

Community Meeting Saturday 1st February 2020

Notes of meeting

Attended: 38

Apologies: 5

Kingston: 24

Monkton: 6

Brixton: 3

Elsewhere: 5

Rev Pauline Reid

Enthusiastic for updating the church to make it a comfortable and welcoming place for future use both religious and secular. In the past the church would not have had pews but benches around the walls for the elderly and infirm. A sacred space at the east end and a large public space for all sorts of activities.

David Stratton

Introduction of the re-ordering to make the building fit for the next 50+ years. The church needs updating now. The installation of the current heating and lighting was in the 1950/70s. A toilet is required in the 21st century. The church is not competing with the village hall but will be complementary. David had visited other churches locally which have been updated. There is a move in the Diocese, and country wide, for the improvement of facilities in churches. The sacred will be respected, the building remains a church at the heart of the community.

Richard Munro

Gave a presentation and explained the origins of the re-ordering and the need to bring the building up to the standards of the 21st century. Work needs to begin before it starts to fail, for lack of congregation and care, it needs to achieve sustainability. If we do not do something now the building may ultimately have to be used for another purpose altogether, such as happened to Monkton and Hill churches which are now dwellings. All the work of the PCC Sub-committee will be noted in the Parish News and villages Facebook page and reported on a website that will be set up very soon.

The committee will be pleased to receive any comments.

The Committee introduced themselves

David Stratton (Chair), Vanessa Colyer, Ted Flint, John Lea, Richard Lucas, Judy Munro, Robert Shuler, Julian Wiltshire and Richard Munro (Programme Manager).

Questions / Comments

Individual comments, and answers from sub-committee members where requested, are shown below. Other than those of the sub-committee, names have been omitted.

1. Suggested an area for Sunday School / grandchildren.
2. Congratulated Richard on presentation but said there were negatives and positives. Two separate things, up grading and use of church. Feeling of special space. Although he is not a church goer this is an important building, it is expected to be a church. When the post office closed the services were available elsewhere. The church should not be a place of popular entertainment. Worried about the conflict of funding for the village with the hall development.

Kingston Deverill Church Re-ordering Programme

3. Asked about village hall. It is flourishing socially but the building needs replacing. The hall is working on plans now to replace the current building with one of a similar size – a ‘better cricket pavilion’. Access to different funding village halls, sport facility although some sources may be the same as that for the church. He wants to be sure both groups do things as one parish and work in partnership. We have inherited the hall and the church from previous generations, and we want to pass them on in good order to the next people.
4. Asked about the business plan, running costs, lettings, cleaning.
5. Asked about the organ, its value and cost of a replacement.
6. Said the organ is not worth much in monetary value but is in good order and of historic interest. With good care it would last another 50/80 years. He was not in favour of an electronic one, they are inferior. He would resign if one was installed.

Richard Munro Commented the organ was donated in 1885 (Julian Wiltshire verified this), it is part of the fixtures as are the pews and therefore the committee has to consider all options. To remove the organ would be cost neutral if a buyer can be found. A large space with more light would be created by its removal.

7. I like the pews and am not in favour of chairs. Pews from my old school chapel were sold off (I have one) they have a value.
8. In favour of the pews. Chairs move about. Perhaps a mixture of both.

Ted Flint There will be more consultation with the community and another public meeting when ideas have been formulated.

Richard Munro The annual Parish meeting arranged by the Parish Council will be discussing all community facilities. He hopes people will come and air their views. It is hoped to have a faculty for the church ready within 6 months. It will be a drawn out process because various bodies will be involved e.g. DAC, Victorian Society, etc but we will continue to push forward.

9. Hindon Church has been reordered. It is in the heart of the village and is the centre of many activities. KD church is on the periphery of the community, how much use would it get? Market research needs to be done.

Richard Munro A statement of needs will be drawn up as part of the development work.

10. Longbridge Church is also considering installing a toilet and sink etc. but the planning is not as advanced as KD. There may be a conflict of funding in the PCC.
11. Quinquennial survey results are due now, Essential repairs 5 years ago cost the three churches about £30,000. The electrics also have to be tested every 5 years.

David Stratton is delighted that both churches are improving their facilities. This will enable more use and opportunities for these buildings.

12. All churches are important, inc. Brixton, one should not be more important than another, need to consider everyone.
13. Parking for KD with extra functions could prove to be a difficulty.

Kingston Deverill Church Re-ordering Programme

David Stratton is keen for the continuation of the 'machinery yard' to be used for parking for the church. Some of the old machines could be moved and limited use by the tractors instigated. Improvements in the surface and installation of lighting from the church could be considered.

14. Asked what was envisaged as happening in the church in the future, it may become a victim of its own success. Management of the building. Conflict of events, for example if there was an art show and then a need to hold a funeral, wedding etc. How would that be managed?
15. Successful 'conversations' seem to involve larger churches with side aisles, more space to convert.
16. The Font is very important part of the church. The pews are beautifully made.
17. Reinstall a screen / movable for the sacred space?
18. 'I am not a Christian'. The church is a Christian place. Somewhere for contemplation. Spiritual space.
19. Communicate with committee about views.
20. Is the fabric of the church sound? Yes. People from far and wide love this church.

Robert Shuler Everyone has an opportunity to comment. Ultimately the PCC will make the decisions.

Comments from those who sent apologies

1. Interested in outcome – keep me on the list
2. I believe that, in this day and age, anything which makes the church more "user friendly" has to be a good thing and make it more suitable for artistic events
3. Very much in favour of the church being taken forward – otherwise it is likely that it will die within the next ten years. Against spending substantial sums on a building used purely as a 'church' [place of worship]. That is what happened at Monkton, which was subsequently sold off privately. The organ is in the wrong place – given a sacred space [chancel] distinct from the main space [nave]. And there will soon be nobody to play it anyway. The remaining body of the church [nave, etc] would have chairs and facilities for refreshments for meetings, lunches, film shows, etc.
4. Questioned the statement that our community is 'facing cultural and social decline' – gave examples where, in his opinion, it definitely is not. The Church and PCC can not afford to fund additional facilities. It would be to the detriment of funds being available to support other Deverill churches. He hopes that the PCC is not funding preparatory investigative work and through-life maintenance costs. The scheme, in particular the fundraising activities, will be in direct competition with the Village Hall.
5. I would have been interested to learn more about your plans as I think it's a great project.