

An update on the restoration works at St Michael's

Dear All,

The first phase of restoration work is now coming to completion and we are most grateful to parishioners, our hall users and neighbours for bearing with us during this time of disruption.

We'd like to bring you up to date with what's been happening and what has yet to be done:

The failing window lintels in the day chapel and hall have been repaired and the window trays above them replaced, requiring the replacement of large areas of brickwork. Much of the building has been repointed, and wall ties and rotten window frames & seals replaced – many around the stained-glass windows high above the main altar and in the foyer. All the other frames, downpipes & rendered areas have been repainted and an area of the concrete access ramp has been re-laid. This just leaves repairs to the main steps once a suitable system is decided upon.

Whilst most of the work has been completed by Reilly Construction within a week of the original estimate of 10 weeks, some in-house redecoration work has yet to be done, notably of the interior window frames in the day chapel and hall and on the metal framework of the steps to the Upper Room. We also have to do a top-to-bottom deep clean throughout the foyer, day chapel and hall.

Separately to these works we are replacing the obsolete fluorescent fittings throughout the building with energy efficient LED's - fluorescent tubes now being unavailable. Finally, we're re-lighting the car park and the external fire routes to comply with fire regulations.

This leaves Phase Two - some very substantial work in re-insulating, re-boarding and re-felting our huge area of flat roof – or rather, 6 flat roofs! Unfortunately, when the church was built in the 1960's planning permission wasn't granted for a pitched roof. Ideally this will be scheduled for next Summer, subject to us being able to fund it!

Bishop Richard has assured us of the long-term future of the Catholic community at St Michael's and was instrumental in the Diocese agreeing to help substantially with funding for Phase One. However, he did ask that we set up an on-going Restoration Fund to support not only Phase Two but to enable us to keep the building in a good state of repair in the future! Sincere thanks to those who have contributed already to this Fund.

Thank you all so much for your prayerful and practical support,

Fr Chris and the Parish Finance Committee