

## **Hampshire Downs Pastoral Centre at St Peters**

### Summary of needs and priorities:

The 2007 consultation report identified the need for a new pastoral centre and identified options to meet that need. Canon Paul asked a number of parishioners with appropriate skills and/or who represented groups using the parish centre to form a project committee to identify those needs in more detail, and work on the various options with the architect to create a design. The project committee was enlarged in 2008 to include expertise in building projects for the church and to connect with the fundraising work of Living Our Faith.

### **Option assessments**

- Option to do nothing  
The 2007 report made it clear that a number of ministry groups were not able to function as well as they needed to do, due to limits on the space of the existing parish centre. Diary clashes between groups were increasing in frequency. Additional ministries (for example: luncheon clubs for elderly people, more regular youth group meetings for older teenagers) and access to all activities by people with mobility problems were being restricted by the disadvantages of the current parish centre. More activities were being transferred through the goodwill of the parish priest to Peterhouse, creating more pressure on that space and even less privacy for the residents. The option to do nothing was not considered viable other than in the very short term. In the long term it could contribute to the parish failing to attract the best parish priests in the future and to ministry groups declining in effectiveness.
- Option to relocate the parish offices and some other functions to church owned property on Jewry Street was considered and presented some difficulties for disabled access. This option would not meet all the needs identified in the report but is being considered alongside the parish centre rebuild.
- Option to reorientate the site to use St Peters Street as the main access was discounted due to the desire to retain the West entrance and elevation as the main aspect of the church. Use of the other buildings on the site (Peterhouse, Milner Hall and the convent) was also explored and present a number of problems including listed building and planning constraints.
- The option of altering the existing parish centre to meet the needs identified in the report was considered the main option, with two ancillary pieces of work to be examined at a later stage; the possibility of adapting 29 Jewry Street if the ground floor offices became available and the possibility of renting out Peterhouse as a residential or commercial property and using other property on the site for clergy accommodation. The latter two options would not meet the full needs

identified in the 2007 report and are not therefore alternatives to the parish centre option.

### **Parish Centre Options**

Refurbish and Extend compared to Demolish and Rebuild, and options in between.

A number of options for a new parish centre are available. They are not all mutually exclusive and could indeed be seen as modular arrangements of preferred options versus cost, effectiveness and risk if not undertaken.

A QS costed option to demolish and rebuild as a brand new centre was obtained early in the project to provide some idea of costs and a benchmark against other options. The QS costings were approximately £1.3m inclusive of fees and contingency but exclusive of VAT, landscaping and fitting out. A developer costed proposal for extension and refurbish (to provide level access to the new 2 floor extension, a lift, new kitchen and toilets, changes to the roof and windows and more meeting space) was provided at £900,000. The gathering space is estimated without a full costing exercise at about £300,000.

### **Priority of Needs**

Following discussion with users of the parish centre and visits to other similar projects a priority of needs for the project has been developed:

- Level access to and installation of lift to meet the needs of increasing numbers of parishioners with mobility issues
- more privacy for the clergy in Peterhouse and for confidential visits
- modern facilities (kitchen and larger hall) to provide more welcoming and community activities including the provision of luncheon clubs for older people
- more rooms for parish ministry groups to meet simultaneously
- an informal gathering space before and after Mass
- offices for all parish staff
- Larger meeting rooms to accommodate the increasing size of our ministry groups (including children's liturgy, youth group) and our other activities
- A Disability Discrimination Act compliant facility which could host larger events and become a rental income source

Current usage of the parish centre averages 49 bookings per month. These figures do not include bookings for Milner Hall, the church, or meetings at PeterHouse. Experience from other similar projects (Christchurch in Winchester and St Bede's in Basingstoke) indicates that bookings should increase by a minimum of 30% within a year of opening.

### **Option Analysis**

**(note costings are estimates and do not include VAT or fitting out).**

- **Refurbish only** (no new building or extension but refit kitchen and toilets)  
 Lower cost than other options – no detail costings but likely to be less than £300,000  
 Accessibility problems remain and will grow more severe  
 Office relocation to the parish centre would reduce further the space to accommodate ministry groups  
 Peterhouse would continue to be used for meetings  
 Kitchen conforms to hygiene standards but is not suitable for large scale provision of meals  
 No improvement in gathering space for before and after Mass  
**Conclusion** lowest cost but only 1.5 of the needs identified met
- **Refurbish and Extend**  
 Middle level cost - £900,000  
 Accessibility problems to most of building including hall and toilets remain but access to new offices and some meeting rooms will be improved.  
 Office relocation to parish centre would not reduce meeting space  
 No provision of additional capacity for meeting space but could provide a larger room in new extension  
 Peterhouse will continue to be used for meetings  
 Kitchen conforms to hygiene standards but is not suitable for large scale provision of meals  
 Improvement in gathering space  
**Conclusion** relatively high cost for middle option with 2 needs met fully and two met partially
- **Demolish and Rebuild**  
 Highest cost - £1.3m  
 Fully accessible  
 Sustainability built in  
 Office relocation achieved without reducing meeting space and in optimum position for new role as parish resource  
 Additional meeting space capacity and size of rooms  
 Peterhouse becomes private residence and available for confidential visits  
 Kitchen conforms to hygiene standards and capable of producing large scale meals  
 Improvement in gathering space  
 Hall increase in capacity and capable of being let for functions  
 Church, Pastoral centre, gathering space church and outdoor area provide integrated parish resource  
**Conclusion** highest cost but meets all 8 needs identified

The difference in cost between the two main options was not considered to be sufficient to compensate for the reduced user value of the new building (only partial level access and no increase in size of hall) and the limited life span of the 1960's parish centre building. However the option to extend and refurbish remains an alternative if the demolish and rebuild option is not affordable.