



Building for the Future



BUILDING A VISION at the HEART of our COMMUNITY

Unless the Lord builds the house,
the builders labour in vain (Psalm 127 v1)

Building a Vision

Blackhall St Columba's in the 21st Century

Following the Elders' Conference on 18th November, the Kirk Session has now agreed to recommend the revised plans for the Building for the Future project to the congregation at a special meeting to be held on **January 27th 2018**. If the congregation gives its approval, we will then move on to the next stage of actually starting on the project.

The purpose of this leaflet is to:

- Describe the vision for the church over the next 50 years or so and to show how the proposed changes would serve that vision.
- Explain the major changes which would be involved and the rationale behind them.
- Answer some of the frequently asked questions which have arisen since the project was first proposed.

This booklet gives insight into what the Church will look like, the facilities it will offer and the principles that have guided our thinking.

Our mission statement is ***'To glorify God, proclaim Christ and serve others'***. To that end we aim to have a flourishing congregation and a church which is welcoming and accessible to everyone. Our vision is to have an inspiring, efficient, elegant, contemporary Church at the heart of the community of Blackhall, making available halls and facilities which are welcoming and able to deliver the Church's message and mission through the 21st century.

We know that in any church it is the beliefs, attitudes, energy and commitment of the people involved which will make the difference. Buildings cannot of themselves build thriving congregations. However, they can hinder them if they are not fit for purpose.

Blackhall St Columba's is a thriving congregation. It has done a great deal within the congregation and the community over the years and many people have given unstintingly of their time and talents to make it so.

However, our buildings are now badly in need of renovation. They are in many ways dated and in need of improvement. Their outward aspect can look forbidding and closed off, discouraging those who are not already familiar with what happens inside them from ever finding out. The infrastructure, by which we mean electrics, heating, lighting, sound and so on, are no longer working as well as they should and, in the case of the wiring and heating, are in danger of collapse.

Wheelchair users have no suitable place to participate in services, and there is no safe access between the Sanctuary and halls for them or anyone infirm.

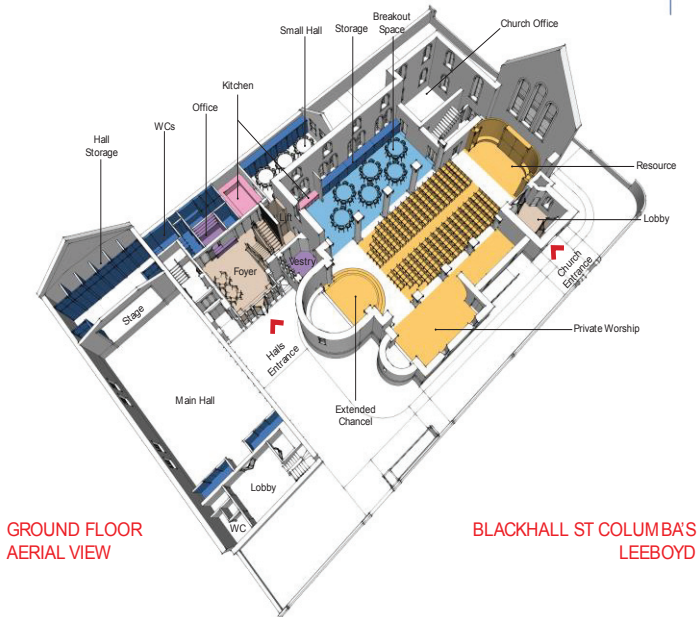
All these issues have been addressed in the revised proposals from the architect and steering committee.

The plans and features that have guided the design

The proposed plans have been on display in the church and can be consulted for further detail. However the salient points are these:

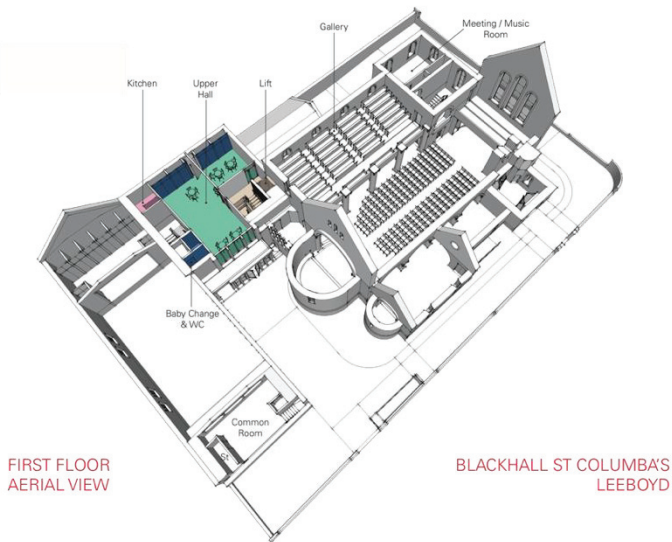
<p style="text-align: center;">ARCHITECTURE</p> <p>The Church will have pleasing architecture designed to be light, bright and comfortable. It will be a significant presence at the heart of Blackhall.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">WELCOME</p> <p>Entrances to both the Sanctuary and halls will allow views into the Church and offer a strong welcome to everyone.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">INCLUSION</p> <p>The Church complex will be fully compliant with disability legislation making it fully accessible to all.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">HISTORY</p> <p>The character of our Church buildings will both retain and preserve our cherished links to the past.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">FURNISHINGS</p> <p>Modern furniture and furnishings will enhance the internal appearance and enable efficient and flexible use of space.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">ECOLOGY</p> <p>Sound ecological principles will make the building sustainable and cost-efficient.</p>

The Plans



GROUND FLOOR
AERIAL VIEW

BLACKHALL ST COLUMBA'S
LEEBOYD



FIRST FLOOR
AERIAL VIEW

BLACKHALL ST COLUMBA'S
LEEBOYD

Proposed Changes

The Sanctuary - a place to worship and find peace

New entrances from Queensferry Road and Columba Road using glass doors in order to create a more welcoming appearance and to draw the eye in to the church rather than away from it.

The space under the choir gallery to be made into a circulation area with an information centre and a library where literature and leaflets will be displayed and available. It will also provide an open space for people to meet and talk before and after services.

All the pews to be removed and replaced with chairs. This will create a much more flexible space which could be used for services, concerts, plays, and meetings. It will also address the issue of suitable spaces for wheelchair users, prams, etc as the chairs can always be moved aside. The replacement of pews by chairs will also make the space as a whole less intimidating to those who may not be used to the formality of pews.

The apse will be extended creating a better space for worship services, children's ministry, nativity plays and other productions.

There will be a lift linking the halls and the sanctuary, as well as connecting to the upper hall, but under the revised proposals this will not intrude into the Sanctuary itself.



Furniture and Fittings

Individual seating will allow traditional and innovative worship and enable a variety of Church and community activities during the week.

The Communion Table, Font and Lectern will link to our church traditions and teaching while modern technology and visual aids will point to the future.

The setting will allow flexibility and the use of other forms of music, drama, worship and praise.

The Chapel

It is hoped that there will be a small Chapel for prayer at the North aisle of the Sanctuary for times of private quietness, meditation and peace. The informal Communion Services once a month and on other occasions will continue to take place in this area.

Upgraded Church halls designed to serve the community

The halls are badly in need of attention to both the fabric and the décor. However, beyond this there is the opportunity to develop them into a much more welcoming facility. Currently, the aspect they present to the outside world is of a closed off area. The entrance is narrow and once inside the space the corridors are not conducive to easy circulation. There are problems with access and 'parking' for push chairs and buggies.

New foyer
- Halls



The key to the renovation of the halls is to create a new and much bigger entrance. This necessitates the moving of the kitchen (this issue is also addressed under Frequently Asked Questions) and the creation of a central circulation area from which all the halls and the Sanctuary itself can be easily accessed.

There will be a single lift which will serve the Sanctuary and also the upper hall. There will be a new window for the upper hall giving more light and also in itself creating a better external aspect from the road. There will also be a new upstairs toilet. The upper hall will be capable of sub-division into two rooms, allowing flexible space for different sized groups and giving scope for varied uses. Storage capacity and IT connections will be available.

The entire area along the south side of the complex will be redeveloped providing improved toilets, better space for the church officer and the re-sited kitchen which will have a hatch serving the small hall. The small hall will be used for a variety of current and future activities, including the possibility of a drop-in centre, where coffee and tea can be served.

The large hall will be completely redecorated and work will be done on the stage and on storage.



Upper Halls

Frequently Asked Questions

Will these changes increase the congregation?

Not of themselves but a fresher and more modern appearance in both the Sanctuary and the halls will create a more welcoming atmosphere and the flexibility in the Sanctuary will create the possibility of a more imaginative and creative approach to worship. We do believe that improved buildings will give us a sustainable future.

Why are we removing the pews?

For a number of reasons. The first is purely practical; we cannot install a much needed modern underfloor heating system without taking up the floor, and therefore removing the pews first. Secondly, the removal of the pews will open up the possibility of flexibility in the use of the Sanctuary which has already been mentioned.

The replacement of pews by chairs will also make the space as a whole less intimidating to those who may not be used to the formality of pews.

If we remove the pews will there be enough seating in the Sanctuary?

Yes, there will be space for approximately 380 chairs downstairs and the gallery will still be available. There is also space where extra chairs can be added when needed.

Is there a danger of a loss of dignity in the Sanctuary?

There is no need for this to happen and it depends on how the space is used, not on whether or not there are pews. Many churches and most cathedrals do not nowadays have pews.

Why are we putting in a new kitchen when we have only recently installed the one we have?

The moving of the kitchen is key to the creation of a user-friendly entrance and meeting area in the halls. Although it is perhaps a pity that the kitchen was upgraded so recently it would be an even greater pity to lose out on the potential the new plans offer by not being willing to move it. In addition, much of the equipment and fittings in the kitchen will be able to be re-used when it is moved.

Can we afford it?

The headline figure of approximately £2.2 million is believed to be achievable. The sale of Church House has already raised over £400,000 which gives us a good start and there will be a fundraising campaign within the congregation and community.

Even if we can afford it, should we be spending this amount of money at this time?

There is no doubt at all that we simply must attend to the infrastructure of the church and the halls and this will account for about £1.1 million even if we did nothing else. However, for the reasons already stated, we now have an opportunity to make all our premises fit for the next forty to fifty years or so.

This should be seen, not as somehow **‘spending money on ourselves’** but as laying the foundation for the outreach which is part of our mission. This applies both to the sanctuary and to the halls, which are an important community resource.

Summary

There are many details which will be worked out at the appropriate stage but these changes are designed to create a modern, bright, welcoming, functional complex. Done properly, they will create the platform from which we can go forward as a church and will create an excellent resource for the community. Used appropriately, they will enable us to grow the congregation and assist us in fulfilling our mission statement.

We invite you to come along to the meeting on **27th January in the Church at 9.30am** to give your support and ratify the Kirk Session’s recommendation to progress with the project.

Working together to make it happen

What funds are required?

Estimated cost of the refurbishment (incl. furnishings, fees and all costs)	£ 2,600,000
Less - Fees already paid	- £ 15,000
Less - Assumed recovery of VAT	- £ <u>400,000</u>
	£ 2,185,000

What funds are available?

Sale of Church House	£ 434,000
Church Reserves (say)	£ 100,000
Donations already received	£ 18,000
Less - Fees already paid	-£ <u>15,000</u>
Total funds available	-£ <u>537,000</u>

Funds still to be raised **£ 1,648,000**

This sounds like a formidable task, but even small amounts add up significantly.

Example 1

Weekly donation	Annual value	Value including Gift Aid	Total value over 3 years (inc interest)
£5	£260	£325	£1000
£10	£520	£650	£2000
£15	£780	£975	£3000

Example 2

If 600 members were to pledge £1000 per year for three years (£3000 in total), that would raise £1.8million. Added to the funds already raised, that would pay for the whole project!

