

Q & A Two
December 2016

***Q. It's four months since we moved out of our church and hall?
What has happened in that time?***

A. Probably more than we initially realise.

- We have developed a stable and workable pattern of worship at Wellesley.
- St Alban's parishioners have coped surprisingly well with this major upheaval, for which no one was prepared.
- We've set up a book in which views or ideas could be recorded. Have you made an entry? If there is something on top of your mind please share it.
- On each of the two Sundays where Wellesley was unavailable and we worshipped at the Cathedral or St James' respectively, the parishioners and priests of these parishes commented very favourably on numbers and demeanour of St Alban's people worshipping with them. We were 'a gift of encouragement' to them. Our presence at the Cathedral 'gave a gift of solidarity and inspiration.' Considering that within two weeks of our visit they had been forced to vacate their Cathedral, we can only reflect on the importance St Alban's example may have set for them.
- The Communications Team developed a series of posters which posed questions about the future and formed the basis for the community consultation on the Blue Skies Day in the Eastbourne library on 19 November. A comprehensive report of the outcomes is now available on the St Alban's website www.stalbanschurch.nz There is also a report in the December Eastbourne Herald.

- In deciding “what happens next”, vestry soon learned there is unfortunately no reference manual to look up and help decide what needs to be done or when. Vestry established a number of committees at the time, but some appointments proved to be premature and overall to lack co-ordination. Careful discernment has resulted in the establishment of an oversight group to which all committees report and which reports to vestry and the trust. This group is SEAT – the St Alban’s Earthquake Action Team. Previously established committees were tweaked.

Q. Why has another new group been established and what is its role?

A. This group, SEAT, has a major co-ordination role to assess and oversee the parish response to the earthquake risk assessment of St Alban’s church and hall. Members of the team are Rev’d Ellie, Cushla Jamieson, Geoff Martell, Joy Baird, Philip Plimmer Rob Burrige and Myles Breen.

SEAT responsibilities are to:

- Report to Vestry and the Trust respectively for appropriate decision making by the parish governance structures.
- Liaise with external agencies and individuals to facilitate firstly the discernment process and the subsequent project management process.
- Liaise with the Communications and Fund Raising Teams.

Q. Why aren’t we just getting on with making a decision?

A. A clear message we’ve received from parishes who have already experienced the disruption of earthquake strengthening to their church or hall is to do plenty of consultation and not to rush this important decision making.

We have a unique opportunity to look forward decades in planning the 'restoration' of our church and hall. St Alban's is the only parish to vacate both church and hall, so our need for consultation and time to think about our future needs, is probably greater.

Q. What were the main issues identified by community consultation on the 'Blue Skies Day?'

A. Most people wanted the church restored, with as little change to its appearance as possible. Many commented on its attractiveness and its importance as a historic building. There were a number of comments about providing increased internal flexibility, including more portable seating, updating the technology and introducing ways of making church involvement more attractive to young people and families.

With the hall opinions were much more varied. Many sought a rebuilding of the hall to cater for a wide range of worship, outreach and community activities. A Civil Defence hub, an extension of the retreat ministry, a community centre or a place to provide activities for youth and children were among the suggestions. There was caution expressed about not duplicating facilities already available in Eastbourne.

Comments identified the importance of catering for future needs and some cautioned against work now which would soon become wasted if no-one used the church.

The overall demographic contributing views was older than 60.

Q. *Why was the community consulted before any consultation with parishioners?*

A. It was considered obtaining community input and providing this information to parishioners when they are considering future plans, was the more appropriate approach, rather than the other way around.

Q. *When will there be consultation with St Alban's parishioners?*

A. Consultation with parishioners will take place in the first quarter of 2017.

Q. *What form will the consultation with parishioners take?*

A. The St Alban's Earthquake Action Team is currently consulting with an experienced external facilitator to determine her availability and arrange parish consultation. A discernment process is underway to establish details of the form it will take. It is likely consultation will take a number of forms over a period of time and involve both small invited focus groups and a larger self-selecting group of parishioners.

Q. *How can we get views from younger people?*

A. The Blue Skies Day communication team noted the lack of views from young people and made some suggestions to vestry on the importance of obtaining such views and how this might be done. Suggestions included sports groups, focus groups and library displays, talking to young families within the parish especially targeting their teen-agers, the Eastbourne Youth Group, Wellesley College senior students, youth workers and leaders within the diocese.

Q. Who actually makes the decision about what is to happen to the church and the hall?

A. The final decision about what will happen to the church and hall will be made by parishioners on the electoral roll, which will then be confirmed in partnership with the Diocese of Wellington. The electoral roll is a requirement of the diocesan Canons. This roll consists of regular worshipping parishioners who have been baptised and have worshipped at St Alban's for at least three months within the last two years. Those on the electoral roll are entitled to stand for parish positions e.g. people's warden and vestry and to vote at an AGM or a special AGM. The electoral roll is revised each year ahead of the AGM to ensure it is up to date, with revisions approved by vestry. The roll is on display for people when notice of the AGM or special AGM is given. The master copy of the electoral roll is available on the office computer with a hard copy available in the parish office.

The electoral roll is not to be confused with the pastoral roll, which is a much larger roll, which traditionally consists of all people with a past or present connection with St Alban's.

Q. Does the diocese have a role in this decision and if so what is the role?

A. Yes the diocese does have a role. A decision of this significance requires approval by the Management Committee of the Wellington Diocese. We have been working in partnership with the different members of the Diocese who can support us in this process, such as Rob Moonlight (the Diocesan Property Manager) and Nick Young (our Diocesan Manager). They will continue to guide us in this partnership.

Q. *When are we going to know how much this all will cost?*

A We won't have an estimate of the likely cost until the form a redevelopment will take has been decided by the parish and architects and engineers employed to develop and cost preliminary plans. This itself costs money. Therefore, we need to develop as clear a brief as possible for the redevelopment, which can then be given to engineers and architects and accurate costs be made available to us.

There are two things, though, which we already know. Firstly, our Fundraising Team will be developing an extensive and multi-faceted fund-raising campaign in 2017. Secondly, although the Parish Trust does have some funds invested, the interest from this has traditionally been split between adding to the capital and contributing to the parish's annual running costs. So withdrawal of too much of the Trust's capital will affect future parish budgets.

Q. *Were the church and hall damaged in the recent earthquake centred near Kaikoura or any of the aftershocks?*

A. A quick visual inspection of the church and hall showed no damage after the Kaikoura earthquake and aftershocks.

Q. *Doesn't this suggest moving out when we did was rather premature?*

A. Unfortunately no. The engineering reports indicating the church at only 15% of code and hall at 20% of code are unchanged. There has been no change to the legislative environment since the last earthquake and therefore there can be no change to the way that we have had to respond to our designated earthquake prone ratings.

The extent of damage, or lack of it in this case, is determined by location, strength and depth of the earthquake, the frequency at which energy is transferred together with the site conditions.

Q. It was earlier indicated there would be a review of our patterns of worship. How and when will this happen?

A. This is planned for early 2017 once summer holidays are over and families back at school and work. It will probably take the form of a survey, available on line as well as in hard copy.

Q. I'm a bit confused about when we are to worship in Wellesley and when we worship somewhere else. Can you please explain this?

A. Our worship is the regular 10am service at Wellesley unless for some reason Wellesley is unavailable, in which case the change of venue will be advised, with as much notice as possible. Please remember to check the pew-sheet or website for any changes.

In January 2017 our pattern is as follows:

- 1 January 10am - St Alban's Eucharist with San Antonio's community at San Antonio's
- 8 January 9.30am - Epiphany Eucharist with St Ronan's at St Ronan's
- From 15 January 10am – St Alban's Eucharist resumes at Wellesley College



KEEP
CALM
AND
TRUST
GOD

“Be still,
and know
that I am
God.”

Ps. 46:10

St Alban's
Eastbourne

