

From Parish Council – Infrastructure Repairs and Renewal

Dear CCSY parishioners,

It will come as no surprise that the Parish Meeting planned for 6 June will need to be postponed due the lockdown, and so we have decided over the next few weeks to provide some of the information we had intended to provide at the meeting. Once it is possible for us to meet in numbers and without masks we will reschedule an opportunity for discussion and questions.

Throughout the past year, Parish Council has been concerned to establish how best to ensure that CCSY is in the best possible position to grow, and to care for each other, in the wake of the pandemic. One thing that has become clear is that much of our physical infrastructure is in need of renewal, and that some of that work is urgent. All of the planning work outlined below has been directed towards a single goal – ensuring that CCSY is as well-equipped as possible to respond to the challenges we face, and to take best advantage of the opportunities also before us.

At our April Planning Day, Parish Council discussed the related issues of the need to address some important problems with our infrastructure, and the parish's financial structure. Prior to the meeting, a sub-committee comprising myself, Sandra Ivory and the Vicar conducted a full audit of the parish's buildings and grounds. This, along with some rough estimates from our architects, has enabled us to get a good understanding of the challenges and opportunities we face, and what is needed to address them.

At all times, Parish Council has been particularly conscious and prayerful of how our mission and outreach to both parishioners and community may be further enhanced. The intention is to get on the front-foot with our infrastructure to support recovery, renewal and growth into the future.

This week we will provide some information on the nature and extent of the necessary infrastructure works that have been identified. Over the subsequent three weeks we will provide information on a) plans to re-structure the parish's finances to enable the funding of these works, b) what we have already agreed to do to address urgent matters, and progress on those plans, and c) consequences for Planned Giving and issues around developing other income streams.

- Brian Hauser, Secretary to Parish Council

Infrastructure Audit

The parish has three major buildings – the church, the Old Vicarage and the New Vicarage – as well as the grounds and minor out-buildings. The church and the Old Vicarage are very large and are of heritage significance. We are blessed with the stewardship of these beautiful buildings but they are expensive to maintain, and it is important not to think on a “domestic scale” in relation to how much things cost. We have identified work that is either urgent, necessary, or highly desirable to enable the

renewal of worship, ministry and mission. Major highlights include the following projects (to prevent building failure, address safety issues, and improve access):

The Church

- provision of toilets with disabled access (urgent)
- external timberwork painting (urgent)
- basement vestries – currently not accessible, and in very poor condition. (A significant ministry resource that is under-utilised.)
- bell maintenance (urgent within 2-3 years)
- external stonework repairs at base of spire and high-level corbels (urgent for safety reasons and to prevent further deterioration and expense)
- Church roof replacement (needed within 10-20 years)
- internal walls (damp-related issues that first require the roof to be replaced and external damp-coursing installed)

New Vicarage

- in good repair. No works required other than general maintenance.

Old Vicarage

- the verandah is in danger of collapse, and the timber-work has almost completely rotted away in places (urgent)
- the roof is in urgent need of replacement. It may fail if not addressed in the next 5-10 years (urgent within 3-5 years)
- the building's public facilities (toilets, kitchens) are in need of upgrading, and the toilets need to be relocated to ground level (urgent for enabling ministry in OVPC.)

There is also a good deal of work to be done in the grounds, including rescuing the heritage fences from collapse on the Punt Road frontage.

The external signage needs complete refurbishment. (urgent)

Parish Council has agreed that there are significant risks in 'doing nothing', and there is an urgent need to progress several critical infrastructure improvements to de-risk the parish for the future and re-position it for recovery and renewal to support our ministry in this place. How we plan to do that will be detailed in "Contact" over the next few weeks.

Please make contact with the Churchwardens directly if you have any initial questions around this audit assessment.

- CCSY Parish Council

From the Churchwardens – Restructure of the Parish's Finances

In last week's "Contact" we identified the need for CCSY to make a significant financial commitment to infrastructure repair and renewal. This week, we will explain how Parish Council intends to fund that expenditure.

In past years the parish has come to rely on the income from accumulated capital, which is entirely sourced from generous bequests by past parishioners, for funding day to day operations. Parish Council has agreed from 2021/2 to set aside this money and designate it specifically for capital works and maintenance expenditure. This will involve a mixture of spending down some capital, but mainly taking out loans with the Anglican Development Fund (ADF) to undertake the works, and funding the repayment of those loans by the income from investments. Future major bequests and external grants will also be directed to this task.

The parish budget has already been pruned substantially over the past two years. Other adjustments are now required instead of further budget cuts. Cost-centres have been discussed, and Parish Council regards this to be a good model going forward.

A Giving and ministry-generated income = ministry costs (clergy & music)

B Business and fund-raising (currently only School rent) = general running costs

C Investment income = infrastructure maintenance and capital works.

Currently 2022 "business as usual" projected income v costs, under these cost centres, looks like this:

A \$241,000 v \$288,000

We need to increase giving by \$47,000 p.a. to fund our current ministry and music.

This should be a planned giving target.

B \$190,000 v \$227,300

We need to increase our business and fund-raising income by \$37,300 p.a. to fund general costs.

C \$70,000 v \$20,000.

We need to increase our annual spend on maintenance by \$50,000 p.a. in an ongoing way.

Parish Council has resolved that future budgets should be structured around these three cost centres. In order to fund the progress of the capital works program to prevent more significant and unforeseen costs into the future, Parish Council has recognised that all the current investments held by the parish (currently generating \$70k pa) need to be used through a combination of expenditure and accrued debt, with repayments funded by investment income. This means that we need to cover our operational costs through increasing income from other areas. There will be further information on how we plan to do this over coming weeks.

Questions and comments can be directed to the churchwardens via the parish office email ccoffice@ccsy.org.au, or call the office for individual warden contact details.

- Christine French, Sarah Benfield, Sandra Ivory (Churchwardens)

From the Churchwardens – Infrastructure repairs in progress

Over the past two weeks, we have outlined the nature of the major infrastructure works required at CCSY, and how we intend to pay for them. This week, we wish to report on what we have agreed to take forward in the immediate term, and progress on some key items.

The following projects have already been completed:

- The Altar platform was replaced for \$50,000, This took advantage of the period of church closure to minimise disruption. Flooring restoration in the chancel was funded by the generous gifts of numerous parishioners
- The lathe and plaster ceilings upstairs in the Old Vicarage, which were in imminent danger of catastrophic failure, were repaired at a cost of \$40,000.

We have agreed to undertake the following additional works in this financial year:

The pewing of the church has been re-organised to open up the rear of the church for hospitality. Pew repairs are yet to be undertaken.	\$2,000.
Church Toilets – refurbishing the facilities to provide disability access. Drawings are complete, and the project is currently out to tender	\$40,000
Preliminary surveys for the repair of the Old Vicarage verandah	\$31,000
Remove 6 dangerous and/or weed trees	\$5,500
Renew all external Signage	\$20,000
External paint work (Lychgate, Cabbies shelter, church doors)	\$15,000

Major works ear-marked for 2021/22 include

Stonework on belltower, corbels and lower level access to open up the vestries for ministry and public use \$410,000

This work is being funded in accordance with his wishes through a generous bequest from the late Dr David Cuthbert, and (we hope) a grant from Heritage Victoria.

Old Vicarage verandah repair works \$170,000+
Fence and hedge repair/renewal \$20,000+

We will be seeking a grant for the fence restoration through the Victorian Heritage Restoration Fund

TOTAL **\$713,500+**

We are also seeking to re-establish a tax-effective method of giving for the repair of the Church. We hope to be able to provide more information on this shortly.

Next week, we will discuss the need to address shortfalls in Planned Giving and other income areas.

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- Christine French, Sarah Benfield, Sandra Ivory (Churchwardens)

From the Churchwardens - Planned Giving, Business activities and Fund-raising

Over the past few weeks we have outlined Parish Council's plans to renew the built form infrastructure of the parish, in order to enable worship, ministry and mission. In this final instalment, we need to turn our attention to how our day-to-day operations are funded. We have agreed to a model where all parish activities other than buildings and maintenance are funded from live give, ministry activities, "business" activities, or fund-raising. The total projected cost of general operations in 2021/22 is \$515,000. The total projected income to fund this is \$431,000, leaving a shortfall of \$84,000.

CCSY parishioners have always been generous in their support of the parish, both financially and in other ways. In order to balance the budget, which has already been pruned very hard, we need both to increase the amount of financial support from parishioners, and to establish new income streams. Bearing in mind the goal to fund ministry and music from parishioner giving and ministry activities (weddings, funerals, school chaplaincy etc), we have set a goal of increasing parish giving by \$47,000. Funding from ministry activities has dramatically increased in the past year, due to arrangements now in place with the school to provide chaplaincy services. Parishioner giving, unsurprisingly given the pandemic, has fallen slightly during the same period.

Similarly, there is a shortfall of \$37,000 in the funding of general operations (administration, insurances, diocesan assessment, utilities etc). The only income we have to balance against this is the school lease, which has also increased substantially due to the recent successful lease renegotiation. We are exploring ways to generate income of this magnitude through new activities, and would welcome parishioner input and suggestions in this space.

Parish Council is doing everything it can to ensure that expenditure is monitored, and new sources of income found, however there are limits in how far we can exploit our existing resources. Where parishioners can make the biggest immediate difference is through planned giving. We encourage all members of CCSY to consider whether they might be in a position to assist in an ongoing way. A Planned Giving Drive will take place during September, in preparation for the new financial year.

Global pandemics notwithstanding, this is an exciting moment for Christ Church, and we thank all members of the parish for their ongoing support.

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- Christine French, Sarah Benfield, Sandra Ivory (Churchwardens)