

Opening the Doors

Redeveloping our Church
for the 21st Century



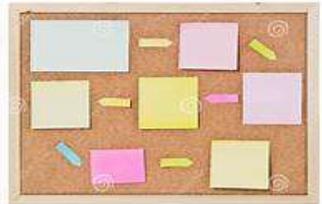
Strathmore Road 
Methodist Church
Rowlands Gill

January 2019

Introduction

This brochure provides an update on our exciting Church Development Project, including ;

- ❖ A summary of the development journey to date along with sources of further information.
- ❖ Reflecting on the mission of our Church and the mission led focus of our project.
- ❖ An update on the current design and planning progress.
- ❖ A status report on project funding.
- ❖ Anticipated future timelines.



Further Information

Copies of the updated floor plans are on display within the church.

Please visit our Development Information Table.

Website: www.rowlandsgill.org.uk



The Development Steering Group members will be happy to answer any further questions you may have.

Development Steering Group Members

Chair : Alan Bradley **Deputy Chair / Co-ordinator :** David Thompson

Finance Team: Matt Taylor (Treasurer), Rob Dixon & Andy Innes

Design Team : Colin Robson & Trevor Peacock

Local fundraising Co-ordinators

David Johnson & Linda Innes

The journey so far

Following discussions on improvements required to the Church buildings, the October 2015 Church Council requested a working group to look at possible options. From the outset the key focus has been on how any improvements we embark upon will enable our future mission plans.

Subsequent Church Council meetings agreed to commission an Architect's feasibility report which was presented to the membership in January 2017. Members were consulted on the Architect's report via letter and questionnaire with further discussions at the May 2017 AGM. With the majority of the members responding favourably and strong support from the AGM, the Church Council meeting in June 2017 voted to proceed with a project on the scale outlined in the feasibility study and to explore the options of an enhanced design.

A Development Steering Group (DSG) was appointed to oversee all aspects of the project going forward, developing the design towards submitting a planning application and a finance and funding strategy to meet the project costs. A timeline of activities was drawn up and over the intervening 18 months or so, the DSG has made significant progress towards the goals of an enhanced design as requested by the Membership, by bringing both details of the design and funding requirements into focus.

A detailed progress report was presented to the October 2018 Church Council meeting. Church Council then had time to consider the report, ask questions at an informal coffee morning, prior to debating further at a special Church Council Meeting in November 2018. This meeting endorsed the current DSG approach to procure the necessary funds and deliver the updated design. Should there be a funding shortfall, Church Council will be provided with a full update prior to considering contingency options.

The ongoing tasks for 2019 are to finalise the design requirements, appoint a Contractor to carry out the works and provide full funding to realise a completed redevelopment in 2020.

Mission

As a Church, throughout the life of our project, we have prayed for God's guidance and sought to discern his will for our future mission in this place and how our building may be developed to be capable of and focussed around, supporting that mission.

Our Purpose

Strathmore Road Methodist Church, exists to exercise the whole ministry of Christ in the local area of Rowlands Gill, and also to share in the wider ministry of the Church. The essential elements of this ministry are worship, fellowship, pastoral care, mission and service

The mission of Strathmore Road Methodist Church (SRMC) arises out of the ongoing experience of God's love and grace founded in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. As a church we continue to explore how we should live in response to God's love both individually and as a community reflecting the way of Christ. Recognising the teaching of Jesus 'to love God with all our, heart, soul, mind and strength and to love our neighbour'. SRMC seeks by the grace of God's Holy Spirit to be a loving community that follows Jesus Christ and worships God together.

A Loving
Community



Our mission statement reflects this desire

"With the help of the Holy Spirit, we seek to live our lives as a loving community with each other and the world around us, following the example and teaching of Jesus Christ and worshipping God".

Our church has 150 members, encompassing all ages, with a thriving ministry among families, children, youth and older members. We are fortunate to have a good representation among the often referred to "missing age group" of 20-45 years. Within the Church people appreciate different forms of worship and we value being able to offer a diversity of styles in our services, to enable people to encounter the living God and express their worship.

Purpose of this Project

For some time we have been praying, exploring and testing ways to develop the premises to meet future needs. We want to "Open the Doors" as we develop our Church for the 21st Century. We identified that we were prevented from achieving our purpose because the present premises speak of an old fashioned faith and a God of the past. We currently have two separate buildings, the Church and Halls have separate entrances and are only linked by a set of toilets which are difficult to access from the church, the easiest route being external. Our premises are well used, however, community groups using the Halls never see inside the Church. We see a need to unify, develop and expand the Church premises to address a number of endemic problems with the current suite of buildings in order to enable our growth and future Mission plans.

Following Jesus



The Importance of this Project

Our Church is growing and is committed to growing disciples. The new development will make it easier to invite people to church, offer hospitality and will open up the worship area to all who use the premises. The current building is not suitable for our present work. Our Sunday School is now running 4 classes, space is at a premium. One class runs in the vestry, not ideal with people setting up whilst the preacher needs a quiet space to prepare, there is too much equipment and too many distractions in the vestry for children to concentrate during class.

Our Messy Church fills the whole building, with crafts and games in the main hall, food in the small hall and story time in the church. We need more space if we are to continue growing this Fresh Expression of Church and to enable consideration of other new models of Church.

Our strong community outreach is bearing fruit with significant numbers of new children, families and young people now attending church, additional flexible space is required.

Our premises are well used by Church and community groups alike. Our development will help all of these groups to flourish and the new improved facilities will encourage establishment of new groups. The development will be a blessing to our local community. We will open up the premises to provide easy access to the church as a quiet space for prayer and reflection. Provision of flexible, less formal, more relaxed areas for people to spend time and meet with others has been high on the agenda during our discussions and consultations.

Our current building has many different floor levels, lots of steps, and heavy entrance doors. It is vitally important that we address these issues, greatly improving accessibility and provide much needed facilities for those with mobility difficulties including level access, level surfaces between different areas of the building and improved and accessible toilet facilities.

Our Circuit has recently employed a Lay Worker to establish a Poverty Truth Commission and to identify community needs across the circuit. Our Church is well placed to be a hub to facilitate areas of this new mission. The improved facilities will be essential in order to offer the support and advocacy services that we anticipate will be required.

In our well used building with many different user groups, all with their own equipment, storage is inadequate. This leads to rooms feeling cluttered and unwelcoming. Improved storage facilities will declutter and improve use of existing rooms and assist with the practical arrangements of managing the premises.

Mission Vision and Outcomes

A priority for the Church is our work with children, young people and their families. The new development will give more flexible space for Messy Church, youth groups and Sunday club. We are a growing church and firmly believe that the combined benefits of the development will enhance our mission and further enable our growth.

Worshipping God



The Development will enhance our worship experience and options. The worship space that is presently behind solid closed doors and has not been refurbished in 40 years will be rejuvenated. We are retaining much of the architecture and history of the building whilst are being more visible, accessible and flexible for the worship of today - space for café church, creativity and opportunity for prayer spaces. The new less formal, relaxed spaces will enable us to develop our existing traditional and new models of church and experiment with and develop other new models. Improved comfort levels will enhance opportunities for informal and formal fellowship and learning.



Local Community

Our current community outreach is thriving. Whilst much of this work is carried out off Church premises, with our Ecumenical partners, it has massively improved community relationships, people view the Church in different light and are much more willing to accept invitations to Church events. Opening up our building, making it more welcoming and accessible will further enhance these opportunities to engage, witness and share. In the last 9 months eleven new young people are attending our youth groups as a direct result of the community football outreach we ran for the first time in 2017.

We are aware that the Church is going through a time of change and we are committed to responding to the move of the Holy Spirit and feel that the new premises will give a flexible and adaptable space for the future church.

During 2018 the Design Development Team has been busy as opportunities to provide feedback on the design proposal were opened up to the membership and friends of the church. The vast majority of feedback embraced the development proposal and positively commented on the scheme as it currently stands. However, that same majority provided some not insignificant constructive feedback for additional works to be incorporated into the scheme. This has in turn, provided the challenge of seeking to incorporate this feedback into what will become the final scheme design. The DSG agreed that the design team should work with the architect to explore the options and costs for an updated and enhanced design with an increased scope of works which included;

- Raise the church floor to align levels with church halls and new entrance area providing “one level” throughout. Retain the organ and raised pulpit, remove choir stall surrounds and provide a raised moveable Dias. Improve lighting.
- Convert current crèche room to vestry /office facilities with independent access via rear door and upgraded external access area.
- Inclusion of a feature glazed room in the new entrance area.
- Toilets - reconfigure to provide additional female WC and cleaner’s cupboard.
- Kitchen – Additional cost provision included to allow for production of final detailed design.
- Small Hall – renew central dividing partition.
- Provide a design and costs for a replacement, as opposed to refurbished heating system.
- Provide a Thermal Upgrade to the existing buildings including double glazing and improved insulation.
- Omit the rear patio / terrace.
- Provision for Audio/ Data/Video/ Power requirements for worship area and other rooms.

Over the summer of 2018 the scheme, including additional works, has been worked into a design by the Architect following which it was agreed that engagement with contractors leading to the early appointment of a preferred contractor, would be the best approach. This offers the benefits of reduced consultant fees and increased cost certainty based on contractor estimates, as opposed to a cost consultants' guide price. It was decided to go to the market in July 2018, inviting estimates to be submitted from four Contractors. The DSG appointed three representatives to review the responses and have now narrowed it down to two contractors to work with and seek further details on various aspects of their proposals. The initial contractor estimates for delivery of this updated design are within the range £675,000 to £750,000.

When the preferred contractor is appointed, a collaborative approach between architect, contractor and ourselves can adjust details of the final design whilst looking at value engineering opportunities to minimise costs in order to deliver the best possible outcome and value within affordability limits.

Our application for pre planning advice based on the feasibility report design received a supportive response from the local authority in January 2017.



Points from the continued discussions with the contractors will be incorporated into aspects of the formal planning application. As well as the updated scheme plans drawn up by the Architect, a Design Access Statement, Heritage Statement, Land Contamination Assessment, Ecological Report and a Community Infrastructure Levy Assessment / exemption claim, are required to support the application.

It was anticipated the formal application would be submitted during November 2018. The recent ecological report stated “The property has been identified as holding a high risk of containing roosting bats and therefore three nocturnal activity surveys are recommended during the bat activity season (May-August inclusive)” We are therefore unable to submit our planning application until these additional surveys have been completed during 2019.

Funding update



This is a significant development for our Church and therefore requires significant support from many sources. Our Funding Plan therefore is a key document to enable us to meet our commitments. Encouraged by the level of member support to date and the initial responses to grant applications, the finance team provides regular updates to the DSG on funding activity. The Funding Plan is updated as and when necessary to reflect grants received and the current status of those funds is outlined below. Whilst there are always opportunities for members and friends to make their gifts, the updated funding plan does not involve seeking additional pledges at this stage from those who have already committed such generous support.

There is a long way to go before reaching the point where the project is fully funded, however the DSG believe the current proposed funding plan is realistic and are cautiously optimistic that the necessary funds can be raised.

Our current committed funds total stands at £391,650.

Secured Funds

Source of Funds	Amount
Local Church Funds - In hand/ pledged (includes gift aid)	£196,130
Legacy Gift	£10,000
Methodist Circuit, District & Connexion contributions	£150,000
External grants received	£34,000
Other Donations / Interest	£1,520
Total Secured Funds	£391,650

Further Fundraising

External grants and fundraising come in many shapes and sizes and all are very relevant if we are to meet our financial target. One such source of income is our local fundraising campaign where everyone can get involved and contribute their time, effort and of course cash, to raise funds locally. Our local fundraising effort has been named 'Spring Into Action' and gets underway at a coffee morning on 2nd February 2019. We aim to raise as much as possible through these local activities and have set a minimum target of £15,000 (with 50/50 match funding to charity).

We have also identified further potential funders and will be submitting grant applications to them from January 2019.

- Trustees for Methodist Church Purposes (TMCP)
- The Hunter Rowe Trust (East Anglia District)
- The Garfield Weston Foundation
- Methodist Insurance
- The Joseph Rank Trust
- The Laing Family Trusts
- All Churches Trust
- National Churches Trust



We continue to research other possible sources of funding and if you know of any contacts in this regard, then the DSG would be most pleased to hear from you.

We are extremely grateful to our members for their sacrificial giving to date and to all of those who have generously committed funding so far. Please pray for our continued funding campaign during 2019.

Anticipated Future Timeline / Key Milestones

- 2019 January 13th - Update / Lunch for Church Membership
- 2019 January onwards – Funding applications, further submissions ongoing
- 2019 January / February – Discussions with Architect and preferred Contractor to firm up design, costs etc.
- 2019 February 2nd - Coffee Morning / launch of Local Fundraising Campaign “ Spring into Action” [Local Fundraising Co-ordinators David Johnson & Linda Innes]
- 2019 February onwards – regular updates to Church Council meetings on progress
- 2019 May- June - BAT Surveys
- 2019 June 22nd Local Fundraising “Finale Event”
- 2019 July - Planning Application Submission
- 2019 September - Planning Application Response
- 2019 December - Target date to have committed project funding in place
- 2020 Spring - Commence construction
- 2020 Autumn - Complete construction