

Northampton Methodist Church
Park Grove Open Church Meeting
Sunday 4th October 2026

The purpose of the meeting is to:

- Hear a presentation from Adrian Ringrose, Architect, on amended concept plans for the redevelopment project
- Vote on new name for this worshipping community; to be submitted to the Church Council for approval

Rev'd David opened the meeting with prayer and summarised the Redevelopment Project Group and what they were tasked to do.

The Park Grove Redevelopment Project Group is established to oversee the strategic planning, design, and implementation of the redevelopment/refurbishment of the Park Grove Methodist Church premises and to make recommendations to the Church Council.

The Group is made up of:	David Speirs – Chair	Scott Deakin – secretary
	Mike Johnson	David Farrar
	Steve Richardson	Hellen Okello
	Sarah Dempsey	Laura Ferris
	Alan Harland	

Adrian Ringrose

Adrian introduced himself. He is a conservation architect with many churches and also works with the Diocese of Peterborough. He went through the proposed plans and explained that there are three phases to the proposal:

Phase One = green outline **Phase Two** = yellow outline **Phase Three** = blue outline

See plans on separate document or on the church website [Plans - Park Avenue Methodist Church](#)

Phase one – green area This involves the main hall and storage areas, the youth room, Jubilee Room and kitchen. The proposal is for this area to be completed first.

Whilst Phase two (yellow area) is being modified the completed Phase one area be used for worship.

It is proposed that:

- the wall between the main hall and the Jubilee Room be removed, and acoustic screens divide the spaces
- the lighting at front of hall is removed and replaced with new LED lighting as well as more general and specific lighting
- an existing window currently hidden, be reinstated
- the floor sanded back and varnished, and redecorate everywhere, this will link visually with the Jubilee Room redecoration
- Improve the entire kitchen, stainless steel etc
- WC and accessible loos, redone
- Remodel/rearrange the storage area
- New audio/visual system set up

There is also an energy audit, to be carried out soon, and consideration will be given to use of an air source heat pump, for a more economic system.

Phase two – yellow area This involves the church, the office/vestry, the forum and office (currently rented out). Consideration is to be made with regards to:

- removing the pews so that the floor in the church can be levelled throughout. The new flooring would be timber
- The new space created underneath the new flooring would house underfloor heating. This is a more economical way of heating a large space

(Because the pews are all curved it would be very difficult to reuse them).

- The plans show the suggested creche area – for families and young children seating, with a screen which can be used or folded back to incorporate the space into the worship area.
- The current glazed window at the pavement end could also be used as a new entrance, this is to be considered.

Storage is needed for furniture for café church and it is proposed that the current office/vestry is reduced in size to accommodate a storage area.

There would be a full redecoration scheme in the church.

Air source heat pumps proposed in the church.

Cost options are to be looked at, re: current vs new system.

The gallery space is not big enough for an accessible lift. It is proposed that three tiers of pews in it be removed, creating a level platform for small gatherings/meetings. This is just an idea at the moment. Pews at the front of the gallery will be kept, there is consideration for the sound system controls possibly being located here.

The external approach to the church entrance has been considered, there may be an opportunity to create additional improved approaches to the church, perhaps up steps at the very front.

Church seating layout suggestions (refer to images)

The main church seating area was shown in two different layouts. 243 seats in the left suggestion.

Right side of plan shown had more seats added, 312 seats (without the café church seating in it).

Phase three – blue area This involves the ladies and gents WC at the back of the property, the Minor Hall, New Hall and the current Prayer Room as well as the corridor connecting these rooms.

The current layout of these rooms is deemed good and it is proposed that they have upgraded flooring, redecoration and possible new ceilings throughout.

The suggestion of the works being undertaken in three phases is to ensure that the building remains open whilst each phase is underway. Green space updated first, the yellow space then the last, blue phase. The timing/what will happen will depend on funding.

All these plans and suggestions remain a proposal at this point.

Examples of chairs will be bought in so that they can be considered as replacements to the pews.

A video 'walk through' will be created to show what it will look like.

Clarifying questions

Is secondary glazing on external windows in the church being considered (due to the current draft)?

An energy audit will bring this up, which will ensure the building is energy efficient.

What is happening with the organ space?

The area will be simplified, seating removed, keep panelling, there will still be a focal point.

Will there be a dedicated prayer space (as it is currently noisy in the church for prayer after worship)?

We do not want to be too prescriptive of areas, and there could be a private space in the church.

Also the current youth room could be used, plus maybe the seating area. This still needs consultation.

Start date still to be confirmed, but is there any idea of a time scale for each phase?

Phase one (green) – may be four months

Phase two (Yellow) – five months minimum

Phase three (blue) – six weeks or so

The timing of the redevelopment will be planned at the time of least disruption to the building users.

Will we have use of the kitchen whilst the green phase is being done?

This will need to be discussed – the kitchen could perhaps be planned at the very end of the phase, so maybe out of commission for three weeks rather than months.

When does this all start? Costs continue to increase as time deliberating goes on. Could we have a deadline for the start?

An energy audit is still needed, 3D modelling, general consensus, costings and contractors to be sought.

The agreed plan will need to be costed. Tenders will be needed from maybe 5 contractors, case of choosing which one. Perhaps we can do this within 6 months. Funding is the difficult part.

We have some of the funding but still waiting for more.

Revd David suggested possibly looking at the end of this connexional year, but it is not in his control.

Permissions need to be sought from the managing trustees and the Connexion and all the necessary processes needed to be followed

Some people are concerned about the pews as they are currently a support for those who need it, would the new seating adequately support those who need it?

Chairs will need to provide the same level of support – we will need to see some suggestions to decide. Upholstered chairs are robust, they can be linked together which gives more support.

Revd David thanked Adrian for his time.

**Please send comments to: office@parkavenue.org.uk,
or place them in an envelope labelled 'redevelopment comment' and leave in the office/vestry
By Sunday 25th October.**

Worshipping Community Name Discussion

Rev'd David explained that there had only been 49 votes received, these were:

Park Avenue Methodist Church	22
Abington Church (or similar)	6
Kingsley Grove / Kingsley Park Grove	6
Park Grove Community	4
Park Avenue Trinity	4
Park Avenue Cornerstone	2
NMC	1
The Spire	1
Churches Together	1
Spoilt / Defaced	2
Total votes cast	49

The Leadership Team thought that 'Park Grove' should not be used, and neither should it be Park Avenue. Suggestions from the leadership team are: 'Trinity' or 'Cornerstone'

Trinity – three congregations worshipping together

Cornerstone – we are on the corner of the roads, plus theological connection

There was general discussion about the name to include the road it is located on so that anyone living in Northampton would know where it is.

Trinity helps reflect we are three churches together.

We have to move forward, and think about the future, the youth. Cornerstone represents so many.

This is for the church building as well as the worshipping community.

Rev'd David clarified that the three communities coming together was not a merger into Park Avenue, it was clear that this would be a new worshipping community from the outset.

The meeting voted by a show of hands for an indicative vote:

Trinity = 45 (approx.) Cornerstone = 2

'Trinity Park Avenue' – seems to make sense Further work will take place on this, particularly on branding and presentation.

The meeting closed in prayer.