

St Francis of Assisi Restoration Project

The primary objective of the planned work is to improve disabled access to the Church and ensure compliancy with current Health and Safety laws.

The work is scheduled to start on September 19th and be complete apart from the final finishing work before Christmas. The chosen contractor is aware that daily service take place and is sensitive to the need to minimise disruption although some disturbance will be inevitable.

The work is planned to be completed in two sections. Section one is primarily concerned with the entrance area and includes:

- a) The installation of a disabled toilet at the entrance of the Church
- b) Lowering the floor of the Narthex to eliminate the step up on entry and step down into the body of the Church (improving access for disabled persons and funeral corteges)
- c) Closing the area by the railings between the Narthex and the body of the Church. This will prevent noises in the Narthex disturbing devotions in the Church and minimise heat loss as people come into the Church
- d) Raise the level of the paving outside to eliminate the step and the side entrance
- e) Provide larger, disabled accessible confessionals at the rear of the church
- f) Provide ramp access to the sacristy (disability compliance)
- g) Relocate the font and provide a suitable space for the priest's chair (so as not to obstruct the view of the tabernacle and altar)
- h) Improve emergency exit through the rear of the sacristy.

Section two relates to the old sacristy area and concentrates on the need to provide an emergency exit at the back of this area and create a room to house the heating machinery required by fire safety regulations. It is planned to create a small meeting room and second disabled accessible toilet as part of this work.

No final decision as to the timing of section 2 work has yet been made as current resources may be insufficient to cover the total cost. A decision will be made when it becomes clearer to what extent the contingencies built into the estimates for section 1 are required and by how successful fundraising efforts are over the next three months.

This update has been issued by a member of the Finance Committee following the feedback to the committee by the Diocesan Treasurer, parishioners in parish meetings, and various architects/contractors.