

ST GEORGE'S FATFIELD

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To all our church family, friends and neighbours

Many of you know about our plans to build a community café and annexe onto St George's Church. After a long process of planning and fundraising, our annexe project construction work has begun. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact us.

What will this look like in practice?

The first thing to say is that there will be disruption and mess during this period. We will endeavour to manage it as best we can, but in some cases, we will simply have to put up with what we don't like and cannot change, and we will have to muddle through when the unexpected happens.

The next thing to say is, I do not guarantee anything I say below. Any major building project may have snags and programme changes required due to unforeseen circumstances, e.g. weather, supplier issues, unplanned breakdowns, etc.

With the above caveats, this is the plan.

The Church will remain open for all our usual activities as much as possible. There may be short periods of time when water or electricity is cut off or access is more limited, but we will endeavour to communicate this when we know. Entrance to the church will be through the North or West doors, with a temporary ramp placed at the West entrance.

Initially, we will see the building site itself fenced off and the contractor's compound set up. Their compound will be at the east end of the car park, mostly on the grass. The benefit of this location will be during the week, where we still have use of the majority of the car park. During the week, the access route to the site (current disabled spaces) will need to be kept clear for, e.g. concrete lorries and building supplies. It also means the contractors will not need to continually walk past the church. It does however mean that access through the carpark to the churchyard will be limited for safety and security. Unfortunately, people will *probably* need to walk up the pavement by the road instead of through the churchyard to get access to and from New Road and the lower churchyard, so those of you who walk through the churchyard may have to go the long way around.

Funerals can still take place using the west entrance, but for burials, the coffin will need to be driven to New Road and come into the churchyard from the lower entrance, as has happened occasionally in the past when carrying a coffin down has proven difficult.

In the first month we will not see that much construction. The porch and affected tress will come down, the 4 affected headstones moved, a temporary ramp installed, and by mid October, ground works will commence (digging of foundations & trenches). An archaeologist will be on site during the

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groundworks in case any remains are found. These remains will be reverently removed, temporarily stored, and reburied in a plot in the churchyard upon completion of the works in a format agreed with the Archdeacon and Chancellor.

In due course, the steel frame will go up and the structure will begin to take shape. The works should last 7-8 months, so long as there are no major issues. The site will vary in how busy it is, some days may not see that much happen, others may feel like Piccadilly circus. Once the works get fully started, I believe there should be a site manager on-site the whole time. Owing to start delays, the superstructure is unlikely to be completed until after Christmas, when works stop for 2 weeks.

On the north side of the church, once the annexe work has started, thanks to the additional grant, the hope is the foundations and structure of the new entrance will also go up.

While the heart of the project is funded, we are still around £40,000 short of being able to do the whole project depending on how much contingency is utilised. Fundraising continues for this, as well as for the photovoltaics that are planned for the church roof after the annexe is completed. Please do pray we can complete the whole in one go as it will save money in the long run.

I know many of you have already given hugely generously to enable this fantastic project to come to fruition, but if you are able to support this final part of the work financially, then please send any gift to the church office or give online through our website.

The contractor has offered, once there is something to see, to escort people around the site, but this will need to be arranged in advance for safety reasons as well as minimising disrupting the works.

Some things will happen after the annexe is completed. Various parts of the old porch are being saved to be turned into artwork, a new location for the old font will be determined, a landscaping plan has been set out to fulfil planning conditions with new trees (including fruit trees), bushes and wildflowers planted. No doubt there will be many questions, some of which I will not be able to answer, but please feel free to ask and I will endeavour to find out what I do not know.

It will be a busy and, at times, difficult period. Please pray for unity, vision and that the opportunity for gospel ministry it presents will come to fruition. Thank you for all of your support and everything you do to bless others in this, our community.

Yours Sincerely, in Christ



Nick Barr-Hamilton

We are thankful to all of our funders including many church members and local people and numerous charitable trusts

