Discussion paper for Congregational Meeting on Sunday 30th April

KIRKGATE REFURBISHMENT PROJECT

Ardrossan & Saltcoats kirkgate PARISH CHURCH

The first phase of the Kirkgate refurbishment project, which will commence in the next few weeks, has been a long time in the planning. It comprises of external stonework repairs and also includes the installation of five stained glass windows (including three war memorial windows) removed from the former Barony St John's Church. This work will be messy and will necessitate major redecoration of the interior of the sanctuary.

Phase 2 of the planned refurbishment will address this redecoration work, along with the replacement of the church heating system. Because of the nature of the Phase 2 works, the Kirk Session has decided to hold a meeting of the congregation on **Sunday 30th April** after the morning service. A lunch will be provided that day. The purpose of the congregational meeting is to allow you to have a say on the details of the interior refurbishment work, so that we can aim to minimise any disruption to the congregation.

MOTIVATION BEHIND THE REFURBISHMENT

- To make our buildings modern, comfortable, welcoming and fit for multi purpose use. At present the interior is getting dated, and badly in need of refurbishment – it is 32 years since it was last decorated.
- Our designation as a Priority Areas Parish means that our building is classified as being essential in the community.
- The hope that longer term we can attract wider community usage of the building, raising its profile within the heart of the community.

REPLACING THE HEATING SYSTEM

Regular worshippers will know that the heating system is well past its best! The huge boiler is over 40 years old, and the under pew pipes older still. Sourcing spare parts for the boiler can be a challenge. The heating pipe layout in the church is restrictive and does not meet modern safety standards (the pipes get very hot and they are uncovered).

Existing church boiler is large, old and inefficient

Overall, the current heating system is inefficient, costly to run, and gives us very limited control over timing and temperature. The recommendation from the heating engineer is to replace the pipes with efficient wall-mounted radiators.

Church pipework does not meet safety standards

The time is right to replace it, but before we can go ahead and get final costings for replacement of the heating system and the interior redecoration/refurbishment, we must first decide whether or not we are going to remove the pews downstairs.

REMOVING THE PEWS?

Removing the pews would be the simplest and most cost effective way to do the work. It would allow us to remove all the old pipework and to satisfactorily repair and recover the floor. It would also give us clear access to the walls for mounting the new radiators. The pews would be replaced by comfortable, flexible seating – enabling us to make full use of the available space.

It is possible to do the required work with the pews in situ, but it would be much more difficult for all the old heating pipes to be removed and for the floor to be adequately repaired/recovered.

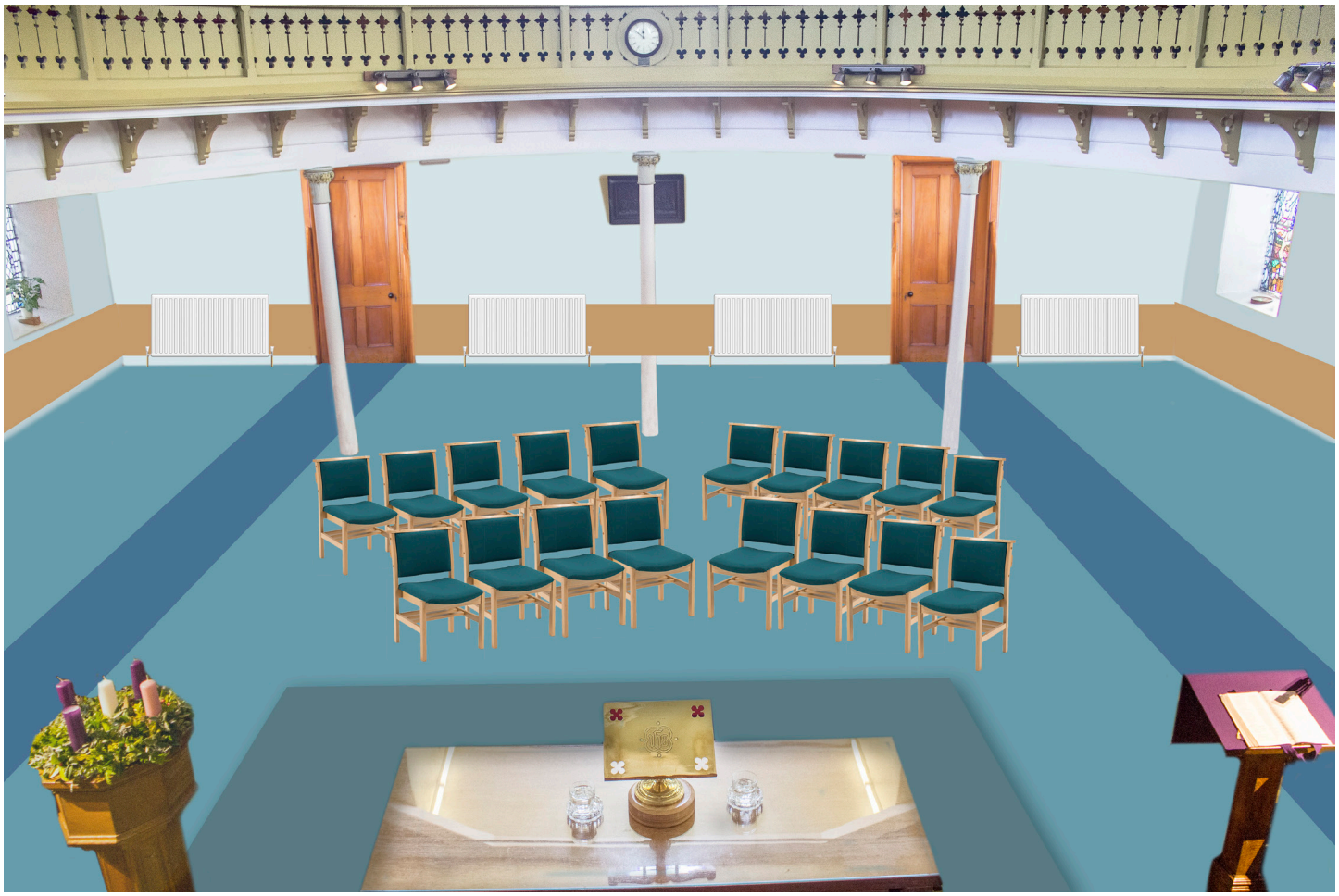
Similarly, radiators could be installed with the pews in situ, but as the radiators would be wall mounted, the pews in the side aisles would have to be cut short at the wall end at regular intervals making them less secure, and the pews along the back aisles would have to come out.

The upstairs pews would remain in place.

Taking the pews out would have other benefits for the future of the congregation:

- It would provide us with an additional space which could be rented out to community groups and local organisations.
- It would give us modern, conference like facilities, for Presbytery and other meetings/events.
- We would not be restricted for space for activities like the Christmas Fair, the Christmas Tree festival or the like.
- The space would be more suitable for funerals, allowing families to be seated together without climbing over boxed in pipes; giving more room for the coffin at the chancel, etc.

Visualisation showing sanctuary without pews. Colour scheme not indicative.



OTHER THINGS TO CONSIDER

The nature of the Phase 2 works means that addressing one item impacts on several others. Once a decision has been made on the pews, we need to consider other areas including:

Replastering / Redecoration
This will be required once the windows are installed. CARTA (The Church of Scotland's Church Art and Architecture Committee) will advise on preferred colour schemes, but it will be light and welcoming.

Flooring/carpeting
What type of flooring is preferred? Hard-wearing linoleum or wood comes in many different finishes, but may be slippy and noisy. Carpeting would be comfier, quieter and warmer, but requires more upkeep.

Chancel
This would be an opportunity to extend the chancel forward slightly to allow the minister to be closer to the congregation and to provide a larger performance area when required.

Audio Visual System
The existing sound system is also quite old, and would benefit from being upgraded. The loop system in particular is in need of upgrade to cater for modern digital hearing aids. Permanent fixtures and connections for the projector/screen would also be added.

Lighting
There is a mix of lighting within the church. Consideration needs to be given as to whether we replace or augment some of it with modern, low-cost LED lighting?

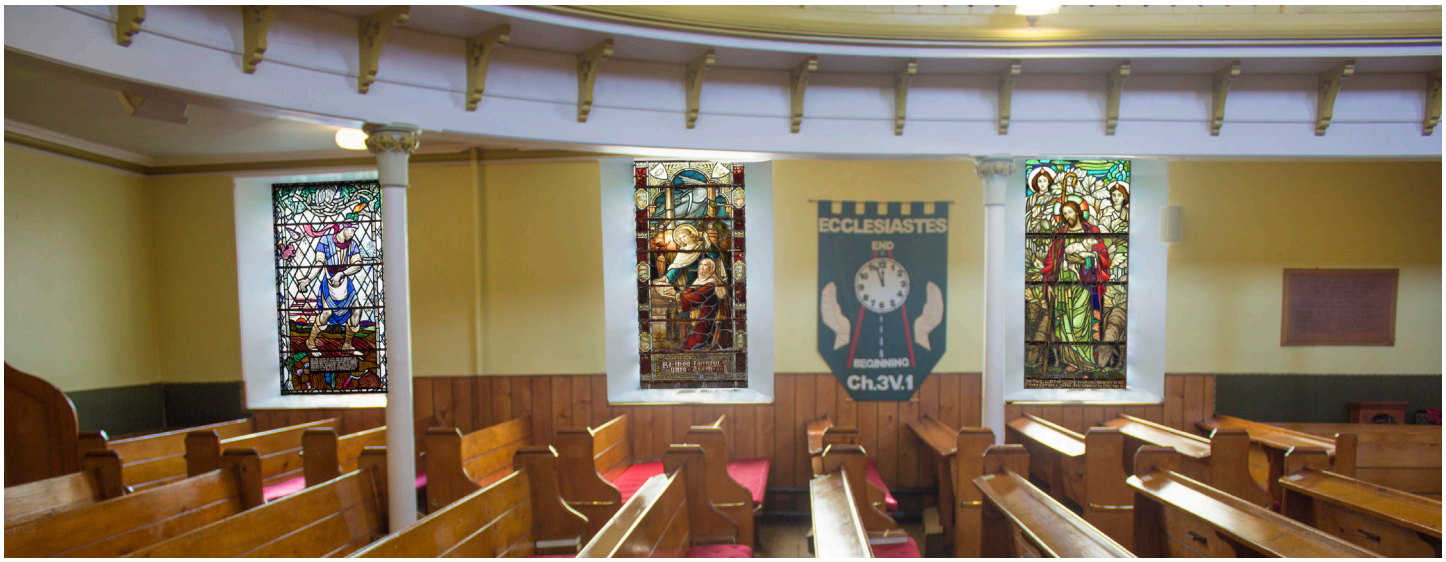
Visualisation showing sanctuary without pews. Colour scheme not indicative.

FINANCES

We have a healthy budget for the work, due to the sale of our surplus buildings. The General Trustees allowed us to keep the net proceeds from the sales on condition these are reinvested in our buildings. If agreed, we could also offset some of the costs through the sale of the pews.

This refurbishment has a third Phase - an upgrading of the halls. The congregational meeting will also give an opportunity for an initial discussion on what sort of work people would like to see done on the halls.

Visualisation showing the stained glass windows in their new locations.



This document can also be downloaded from our website: www.kirkgatechurch.org.uk