

PROJECT PRÉCIS

ST MARY'S CHURCH, DEVIZES, WILTSHIRE



Our Goals

Balancing Heritage and Innovation

To transform the historic Church of St Mary the Virgin, Devizes, from a potentially redundant building into a thriving, multi-use space for the local community and much of the county.

Encouraging Arts and Culture

To offer flexible, state-of-the-art facilities for holding a wide variety of heritage events, concerts, drama, exhibitions and conferences.

Social Responsibility

To benefit the entire community while expanding Devizes' reputation as the place of choice in Wiltshire to hold all types of events.

Holding the Tradition

To remain a consecrated building as well as encouraging a diverse range of cultural activities.

Benefits

Sustainability

Enhancing and preserving the heritage of this beautiful building while developing a sustainable future.

Inclusion

Encouraging local participation and cohesion, and improving cultural opportunities in Wiltshire.

Empowerment

Inspiring the local community to learn about their heritage through cultural and artistic activities, and celebrating local talent.

Outreach

Attracting minority groups and disadvantaged people who may not necessarily think about arts and local heritage in their day-to-day lives.

Planned Capital Works

In the churchyard a semi-circular cloister building will be constructed, joined to the church and containing the new vestry, office space, meeting rooms, kitchen, toilets and store rooms.

Inside, pews will be removed and a new wooden semi-sprung floor with under floor heating installed, together with a ground-source heat pump. The auditorium will hold audiences of up to 260 people using flexible raked seating. A lighting gantry for the stage will be installed at the east of the nave.

Facilities

- A community event space of character
- Flexible performance space for audiences of up to 260, the largest of its kind in Devizes
- Moveable raked seating for 90 people
- Conference facilities with break-out rooms (something lacking in Devizes)
- Display space for works of art
- Full IT facilities for meetings
- Environmentally friendly heating and water usage
- Management by an independent charitable company, under a lease from the parish

Potential Users & Beneficiaries

Charities	group meetings, hot-desking, printing and other office facilities
School and Youth Groups	educational and outreach activity such as local history or arts projects
Volunteers	who engage with the project and help manage or provide activities
Families, Visitors and Tourists	attending performances and activities, and engaging with heritage
Disadvantaged People	experiencing and enjoying arts and heritage for the first time
Arts and Crafts Clubs	exhibiting work both short term and long term
Music and Dance Societies	choral, orchestral, operatic and dance rehearsals and performances
Theatre Groups	touring drama companies, & one-off productions for larger audiences
Institutions and Clubs	business, cultural, social and ecclesiastical meetings and conferences

Consultation, Planning & Governance

The project started in 2008 when the Parochial Church Council (PCC) began holding public consultations.

A steering group known as the St Mary's Future Group has since been set up. It reports to the PCC and includes representatives from the PCC, the parish, the town council and the arts community.

An Historic Buildings Assessment of the church has been carried out and Statements of Significance and Need have been written for the Diocese. An archaeological investigation of the churchyard has taken place - no significant structures were uncovered and the project now has a clear work plan approved by Wiltshire Council Archaeology Department and acceptable to the Diocese.

Public consultation has continued with open meetings, briefings to the Town Council and the Devizes Area Board (part of Wiltshire Council). The Diocesan Advisory Committee and Conservation bodies have been invited to the church and briefed on the outline plans.

The architectural practice **Batterham Matthews Design** of Bath were selected as our **project partners**, for their innovative plan for a new eco-friendly cloister to the north of the church.

In order to run the facility St Mary Devizes Trust Ltd has been formed as a charitable company limited by guarantee (Registered Charity No 1151049). Arrangements are being made with the PCC on the structure of the necessary lease.

It is hoped that ground works will commence in April 2014. Building works including refitting of the church are expected to take about 18 months.

Costs

Item	Cost (£)
Ground Clearance	6,000
Design & Build: new Cloister to north of Church	780,000
Adapting and Equipping the Church	300,000
Furniture and Fittings	92,000
Fees and Costs	130,000
Total	1,308,000

With existing pledges of £300,000, the residual fundraising target is now £1m.

A detailed **Business Plan** and fundraising **Case for Support** are available on request.

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