



you said...

**SUMMARY REPORT OF THE CONSULTATION
ON THE WORSHIP AND OTHER ACTIVITIES
OF HIGH STREET METHODIST CHURCH
AND OUR SPACE REQUIREMENTS**

March 2016

Vision Day 2016

highstreetmethodist.org.uk

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Dear Friends

For those who are committed to the life, work and worship here at High Street Methodist Church, this summary report is like a mirror. In it we can see ourselves as we are. It distils a huge amount of work. I am very grateful to the members of the Worship and Leadership Teams who have encouraged us to gather in meetings, to speak openly and honestly of the particular aspects of work and worship in which we are each involved, and to enable us to fill in the questionnaire.

I also want to express my thanks to the many individuals and groups of our church, who have so willingly and eagerly participated, not only in these most recent consultations, but also in the various meetings, soundings and explorations that have taken place over the past two or more years.

The image of ourselves we see in this document is of a church with a huge variety of quite different people. Together, we are already being enabled to encounter God, to be equipped as God's people, and to share in extending God's kingdom. We also see reflected back at us, a desire in many to keep growing, developing and progressing under the guidance of God's Spirit, so that we can be ever more fruitful for him.

The reflection of ourselves found in this summary confirms the need for us to consider how our buildings might be improved, to enable us to serve God better. This is something that requires expert advice. Thus, the final section of this report is a 'feasibility brief for the architect'. Over the coming weeks, we will be instructing an architect, who is well experienced in working with churches, to spend the summer considering what might be done and the likely costs. We envisage this feasibility study will be presented to an open meeting in Autumn 2016.

You will see the diversity of our membership reflected in this report. I earnestly ask that you hold in mind the prayer of Jesus in John 17, verses 20-21:

'My prayer is not for those who already believe alone. I pray also for those who will believe in me through their message, that all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you. May they also be in us so that the world may believe that you have sent me.'

May the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who made us each to be uniquely different, grant us by the power of his Spirit that love for one-another by which the world will know that we belong to him.

With every blessing

Mark Hammond

1. OVERVIEW AND CONTEXT

1.1 What is this document about?

This document is a summary of two recent consultations at High Street Methodist Church. The first looked into the many activities of High Street that take-place beyond our worship services. The second focused on our worship. The purpose of both consultations has been to:

1. Comprehend the variety of ways we work and worship at High Street, exploring how we might better enable people to encounter God, be equipped as God's people, and participate in extending God's kingdom.
2. Ask those who are most directly involved, whether there are any changes that could be made to our buildings that they envisage would enhance our worship and other activities.

This document, therefore, is the distillation of a major exercise in listening to those who worship at High Street Methodist Church, in all their glorious diversity!

1.2 Why have these consultation exercises taken place at this time?

During 2014 and 2015 the Worship Team facilitated a thorough review of the pattern of our Sunday morning worship. This included a number of widespread consultations and an extended exploratory period, during which detailed feedback was received. Their careful consideration of all the various consultation responses and feedback led the Worship Team:

1. To recommend that the pattern of our Sunday morning worship be established as it is now, with both Informal and Traditional services happening in the Church at separate times, and the primary-age section of Junior Church meeting in the Hall alongside both services, with Little Fishes in the Rear Rooms and JAM in the LX;
and (in the light of the many recommendations and observations they had already received),
2. To also recommend that proposals be developed to make the Church more conducive to worship of all styles. This to be done sensitively so as to enhance the ambience of the worship space.

When the Church Council agreed these recommendations in July 2015, the Worship Team was tasked with implementing them. At that point, the consultation responses and feedback that already had been received contained various suggestions and concerns regarding the current

configuration of the Church space, but, rather than proceeding directly to draft proposals, the Worship Team recommended to the Church Council that:

- Our buildings should be shaped by what we do in them and not the other way around. Further consultations should take place to clarify how our various worship and “wider-than-worship” activities could develop;
- To ask those who are most directly involved, whether there are any changes that could be made to our buildings that could enhance any of our worship and other activities.

Having considered these recommendations, the Church Council agreed in October 2015 that the Worship Team and the newly formed Leadership Team should carry out these wider consultations during January 2016. Sections 2 and 3 of this document summarise the responses of these latest consultations. The Worship Team found that these confirm and amplify many of the space issues already raised via the preceding consultations. These space-related issues have been captured in the Feasibility Brief, which is set out in section 4 of this document.

1.3 What will happen next?

Following on from these latest consultations, two separate but related processes will now follow:

1. ***The Worship and Leadership Teams will continue to support the ongoing development of our worship and other activities in line with our church Vision and Strategy.***
2. ***An architect, with appropriate experience, will be instructed to prepare a feasibility study in line with the Feasibility Brief in section 4 of this summary.***

It is anticipated that the feasibility study, showing what is possible and the likely cost, will be completed and presented to an open church meeting in the Autumn 2016.

2. THE WIDER-THAN-WORSHIP CONSULTATION

2.1 Introduction

In October 2015 the Church Council appointed a new Leadership Team to enable the better delivery of our strategic priorities. This new team includes the following four Mission Coordinators:

- Encountering God – Sally Hammond
- Equipping God’s People – David Thomson
- Extending God’s Kingdom – Helen Snowden
- Our work with Children and Youth – Pamela Atkins.

These each have the responsibility of coordinating, representing and communicating the work of the church that comes under their nominated strategic area. The vital work in each area continues to be carried out mainly by long-established church groups and teams, but each Mission Coordinator is a valuable sounding board and key advisory contributor within their nominated area for considering such things as: progress by the groups and teams in their area; fresh initiatives to consider; developments and improvements to deliver the church’s Vision; and resources to enable the Vision to be delivered more effectively.

These are still early days. During their first few months, the Mission Coordinators have already started working alongside the groups and teams in their areas, helping them to consider how our many and various mission activities may continue to develop over the coming years. This ongoing process of “wider-than-worship” consultation will feed into the Leadership Team’s work of producing an executive plan for consideration by the Church Council, setting out our long-term context and a 12-month action plan.

This “wider-than-worship” consultation has confirmed, not only a staggering amount of wonderful work is already being done at High Street, but also we are not short of fresh and creative ideas for the future development of this work. Given that our key resources of people, property and finance are finite, the Mission Coordinators will be helping us all to consider how to coordinate the future development of all our activities to ensure that we maintain a healthy and effective balance across all our work.

The following summary is not comprehensive but is intended to provide a brief overview of the work going on in each strategic area. The highlights (in the boxes) show where the groups concerned have indicated the ongoing development of their activities will have space implications.

2.2 Children's and Youth Work

Our growing children's and youth work includes:

a. Junior Church – Sunday mornings

- Little Fishes (age 0-3) – left Rear Room
- Little Fishes (age 3-4) – right Rear Room
- Primary (reception to year 6) – Hall
- JAM (year 7+) – LX

Space Implication – Junior Church

- Our new format for primary-age children in the Hall has proved very popular, and we are seeing considerable growth in attendance. As numbers grow, we would like a second large space to enable us to divide into two age-groups and provide both with the new format.
- It will help if all our ancillary rooms had internet access as well as AV facilities (sound and projection).
- The Rear-Rooms are not ideal, and consideration should be given to providing improved purpose-built space for youth and children's activities.

b. On-site Youth Activities – Tuesdays, Fridays and Sundays

- After-School Chill (age 11-18) – LX
- Friday-Night Chill (age 11-14 and 15-19) – LX
- INSIGHT (age 15-19) – LX
- FUEL (age 13-19) – Wesleys, Hall and Church

Space Implication – On-site Youth Activities

- We are continuing to see growing attendance at our youth activities. In the short-term the LX may be big enough for year 7 and above, but it seems likely more dedicated spaces will be needed on Sundays and for after-school activities.
- Outside bookings continue to hinder the potential for using the Hall and Wesleys for mid-week youth activities.
- It will help if all our ancillary rooms had internet access as well as AV facilities (sound and projection).

c. Schools' work – midweek

- Leading assemblies in various schools
- Delivering teaching in partnership with STEP

d. X:site – Saturdays

- Ecumenical event for children – Church

Space Implication – X:site

- This quarterly ecumenical children’s event has steadily grown in popularity. It now takes place in the Church because this is the only space that is large enough. The continuing growth of this significant event requires a larger flexible space with improved lighting, sound, projection and internet access.

e. Additional future activities

- Children’s Holiday Clubs
- Youth Concerts
- Youth Worship events (In-house and ecumenical)
- Youth Café
- Evening social events and clubs
- Nurturing relationships with uniformed organisations e.g. Scouts

Space Implication – Additional Future Activities

- To host youth concerts and youth worship events on the scale envisaged would require a large, comfortable, space with flexible seating and excellent lighting, sound, projection and internet access.
- To host a twilight/evening Youth Café in Wesley’s would require some adaptation of lighting and décor to create an attractive ambience for this age-group.
- Outside bookings hinder opportunities to use the Hall for children and youth events. Internet access required.

f. Provision of a children’s work office

- Dedicated computer for data protection
- Safeguarding administration
- One location for resources and documentation

Space Implication – Provision of a children’s work office

- We need a secure room for administration, bringing onto site data currently being held in the Junior Church Coordinator’s home.
- We need more storage for materials, resources and safeguarding documentation.
- As the work grows, an office base will be needed for a children’s work coordinator.

2.3 Encountering God

This priority area clearly includes our varied provision for different styles of worship both on Sundays and midweek, and also includes the following “wider-than-worship” prayer activities:

a. Prayer meetings

- Wednesday and Saturday half-hour - Church Prayer Corner.
- Pre-Sunday morning worship - Meeting Room.
- Monthly prayer hour – Church.
- 24 hours of Prayer – Church.

b. Prayer Ministry Team

- Our Prayer Ministry Team has been trained and commissioned to be available to pray with those who ask for prayer during or after worship.
- Prayer Ministry is also being requested outside of worship.

c. The creation of a prayer diary

- This would be a regular calendar of prayer pointers for each day.

d. Developing a team of intercessors

- Recognising that some people have a particular gift in either leading public prayers of intercession or interceding for others at home.

Space Implications – Enabling Prayer

- Our Prayer Days and occasional creative prayer installations would be greatly helped if the Church was more flexible, with the ability to be creative with lighting and space.
- Our ministry of prayer would be enhanced by the provision of a dedicated prayer space within our suite of buildings, permanently reserved and available for those who wish to pray no-matter what else is happening.
- Praying with individuals would be helped if throughout the premises there were pockets of comfortable seating.

2.4 Equipping God’s People

The following activities are among the ways we are seeking to equip God’s people:

a. Alpha Courses

- There are other discipleship courses that we may also consider running in addition to Alpha in time, but at High Street, Alpha

continues to provide a fruitful means by which many are deepening their understanding and experience of God's love in Jesus Christ.

- We have recently grown the team of Alpha Course leaders, helpers and cooks to give us the capability in future of running larger courses three times a year; some in homes, others at church.

b. School of Theology

- Over the past two years our monthly School of Theology has begun to provide for those who wish to deepen their biblical and theological knowledge. It may sound daunting, but those attending have found it enjoyable as well as very valuable.

c. Parenting Courses

- We have, this year, begun to establish new teams to lead and run courses for those who want to give special attention to some of our most precious human relationships.
- Recognising a growing hunger in a variety of areas, we would hope, in time, to introduce a number of such "life-skills" courses, perhaps covering such areas as bereavement, divorce-recovery, finances...

Space Implications – Our Courses: Alpha, Parenting, Marriage, Theology, ...

- The various courses we are already running (and those we are planning to develop in future) would be greatly enhanced if we had a choice of different sized, well-appointed and comfortable rooms, each with good quality technology (e.g. sound and vision) built-in.
- The provision of a coffee-point in each room would be ideal.

d. Newcomers Team

- With a steady stream of newcomers continuing to arrive at High Street, our Newcomers welcome team are continuing to develop ways of helping people find their home with us, including our regular Newcomers Tea.
- Over the coming year further consideration will be given to how we might continue to improve our welcome and make it even easier for people quickly to build relationships, grow in their discipleship, and have the opportunity to use their gifts for the common good.

e. House Groups

- It is our continued hope, in keeping with our Methodist heritage, to maximise the number of our church members who are meeting regularly in homegroups. This remains our primary means for providing pastoral care, sharing in fellowship together, and growing as disciples.

f. Resources Centre

- Our well-stocked library of books and other resources continues to ensure we all have easy access to some wonderful up-to-date material.

g. Partnership with other local churches

- We rejoice that we have a very close working relationship with the many churches of our town, and are continuing to look for fresh ways of supporting and partnering one another.

2.5 Extending God's Kingdom

a. Building Blocks

- For many young families in Harpenden, this provision for parents, grandparents and nannies to meet regularly and play together with their young children, is their primary contact with a church.
- Demand for this provision in Harpenden is such that – had we the resources to do so – we could probably fill the Hall every day of the week.

Space Implications – Building Blocks

- Improved and enlarged storage facilities are required.
- Providing opportunities to advertise and promote our services, courses and activities among those who come to Building Blocks.

b. Wesleys

- Our ever-popular café continues to provide a wonderful venue for all ages to meet in comfort over a quality cuppa, and to be served with warm hospitality by our friendly volunteers. Like Building Blocks, for many this is a primary route to a first experience of church.

- As an initial doorway into church, it is important that Wesleys continues be a comfortable place where all-comers feel at home, regardless of their faith or lack of it. We would, however, like to find appropriate and attractive ways of ensuring our customers are aware that they are visiting a church-run café and that they are openly invited to share in our worship, courses and other activities, including fund-raising for charities.

Space Implications – Wesleys

- Provision of appropriate, attractive and sensitive ways to communicate to our customers about our worship, courses and other activities.

c. Shoppers Lunch

- Our Shoppers Lunch team continues to provide a high-quality meal each month. Many of our customers are elderly and/or live alone, and this initiative provides an opportunity for them to make contact with others in a comfortable and warm environment.

d. The Harpenden Christmas Carnival

- In recent years we have continued to develop our participation in the Harpenden Christmas Carnival, and have seen hundreds of people (including many who do not usually come to church) come onto our premises to experience music, drama, refreshments and children's activities.

Space Implications – The Christmas Carnival

- This event would be enhanced by greater flexibility in the church space and more circulation space for large numbers of people.

e. World and Society

- The aim of our World and Society Team is to ensure that the members of High Street are outward-facing and active beyond the walls of our church buildings. This includes, but goes far beyond, raising funds for good causes. In many different ways, and arenas, we ourselves are being "salt and light" in the world.
- Through such initiatives as our SHARE food-collection and distribution scheme, we are continually seeking to partner with other local churches, charities and organisations both to recognise and meet the needs of our neighbours.

Space Implications – World and Society

- A better means of communicating to all-comers our outward-facing activities and initiatives, perhaps via rolling TV monitors around our building.
- Consider providing ways to better launch and promote appeals in the foyer.

2.6 Conclusions

The activities listed above are not intended to be comprehensive, but indicate the scale and scope of our mission activities, and highlight those areas where the development of our current work has space implications. Our aim is to ensure that we continue to shape and grow our work on all fronts in a way that is both sustainable and shaped by our common Vision and Strategy. Please do support and pray for our four Mission Coordinators as they continue to develop ways of supporting and coordinating all that we are doing.

3. THE WORSHIP CONSULTATION

3.1 Introduction

During January 2016 more than two hundred people were involved in completing the Worship Consultation Questionnaire (Appendix 1). The Worship Team received a total of 80 detailed responses; 18 from church groups who had discussed it together, and a further 62 from individuals. A good number of responses were received from across the whole spectrum of our congregations.

A 59-page analysis has been prepared containing all the detailed responses with the names of respondents removed to preserve anonymity. An electronic copy of this is available on request from the Church Office.

There is such a great deal of diversity within the responses that mutually contradictory desires are often found even among those who strongly prefer the very same service style. So what follows is a summary of the trends that emerge from the answers to questions 3-6. There is a clear acknowledgement that some of these trends do not command universal popularity!

3.2 Summary of responses to question 3: *At HSMC services currently, what helps your worship and enables you to encounter God?*

a. Across both *Traditional* and *Informal* there are respondents who agree they are helped and enabled in worship by...

- A physical worship space with ambience, beauty and atmosphere
- Warm friendliness and fellowship with other worshippers
- Provision for children and youth
- A breadth of good quality music
- Clear reading of scripture
- Bible-based quality preaching
- Thoughtful and inspiring prayers
- Periods of quiet for prayerful reflection
- Sharing Holy Communion
- A range of worship leaders and preachers.

b. Among those who especially prefer *Traditional* worship there are respondents who say they are helped and enabled in worship by ...

- The excellent acoustics for choral singing
- A peaceful pre-service atmosphere
- Knowing the service is no-longer than an hour
- Singing traditional seasonal hymns and anthems
- The ministry of the choir and organist

- Following the lectionary readings and the church year
 - Singing the Lord's Prayer
 - Holy Communion with traditional liturgy.
- c. Among those who especially prefer *Informal* worship there are respondents who say they are helped and enabled in worship by...**
- The cheerful welcome on the door
 - Being God-centred and Spirit-led
 - Having a screen for words and images
 - A mix of modern worship songs with some old ones
 - A sequence of songs together
 - Being led by gifted worship leaders and music groups
 - Creative forms of prayer
 - Testimonies and interviews.

3.3 Summary of responses to question 4: *In what ways might your preferred worshipping style(s) be enhanced?*

- a. Across both *Traditional* and *Informal* styles there are respondents who agree their worship might be enhanced by...**
- An improved sound-system
 - More use of drama within worship
 - Having no more than one new song per service
 - The two service styles being distinctly different
 - More times of silence within the service for quiet prayer and reflection.
- b. Among those who especially prefer *Traditional* worship there are respondents who agree their worship might be enhanced by...**
- A time of quiet before the service begins
 - Always having a children's address
 - The sacraments of baptism and Holy Communion being fully embedded within, as opposed to being tacked-on to, the service
 - Ensuring the service finishes in an hour
 - More traditional-style hymns with four-part harmony
 - Using the lectionary readings more consistently
 - Shorter sermons
 - Singing the Lord's Prayer
 - Greater reverence during the distribution of Holy Communion
 - More use of traditional Holy Communion liturgy
 - The preacher using the pulpit
 - More visiting preachers.

- c. Among those who especially prefer *Informal* worship there are respondents who agree their worship might be enhanced by...**
- More consistency in style and ongoing development
 - More informality
 - Not being bound by a particular finishing time
 - More time to interact with others
 - Giving parents opportunity to move to another seat after the children have left for Junior Church
 - Keeping up-to-date with contemporary worship songs but also including some favourites from past eras
 - The service being led in a less formal style
 - A themed sermon series
 - More opportunities for prayer within the congregation and by the Prayer Ministry Team
 - More testimonies and interviews

3.4 Summary of responses to question 5: *Thinking of the future and thinking about those who do not yet know God, how might we seek to draw in new worshippers?*

- a. Across both *Traditional* and *Informal* styles there are respondents who agree we might seek to draw in new worshippers by...**
- Ensuring the two different services remain distinct from each other
 - Including some well known songs/hymns
 - Witnessing to our neighbours and personally inviting them to come to worship
 - Being open to and involved in the wider community
 - Running more outreach events
 - Better advertising and communication through banners, notice boards, local press, social-media and literature
 - Running more courses, such as: Alpha, Discipleship, School of Theology, Parenting, Marriage, Divorce-Recovery, Bereavement, Debt-Advice...
 - More involvement in the wider community, including partnering with others common causes
 - Holding different types of special service tailored for various target groups, including the wider community, those who are new or returning to church, men, young families...
 - Ensuring we communicate well and regularly with those who use Building Blocks and Wesleys
 - Ensure the building is welcoming to all

- Improved sound-system
- TV monitors in the Foyer and Wesley's communicating what we are about
- Having a general culture of welcome – every member being a good host
- The friendliness of our receptionists
- More space and opportunity to share coffee before and after services
- More work with our local schools and uniformed organisations.

b. Among those who especially prefer *Traditional* worship there are respondents who agree we might seek to draw in new worshippers by...

- Not compromising the traditional style of their preferred service
- Hosting more external concerts, lettings and events
- Ensuring we always have a children's address

3.5 Summary of responses to question 6: *Bearing in mind your responses above, what physical changes to the church space could you envisage enhancing worship and outreach at HSMC?*

a. Across both *Traditional* and *Informal* styles there are respondents who agree...

- We should seek the expert advice of a suitably experienced architect
- We must think very carefully before spending large sums of money
- The dais/stage does need upgrading (perhaps including the lift)
- We need a better sound system both for spoken word and modern music and singing
- We would like a better, more central, screen that is more discreet when not in use
- The space would benefit from much improved lighting
- More versatility within the space would be good.

b. Among those who especially prefer *Traditional* worship there are respondents who agree...

- Our beautiful church space is already perfectly fit for our *Traditional* worship
- It is very important for us to retain excellent acoustics for choral singing and organ music
- There should be less clutter on view in the church
- Keeping the pews is important because pews give the space character, provide excellent seating capacity, are good for acoustics,

- provide the stability for those who struggle to stand up, and provide storage space for Bibles, service books and hymn books
 - The current sound system is particularly poor for those sitting in the choir stalls
 - The Choir Vestry needs upgrading and enlarging (perhaps by knocking-through to the Minister's Vestry?).
- c. **Among those who especially prefer *Informal* worship there are respondents who agree...**
- We should focus more on developing spiritually before we develop our buildings
 - Replacing the pews with chairs is important because chairs would make the space extremely flexible, and provide excellent versatility and greater comfort for everyone
 - Additional monitor screens around the church for blind spots
 - We should have monitor screens advertising what we are about in Wesleys and the Foyer (including facing the street)
 - Create more space in which to share coffee beyond Wesleys, which is regularly overly full.

3.6 Conclusions

Taken as a whole, the responses to this worship consultation confirm the soundings received during Vision Day in 2014, namely that we do strongly want:

- ***To cherish, equally, our two distinct styles of Sunday morning worship***
- ***Each congregation to have ample room to grow***
- ***Our weekly Sunday morning worship to attract and keep all ages, and proportionally more children and young adults and men***
- ***To provide the two styles of service every Sunday morning.***

The responses demonstrate that there is considerably more that unites the diverse members of High Street than divides them. They also clearly demonstrate a spectrum of seemingly contradictory opinions co-exist *even within* each of our different congregations. As a result, many of those who met with others to complete a group response found that considerable differences of taste and opinion exist even between those who strongly favour the same style of worship. It is, therefore, not helpful to think or speak in terms of

“Traditionalists” and “Informalites” as if those who worship in one style are somehow quite different people from those who worship in another. And it is equally unhelpful to speak as if all those who happen to prefer a given worship style are a homogenous group. The consultation responses prove, beyond a shadow of a doubt, that they are not!

It is sincerely hoped that this consultation will encourage those who favour different styles of worship to continue to listen to one another, and support the development of their differing expressions of worship. The general trends within the consultation responses, that have already been highlighted, will assist us in the provision and development of each style of worship. This will help to ensure that we can continue to provide a high standard of worship to suit a wide variety of tastes.

Now that the sequential pattern has been established for our Sunday morning worship, with Informal as well as Traditional worship taking place in the Church, the consultation responses strongly affirm the Church Council’s recent decision *‘to develop proposals to make the Church more conducive to worship of all styles’*. They also affirm that this needs to be done *‘sensitively so as to enhance the ambience of the worship space’* for all (see Appendix 2). Given the architectural significance of our building and the sensitivity of the project, the Church Council has already agreed that, before we bring forward firm proposals for change, we will be instructing a suitably-qualified architect to prepare a feasibility study to show us what is possible and the likely cost. The following architect’s brief summarises the scope of possible enhancements within the Church.

4. FEASIBILITY BRIEF FOR THE ARCHITECT

We are looking for proposals to enhance and improve the church to make it more conducive for worship in different styles and also appropriate for activities that take place on the premises. We are sensitive to the need to respect current architectural lines, ensuring the church remains uncluttered. Where new or replacement technology is recommended, we would like any equipment to be as unobtrusive as possible and an improvement on any current systems, e.g. speakers, screens, lighting, signage, etc.

To make this happen, we wish to consider:

In the Main Church Space:

- Enabling **different, flexible styles of worship and other church activities** to happen in the main body of the church with very little or no “set-up” time (e.g. services, X:Site, courses, concerts, children’s holiday clubs, prayer days, prayer installations, Christmas Carnival, etc.).
- Ensuring the **east end of the church** remains a focus for worship.
- Options for accommodating a **larger choir** together with providing adequate space for the choir to gather before/after worship, and for the storage of gowns, music, etc.
- Ensuring, **sight lines are improved** for viewing worship bands, drama pieces and other activities, including external events that take place ‘centre stage’ and that there are sufficient **inputs and sockets** for electric, sound and data with open communication channels to a sound desk, where appropriate.
- Enabling larger congregations more easily to occasionally receive **communion at a rail**.
- Reviewing the means of providing **disabled access** throughout the premises.
- Creating greater comfort and maximum flexibility in the **seating for a minimum of 350 people** in the main body of the church (more if possible).
- Improving the current **sound system**, such that it will be excellent for speech, musicians, singing, audio replay, etc., and can be managed efficiently and effectively from a sound desk that is appropriately positioned.
- Improving **the flooring** in the church such that it will enhance the comfort of worshippers and not impact, negatively, on the acoustics of the building.

- Replacing the current **video screen and projector** with a more effective and unobtrusive system, including the potential for erecting preacher's and/or worship leader's monitor(s).
- Improving **visibility in the transepts**.
- Having the facility to **record services and project live action** onto a screen, e.g. drama pieces, bands, speakers, etc., through the use of discrete recording and projection equipment.
- Installing unobtrusive **lighting and associated equipment** that improves visibility and enables the ambience and atmosphere of the church to be easily and quickly transformed.
- Finding appropriate **storage solutions** to help de-clutter the church e.g. pianos, band equipment, staging, children's play equipment, assorted furniture, seating, etc.
- Finding solutions to the issues raised by having **poor access to the kitchen** from the church e.g. preparing/washing communion elements, meals served in Church and the Wesleys.

In other spaces:

- Finding solutions to **Junior church growth** to enable the primary age children to divide into two age-groups with similar facilities.
- Providing **internet access** and installing **Audio-Visual facilities** in all ancillary spaces (including the Hall, Wesleys, and other meeting rooms) and fitting these out to enable any of them to be ideal for various activities, such as Alpha/Parenting/Marriage/Theology courses, business meetings, and children's and youth activities, including coffee-point facilities, where appropriate.
- Providing additional space to meet the **potential growth of on-site youth/children's activities**, including consideration of redeveloping the rear rooms.
- Providing **improved lighting and décor in Wesleys** for a twilight/evening Youth café.
- Providing a secure room for a **Children's Work Office**, including space for materials, resources, and safeguarding documentation.
- Providing improved and **additional storage spaces** for a variety of needs, including for Junior Church, Building Blocks etc.
- Providing **additional circulation spaces** better to enable large numbers of people to gather informally at the same time as the main church space is in use (e.g. during a second service on a Sunday morning when worshippers from the first service are still on site).
- Providing a **dedicated Prayer Space** within our suite of buildings that is permanently available.

- Providing **areas of comfortable seating** throughout the premises.
- Providing appropriate **means for advertising and promoting our services, courses and activities** to those who use or walk past our buildings.

We believe a detailed consideration of these issues will lead to the provision of a joined-up response that will both enhance the church for all styles of worship and for its use with many other activities, e.g. prayer installations, conferences, vision days, district synod meetings, BBC Songs of Praise, prayer labyrinths, Alpha courses, parenting and marriage courses, theology school, children's holiday clubs, worship in the round, and a variety of external events. In looking to the future, we recognise the need to acknowledge on-going running costs and the capacity to adapt, in a flexible way, to newer styles of worship and more advanced technology solutions further down the line.

APPENDIX 1

WORSHIP CONSULTATION QUESTIONNAIRE JANUARY 2016

Members were encouraged, during January 2016, to gather with others to discuss the following questions and then to submit a joint responses, although individual responses were also welcome.

Questions:

1. Name(s) of person(s) completing this questionnaire
(n.b. unattributed responses will not be considered on this occasion)
2. Which service styles do you prefer?
(if appropriate, indicate more than one, but in priority order e.g. 1,2, 3, etc.)
 - Traditional
 - Informal
 - Contemporary (e.g. 8.00pm service)
 - Other (e.g. Tuesday Morning Communion, 6.30pm Evening)
3. At HSMC services currently, what helps your worship and enables you to encounter God?
4. In what ways might your preferred worshipping style(s) be enhanced
(n.b. do not list suggested 'physical changes' here because this will be covered below in Q.6)
5. Thinking of the future and thinking about those who do not yet know God, how might we seek to draw in new worshippers?
6. Bearing in mind your responses above, what physical changes to the church space could you envisage enhancing worship and outreach at HSMC?

Table showing spread of first-preferences in responses:

First preference service style(s) as indicated in response to Question 2	Group Respondents	Individual Respondents
Mix of Traditional and Informal	11	15
Traditional	3	24
Informal	4	18
Contemporary	0	4
Other	0	1

APPENDIX 2

RECENTLY AGREED PATTERN FOR SUNDAY MORNINGS

Following a lengthy period of consultation and exploration the Church Council (8 July 2015) agreed (26 in favour, 5 against):

1. That sequential services become an established pattern for our Sunday morning worship from 1st September 2015, running alongside Junior Church in the Hall and Rear Rooms and our youth ministry in the Annexe.
2. That the Informal service goes first and the Traditional, second.
3. That the Informal service starts at 9.15am and the Traditional, 11.00am.
4. That the Worship Team consult the congregation of our current monthly 7.45am Communion Service to reconsider the timing of this act of worship.
5. That we continue to have Worship Together services on Christmas Day (All-Age), Easter Day (All-Age), Pentecost, Harvest, Remembrance Day, and for our Nativity service (All Age) with:
 - a. both organ and band;
 - b. an opportunity for the Choir, New Creation and Junior Choir to be involved together; and
 - c. (except for Christmas Day, Easter Day and the Nativity service) the combined Junior Church having their own Worship Together time in the Hall.
6. That the Church be made and kept available every Wednesday and Thursday night to enable our worship bands and technicians to rehearse properly, thereby recognising that this will necessarily involve seeking to find alternative options for current users e.g. Music Makers.
7. In the light of the many recommendations and observations made during the Exploratory Period, the Worship Team is tasked to develop proposals to make the Church more conducive to worship of all styles. This to be done sensitively so as to enhance the ambience of the worship space. They are asked to make their initial report to Church Council on 15 October 2015.