

APPLICATION FOR A MISSION GRANT FROM THE SHEFFIELD METHODIST DISTRICT.

PROJECT - TOTLEY RISE METHODIST CHURCH - RIVERBANK STABILISATION PHASE 3

Project ID – 51534

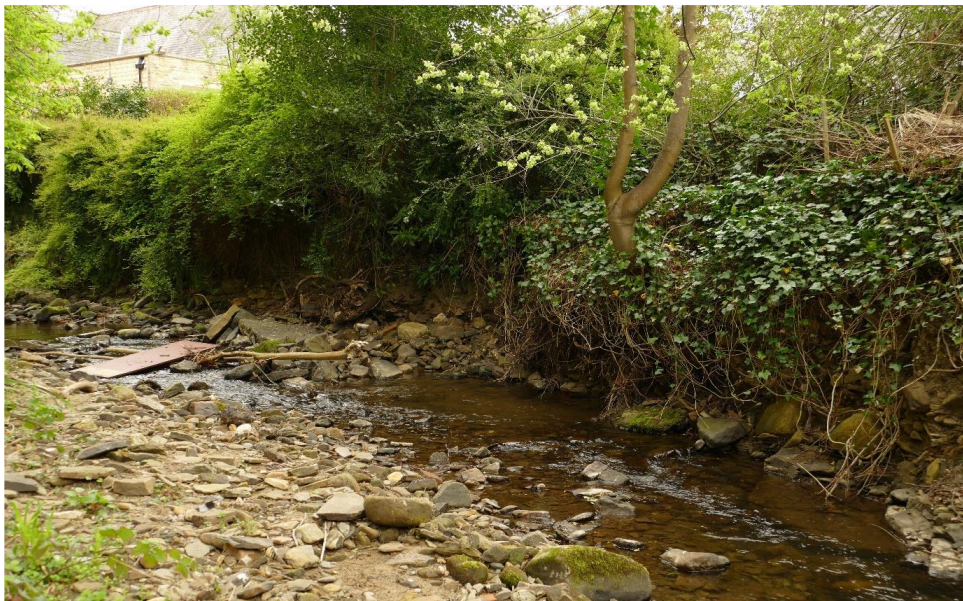
INTRODUCTION –

At Totley Rise we are blessed that our Church Building and TRM Centre stand on a plot of land that is large enough to accommodate a Quiet Garden and Car Park as well as the buildings. The Old Hay Brook which forms a large part of our boundary adds much to the tranquillity of our Church and Garden.

There is, however, a downside in having a water course as the boundary, as it is the nature of water courses that the flow of water will sometimes cause the riverbank to be undermined. At Totley Rise we have previously had to have major engineering projects, in 2013 and 2019, to stabilise the riverbank around the Quiet Garden. Regular inspections have confirmed that the engineering works are performing as expected and preventing any further erosion in those two areas.

The total cost of the previous works was approximately £45000 and was funded by a combination of grants, a legacy and Church funds.

In the past few months, it has been noted that the riverbank adjacent to the Car Park is beginning to show signs of being undermined and already we have had to close off two car park spaces. This picture gives an idea of the area that is causing concern.



Condition of the Riverbank adjacent to the Car Park

We have concluded that the only realistic option is to carry out another major engineering project to stabilise and to protect the riverbank. Although the timescale is unclear, at some point in the future the riverbank will be undermined unless extensive work is carried out. Should the riverbank be significantly undermined the future of the Church on this site will become problematic. The work will involve the installation of a new Gabion Wall 30 metres long plus reinstatement, realignment and repointing of 10 metres of the existing masonry wall.

Once this third stage of work is completed all sections of the riverbank that are at risk of being undermined will have been reinforced and stabilised and we hope no further major work on the riverbank will be required.

Initial estimates suggest the total cost will be around £43000.

The new Gabion Wall will be like the one installed in 2019, as shown in the picture below.



VISION.

Totley Rise Methodist Church aims to be a church in the community and for the community, increasing an awareness of God's presence, celebrating God's love, caring for people, helping people to grow and encouraging people to follow Christ.

Totley Rise Methodist Church seeks to respond to the gospel of God's love in Christ and to live out its discipleship in worship and mission: -

- Worship - TRM exists to increase awareness of God's Presence and to celebrate God's love.
- Learning and Caring - TRM exists to help people to grow and learn as Christians, through mutual support and care.
- Service - TRM exists to be a good neighbour to people in need and to challenge injustice.
- Evangelism - TRM exists to make more followers of Jesus Christ

Improved missional opportunities.

This project is aimed at ensuring that the Church can remain on its existing site and continue to serve God and the Community in the way we do at present and provide facilities for future outreach initiatives.

In recent months a "Churches in S17" group has been started which includes representatives from the three Anglican churches, together with the Catholic church and Dore and Totley Christian Fellowship, Totley Rise is represented by a member of our Leadership Team. Totley Rise Methodist Church has one of the best outdoor spaces together with a car park and is centrally located in S17 consequently we are well placed to host ecumenical community outreach events.

Those who will benefit from Totley Rise remaining.

Our membership is currently 106 and our normal attendance at Sunday Worship is between 50 and 70.

We estimate a footfall of about 500 people. The premises are used by community organisations during the week. In addition to being used for church purposes (including supporting those with special needs and their carers), activities include a weekly Toddler Group, Slimming World, Guides, Brownies, Rainbows, Jazz Club, PROBUS and Dance Group. The church is currently open to all on Tuesday mornings as part of the Warm Spaces initiative.

There is a Quiet Garden next to the river and we have been focusing on enhancing this area to become a place of stillness and reflection enjoyed by many in the community particularly those suffering stress and mental disabilities. The Quiet Garden is open to all during daylight and is used by many local people, including the marginalised and disadvantaged. During lockdown it was a haven for many, who have continued to benefit from its green spaces, (important for mental health), bird song and the sound of running water (!).

A major use of the buildings and grounds is by an after-school club and childcare service, run throughout term time for children aged 4 to 11. They collect children from local schools and look after them until 6:30 p.m. They use part of the car park area for ball games. A car park on site is important for these users and minimises parking issues during pick-up for nearby residential properties. It's also a favourite spot for teaching children to ride their bikes.

Our key activities are: -

- Providing a weekly service at 10.30am on Sundays, this service is normally live streamed on Facebook for those unable to attend. It is also recorded and put on YouTube.
- Youth Church
- Toddler Praise at 9am on Sunday.
- Focus Church – a service for those with a learning disability and their carers held on the afternoon of the second Sunday of each month.
- Fellowship Groups
- Coffee morning and warm space on Tuesday mornings
- A Listening Project to be held in conjunction with the Tuesday coffee morning.
- Knit and natter on Tuesdays after the coffee morning.
- Pushchair Club (Toddler Group) for parents/carers, Thursday a.m.
- Providing a building for various community organisations including the after-school club mentioned above, and popular Slimming World meetings.

Many of the activities which produce fruit in the mission of the church take place in the building and grounds of the property such as: providing worship that enables people of all ages and abilities to have their lives changed through encountering the presence of God; providing opportunity, through the various community activities the church runs, for people to build relationships that are supportive and faith enhancing; increasing the wellbeing of the local community through the community activities the church runs and open provision of the green space; providing opportunity for user groups of the premises to meet the needs of the local community. The fruitfulness of these mission activities is dependent on having stable and safe grounds and buildings available.

Other challenges

Setting up a Listening Project is a current venture under development to help alleviate loneliness locally. We feel it is important to maintain the river in the most sympathetic and sensitive way possible to preserve the garden and car park area for future community use and work with the Environment Agency to help ensure sympathy with nature.

MAKING OUR PROPERTY FIT FOR MISSION

We believe our building is adequate for our current mission but there are major concerns about the long-term viability of the plot of land on which the Church, Community building, car park and quiet garden stand unless we carry out work to stabilise the riverbank.

At some stage in the future the Church community centre will need upgrading including a new heating system. In preparation, the Church has established a group to plan for a lower carbon footprint.

Proposed work.

We are planning to stabilise the riverbank to prevent undermining by the river.

Improving Eco Church status, or reducing carbon footprint

The changes resulting from this project will not directly impact on our carbon footprint. As mentioned earlier we are setting up a working group to look at what we can do reduce our carbon footprint which may allow us to become an Eco Church.

Other property needs.

This is a standalone project.

Although we would wish to improve our property by linking the two buildings together and improving our toilet and catering facilities this is not something that we can contemplate at this time. Consequently, it is possible that Topley Rise could, in years to come and when finances allow, consider a project to improve our property.

Permissions

Work to obtain permission from the Environment Agency is on-going and is making good progress. An application to obtain local authority planning permission has been submitted.

Once we can resolve any points raised by the Environment Agency there is no reason to expect any problems in obtaining permission as the work is similar to the two previous phases.

JOURNEY

The riverbank has shown signs of being undermined in various areas. Work on the two previous phases indicate that our current proposal is the only viable way forward.

As stabilisation of the riverbank is not aimed at doing anything new on this site we have not sought views from outside users of the buildings or the wider community. We are however seeking to make sure the users and the community are aware of the required work. We are also seeking comments from our users to be used in our applications to other grant making bodies.

In the early weeks of 2023, we were unable to meet in Church due to a failure of our boiler and we were having to hold services in our community building the TRM Centre. It has been very pleasing to see that this has not had an impact on attendance at Sunday Morning worship and there are some signs that we are beginning to see some people for the first time since pre covid.

TEAM

The Resources Committee, who are a sub-committee of the Topley Rise Church Council, are dealing with the day-to-day aspects of the project. A member of the Resources Committee is a retired Civil Engineer with particular experience of riverbank projects. Other team members have disciplines in engineering, quantity surveying, accountancy, mathematics, science and information management.

The project was approved by the Topley Rise Church Council on 19th October 2022. It was approved in principle by the Sheffield Circuit Meeting on 21st November 2022. It should get final approval at the Sheffield Circuit Meeting on 28th March 2023.

The Church congregation continues to pray for a successful outcome.

RISKS AND RESPONSES

This project will eliminate the risk of the riverbank being undermined with the consequential risk to the Church building and grounds.

We have been required to carry out a risk assessment by the Environment Agency, but those risks relate to events within the water course. In addition, the contractor will be required to demonstrate that they have carried out appropriate risk assessments and have appropriate mitigations in place for their activities.

The risks, related to the Church, that have been identified are those that may arise as a consequence of not carrying out the project.

FINANCES

COST – The total cost is estimated at £44073. Made up as follows :-

Contractor's Estimated Budget Price		£29250
Supplying and laying geotextile membrane		£ 1600
	TOTAL	£30850
Contingency	+15%	£35477
VAT	+20%	£42573
EA Agency & Sheffield City Fees		£ 1500
	TOTAL	£44073

We held a Gift Day on Saturday 4th March. We set a target of £15000, i.e. a third of the estimated cost, and we have been overwhelmed by the response which has raised over £30000.

We request that the Sheffield Methodist District makes a grant of £3000 towards the cost of the project.

Other grant awarding bodies being approached.

Organisation	Amount requested	Outcome	
National Lottery	£8000	Awaited	
Benefact / Allchurches Trust	£3500	Awaited	
Sheffield Circuit Model Trust Fund	£3000	£0	The circuit are not supporting us financially
Sheffield District Mission Grant	£3000	Awaited	
TMCP	£3000	Awaited	
J G Graves Charitable trust	£3000	Awaited	
Sheffield Town Trust	£3000	Awaited	
Laing Family Trust	£7000	Awaited	

If the District is not able to provide a grant and/or the above grant awarding bodies do not grant sufficient funds we will approach other bodies, including South Yorkshire Community Foundation, Garfield Weston Foundation, Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust, and Joseph Rank Trust.

A map showing the position of the proposed work is in an appendix.

A copy of our Annual Accounts is attached.

Bank Account details – Totley Rise Methodist Church General Fund – 40-41-46 / 30016842

Appendix – Totley Rise Methodist Church - Riverbank Stabilisation Phase 3

Totley Rise Methodist Church has the Old Hay Brook on two sides of the property. There have already been two phases of Riverbank Stabilisation carried using Gabions. A third section of the Riverbank adjacent to the Car Park now needs extensive work to allow it to be stabilised. The location of the work is shown on the plan below. The two previous phases of stabilisation are upstream from the new work.

There are already signs of movement in the Car Park and two spaces have had to be closed off. Phase 3 involves installation of a new Gabion Wall 18 metres long with a total area of 37.5 m², plus reinstatement, realignment and repointing of existing masonry wall.

