



September 2019

Dear friends and supporters

Brunswick Church Refurb Phase 1... Big Task. Big Ask.

Welcome to our second Refurb update for 2019. Back in May we outlined some details of Phase One: our first 'Big Task' of several for the coming years as we work through the whole Refurb Project. Now it's time for the 'Big Ask'.

You can see from this recent picture that the wider building work on the estate is continuing and the Brunswick Street shops have been replaced by the shell of what will be a large new Care Centre: literally right on our doorstep. We'd like to get our building work up and running as well.



We have been doing more thinking and praying about our vision as a church and the part that the Refurb project plays in it. That vision can be summarised as *"Living God's love - here."* There are so many implications and potential outworkings of that short phrase, but having a good physical space as a base for local holistic ministry is vital to its facilitation and growth. That has been the case up to now with this building where we meet and which has hosted so much over the last 45 years. It now needs refurbishing and improvements to meet modern demands: hence Refurb. A bit like Abraham we have embarked on a journey into the unknown and taken on something way beyond our own human resources. But not God's. Which is easy to say, but much harder to put into practice!

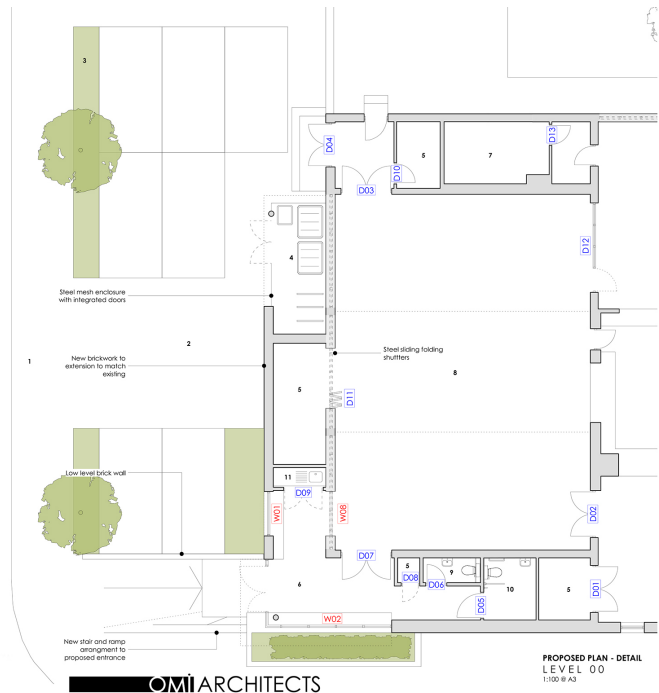
A story in the Bible tells of three Hebrew young men being threatened with death unless they forsake their God and worship the gods of the Babylonian king. They say this: "If we are thrown into the blazing furnace, the God we serve is able to deliver us from it, and he will deliver us from Your Majesty's hand. But even if he does not, we want you to know, that we will not serve your gods..." (read Daniel 3 to find out what happened). What we feel is this: if God provides for Refurb, then great – we will give thanks and continue with our ministry here, living his love, and serving the people of this parish. But even if he does not and Refurb fails, we will still continue with that ministry. To use another Biblical image, we feel as if – faced with a large number of hungry people – we are gathering together a paltry few fish and loaves of bread and asking Jesus to multiply them.



A lot of progress has been made since our last update in May. All permissions are now in, quotes for the work have been tendered and a contractor chosen. It's probably fair to say that all that is now needed to enable work to commence is the rest of the money.

The budget for Phase One* is £400,000. Of that around £140,000 has been raised already through a mix of us as a church committing as much of our reserves as we are legally allowed to, plus several generous donations already received from individuals. As a congregation our formal "gift period" where we will explicitly ask church members to give specifically towards Phase One began on September 14.

Also on September 14 our "Sports-tacular" sport-themed community fun day put the Refurb project firmly into local awareness and we feel encouraged that it has increased a sense of shared ownership of the project. That may not turn into a lot of financial support in an area like this, but will be valuable in many other important ways. Local businesses and institutions have been supportive in a number of ways, though mostly "in-kind" so far. We will be appealing to them again.



The Big Ask: We feel we are doing as much as we can. Can you as an ex-member help us, whether with a one-off donation or a commitment to a monthly amount (or both)? It was clear by the large turn-out of ex-Brunswick members at the funeral of it's first minister, Martin Gooder, that many people feel their time at this church was important in their lives. Here is another way to express your gratitude to God: by helping enable another generation of people to be served and helped in Jesus' name.

Whatever you can do, thanks in advance. In addition can we ask you to please pray for Brunswick Church and the Refurb project.

The Refurb page on our website (www.brunswickchurch.org.uk) gives more details and has an online donation facility. Or contact us** for any further information you may need.

Thank you for walking with us.

The Congregation of Christchurch Brunswick

* Phase One of Refurb consists of new heating and work on the hall. This would mean we can use the hall for church and other meetings while subsequent work is going on in the rest of the building:

- New replacement boiler(s). For some of you of a certain age from the church congregation you will know the significance of this decision!
- New heating in hall and worship room.
- New Insulated hall roof.
- New hall ('Youth') entrance.
- Additional new toilets off the hall.
- Revised car park.
- Beginnings of new church garden.
- Additional storage.

Sketches/plans available for perusal if you're interested.

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