

The background of the entire page is filled with various silhouettes of people in teal and green colors. On the left, there is a large teal silhouette of an adult and two smaller green silhouettes of children. On the right, there is a green silhouette of an adult and a child. In the center, there is a white rectangular box containing text. Below the box, there are more silhouettes: a green child on the left, a green couple walking in the middle, and a teal family (adult, child, and another child) on the right.

st JOHN'S
Living God's Love

Our new
Parish Centre

***BUILDING IT
TOGETHER***



St John's Parish Centre is an ambitious, but achievable, vision for our local community.

Foreword from the Vicar, Berkeley Zych

St John's Parish Centre is an ambitious, but achievable, vision for our local community. There is limited community space available in the Southdown area of Harpenden and none that relates so clearly with the Common.

Space where everyone is welcome

Our aim is to create improved space for young people, community groups and those struggling with loneliness and isolation, such as young families and children, older people and carers. The new and enhanced building will accommodate a variety of cultural and social activities and will include drop-in space and a café where everyone is welcome. All this will be achieved through the re-development of the existing hall, which is nearing the end of its useful life.

St John's exists because of the generosity of the local community

The life and well-being of the wider community are important to us at St John's because generosity and hospitality are at the heart of Christian life as we seek to live out God's love. Jesus teaches us this through his own ministry that was characterised by abundant giving to others. We are also aware that St John's exists because of the generosity of the local community who first raised the money to build the church back in 1908. We want to continue to embody that charitable spirit and offer back something of value to our local community now and into the future.

The new Parish Centre will play a key role in enabling St John's to continue its ministry of generosity and hospitality in the community and to engage with and support both the worshipping community and the wider community in the years ahead.

Our vision for the new Parish Centre

We aim to create a sustainable, contemporary and flexible building designed to meet the existing needs of our congregation and enable us to expand our range of outreach activities and services within the community.

Our new Parish Centre will provide St John's church family with:

- a more integrated space between the beautiful church where we meet to worship and the environment where we meet in fellowship to support and socialise with each other
- a safe space to meet and play for our Junior Church, Rainbows and Brownies and other children's groups
- greater flexibility in how our existing church groups use the space, enabling different groups to meet at the same time
- an open and welcoming café area to support our social activities
- a main hall designed for larger gatherings and performances
- upgraded kitchen facilities
- purpose-built rooms for church groups such as an activity room for messy play and crafts, a large formal meeting room and a lounge for informal discussions
- adequate storage space for users.

Our new Parish Centre will provide our local community, of all faiths or none, with:

- flexible spaces which enable us to address specific needs within the community
- more scope to expand and develop outreach activities such as our monthly Tea@3 for older people and our weekly Little Acorns group for parents and toddlers; these groups provide friendship and support to help combat loneliness
- safe and welcoming spaces where we can host a permanent playgroup for local families
- affordable community space for a variety of users
- an enhanced environment for our existing hall users, which include dance groups, music groups, and community meetings
- improved facilities in which to offer additional local support for Southdown residents. The hall is currently used as a Polling station but we could also consider being a base for a food bank, MP surgeries, library facilities, or an information point.

“The new Parish Centre will be a valuable resource and community hub and will provide improved facilities for everyone to make use of and enjoy.”

Cllr B Ellis, Harpenden Town Mayor



Why?

The current church hall provides essential facilities for both the church and the wider community to run activities, hold meetings and host events. However, although it has served us well for more than 50 years, it is now nearing the end of its useful life and is beginning to have a negative impact on our activities and our finances.

The existing building is inflexible, with one hall, one committee room, an outdated kitchen and an office, all of which require significant overhaul. The building is therefore becoming increasingly expensive to run. In addition, the hall does not comply with current legislation with regard to disabled access and catering facilities, and this directly impacts on us as church members and on the wider community as users of the building.

Five years ago the Parochial Church Council (PCC) appointed a small steering group to assess our options. Following extensive research, and consultation with other churches who had renovated or built a new church hall, the group presented their findings to the PCC.

Continuing to repair the existing building would not be economical or cost effective given its physical deterioration and the extensive repairs and updating required.

Constructing a replacement church hall with a like-for-like version would involve a significant spend, yet leave us with a relatively inflexible building that would not meet the current or future needs of the church congregation or the local community.

As a church, we believe we are now presented with an unparalleled opportunity to replace the existing church hall with a mission-enhancing building that reflects both our values and our aspirations for the future. For an investment that is not significantly more than the cost of a replacement church hall, we can create a bespoke building that effectively responds to our needs and those of our users.

The previous generation built the existing church hall in good faith, and as a congregation we have appreciated and benefitted from its facilities over a number of years. It is now our turn, in faith, to provide a new, attractive and sustainable building that our children and the families of the parish can enjoy using and be proud of for generations to come.

What?

Our new Parish Centre will be a contemporary, flexible space, full of light. Large, glass front doors will create an inviting welcome to the building, which will be nearer the entrance to the church, making it more accessible and more visible from St John's Road.

There will be direct access between the church and the new Parish Centre to highlight the connection between the church and the community, visibly emphasising how God's love is at the heart of what we do.

The access into the church will encourage 'free flow' between the two buildings, creating flexibility by opening up the use of the two spaces for events and activities.

The facilities will include a welcoming café area, a main hall, a modern kitchen, a comfortable lounge, an activity space and a meeting room. The heart of the building will be the welcoming café where people can meet for a chat over coffee, drop in after walking the dog on the common, or use the free wi-fi as an alternative touch down work space.

The café makes good use of the area designated for transition from the front of the building to the hall and meeting rooms at the rear. The church office is at the entrance to the building to provide an easy first point of contact.

The facilities will be purpose built and are designed to be user friendly for all ages and stages. Particular attention has been paid to making the building accessible for those with disabilities.

The style of the new building is designed to reflect and respond to the architecture of the church, creating an attractive and complementary structure. At the rear of the building, the enhanced outside space will create a tranquil and pleasant garden.

The construction materials will be ethically sourced and sustainably driven to minimise maintenance and running costs.

A direct link into the church to enable 'free flow' between the two buildings.



The construction materials will be ethically sourced and sustainably driven.

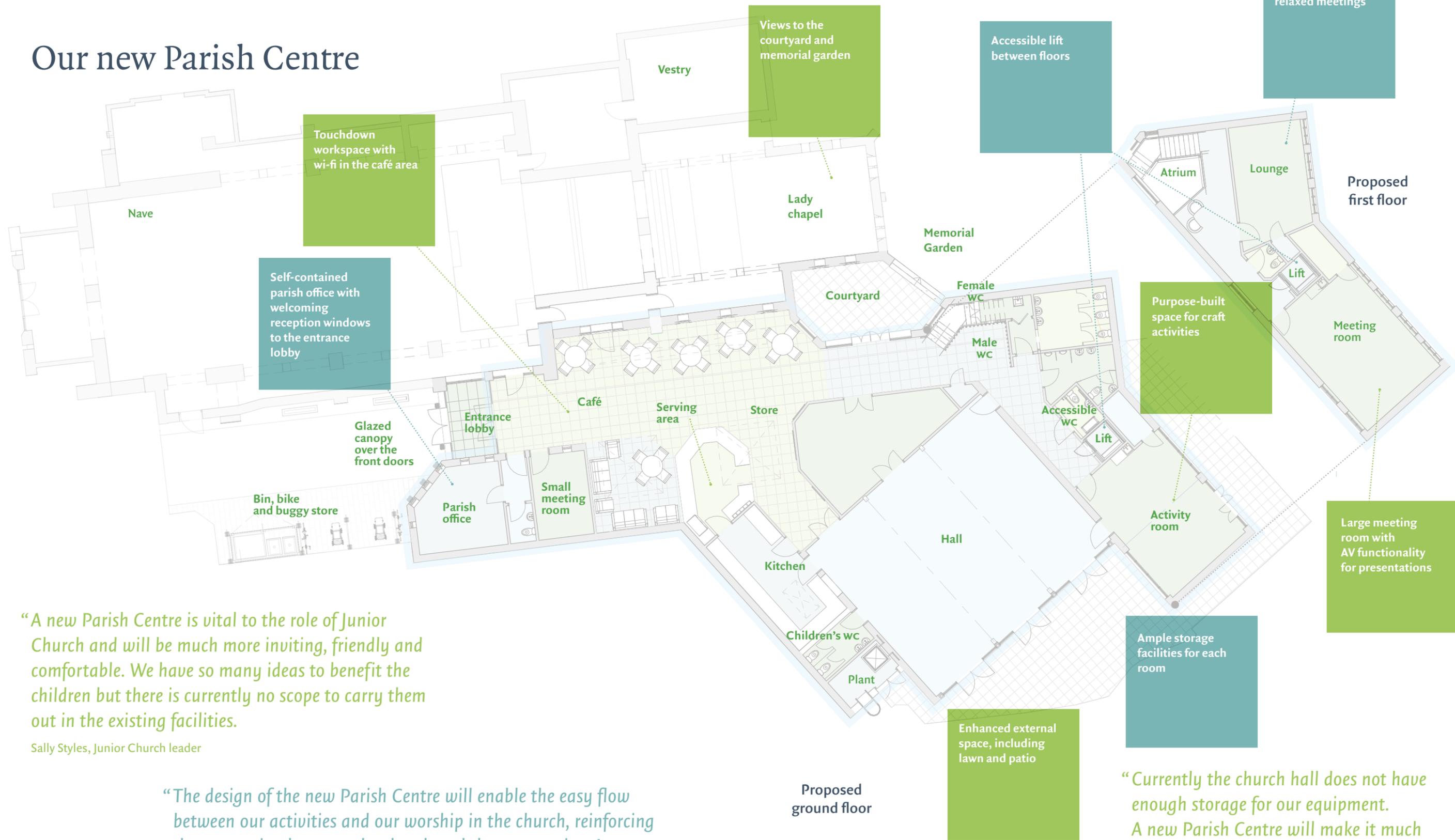
There will be a café area, a main hall, modern catering facilities, meeting rooms, an activity studio and a conference room ... all available for hire.



The building will be highly insulated and sealed to provide maximum energy efficiency.

The facilities will be purpose built, welcoming to all ages and to those with disabilities.

Our new Parish Centre



“A new Parish Centre is vital to the role of Junior Church and will be much more inviting, friendly and comfortable. We have so many ideas to benefit the children but there is currently no scope to carry them out in the existing facilities.”

Sally Styles, Junior Church leader

“The design of the new Parish Centre will enable the easy flow between our activities and our worship in the church, reinforcing the connection between the church and the community. A room for messy activities will be most welcome. The new building will provide much-improved wheelchair access and long-overdue improvements for those of us with mobility issues.”

Lauryn Awbrey, Faith and Light, a non-denominational worship and fellowship group for adults with learning disabilities, their families and carers

“Currently the church hall does not have enough storage for our equipment. A new Parish Centre will make it much easier for us to invite local Guiding and other groups to share in and expand our activities.”

Liz Harbord, 19th Harpenden Brownies

Cost and schedule

Following an extensive consultation period, a technical team of construction professionals from the congregation and our appointed architects, MEB Design, worked together to design the building to meet our current and future needs.

Planning permission has been granted by St Albans District Council.

Our cost consultants have provided a cost plan which indicates the overall project cost at £1.6 million (including contingency and professional fees).

The current schedule is to allow for a five-year fundraising campaign, with construction commencing before, or by, summer 2024. Construction is estimated to last for approximately 10 months.

Budget estimate for the Parish Centre (costed 2019)		
Construction cost		Total (£)
Cost of individual elements		
Demolition/alterations		54,386
Substructure		208,025
Superstructure		444,328
Internal finishes		152,560
Fixtures & fittings		65,790
Services installation		378,945
External works		92,815
Client / development cost		
Design team fees and surveys		169,500
Fixed furniture and equipment /loose furniture budget allowance		30,000
	Subtotal	1,596,349
VAT 0.00%		-
	Total estimated development cost	1,596,349
Estimated rounded development cost		£1,600,000

“Our children regularly visit the space to learn about many different aspects of life in a Christian place of worship. The benefits of a bespoke space would immeasurably enhance our learning opportunities — and we would welcome the addition of more flexibility in our visits to St John’s.”

Deputy Head, The Grove Infant and Nursery School

Why should I help?

Help us do more for the church and our community

Our new Parish Centre will:

- support and expand our current church activities, enabling them to grow and become more vibrant
- provide flexible and affordable facilities that support the local community
- ensure a sustainable future for St John’s Church.

Leave behind something better

You can be part of the future by

- continuing the strong history of legacy, which began with the courageous and ambitious project to build St John’s Church on its present site, after the original ‘paper’ church was destroyed by fire on New Year’s Day 1906

- ensuring the relevance of our church in the local community
- supporting us to create enhanced facilities we can be proud of, for future generations to use and enjoy.

Create a mission-enabling place to do God’s will

Your generosity and support is an expression of

- your grateful response to God’s love in your life
- your faith in our vision to be a church at the heart of its community
- your place in a church family that is vibrant and valued
- your desire to live out God’s teachings, and enable us to support those in need in our local community.

How can I help?

Securing the funds needed to build our new Parish Centre is a considerable challenge, and we have explored a range of funding avenues. However, it is clear from our research that the vast majority of the funds will need to be raised by the congregation, those associated with the church, and the local community. Whilst potential funders, such as trusts and foundations will be approached, it is expected that contributions from these sources will be relatively modest. Our success will depend on encouraging support from the congregation and local community.

Tax-efficient giving

As St John’s has charitable status, the campaign will be able to recover the income tax that you have paid on your gift through the Gift Aid scheme, provided you are making a gift out of taxed income. At the basic income tax rate of 20%, your gift will increase by a quarter, at no extra cost to you.

If you are a higher rate taxpayer, you can also claim tax relief at the difference between basic rate and higher rate income tax on the total value of your donation. This applies to both the amount you have donated and the tax that we have reclaimed under the Gift Aid scheme. Once you have reclaimed this tax relief your gift will have cost you only approximately 60% of its value to us.

“We are excited by the plans for the new Parish Centre, which will cater for our needs and enable us to offer a fantastic, inclusive child-care provision for the families of Southdown and beyond.”

Katerina Filipova, Managing Director, Outdoor Child

Ways to give

Planned giving

Giving by Standing Order under the Gift Aid scheme is usually the most efficient way of contributing, as it spreads your contribution over a number of years. This helps to make a larger gift affordable and enables us to predict future income with a higher degree of certainty. There is no minimum period for a planned gift, but we hope you will consider a commitment of five years or longer since it will enable a significant sum to be given by means of quite modest regular payments.

Pledges can also on occasion be used as collateral for bank loans and may help us to release other committed funds earlier than would otherwise be possible.

The table below shows the value to us and the cost to you, of a pledged planned gift by Standing Order over a period of five years, at various levels of monthly commitment. As shown, for higher rate taxpayers planned giving can be very tax efficient with the cost of a gift to the donor being just 60% of the value of the gift to St John's.

Monthly investment	Cost over 5 years to a standard rate taxpayer (20%)	Cost over 5 years to a higher rate taxpayer (40%)	Gift Aid	Total value of gift to the appeal (if Gift Aided)
£1,500	£90,000	£67,500	£22,500	£112,500
£1,000	£60,000	£45,000	£15,000	£75,000
£750	£45,000	£33,750	£11,250	£56,250
£500	£30,000	£22,500	£7,500	£37,500
£300	£18,000	£13,500	£4,500	£22,500
£150	£9,000	£6,750	£2,250	£11,250
£100	£6,000	£4,500	£1,500	£7,500
£75	£4,500	£3,375	£1,125	£5,625
£50	£3,000	£2,250	£750	£3,750

Please note that although planned gifts are often structured as monthly giving, they can also be structured as quarterly or annual giving according to the preference of the donor.

One-off single donation

If a pledged planned gift is not possible, or preferred, then single gift payments are also most welcome. If accompanied by a Gift Aid declaration these can be worth considerably more to the campaign than the actual cost to the donor.

A company donation

Although we cannot reclaim tax on company donations, a company can set the value of its donation, whether by Standing Order covenant or lump sum, against its corporation tax liability. This makes corporate giving a tax efficient way in which profitable local companies can support the project and their local community.

A legacy pledge

Leaving a donation to St John's in your will is another valuable way to continue to support our mission and ministry, and meet the needs of future generations. Please contact us to discuss this approach.

Donations of shares, land and buildings

Donations of shares, land or buildings, whether by an individual or a company, are not only exempt from capital gains tax, but allow the donor to claim income tax or corporation tax relief on the current market value of the gift. Please contact us to discuss this approach.

All are asked to give generously.
No-one is asked to give more than they can afford.
Every gift is valued.



“The new Parish Centre with its plans to offer services to the Southdown community, would be an ideal venue to host the Money Advice Centre.”

Richard Payne, Harpenden Money Advice Centre

THANK YOU

...for taking the time to learn more about
our plans for St John's Parish Centre.

We sincerely hope you have been inspired by our vision
and the positive impact our new Parish Centre will have on
both our church life and our local community.

Join us in making this vision a reality

We would be very happy to discuss the details of the
project and any aspect of this campaign with you.

Contact our Campaign Manager
Parish Office, St John's Road, Harpenden AL5 1DJ
Telephone 01582 712776
Email parish.office@stjohnsharpenden.org.uk

