

What to expect when we return

The renovation project largely concentrated on the outside of the church (the roof and external brickwork) and very little work has taken place inside. The most visible aspects internally are the amount of natural light now coming into the church during the day and new lighting which is significantly more powerful than before. The concrete in the baldachino (above the altar), the balcony and the pulpit has been repainted. However, the internal brickwork has not been touched. The pews were removed and have been re-installed. However, the project did not cover any refurbishment, so they remain in the same condition as before.

Cleaning

The contractor will clean down the church towards the end of next week. However, we are also arranging work parties to clean and polish the pews and to clear and clean the entrance areas to the church and the sacristy, prior to returning to the church.

Project cost

The original budget for the project was £2 million. We are in the process of identifying the actual cost. We have received grants of £1.31 million and so far have been successful in reclaiming VAT on the project. Nevertheless, the balance of cost will fall on the parish as a Diocesan loan which will need to be repaid in future years. Fundraising will be an important continuing aim, because there are other areas of the building complex which need work to be carried out, e.g. refurbishing the pews, rewiring the church and church house, and general maintenance of the church house which are needed.

Cross on the church

We have applied for planning permission to put a metal cross in the niche on the east wall. We are still considering the design. The provisional cost is in the order of £10,000 for the cross and an additional amount to erect the cross.

Club 200

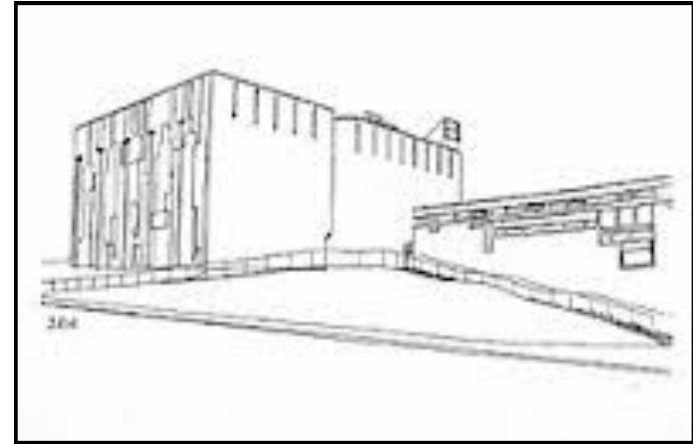
One approach to fundraising is Club 200, a private lottery arrangement that needed to be registered with the Local Council. We received our small lottery license in the last few days, so we will be providing more information about Club 200 in the coming weeks, including contacting those who have already expressed an interest.

Your views and opinions

We are always keen to hear from parishioners about the works, including financing and fundraising ideas. If you have any questions or thoughts, please speak to John Hastings, Father Rafal or Deacon John.

We ask for your continued help and support in our parish at this time.

ST BRIDE'S CHURCH EAST KILBRIDE



REPORT ON REPAIR PROGRAMMES

July 2016

Background

The most recent update on repair programmes was issued in February 2016 so, as the church renovation is nearing completion, another update is overdue. This update concentrates on the church, with a little on the Parish Centre.

Parish Centre

Work on the kitchen extension is complete. There is a modest amount of electrical work needed in the kitchen (hard wiring the dishwasher and water boiler) and a shelf has still to be fitted at the back of the bar.

The church renovation project - roof, brickwork and lighting

The renovation largely involved renewing the roof, including new windows, repairing the external brickwork and mortar, and new lighting. There were five main goals - to stop leaks, to ensure the structure remains sound, to repair extensive damage to the external brickwork, to improve the level of natural light coming into the church and to renew the lighting. After erecting some external scaffolding in December, the church closed for renovation in January for a projected 30 week period. The schedule fell behind early in the project because high winds and heavy rain held up the erection of high level scaffolding because of dangerous working conditions. Nevertheless, the contractors made up the time as the weather improved. In order to provide a safe working environment, a birdcage of scaffolding was erected inside the church with crash decks above and below the ceiling struts.

Most of the building structure was sound. The roof trusses were brushed off and repainted with rust inhibitor. The principal structural damage was in the support for the copper light cannons; that is why much of the external copper was replaced; the shiny new copper oxidises quickly so is already looking more natural. All of the metal work (copper and lead) is of very high quality; this is most visible at low level on the outside wall behind the altar. Bricks along the parapet were in poor condition and this was a major source of leaks around the building. Two upper courses of bricks were removed because of damage (the parapet has been lowered modestly) and more effectively sealed. The existing roof membrane (now 28 years old) was removed, a flat plywood surface was added and the new membrane placed on top. The vertical panels were covered by acrylic sheets which had darkened over time. New glass windows have been installed; this makes a huge difference to the amount of natural light coming into the building. Glazing has been added to the top of the niches on the east wall (restoring the original design); this allows natural light into the niches. New LED lights have been installed, flush with the ceiling struts. There are two types of light; some provide diffuse lighting and the others are more focussed, so look as if they are only partly on unless you are directly underneath. We can have the church half lit or fully lit.

Drainage and brickwork

The roof is a saw tooth shape running north / south. New gutters run in both directions taking rainwater out to hoppers into the cast iron downpipes; these have been repaired and repainted. The drains have already been replaced at the north wall and are being renewed at the external base of the altar wall.

Among the most visible aspects of the renovation is the brickwork and mortar repair. The most extensive damage to bricks was on the piazza and altar walls which suffer most from the prevailing wind and rain. It will take time for the new bricks to weather down. The new mortar will darken over time, which is why it looks quite white at the moment. The brick design on the east and north walls (facing the school and Whitemoss Avenue) are much more prominent following the repair and replacement. The piazza has been power washed, and the brickwork paving looks like new.

Groundwater penetration

There are two areas of the church where there is a problem with groundwater. The external ground around the south east corner (in the sanctuary behind the altar) and the north west corner sits higher than the level of the church floor. Both areas are subject to water ingress. In the south east corner, it is possible that the problem has come from a blocked downpipe and drain; the water had seeped under the flagstones and the damp problem was hidden by the carpet. When the sanctuary carpet was lifted, we found that the flagstones and bricks under the carpet were covered by bitumen, applied previously in an attempt, which was unsuccessful, to stop the water ingress. The contractors have investigated the situation, excavating the earth outside to check the drains and the protection of the wall against water ingress, as well as allowing the back of the sanctuary to dry out. They have also re-directed the external drain and are building a channel to divert water from this area. We hope this will resolve the issue but only time will tell. In the north west corner, water which has seeped through the wall over the last few months has damaged the new ramp. It will need to be rebuilt. However, there may be a persistent problem in this area which we have still to resolve.

Sanctuary

The original carpet on the sanctuary was olive green in colour and covered the high altar with a runner down to the main nave. The replacement carpet will replicate this which means that the flagstones will be exposed on most of the sanctuary. This will also allow monitoring of the altar wall for water ingress. The steps to the pulpit and the lady altar will also be carpeted. The area of the sanctuary is still drying out. The church has been unoccupied and unheated for over 6 months. We will delay re-installing many fittings such as loudspeakers and stations and defer the return of the organ until the church has heated up and dried out further.