

ST PAUL'S CHURCH BARROW

CHURCH HALL UPDATE



April 2022 | An update letter for local residents regarding the future of the Church Hall

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Dear local resident,

You may be aware that in October 2021, as churchwardens of St Paul's Church, we wrote to immediate local residents with an update report on the condition & situation facing the St Paul's Church Hall, on the junction of Hawcoat Lane & Wheatclose Road. We invited immediate residents to an Open Meeting on 1st November to hear opinions & gather ideas. As we explained at that meeting, since lockdown the Church Hall has remained closed and unfit for use, despite some costly repairs to the roof in particular. Thank you to those of you who came to that meeting & shared your thoughts.

Since that meeting we've continued to consult with the church community, considering different options and seeking to discern a way forward that is realistic and wise, with long-term benefit to church and community. When it felt like various options and views had been explored & compared, we then held an Extraordinary Meeting of the St Paul's Parochial Church Council in late February. At this meeting the PCC voted unanimously in favour of a proposal to pursue a sale of the Church Hall site.

This was not an easy decision, because the Church Hall has played an immense part in the life of the church and the wider community over 140 years, including the lives of many members of our PCC. However, its present state means that it is not currently offering such benefit to the church, nor to our mission in the wider community.

We believe that seeking to be wise stewards of all that has been entrusted to us means it is now appropriate to pursue a sale of the Church Hall site for the sake of the church's ministry to future generations. It is our intention to use any sale funds to help us carry out the purposes for which the church exists, and we believe this will be a means of blessing to the wider community, amongst whom the Hall has clearly meant a great deal to many.

We realise that just as this decision is tinged with some sadness for many in our church community, so it will be for some local residents whose lives have been entwined with the Church Hall. There will no doubt also be questions about what the future of the site will hold. In the event of a sale, we hope that any future use of the site will be in keeping with the nature of the local community.

We are communicating this decision to local residents in the same week as the church community. If you would value a conversation around anything in this letter, please get in touch as above and we can arrange a conversation.

Yours sincerely,

Ms. Jackie Dower, Mr. Derek Pearce, Mr Mike Derry, & Rev. Robin Ham
on behalf of the St Paul's Church PCC