

ST JOHN THE BAPTIST GREAT GADDESSEN

Proposal to install Infrared heaters throughout the Church

STATEMENT OF NEEDS

1. General Information

There are 54 people on the electoral roll, 14 of whom are not resident in the parish. Two services are held each week, a Parish Communion at 11am on Sunday and a Communion service at 9.00 on a Tuesday. The service on the second Sunday each month is a "Café Church Service". The average attendance at a Sunday service fell following the pandemic but recently has been increasing and is now 24 adults and 2 children, with about 60 on big occasions and school services. The congregation is predominantly older but we have a number of young people. In addition, during school term time there is a Friday assembly/service for our church village school attended by approximately 90 pupils and associated parents/guardians.

The church is open every day during daylight hours. We do not have a church hall. There is a parish hall some distance away across a very busy main road. The school does not have a hall, so it relies on the church for significant events – school assemblies, end of term performances, nativity play, and carol service to name a few.

The area at the West End of the Nave is used for Café Church, Parish Suppers, Walk & Talk, Meetings, Refreshments at the end of the Service, Funeral Wakes and the monthly School parents social whilst waiting to pick up. There is a regular jazz concert held in the Church and which raises funds.

2. Our Needs

We have an ageing boiler which needs to be switched on several hours in advance to get the church to a modest temperature. At best this is 16° C. Being old, the emissions are nowhere near as efficient as a modern boiler.

In our ambition to achieve net zero by 2030, a working group was set up to consider how we might achieve this. We benefited from a diocesan survey listing out the potential options to consider. We then set up a working group and which benefited from the participation of Michael Carver and who is an independent heating consultant from a neighbouring parish. The result has been a proposal to install infrared heaters throughout the church plus an overdoor heater at the South entrance. We had trialled 4 Infrared heaters at the West End of the Nave at the end of 2023.

The advantage of the infrared heater is that it heats the individual and not the whole church. This means they do not have to be switched on for some time in advance of a service and we only need switch on where persons are seated. This keeps the running costs to a minimum.

3. Proposal

A diagrammatic layout of the of the proposed heating system is attached. On this diagram Heaters 1,2, 14 & 15 already exist. A photograph of a heater in position is included in the Statement of Significance.

For the heaters in the Nave the wiring will go over the arches and which project forward from the masonry so very little of the cable will be seen.

For those in the two aisles the wiring will follow existing wiring along the roof line and then drop down to the heater in conduit.

For those in the Chancel and Halsey Chapel, wiring to the two existing Chancel heaters will be used with those heaters being removed.

Due to the friable nature of the masonry a wooden pad in the same colour will be fixed to the masonry and the heater bracket fixed on to the pad.

Wiring to the overdoor heater will follow the roof line then drop down in conduit to the heater.

Switches for the heaters are to be located in the cupboard in the kitchen with the other electrics. Most heaters will be paired to a single switch but some will have an individual switch. Switches will have a light to show when they are on.

As part of the project the three existing boards will be combined to a single board.

When the installation is complete the boiler and oil tank can be removed.

4. Why we need it and why now

There is a risk that at anytime the boiler could pack up and we might not get the parts to repair it. It's removal would also free up space and allow us to progress to having a disabled toilet facility.

5. Justification

The total cost for this project has been estimated at £30000 including a contingency. We would expect to get a reasonable level of grant aid. The Friends of Great Gaddesden Church have funds to meet the cost and although this would make a sizable dent in those funds, we would be organising special fund raising events linked to this project.

Our experience with the four heaters that were installed in 2023 has given us confidence that although not perfect and nothing will be, this is a very good economic and practical solution for our Church.

We now have the capacity with our electricity supply – we were upgraded to 300 Amp three phase supply in January 2024, for an electric heating solution and we should be able to source a renewable supply so enabling us to achieve net zero emissions.