



May 2022

*Press Release on behalf of the Trustees of Church House*

### **Church House Westminster to undergo extensive refurbishment**

Completed in 1940, Church House, Westminster is located in the heart of London adjacent to The Houses of Parliament and Westminster Abbey. The multi-purpose building houses the headquarters of much of the central operations of the Church of England, as well as commercial tenants. With an extensive suite of meeting rooms and conference facilities, it has the capacity to accommodate up to 800 people and often hosts high profile conferences and events. It has a floor area of over 220,000 square feet.

The Trustees of the building (the Trust is known as the Corporation of Church House), are delighted by the architects' plans which preserve the notable historic features and ethos of the building as well as meeting the overarching aim of being a "*building of light for the people of the light*". This will be achieved by installing sympathetic fixtures and fittings reflecting both the history of the building and using modern materials and technology.

The trust responsible for the building has the prime objective of providing for the accommodation needs of the national services of the Church of England (including the Church Commissioners, Pension Board and Archbishops' Council). Its commercial activities have provided much needed additional funding for the Church for many years. As more flexible working patterns reduce the need for in-house accommodation, the opportunity for more significant third-party tenancy together with its growing conferencing business will enhance its fund-raising potential.

Listed Building Consent has been granted for work to start on parts of the interior of Church House, and a Planning Applications is ready to be submitted to significantly upgrade the office accommodation at Church House Westminster and to reconfigure its entrances, improving accessibility for all who use the building.

Significant investment is also being made towards carbon neutrality, in line with the Church of England's target of net-zero by 2030. The expectation is also that the refurbishment of the building will be carbon neutral which is very difficult for a grade II listed building to achieve. Focus has been given to more environmentally friendly construction materials, carbon neutral and carbon negative finishing materials and the installation of energy efficient systems.

The plans for the building include revamping the office space within Church House, creating a large entrance with lobby and reception area at the north door making the building to be more visible and welcoming from the street. The ceremonial entrance at Dean's Yard will remain.

The Corporation will soon start on the refurbishment of the south side floors to prepare for the arrival of a new commercial tenants in the second half of 2023; listed building consent was awarded

on the 19<sup>th</sup> May. Colleagues from the Methodist Church will be moving in while their new headquarters building is being worked on in the short term and are due to arrive in August.

The project will take approximately 18 months to complete. It will be paid for from monies set aside for this purpose. The Trustees expect the refurbishment to make a normal commercial investment return for this type of property. Church House looks forward to welcoming new commercial tenants to the building from summer 2023.

The Chair of trustees is pleased to say

*“The plans are great news for the future sustainability of Church House and its tenants; they will make it more visible and welcoming in Westminster as well as making it possible for the Corporation to continue supporting the Church of England financially through the-ongoing giving of grants. Unlike previous refurbishments, we will not be asking anyone to move out of the building, since with the massive co-operation of all concerned, we can work within the building in a way which we hope will cause minimum disruption.*”

*We look forward excitedly to the start of the work and even more to its completion, rejoicing that we will be able to make great strides towards carbon neutrality.”*

**Images of the proposed refurbishment:**

New North Door Entrance with lobby visible



View of the interior of the new North Door Entrance





Potential office space



Potential reception areas for new tenants on their floor



Potential Board Room



Example floor landing



