

**HOLY CROSS CHURCH, BINSTED**  
**REORDERING OPTIONS ANALYSIS PREPARED BY THE PCC AT THE REQUEST OF THE**  
**WINCHESTER DAC**  
**21 OCTOBER 2019**

**INTRODUCTION**

This options analysis has been prepared at the suggestion of the DAC of Winchester Diocese. Its purpose is to show the method and path followed by the reordering committee in reaching its decisions concerning the various different aspects of the proposed reordering of Holy Cross church. This has been a continuous process, which has been ongoing for four and a half years, starting in April 2015 with the Community Survey carried out on behalf of the church, the Wickham Institute (village hall) and The Cedars pub (now closed). This evidenced a clear need for a welcoming, large space available for many varied community activities and events, which at the moment does not exist, but to which the church building would be ideally suited.

Following an appraisal of the current position of the whole church, we then look at each different area of the church, setting out the current position, the various options which we have considered, the advantages and disadvantages of each, and, in conclusion, what we believe is the best choice for the long-term future of the church.

Throughout this options analysis, the metric by which we measure all current and future proposals is whether they enable, encourage and grow the spiritual life and purpose of the church; both as a community of believers and as a way of serving the wider local community.

For hundreds of years, people have been worshipping faithfully in Binsted. During this time, the church has seen enormous change: in the way that it is governed and administered, in its status in the local community and in society at large, in its fabric and styles of worship, and in many other ways.

There are however two constants which run through its faith community's history: the worship of a God who is the same yesterday, today and forever, and His corresponding call to His people to be a light in the world, being disciples and making disciples in His name and to His glory.

Our context inevitably shapes how we go about fulfilling our call and mission under God; how we use our church is central to how we continue to work out together our best response to God's charge - in this place, at this time.

*"We are sometimes discouraged from putting too much store by our sacred buildings, but we should remember that many were constructed for the future, as a sign of God's blessing to generations not yet born. We should not be content with a throwaway world or a throwaway Church, but build for tomorrow with our hearts set on eternity".* Angela Tilby.

## OPTIONS ANALYSIS - HOLY CROSS CHURCH – THE PARISH CHURCH OF BINSTED

First, an appraisal of the current position of Holy Cross:

- in its context as the parish church of Binsted and
- in its context of one of the three parish churches comprising the Benefice of Benbinfro.

This appraisal will consider the church in terms of:

- its primary function as the spiritual centre of the Parish of Binsted
- its role in the witness to the ministry of the Christian Church in England
- its importance to the heritage of England as a Grade I listed building.

### **Holy Cross as the parish church of Binsted: Living the mission of Jesus**

Our Benefice Mission Action Plan (bMAP) grew out of the Parish Mission Action Plans of Bentley, Binsted and Froyle. It was adopted for use by all three churches in the benefice in 2017. **It sets out our mission and purpose: to worship God and give every man, woman and child in the Benefice the repeated opportunity to hear, understand and respond to the Gospel. We are also called to be a church where people can grow as disciples and engage in ministry in the community and beyond.** This is the aim to which all our resources should be directed, and in doing this we seek to apply, among others, the following values.

- **Hospitality:** creating a safe, warm and welcoming space that does not discriminate on the grounds of age, status, wealth, physical or mental ability etc, and which speaks of God's love to all. Sharing the good news is not just proclaiming the word, but also demonstrating God's love in the way that we share God's resources, our money, our time and the way that we use God's building. We seek to make the church a hub for the whole community as it has been in the past.
- **Building community:** in conjunction with the Wickham Institute and the Recreation pavilion. While many events will continue to take place in the Wickham Institute or the pavilion, there are events which can only or will be most suitably hosted in the church. Some are already envisaged, others will emerge once the space becomes available.
- **Excellence in worship:** worship in its widest sense (John 4:23), growing a community of worshippers and honouring God through wholehearted commitment to Him. Just as our forebears built a beautiful building, so we to want to give of our best without stinting.
- **Handing on a legacy:** The church building does not exist merely to serve the current congregation. We are acutely aware of the need to resource the church to serve future generations. (Acts 2.39). This is not just a five or ten year project, but one for many years to come. (The last major reordering was 156 years ago). We are both responding to the past and handing a growing, vibrant church on for the future.

This options analysis sets out the practical options, worked on and refined over the last four years, which are intended to achieve and fulfil this vision.

### **Holy Cross: Current worship patterns**

The ecclesiastical parish of Binsted consists of approximately 700 parishioners, spread over a wide area. The central village of Binsted is surrounded by seven hamlets: Isington, Wyck, Blacknest, South Hay, Wheatley and part of Bucks Horn Oak and Frith End.

When the Victorian reordering took place in 1863-4, the church could seat 299, and two services were held every Sunday, each attended by approximately 200. Since then the church's electoral roll has contracted significantly and this year was recorded as 47.

Of note:

- Approximately 40 people regularly attend bi-weekly services, comprising approximately 25 parishioners, a further 5-10 from Bentley when Bentley holds its service in the evening (Live@5) and visitors, especially couples in the months leading up to their marriage coming to hear their banns read. Thus the usual Sunday attendance typically comprises 60% parishioners, 20% benefice members and 20% other.
- The average monthly attendance for 8.00 Communion is 6-8 (100% parishioners).
- Festivals see larger numbers, although Easter and Christmas attendances have generally been falling in recent years.
- Remembrance Sunday is still well attended, with 112 in 2018.
- The Marquee and Pet Service the day after the Binsted Fete is increasingly popular, with 90 attending in 2018.
- The annual Carol Service ceased in 2016; it used to be well attended, but when the local Salvation Army Band was dispersed we lacked the musical support to be able to continue this service.
- The church initiated carol singing round the village in 2018. This proved very popular and will be continued in the future
- The Real Nativity service is usually very popular and brings many from outside the parish and benefice. It starts and ends in the church, with the story unfolding in front of the neighbouring houses and a barn. The five-year average attendance is 240.
- Binsted C of E School holds five services a year in the church – Easter, Leaving, Harvest, Remembrance and Carol Services. These are very well attended (between 123 and 290 over the last few years), with attendance increasing year on year. Apart from these services, very few children come into the church; they tend to be those who are too young to attend Live@5 in Bentley. The benefice's Youth and Children's activities and work takes place mainly in Bentley Church.
- A few families with young children come regularly to church. Five years ago a crèche was offered in the village hall during services, but this was not popular with parents because it was too remote from the church.

There are currently four regular services a month:

1st Sunday – 9.30 Holy Communion

2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday - 3.30 Messy Church, held in Binsted C of E school as there is no suitable room in the church. This is attended by families both in and outside the Benefice. It has been successful as a springboard from which families have then started to attend Bentley where there is a regular children's church.

3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday - 9.30 Morning Worship

4<sup>th</sup> Sunday - 8.00 Holy Communion.

In addition, every 5<sup>th</sup> Sunday sees an all Benefice service held in Bentley, Binsted or Froyle by rotation.

There are approximately 3 baptisms, 10 weddings and 9 funerals each year.

The church building is open every day, but is generally only used for services, which regularly occur in church on three out of four Sundays a month. During the week of prayer, the 24/7 Prayer Room was located in St Mary's Bentley, as it has a church hall, but there were three prayer stations in Binsted church. Binsted C of E school and members of the church and community visited these.

The school also uses the church five times a year for special occasions e.g. its carol service (see above).

The church has a good set of six bells and bell ringing practices are held once a week. Bells are rung before services twice a month, often at weddings, at festivals and at other times as requested.

There is no doubt that the worshipping congregation contains a good number of committed Christians whose deep desire is to share their faith with others and grow the faith of the local community. This is currently being done through initiatives outside the church, or elsewhere in the Benefice, but it would be wonderful to see greater use of the church for this purpose as well. For example, in 2018 we held a free harvest lunch in the church: 70 people attended, squeezed in wherever there was a space. This has just been repeated in 2019. Other church events are held outside the church, due to lack of space inside the church; more events could take place, and more people could take part, if we had more space.

The church is a Grade I building, with the nave, aisles, tower and chancel dating from the late C12 or early C13. It is *"one of the largest and most interesting mediaeval churches in North-East Hampshire with an especially fine interior"* (Pevsner 1967). As such, were the church members no longer able to fund its upkeep, the congregation dwindled and younger people went to Bentley or elsewhere, some other statutory body would probably step in and find a use for it.

## **Holy Cross: the largest of the three churches which together form the benefice of Benbinfro.**

Holy Cross Binsted, together with St Mary's Bentley and St Mary's Froyle, make up the Benefice of Bentley, Binsted and Froyle – known informally as 'Benbinfro'. Although the largest church in the benefice is Holy Cross, the primary church in the benefice, at least in terms of attendance, is Bentley. It also has the youngest overall demographic, due to the decision to base most of the youth and children's work there. It has a relatively new church hall with toilets and kitchen facilities and can, therefore, provide a meeting place, albeit with space constraints, for the whole benefice when required. It is the natural place for families with young children to gravitate to on Sundays, with women's groups for the younger mothers and a crèche in the church hall on Friday mornings.

Froyle is well supported by its village, and has its own unique character. It joined the benefice eight years ago, after its joint benefice with Holybourne was dissolved, and the merger has inevitably taken time to settle. Of the three churches its services are the most traditional in style. It is also about to embark on a limited reordering, to provide better lighting and kitchen facilities, so that it too can serve its congregation and the village better. It has one toilet.

The worshipping community of Holy Cross is welcoming and friendly, with approximately 12-15 parishioners happy to go to the other two churches when twice a month there is no 9.30 service in Holy Cross. However, the church mainly serves the members of the parish, many of whom also have very active roles within the wider benefice. The fact that the congregation is ageing, and that few young families feel comfortable in Binsted church (due to the lack of children's facilities and toilets), leads to serious concerns that there will come a time when the church is no longer self-supporting, with regard to both financial and human resources. If the benefice cannot support three churches, the future of Holy Cross would be difficult to predict. This is of great concern to a number of current church members, who fear that Holy Cross could become a victim of the inevitable and growing squeeze on church resources. For this reason, the PCC has decided that it needs to take action now to ensure the church continues to grow and flourish.

## **The reason for and purpose of the proposed reordering of Holy Cross**

### **General**

It has been recognised for some time that the current position will become increasingly unsustainable. Change is in the best interests of the church, facilitating visual, aural, physical and other means of access to the church and to the Gospel, but this, in itself, is not enough. A much wider and far reaching offering of the building through community discussions and input is a vital and necessary step in equipping the church to continue to bear witness to Christ, to grow the worshipping community and to serve the wider community. The community meeting on 25 October 2019 is an important part of this process.

A wider use of the church is constrained by the cluttered and inflexible interior, the absence of toilet facilities and the lack of adequate catering arrangements. Heating, lighting and advanced audio needs must also be addressed. The lack of a warm, safe and inviting area for children's church, crèche and other church and community activities effectively prevents the growth of a younger generation of church members. A modern and sensitive update of

all aspects is urgently needed. Failure to address these issues adequately will make the church more vulnerable, through reduced attendance and limited potential for complementary use.

Other than the Westcote chapel (see below), the fabric of the church is generally in good condition, but some regular consolidation and replacement is necessary, along with upgraded lighting and heating. An issue which increases the vulnerability of the church in this respect are the demands of recent legislation: Health and Safety Regulations have made it more difficult for volunteer labour to carry out a variety of routine tasks, e.g. changing the high-level light bulbs. This means that expensive equipment such as scaffolding may need to be hired for such works. The recent emphasis on conservation-led maintenance and repair also mitigates against volunteer involvement, as specialist, accredited expertise is required for jobs previously done by laymen or by building firms with limited experience of working with historic materials and fabric.

The Equality Act requires better disabled access both to the churchyard and to the church itself. It should be noted that all kinds of disability are included and this is not just about wheelchair access; such things as large print books and an audio loop fall within the remit of the legislation.

### **Summary evaluation of the present position:**

As a famous historic church in an attractive village - and a very popular area for walkers - the church receives a considerable number of visitors; further, approximately 1,800 people live in Binsted and the immediate surrounding area. The church is in good structural and decorative condition, is beautiful and fascinating and has good acoustics, but it has rudimentary facilities. Thus, there are weaknesses which make the church's position vulnerable:

This building as it now exists is not viable for sustainable C21 use:

- it has poor pedestrian access for the physically disabled, both in the churchyard and in the church itself;
- it has no toilets or kitchen facilities and just one (cold) water tap;
- it is not possible to provide crèche and children's church facilities during services;
- the Westcote chapel is unusable except for storage, and is in poor repair;
- there is no suitable area, free of fixed pews, for larger church gatherings and courses;
- there is limited organised storage;
- its organ is ill-sited, in poor condition and difficult to play;
- the opportunity for flexible forms of worship now or in the future are very limited;

- it has little to offer in terms of educational and heritage experience and enhanced community use and enjoyment;
- its heating system is expensive and ineffective;
- its tower is cold and damp, affecting the enjoyment of bell ringers.
- access for maintenance can be challenging and dangerous in some parts of the building: and
- there is no wi-fi.

In order to resolve these shortcomings, the following are needed:

- better access for disabled pedestrians and wheelchairs, both to the churchyard and the church, and inside the church, including safe, multiple routes of emergency egress from the building;
- on-site toilets and simple catering and after-service refreshment facilities;
- crèche and children's church facilities;
- an area where church activities, currently carried on offsite, can be brought into the church:
- a large, flexible space where large gatherings of church or community can be held, with a warming facility for meals if required;
- conservation of the Westcote chapel;
- improved storage facilities for all church activities;
- re-evaluation of the possible locations and purpose of the organ and the future musical and worship requirements of the church;
- development of an educational and heritage experience and enhanced community use and enjoyment;
- support of services to provide water, drainage, electrical power and heating;
- improved environment and heating for bell ringers;
- easy access for maintenance to all facets of the building: and
- the installation of Wi-Fi.

In order to make it possible to resolve these shortcomings, the following are needed:

- good, pro-active relations between the Church community and its various neighbours and stakeholders, territorial and ecclesiastical;
- the will and the energy (in all parties) both to perceive that various solutions are possible and, in addition, the legal, financial and practical enabling to implement an agreed solution;
- the leadership to develop and implement a sustainable solution

There is no recognition or explanation in the church of the pivotal role of Viscount Montgomery of Alamein in World War II, nor is there any indication of the importance of his gravestone in the churchyard.

There is no provision to offer hospitality to the many ramblers who pass by the church, and nothing to encourage them to enjoy the beautiful surroundings, to enter, enjoy and learn more about the church, and especially about Viscount Montgomery.

There has been little attempt to provide a more welcoming and conducive environment for the bell ringers, so as to encourage more bell ringers to learn and become involved in the art of bell ringing.

There has been no attempt to make known and publicise the tomb of Richard de la Bere de Westcote, to develop and enhance visitors' understanding and experience of his life and the importance of his effigy, and to grow this as an educational experience for children and adults alike.

### **Assessment of potential for change:**

The church building is for the most part in very good condition, and inherently sustainable in terms of its materials. To ensure its continued use for worship, complementary uses and forms of local and community engagement will need to be found or better exploited, including the establishment of a Friends Group. The church, with its attractive location, must be seen as a resource available to the whole village community. There is certainly more potential in this large church than is currently realised.

To achieve this potential, sustainability is needed in various aspects:

- (i) Human sustainability – sufficient in amount, capability/skills, and motivation;
- (ii) Financial sustainability – capital and revenue; and
- (iii) Energy/environmental sustainability.

This is the social and economic context for the development of this building – a challenge, but also an opportunity.

### **The proposed way forward**

To solve these problems and grasp the opportunities offered, the Reordering Committee is working on plans to reorder the church, creating space and facilities for use both by the church and by wider sections of the community.

In April 2015, the Binsted Community Group, comprising representatives from Holy Cross Church, Binsted Village Hall (The Wickham Institute), and the Cedars Pub in Binsted



prepared a survey asking those living in the Parish of Binsted what community activities and social opportunities they would like to see being introduced.

A 12% return of the survey was handed in to the collection boxes, providing comments and suggestions on how to improve the facilities and increase participation in and use of the Church, the Village Hall and the pub (now closed).

The most popular activities suggested in the survey were as follows:-

- Village Market (locally produced food and craft): 74%
- Community services (shop, parcel receiving, drop off, dry cleaning): 69%
- Film screenings, talks, lectures and concerts: 65%
- Day/Evening classes: 49%
- Meeting Place/drop in centre: 47%
- Yoga/Dance: 36%
- Walking group: 35%
- Sports: 27%
- The provision of facilities for a crèche, toddler group, other children's activities and holiday clubs also engendered considerable interest among those with children.

The most effective sources of information about current activities at the time of the survey were the Bentley & Binsted Parish magazine (82%) and word of mouth (80%). The magazine is now distributed free of charge by the benefice church office to all houses in the parish.

Overall, comments from the returned surveys strongly suggested that toilet and kitchen facilities should be installed in the Church.

Subsequently, the church held its own consultation evening in June 2015, and the results of this and the survey helped to inform its future plans embodied in its Parish Mission Action Plan. This has, in turn, been fed into the Benefice Mission Action Plan.

Initial ideas which are being investigated for the development of the building include:

- Removing the organ from its present site and, as a pragmatic solution in the short term, installing a new high quality electronic organ which is fit for purpose (unlike the current organ). This will have a moveable console, with several possible positions within the church, so that it can be used in the most appropriate way for different forms and configurations of worship and for the provision of music generally. A longer-term aspiration, when funds permit, would be to provide a well-designed pipe organ located on a new gallery at the west end, over the tower arch. This would satisfy the strategic ambition of excellent musical provision within the church building, whilst providing a short- to medium-term solution which is not too demanding of space or money.
- Removing the inelegant C20 partition wall behind the organ across the north (Westcote) chapel, bringing space and light to this area. The obscured southern window in the east wall of the Westcote chapel would thereby be revealed, and the pleasing original dimensions of the chapel would be restored.

- Developing the Westcote chapel to provide a warm and welcoming space for church and community activities, especially as a space for children's church and crèche. This would involve lowering the floor to the level of the lower south part, and providing a well-designed disabled access ramp from the Westcote chapel to the north aisle (if the nave and aisle floors cannot be raised).
- Enclosing the Westcote chapel to enable it to be used for children's church and crèche, and for many other church based activities. This would be achieved by means of a glass screen across the south end of the Westcote chapel, parallel to the columns, with the main entrance from the north aisle. The screen would be placed at a sufficient distance from the chancel arches to ensure that it would not interfere with the new visual enjoyment of the open and light space created by the removal of the organ and stud wall behind, and to minimise any reflection from the east window of the chancel.
- Providing toilets outside the north-west corner of the church, in a new low rise, lean-to building, on the site of the existing boiler, which would then be incorporated in the new addition. The entrance to the toilets would be from the west end of the north aisle, through the lower part of the existing window opening, which was enlarged and remodelled during the 1863 alteration. The masonry beneath the window would need to be removed to form the doorway. There will also be an additional access point into these facilities directly from the churchyard suitable for wheelchairs.
- Providing simple catering facilities by means of a warming oven and hot and cold water in the Westcote chapel, to enable the church to be used for large gatherings when a meal is required, whether of an ecclesiastical or community nature.
- Investigating the most effective use of the tower, recognising its primary role as a belfry, and ensuring that more is done to encourage bell ringers and to promote the church and its fine bells as a preferred place for bell ringers to gather and practice.
- Developing the nave to provide a large flexible space suitable not only for large services and other church activities where such a space is needed, but also for community events. This was suggested by responders to the 2015 survey. It could be used for music, concerts, art exhibitions, films and lectures and other educational events, produce markets, adult and children's clubs, pre and post school activities, holiday clubs, large church and community gatherings and celebrations and other cultural and community events. The village hall is relatively small, and there is no other space in the village suitable for larger gatherings.
  - The proposal is to raise the floor level of the nave and side aisles to that of the chancel and south chapel (and tower). This would provide a level floor throughout the whole church. The step down into the church from the porch would disappear and the whole church would be accessible by wheelchair. No Victorian tiles would be destroyed. Those in the chancel and south chapel would remain exactly as they are at present, and the Victorian tiles in the

nave and side aisles would be covered, undamaged, by the new floor, which would be of a material and colour in keeping with the rest of the church. There are no stone burial or memorial slabs in the aisles and nave.

- Appropriate underfloor heating and insulation would be incorporated into the floor space between the Victorian and the new floor. This will ensure that the church does not continue to suffer from its current heating and humidity fluctuations, with the consequent deterioration of the fabric. The raising of the floor level would be executed in a sympathetic manner, so as to ensure that the piers can be seen to their full advantage (certainly not possible at the moment with 47 pews obscuring the view of the piers from all directions).
- Providing flexible seating so as to maximise the future potential of the church, both as a place of worship and mission and also for community use and benefit. The existing 47 Victorian pews are fixed, and preclude any flexibility in church use. When originally installed, the 59 pews accommodated 299 worshippers - necessary when there were regular congregations of 200 twice each Sunday. Today we need to provide for much smaller groups, sometimes in a more intimate and innovative manner, as well as for full church or community when more seating would be required. We therefore envisage employing moveable seating, comprising a mixture of stackable pews and chairs.
- Moving the font to a more accessible area for baptisms, or enabling the existing area to be made more accessible. While it is hoped that we would be able to raise the floor level as described above, if this is not possible, then the consequent ramp into the church from the south porch would further congest the area round the font.. One of the key times when substantial numbers of village folk come to church is for a baptism. There are often 50 or more additional people in church. Baptism is an important activity in the life of the church and should be celebrated where all can see it. It is proposed that a simple, elegant moveable font is positioned in the centre of the church, and the large, orange alabaster font is moved elsewhere within the church.
- Retaining the south chapel as a dedicated place for private prayer and reflection, suitable for small gatherings, with separate additional heating.
- Developing the south aisle to provide an educational facility, accessible to both children and adults, describing the pivotal role and importance of Viscount Montgomery in World War II, and to provide an educational facility explaining the history of the church and its role in history and Christianity in Hampshire.
- Developing and enhancing visitors' and local schoolchildren's understanding and experience of Richard de la Bere de Westcote through the medium of his effigy, and growing this as an educational experience.

- Installing a modern AV and lighting system, wi-fi and hearing loop in all areas of the church so as to make best use of the facilities offered.
- Installing wifi - essential for both safeguarding and emergency reasons as it is often impossible to pick up a signal in the church.

This programme of works is to be carefully considered with full consultation and is to be completed over several years as funds allow.

## OPTIONS ANALYSIS – SPECIFIC AREAS OF THE CHURCH

**WESTCOTE CHAPEL** The Westcote chapel is potentially a very beautiful and useful area of the church. Built in the early C14, and finished in 1331, it was funded by Sir Richard de la Bere de Westcote, and contains his tomb and effigy (see the Conservation Management Plan pages 11-12 and 27 and Appendix 2). It replaced an earlier, smaller chapel. It is a large chapel with two fine windows and originally contained two altars with accompanying piscinas. It has two steps running across it from east to west, installed by the Victorians when they restored the chapel. This restoration involved rebuilding the north wall and window, and it is likely that any crypt below the chapel was filled with the mediaeval masonry. In 2018 the PCC commissioned an archaeological investigation into the space below the floor, and the diocesan archaeologist has confirmed that there is no archeological reason why the steps should not be removed. The chapel is currently cut into two by an extremely unattractive early C20 floor-to-ceiling stud partition, and the north part is now used as a storage area. The south half currently contains the organ (see specific options analysis below). It has a single cold water tap and sink. It is currently used as a store room and in desperate need of cleaning, redecoration, better lighting and conversion into a useful and attractive area of the church where the tomb of Sir Richard de la Bere de Westcote can be properly lit, seen and appreciated. The restored chapel could be used for many different purposes: children’s church, crèche, Messy Church and other children’s activities, a meeting room for church activities and courses, a warm and comfortable area for the flower arrangers or others using the chapel and by Binsted C of E school during its services or at other times as required.

OPTIONS	FOR	AGAINST
1. Leave the Westcote chapel in its current state of disrepair.	Nothing	<p>We are wasting one of the church’s most useful areas, and the chapel is currently split into two.</p> <p>We are failing to make known and available the tomb of Richard de la Bere de Westcote in a way which could be appreciated by the public.</p> <p>The chapel is in a poor state of internal repair and preservation, and the</p>

OPTIONS	FOR	AGAINST
		<p>windows are in a poor state of repair. It is a dereliction of the church community's duty to look after its assets and care for them for the benefit of all.</p> <p>The stud wall is deeply unattractive, and prevents the light from the Westcote chapel reaching the north transept.</p> <p>At present any children who are unhappy sitting quietly through a service have to be taken outside the church, whatever the weather, as the chapel is unheated and unusable.</p>
<p>2. Remove the C20 stud partition.</p>	<p>The light from the north half of the Westcote chapel would light up the whole chapel and help to transform the southern part, currently a dark and dingy area.</p>	<p>There would no longer be any form of delineation between the Westcote chapel and the rest of the church. The poor condition of the chapel would be visible to all. The chapel would only really be useful as storage space, subject to it being properly organised.</p>

OPTIONS	FOR	AGAINST
<p>3. Remove the two steps across the middle of the chapel and lower the floor so that the floor level is consistent throughout. This course of action has been sanctioned by the diocesan archaeologist, following investigation into the two half-hidden doorways' or 'windows' in the exterior of the east and north walls of the chapel.</p>	<p>The Westcote chapel would then have the same floor level throughout, save for the one step drop before the doorway in the west wall. Underfloor heating could be installed where the floor level is dropped.</p>	<p>Disruption of the existing floor level and Victorian floor tiles.</p>
<p>4. Erect a glass partition between the Westcote chapel and the rest of the church.</p> <p>Repair and redecorate the chapel with sympathetic lighting and install effective heating using a combination of underfloor heating and wall radiators.</p> <p>Develop the Westcote chapel as a dedicated church room for church activities. (For the position of the glass screen see the specific option analysis below)</p>	<p>The Westcote chapel could then be used by the church for a variety of purposes, including as a crèche, for children's church, for Messy Church and for other children's activities. This would help to familiarise parents, who may never have been inside a church, to the idea of church as a warm, attractive and welcoming place.</p> <p>It could also be used for church courses as an alternative, or in addition, to Bentley church hall, thereby bringing Binsted church more into the life of the benefice and deanery.</p> <p>Events and courses, currently held in private houses, could also be</p>	<p>There would be a visual impact, but it could be visually beneficial and would be mitigated through careful design and construction.</p>

OPTIONS	FOR	AGAINST
	brought into the church if appropriate.	
5. Flower arrangers: provide a dedicated sink and storage facilities in high quality oak cupboards, with good table space, in a warm and comfortable environment.	The church appreciates the valuable contribution of the flower arrangers and the reordering of the Westcote chapel would enable the church to give them a much better working environment.	Nothing. A member of the reordering committee has been liaising with the flower arrangers and the PCC understands that they are happy with the proposed arrangements. Before the final storage details are agreed it will be necessary to review them to ensure that they are suitable in every respect.



OPTIONS	FOR	AGAINST
<p>6. Provide a separate sink with hot and cold water, fridge, dishwasher, warming oven and storage for crockery, cutlery, glasses as needed enclosed in high quality oak cupboards.</p>	<p>At present, in the whole church, there is one cold tap in the Westcote chapel. No fridge, no dishwasher. This will enable people to gather in comfort, have easy access to hot drinks and simple catering of ready cooked food. It will enable much greater flexibility when catering for all church activities.</p>	<p>Nothing.</p>
<p>7. Provide storage for up to 99 additional chairs stacked 33-high in high quality oak cupboards under the North window.</p>	<p>This will enable flexibility in the church seating, and provide seating for large church and community events and for the increased number of people whom we hope will be involved in the life of the church.</p>	<p>The storage space could be used for other purposes.</p>

**CONCLUSION** The PCC considers that there are many compelling reasons for demolishing the C20 stud wall, redecorating the Westcote chapel, erecting a glass screen to separate it from the rest of the church. It could then be used for church activities and courses, for children's church and as a crèche during services, and whenever the body of the church is in use. It will provide a warm, welcoming and comfortable environment for these activities and for the flower arrangers who will use it on a weekly basis. It will also be available for the wider community and Binsted C of E school whenever needed, in particular during their very popular services. It will contain warming facilities, and will enable larger church gatherings to be accommodated for meals e.g. Passover and Harvest meals. Although each option would in itself represent an improvement, these options need to be taken together to achieve optimum impact, and they all depend on the removal of the C20 stud wall and its replacement by a glass partition in its new position. This will enable the entire Westcote chapel to be used and seen as a whole once again.

**GLASS SCREENS** At present just over half of the Westcote chapel is screened off from the rest of the church by a floor-to-ceiling stud wall, thereby almost halving its surface area and massively reducing the potential use of the space. Of the two east windows in the chapel, one window is to the north of the stud wall, the other is to the south, hidden behind the organ. The stud wall prevents any light coming through from the Westcote chapel, and its south window is totally obscured by the organ, thus the southern part of the Westcote chapel is dark and gloomy. The glass screen between the nave and the tower is also considered here.

OPTIONS	FOR	AGAINST
<p>1. When the question of glass screens was originally raised, it was suggested that there should be two separate areas screened by glass, one enclosing the Westcote chapel and one enclosing the South chapel. Both would have glass doors into their respective aisles for privacy and reduction in noise transference.</p>	<p>There would be two clearly delineated and dedicated areas within the church for separate church activities. It was suggested that the south chapel could be dedicated to private prayer, for small meetings and for the 8am service of Holy Communion once a month, which has a low attendance, and is therefore held in this</p>	<p>At the first meeting with the DAC representatives, the CBC and Historic England in 2017, it was felt that screening both sides of the chancel would be unnecessarily restrictive and concerns were raised that two screens, one either side of the chancel, could cause serious problems with</p>

OPTIONS	FOR	AGAINST
	<p>chapel. Both chapels would be heated separately as necessary, obviating the need to heat the whole church.</p>	<p>reflected light and possibly acoustic issues.</p>
<p>2. As a result of the objections put forward by the amenity societies who attended the meeting in 2017, the committee decided to proceed solely with the proposed screening of the Westcote chapel.</p> <p>Using triple insulated glass with vertical steel “fins” for support, the glass would appear almost seamless. The screen would extend the length of the chancel on the north side, and the arch from the north aisle would also be enclosed with a door, to provide a semi-soundproofed area.</p> <p>At the joint request of the DAC, the CBC and Historic England, the screen would be set back from the north chancel arcade by approximately two feet so that it does not interfere with the arcade itself. The soundproofing would be achieved by a horizontal sheet of glass joining the screen to the chancel wall above the arches.</p>	<p>The benefits would be as set out above. The positioning of the screen would enable the largest possible area to form part of the Westcote “Room”.</p> <p>The greater flow of light through the glass into the chancel and the north aisle would be very marked, and would enhance the beauty of our mediaeval church.</p>	<p>While that glass screen would be of the highest sound absorbency available, it will not be “sound proof”. However, the aesthetic considerations and the light transference were deemed to outweigh this downside.</p> <p>If the screen is positioned as proposed, the organ could no longer be played in its current position as it would be situated inside the Westcote chapel. However, it would not be possible to locate the screen in the position of the existing wooden wall as the height would be too great for glass, and it would defeat most of the purpose of the reordering of the chapel, as only half the chapel would be used.</p>

OPTIONS	FOR	AGAINST
<p>3. It was agreed at the July 2019 meeting with the DAC committee and the amenity societies present that we would investigate etching the glass screens for practical and aesthetic reasons.</p> <p>It was also agreed that a similarly designed plain glass screen should replace the existing glass screen separating the tower and the nave, both to complement the new introductions at the east end of the church and to enable access to the tower following the raising of the nave floor.</p>	<p>Practical and aesthetic benefits.</p> <p>Our aim is to create a light and pleasant environment which offers a degree of privacy to users of the Westcote Chapel without forming a barrier between them and the rest of the church.</p> <p>We are still considering all possibilities, but at the moment our thoughts are not sufficiently formulated to record in this document. Updates will be publicised once we have a better idea of what we want to do.</p>	<p>None other than losing the totally transparent quality of the glass screens.</p>

**CONCLUSION** The PCC considers that a glass screen should be erected between the Westcote chapel and the north chancel arcade set back approximately somewhat from the arcade. A second glass screen with a door should be erected between the enlarged Westcote room and the north aisle. Replacing the current screen between the church and the bell tower with a similar etched glass screen would be necessary if the nave floor level is raised.

## THE ORGAN

The organ was originally made for Alton House. It was installed in the church in 1902 (probably replacing a traditional west-end band), and six large pews were removed in order to accommodate it in its current location. This would have been specifically chosen in order to support a robed choir, which the church no longer has.

Consequently, the organ is now in an unsuitable location. It is too remote from the worshippers to support them adequately in congregational singing, especially those more than halfway down the aisle. It needs to be played at full volume all the time, so little subtlety is possible. If it is played by an organist who does not use the pedals, it cannot be heard. It is musically unsatisfactory because the organist can neither see nor hear the congregation, so there is no sense of being at one with them.

The organ is situated in the southern part of the Westcote chapel, where it takes up a lot of space. It also obscures the C14 window to its east, and prevents that window providing light for the Westcote chapel and the chancel.

Although it is a genuine pipe instrument made by a local builder in around 1900, it is now well past its best: the action is uneven, worn, heavy and noisy, and the voicing needs attention. It would require a significant amount of work and expense to restore it to good playing condition.

OPTIONS	FOR	AGAINST
<p>1. Cease using the organ for most services and use the piano/keyboard or recorded music at services. If, in the future, we do not have an organist who can use pedals, this may be necessary as, without pedals, the organ cannot really support congregational singing.</p>	<p>Costfree. Flexible. Avoids the need to spend upward of £20,000 now just to keep the organ going.</p> <p>In due course the organ could be declared 'redundant' and removed.</p>	<p>Many regular worshippers, wedding couples, Binsted C of E school, and others who use the church occasionally, probably prefer live, traditional organ music and value the church because we can provide it.</p>
<p>2. Move the current instrument to a more suitable position in the nave of the church.</p>	<p>Preserves the current instrument.</p>	<p>There is no obvious location which does not create further problems for movement, sight lines around the church etc. In any case, it would be difficult to find a place where it could be satisfactorily rebuilt due to the shape and size of the organ pipes and casework</p>

OPTIONS	FOR	AGAINST
		<p>Moving the instrument would actually involve total rebuilding. The cost would be difficult to estimate until the work was underway, but it would probably be in the region of £50k-£70k.</p> <p>A report on the instrument commissioned by the PCC from Dr Nicholas Thistlethwaite (author of <i>The Making of the Victorian Organ</i> - see Appendix 4 of the Conservation Management Plan, and a foremost expert on Victorian organs) concluded that it is an undistinguished instrument and would not be worth the expense.</p>
<p>3. Install a new pipe organ on the west wall of the nave.</p>	<p>This would be musically and aesthetically ideal: there is ample space on the wall for a decent-size instrument, which would speak well into the body of the church.</p>	<p>The cost would be in the region of £250k-£500k - almost certainly beyond the present resources of the church unless we were to receive a major specific donation.</p>
<p>4. Install a new electronic instrument for use in the body of the church. This would consist of a high quality oak console (identical to a pipe organ console), the necessary software installed inside the console and high quality speakers placed out of sight on the ledge supporting the rafters along the north and south sides of the nave.</p>	<p>The likely cost (£35k-£45k) is already covered by a restricted fund which can only be spent on music.</p> <p>The instrument could be played from a mobile console, enabling flexible use in the body of the church.</p> <p>The console would be retained and used if a pipe organ were ever installed.</p>	<p>Electronic instruments are imitations of 'real' pipe instruments, albeit the technology has improved remarkably in recent years and very few people can hear the difference between a pipe and a modern electronic organ.</p> <p>The software of an electronic instrument (as opposed to the console) is unlikely to last as long</p>

OPTIONS	FOR	AGAINST
<p>The cost of an electronic instrument is approximately 50% for the console, 20% for the software and 30% for the speakers.</p>	<p>Maintenance costs and upgrades of software are much cheaper than the equivalent for a pipe instrument. The expense of maintaining a pipe organ would leave a costly legacy to future generations.</p> <p>The overall sound, range and versatility of the organ would be substantially improved and it would be more effective at leading the musical elements of our worship</p> <p>The whole of the Westcote chapel would become available, thereby enabling it to be fully used with the glass screen as detailed above. The hidden east window behind the organ would be seen and would shed light again (as originally intended in the C14) into the Westcote chapel and the chancel.</p>	<p>(perhaps 30 years) as the components of a pipe organ (100 years and more).</p> <p>The current organ would become redundant and, if we wanted to use the space, we would probably be required to find a new home for it, which might not be easy.</p>

**CONCLUSION** We decided that the advantages of Option 4 (acquiring a new electronic instrument) were compelling, provided we could obtain the consent of the Diocesan Organ Consultant, which might be dependent on finding a new home for the current instrument.

**TOILETS** At present there are no toilets in the church. The nearest toilets are situated in the Wickham Institute (village hall), which is run independently from Binsted Church. The Wickham Institute is outside the churchyard and across the road, which is difficult or impossible for the disabled and dangerous for children unless accompanied. It has to be unlocked for every church service and at all other times when the church is being used. Sometimes it is already in use by private hirers, causing embarrassment for all, as it is necessary to go through the hall, or leave a fire exit open, to get to the toilets at the back.

OPTION	FOR	AGAINST
1. To provide toilets inside the church	At present there are no toilets inside the church. The nearest toilets are in the village hall which is across the road from the church. The village hall is usually locked and has to be opened for services.	Wherever the toilets are situated, they will affect the current fabric or configuration of the church to a greater or lesser extent.
2. After considerable discussion, the committee agreed that we needed two toilets in the toilet block; one unisex toilet and one larger disabled toilet with baby changing facilities and proper disabled access.  A separate basin at the rear of the church for cleaning, flowers etc was considered desirable and can be installed if required at minimal extra cost.	Two toilets would be necessary if there are a substantial number of people in the church e.g. for weddings, funerals or other church services or events. A disabled toilet is a legal requirement, baby changing facilities are necessary, and the additional space and cost needed for a second toilet is fairly small.	Small additional cost for the second toilet.



OPTION	FOR	AGAINST
<p>3. A number of different sites were considered for the toilets. These included: outside the west door of the Westcote chapel, in the tower, in the north or south aisle, and outside the north-west corner of the church.</p> <p>All the different options have been extensively researched, and the advice of the DAC representatives, the CBC and Historic England was sought when they attended the first meeting of interested statutory bodies in 2017. The site proposed and agreed by them was outside the north-west corner of the church for the following reasons:</p> <p>3a Outside the door of the Westcote chapel.</p>	<p>The toilet block would be well hidden in the north-east corner. It would be</p>	<p>All new toilets require disabled access. This would not be possible as there are two steps down and a low,</p>

OPTION	FOR	AGAINST
<p>3b. In the tower</p> <p>3c. Some form of pod in the north or south aisle</p>	<p>very close to the Westcote chapel.</p> <p>The toilets would be readily accessible and would not impinge either physically or aesthetically on the main body of the church.</p> <p>The toilets would be readily accessible.</p>	<p>narrow doorway. Permission would not be granted for this mediaeval doorway to be substantially enlarged.</p> <p>Furthermore, in order to go to the toilet, it would be necessary to go to the front of the church and through the door between the north aisle and the Westcote room. This could be embarrassing during a service.</p> <p>After considerable discussion with the bell ringers, we concluded that there is absolutely no room in the tower for toilets or for anything other than minimal storage.</p> <p>The toilets would impinge radically on the integrity and beauty of the church and be very intrusive. If placed in the north or south aisle, they would obstruct all light from the windows and impede free movement within the building.</p>

OPTION	FOR	AGAINST
<p>3d. Outside the church in the north-west corner in the place of the existing building housing the boiler.</p>	<p>The toilets would be readily accessible, but still quite private as access would be through a separate door leading from the main body of the church at the back of the north aisle.</p> <p>It would be easy to provide disabled access both into the church building from the outside and from the north aisle to the toilets.</p> <p>The envisaged plan takes account of the latest planning and aesthetic requirements when adding new buildings to old ones, in that they should be sympathetic to the concept of - but sufficiently different from - the original building. The toilet block would be of timber with a slate roof, with a glazed link to connect</p>	<p>Access would be through an opening provided by the removal of the lower part of a Victorian window (which itself replaced the original C12 mediaeval window in 1863). A small portion of mediaeval wall below the window would also need to be removed.</p>

OPTION	FOR	AGAINST
	<p>with the church, allowing maximum light into the north aisle.</p> <p>The toilets would be well hidden from view, but a path would provide disabled access through the glazed link from the north side of the church.</p> <p>The toilet block would also house the boiler and the requisite pipework and would provide additional storage space in the roof void.</p> <p>The integrity of the C12 interior of the church would be retained and there would be little diminution in the amount of light in the north-west corner. The least amount of original masonry would be disturbed.</p> <p>This proposal appeared acceptable to the DAC representatives, the CBC and Historic England.</p>	

**CONCLUSION** Following the prompting of the various groups attending the DAC meeting in 2017, it was decided that the only practical and aesthetically appropriate place for the toilets was in the external north-west corner of the church.

**COFFEE STATION** At present coffee is usually served in the south chapel. When there are larger events requiring coffee, it is either served in the north west corner of the nave or in both places. All water for coffee and tea has to be transported from the cold tap in the Westcote chapel, and either heated where the coffee is served or boiled in kettles on the floor by the organ and transported through the church when hot. Coffee and tea is then handed round on trays to everyone where they are standing in the church in or beside the pews, or they go to the south chapel. There is room in the south chapel for some but not all of the congregation. The coffee cups are taken to a parishioner's house after the service to be washed.

OPTION	FOR	AGAINST
<p>1. Leave the coffee station where it is.</p>	<p>Some of the congregation like going to the south chapel for coffee and mingling there.</p>	<p>A coffee station in the south chapel is extremely inconvenient. The nearest source of water is the Westcote chapel, and everything necessary to make and serve coffee and tea has to be brought from the Westcote chapel across the chancel and either taken back there afterwards or taken to a parishioner's house to be washed.</p> <p>The south chapel is not very large, especially once the table for refreshments is set up. Thus a not inconsiderable proportion of the congregation have coffee served to them in the body of the church, either of necessity or because they want to enjoy private conversations. This is a health hazard, as after every service hot tea and coffee is carried on trays by an aging congregation across the church and often into the pews.</p>

<p>2. Move the coffee station to the Westcote chapel.</p>	<p>Assuming that the Westcote chapel is made into a warm and welcoming room, with hot and cold water and the facilities to provide tea and coffee for large numbers, this could be an option.</p>	<p>The south chapel is the most likely place for post service prayer, especially if coffee is served at the rear of the church. A screen could be used for greater privacy if necessary.</p> <p>The Westcote chapel is in the opposite direction to the main exit from the church, and the furthest point in the church from it. Churchgoers with limited mobility, or those unaccustomed to coffee after church, might be less likely to stay and mingle after the service.</p> <p>It is hoped that the Westcote chapel will house a crèche and children's church during services, thus it is not the most practical place to serve coffee immediately after services, especially baptisms when there are often more children present, as the children's toys would need to be tidied away.</p>
<p>3. Move the coffee station to the back of the church using a new purpose built kitchenette sited inside and behind high quality oak cupboards in the north west corner of the nave.</p>	<p>Hot and cold water, the urn, teapots, mugs and everything needed to serve tea and coffee will be readily available. There would be a sink for washing mugs and possibly a small dishwasher. A table for refreshments could be stored in the tower.</p>	<p>A purpose built cupboard would be needed and the pews at the rear of the church would need to be removed.</p>

	<p>This is the most practical and friendly place to serve coffee, as it is where people naturally gather at the end of services, especially baptisms, and those who are shy about staying will automatically feel more welcomed and included.</p> <p>It is closer to the toilets for those who need them and the easiest place to get to for those with limited mobility.</p> <p>If we are not able to raise the floor of the nave and aisles it can be reached without having to negotiate a step.</p> <p>There will be no need to carry trays with hot tea and coffee, or kettles full of boiling water, around the church, thus removing this health and safety issue.</p> <p>The post service prayer station, at the further end of the church in the south chapel, will consequently be more private as the congregation will move to the rear of the church rather than the Westcote chapel. A screen could still be used if thought necessary.</p>	
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**CONCLUSION** The PCC considers option 3 to be the most appropriate option, enabling the greatest number of those attending church to feel welcomed and be included in refreshments after the service in a safe and roomy environment with no equal opportunity issues.

**FONT:** The large orange alabaster font was given to the church in 1896 by Sophie Wyckham. It is currently situated in the west end of the south aisle. It is placed on a large stone plinth. It replaced a carved C12 Norman font with an intricate wooden lid, which the Victorians deemed to be crumbling and which they removed. There is no record of its current whereabouts. A sketch of 1841 shows the Norman font in a totally different position in the church. It was placed between the first and second columns of the nave on the north side. It was situated opposite the pulpit between the same columns on the south side. The pulpit was also removed by the Victorian reordering.

OPTION	FOR	AGAINST
<p>1. Leave the Victorian font where it is.</p>	<p>It is in one of the three traditional places for a font in a church.</p>	<p>It is in a very unhelpful position in this church. Baptisms bring into the church some of the larger congregations of the year, and with the fixed Victorian pews there is no space for everyone to gather round the font or even see what is going on. This should be a whole church activity as the existing church members welcome a new member into the church.</p> <p>The plinth itself is dangerous and our vicar is very concerned that there could be an accident, so some action needs to be taken in any case.</p> <p>If the font were moved, the space could be used for information or, for example, a semi-permanent exhibition featuring the life of Viscount Montgomery of</p>

OPTION	FOR	AGAINST
		<p>Alamein who lived in the parish and whose grave in the churchyard is visited by many.</p> <p>If the floor level of the nave and aisles cannot be raised and a substantial ramp is required from the south porch into the church, the space around the font will be further seriously compromised.</p>
<p>2. Remove the font from the church.</p>	<p>It frees up the space in the south-west corner of the church.</p>	<p>This is unlikely to be approved by the diocese. The font was given by a parishioner and is an interesting example of its type.</p>
<p>3. Move the font to the centre of the church.</p>	<p>This would enable baptisms to be held in the middle of the church, another traditional position for the font.</p> <p>If the fixed pews were removed, this might become a possibility, although it could hamper or prevent the church being used for some community activities.</p>	<p>With the fixed Victorian pews there is no room for such a large font in this position.</p>

OPTION	FOR	AGAINST
<p>4. Retain the font but move it to, say, the south chapel and install a sympathetically designed, high quality, moveable modern font for everyday use</p>	<p>This would retain the font and is one course of action the diocese makes available to churches.</p> <p>The font could be moved into the south chapel where it would be seen well in the light. It has been suggested by the diocese that a plaque should be put on the wall above it explaining the significance of baptism, which is not possible in its present position. The spiritual significance of the existing font would be thereby enhanced, and an explanation of baptism available to all who visit the church.</p> <p>A moveable font could then be used for baptisms in the spiritually significant centre of the church, enabling all those attending to be fully involved, and removed after the service so that it does not clutter the aisle.</p>	<p>Nothing, provided the moveable font is of a pleasing design and high quality.</p>

**CONCLUSION** The existing font should be moved to the south-west corner of the south chapel and a moveable font of agreed design used for baptisms in the centre of the church.

**HEATING, NAVE AND AISLES FLOORS.** The current floor was laid during the Victorian reordering of 1863-4. It comprises chequered red and black square tiles. It only covers part of the nave and aisles as the areas under the Victorian pews are not tiled but filled with rubble. Heating is by means of cast iron radiators, pipes situated on the backs of the pews, and a grill running down the centre of the nave. The tower is unheated, and the only form of protection from the cold comprise a raised wooden platform and a couple of electric heaters.

OPTION	FOR	AGAINST
<p>1. Retain the existing floor with the existing heating arrangements.</p>	<p>This option retains the Victorian floor tiles from the Victorian reordering.</p> <p>It might be possible to avoid the need to have a fixed ramp inside the south porch if the floor of the porch itself was sloped down into the church. However, the reason why the Victorians raised the porch floor would need to be investigated.</p>	<p>The heating system is now totally inadequate for sustained use. It is inadequate for conserving the fabric of the church in the long term, and also for providing a warm and welcoming environment other than for short periods e.g. a church service. This is due both to the inefficiency of the system, and also the cost of running it. There is also a burn hazard from the pipes behind the pews.</p> <p>If the existing floor, and therefore the existing floor level, is retained, it is likely that two visible and intrusive ramps, possibly with handrails, to allow for disabled access would be required, one from the south porch and one from the Westcote chapel to the north aisle. These would interfere with some of the fixed pews (especially if the font is retained in its present position), thereby</p>

OPTION	FOR	AGAINST
		<p>reducing available seating. The ramps would need to be at an angle of between 1:10 and 1:20, and the ramp from the south porch would need to allow for a raised area inside the doors before it could start. Further advice would be needed if this scenario is pursued.</p>
<p>2. Provide more effective and efficient modern heating, by digging out the existing floor, laying underfloor heating and then reinstating the existing floor so far as practicable (see also options analysis - pews). The spaces under the pew platforms would be covered with similar modern red and black tiles or maybe contrasting stone flags.</p> <p>The heating system (for both options 2 and 3) would be designed to ensure the best possible conservation of the fabric of the church, using the most modern methods. It would comprise underfloor heating throughout the nave and aisles, to maintain the appropriate ambient temperature, with some trench heating around the perimeter and between the piers to raise the</p>	<p>Retains some of the existing Victoria tiles in situ. Protects and conserves the fabric of the church through appropriate underfloor heating.</p>	<p>Much more expensive and time consuming than laying a new floor over the existing Victorian tiles (see option 3). It is likely that bodies will have been buried under the floor, and these would need to be taken in to account as required by the church authorities.</p>

OPTION	FOR	AGAINST
<p>temperature quickly when needed. Radiators would only be needed where underfloor heating would be impracticable (see option 4 below).</p>		
<p>3. Retain the existing Victorian floor, protected against any damage, but build a new suspended floor on top with attractive flagstones blending with the stone of the church.</p> <p>The floor would incorporate new, more effective and efficient heating, and there would be flexible seating with comfortable, attractive, moveable pews and supplementary chairs. when required (see below – options analysis - pews)</p>	<p>This appears to be the optimum choice. The glorious beauty and integrity of the whole mediaeval church would be revealed again by the removal of the pews, and the interior could be appreciated as a harmonious whole.</p> <p>The whole church, apart from the final step at the altar, would be at one level, fully accessible from the porch to the altar, and the church could be heated and its fabric conserved in the most effective and efficient way at the least possible expense.</p>	<p>There remains the ongoing challenge of how to deal with the pier bases in the nave. At present these all present differing depths in relation to the nave. If the floor were to be raised to the same level as the porch and the chancel, all of the pier bases would be reduced in height, and some could be level with the new floor.</p> <p>The architect has proposed various methods of dealing with this, and is looking at additional ways of doing so, so as to find a solution acceptable to the DAC and amenity societies.</p>
<p>4. Provide separate freestanding or wall radiators for the south chapel, chancel, vestry and those parts of the Westcote</p>	<p>This would reduce the overall heating cost, as it would enable part only of the church to be heated as necessary. E.g. for the</p>	<p>None, although this would only be feasible as part of an overall replacement of</p>

OPTION	FOR	AGAINST
chapel when the Victorian floor is retained.	monthly 8am communion service and events using the Westcote chapel only.	the heating system (proposals 2 or 3).

**CONCLUSION** Proposal 3 (laying a new floor with modern underfloor heating on top of the Victorian floor) seems to be the most advantageous in terms of practicality, cost and time taken. It would also be the most attractive, replacing the sombre Victorian tiles with light stone tiles matching the piers and the rest of the interior of the church. However, a solution needs to be found to alleviate the concerns relating to the pier bases.

**PEWS** There are currently 47 Pews (21 for three, 18 for four, and 8 for five people) mounted on seven raised wooden platforms. Some pews have been removed from the rear of the nave and six large pews were removed from the Westcote chapel in 1902, to accommodate the organ when it was moved to the church from Alton House.

OPTION	FOR	AGAINST
1. Retain all the pews as they are in their current positions.	For those who like the current Victorian pew configuration, as subsequently altered, this retains the status quo.	<p>The yellow pine pews, which are undistinguished, uncomfortable and mass-produced (probably sourced from a catalogue), are fixed on their plinths.</p> <p>This can be intimidating to non-churchgoers and prevents the church being used for most purposes other than traditional church services, and does</p>



OPTION	FOR	AGAINST
		<p>not allow for any form of flexibility. There is little or no opportunity to serve the community other than in a very limited way, and even to use the church in different ways by the worshipping community e.g. for serving refreshments after services, harvest and Passover meals.</p>
<p>2. Retain some of the pews but remove the wooden plinths so that they are freestanding and moveable.</p>	<p>Some pews would be retained.</p>	<p>Some of the existing pews were trialled on a free-standing basis, but we considered that they were not safe as they could tip backwards if they were used as a way of pulling oneself upright.</p>
<p>3. Replace the pews with a number of modern, high quality, comfortable, movable and stackable pews - sufficient for the current weekly congregation.</p>	<p>This would enable much greater flexibility both for the use of the church within its primary function as a meeting place for the worshipping community and for other uses as it seeks to serve the community and the benefice in the future.</p> <p>The interior of the church would be much less cluttered and the Norman columns would be much more visible.</p>	<p>The Victorian pews would no longer be used.</p> <p>Although the consistent response once pews in a church are removed appears to be positive, it would take time for the community to get used to the uncluttered, simplified, original mediaeval space.</p> <p>The weight of the stackable pews could be an issue if younger people do not become involved in the church</p>

OPTION	FOR	AGAINST
<p>4. When additional seating is needed for church and community activities, 99 high quality stackable wooden chairs would be available. These would be stored in the Westcote chapel in oak cupboards underneath the north window.</p>	<p>Comfortable additional seating for large scale services, weddings etc and other events would be available.</p> <p>The original beauty of the church, as it was designed to be seen in the C12, could again be appreciated and enjoyed. The quiet simplicity of the space, freed from the constraints of the wooden pews, would aid contemplation and prayer.</p>	<p>The need for storage space under part of the north window of the Westcote chapel for other purposes.</p>

**CONCLUSION** The fixed Victorian pews should be removed and replaced by a mixture of modern stackable pews and stackable chairs.

**VIDEO** At present, the church has no means of showing or projecting visual material. This would be helpful for showing welcome or other notices, video clips, sermon slides, words for hymns and songs (when they are not in the usual hymn books), for hosting film evenings and for other school and community events.

OPTION	FOR	AGAINST
1. Acquire a large, moveable HD TV screen to be located in front of the chancel steps.	This would provide a high quality picture and be relatively inexpensive.	A large TV screen would be unsightly and would obscure the view into the chancel. It would also be inconvenient as it would need to be moved aside (during communion, for example) to obtain easy access to the east end of the church.
2 Install a drop-down screen in the chancel arch.	This could be accomplished relatively easily at moderate cost and in such a way that it could be rolled up or folded away out of sight. Also the screen would be high enough not to hinder movement to and from the chancel	The image in such an arrangement is likely to be less crisp and bright than on a TV screen

OPTION	FOR	AGAINST
<p>There are three options for projection:</p> <p>i) from the west end wall</p> <p>ii) back projection from chancel</p> <p>iii) projector suspended from nave roof or side wall</p> <p>NB Additional (small TV) screens would also be required for those seated in the side aisles.</p>	<p>i) technically elegant</p> <p>ii) technically feasible</p> <p>iii) technically feasible</p> <p>Cheap and effective</p>	<p>i) would require a very powerful (and therefore very expensive) projector with a long-throw lens;</p> <p>ii) probably not bright enough - and could suffer from glare from east windows;</p> <p>iii) projector would be visible at all times and possibly intrusive.</p> <p>Relatively unattractive, although they could be sited unobtrusively.</p>
<p><b>CONCLUSION</b> We are consulting AV specialist suppliers to comment and advise on all the options noted above.</p>		

**SOUND SYSTEM (AUDIO)**

The present system is unreliable, prone to feedback, can only be adjusted from the west end and is hard to set to achieve the correct balance. The speakers are large and unsightly and the cabling very conspicuous. The sound system is also inflexible and has very little provision for adding other instruments, e.g. for a band.

There is a working hearing loop, but it would need to be extended into the Westcote chapel.

OPTION	FOR	AGAINST
<p>We are seeking quotes from audio specialists to provide a system with the following attributes:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. up-to-date (digital) technology which is reliable and free from interference;</li> <li>2. capable of being operated from the chancel (i.e. by the person leading the service) as well as from the west end;</li> <li>3. visually attractive (likely to mean replacing the existing speakers with slim, column speakers);</li> <li>4. lighter, neutral-colour cabling;</li> <li>5. facility to add additional instruments etc to enable use by a band in either a church or community context;</li> <li>6. integral hearing loop throughout the church including the Westcote chapel and the south chapel.</li> </ol>	<p>Effective, modern, flexible audio system, capable of being operated by the person leading the service.</p>	<p>None.</p>

**CONCLUSION**

The only options to be decided are the choice of supplier and more detailed technical specifications.

**GLASS DOORS FOR THE PORCH** At present the main entrance to the church is via the south porch and a pair of heavy Victorian oak doors, installed when the Victorians remodelled the 1330 doorway.

[OPTION]	FOR	AGAINST
<p>1. Keep the doorway and the oak doors as they are.</p>	<p>Retains the current configuration.</p> <p>Minimal impact on birds nesting in the porch.</p>	<p>The oak doors are forbidding, heavy and embarrassingly noisy to open, for instance during a service if people want to go in or out (e.g. with children).</p> <p>They are normally kept shut, so it is not possible to see inside the church. They also make the interior of the church much darker than it would be otherwise.</p> <p>They are not welcoming, especially to local residents who come to the church to pray outside services, and the many ramblers and visitors to Viscount Montgomery's tomb.</p>

[OPTION]	FOR	AGAINST
<p>2. Retain the existing solid oak doors, but install glass doors outside these.</p>	<p>The oak doors could be kept open during the day, with the glass doors providing the weather protection required.</p> <p>This option would provide much greater transparency into the church, and a more open welcome, both during and outside services. It would show that the church is open to and for all, irrespective of whether they are passing visitors, local residents seeking spiritual refreshment or peace, or members of the church community.</p> <p>We are advised that the glass doors could be installed with minimal disruption to the fabric of the church.</p> <p>Both sets of doors would be locked at night to keep the church secure.</p> <p>The glass doors could be inscribed with a Christian message showing to all who pass by the purpose and meaning of our church.</p>	<p>Any impact on swallows which currently nest in the porch for part of the year.</p> <p>Any mess from the nesting birds on the glass doors would be unsightly and need regular cleaning.</p>



**CONCLUSION** The PCC would like to investigate the possibility of installing glass doors in the back of the porch.

**LIGHTING**

The church’s existing lighting is underpowered, making it gloomy and difficult for people to read hymns, service sheets, programmes etc on dark days. Equally, it is inflexible, so there is no scope to dim the lights to create a more contemplative atmosphere, e.g. at a carol service. The system uses inefficient tungsten and halogen bulbs which consume significant amounts of electricity; they fail regularly and are expensive and (in the case of the high-level fittings) dangerous to replace. Several of the spotlights are unsightly and poorly situated, creating unattractive glare to those seated in the body of the church. The chancel step, where much key activity takes place at services, is inadequately lit (it is really rather dark!)

OPTION	FOR	AGAINST
<p>We have invited three well-respected designers with experience of church buildings to propose lighting schemes incorporating the following features:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. new fittings (up- or down-lighters) which will subtly reinforce the existing pendants while enhancing the church’s architectural features;</li> <li>2. flexibility - to vary the lighting to suit the needs of different occasions;</li> <li>3. greater energy efficiency;</li> </ol>	<p>A new, professionally designed system would greatly enhance the appearance of the interior while making it more energy-efficient and safer to maintain.</p>	<p>The cost will be significant, probably up to £70k, depending on the scope and sophistication of the system chosen.</p>

OPTION	FOR	AGAINST
<p>4. longer life, to extend the replacement cycle;</p> <p>5. compact, low-glare design; and</p> <p>6. new, appropriate fittings for the Westcote Chapel and South Chapel.</p>		

**CONCLUSION** We should investigate lighting options.