



St Lawrence Church
LECHLADE-ON-THAMES

Restoration and Reordering Project

Findings from the Initial Consultation

Summary Report

January 2019

Restoration and Reordering Project Group

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1. The Consultation Process

The Restoration and Reordering Project Group (RRPG) has carried out an initial consultation with the church community to seek support to the objectives of the Restoration and Reordering Project and to obtain feedback on the possible options.

Four presentation meetings were held in the church on 3rd, 7th, 11th and 14th October 2018. At each meeting a Power Point presentation was shown and the attendees were given the opportunity to ask questions. The drawings of the proposed options were placed in the church for each meeting. Questionnaires were handed out to all the attendees and made available to those who were not able to attend. The questionnaire comprised four sections: Preferences; Objectives; Options; and additional comments.

There were 135 attendees at the four meetings and 119 questionnaires were returned. This report summarises the main results from the consultation. These findings, presented in Sections 2 to 6, will be used to inform the development of a Statement of Need for discussion with the Diocese Advisory Committee.

Respondents were requested to state which services they attended, the frequency of attendance and age group. This data is collated in the tables below.

Service attendance, frequency and age group

Service	Attendance
8.00 am	14
10.00am ¹	83
Family ²	54
Inspire ³	44
Evensong	29
Thursday	9

Frequency	Count	%
Weekly	68	57
Fortnightly	21	18
Monthly	9	8
Occasionally	11	9
Not stated	10	8

Age Group	Count	%
-12	1	1
12-24	6	5
25-39	1	1
40-55	18	15
56-69	37	31
70+	46	39
Not stated	10	8

1 = communion twice per month. 2 = once per month, 3 = once per month

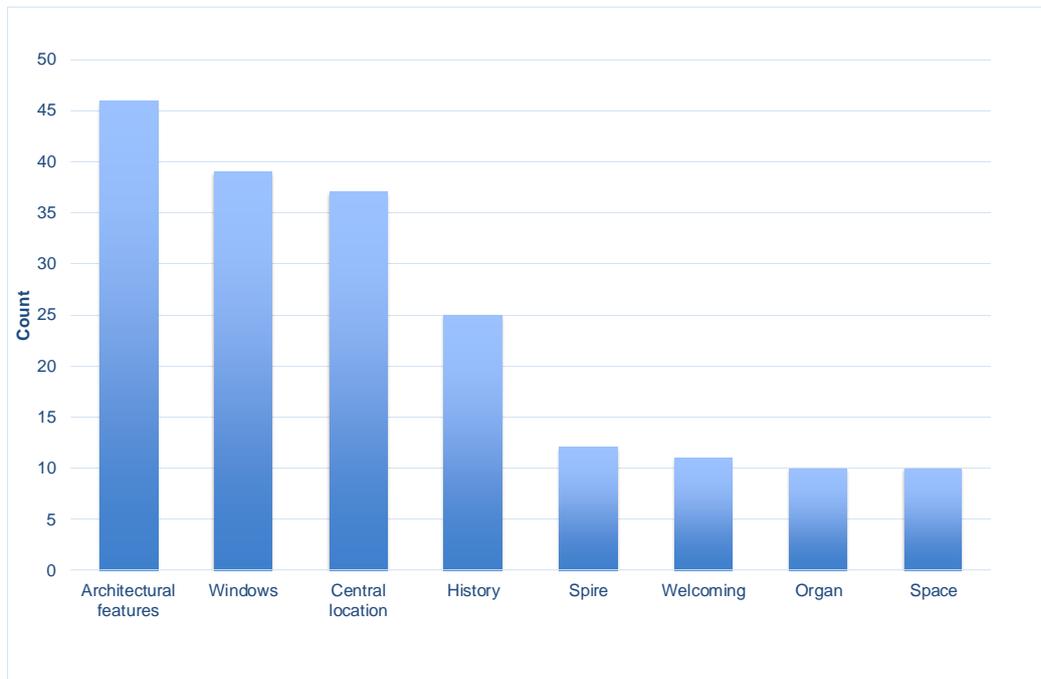
This data shows that we have a good spread of respondents across services with a high attendance; some 75% of respondents attended church at least once a fortnight. The age group distribution shows a bias to those of greater age and responses from age groups less than 40 years is very low.

Questionnaires were also sent to groups in the church community who use, or would use, a reordered church to seek their needs related to meeting rooms, kitchen facilities, toilets and storage. The responses will help us assess the space requirements in the Needs Statement.

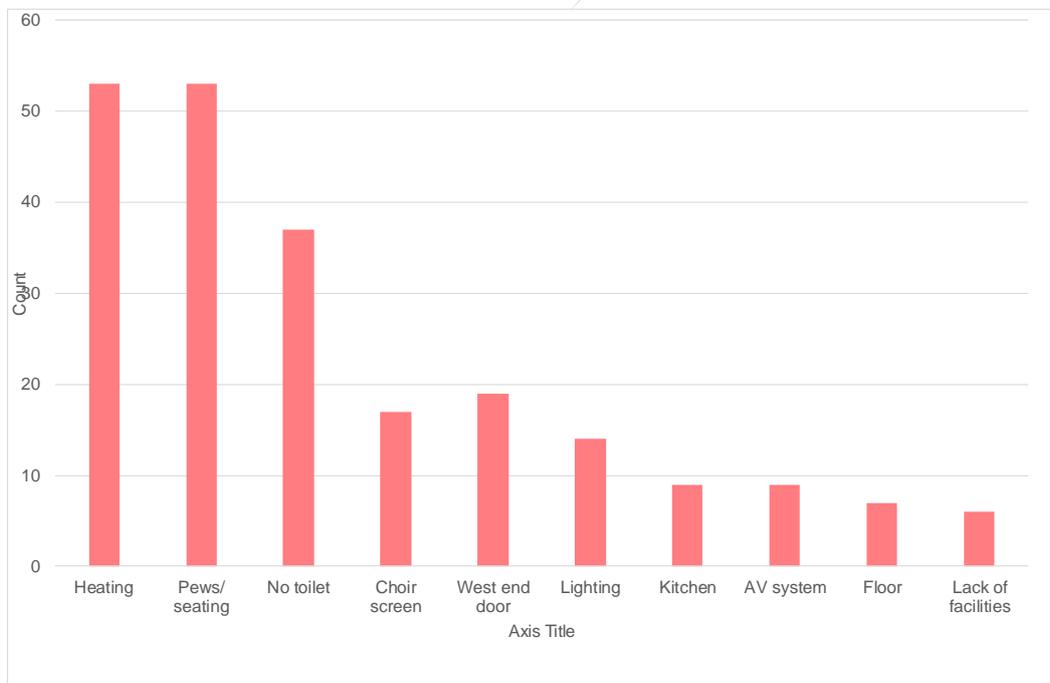
2. Preferences

Respondents were asked to state their preferences to four questions, set out below.

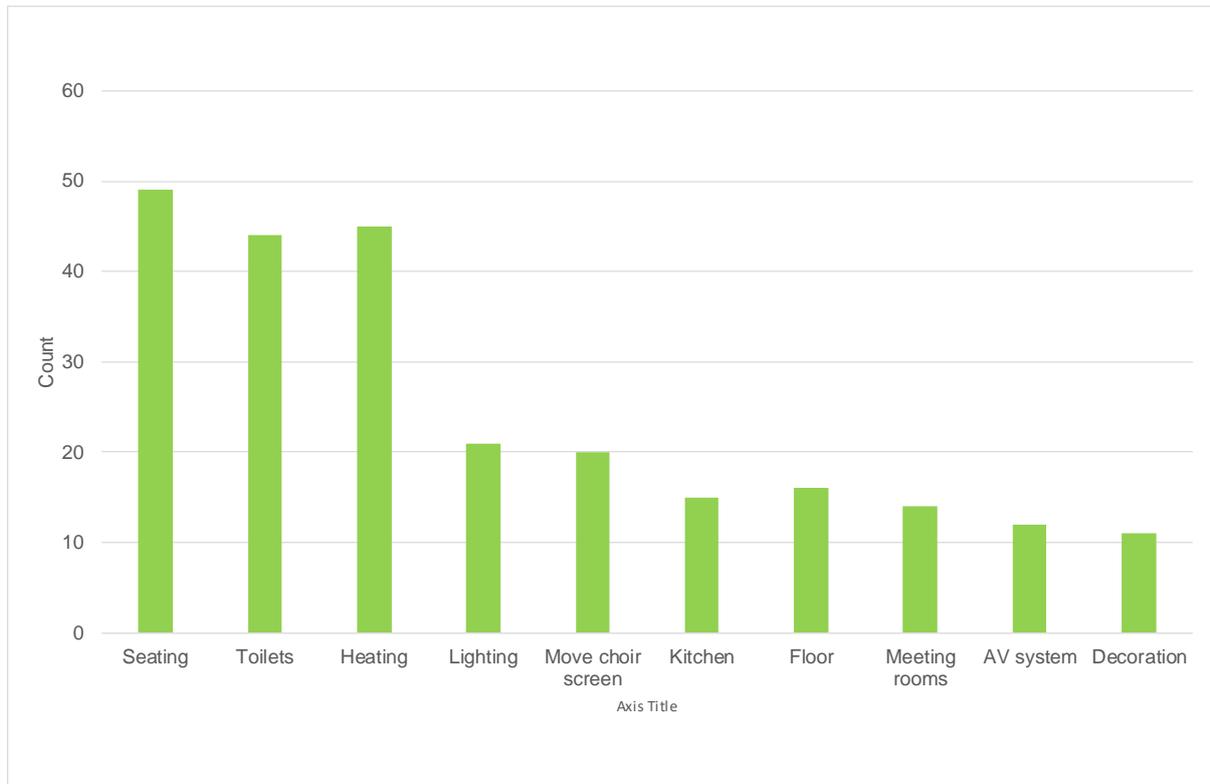
A - The three things that respondents liked about our church building:



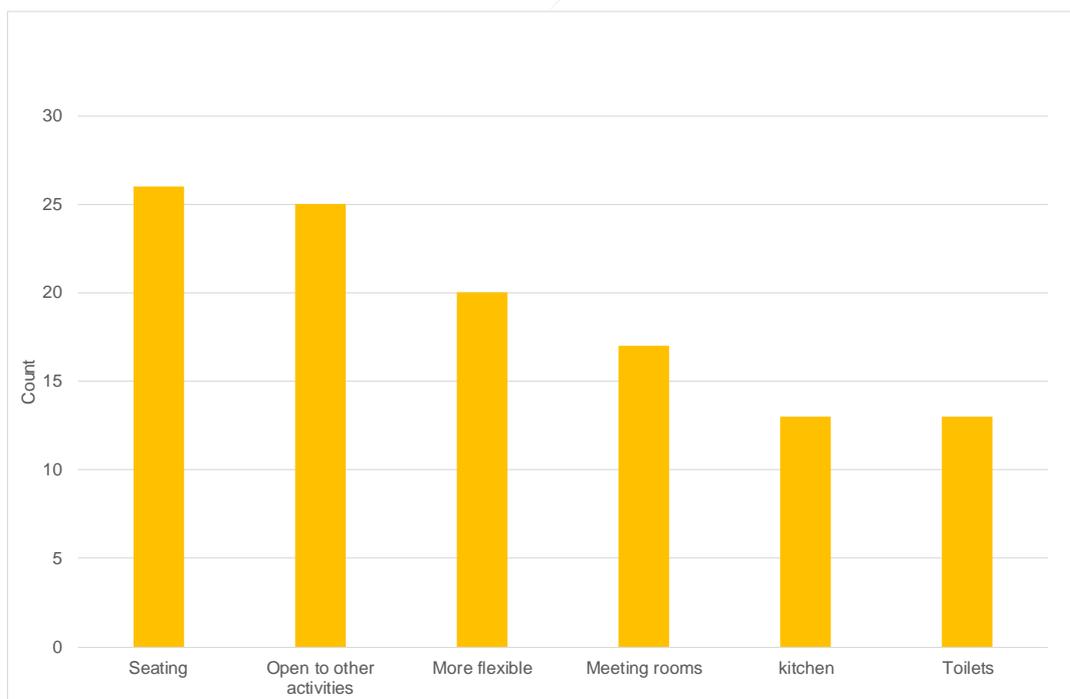
B - The three things that respondents found difficult about our church building:



C – The three ideas that respondents had for improving the church building:



D – How respondents thought we could make better use of the church building:



3. Objectives

The objectives of the Restoration and Reordering project (the project) are to

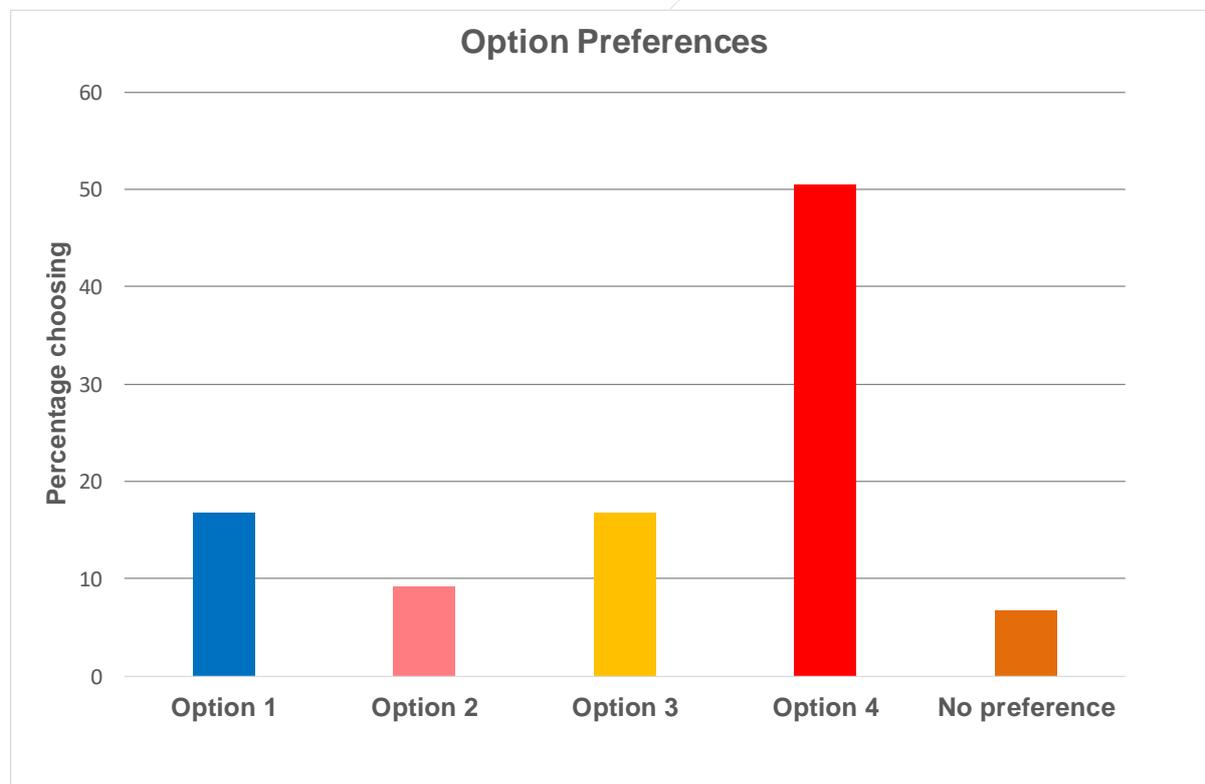
- restore the building for the next 120 years;
- support worship and wellbeing of the Church;
- enable flexible use of the building for all services and events;
- create access for all disabilities; and
- have enhanced facilities (for example better toilets, enhanced kitchen and an improved AV system).

The main findings from this section are that

- there is overwhelming (91%) support for these Objectives;
- 70 % of respondents did not disagree any of the Objectives; there were several concerns raised by others. We have noted these concerns which will be considered in the development of the project;
- 64% of respondents did not identify any additional objectives although we received a range of helpful suggestions to consider; these will also be considered in the development of the project.

4. Options

Respondents were asked to select one of the four options that they preferred. The results are summarised in the Figure below. The definitions of the options 1 to 4 are set out in the table on the next page.



Option	Option description	Preference (number)	Preference (%)
1	A new limestone-paved floor, more effective heating, rewiring and all LED lighting, new audio-visual system, flexible seating, improved access for all and open up the north porch;	20	17
2	As Option 1 with balcony and meeting rooms, toilet(s) within the church, relocate the choir screen to the west end balcony and relocate font;	11	9
3	As Option 2 with toilets relocated in an extension off the north porch, additional meeting room/ office and enlarged kitchen;	20	17
4	As Option 3 with building extension along the north side of the church to include office and additional meeting room.	60	50
0	No preference	8	7
	Total Responses	119	

The options are a progressive build-up of components from Option 1 to 4. For example, a preference for Option 1 is shown in all options. A preference for the balcony and meeting rooms is shown in options 2, 3 and 4.

The feedback shows that

- Nearly all (93%) respondents supported all or most of the components of Option 1. This preference is included in those respondents who supported options 2, 3 and 4;
- The provision of meeting rooms, kitchen and balcony at the west end of the church was supported by 76% of respondents (Options 2,3 and 4);
- 9% of respondents preferred the provision of toilet(s) inside the church (Option 2);
- 67% of respondents supported the provision of toilet(s) in an extension to the north porch (Options 3 and 4);
- 50% of respondents supported Option 4, building an extension along the north exterior of the church.

5. Comments

A range of observations were received on the objectives, options and further comments in the free-form area of the questionnaires. These were constructive even if opinions differed. We received 79 comments which were supportive of the objectives and options. A further 87 comments were supportive and make additional suggestions on elements of the proposals. There were a further 46 observations expressing concern on the proposals. Many of these comments were duplicated across the three areas of Objectives, Options and further comments. Each comment will be considered as we develop the project and prepare the Needs Statement.

The table below identifies some common concerns expressed by a few respondents and response of the RRPg.

Selected comments with responses from the Project Group

Reference	Comment	Response from the Project Group
1	<p><i>-Concern about duplication of facilities with the Memorial Hall</i></p> <p><i>-The town has a purpose-built hall so the Church should not compete with this</i></p>	<p>The facilities and meeting rooms are to support worship and worship-related activities in the Church such as coffee after services, Sunday school for a range of ages, toilets in the church and wine during concerts. These facilities are needed at the church rather than the hall some distance away.</p>
2	<p><i>-Is it certain that a purpose-built hall cannot be built on the south side of the church?</i></p>	<p>The south side of the church contains several listed chest tombs, headstones. tombs and many burials. To clear this area would require much time to locate and obtain agreement from relatives, space to relocate burials, reconstruct chest tombs and archaeological surveys to identify other possible burials. There are high risks in terms of approvals, time and cost which makes this suggestion unviable.</p>
3	<p><i>-Doubtful that the north extension can be built in sympathetic style;</i></p> <p><i>-With the proviso that the external fascia [of the north extension] fits in with the integrity of the existing building;</i></p> <p><i>-Would totally ruin a wool church.</i></p> <p><i>-Would prefer to see more detailed plans</i></p>	<p>Options 3 and 4 would need sympathetic designs to reflect the architecture of the existing church building.</p> <p>This is recognised and we need to come up with proposals that meet the requirements of Historic England, the DAC and local planning authority. We shall be appointing an experienced architect and an archaeologist to advise us.</p>
4	<p><i>-The option to develop the cottage to accommodate Sunday school rooms and facilities has not been fully explored</i></p> <p><i>-a major benefit of respecting the Grade 1 building</i></p>	<p>The consultation supports the inclusion of a toilet with all-weather access, kitchen and Sunday school rooms within the church. Development of the listed cottage to accommodate some facilities is being explored as an option although the consultation shows clear support to improvements within the church.</p>

6. Group questionnaires

We circulated group questionnaires to all those who use, or who would like to make greater use of, the church and church cottage. 13 questionnaires were received from these groups. The information showed that the groups represented nearly all ages. Significant use of the church for primary school activities and music concerts was identified.

The feedback is generally consistent with the findings of the individual questionnaires with a preference for more flexible seating, toilet(s) and more effective heating. All the groups supported the objectives with several helpful comments. Option 4 was supported by 11 (84%) of the groups.