

ALL SAINTS – we want to **FIX THE FLOOR!**

Click clack! Click clack! What a familiar sound as we walk up and down the aisles.

But perhaps we have got too used to it and not realised that the area from which the noise is coming is increasing. And why? Because the floor is deteriorating more and more rapidly and causing more and more tiles to become loose or cracked. We surely want to ensure the floor is made good again; otherwise as a church we shall be in trouble! We would like you to know what is happening.

The PCC has been actively considering the problem and has set up a flooring project task force to investigate the problem and recommend the way forward.

We needed to know how the floor had been constructed so, with the permission of the Diocese, two test holes which you have probably noticed were dug under the supervision of our architect and a tiling specialist, one under the piano and another by the pillar on the north side of the nave, and which have since been filled in.



These revealed that the floor is soundly built on some two feet of tightly packed rubble (so tight that a kangol hammer had to be used to break it out) and a screed of lime mortar was laid on top in order to provide a level surface on which to lay the tiles. These excavations revealed that the top of the rubble had not been packed level so that when the lime mortar was laid on top we found it was sometimes thick enough to support the tiles but in other places it is too thin, hence the tiles have been loosening and breaking up.

This is not a new problem. You may have also noticed the extensive cement areas under the carpet in the centre aisle and to the side of the dais behind the lectern. That has been there since before any of us can remember and surely done before the Diocese, Historic England, Victorian Society etc became fully vigilant to the proper care of listed buildings. This would not be allowed now.

The problem lies with the original floor and not the extension to the West.

Carpet and linoleum have been carefully considered as solutions but the carpet companies say they cannot lay on loose tiles, and linoleum traps damp underneath it.

We do not know where the lime mortar layer is too thin – it could be anywhere in the original church floor – and therefore we believe it makes sense to repair the whole of the floor, as attempts at patching obvious spots may reveal further problems that we had not expected or budgetted for. The proposal therefore is to photograph and take up all the tiles, excavate partly the substrata, refill, add a waterproof membrane, provide a correct lime mortar screed and then relay the original tiles supplemented by new ones as necessary. The tile pattern will be exactly as the original.

An initial estimate indicates that it could cost up to £300,000 to repair.

The on-site work could take about six months when the church will be closed for services, and we think this could be after Easter and before Advent in 2021. Consequently we see the parish centre as the core for our Sunday services but we would also like to explore the possibility of sharing our faith elsewhere in the community as well and engaging the community more with ourselves.

To take on this task will be an enormous act of faith on all our parts and we need seriously to consider how much prayer, time and financial support we should be giving in order to enjoy the building as a focus for our worship and to provide a sound basis for ourselves and future generations in moving forwards. We will seek support from certain Trusts which are prepared to provide money for such projects but we will be working in a very competitive market and there is no doubt that our own sacrificial support will be a prime mover in achieving our aims. We will share with you later on in more detail just how you can provide your support

This is an exciting opportunity for growth and mission.

We will keep you in touch as the project progresses and show you just how you can ensure we look forward to “the Sound of Silence”.

We do however need to know that you the congregation want meaningfully to support this so please will you tell one of us that you do or just send ‘i/we will support the floor project’ to ken.smith1@btinternet.com. This is really important, but by all means also ask any questions you want to of us.

Fr. Jeremy, Ann Rawlings, Ken Smith

“Put out into deep water”; Jesus’ challenge to Simon Peter.

Please read Luke Chapter 5 vv1-11

All Saints Floored



Project Update

14 July 2019