

Dear Friends and Users of Brunswick Church both far and near

As we enter another year, here is an update on our Refurb Project to carry out some much-needed and significant refurbishment and improvement work on our forty-plus-year-old building.



What's happened in 2017

Early in the year we had a consultation with ex-Brunswick member and architect, Steve Waldron, which was really helpful in clarifying what we wanted and needed to do and in what order. For the rest of 2017 we set ourselves three objectives:

1. A dry building...
 2. with improved warmth in the daytime activity areas.
 3. Selection of architects to help us on the next major stage of our journey.
- During the spring we had work done to solve the leaks: however one persisted. But with the help of two of our teenagers (thanks Joel and Elden) we located and fixed it ourselves. Objective 1 ✓
 - Heating. The Lounge, Youth Room and especially the Foyer are used daily by many groups, but can often be cold in winter. With guidance from our friends at Global Heating we decided to remove all radiators and replace with blowers. A Faculty was submitted to the Diocese in the Summer, installation began in November and despite one or two hiccups we now have three warm rooms where coats and even jumpers are not required. Objective 2 complete.
 - During the latter part of the year we put together a comprehensive brief about the project and invited seven architects to tender to work alongside us. We narrowed these down to three which we interviewed and then selected a firm called Omiarchitects. Objective 3 done.

All in all, not a bad start to our ongoing journey – and behind the scenes our Solar Panels (remember them?) keep on reducing our electricity use and bringing us income (about £100 per month in the first year) despite our Manchester weather.

And we now have a brilliant group of teenagers who meet every Monday evening and help us with ongoing maintenance, keeping on top of all the issues that need attention – the next generation is taking over!

At the very end of 2017 we said goodbye to our curate Mike who had come to the end of his time at Brunswick. Because of his previous experience working in housing, Mike provided able leadership to our Refurb Buildings group, and both he and that leadership will be missed. Thanks Mike!



What's next?

- Our first and main job for 2018 is to do a feasibility study with Omiarchitects. This should tell us what we really want, what we need and what is possible and in what time-scale. We aim to complete this by Easter and it will involve lots of talking, thinking and consulting with others and then putting it all together as quickly and efficiently as possible (the first meeting is next week). This phase is going to cost us £9600 and at the end we will know the scope, size, complexity and cost of what we are hoping to achieve over the coming months and years. When it is complete

we will hold a public event in April or May which will link into the Easter message of New Life around us (including the building!) and share some pictures and designs.

- Talking about money... We need to raise funds to enable each stage of the project to become a reality and we need a Finance Group to manage this for us. Grant applications can be complicated and time consuming and it would be good to have two or three people (preferably with at least one of enthusiasm, patience and relevant experience) who could lead on this for us.

Why?

As we enter a New Year it is good that we remind ourselves what this is all about. Our buildings are not the end point – they are only the shell that houses the important stuff.

- Two Worshipping Christian communities (Brunswick Church and Manchester Chinese Church)
- Our Positive Steps community hub which hosts toddler and women's groups, ESOL and exercise classes, a Credit Union, a Well-Being Café and various other groups and charities, such as JustLife who provide services for the local community. (We had an amazing couple of weeks leading up to Christmas. Thanks to the generosity of many people and organisations we were able to distribute toys, goods and food to numerous people. We also had over 50 people attend our Community Christmas Meal cooked by Manchester College and an excellent evening community event with food and live music.)
- Youth work run by the M13 Youth project.
- A Night Shelter once a week in winter.

...and so much more behind the scenes that is not organised but is still vital and important.

PCC have recently reviewed Brunswick's mission plans and re-affirmed that the buildings should be a place of "rest and refuge, help and hope" every day.

How can you help?

This update is going to a lot of our friends and past and current members locally, UK-wide and even abroad, as well as to those who use the building, and to other interested parties. Can you...

- Think about what you can do to assist our Refurb Project. Would you be willing to talk to our architects about your building use? Can you help on the Building or Finance groups? Have you a practical skill we can use?
- Input: We don't have all the answers, so if you have views or comments please let us know. The next few weeks are going to be critical as we decide what the overall changes and refurbishment should be.
- Consider making a financial donation. Small or large, everything counts.
- We'd like to see more local fundraising, like we did for the Solar Panels (remember the Solar Stroll and Cake Sale?) This is a great way for lots of people to join in and help and have fun doing it. We need your creative ideas for ways that could happen.
- And if you are someone who prays, please do so, for the Refurb Project and those involved as we move into 2018, for Andy and Aaron at Omiarchitects, and for all those that use the buildings in any way. Most of all that through this project that the buildings may become even better in enabling all who enter them to live "life in all its fullness".

Thanks for reading.

Brunswick Church: 0161 273 6608 / refurb@brunswickchurch.org.uk / www.brunswickchurch.org.uk