



Trinity Methodist Church 2020: a strategy for growth and development

Trinity Methodist Church was opened on the Brewery Road site in 1965. The Trustees at that time demonstrated great courage and ambition to build a suite of premises that met the needs of a large church and catered for a wide range of activities. The challenge and responsibility of the current Trustees is to show equal courage and ambition to ensure that the building is and will remain fit for purpose as it continues as a centre for Methodist worship and serves the local community.

But what is the purpose of a church? Paul gave an excellent illustration of the purpose of the church to the believers in Corinth. *"The church is God's hands, mouth, and feet in this world—the body of Christ"* (1 Corinthians 12:12-27). We are called to do the things that Jesus Christ would do if He were here physically on the earth.

Having consulted widely, and using the services of a professional architect and surveyor we have developed outline plans to change the use of some areas of the building, refresh and modernise some of the essential services but most importantly to create some new facilities designed to fulfil our calling as God's church to be 'His hands mouth and feet in this world' and thereby meet the needs of Trinity and those of the wider community.

The **key objectives** of this strategy (illustrated on the plans that follow) are as follows:

- *To become an ever more open and welcoming community*
(Plan 1 - East Entrance and Vestry Corridor)
This was also an objective in 1998 when we created the new east entrance which is in the centre of the building. It has become the main entrance to both the Church and the other rooms. When we are in full flow, between 900 and 1000 people pass through the East Entrance each week as the activities of the community groups meeting at Trinity increase. It is vital that the first impression visitors have as they enter the premises is that this is a welcoming and comfortable place to be.
- *To provide additional smaller meeting rooms that could be used for interviews or quiet prayer spaces.*
(Plan 1 - East Entrance and Vestry Corridor)
There is an increasing need to be able to support individuals or groups in our community providing advice, counselling or a quiet space for prayer. We currently offer CAB space for this and we need to facilitate our own church prayer life by offering a permanent space.
- *To create a larger meeting space at the heart of the building*
(Plan 2 - Courtyard and kitchen)
When we rebuilt the kitchen in 1998, we were able to create a meeting space (the Courtyard) which transformed the way in which groups (both from church and the community) could meet together and talk over a relaxed cup of tea or coffee. This space has become a victim of its own success and is so popular it is often not large enough. Outside of the Worship Area, arguably this is the heart of all that we do at Trinity - welcoming, caring for and supporting all those who pass through our doors. Again, it is important that people feel at ease and able to relax there.

- *To provide additional space and facilities to support the essential work with children and young people*
(Plan 3 - Under stage) (Plan 4 – Back stage)
Our work with young people and children always needs to be a priority. The Kabin has limited use and its days are numbered. However the space under the stage is virtually empty and could be developed into a dedicated area for young people. Some innovative suggestions include a youth den and/or recording studio both for our own young people and others in the community. We would need to re-model the back-stage area to improve access to the lower level, and this creates other opportunities in that corridor.

- *To make the worship area more visible to the passing public and use the entrance space ('Narthex') more creatively*
(Plan 5 - Front and Narthex)
The removal of the fixed pews in 2014 and installation of carpet on the floor has made the main worship area a most attractive space which can be very flexible. Since the transformation it has been used for concerts and study groups as well as a variety of worship styles. It could be used for many more types of activity and we want to improve the entrance to it by making it more attractive and visible from the outside. Also Jill and her team have worked wonders in our gardens at the front, a vital witness to all who pass by. By re-designing the Narthex entrance we have the opportunity to continue the interest shown into the Worship Area itself to promote our worship and other activities.

Alongside the more exciting new facilities there are inevitably some objectives that are more mundane to enable the efficient and safe management of the premises. These are:

- *To renew the kitchen facilities*
The current kitchen and fittings have served us well for almost 20 years but parts of it are now looking tired and in need of replacement. Our catering is generally simple and straightforward, heating food produced in homes or arranging buffet items for a communal lunch or supper. Mainly we provide many cups of tea or coffee! So the kitchen does not need to be enlarged, just updated.

- *To renew and extend essential toilet facilities*
Our toilet facilities do not meet current standards or expectations. We can provide better laid out facilities that meet appropriate standards, and ensure that we provide parenting facilities for use by both sexes.

- *To house administrative equipment and plant more efficiently*
Whilst the administrator sits in the East Entrance the photocopier and filing area is at the rear of the building and needs to be moved closer to the administrator's desk. Various electrical and other services equipment can usefully be moved to make better use of space and improve security of expensive and crucial equipment.

We understand that a fundamental issue on people's minds will be the cost involved in delivering such a significant scheme. The proposals have been subject to a preliminary cost assessment by a quantity surveyor so we know approximately what each part of the scheme would cost at today's prices. This leaflet deliberately does not include this information because its purpose is to focus on what we believe to be the key objectives for the future of Trinity's premises and to explain the proposals themselves. Costs, phasing and fund-raising strategies form the next and critical stage in the process.

Premises Working Group

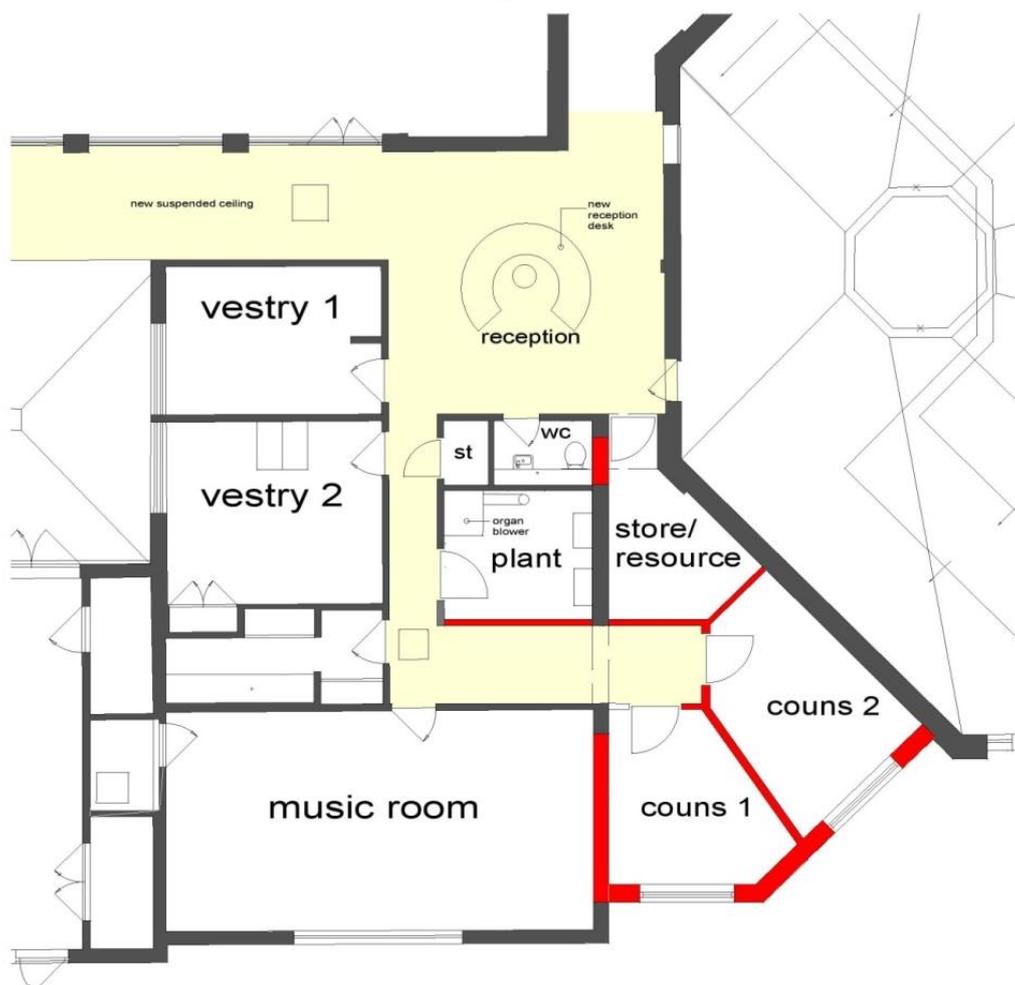
October 2016

Detailed drawings showing how the proposals link back to the objectives are on the next pages as follows:

- 1.** East entrance and vestry corridor
- 2.** Courtyard, kitchen and toilets
- 3.** Below stage space
- 4.** Back stage area
- 5.** Narthex

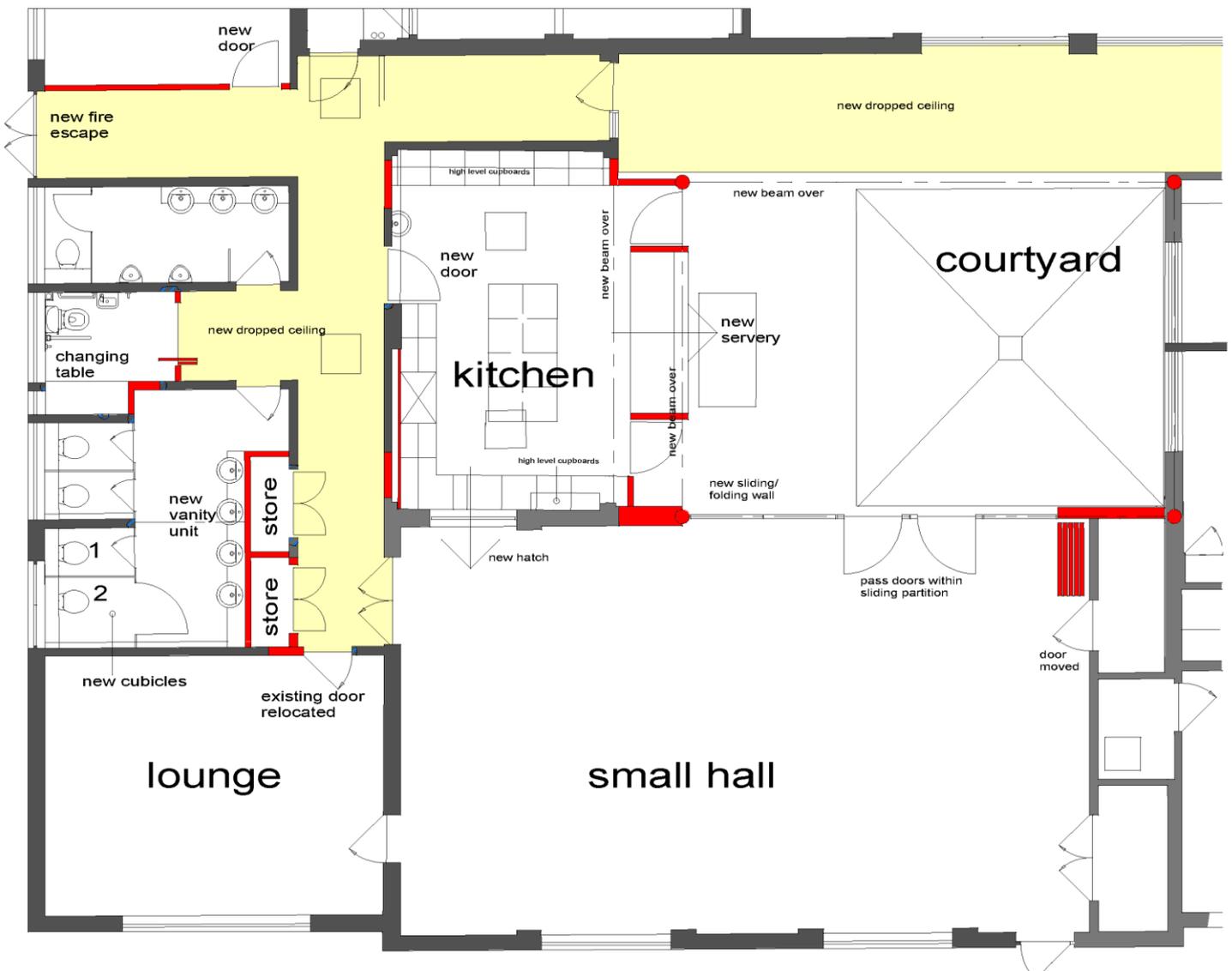
1. East Entrance and Vestry Corridor

- *To become an ever more open and welcoming community*
 - As our support for community groups and activities has increased over the years, this entrance has also become our administrative hub and often gets clogged up, detracting from the warm welcome we want to offer.
 - Part of our plan is to move the administrative function into the centre of the building by removing rooms currently known as the Blower Room and Consumables Store, and creating an open area for the administrator's desk and office equipment.
 - The East Entrance can then be refurbished in a more relaxed style which we believe will be more attractive to visitors and provide an open welcoming space for all.
 - From the new position the administrator will be able to act as a receptionist and be a visible presence along the corridor.
- *To provide additional smaller meeting rooms that could be used for interviews or quiet prayer spaces.*
 - On the west side of the building there is an open area that almost mirrors the East Entrance. This space could easily be enclosed to create 2 additional rooms. They would be well lit and private and could be used as interview or counselling rooms either for ourselves or other community groups.
 - Alternatively they could be used as office or even storage accommodation which would free up other space within the building for more productive use.
- *To house administrative equipment and plant more efficiently*
 - Administrative equipment will be moved into the room currently known as Stewards' Vestry, adjacent to the proposed new site for the administrator's desk.
 - Currently the electrical inlet and distribution centre is in the Blower Room. This also contains the timing controls for our heating systems and the blower that serves the pipe organ. This is poor use of a space at the very heart of the building. The replacement of our ancient boilers has created space in the Boiler Room and so the other mechanical and electrical equipment can be moved into that space.



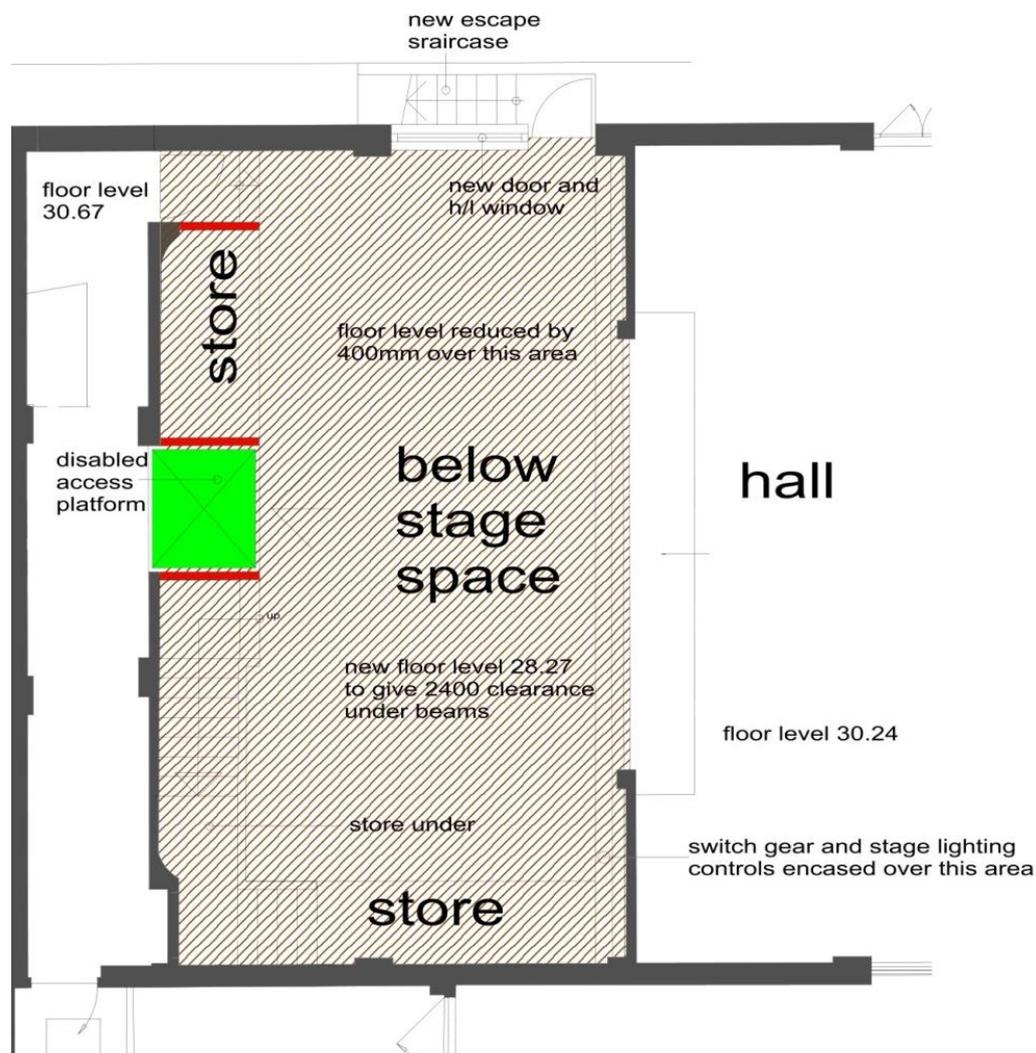
2. Courtyard, kitchen and toilets

- *To create a larger meeting space at the heart of the building*
 - By moving the kitchen into the current Resources Room and Youth Storage room, we can almost double the size of the Courtyard which will enable us to better serve more people at busy times and provide an attractive space for more relaxed meetings or to enjoy refreshments.
 - The plan includes provision of a fold back wall between the Courtyard and Small Hall so that those spaces can either be occupied separately or become one large space when required. This is a very exciting new flexible provision.
- *To renew the kitchen facilities*
 - We do not anticipate upgrading the kitchen function to enable any more significant cooking of hot food for those using the premises, thus its current size and shape are adequate.
 - By moving the office equipment as mentioned above and the youth organisation store elsewhere, we create a sufficiently large space to accommodate the new kitchen.
- *To renew and extend essential toilet facilities*
 - An extra-wide corridor is situated between the existing toilets and the Lounge which is now really wasted space. By blocking off that exit, we will utilise the space by re-planning the existing toilet facilities. Cupboards containing cleaning materials and other consumables, currently provided within the disabled WC, will be relocated within the same block but with access from the corridor.
 - A new more direct emergency route to the rear of the premises will be achieved by creating a corridor within the current Curtis Room. It will slightly shorten that room but actually make it a more convenient shape. Storage space will be provided along the Curtis Room side of this new corridor.



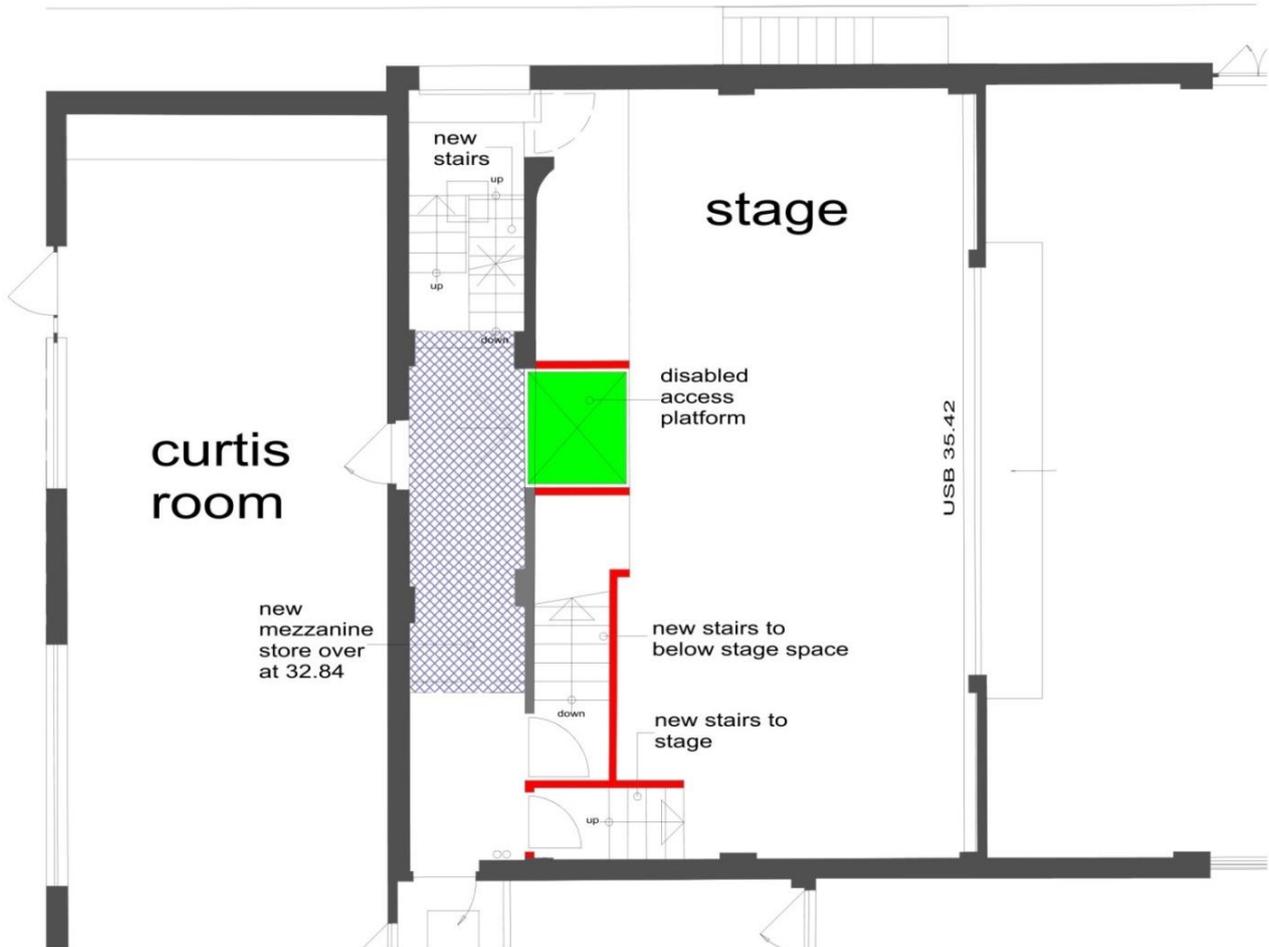
3. Below stage space

- *To provide additional space and facilities to support the essential work with children and young people*
 - Beneath the existing stage, is a very large area which has habitually been used for storing scenery and props for dramatic productions. This has been cleared out now and thus the space is large and empty.
 - Work will be needed regarding insulation, emergency escape and general head height, but when that is done there will be an attractive area which could become a 'youth den' or similar space.
 - Another proposal is to create a recording studio in part of this space. It would require additional insulation but could be equipped relatively cheaply.
 - The stairs down will need to be re-aligned to make access more convenient and this will require alterations to the steps up on to the stage at both ends of the corridor as well.
 - To facilitate access to this new accommodation we will provide a lifting platform at the rear of the stage to help with mobility. It will also be useful in connection with our plans for the back-stage area (see next page).



4. Back stage area

- *To house administrative equipment and plant more efficiently, and improve storage facilities*
 - Storage facilities that have been removed with developments in the corridors and the youth cupboard can be replaced and extended by using the considerable space behind the stage.
 - We propose to insert a mezzanine floor over part of the area where bulky items can be stored.
 - It will be accessed via a new staircase at the far end of the corridor and by utilising the proposed access platform to serve this higher level as well as the below stage space.



5. Narthex and Brewery Road frontage

- *To make the worship area more visible to the passing public and use the entrance space ('Narthex') more creatively.*
 - This entrance is now less used on Sundays but remains important for 'processional' occasions such as weddings and funerals. Our plan involves removing the rather dated canopy at the front of the building and relocating the doors to create a new fully glazed screen allowing direct views from Brewery Road. We would utilise the existing glass screen (with dove engraving) for this purpose.
 - In its place a central double door would be installed into the main worship area, allowing a central route to the front, with the Narthex providing a gathering space as necessary.
 - The new Narthex space would provide an additional opportunity for small group meetings. There are existing toilets and there is the opportunity to create a small 'coffee point' as well.
 - There is scope to link the crèche to a secure external space in the west side garden area via the existing fire door.

