

2nd December 2021



Dear Friends,

It may come as something of a surprise to you but at an extraordinary meeting of the PCC yesterday evening (Wednesday) the decision was taken to look into selling the Parish Hall (that is owned by our parish (PCC)). This was not taken lightly, especially as it was recognised that it has served an incredibly important purpose both for the churches of the parish and the town of Wareham. Over the past decades it has been faithfully maintained and improved considerably; mainly due to the hard work of Carol and Maurice Turner, and a team of helpers, who we want to publicly thank for all the dedicated service they have given.

However, to all things there is time and a season and recent events have suggested that the season for this particular hall may have come to an end. At the beginning of autumn, the roof started to leak, which it has done many times before, but this time we were informed that it was beyond repair. It would need a new roof and insulation to prevent the major heat losses through the roof and walls. At the same time the boiler started having problems, which have now been repaired (but being 21 years old it may not have too much life left in it).

With large increases on the horizon for our parish share (payment to the diocese), church repairs and utilities etc. as a parish we will find it difficult to raise all the money for these, let alone the work required on the parish hall.

So far this might sound rather pessimistic but with Christ there is always grounds for optimism, from death comes resurrection. And, just as we were facing the issues relating to the parish hall, we discovered that contrary to what we had been told, we own the piece of the churchyard to the north of the church (between the church and Church Lane). In light of this the idea was born to explore the possibility of building a new, purpose built, eco-friendly, hall on this patch of land. It could be linked to the Church maybe through the choir vestry door and provide most, if not all of the facilities that the present hall provides.

Of course, this is not a foregone conclusion but the PCC will be actively exploring this exciting possibility, and consulting with our architect and the relevant diocesan and civil planning authorities over the coming months. The motion that was put to the PCC was '*...that the site of the Wareham Parish Hall be sold unless within a six-month period a sustainable rescue plan can be put in place.*' This recognises that in the ideal world it would be good to keep the old parish hall whilst we raise funds for a new one (and sensitively re-order Lady St Mary church) but it was felt that with the cost of the repairs to both the hall and the church we would be overwhelmed with the amount of fundraising required. **However**, if there was a generous benefactor (or a group of people) who wished to save the hall, paying for the repairs and the ongoing costs, then the PCC would reconsider the decision made.

We do not underestimate the enormity of the decision that was made. We recognise the impact it will have on both the ecclesiastical and civil parish, and the short-term disruption to many groups and gatherings but we think this will be worth it in the long run.

We are sure that you (and the wider public) will have many questions relating to this matter and in order to address these we propose to have some meetings for church members and the wider public in the New Year, and good notice will be given of these.

This is a bold step of faith by the PCC and God alone knows what the future holds, for the time being let our prayer be, 'Thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth (in this parish) as it is in heaven. Amen'

Yours sincerely in Christ,

Simon Everett
Team Rector

Hilary Goodinge
Churchwarden

Mike Quinlan
Churchwarden



14th December 2021

Dear Friends,

Parish Hall Update

Since our last letter of 2nd December, there has understandably been much discussion about the PCC looking into the possibility of selling the Parish Hall. This in turn has led to assorted conclusions and so we are writing to address some of these.

We wish to make it clear that although the motion stated '*...that the site of the Wareham Parish Hall be sold unless within a six-month period a sustainable rescue plan can be put in place*' This does not mean the hall will be sold precisely six months from the PCC meeting. The idea of this time period was to make as many enquiries as possible, so that we could have a clear idea as to what might, or might not, be possible. If after six months things were still unclear the PCC would extend this deadline, Parish Hall roof permitting.

You can be assured that the PCC would not sell the existing hall without knowing for sure that a new hall could be built to the north of Lady St Mary church. Perhaps it should be said that the trustees of the Parish Hall, the PCC, will be the body making decisions regarding all future developments. The difficulty is, we do not want to be spending large sums of money on an ageing, uneconomical building, (that is hopefully going to be superseded and sold within a few years) at a time when we are facing mounting bills for share and fabric repairs to LSM etc.

To conclude, we reiterate what was said in our previous letter, there will be opportunities for church members and the wider public to ask questions and be kept informed in the coming months. As your parish church leaders It is our firm intention to make sure that everything is out in the open and clear for all to see.

Yours sincerely in Christ,

Simon Everett
Team Rector

Hilary Goodinge
Churchwarden

Mike Quinlan
Churchwarden