

May 2019 - update for the church family only.
Not for wider circulation

The Annexe project represents a long-standing commitment to better serve our local community, and is a significant factor in my working week, each week. The goal in this note is ongoing information, and renewed energy across our congregations for how we nurture creativity, offer hospitality and deepen community in Next Door Hextable. When realised there will be extensive community spaces, and a community to bless, welcome and serve all. Since my arrival in early 2018 we have engaged many local stakeholders, leaders and the local population, to better engage our community with this church aspiration dating back some fifteen years. *The atmosphere is changing, the welcome is growing and we are making some progress...*

The initial contractors have been off site for some months now, and sadly progress has stopped. Had the monies come together the goal was to commission the interior works by Easter for completion by the end of 2019. *There are three reasons for this delay...*

1. **The external fundraising has been** has been energetically revisited but against an aspirational further 100K of fundraising, there has sadly only been 11K secured, in addition to the wonderful generosity of the church family.
2. **The detail and costings** previously detailed for the building are significantly adrift for more modest and realistic completion now. This has required full reworking on pro-bono and minimal cost. Delays in this mean that there is a consistent uplift on the nineteen large budget items that would see the project completed. Essentially the remaining total works are expected to cost around £600K with almost £200K pledges and detail in place. It is the remaining £400K that is needed. This is this element of our project logjam.
3. **The further loan monies** initially hoped from the diocese, circa £250K has slowed down and there now needs to be a greater amount, from whatever source, with further meetings taking place in early June, as will meetings for A3 permissions for café and wider use as previously not in place, with HPC, SDC and KCC.

For now, the next-step question before us is do we have a season of waiting, praying and urgent seeking of additional funds – say up to year end, or do we do progress with partial zoned works however incomplete? There are at least four part options, or the wait, and seeking the resources to complete the whole of the job. Your prayerful reflections in this invited as soon as possible, ideally by our next PCC mtg on Monday night, 20th May 2019

Here's answers to other frequently asked questions!

1 When will the Annexe be useable please?

Ideally as soon as possible, now it will be in 2020 or beyond.

2 How much work is needed to get this done? A significant amount in the fundraising or loan securing for the remaining £400K monies, either by loans, gifts or repayments. Lots of conversations have been had to explore this, and are ongoing. The stuckness is solely the result of the finance gap

3 How many hours each week are you spending on this Johnny? And is this realistic?!

At least 15-20hrs each week are spent on progressing the completion of this resource.

4 How much have we spent so far? £943k.

5 Estimated further costs to complete? Around £600k, including a modest 7% contingency.

6 How much was the loan? The initial Rochester Diocese loan has been paid consistently, with £2.5K per month repayments, £85K has been paid in full, with £49K remaining.

7 Average monthly building fund donations? There is an account for the building project, with a consistent and appreciated £2.5K per month. In addition to the recent June 2018 pledges, from 48 donors which totalled approximately £168K excluding gift aid. £27K of these pledges have been received, with an additional £10K kindly received over the last year. The outgoing monthly costs are almost nothing at present, as there is no building works being undertaken.

Connecting all the core services are around £40K; they each have varied lead times and thereafter daily charges so this is delayed until we have a clear finish date on the horizon, to reflect project wisdom and appropriate stewardship.

8 Any grants applied for or promised? Thusfar as explained above only a further £11K has been secured in the last year against 41 grant applications undertaken. There are a further 7 applications in the remainder of this year that we might submit with a possible £20K monies, without any presumption or false hope! There are further talks with fundraisers and specialists in this field as to whether they can assist us.

9 Why can't the hoardings be taken down? Simply because the rest of the site is vulnerable and unfinished and people could have accidents Having discussed this with SDC in the wider context of project simplification, there are a number of conditions on our application that must be fulfilled before the hoardings can be taken down, and a fully agreed external hard landscaping and planting scheme is one of these, circa £61K. This has to happen before the hoardings can come down and the space be formally used.

10 Can we use professional tradesmen within the church family to help us complete? Some quotes have been gathered in from church family, and they are very much welcomed while being held in the wider context of other quotes. Full due diligence of three-quotes for each budget line has to be undertaken to know that we are securing the best value for money, but where possible we surely will!

And so might our action steps be...

- Would you seek God's wisdom for us as a church in this? Pray, reflect & reply?
- Would you commit to praying daily for this project and it's favour?
- What are your suggestions for the PCC, ideally in advance of 20th May next PCC when this is our main agenda item?
- Do you have any suggestions for approaches to grant awarding bodies?
- Direct any project giving to pledges to Liz Warwick at liz@stph.org.uk or via Sue at office@stph.org.uk with all other reflections to myself as your project lead.

With thanks for your partnership and care in the mission project...

Next Door Hextable will be a case of, 'truly God made this possible!'

Yours truly,



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