

Church of St Andrew the Apostle, Holt, Norfolk

Proposed Extension - Statement of Need

1. General Information

The Parish Church of St Andrew stands in the middle of a growing community. The population of Holt is around 3.700 and there is planned new building over the next ten years of an additional 440 dwellings, giving a potential increase in the population of the town of approximately 900 people. This increase will place increased demands on the use of St Andrew's, its regular worship, together with baptisms, marriages and especially in Holt, funerals. There are currently 205 people on the Electoral Roll and the average attendances on any normal Sunday over the two services (8 am & 10.30 am) is 140. St Andrew's also uses the Church Hall routinely for mid week activities meeting the needs of specific groups within the community. The congregation is extremely active with over 100 people regularly participating in the many different aspects of the life and ministry of the church.

St Andrew's is a beautiful building (see the 'Statement of Significance'), well proportioned and well cared for, but with an expanding community to serve and new areas of ministry active and planned, the church does not have the physical facilities to meet the present and future needs.

St Andrew's is an active church, very much in line with the Diocesan initiative, "*Committed to Growth*". The church's aim is to **'Seek to love and serve both God and our neighbour'**. The PCC is committed to growth in discipleship, nurturing individuals in their own journey of faith and is continually looking for new ways to serve the local community and to draw more people into the worshipping life of the church. In order to achieve real and sustainable growth the church places worship and prayer at its centre. Morning and Evening Prayers are said daily as is the celebration of the Eucharist and from this flow ministries to the wider community. To meet the pastoral needs of the parish and to reach out to all age groups, members of the clergy and congregation are active together in the following:

- Outreach to families, through the Holt Youth Project and well attended weekly toddlers' group 'Little Lambs'
- Junior Church for the 7-11 age group, St Andrew's Seniors, for over 11s and crèche/Sunday School during Sunday morning services
- Pastoral support through home visiting and a parish wide, ecumenical '*Good Neighbour Scheme*'
- Quiet Days away from the parish, bible studies and retreats
- '*Out and About*' organised day trips throughout the year, open to all in the parish, to places of local interest
- A monthly mid week '*Tea Service*', with transport provided, offering worship, teaching, prayer and friendship for those unable to get to a Sunday service
- An active Social Group supporting, to a very high standard, a wide and varied programme of activities
- '*Open Church*' - the church building is open every day and a team of 'welcomers' is available in church daily from Easter to All Saints to greet and inform visitors
- The Church bells of St Andrew's are rung every week by an enthusiastic team of experienced bell ringers
- A robed adult choir leads sung Sunday worship twice each month
- Active involvement in major community events such as the annual Holt town Christmas lights switch on evening, the Christmas Tree Festival and the newly established Holt Festival
- Members of the congregation are also active in supporting the Town Council, the Holt Area Caring Society, the Holt Cubs and Community Centre and the Church Hall is heavily used for a large number of local community events and activities

More information can be found on the church website: www.holtchurch.org

2. The Need for Expanded Facilities

Deficiencies in the scale of the current accommodation have been evident to the PCC for a number of years and can be summarised as follows:

- On Sundays there is always a special teaching time for children during the 10.30am service and the children and their dedicated teachers sit cramped, often on the floor, in the small, overcrowded vestry/sacristy.
- The choir, usually 12 strong and bigger for special services, huddle in a corner at the back of church to change and store their coats and belongings before and after services.
- A single toilet, only suitable for the able bodied, is located off the vestry/sacristy, which is locked outside service times. Large numbers of visitors to St Andrew's from all over the UK and overseas, are greeted by the Welcome Team on duty in church from Easter to All Saints, but have to be re-directed to the nearest public toilet, some distance away.
- There is no facility to make even a cup of tea, let alone slightly more demanding needs, such as mulled wine or mince pies. An electric kettle on the floor provides refreshments for the PCC when they meet.
- PCC members, meeting every six weeks, in a circle in the church chancel, will testify to the choice they make between being very cold in winter or straining to hear each other over the noise of the electric heater.
- The Parish Administrator, working 3 days each week, is currently based in accommodation on loan from nearby Gresham's school and walks outside to the Church Hall some distance away, when nature calls.
- The clergy share a small, overcrowded vestry/sacristy with a number of people and general storage functions - hardly a place for prayerful preparation.

3. The Proposed Solution

A building solution to the urgent needs identified above has been proposed by the church architect Ruth Blackman of Birdsall, Swash and Blackman, to the south of the church, extending from the existing vestry/sacristy and boiler room, through the churchyard boundary wall, making use of land adjacent to the churchyard, which is being made available by agreement with Gresham's School - see architect's Design and Access Statement. The proposed extension will provide the following internal accommodation and external spaces:

- Main West Entrance Lobby - providing an entry and reception point for visitors, a gathering area for clergy and choir prior to processing into church and a circulation area in support of support events and activities in church.
- Clergy Vestry / Sacristy - two separate but connected spaces.
- Parish Office - a permanent work base for the Administrator, also with provision for occasional use by the Rector, Curate and Churchwardens and volunteers -filing, copying, collating, storage, etc.
- Multi-Purpose Meeting Room - including provision for the choir (robbing/disrobing, robes storage and choir practice), crèche and Sunday School during Sunday services, meetings and special events.
- Kitchen - to provide drinks and light refreshments in support of activities in church or the meeting room.
- Utility/Boiler Room - including storage of 'dirty' equipment, cleaning materials, flower displays, etc.
- W.C.s - two cubicles, one modified for the disabled, and baby changing facilities.
- External Upper Terrace - accessed from Meeting Room, providing hard surface outside space for serving light refreshments after church events and a summer venue for Sunday School.
- External Lower Terrace - landscaped ornamental area between main church South Aisle and the proposed new extension.