

HERITAGE STATEMENT

Twyford United Reformed Church and Church Halls.

Acts of Worship in the non-conformist tradition have been conducted on this site since 1796. Initially constituted as a Congregational Church, so the practice continued for 176 years, until the Union of the Congregational Church and the Presbyterian Church of England in 1972, emerging thereafter as the United Reformed Church.

Before 1897 the buildings on the site were of a temporary nature, but in that year the present Victorian Chapel was erected at a cost of £995.00. The small hall immediately behind the Church, now known as the Schoolroom, was built at the same time. Whilst greatly admired, the Church itself is not unusual and there are a number of Chapels built in a similar style from around this time.

The main Church Hall was built in 1934 and officially opened in October 1935. It was built in a style sympathetic to the Church but without the same embellishment.

Further extensions were added in 1962, specifically a kitchen behind the Church, a kitchen and store-room off the main hall and also further toilet facilities. These were built in modern brick and contrast with the style previously seen. All these additions were flat roof extensions. These extensions do not possess architectural merit, but are mostly hidden out of sight behind the Church and the main hall.

The main hall was intended to serve both the Church and the local community. In the past it has been the base for 1st Twyford Boys' Brigade for more than 40 years and home to Twyford Singers for more than 30 years. This facility is still used for children's work with up to 60 children attending activities on a regular weekly basis.

It also provides a regular venue for groups such as Christian Aid for fund raising events, for weekly pilates classes, for the Twyford Arts Group, for badminton, for Tai-chi and for children's parties. We have hosted Henley Arts Trail, Cards for Good Causes, art exhibitions, Collectors' fairs and local Councillors' meetings.

At the same time it continues to provide the local Churches with meeting space and we hold a Cafe Church service for all the local churches to meet together on a regular quarterly basis.

In short, there remains a real demand for a Community Hall at the heart of Twyford

Village, to continue serving it's needs.

The hall is currently heated by night storage heaters which were installed in the early 1970's. These heaters are now at the end of their useful life and in the current power crisis, proving increasingly expensive to run.

We now wish to install a low carbon heating system, which leaving aside the capital costs would provide a much more affordable heating system.

A professional assessment of our needs shows that two 5- 10 Kw air to air heat pumps will provide us with an adequate level of background heating.

None of the architecturally interesting parts of the buildings will be affected by these changes.

Our Church is committed to minimising our environmental impact, we have already made the change to low energy lighting throughout and we see the heat pumps as an essential next step on that journey.

Terence Powley
Treasurer, Twyford URC
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