

The Property Committee spent a long time thinking through how to re-install the organ pipe screen that used to be on the floor under the arch into the organ room. It's going into the wall that Roy has built where the old organ used to be. But before we can decide exactly how we want it to look, Roy is going to cut out the space for it, and temporarily place the wooden screen with the pipes into the space. Then we can see how it looks, and whether we want the screen to remain in full, or to remove the lower part of the screen. Everyone will get the chance to have a look at it before we decide.

We still have not had the conversation about what we want to do in the long-term with the organ space; we will do that later this year. But in the section of this update about the use of the church during the re-building, you will see some details about its temporary use.

Choir staging

The Property Committee has not yet had the detailed discussion about the choir staging. There are several ideas that they are considering. We will have that conversation in the next couple of months so that we can be ready to make the changes to lower the choir seating later in the year, and have a flexible use of the space for other events.

New Storage Space

The Property Committee decided to go ahead immediately with a structural investigation so that we can start straight-away to create a new storage space under the church itself. There will be new double doors into this storage through the Lecture Room wall, and it will be a standing-height space, with internal walls to make a neat and tidy storage space for tables, chairs and equipment.

Roof and gutters

Thanks to Rex Brearley for working with the roofer to clean and inspect the roof and gutters.