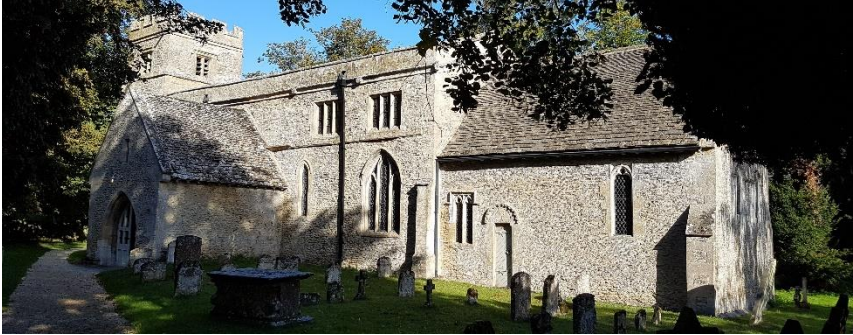


# ADAPTING ST MARY'S CHURCH FOR WIDER USE



21<sup>st</sup> June 2021

The churchwardens of St Mary's are responsible for its upkeep and continued use. Our Parochial Church Council (PCC) has identified the need to improve the facilities at St Mary's to ensure the viability of worship there for future generations. To that end the PCC is anticipating that any improvements should be considered with the needs of the whole village in mind.

To date the PCC and friends of the church and the committees of the Parish Council (PC) and Black Bourton Village Association (BBVA) have been discussing the likely needs for a community space (see page 8). To stimulate feedback three options are presented in this leaflet, ranging from a simple internal toilet (Option A) to a fully equipped annexe (Option C).

We would now like to extend the discussion to all residents and interested parties. To that end, if you are registered on our website (<https://blackbourton.org.uk/>) for the monthly newsletter you have received a link to a survey designed to see how many would support using the church for the wider community. Paper versions are readily available.

**Our Vision:** A community space that serves the needs of both parishioners and residents for generations to come.

## THE THREE OPTIONS

- A. **Internal toilet and kitchenette**
- B. **External toilet and internal small kitchen**
- C. **Toilet and kitchen annexe**

### UNIVERSAL REQUIREMENTS INCLUDED IN ALL THREE OPTIONS

1. **Removal of some pews** at the west end of the church and replacing with a rug covering will provide a casual seating area (in progress).
2. **Far infrared shortwave radiant heating** can replace the oil heating. It is designed to heat objects not the air, making it instant and efficient and ideal for the murals (as used in Chalgrove church). This will free up the boiler room for more storage.
3. **The Trench Arch System** can discharge wastewater from the toilet and kitchen to the soil (as used in Alvescot church). The system is fully aerobic and does not require deep excavations or removal of sludge. The kitchenette option is likely to require its own soakaway. Access to water in theory is from the current tap in the churchyard.

Each option has its pros and cons. For the purposes of helping to identify needs, each option is considered using the following feasibility criteria:

1. Fulfilling the **village's needs** – does it effectively anticipate our short- and long-term requirements?
2. Fulfilling the **wider community's needs** – does it effectively address their requirements?
3. The **long-term viability** – will it be fit for purpose in 10-50 years' time?
4. The **costs** – what are the likely costs, and will the option readily attract funding from national grant-givers and the wider community?

### THE PROCESS

1. Identify the needs (the village-wide survey and feedback)
2. Review which option best addresses the needs
3. Get approval from the planners at the Diocesan Advisory Committee
4. Set up a project team from volunteers across the village
5. Appoint architect and define the requirements
6. Get the costs for one or more options
7. Raise the money through fundraising and attracting grants
8. Build the option we can afford to build!

## FEASIBILITY CRITERIA

### 1. Village's needs

As well as the needs of the PCC, the likely needs of the village should be identified with guidance from the PC and BBVA.

For example:

Beyond church services the church has already been in use as:

- A venue for professional evening concerts
- Parish Council meetings
- PCC meetings
- Polling station
- A venue for bring-and-buy
- Coffee mornings
- Evening classes

All of which are constrained by the lack of facilities.

- A number of other village activities could also benefit from improved facilities, such as a book club and toddlers' group.

### 2. Wider community's needs

St Mary's reaches out to a wider population beyond the village that could also benefit. Black Bourton is the site of Carterton cemetery and RAF Brize Norton war graves – both of which attract regular visitors requiring access to a toilet. This is especially evident at peak times such as Mothering Sunday and Remembrance Sunday.

Carterton Town Council is already in discussion about erecting its own semi-permanent 'portaloo' solution.

### 3. Long-term viability

Consideration should be given to the viability of the option for meeting future needs and expectations. Will the solution stand the test of time and be as attractive to future generations?

### 4. Costs

There will be (to be established) a significant difference in cost between the options. However, there's also likely to be varying opportunities for securing grants from national bodies and local authorities depending on the option chosen.

\* Where quoted, we expect building costs to be lower when we work with local builders who know our church.

## OPTION A: INTERNAL TOILET AND KITCHENETTE



### THE PLAN

This option introduces an accessible toilet where the current cleaning cupboard is and a kitchenette – an unobtrusive bespoke kitchen cabinet that includes a sink and worksurface (only visible when the lid is lifted) and storage – that can be fitted to the wall, left of the bell tower door (as used in Clanfield church). Total guesstimated costs, including universal requirements, are £50,000.

### PROS

- The cheapest option
- Very convenient toilet for church users

### CONS

- Leaves no storage space for chairs and tables
- The kitchenette has limited features and will intrude on the seating area
- The church has to remain open every day to allow cemetery and graveyard visitors to use the toilet
- This option may not attract significant funding from Carterton Town Council and RAF Brize Norton
- The appearance of the toilet may harm the integrity of the church
- The toilet area will not be able to accommodate baby changing facilities
- This option may incur internal work for accessibility

## OPTION B: EXTERNAL TOILET AND INTERNAL KITCHEN



### THE PLAN

The accessible toilet is sited away from the church at the entrance to Carterton cemetery or near the north door. A store area for a mower and equipment for maintaining the churchyard can also be attached. The existing cleaning cupboard beside the organ is converted to a small kitchen.

The approximate size is 4m x 2m. The build cost (not including any of the universal requirements or fixtures and fittings) is around £2,500/m<sup>2</sup>, making it £20,000 (see 4\* page 3). Total guesstimated costs, including universal requirements, are £60,000.

### PROS

- Meets requirements for visitors to Carterton's cemetery and war graves
- The toilet can be large enough to take baby changing facilities
- The small kitchen provides a very serviceable catering facility that doesn't impact on the seating area or the integrity of the church
- Is probably the easiest option to get approval from the DAC
- Is significantly cheaper than Option C
- Likely to attract funding from both Carterton Town Council and the RAF

### CONS

- An outside toilet further from the church is not ideal – especially at night and in bad weather, for the less mobile and for babies and infants
- The church as a community centre is not best served by an outside toilet
- An outside toilet is unlikely to be viewed by future generations as a long-term solution

## OPTION C: TOILET AND KITCHEN ANNEXE

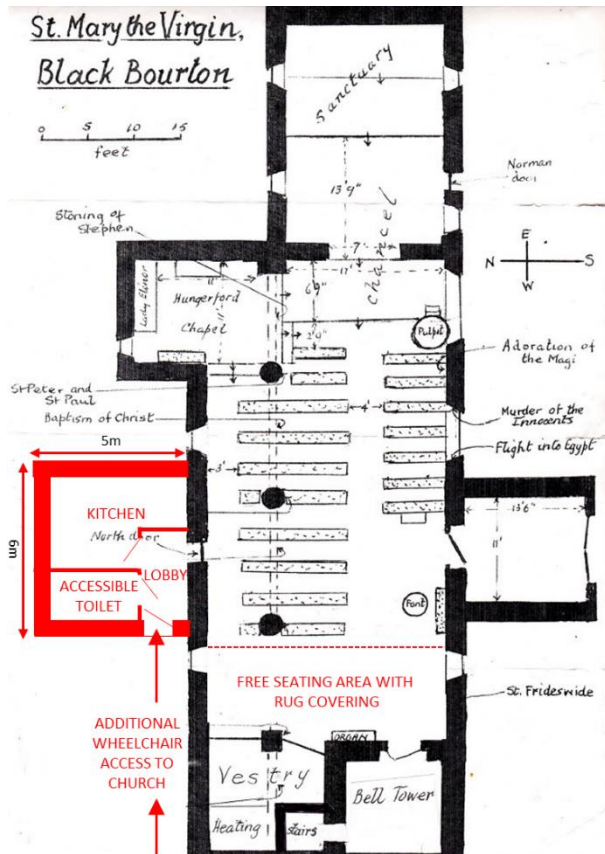
Based on the kitchen and toilet annexe at St Peter and St Paul Aston Rowant.



### THE PLAN

This option is for an annexe off the north door for a kitchen and self-contained accessible toilet, which can be accessed from the outside without having to unlock the church (to service the needs of visitors to the cemetery). The accessible access would also be used as an alternative entrance when the church is open.

The approximate external size is 6m x 5m. The build cost (not including any of the universal requirements, fixtures and fittings or groundwork to bring the level to that of the church floor) is around £4,000/m<sup>2</sup> (to match the existing walls and roof) making it £120,000 (see 4\* page 3). Total guesstimated costs, including universal requirements, are £220,000. (In 2012 the total costs for the Aston Rowant annexe were £110,000.)



## PROS

- Meets the requirements for a village community centre
- Meets the requirements for visitors to the Carterton cemetery and war graves
- Very convenient toilet for church users (with baby changing facilities)
- Likely to be viewed by future generations as a long-term solution
- Likely to attract funding from both Carterton Town Council and RAF Brize Norton and match funding from national bodies
- Does not impact on the inside of the church or the most viewed elevations outside

## CONS

- The cost
- Is probably the most difficult option to get approval from the DAC

## FEEDBACK SO FAR ...

*The BBVA is keen to support the project. We use the church for our Live@BB. We have in the past used it for History Evenings, coffee mornings and if facilities were available, we could hold our meetings in there, plus other events. DH (BBVA Chair)*

*Although you think option C has more hurdles and higher cost, I think we should not lack ambition! JL*

*I agree that Option B does seem the most viable. Although the long term benefits of Option C are attractive, the costing is probably prohibitive. NH*

*Obviously Plan C is the best option ... I realise this involves a huge amount of money and we will probably have to compromise but I think it is really worth looking into for the present and the future. DH*

*I think option C would work best for the church, community and be more "future proof" for any other changes that may happen. DH*

*Option C – by far the best and most sensible option. Obviously, this will cost a lot more, but I feel the other options could only be very temporary ones, and therefore a waste of money, as eventually Option C will be needed anyway. MW*

*The answer has to be option C. If you went for either of A or B neither could be a permanent solution, and eventually you would have to go to option C anyway. BW*

*In this ever-changing world I think it's a great idea for the church building to be used for recreational and entertainment activities. I'm sure that the Village residents would be happy to pay for the use of this and in future years the financial returns will be paid back many times and the well-being of the villagers will be paid back beyond value. EO*

## NEXT STEPS

The results of the village-wide survey will be published in the July/August newsletter. With this feedback we can produce a draft statement of need, which can then be discussed with the planners at the Diocesan Advisory Committee (DAC). With the DAC's advice we can appoint an architect to work with us on the viable options and position the project to attract grants.

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