

CASE NOTES

COMPLETION AT BRYN.

Two years ago we reported on a visit Roger made to Bryn Independent Methodist Church in East Lancashire. As a result of an evening spent together exploring concerns they had, the members were encouraged to move forward with the plans they were considering. They called us recently to say that their building work was now complete, and was already bearing fruit.

This is an example of our role as “**Counsellor and Catalyst**” - where a small investment in our time can be all that is needed. If you would like us to come and talk to your church please get in touch.

NEWS FROM MALMESBURY ABBEY.

Living Stones were introduced to Malmesbury Abbey by the Council for the Care of Churches (CCC) in October 2000, following which we have been involved in progressing an exciting development in the life of this Parish Church who occupy such a magnificent building.

Our first exercise was to establish that the church **needed** additional accommodation. This involved carrying out a Space Audit, looking at several buildings in the town that belonged to the church, and assessing the current and projected needs for space that the church required to meet its mission objectives. Our Space Audit Report proved the need for more accommodation, was submitted to all the statutory bodies for comment, and has subsequently formed the basis of a Brief to the Design Team.

We have also been involved in identifying the key steps that the church needed to take to make progress. This has involved establishing communication with the main “Stakeholders” – Local Authority, English Heritage, DAC etc., organising an Archaeological Investigation of the proposed site, short listing and arranging for Competitive Interviews to select the Architect for the project, and ongoing Project Management.

Graham Ball, our Southern Field Worker now regularly attends and advises the church’s working group for the Malmesbury Abbey Restoration Scheme (MARS) and with the Design Team having produced their initial design concept, the church is about to launch its appeal on the 7th July 2004. The Chairman of the MARS Group writes “ I think I speak for all the MARS team when I say that we all felt that the whole scheme only became a reality when Living Stones came on board”

It’s nice to be appreciated!

We have been working for some time with St. Augustine’s, Highbury, developing a brief and helping with a community audit.

Their vicar, Revd Clive Main, recently said this:

“St Augustine’s is a large Victorian church building, which, 30 years ago, was adapted to incorporate a church hall and facilities. In straitened circumstances it met the needs of the time, but is far from adequate for the present life and mission of the church



“We had - conveniences most inconveniently located... heating and electrics desperately needing renewal... lots of space but much of it underused or unusable... an urgent need to make the building work better for the church and the community, and to generate income by letting our premises in a more entrepreneurial way.

“Our aims were already well formulated, but how to set about what appeared a daunting large-scale redevelopment? Our financial resources were very limited. In our small-to-medium size congregation, we had a range of skills but not a lot of availability. Who could possibly begin to drive this project forward? This is where a contact with Living Stones was so helpful. Graham Ball came on board as a consultant in early 2003. He didn’t drive the project forward, but accompanied us through the early stages of the journey.

“The groundwork for the project was broken up into manageable sections – community survey, space audit, community audit, envisioning of the church, developing a brief, feasibility study. At each stage we found that, once we had grasped what was needed, we could do most of the work ourselves, harnessing different church members’ time and talent as and when available. Graham was there as a reference point, setting us off in the right direction, and able to assess and validate what we had done. As a church that has always had to watch the pennies, we were very appreciative of the Living Stones ‘menu’ which itemised the cost of each activity.

“A year later, we are still working through the feasibility stage of the project. We have a long way to go! But Living Stones has given us the confidence to get this far, and I am grateful for Graham’s very genuine interest and support in our project – and the vision for ‘living’ Christian buildings which underlies the work of Living Stones.”

CHURCH FUNDRAISING HELP

- a new book by Maggie Durran - “THE U.K CHURCH FUNDRAISING HANDBOOK” (Canterbury Press) is both “a practical manual and a directory of sources” Maggie marries faith and finance in an intelligent way, and sets funding within the wider context of the church’s life.

HELLO AND GOODBYE!

We recently welcomed two new Trustees on to the board of Living Stones.:

David Hallatt is the Assistant Bishop of Sheffield, and before that was Suffragan Bishop of Shrewsbury.

Nick Rank is an architect; surveyor to the fabric of two cathedrals, and a partner in a prominent firm of architects specialising in church work.

We look forward to the gifts they bring, and hope to profile them in a future edition.

At the same time we take our grateful leave of two former Trustees :

Revd. Robert Bull and **Jane Kennedy**. We thank them for their support of our work, and we are particularly pleased that Jane, who chaired Living Stones for a number of years, has agreed to join our Council of Reference.

LIKE TO KNOW MORE?

If you would like more information on how Living Stones might be able to help your church we shall be pleased to hear from you. Call 01923 431899, write to our office at Crawley, visit our website, or email us at info@living-stones.org.uk