



StMARY*with*StALBAN



Artist Brief for New Glass Artwork
St Mary with St Alban Church, Teddington
October 2021

1. Introduction

This brief represents an opportunity to contribute in a significant way to an exciting new extension project at the Grade 2* listed church of St Mary with St Alban, Teddington, West London. We are seeking an art practitioner to design a new artwork for an extension on the north side of the church. This extension will provide much-needed facilities for our community and the artwork will comprise a new glass window, visible from inside the new extension and forming a key feature facing the churchyard. [see appendix A for locations within the new building].

2. About St Mary with St Alban

The Grade 2* listed parish church of St. Mary with St. Alban is situated close to the River Thames in a conservation area known as Teddington Lock, in the London Borough of Richmond Upon Thames. The church is the oldest place of worship in Teddington, the first written reference to it being in 1217. The building has been added to over the centuries and now you can see key architectural styles within it, such as Tudor, Palladian, Georgian Gothic and High Victorian. There are also 40 inscriptions and monuments from the 16th century onwards, dedicated to important historical figures, as well as a range of historic stained glass [see appendix B for images and description]. The church also has an important and charming setting, surrounded by burials and in a mature 'wilderness'-style churchyard which offers respite from the bustle of west London. [see Appendix C for location and images of church in its setting].

Over the past 35 years the congregation of St. Mary with St. Alban and its community involvement has grown steadily, one single example being the 1,400 people who crossed our threshold on Christmas Eve in 2018 for our services. As the congregation has grown, so has our ambition and we have been running (pre-Covid) an extremely broad range of activities for our community, from 9am services for people with young children, to homeless night shelters, to bereavement sessions to courses on art and religion. In a typical week (pre-Covid) around 360 people attend the church for weekend and weekday services, events and concerts, numbering around 18,700 per year. In addition, during around 40 weeks of a normal year, there are approximately 30 bookings of the Parish Hall and there are also around 20-25 other activities which take place annually, such as carol concerts and other music events, school visits, meetings and flower festivals.

Our values: We aspire to be an open and welcoming church, serving our local community, fostering faith and friendship, bringing people of all ages together for the glory of God. These are the church values that we seek to represent in all that we do, including the extension project.

3. The 'Building Anew' Project

The current facilities on the church site are not fit for the 21st century. Added to this, the expansion and success of the church over the past decade means that pressures on the existing site have become even more acute and we can no longer meet the Church's ambition, nor the demand from its attendees. There are currently no toilets at the church and only one old and poorly-situated sink and there is no space for meetings, group work or contemplation adjacent to the historic church building. Although the nearby St Mary's Parish hall has good facilities, it is situated across a busy road and it is usually fully-booked so we cannot expand our activities any further within our existing footprint. Accessing toilets and other facilities in the Parish Hall from the church is particularly difficult and dangerous for children and elderly members of the congregation and community.

The new extension will provide a new space for community engagement, toilet and catering facilities adjacent to the existing historic fabric, which is not only convenient, but it means that much of our activities can take place next to the contemplative space of the religious building so that they have a

greater poignancy and connection with its purpose and heritage. We want to use the spaces to deliver new activities for our community so that they can learn more about this incredible building and enjoy themselves within it. Examples of activities include school visits supporting the curriculum in multiple areas (Christianity, local heritage, churchyard biodiversity, art and design of church iconography, important local personalities through time); a larger range of public talks on faith, history, heritage, science, art and mental health; conductor-led community singing workshops to enhance well-being; group carer support sessions; grief support; memory cafes; art workshops inspired by the church and its setting.

At the time of writing the project has been reviewed during a pre-planning process with the Diocese, Historic England and the London Borough of Richmond Upon Thames (LBRUT), and we are aiming to submit a full planning application before the end of this year.

4. The Brief

Please see appendix for location of the artwork, which should be examined while reading the below.

We are seeking an artist to design a glass installation at the east end of the new extension, in the external wall facing the main churchyard, forming a new window which will catch the light of the morning sun. This could be of stained glass or something which creates a similar effect. This will be in-built into the new building.

While we are not being specific on whether the works should be figurative or abstract or on any particular theme, we would like it to meet the following brief:

- To have a Resurrection theme, with colour, light and signifying new life.
- To provide a form of contemplation from wherever visible and be mindful of the church as a sacred space.
- To reflect the other stained glass artworks already present in the church, in the sense that they do not need to be a pastiche of those works, but the new works should be mindful of the historic glass and interiors so that there is a 'flow' from the old to the new.
- To reflect the welcome that we hope people will feel when they encounter the new building.
- N.B. It is likely that there will be a large, historic crucifix mounted in the link between the old and the new church buildings – representing Good Friday as part of the narrative towards the Resurrection theme within the new artwork.

It is highly likely that the selected artist will need to engage our local community during the process of creating and installing the artworks. We envisage that the artist would, of course, work closely with us at design stage, oversee production and then remain involved with the project during installation and construction, once planning permission has been granted.

Please note, at selection stage we will not need all the answers to the above brief and we will not be expecting detailed designs. This is to give an overview of what will eventually be required.

An indicative budget for design and production is £10,000. *The creation and installation of the work is subject to planning permission and subsequent fundraising.*

5. Timetable

- Call for initial responses to the brief: w.c. 18th October 2021
- Deadline for initial responses: Midnight, Sunday 14th November 2021
- Interviews and Selection: anticipated to be week commencing 6th December 2021
- Planning Application submission: December 2021
- Initial design development: January – March 2022 (alongside the planning process)
- Fundraising and production will take place after planning permission is anticipated to have been granted in 2022
- Estimated date for start of on-site preparatory work and construction: 2023

6. Application Process

The application process will be in two stages, designed not to be too onerous at the initial stage.

Stage 1 – Deadline Sunday 14th November 2021, midnight: We are asking art practitioners to express an interest in the project by submitting a CV, two examples of relevant previous work and a covering letter of not more than two pages by this date. The covering letter should include a short statement on why the submitted examples are felt to be relevant to this project.

We will then select a small number of artists (maximum 4) to progress to interview. Selection criteria will be based at this stage on the following evidence:

- relevant art practice to a high standard.
- relevant experience within churches or other historic buildings.
- relevant community engagement projects alongside their art practice.

Stage 2 – November/December 2021: Those selected for interview will be asked to work up initial ideas in response to the brief to bring with them to interview. This does not need to be detailed design work, but should give us enough of an impression as to:

- How they would approach the brief.
- The materials they would be likely to use and how the work would be made (i.e. whether by the artist or with a specialist contractor).
- How the artwork would connect conceptually to the old and new buildings.
- The proposed size and shape of the work so that we can understand broadly how they will 'sit' within the building.
- An initial concept.
- An idea of cost breakdown and split between: design fees, production and any ongoing fees relating to community engagement and supervision of installation.

Artists invited to interview (of which there will be a maximum of 4 artists) will receive an honorarium of £250 for this work. They are also welcome to visit the site and talk to one of the project team members at a social distance or on the phone to understand more about the project.

It is anticipated that a final selection will be based on this stage.

Once selected, we would like to work with the chosen artist to help us with our communications with the planning officers about the proposed artwork following submission of our planning application. We anticipate that there will be questions from the planners about the artistic scheme

in their analysis of whether to grant the extension their permission. Once planning permission is granted we will fundraise for the commission. Final installation and construction is anticipated to be in 2023.

7. More information and how to apply

If you have any questions about this project please contact: Steven Randall at future@stmarywithstalban.org

To submit an application please send a CV, including references, two examples of previous work and a covering letter of not more than two pages (including why the submitted examples are relevant to this project) to:

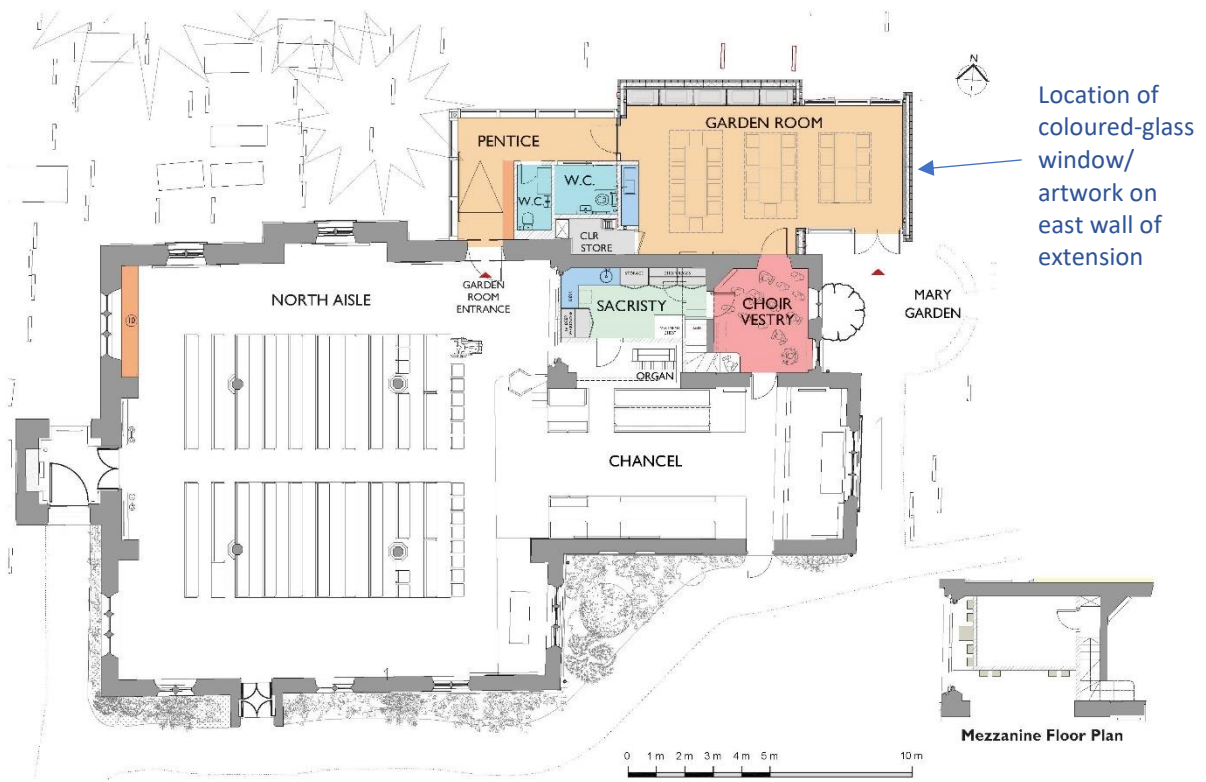
future@stmarywithstalban.org

or:

Parish Administrator
St Mary with St Alban Parish Office
St Mary's Parish Hall
Langham Road
Teddington
TW11 9HF

Appendices

A. Location of proposed artwork



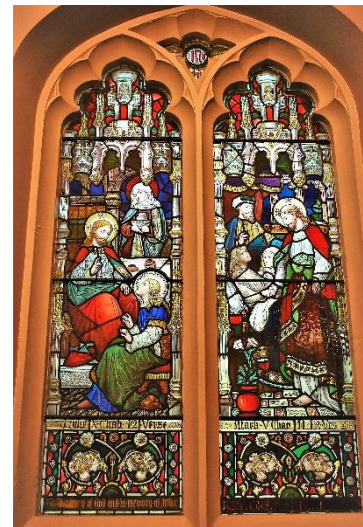
B. Details and images of existing stained glass

The church has five stained glass windows. Three are of the late nineteenth century: in the south aisle is the Fuller memorial window depicting St Mary and St Joseph of c. 1880 and the 'Three Marys' window of 1880 at the west end. Both of these were made by James Powell & Sons, one of the major London-based firms of stained glass suppliers and manufactures. They made glass for Morris & Co, among others, and executed windows for several leading art-and-crafts designers.



The north aisle has a window of 1877 or later depicting Martha and Mary, which was partially restored in 1976; the original designer and maker are unknown (nb. This window is to be moved as part of the extension project in order to allow an entrance to the new building from the main body of the church).

The two east end windows, designed by A E Buss, were installed in 1960, replacing earlier, war-damaged windows. The stained glass artist Arthur Edward Buss (1905–99) trained at Camberwell School of Art and worked in the studio of the Arts and Crafts stained glass designer William Aikman (1868–1959) before setting up on his own in 1937. After the war he helped to establish the studio of Goddard & Gibbs in Hackney (the firm, founded as Walter Gibbs & Sons 1868, is one of the leading makers of ecclesiastical stained glass and is now based in Corsham in Wiltshire).



C. Church location and setting

