



St Nicholas Church Nottingham

Re-ordering Project

“Imagine”

2010 -2011

Summary

This brief document describes some of the features that the re-ordered St Nicholas Church will offer to its users from late 2011.

The re-ordering project tries to create a building fit for the work of God in Nottingham for the coming years. A space that is flexible, welcoming, and ready for worship and praise.

Welcome to St Nicholas, the Beacon Church of the City of Nottingham.

Imagine

You are entering St Nicholas from the new west entrance. You step up a broad flight of stone steps onto a welcoming terrace area, and looking back over your shoulder you see a safety railing designed in sympathy with the west side of the church that also stops the younger members of the church from running near the road.

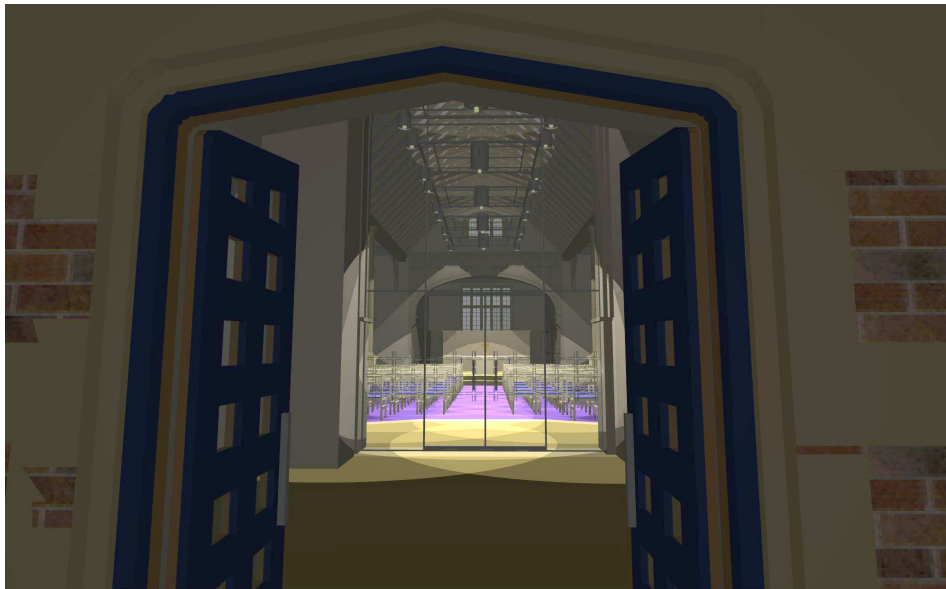
Before you enter the church you notice that the broad terrace in a traditional style creates a connection from the north doors to the new west door providing broad and smooth access for baby buggies and for disabled access.



The solid oak doors are opened inwards revealing a welcoming and well lit inner vestibule under the tower. Two inner glass doors, now set open, but with key pad release, provide clear vision and security during week day use.

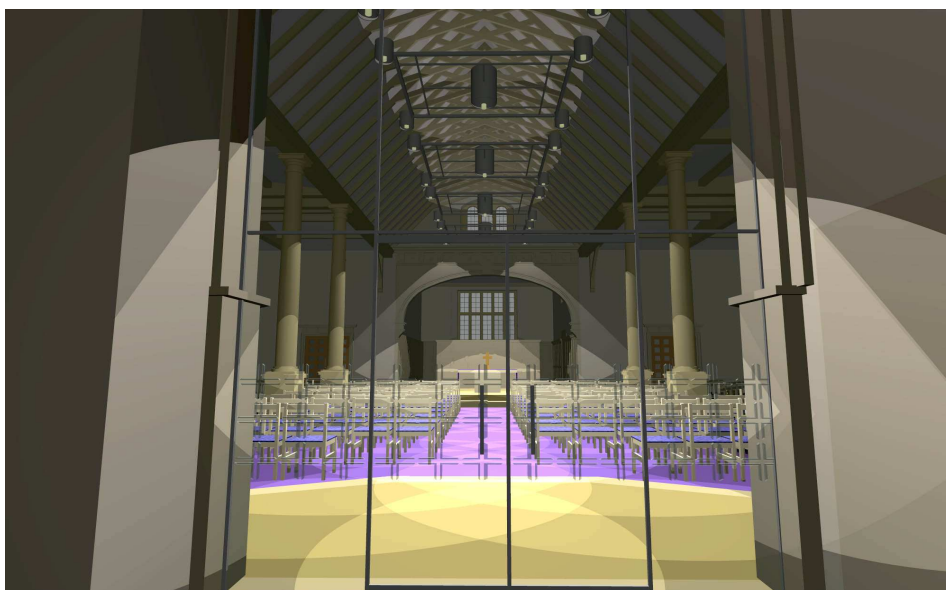
Entering, you are greeted by a steward who offering you a Bible welcomes you as you see the in-laid floor mat and the stone floor throughout the tower area.

The walls are decorated in calm colours and a neat notice board is mounted to one wall. Narrow wall cupboards provide storage. Down-lighters in the ceiling are adjusted to give a welcoming and bright feel.



You notice as you move forward to your left the door to the ground floor all access toilets.

Glass doors with a translucent script from Ezekiel create the inner end of the entrance area and allow you time to look into the nave and collect your thoughts before you enter.



As you pass through the glass doors you walk over further stone flooring that extends out a short distance into the nave to add a sense of continuity between the welcome area and the main floor of the church.

You realise that you have come into the church under the new balcony that extends left and right across the rear of the church close to the rear most pillars but blending into the church structure as it appears to be standing away from all the walls and with its lights sunken into the ceiling an overall effect of lightness is generated.



You look first to your left and see the compact lift for those who do not wish to use the stairs for access to the balcony, placed against the west wall between the windows in that area.

To your right you see the new refreshment area with its open plan frontage onto the church but with the balcony providing a feeling of separation within the same building.



Later you will notice the professional quality of the kitchen equipment including a dishwasher and cooker, all laid out for ease of use and hygiene.

Either side of the main aisle are laid the new chairs and you know that with their new design they can be more easily stacked into the storage areas that the church now has.



As you take your seat you look over your shoulder and see that the front of the balcony is curved and that the edge of the balcony is glazed adding to the sense of lightness in the balcony.

You are pleased that even though there was the need for some strengthening of the church foundations to support the new balcony and the digging for the hole for the sunken baptistery in the chancel area seemed to take forever the end result is a warm happy feeling building ready for the work of God for years to come.

Looking around the main church you see that the walls no longer look damp or crumbling and the whole is painted in clear colours that reflect the heritage and quality of the building yet give a modern feel.

You relax into your seat as the colours and decorations were hoping you would and your feet rest on the solid wood flooring that stretches throughout the main body of the church.

You cannot see any radiators nor is there the sound of might rushing wind from the old heating system, and you recall that under-floor heating was to be installed. You are almost tempted to take off your shoes to find out if the floor is warm, but you know that you feel warm so it must be working.

Near the rear pillar you see that the sound and computer desk is now at floor level with line of sight to all the musicians and speakers in the stage and chancel area.

Further to the front you see that the organ is now re-installed and whilst you know that this location did cause some discussion, it looks completely at home there.

A door has been let into the old vestry wall that matches up with a similar door under the old organ pipes.

Musicians are bringing out equipment from the old vestry area that you know is divided into two to provide a smaller and still usable vestry area and a store area for musical equipment. You have not seen them, but you know that in order to free up space in the church offices for children's work, the vestry is now the office space for Steve, the Rector and three other staff. A great idea as it means that the church is open and in use all week, not just on Sunday.

The old projector screens are gone and the east wall of the church is now clear of old wiring as part of the work of the re-ordering included a full re-wire of all electrics. Two large projection screens now provide clear pictures.

As you look to the left you see that the identical door under the old organ pipes allow access into a second store for chairs and occasional tables.

The old organ pipes have been re-painted and provide the front to this store area.

The chancel is what attracts your eye as you wait for the start of the service.

A mid oak altar communion table individually designed for St Nicholas is placed towards the front of the chancel. Its size would have been dwarfed by the old altar table.

A cross, side credence table, President's chair and lectern all complementary the design and style of the altar table, and are easily moved around the chancel area.

You can just see more relaxed seating towards the rear of the chancel creating an area for prayer, worship and meditation both during services and at other times during the week.

Your eyes are drawn to the floor of the chancel which is edged in lightly coloured stone work matching the entrance, inlaid with carpet and with the baptistery in the middle creating a chancel area with a reverential feeling that still manages to complement the previous chancel panelling.

You are pleased that the new St Nics still feels like the old St Nics, a warm family style of church.

Ah, the baptistery. You know that in the original plans the baptistery was to be at the west end of the church. You recall that practically it did not "work" in that location.

The new baptistery is sunk into the chancel floor under a mid oak wood cover. Now a verse from Matthew 28 is inscribed around the stone rim; an excellent result.

You wonder where the old pulpit has gone, a little used item you know, and you see that it is now part of the welcome desk near the north door; a fitting use for an item of St Nics history, not totally suited to today's style of worship.

The musicians organise themselves along the east wall in the area that the organ and piano used to occupy, with the musical leader able to stand almost centre stage on the chancel floor, yet able to move clear for other times during the service.



Something makes you look upwards and you see that all the main lights including controllable lighting for the stage area is carried well up in between the cross beams of the roof so that only the lights can be seen.

Some lights shine onto the roof area and some shine directly downwards.

Other lights are carried on track rails mounted along the wood beams of the roof and across the side nave ceilings. However, they are compact and blend in with the overall decoration of the church.

You are pleased to see that the level of the lighting is sufficient to be able to easily read your Bible during the service.

Your hearing impaired friend who is sitting next to you can easily hear the service as the sound loop has been renewed along with the rest of the electrics and sound system wiring.

You can see that the band is using the new audio system and the sound is both tuneful and at the right volume. You, as one of the older members of St Nics, had been worried that with the new harder floors and the balcony the audio system would struggle.

The new sound mixing desk and amplifiers along with placing the sound desk at ground level means that the days of the sound engineers making compromises is past, and you also know with the organ finally having its speakers fully installed and tuned, this fine instrument was another sound investment.

After the service you collect a fresh coffee from the open plan refreshment area before you think about leaving the church.

You had forgotten that all the panels and the sides of the stairs are glazed, even the lift is glazed so that light can flow into the church through the large west windows and this adds to the feeling of lightness of the balcony; a major worry at the discussion and design stage of the project you recall.

You are pleased that the refreshment area now longer seems to be a jam point as the serving area has been moved towards the south wall is more open plan and the small round tables let some of your friends enjoy a few minutes talking as they mingle.



Getting a coffee or tea is definitely no longer a chore and you can see that the kitchen equipment will be easily capable of creating meals for the next Alpha course, Sunday night food and the ever busier Friday night tea and toast initiative.

You are amazed how the whole refreshment area looks so clean and hygienic and away from the toilets at last.

Deciding to explore the balcony again, as you are constantly amazed how the extra space is so useful, you decide to use the lift instead of the stairs and find that although it is small it is perfectly satisfactory for one person or a person with a pram or wheel chair and quiet in operation.

Walking onto the balcony you see that it is flat floored and easily able to accommodate another 80 or more people, but is an area with its own carpeted floor that can be used for separate meetings during the week and as a coffee bar area perhaps on Friday nights.

The glazed front to the balcony keeps the smaller member of the church safe and allows people sitting there to see what is happening on the ground floor.

As you walk across the balcony towards the stairs to go back to the ground floor, you see the glass fronted room in the tower that has been added in the re-ordering.

Some parents and babies are still there sitting and talking and hardly a sound comes out as the glass wall insulates the room, but the large TV monitor on the wall allows the parents if not the babies to take some part in the service without the worry of causing a disturbance.

You know that this room makes a great separate meeting room during the week, allowing multiple use of the church at the same time.

Near the top of the stairs you find more toilets each set up for female members of the congregation complete with baby changing facilities. The under floor heating allowed the removal of the old boiler in the basement and this area is now toilets for the male members of the congregation, complete with baby changing facilities again in this enlightened time, as well as providing a second fire exit.

The stairs lead you back to the entrance lobby and you notice the fire regulated doors and walls to the stair well.

What you forgot to look at was the old main door, but you know that it is still usable and only last week a wedding used it as the trees were in blossom.

You leave the church through the west door onto the wide steps leading onto Maid Marian Way.

A really lovely church, both building and people that you always want to invite your friends to.

Imagine

This will be our St Nicholas Church once the re-ordering is completed