

PARISH RENOVATION APPEAL

Our parish church of St Laurence was provided by Mr Laurence Cave for the benefit of the Catholics in this area 130 years ago. It is a Grade 2 listed building of special architectural interest and of national importance, and something of a landmark in Petersfield. Earlier generations have passed on this 'spiritual home' to us; let us now provide for future generations.

Many of you will remember that the dome was re-covered with copper in 2011. The inside of the dome was painted at the same time and looks magnificent. Many parishioners have asked about decorating the rest of the church. There is much work to be done: some of it is urgent (Phase 1) and some less so (Phase 2).

The Diocesan Trustees have strictly limited parish expenditure, because in the present circumstances 80 of 91 parishes were in deficit last year and this is likely to continue for some time. However the Trustees have accepted that works described in Phase 1 are urgent and have agreed the expenditure for this. Phase 2 will have to wait and this will give us time to raise the funds.

Please note that the regular maintenance and repairs will continue subject to expenditure restrictions by the Diocesan Trustees. There are also still some works to be completed at St Agnes Church to provide for full disability access.

Phase 1 - Exterior (expected to cost about £140,000)

Exterior repairs to roofs, brickwork and guttering. There are several areas where rainwater is coming into the church, church hall and the presbytery.

In the presbytery there is occasional water penetration to the shower room, which needs to be resolved.

There is a very small leak from the top of the dome which was first evident in spring 2018. This means that high level scaffolding will have to be put up to give access to the top of the dome. The original contractor, Peter's Roofing, who did the new copper dome has verbally agreed to attend and resolve this issue.

The other areas needing attention are:

the lower windows in the dome need sealing to prevent further water ingress (but will need to await the internal scaffolding required for Phase 2),

the flat roof above the WC's in the church hall,

the flat roof needing replacement above the Sacred Heart Chapel and lastly,

in the sanctuary where water is coming in and one slate roof above may have to be renewed

Phase 2 - Internal (expected to cost about £210,000)

Subject to parishioner and Historic Churches Committee agreement, we propose to install an oak and glass screen at the back of the church to create a separate area. The existing small wooden lobby would be removed.

Apart from the interior of the dome painted in 2011, complete internal redecoration of the church including repairing plasterwork where necessary.

Install a completely new lighting system in the church.

Refurbish the heating system which will include installing a new boiler and possibly new radiators.

Repair the parquet flooring where it has shrunk and become loose.

Install push button opening doors from the outside through the church hall and into the church for easy disabled access. Four doors in total.

Possibly install a new sound system. Whilst the audio system at St Laurence is working adequately at present, we will obtain a price for a new system and then decide whether it should be renewed.

Funding

This is a summary of our current parish funds:

Current Account	£148,317	(inc. £18,750 Covid-19 Heritage at Risk Response Fund)
Deposit Account	£ 44,591	
Living Our Faith Funds	£ 63,003	
Diocesan Investment Fund	£ 17,000	
Total: £ 272,911		

The Parish Finance Committee have agreed an expenditure up to £175,000 for Phase 1.

The Parish Finance Committee have considered various fundraising options and have decided to promote an appeal for £150,000 over a period of three years in order to meet the costs of Phase 2 when we are allowed to proceed.

Parishioners may be aware that the very necessary renovation of the dome and roof was substantially helped by a large legacy which avoided the need to approach individuals. In normal, pre-Covid 19 years, the annual income of the parish was roughly £90,000 but dropped by about £10,000 last year. So, if you can afford to do so, to meet this target of an extra £50,000 per year everyone needs to think in terms of quite a substantial increase in their giving. So whether you give cash in the Offertory collection or donate by standing order, please consider this seriously.

Contributions can be made in the usual way using a pink/or any envelope but please write on it "Appeal" and, if appropriate, your Gift Aid number. Donations marked "Appeal" will be ring-fenced for this purpose. A specifically amended standing order form is available for those who wish to make a separate periodic donation into the appeal.

Please remember that Gift Aid increases any amount given by 25%. If you are a tax payer and have not yet joined the Gift Aid scheme, please consider doing so.

If you need any help with Standing Orders etc. let us know in the parish office or go direct to Sandy Sullivan for advice (sandysullivan@ntlworld.com or 01730 300464)

I would like to thank the Parish Pastoral Council, the Finance Committee and the Repair and Maintenance Committee and Ann Saunders for their work in preparing this Appeal.

And many thanks to you for taking time to consider it.

Yours,

Fr Peter Hollins