



St Paul's Church

Parish of Old St Pancras

Project Newsletter 2 – September 2019

St Paul's Church has served the local community for 170 years, but our current building (built in 1956) cannot be repaired and urgently needs to be replaced.

Over the past few months we've been gathering ideas from the community to help shape our vision for the future. We ran an online survey, a focus group, and hosted interactive exhibitions at the St Paul's Summer Party and the Camden New Town Community Festival. We asked people what they think of the existing buildings and activities at St Paul's Church, and what they would like to happen here in the future.

Most people saw the existing building and gardens as significant assets to the community. They felt the gardens should be kept, but with a greater connection to the building, and that the external appearance of the site should be improved. It was noted that the hall has many good points – its size, proportions, light and airiness – but that additional, smaller rooms would enable activities to happen in parallel. The stained-glass window and wooden beams were identified as favourite features, while the toilets, kitchen, heating and storage were marked out as needing improvement.

There was excitement that a new building could better serve the needs of the community – with improved facilities for a wide range of community events and worship. Respondents suggested that families with pre-school children, young people, and older people need additional support, as well as people with learning and/or physical disabilities, carers, and those who are homeless or isolated. Activities and facilities suggested included: baby/toddler groups; a youth club; classes and social events for older people and a food bank. People suggested that more classes and groups, exhibitions, lectures, events, festivals, and a farmer's market would benefit lots of people in the community.

People hope that the new building and gardens will be of high quality – aesthetically, functionally and environmentally – and that the project will be financially sustainable, driven by a sense of community and church, and sensitive to its surrounding context. Concerns



Focus group feedback



Exhibition at St Paul's Summer Party. Photo: C. Christie-Webb

were expressed about the impact of construction work on residents and on existing users of St Paul's. Some people hoped that alongside church and community activities, the project could include other facilities (such as a café and residential accommodation), but others disagreed.

We really value all the comments we've received so far. Over the next few months we'll be carefully considering your suggestions and our next steps for the project.

You can visit our website (address below) to find out more about the project and sign up to our mailing list. We'll also be holding an exhibition of the work we've done so far at the Harvest Festival on the 6th October 2019 – mass at 11:30 followed by lunch from 12:30 – do come along.

Father James Elston
posp.co.uk/st-pauls-church/future