

ST. THOMAS CHURCH LANCASTER

HEART OF THE CITY PROJECT

MAY 2018 UPDATE

Finance update: thank you to those of you who are continuing to support the Heart of the City project. By 31st March, the amount given had grown to £709,809. We are now beginning to see expenditure items go through the account, as well, and so far these have totalled £24,196.

Planning application: the planning application for the new centre has now been submitted to Lancaster City Council. The Council expects to reach a decision on our application by 24th July at the latest – please pray that our application finds favour with the planners. If you would like to write letters of support for the project, to the Council, the planning application number is 18/00405/FUL.

Questions: If you have any questions about the planning application or would like to chat about any other aspect of the project, you will be able to catch members of the Heart of the City Executive and Finance teams after each service on 20th May, 17th June and 22nd July. Look out for them next to the new Heart of the City noticeboard at the back of church.



Spire: you will have noticed the scaffolding growing over the past few weeks and it has finally reached the top – what an amazing structure! The masonry and pointing repairs have now begun. The rusted cross and tie rod from the top have been removed and will be replaced with a stainless-steel version. With full scaffolding internally as well, we have been able to access the last remaining bell for the first time since 1968. Unfortunately, the supports are in poor condition, so the PCC, in consultation with the diocese, has opted to remove the bell. The cost of the scheduled work (including architects fees) is set at £114,260 before VAT, which we expect to be able to reclaim. There will be an additional cost to remove the bell.

Upstairs Church Centre Boiler: The boiler that services the upstairs of the Church Centre has recently failed and been condemned. It is planned to replace this with a boiler that can service our existing needs and then be removed and stored before demolition, to be re-installed in the new centre as part of a modular heating system.

Main Church Boilers: the Listed Places of Worship Grant Scheme is a national scheme to cover the cost of VAT on repairs to listed places of worship. We were very pleased to hear that the VAT amount on the boilers of £5,150.72 was being reimbursed by them, a significant saving for us.

Internal repairs: we are working on resolving the issues of water ingress into the West End of church, particularly into the upstairs room. This project will involve adding some structural ties to the building as well as re-pointing work. It is hoped that all the relevant permissions will be granted to allow the work to be completed by the autumn this year.

Fundraising in the community: our 2018 schedule of fundraising activities is now well underway. Our first congratulations go to Renate who raised £510 from organising a ceilidh in her local village hall. It was a huge success and extremely popular. All funds raised went to Heart of the City.



Next, congratulations to someone in the congregation who has decided to work a bit of overtime. Anything she earns will be 'reverse-tithed' (in terms of what she keeps versus what she gives) to the Heart of the City project. What a great idea!



The “**St. T’s Community Cinema**” filming of Paddington 2 on 17th March was a huge success and was sold out. The team raised £450 towards Heart of the City.

This was followed on Saturday 28th April, when we ran a **Vintage Tea Party** in church. Again, this was a sell-out event and the team raised over £1,500 for our project. These are all fantastic fundraising initiatives so a big thank you to everyone who was involved!

Please do consider your own fundraising in the community for this project. It is and a great way to engage with friends and neighbours about our project and to talk about our faith!

Family Life Centre Task Group: this new group is now well underway, carrying out visits to other churches who are engaging with their communities through Family Life Centres, as well as conducting a community needs assessment by consulting with GPs, health visitors, special needs teachers, police, etc. This is one of the first ministries we are looking to develop, to be offered from our new centre.