

## FINAL UPDATE ON PHASE 1 OF THE ROCK REDEVELOPMENT PROJECT

*A detailed update following the summary in the All Saints news sheet, marking the virtual completion of Phase 1 of the ROCK Project.*

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### BRIEF RECAP

After over a decade of planning, a comprehensive plan was developed to completely refurbish and re-order the interior of All Saints Church, add an extension providing more hospitality facilities (including a large meeting room), and improve the churchyard and car park areas.



In early 2024, recognising that sufficient funds were unlikely to be available to complete the whole project, the PCC agreed that only **Phase 1** (the refurbishment of the church) should go ahead—although some elements of **Phase 2** (the extension) were incorporated into this phase.

In **November 2024**, our contractors, *Ellis*, moved into the building, which was then closed for all services and events for ten months.

By **September 2025**, we were delighted to move back in, and in **October 2025**, we celebrated with a joyful service and lunch, with the **Bishop of Bath & Wells** as our principal guest.

Over the following year, further work continued—addressing minor defects and adding improvements not in the original schedule, made possible by continued giving and careful stewardship by the ROCK Project Board.

In **October 2025**, the final payments were made to contractors and consultants, officially completing **Phase 1** of the ROCK Project.

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### IMPROVEMENTS AND ADDITIONS COMPLETED BY 31 OCTOBER 2025

- Installation of lighting for performances
- Purchase of a moveable TV monitor
- Extensive sound-reduction measures for the heating system
- Carpeting of the stairs to the gallery and the gallery floor
- Painting of the organ pipes
- Installation of new external signboards on the church walls
- Safety rails added to the steps by the south porch entrance
- Pruning of several yew trees
- Purchase of a new keyboard
- Installation of hand dryers in the WCs
- Funding of the church caretaker's salary
- Printing of a book illustrating the ROCK Project
- Purchase of two umbrella stands
- Purchase of slow cookers
- Repairs to cracked roof pinnacles
- Repair of the church clock
- Carpeting of the tower floor and steps



## STILL TO COME

The following improvements will take place using remaining funds in the ROCK Fund:

- Installation of **ground-level lighting** on the path leading down from the car park
- **Purchase of land** beyond the car park, to provide (in time) additional parking space
- Replacement of the **lectern**, maintaining the same design but reducing its height to make it more practical for readers



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## ROCK FINANCIAL POSITION

By the end of 2025, approximately **£2,100,000** will have been spent on the ROCK Project. This figure includes not only all building works and fit-out costs but also the planning and consultancy expenses leading up to the start of work in 2024. It also includes the design (approved by the council) for the future extension (**Phase 2**).

When fully paid off, more than **70%** of the total cost will have been funded by the **generous giving of church members**. The remaining balance has come from grants from trusts and the reclaim of most of the VAT paid on the building works.

To finance the project, we also borrowed **£250,000** from *Methodist Chapel Aid (MCA)* and a further **£35,000** from church members. (So far, £10,000 of those member loans have been converted into gifts.)

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## METHODIST CHAPEL AID LOAN

Although £250,000 was originally borrowed from MCA, we repaid £50,000 at the end of 2024 as it was not required.

As of **October 2025**, the outstanding balance stands at **£180,000**.

In **December 2025**, we hope to repay a further **£80,000**, which includes advance payments for 2026. If this pace continues, the loan could be cleared by the **end of 2026**—meaning repayment in just **2½ years**, instead of the 10 years allowed in the loan agreement.

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## ONGOING GIVING

We remain deeply grateful to all who have given—and continue to give—to the ROCK Fund. At the recent *Hilarious Harvest Giving Sunday*, over **£10,000** was donated specifically to the project.

Although Phase 1 is complete, we still rely on continued giving to clear the outstanding loan and to support future development.

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## AND WHAT ABOUT PHASE 2?

Although the PCC approved the overall plan for Phases 1 and 2, **no timeline has been set** for the implementation of Phase 2.



Before any further building work is considered, we need to:

- Fully repay the Phase 1 loan
- Clarify the future of the Scout Hall
- See how our church grows—numerically, spiritually, and financially

Only after taking a **long, prayerful look** at these factors will we discern whether, and when, it is right to roll up our sleeves for **Phase 2**.