

# St. Margaret's Parish Centre Horsforth, Leeds

The Church of St. Margaret, Horsforth is a Grade II Listed Building designed by John Loughborough Pearson and constructed of local Yorkshire gritstone with slate roofs. Building commenced in February 1877 and consecration took place on 8th December 1883 although the North and South Porches were not added until 1885 followed by the churchyard boundary wall and gates in 1897. The tower was extended and spire added to complete the Church in 1901.

The Parochial Church Council had contemplated the need for additional accommodation for many years. In September 2002 the leaders of the Junior Church reported to the PCC the practical difficulties they were experiencing as a result of the inadequate facilities at the Church. Concerns were raised that this was undermining the efforts being made to increase the number of younger people and families regularly attending the Church. The Church had an aging congregation and needed new 'blood' to secure its future.

Although the Church is one of the largest indoor spaces in the local community and occasionally used for concerts, the ancillary spaces for changing, storing instrument cases and equipment and providing refreshments was inadequate. The PCC



agreed the Church needed better facilities to promote itself more actively in the community and provide for events that could widen its use during the week.

In December 2002 sketch plans were presented to the PCC proposing an extension on the north side of the Church with a covered link to the north porch; which is used as the principal entrance into the Church. The link would function as the entrance to both Church and extension. Ground levels at the north porch facilitated level access and the prominent elevations of the Church on the south and east side remained unaffected by the scheme, thus maintaining the character and setting of the Church. The Diocesan Advisory Committee visited the Church and expressed their support in principle and



Church, Parochial Church Council and other group meetings; choir practice; music group practice; serving of refreshments after church services and concerts; and changing for visiting dignitaries, clergy, orchestras and choirs attending events in the church. A small committee room would provide a meeting place for the Junior Church groups and other church subgroups. Other accommodation to include the church administration office, a large kitchen and toilets.

The planning application was submitted in January 2007 with the support of the planning officer. However despite addressing early concerns about the connection of the link to the north porch the conservation officers remained averse to the idea and after much deliberation it was agreed that the link should

The Victorian Society, English Heritage and the local planning officers were also consulted. The PCC then appointed a sub-committee to promote the scheme and there followed a period of consultation with Church members.

In October 2004 the PCC appointed a working group, who visited other parishes who had undertaken similar developments to assess the differing solutions and to review their relative success and failings. This working group was keen that the new building should also be used to promote environmental awareness and sustainability and as far as reasonably practical should incorporate UK, if not local sourced materials and have low energy consumption.

The design brief focussed on the need to provide a large meeting room for Junior

be omitted and dealt with as a separate application. Thus planning permission was subsequently determined within eight weeks and the PCC agreed to proceed with obtaining tenders while a new planning application for the link was under consideration. The design was subsequently amended and further detailed drawings produced during the lengthy period of negotiations between the Architect and the conservation officers before the planning officer was comfortable in recommending approval.

With sufficient funding raised for the main building the contract was awarded to Paul Whitehead Builders and the first turf was dug by the Lord Mayor of Leeds in November 2007. Fund raising continued in earnest and before long sufficient money was available >??

PROJECT TEAM

- Client: ???
- Architect: Richard Crooks Partnership
- Main Contractor: Paul Whitehead Masons & Builders
- Quantity Surveyor: MHB Partnership
- Structural Engineer: Furness Partnership
- Window Supplier: Vale Garden Houses Ltd



facilities and the plant room containing the ground source heat pump and controls. A staircase off the corridor leads up to the large first floor space above the smaller rooms. This space is to be sub-divided and fitted out, when further funding is available, to provide storage and a meeting space (possibly for youth groups).

To achieve a low carbon footprint the concrete used in the foundations, ground slab and blockwork incorporates ground granulated blast furnace slag reducing by 50% the Portland cement requirement. Carbon neutral insulation quilt manufactured from recycled glass bottles is used throughout. Internal spaces are provided with natural daylight through sun-tubes and conservation style rooflights to minimise the use of the low energy artificial lighting. Rainwater is collected from the roof and stored in an underground storage tank for flushing the toilets. A ground source heat pump supplies the underfloor heating installation with heat drawn from deep boreholes within the churchyard and heat reclaimed from the mechanical extract ventilation.

The completed Parish Centre is proving to be a great asset to the Church and is already attracting bookings from local groups, the Town Council and the wider community. It has transformed the work of the Junior Church and brought members of the Church closer together as well as giving the Church a higher profile within the township. ■

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Church and the new Parish Centre, is approached through a small courtyard which can be secured to provide a safe area for young children to play and in warm sunny weather a pleasant place to sit for refreshments after a church service. The wrought iron entrance gates were formerly on the north porch. The link leads through the circulation space to the large meeting room which is capable of accommodating about 75 persons seated for meetings. The large windows and high ceiling give a light and spacious interior and a large side door opens out into the courtyard. Smaller mid-week services are now held in this room instead of the Church.

The adjacent kitchen is fully fitted to cater for large functions and has a serving hatch through to the large meeting room.

The internal corridor leads to a smaller meeting room capable of accommodating up to 20 persons; the Church Office; five toilets incorporating disabled and baby-change

to fund the link, the external works and fitting out. The new Parish Centre was officially opened by the Bishop of Ripon and Leeds in September 2008.

The new structure compliments the existing Church building with the main frontage taking its form and scale from the double gabled wall of the adjacent Lady Chapel. The building is not over-dominant and is sympathetic to the style of the Church but with contemporary elements producing a light and spacious interior. Constructed largely of traditional quality materials sourced within the UK the external walls are of local hand dressed gritstone set in traditional lime mortar with window surrounds, plinth coursing, gables and copings modelled on similar features on the Church building. The roof is finished with Burlington slate; Code 8 lead to the concealed 'flat' area and reclaimed ridge tiles. Window frames are bronze with leaded double glazed units and traditional style ironmongery.

The glazed link; which provides an attractive modern entrance to both the



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