

Cossington Church and Community Centre

Building for Cossington's Future

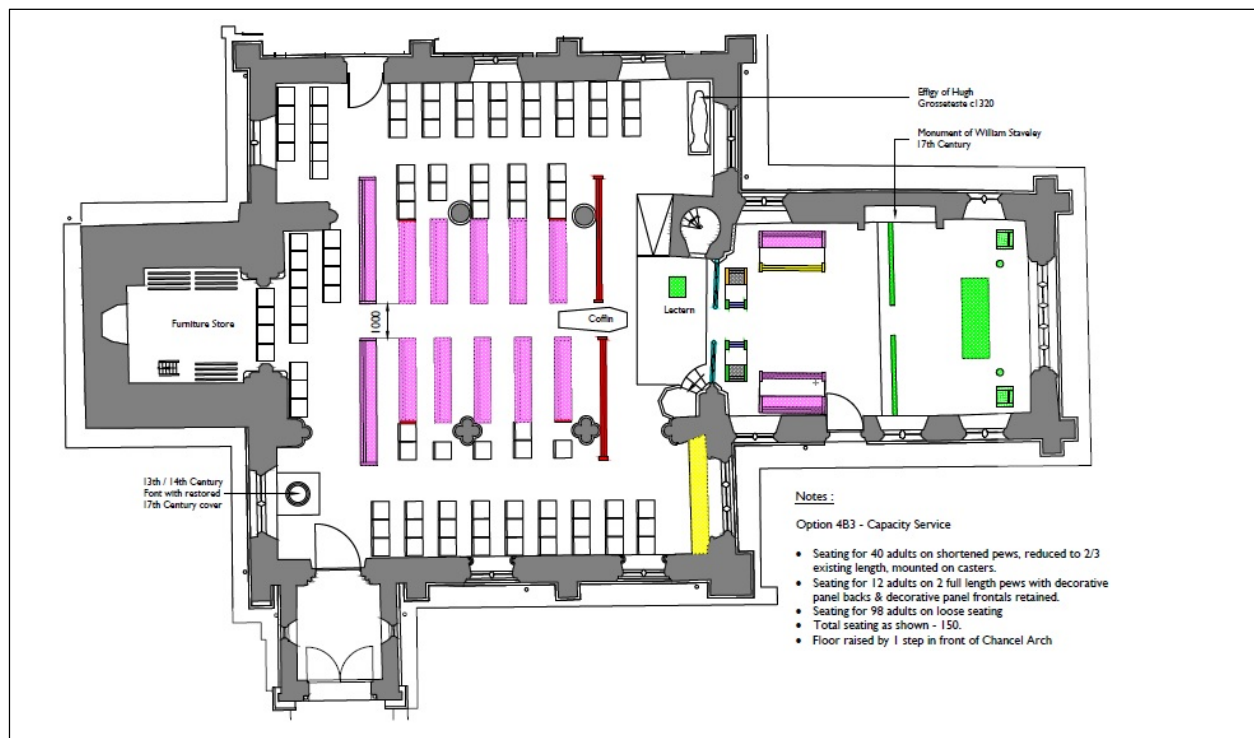
Project Group Update: Spring 2015

We aim to improve the fabric & facilities of All Saints Church in order to:

- Serve the whole community of Cossington as a community centre for all.
- Enable and equip the growing Cossington church family to thrive.

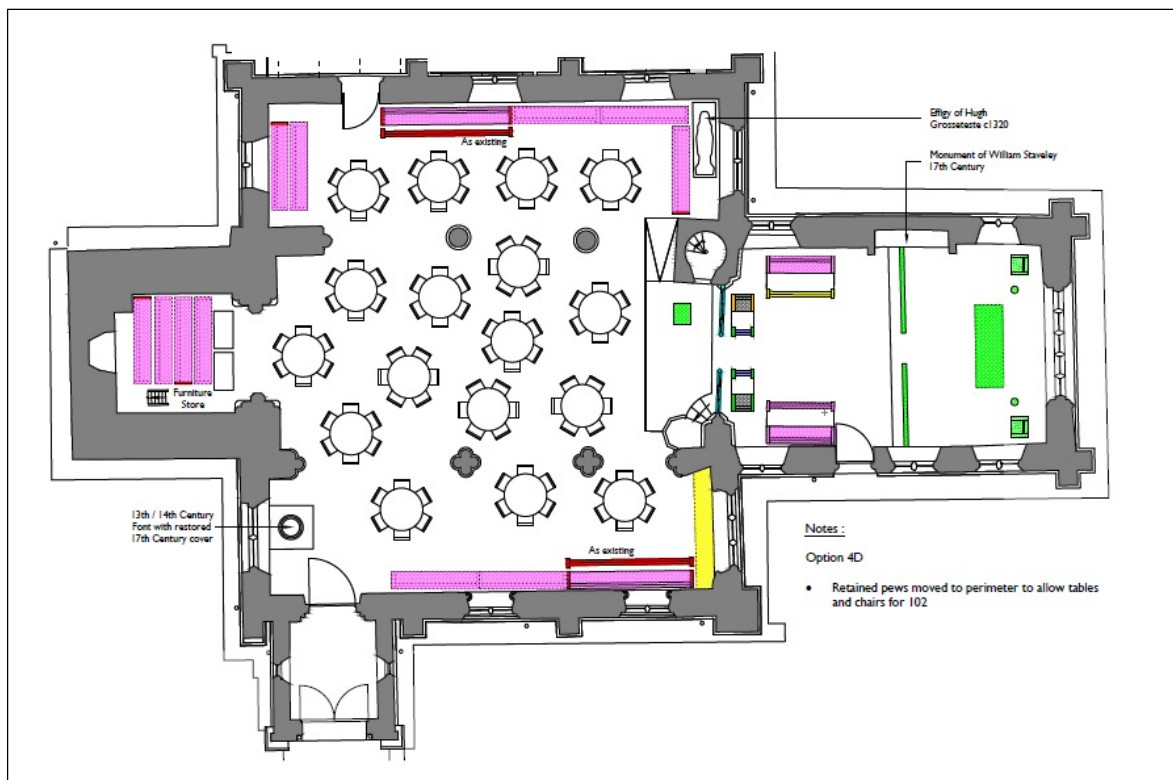
Welcome to this 5th Update on the progress of this village development. It follows on from the piece in the last Cossington Village Society newsletter. Progress continues to be made. We have secured general agreement with the various powers that be regarding the scale, positioning and design of the key extension part of the project, subject to the fine tuning of the detail.

Design Work is now progressing for the repair and internal reordering of the main church building. In March we submitted a major report to the DAC (Diocesan Advisory Committee) outlining our proposals for the internal re-ordering.



This image illustrates one of several possible layouts in the reordered church.

This picture shows how it might look when arranged for a village supper



A Funding Success Story!

We have a significant funding success to report! (hopefully, the first of several to come). An unexpected Heritage Lottery opportunity arose in January to apply for funding being made available to repair roofs of historic Grade I and II* buildings. Our application was accepted by the Department of Culture, Media and Sport, and they have approved £52,000 to re-slate and re-lead the chancel and nave roofs, which are part of our repair plans anyway. This represents a key allocation of money to the Project and is therefore worthy of celebration.

Work will start when various formalities have been completed. A *Faculty* (C of E terminology for Planning Permission) has to be obtained from the Diocese and a tendering process has to be conducted. We are hopeful that works will commence towards the end of the autumn.

Ecology Survey

A survey has also been required, now undertaken, which will inform design and construction scheduling.

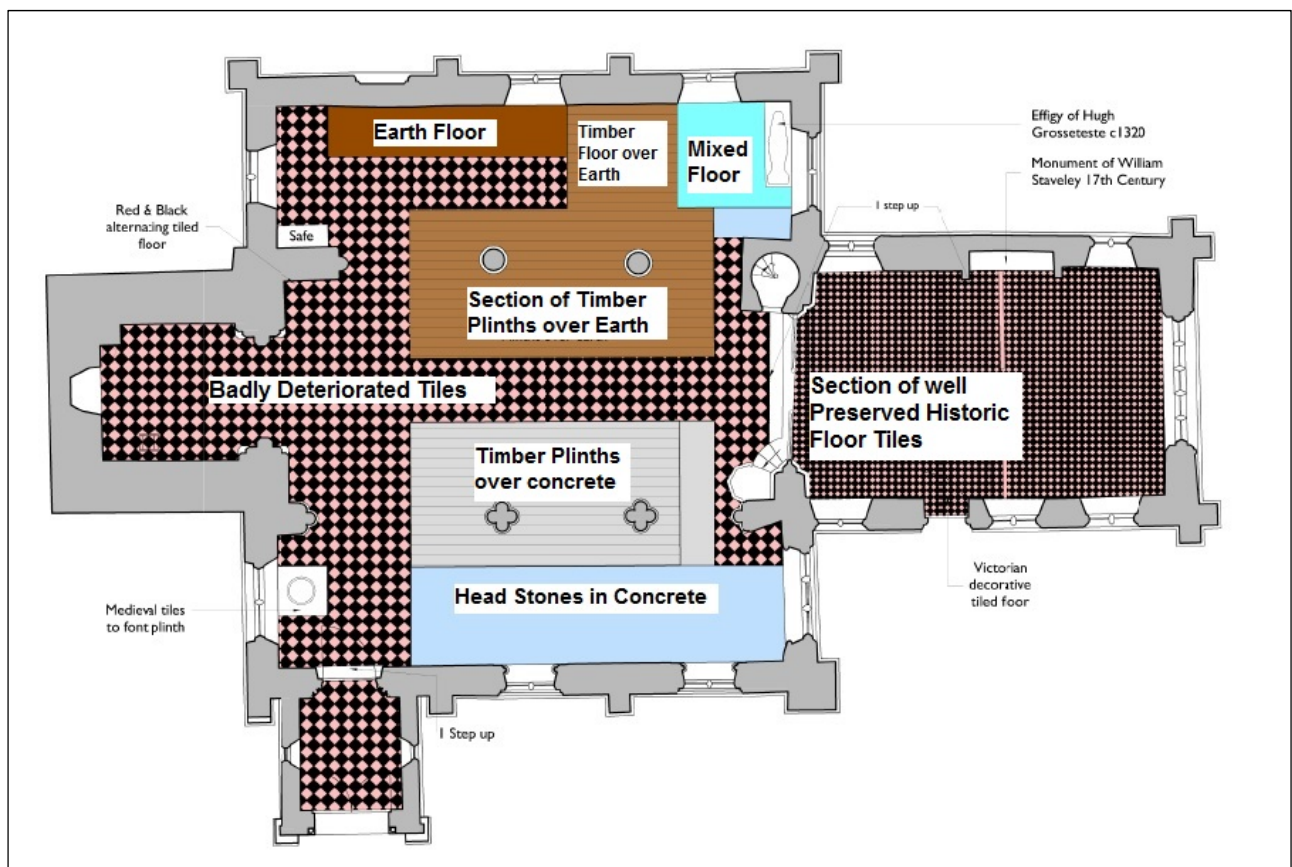
Next Steps

Our Project Group is preparing for a key site visit by the Diocesan Advisory Committee (DAC) in early May as they reflect on our report and options for the internal re-ordering of the existing church building. The DAC is the body which oversees the project on behalf of the Church of England. The site visit will be attended by representatives of the DAC and from various specialist heritage advisors which may include the Church Buildings Council, Historic England (previously English Heritage), Society for Protection of Ancient Buildings, the Victorian Society and conservation officers from Charnwood BC. These parties will advise the DAC on the many different aspects of the development.

A key consideration during the visit will be the proposed options for the internal rearrangement of the Church, including how it can be used as a community centre whilst retaining its integrity as a place of worship.

The above plans are a few examples of how the nave & aisles could be configured in order to meet the identified needs for this space, & whilst there are a number of diverse alternative arrangements, the main aim is flexibility.

This graphic illustrates the deteriorated state of the floor at present.



Flexibility - It is envisaged that there will be 100 comfortable but stackable chairs which can be placed on trolleys and easily moved to store in order to free up the main space of the nave. Clearing it will enable the space to be used for a wide variety of events - dances, table tennis etc -what activities would you like to see in your new community space?

Most of the pews will be retained especially those with historically important, carved 'linen-fold' ends. The length of some pews will be reduced but all will be discretely mounted on castors so they can be easily manoeuvred and relocated within the church. The aim obviously is to retain the character and heritage of the pews whilst making them more flexible to use.

Of course, none of this will be possible with the present floor as it is! The intention is that the new floor will be level and smooth to enable movement of furniture and making it safe for all the activities the village wants.

It is likely to have a stone-effect floor finish, which is the group's preference at present; but this is the sort of decision that is made by the DAC. Our forthcoming site visit will enable us to discuss the various options.

A Heritage Society? It would be of incredible help & assistance (when we are applying for heritage grants) if there happens to be a number of people in the village interested in the history & heritage of Cossington, its famous sons & daughters, its medieval buildings, and stories, whether truth, myth or legend? (Did Polly Peg really exist?) We have a few bottles of wine to get the first meeting off to an enjoyable start!

Your Views? - A key aim of these Project Updates is to promote discussion about the Project within our community. Please, we would welcome any thoughts on the proposals and progress to date. We do not expect them all to be positive. If you have any concerns or wish to clarify any detail please, please do not hesitate to contact us. We want everyone to know what is proposed so that everyone has an informed understanding. This project is for everyone.

Email: Paul Dearson paul@posidrive.co.uk and let him know your views and especially if you would like to be involved with a new village heritage society!