

Future Use Study

For some time now, most of you will be aware that St Mark's has been involved in the Chance to Thrive (CTT). Many of our local groups have come under this banner; groups like the Fruit Barra, Eyewitnesses, St Mark's @ Sainsbury's, Friday Youth Club to name a few.

We are almost reaching the end of this process for St Mark's as the project's new Coordinator Fred Vincent takes over from Russell McLarty and as they begin to look at helping other churches begin afresh under their "Chance to Thrive."

Some of you will be aware that the end of the process involves having a fresh look at buildings and to see if they are fit for purpose in helping us to progress in our desire to reach out to our communities.

St Mark's has reached this stage and before the summer months the local CTT group decided that with the help of our mentor Robin Watson we would make up what's called a "Future Use Study" and send it out to 4 architects inviting them to tender for the work.

As I write this at the beginning of September, I'm glad to report that the four companies have successfully replied and a small group have met on the 17th August to see which one reply appeals the most. The local CTT group are in the process of reporting to the main group, the Kirk Session / Congregational Board with the view of taking this matter forward.

I felt that it was important to try and keep as many of you as up to date as possible AND to ask that you take your place in helping things to progress.

Below is a copy of the "FUTURE USE STUDY" for your interest. More details will follow in future Link magazines.

"Future Use Study"

This proposal sets out the requirements for a Future Use Study for St Mark's Church in Stirling. www.stmarksstirling.org.uk

INTRODUCTION

St Mark's is one of 8 Chance to Thrive congregations selected by the Church of Scotland's Priority Areas programme as meriting special regeneration encouragement. The Chance to Thrive is an innovative and creative programme designed to develop and deliver major new and sustainable church based community facilities in some of Scotland's very poorest neighbourhoods. In the first phase, attention has focused on eight neighbourhoods, of which Raploch is one. However, the Chance to Thrive is not primarily about buildings – it is about people and their aspirations for community. It is about a model of regeneration which recognises the importance of inter-dependence – that in order to build places where we all want to live everyone needs to be involved.

REQUIREMENT

Following extensive community focused consideration by the St Mark's Chance to Thrive project team it has been decided that the interests of the community will be best served by the redevelopment of their Church within its existing site. This document sets out the project ambitions as currently envisaged. It is anticipated that this brief will be further enhanced through a Community Visioning exercise, which the appointed project architect will be expected to attend and lead, and by subsequent detailed discussions between the project team and the architects and their design team.

No pre-conceptions currently exist with regard to the optimum design for the redevelopment. In arriving at the scope of work to meet the requirements of the brief, clear arguments will need to be demonstrated setting out the case for retention and adaptation / modernisation or demolition and replacement (with a typical budget of circa £1M for similar recent projects), creating opportunities for complementary social housing or other such use on the site to offset capital cost. It is anticipated that this exercise will involve a

high level consideration of generic options.

The site at St Mark's contains the Church which was built in 1966, and a series of halls, meeting rooms, offices, kitchen and toilets, and areas of adjacent garden and brown field land, offering considerable potential for redevelopment. For arrangements to view the site or for any queries relating to this enquiry please contact Mr John Murie, Clerk to the Congregational Board, muriejohn@gmail.com

Following our final agreement of the consultant's recommendations for the most attractive site development model, in terms of design, cost, sustainability and community benefit, we require completion of Concept Design up to RIBA 2013 work stage 2.

This incorporates the following key components:

- Participate in a Community Visioning Exercise and follow up brief development discussions with the project group
- Identify the scope of work required to meet the requirements of the brief
- Review high level generic development options
- Prepare Concept Design of the recommended redevelopment model
- Identify the project cost via QS Budget Cost Plan
- Provide sufficient information to the project team to allow completion of a robust business plan including a funding package which outlines how the monies will be raised.

ST MARK'S OUTLINE BRIEF AND DESIGN EXPECTATIONS

The following list highlights our summary requirements and expectations from the Redevelopment Project:

A friendly and welcoming entrance to the church and halls giving it the "Wow, I really want to go in there" feeling. We want our entrance to announce itself confidently – not hide away timidly. We want people to visit us and to encourage them to gather in sheltered spaces outside the building, without feeling threatened or thinking they don't belong there.

Making St Mark's part of the Community, instead of separated from it. The Church needs to be fully accessible to all within the Community. We need to break down all perceived barriers which prevent this vital connection. All are welcome in this place. Incorporation of large expanses of full height glazing are encouraged. Above all, we wish the building to feel like a Church, from the inside and out – to be instantly recognizable and identifiable as a spiritual place.

A flexible Church that can be used for a variety of purposes by the whole community. We currently see the accommodation as incorporating a Sanctuary, meeting rooms of varying sizes, offices for church use, flexible halls suitable for youth groups, crèche, play groups and other community interest groups which currently include local football teams, Healing Rooms, Keep Fit, Scottish Slimmers, Homestart, Alcoholics Anonymous, Beavers, Cub Scouts and Big Noise Orchestra. It must incorporate a café area, kitchen and toilets. For proposals featuring a new build Church, we would anticipate the Sanctuary being used flexibly to provide this hall function – whilst retaining its primary spiritual purpose. We do not want God to be 'put away' for 6 days of the week and opened up only on Sundays.

A sustainable church – economical to heat and to maintain, exploiting the south facing aspect of the site. Good acoustic properties within the Sanctuary are highly desirable.

A spiritual place. We need to feel God's presence in the Sanctuary and to know that we are in a place of worship and peace. We see this as one of the key design challenges and one which will incorporate building scale, colour, materials, a skilful blend of natural and artificial lighting, artworks and significant artefacts from St Mark's past, to maintain continuity of tradition. 'Large enough to feel welcoming, small enough to feel like home' Spacious yet intimate.

Incorporates a beautiful Garden with all year interest – This is considered to be an important component of St Mark's celebration of Faith. It would be highly desirable to carefully integrate the garden with the entrance and main Community spaces.

A friendly bustling Café area – We want people to enjoy meeting each other in our Fair-trade café, which will be supported by a modern efficient kitchen. It would be nice to be able to sit outside if the weather was favourable. We would encourage wider use of this facility as a desirable future outcome.

Incorporates IT and Audio Visual Technology - important to future proof any design proposals.

Incorporates carefully selected quality internal finishes and materials – to create the desired ambience and to provide longevity of use.

PARTICULAR SKILLS SOUGHT FROM THE ARCHITECT

We are seeking a highly creative architect with a proven track record in the design of Church projects. We are also looking for someone with experience of working with volunteers and in community development project work.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR TENDER SUBMISSION

Please complete the attached Application Form and return by the stated date. Attach a fixed price fee proposal inclusive of all costs for your Service within a separate envelope, with the name of your firm clearly identified. Please include costs and details of the Quantity Surveyor you propose to use to provide the budget cost advice within the Study.

Rev S. Davidson, St Mark's Parish Church, 1st Sept 2015.