

## Parish Church Renewal Project and PCC Update

The PCC met on 22 October, to take the next step in the renewal of the Parish Church building. This meeting was postponed from September to allow the PCC time to consider these important proposals.

### Commissioning a Feasibility Study

Following an intensive selection process, including visits to other church projects, the project steering group proposed commissioning **Oliver Architecture and Hall McKnight Architects** to prepare a “feasibility study” for the Parish. This proposal was discussed and unanimously accepted by the PCC. We also agreed to commission a “statement of significance” analysing the history and architectural importance of the Parish Church building, as well as a “measured survey” to give the detailed measurements the architects will need to begin work.

### Our chosen architects

[Hall McKnight](#) came to our attention because they have been doing extensive work for the Convent. However, they are not church building specialists, so they suggested working with [Oliver Architecture](#). Recent projects have included Holy Trinity Stratford-on-Avon (‘Shakespeare’s Church’). All of the architects shortlisted were experienced and capable, and it was a difficult decision. However we decided that the partnership between these two firms was strongest because of their commitment to understanding us as a church community, and the creative thinking they could offer at this early stage in the project. There are a lot of things we would like to be able to achieve, not all of which may be possible, and we hope they will be able to come up with solutions we haven’t thought of, and to guide us through identifying our key priorities.

### What is a feasibility study?

The feasibility study is the first stage in a major building project. The architects will work with us to identify how we currently use the building and what we need it to do better. They will then come up with a range of options for us to consider.

### What is the next step?

The first step will be for the architects to visit the church and speak to the project team, the PCC, and other members of the congregation, as well as other key users of the building. Once they have come up with some ideas to meet our needs, we will then have a further chance to discuss and consult on the proposals (with

pictures or models) and feed back over a period of time, before we settle on a final plan. It is likely that the plan will be 'phased', that is, we will not do everything at once but identify which are our first priorities. You will soon start to see some more communication (e.g. web pages) about the project and how you can feed in your thoughts.

### Keeping the Parish Church open

The PCC also discussed how we can safely keep the Parish Church open more during the day. We would like to do this as many more visitors come in when the church is open in the afternoon, and our insurers are also in favour of churches being open. However this carries risks. The PCC discussed the steps we would need to take to improve security and minimise fire risk. We agreed which risks we can accept and which will need changes. Mostly this can be done with relatively little cost (e.g. updating some internal locks) but it will require us to change our way of working and how we store some things. This would affect our volunteers, so before we do anything more we will be speaking to those of you who are in and out of the church during the week.

### Other PCC business

The PCC also discussed the rules around who can have their ashes buried outside the two churches, the principles for the hiring of Holy Trinity, especially by other church groups and for events using the kitchen, and feedback on the pewsheets and e-news. The next meeting will be in November and will focus on our finances and budget for the year to come.