

St Andrews Psalter Lane Church

Property and Finance Committee Annual Report 1st April 2020 – 31st March 2021

The P&F committee met 3 times during the period. There were no meetings during the 1st Lockdown and since then meetings have been on Zoom.

Administration

Staffing:

- **Church Administrator**, Chris Heald was appointed Church Administrator on 1st September with increased responsibilities for property and administration. He will line manager Debbie Thirtle and the 2 posts below. An unsuccessful attempt was made to appoint an ECC nominee as his line manager, but Gareth Jones will continue to do this.
- **Property and Liaison Officer** – Catherine Rooker-Brown: Appointed 1st December at 7 hours per week for SAPLC to assist with 4 hours for Property (liaison, fund raising) and 3 hours Mission support (children's ministry, slides for on-line services. Ways of reducing the time required to prepare slides have been discussed,
- **Policies and Communications Officer** – Clare Loughridge. Appointed on 6th April 2020.
- Chris Heald was furloughed from 23rd March to 20th July while the office was closed due to Covid 19 actions; Consideration was given to whether Debbie Thirtle and Simon Dumbleton should be Furloughed, but it was decided their services would continue to be required.
- It was necessary for Debbie Thirtle to continue to clean Shirley House but as Church cleaning was designated as non-essential, it was not possible for her to deep clean the Church as proposed so she used her work time to redecorate Room 1 and paint doors in the hallway of Shirley House.
- We are considering employing a cleaner to cover for our caretaker's holiday and sickness absences. Dawn Cripps is at present cleaning the Church and Shirley House while Debbie Thirtle is on sick leave.

Property and Finance Committee:

- It was decided to reduce the number of meetings to 5 per year, before ECC meetings: 23rd April, 23rd July, 15th Sept, TBA December 2020. It was also decided to reduce the membership of the committee. John Harding stood-down and was thanked for his many years of excellent service on the committee.
- A list of our Policies has been created and prioritised for updating. We are considering an Inclusivity Policy and have revised the Procurement and Bookings Policies.

Quinquennial Inspection: Various maintenance issues were highlighted and progress since report dated 14th September, is as follows:

Essential in next 12 months (likely to cost £7000-£9000):

- External painting throughout (Church rainwater pipes to be renovated, quotes for Shirley House)
- Rainwater pipes at Church (Contractor appointed, work to include provision of 2 rainwater butts)
- Clean all gullies (Done, but some challenging gullies at Shirley House)
- Remove ivy from Shirley House (Done)
- Fire protection to doors (The Architect views this as unnecessary and options are being considered)
- Safety glass to windows, doors and vestibule frames (Contractor appointed)
- Repairs to rainwater pipes, eaves gutters and timbers to Shirley House (Quotes requested)
- Reconstruct cellar entrance at Shirley House (No action as requires access via Caretaker's flat)

Essential in next 5 years (inc work at Shirley House- likely to cost £10000-£15000):

- Rising dampness in Church (No action)
- Repairs to fleche (spire) to roof (Quotes obtained, but need to apply for funding)
- Penetrating dampness in toilets in Church (Suspect leaks in flashing to be investigated)
- Dampness in Shirley House porch. (No actions)

There were no items of the *utmost urgency, advisable within 5 years or requiring further investigation*. Our experience is that the cost of work considerably exceeds the surveyor's estimations.

Shirley House

Leases:

- David Miller Associates started to Room 7 from 1st August 2020. We are awaiting formal signing of the lease.
- The Room 9 tenants were objecting to sign the lease as this required a trustee to act as guarantor. It was suggested that they should pay a deposit of 3 months rent against the possibility of default of rent or terms. MTCP confirmed this is acceptable and the solicitor is drawing up a modified lease. As their present lease expires in June 2021, they are being offered a new lease from 1st March 2021.
- Home Instead are occupying rooms 5 and 6. The communicating door between these offices has been restored.
- Mum's United used the Interfaith Room from mid May to August to store materials and assemble packs of materials for distribution.
- Consideration was given at the ECC meeting on 16th February to options for increasing income from Shirely House: 1. Allow the interfaith room to be booked for community purposes, 2. Let as an office on a lease. It was decided on option 1, as 3-4 hours hire charges would yield income similar to an office, while preserving use of the room for Interfaith activities.

Corvid 19:

- Corvid risk assessments were carried out for the continuation of activities in Shirley House during the lockdown. The use of Rooms 1 and 3 for community use, the Interfaith centre and Quaker meetings was suspended. The kitchens and some toilets were taken out of service and the cleaning of public areas increased. The tenants were reminded that where possible they should be working from home. Home Instead continue to use room 6, with one member of staff responsible for dispensing PPE.
- On 4th August guidance was issued on the use of community halls and similar venues. Live performances of drama, music and comedy remained prohibited, but limited socially spaced meetings could be held, as long as hirer had also done their own risk assessment and this is acceptable to us. In September we decided to display a QR Test and Trace codes in the Church and Shirley House.

Works:

- It is proposed to install a notice board visible on the Psalter Lane frontage to display details of tenants' companies. This has been deferred due to the present financial position.
- Fire alarm servicing and weekly tests have been performed
- Room 7 was rewired and LED lighting was installed prior to it being redecorated by the tenant. LED lighting has been fitted in room 6 but plans to rewire this room 6 were abandoned as the tenant redecorated and recarpetted the room.
- The proposed kitchen upgrade has been deferred for the time being.
- A service contract for the automatic front door is in place and we are expecting the door mechanism to be operating in a fully automatic manner.

Church:

Works:

- We are creating an inventory of the Church's belongings.
- The final details of the design of the light box to better illuminate the Morris School stained glass in the Narthex are nearing completion.
- A final design of a stairway to provide safe access to the roof space has been requested from the contractor and we need to have this checked by a structural engineer and the insurance company TMCP have given conditional approval.
- Sources of funding for replacement downpipes and repairs to the Spire are being investigated.
- A quote of £600 +vat has been obtained for the installation of a plug in and play single microphone hearing loop in the chancel.
- The squatter in the south side doorway had been helped to take up the offered accommodation. A wire grillage was fitted to the outer gate to prevent this from being opened from the outside in future. Fire alarm, fire equipment and emergency lighting servicing and weekly tests have been performed.
- Options for automating the entrance doors to Church are being costed.

Covid 19:

- Services were suspended from 22nd March 2020, and on-line services via Youtube began in April. From 6th September these included video images filmed inside and outside Church.

- In June it was decided that we should open for Private Prayer and a Wedding that had been postponed earlier in the year due to Covid and was then booked for 1st August. We set up a Covid team consisting of JCC, Debbie Thirtle, Janet Loughridge, Clare Loughridge, Alison Gregg, Alan Wadham, Anne Hollows and Anna Harvey to consider the assessments and/or act as welcomers. The risk assessments and mitigation actions were circulated to the Circuit and the Circuit Covid team. Janet coordinated welcomers and Clare set up the card reader for on-line donations. Twice weekly Private Prayer started in August with Debbie and a volunteer in attendance. On Sunday 4th October we began fortnightly Sunday afternoon services in Church, which continued until 20th December. A remembrance day service was held in the Church garden on 8th November. Risk assessments and protocols were written so that these services could be conducted in a Covid safe manner. Clare Loughridge arranged a booking system and seating plan for services in Church. It was hoped that it would be possible to live-stream these services, but the board-band capacity in Church would be too slow for this. Private prayer started taking place weekly on Thursday mornings from 8th October 2020 to 7th January 2021.
- The heating was reduced and reprogrammed to reduce the use of gas.
- Kaoru Bingham recorded a concert on 9th September that was streamed via SAPLC YouTube on 19th September as part of the Nether Edge Festival.
- The St Andrews Psalter Lane Music Festival was cancelled.

Grounds:

- Garden working parties were organised on the first Saturday of each month. We planted runner beans, French beans and kale in the plot to the rear of Church. We have continued to clear the undergrowth from the shrubbery area. Garden waste and prunings are being processed into compost and wood chips. Trees that were interfering with the telephone wires were pruned and the grass was mowed by several volunteers. We had a good crop of apples in September. The grass in the orchard area and adjacent to Cherry Tree Road was allowed to grow and was cut in September.
- Improved access was made to the main Church notice board.
- We have identified some dead branches in trees which we propose to remove during working parties. We will then have the trees professionally inspected to ensure their safety.

Health and Safety Issues:

- Some of the LED lights on the pedestrian access between the Church car park and the drive in front of Shirley House and on the ramp that were stolen have been replaced.
- The box with a power supply and the defibrillator device have been installed on the exterior of Shirley House. Arrangements are in place for us to check this regularly. We were pleased to receive a contribution of £400 from NENG towards the cost of this. We are expecting Yorkshire Ambulance Service to provide training for its use.
- Guidance from the Circuit indicated that while the Church is not in use the water system should be flushed each week and that if this was not being done we should have the water tested for the presence of legionella bacteria. Flushing started on 4th July and this has since continued weekly. Tests on water samples from the vestry and the kitchen confirmed the absence of legionnaires bacteria.

JCC 10th April 2021