

ST GEORGE'S FATFIELD

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30th November 2023

To all our church family, friends and neighbours

We write with sincere gratitude to everyone who is supporting our community annexe and café project. We thank you for your prayers and all the support you have given us - whether spiritual, practical or financial. Your continuing generosity from when we first began fundraising in 2021 has been overwhelming and has brought us to this point. We have also been hugely encouraged by your grace through the current disruption and muddy conditions. Thank you.

By God's grace we raised an incredible amount of money quickly enough to be able to lock in the price of the annexe and ensure it can be fully built by May 2024. So far, despite the bad weather, the works are on schedule – and now we are out of the ground, the risks of having to use our contingency funds have been dramatically reduced.

As shared previously, we were awarded another significant grant in September. This has enabled us to step out and commit to much of the work that was pushed into a second phase. This includes the terrace, better access and much of the shell of the entrance and new office. However, since the initial cost given 9 months ago, inflation has continued to be substantially higher than predicted.

In addition, Building Control has insisted we reinstate the exit to the north to comply with fire regulations. Trustees met to discuss the options available to us for this phase 2 work. On balance, they felt it was better to lock in the price of completing as much of the outstanding works as feasible, rather than to leave funds unspent and risk another hike in prices next year.

Trustees have prayerfully stepped out in faith, deciding that a watertight and secure entrance would be preferable to an open porch or open space, which they believed would carry a much greater risk of weather damage and vandalism.

As shared on Sunday, this means that a minimum of £17,000 more is needed to complete this Phase 2 work. Realistically, however, unless we do not need to tap into any of our contingency funds, we need to raise about £36,000 to be safe. The internals, (floor, electrics, lighting, heating, plumbing, decorating, etc.) will require a further £50,000. However, these can be done later in small segments, as funds come available. Clearly, the more we raise now, the more we will be able to complete at today's prices. 4 further grant applications have already been submitted, but these take time to be answered and there is no guarantee they will be awarded.

We recognise that coming back to ask you to prayerfully consider if you can give additional funds to this project is not what we intended or wanted to do. Nonetheless, we hope you might help us finish the vision with a final gift, thereby completing this project that will bless both our community and church and leave a legacy for generations to come. We do not need the extra funds immediately, as our final bill will not be until May 2024. Knowing what people are willing to give enables us to plan accordingly.

We fully understand if you cannot commit now. Separate from the annexe is the hope to install Solar PV panels on the church roof enabling us to cut our carbon footprint, generate our own electricity and save us money. This project could be supported at a later stage or over the longer term as there is less urgency for this work.

Pledge forms with all of the details are available at church. To assist with our planning, please fill it in if you are able and return it to the church office as soon as possible.

On behalf of the PCC, *thank you* again for believing in this vision and please keep praying.

Yours Sincerely, in Christ



Nick Barr-Hamilton

We are thankful to all of our funders including many church members and local people and numerous charitable trusts



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