

## **St James Faculty Application: Church Extension and Seating Project**

### **Supporting Documentation: Chairs**

In response to DAC feedback we have only considered wooden chairs without fabric cushioning, conscious fabric may dirty quickly and require maintenance. This absence of fabric was also felt important in light of the experience of the pandemic and being able to clean chairs if required.

#### **Chair Selection Process** [the text below is from Chair Selection Process.docx]

- To assist in the effective delivery of our mission and create a more flexible space in church, we identified the potential need to remove the pews and replace them with chairs.
- We therefore decided to investigate our options.
- We contacted 3 reputable church furniture suppliers, all of which had been previously used in churches within the diocese.
- We invited each of them to supply samples of their chairs for us to inspect.
- At the same time a small working group visited a number of local churches, that had already removed their pew and replaced them with chairs.
- Our objective was to understand the lessons they had learnt as they progressed their projects.
- The feedback was very positive and the church congregations were unanimously in the view that the exercise was very positive and had improved their church space.
- This gave us great confidence that we were going in the right direction.
- The three suppliers delivered 10 different samples, which we display in church.
- It was important to us, that the selection process was inclusive, so we entered a consultation period and invited the congregation to examine the sample chair and use them in services.
- We then asked the congregation to vote for their favourite.
- This consultation period was carried out over three months to enable as many people as possible to cast their vote.
- The outcome was that 2 individual chair received over 80% of the votes but there was no clear winner between the two. We reflected that changes to the central nave area were likely to be more frequent, and hence we could accommodate a mix of the two with the lighter stackable chair in central aisles and the more traditional chairs in the north and south aisles. The PCC decided to go for a hybrid option and select both chairs for our final proposal.
- This decision, as noted, gave us the added advantage of having one chair which had excellent stacking benefits and a second chair which was a more traditional church design.
- Both Chairs come from the same supplier [ICS Contract Furnishers], therefore we will get a colour match of our choice and the chair backs can be carved with a simple cross of our choice and design. These features will create a branding of all chairs avoiding any clash.

## Chairs Selected by the Community

The chairs selected by the community, Icon 40 and Eton Light, over a period of three months are shown below, noting the last comment of the process detailed above.

Icon 40: stacks 40 high



Eton Light: stacks 12 high



## Seating Capacity

Our seating capacity analysis indicates we can seat 165 adults comfortably in the nave with pews. Namely, 33, 30, 55, and 47 in the North, South, North Inner, and South Inner aisles respectively.

If we assume replacing all pews with chairs and conservatively losing 2 rows in the South aisle, 1 row in the North aisle, and 2 rows in both the the North and south inner aisles on account of the increased depth of the chairs then we may expect around a 12% reduction in seating capacity to 146 adults. This is likely an over estimate, since with the removal of the pews there will likely be a larger seating footprint for chairs.

We anticipate this level of slightly reduced seating will be entirely sufficient for the futures uses of the church, and indeed regular services of divine worship. The only service, currently, which exceeds the projected seating capacity would be for Remembrance Sunday, where we are also not able to accommodate all visitors with pew seating.

## **Chair Costing**

Representative costs for the chairs are included in a separate document entitled 'Supporting Documentation Chairs Projected Costs.pdf'