



March 2023



Busy, busy, busy. Plus 2 Pieces of Really Good News

Dear friends of Brunswick Church.

Sorry it has been a while since our last update – this is partly due to there being a lot happening in and through the 'Positive Steps' Community Hub which has been one of the main beneficiaries of our newly refurbished hall (which, if you recall, was the main part of Refurb Stage One).



'Positive Steps' is well established in the local community, and was able to function during Covid lockdowns providing hot takeaway meals and with some activities running online. Since then a number of new activities have got going,

such as exercise classes, a singing group, guitar classes, Table Top sales, women's Spoken Word events. Plus daily food and refreshments, drop-ins with health professionals and a session with an energy-saving expert. A creative writing workshop is in the pipeline. This winter we have had a 'Warm Space', running each day. The church has also run a 'Keep Warm and Well' project through which loads of items such as blankets, fleeces, socks and heaters have been given to community and church members on the 'heat the person' principle to minimise those fuel bills and at the same time reduce carbon footprint.



Which brings us onto our first piece of **Really Good News**, which is that a few weeks ago we were awarded a grant of £100k to enable us to run 'Positive Steps' and continue to pay the our manager Mo for another 3 years. Cue much rejoicing and praising God for another great bit of provision!

As well as 'Positive Steps', the hall is in regular use hosting events and programmes for organisations such as the [Lab Project](#) who are major mid-week users. Our EV charging points in the car-park – still the only ones publicly available on the estate – are being well-used.



Meanwhile, back at the Refurb Project

Refurb Phase One is now complete, with last bits of 'snagging' finished and final bills paid just a few days ago. Some funds continue to come in for this – now totalling £23k. We will put this towards Phase Two, which PCC gave the go-ahead to proceed with in February. Phase Two will include new front doors, modernising the toilets, new windows in the lounge and Youth Room, lighting, heating, furnishings and fittings. Remember these things are all nearly 50 years of wear and tear old (more on that number below). Work has been ongoing with the architects in obtaining quotes, and an estimate of cost is £300-350,000. The first spend will be about £10k to get the detailed drawings and planning ready for tendering for the actual work (RIBA 3).

We may possibly have to include replacing the worship room windows, moved up from Phase Three, as these are not in a good way and very draughty, making it harder to adequately heat that large space: costly for bills and carbon footprint. Then there are ongoing issues with leaks from our flat roofs, which need to be dealt with urgently. And we still need to replace the church name on the outside.

It's all looking like another big challenge and we would like to ask you to pray for God's provision and wisdom as we cautiously move forward. Pray for us as a church as we take a deep breath and prepare for another round of fund-raising and all the associated hard work and stress. Specifically, please pray for a formal meeting with the architects happening soon. Of course as part of our praying we need to be open to God saying 'no', to some of the above list. However, we have recently had what could well be a big nudge from God... Our second piece of **Really Good News**

is, and we quote: *“the developer for the Upper Brook Street site has confirmed in principle that he will be looking to contribute to the value of circa £100k for the improvements works to the church.”* That is subject to some red tape, but we are optimistic. Also, two of our previous funders have asked us to go back to them as and when.

Ideally, we would like to see the Phase Two work completed by mid-2024, because that is when Brunswick Church building will be 50 years old! You will hear more about this...!

Again, thank you for your interest, support and (for those of you who do) prayers. Any feedback, encouragements, questions, requests for more information would be most welcome. We did say last time we would try to do another update before the end of the year - sorry this is late. We will do our best to get at least one more to you in 2023!

The Congregation of Christchurch Brunswick

