

## **Report from the Development Group on Visits to Seven Churches for Congregation of Bearsden Cross Parish Church**

This brief report has been prepared to provide members of the congregation with a summary of the information which research by the Development Group has shown to be the way that some churches have recently redeveloped and refurbished older buildings and in one case built a new sanctuary. These redevelopments were carried out to create a setting for worship that is in keeping with the modern world. In order to benefit from the experience of different approaches to refurbishment, the group visited seven churches, (Appendix 1), six of which have been recently refurbished, the seventh being the relatively new building, the sanctuary of the Baptist Church in Bearsden.

### **On each visit special attention was paid to:**

- Car Parking, particularly for disabled access
- The entrance foyer
- Seating arrangements in the sanctuary
- The Preaching space
- Choir position and Organ - alternative music provision?
- Interior decoration including lighting, heating and use of audio-visual technology
- Ancillary accommodation including the halls, kitchen, toilets and storage
- The Funding Process

The general conclusions formed were:

### **Parking**

The site at Bearsden Cross compares favourably with the provision of parking at the churches visited. The Bearsden site is adjacent to a public car park and on-street parking.

### **Access/Entry**

- The entrance areas must be welcoming with space for mingling
- Disabled access to all parts of the Church complex must be provided
- The Sanctuary itself, the halls, toilets, cloakrooms and church office should be accessible directly from the entrance area if possible
- The main kitchen should be adjacent to the hall(s)
- Most Churches run cafes open to all members of the public. Some are open on certain days, some on certain hours each day

### **Seating Capacity**

The general move is toward ensuring more flexible use of the Sanctuary.

The Architects will look at all options.

One option could be the retention of the North building sanctuary. Flexibility could be achieved by removal of the pews and installation of chairs in the main central area.

Another option could be a 'new build' sanctuary on the site. The architects will require to design in various options, for sanctuary flexibility.

### **Preaching Space**

We have noted that the 'Chancel' area has become less formal, more flexible and where possible, the area is enlarged.

Pulpits are 'out'. Lecterns are 'in'

The communion table and font, generally, no longer have fixed positions.

### **Choir**

Similarly there no longer appears to be a fixed position for a choir.

### **Organ**

We received advice that, if we have a good organ (we have two) then we should retain one. This is an asset which in addition to our worship can be used for public concerts of various types. We noted that in most of the churches visited, provision was also made for alternative musical instruments.

### **Interior Decoration**

Should the option selected be that the existing North building Sanctuary is retained and re-furnished then, from our observations, the architects would need to address the possibility of brightening the interior.

- Historic Scotland could be consulted regarding the possibility of being permitted to insert the existing South Church Memorial windows into the external walls.
- Advice from Lighting Consultants could be sought to provide a solution which will improve the general level of lighting.
- any lighting system must avoid the need for expensive hire of scaffolding to re-place light bulbs.

The architects may recommend the construction of a new building. The above points would still apply.

### **Ancillary Spaces**

We must provide well equipped and finished to a high standard:

- Church Office**
- Kitchen** large enough to serve at least the capacity of the largest hall
- Toilets** which include Disabled and Baby-changing facilities

### **Halls**

The size and number of these will be determined by the views of the congregation and the outcome of the current research being carried out regarding existing and potential users.

### **Storage, Heating, Lighting, IT and Finishes**

Everywhere we went the advice we received was:

- Storage**--plan for more than we think we need
- Heating, Lighting, IT** --Thorough research related to our final design decision.
- Finishes** --The best we can afford.

**No design decisions have been taken All proposals from the architect (when appointed) will be considered.**

## **Appendix 1**

### **List of Churches Visited.**

Cairns Church, Milngavie  
Cathcart Trinity, Glasgow  
Bearsden Baptist Church  
Renfield St Stephen's Church, Glasgow  
Sandyford Henderson Church, Glasgow  
St Andrews Church Bearsden  
St Andrew Blackadder, North Berwick (one member of the group visited this church)

## **Appendix 2**

### **Sources of funding**

Most of the churches visited relied on the Congregation to provide the bulk of the funding. Examples are:

- Gift Aid
- Fundraising Activities
- Legacies
- Interest Free Loans

Finance was also raised from other sources such as:

- Borrowing
- External Funding – grants or lottery
- Asset Sales – sale of one building to finance the redevelopment of another
- Insurance Refund – storm damage insurance allowed for internal redevelopment

The Heritage Lottery Fund website lists East Dunbartonshire as one of the six areas in Scotland that have received the least funding to date. The website indicates that the fund is working to promote funding in these areas.

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