

Background into the Refurbishment

Gathering Area Issues

The existing Gathering Area kitchen is no longer fit for purpose for the increased/changed activities that now occur in the Gathering Area compared with when the kitchen was first installed. The new emphasis on Health and Safety (H&S) places the onus on us to address areas of concern.

- The size of the kitchen is too small even for our weekly Sunday after-church refreshments.
- The half-size fridge is inadequate for our needs.
- The lack of a stove in this space means that all heating needs to be done in the social lounge and then carried down the stairs. This carrying of hot food occurs at funerals, Friday night social events, Youth group sessions and Sunday special morning tea events. We are fortunate that we haven't had a fall as people try to manage the hazard of the stairs. (H&S)
- Poor hygiene for hand washing. Regulations have now changed, and washing hands in a kitchen sink before preparing food is no longer acceptable. A separate basin must be provided. (H&S)
- Lack of sterilizer. The dishwasher takes at least 40 minutes if not longer to clean items. For large groups, people have been known to take the wine glasses home to wash to then bring back, or when the dishwasher is full take a load up to the hall kitchen sterilizer.
- Inadequate bench space. A catering company was seen to have put platters on the kitchen floor laden with food because of a lack of space!
- Inadequate storage. Many items are stored in the hall kitchen, such as plates, and then carried back and forth when they are required in the Gathering Area.

The Kitchen Refurbishment Plan

Addressing the points raised above, plans include:

- Full-size fridge.
- Improved bench space for preparation.
- Stove for heating items meaning that the stair trip hazard when carrying hot food is removed, storage is increased.
- A servery for the distribution of tea and coffee away from the existing trolleys will create more space in the Gathering area during functions.

The increased size of the kitchen will allow more people to enter the space without it being a source of frustration for those 'on duty' not being able to continue with their tasks. A stove in this area will also mean that we are not dictated by the Social Lounge bookings as to whether an event can proceed in the Gathering Area.

The Hall Toilet Issues

The Hall toilets have long been an area of concern for parishioners stretching back several vicars. The men's toilets have a constant pungent odour which no level of cleaning is able to remove. The toilets are outdated, and the unused space which once might have been useful for people changing after badminton games is now only used for unsecured storage. There is no disability facility at this level in our complex for anyone who might have a walker or need a rail to support them as they use the toilet. Our toilets are no longer fit for purpose or hospitable for people using our facilities.

Biblical mandate

The importance of hospitality is illustrated throughout Scripture. We are called to do the same because as we serve others, we serve Christ. The church building is our parish home and whether it's a funeral gathering, or after our regular Sunday worship, hospitality is a key part of these gatherings. We want, and need, facilities that are safe to use, and are welcoming for those who use them.

"Keep on loving each other as brothers and sisters. Don't forget to show hospitality to strangers, for some who have done this have entertained angels without realizing it!" - Hebrews 13:1-2