Excavations and Finds

Week 3 – report of work for disabled access, toilet and kitchen

Although work has been confined mainly to the inside of the church, we have made significant progress during this third week. The following has been achieved:

✔ With the help of Derek, the pair of us cut some of the mortise and tenon joints that will form the pair of new oak gates for the north entrance.



✔ The font was moved to a temporary position by jacking it up and inserting steel rollers beneath. A 12” square hole was revealed beneath and we have shown the archaeologist the discovery. Some of the stones that were used to fill the void were interesting. One piece, in particular looked like it was carved to form a boss from a vaulted ceiling. Another couple of pieces of stone were dressed and showed signs of soot. My

theory is that the roof of the parvis room might have once been stone vaulted before replacing it with a wooden structure and covered in lead. There is still a short chimney stack, indicating that a fireplace was part of the east wall. I believe the small stones we found under the font were redundant parts from this refurbishment. Russell and Roger worked on cleaning up the tiles after moving the font.



✔ Richard Cherrington, the archaeologist also inspected the shallow hole in the corner of the toilet area. Having removed some of the floor tiles and excavated to a depth of approximately .5 metre prior to his arrival, the dig revealed a large flat stone. Whilst Richard monitored the continuation of the dig, we were disappointed to find nothing of any significance beneath.
Digging finally ceased at a depth of 1.2M.

✔ Will, and his two employees Jon and Doug, used machinery to remove the ceramic tiles and limecrete that I laid on the rubble floor over twenty years ago when myself and a team of villagers removed the seven short pews by the bell tower.

Fortunately, limecrete is not as difficult to remove as the much harder concrete might have been. An area approximately 3M x 1.4M was dug by hand and the spoil tipped on the grass on the right of the north front approach steps. One or two small pieces of bone were discovered as well as remnants of cut and faced stone that had been previously used for one reason or another.



Digging to a depth of 30cm below existing porch floor level, Will discovered a small flat cut piece of stone. Upon lifting the stone, he discovered a stone trench, or culvert of approximately 25cm square cross-section. Knowing that the porch is the oldest remaining part of the church, and that the floor level of the main section of the church was raised, this culvert would have been just below ground level. However, it is more interesting that it continues on a curve, passing beneath the steps up to the belfry. Hence, it must be rather old. Richard, the archaeologist is anxious to inspect this discovery when he visits again next Monday.





✔ The investigatory trench to locate the water pipe on the south side of the church also served to accommodate the large diamond drilling machine that was needed to drill two holes through the south wall. Confirming my suspicions, the trench finally exposed a water pipe at a depth of over 90cm, having first revealed the gas pipe and a very large clay drain of approximately

20cm diameter. I believe this pipe carries the water from the two downpipes from the south wall gutter to an eventual soak away, somewhere else in the graveyard.

On Friday, the drilling company drilled the two holes through the wall from outside. The first hole is at an external depth of 30cm below ground level to pierce the inside face of the 75cm thick wall in the toilet area, some 1.3M below inside floor level to facilitate the soil pipe for the toilet and basin wastes. This hole will also accommodate the new water pipe, having first connected it to the existing blue water pipe outside, under the gas pipe. A second hole, 12.5cm diameter, was drilled approximately 2M high in the same area for the extractor fan.
Altogether, a very satisfying exercise…
John Pinch



Progressing Well

New approach to the west gate

The Open 2 All Project is progressing well. A lovely new approach to the west gate of the church with oak steps and Cotswold gravel top has been made. All carefully done by Will Heming.





New Gravel Path with steps

Work inside

It’s only Open 2 All day two and the work on the new loo has also started by John, Derek and John.


DEWALT



Open 2 All Project Update 07/03/2022

We have started!

The Open 2 All project is officially underway. The oak for cladding the WC cubicle and for making two sets of new gates for the church was collected from the sawmills last Monday and is now stacked in the back of the church.

The area at the back of the church has been cordoned off in

readiness for working on the WC cubicle.

All the other construction materials will be delivered on Tuesday 8th March where Derek Crocker, John Brown and myself will set-to building the stud partition walls.

Meanwhile, Will Heming and John Wallis will be re-landscaping the west approach to the church next to Heidi’s house.

Photos include the oak at the sawmills and finally on the floor in the church.

John Pinch



A prayer for the Open 2 All project

I was asked by The Rev’d Fiona to write a prayer for the ‘Open to All’ project as we approach the commencement of the work.

The prayer which I have written can be used in its entirety,

or broken into a sentence or section. It may be that one particular line resonates with someone, and they may wish to pray that one sentence?

When contemplating prayer, I am reminded of the words of Wilferd Peterson:-

“*Change can be accomplished most of all through the power of prayer, because with God all things are possible*“

Wendy Hamilton

A Prayer for the Open 2 All Project

Heavenly Father,

It is with grateful hearts that we give thanks to all who have worked so tirelessly to bring this project to commencement. For generosity, perseverance and belief, expressed by so many.

We remember and give thanks for all those who have held this dream in their hearts, but are sadly no longer here to witness its fruition.

We ask for God’s protection on all who will work on physically creating easy access and space for hospitality.

We pray for patience, understanding, and care to be expressed with humanity to one another during this time of change.

We look forward with hope that St. Cyr’s will provide welcome, strength, and inner peace to all who visit.

May the love of Christ seep into the souls of those who seek comfort.

In this holy place, may there be refreshment, hospitality and healing.

As we create, so we pray in faith, that St. Cyr’s will offer

security and witness for generations to come.

We pray that in times of uncertainty in a transient world, here there is permanence.

We give thanks for our beautiful church, loved by so many, now, and through ages past. Let us pray that it is love which radiates from this holy house of God, and truly provides a place of welcome and joy.

It is with hope that we create. It is with faith that we look forward. It is with love that we open St. Cyr's to all.

Let us pray that it may be so.

Amen

Small Beginnings

Saturday 22nd January:

Have you noticed yet that there have been small beginnings to the Open to All project? A tree has been removed outside church, with planning permission, and a piece of furniture moved inside…all very exciting and thank you to the team who have started. A tree will be planted in lieu too after the disability path has been completed.

Fiona, your excited and grateful Vicar.

Timber!!
No, it's not a coffin…!
Clearing the back of the church in preparation for work to commence.

A New Year’s Present for St Cyrs

Open2All

The funding required for the ***‘Open2All’*** project has now been achieved. We are now in a position to start the work to provide a disabled access ramp up to the Church door. At the same time as this, a wheelchair lift into the Church, the provision of kitchen and toilet facilities in the South West corner of the Church.

For 5 years the ***Friends of St Cyrs Church*** and the **Parochial Church Council** have been working together on “Open2All”. The purpose is to make the Church available for many more groups to use as well as for religious services. The models of the plans have been available to see in the Church over this period.

Over the hurdles

There have been many hurdles to overcome during the planning of the Project. However, finally, we are in a position to commence the build by this coming spring. The facilities should then be fully open by mid to late Summer 2022.

The Friends and PCC now have obtained

- The Faculty from the Diocese
- Planning and Listed Building Permission for the work
- Permission from Stroud DC Building Control
- Agreement from a Church Conservation Architect.

(The Agreement from The Church Conservation Architect is to confirm that our plans are sufficiently robust so that the Grade 11* nature of the Building will not be compromised by the Project.)

The Costs

The Project is planned to cost £83,038. We reached our funding target for the at the end of November. This now means that we can now commence the build work.

The Friends are providing £18,408. These funds have been raised over the years by Villagers and other attendees to the many events organised by the Friends. In addition the Parochial Church Council have provided £5,535 in funds through giving and organised Church events. So nearly 30% of the cost has been raised through the Parishioners, Villagers and supporters of our Fund Raising activities. We are extremely grateful for the support that has been given.

Donations and Funding

The remainder of the funds of approximately £60,000 has been generously given by donations, grants and pledges of funds through various Charitable Trusts and organisations that support our type of Project.

The Charities supporting the project are:

- ***Gloucestershire Historic Churches Trust***
- ***All Churches Trust***
- ***Garfield Weston Foundation***
- ***Renishaw Charities Committee***
- ***Congregational and General Charitable Trust***
- ***National Churches Trust***

Thank you to all in the village who have supported the Friends and the Parochial Church Council with Donations

So, most of the hard work is now done and we look forward to welcoming everybody to the launch of our finished Project in a few months time.

The Friends of St Cyrs Church Stinchcombe & The Parochial Church Council

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Open to All

A project undertaken by the Friends of St Cyrs

I can't believe it was three years ago that we considered creating a disabled access to our village church. How time flies? St Cyr's suffers from being sited in an elevated position that requires. This requires steps to enter the churchyard, and yet more steps to enter the interior of the church. In consultation with representatives from the Diocese plans were drawn up and models made to illustrate a feasible solution.

We have come a long way since then. We reduced costs and refined the design. Now have a practical and attractive solution to the need.

We have used the time well by enjoying ourselves and raising money. To contribute to the cost of realising our dream. Thanks to all those people who have joined us at barn dances, safari suppers, open gardens and many more activities. We now have sufficient funds to move to the next stage.

We now have **planning permission**, that involves Historic

England and have Building Control and a Faculty from the DAC.

Also, we now have secured quotes for the groundwork, electrics, plumbing, carpentry, ironwork, lifts, joinery. We want to try to employ local contractors wherever possible. Therefore most of the prices we have received have been from such people.

Then will have a definitive costing of the Project within the next few weeks. We will then advise everyone what funds we are seeking to raise to complete the work. Also, how we intend to raise those funds

At present The Friends of St Cyr's are applying for grants to match our finances.

Thank you to all those generous villagers and friends for helping to make this 'Open to All' initiative possible.

If you would like to know more about the project, please do contact one of the ***'Friends of St Cyrs'***