

## **Report on the St Paul's Building Questionnaire distributed to current users of the site.**

### ***Introduction***

Of the 100 questionnaires that were taken, we had 43 completed, with 4 of them completed by more than one person, so: A total of 47 responses. In almost all the questionnaires received back, there was a good response to the opportunity given to elaborate on the standard multi-choice answers. 59% of responses came from people aged over 50 and 22% from the 13 – 21 age group leaving 19% from the 22 - 49 age range.

A summary of the findings is as follows:

#### **Question 1) How would you describe the facilities in St Paul's Church?**

72% of responses considered the facilities poor or needing improvement. Comments mainly centred on lack of disabled access, poor kitchen facilities, chairs, tables, poor decoration and poor sound system.

#### **Question 2) In your opinion is the building making the most of its potential?**

76% thought not. Most of the comments here focussed on the large amount of space in the large hall/ worship area - only really used on a Sunday. Also, the poor repair the rest of the building is in – especially the dated decoration.

#### **Question 3) How would you describe the parking arrangements? (If you don't use the parking, then please skip to the next question.)**

40% of people left this blank and 40% considered parking poor or needing improvement.

Comments suggest that the parking situation affects people who don't bring cars just as much as those who do as access to the building becomes restrictive due to the parked cars in front of the entrance.

#### **Question 4) How welcoming is the St Paul's building?**

50% considered the building "quite welcoming" and 20% very welcoming. Of those who put "quite welcoming" over half had suggestions for improvement. Improvements concentrated on the notice boards, the doors (a number suggested glass doors), the darkness inside and the coldness in winter.

Those who thought it was "very welcoming" concentrated on the warmth of the personal greeting received on arrival.

**Question 5) Which word best describes the Church entrance (big wooden doors leading into atrium) area?**

37% used favourable words: Welcoming (11%); Adequate (15%); Practical (7%).

63% chose unfavourable words: Cold (20%) and Bleak (15%).

Suggestions include disabled access, glass doors and decoration including a coat of paint; pictures on the walls etc.

**Question 6) Which phrase best describes the toilet facilities?**

54% of people indicated that the facilities were either “uncomfortable” or “badly in need of tlc”. A further 20% had “never used” the toilets.

22% registered that they are either “functional” or “comfortable”.

All the additional comments were negative: ‘too small’; ‘cold’ and ‘basic’ were mentioned more than once. The unsuitability for disabled use was also mentioned.

**Question 7) What words/phrases best describes the small hall?**

65% categorised the small hall as “badly needing tlc” (30%); “needing some tlc” (15%); dated (15%); and “needs major help”. In addition significant numbers of people added “small” and “dark”. The lack of recent decoration was also mentioned.

22% of responses were positive: “adequate” (20%) and “perfect”.

All additional comments pointed out negative aspects.

**Question 8) What words/phrases best describe the large hall (the worship area with static pews)?**

61% responses registered improvement needed: “needs updating” (26%); “needs tlc” (24%); “needs major work” (11%).

20% of people thought the hall was “fine for church but nothing else” [For some this was a positive thing – after all, it is a church! Others saw it as missing an opportunity to do more than just Sunday worship].

20% thought we should “lose the pews”.

20% responded positively: “happy with it” (9%); “lovely” (7%) and “adequate” (4%).

A large number of comments focussed on the purpose of the hall: Is it desirable for the worship area of the church to be used for anything else? A significant number of

people are uncomfortable with the “sacred space” a church provides being used for secular activities like badminton or 5-a-side football. An equally significant number of people can see potential in opening the building up for community activities.

Another significant group recognise the difficulty the current layout provides for conducting worship services and suggest taking out some of the pews at the front of the church to ease the situation and for disabled access.

**Question 9) Please list the features of St Paul’s building that you like best.**

Solid structure. Sense of history. The layout which although it was probably not planned means that it is impossible to leave the church after a service without going through the “social area” of the small hall. The small hall itself. The stonework outside. The area with the Lord’s Table (Chancel). The green grass around the church. The ‘outside’ in general. The location in Stonehouse. The organ. The atmosphere. The clock. The altar rail. Fine architecture. The tiled floor at the entrance. Acoustics. The counter from the hall to the kitchen. The trees. The doors. The tower. The font. The drum kit. The front of the church.

**Question 10) At St Paul’s we would like to see our building (among other things) as a community resource. Please list any suggestions you have that will help us to make this possible.**

There is a wide range of suggestions here from keeping everything the same to converting the building to a café, cyber café and offices. All these will be considered by the buildings group in detail in due course.