

Roof Project – August 2026

It has been a while since I reported on the roof various things have been happening and now I have some news and it is good.

Firstly the planning permission went through with no issues. Secondly the inspection pre-construction survey of the roof was very worthwhile. The good news is that the condition of the roof was better than they had expected. The structural engineer was able to more clearly see the construction of the roof and he is convinced now we do not need to put in extra strengthening for the solar panels. Which is good news as this will save us quite a lot of money.

Not so good news was our conversation with the Archdeacon about a possible loan from the Church of England until we have sold the bungalow we were told that there was no money to loan us. I contacted and spoke to the Net Zero Programme Manager for the diocese to see if he knew of any loans that could be available as we are doing a lot to make our church more eco-friendly. He suggested a loan from the Methodist Church. Both Judith Spencer-Gregson and I spoke to a very nice chap and it certainly looked very feasible. We had a problem with getting a normal “commercial loan” but this did not worry the Methodist Church. All they wanted was a letter from our solicitor saying we would pay them back when we sold the bungalow, no complex legal agreements, how sensible! We were getting ready to set this up and bingo we got an offer on the bungalow. After a quick chat/email around the PCC it was agreed to accept the offer. But we had to have another professional valuation to satisfy the charities commission the offer was fair. This took time and we had to monitor things while we were on a cruise. Finally all was agreed.

The people making the offer are first time buyers so no chains to confuse things and our solicitor is familiar with the procedures so we are hopeful that things will go through reasonable quickly and smoothly, accepting we are going into the summer holiday period.

I have kept our architects (MEB) and the contractors (BMR) fully informed as what is happening,

Well it looks likely, all being well, that work on the roof will be able to start this autumn. Perhaps the delay is in some way a blessing as working on the roof in the heat we have had this summer would be almost impossible. Let's hope for a gentle calm autumn.

Once work begins things are going to be a bit difficult around the church. The plan is to keep the church open as much as possible for everybody to use. However if the builders feel it would be too dangerous then they will inform us and our wonderful Parish Administrator will let you know the situation. But we hope these will be exceptions.

Half of the car park will be taken up with building “stuff”. Much of the folding of the zinc panels will be done up on the roof. The stained glass windows will be covered with plywood to protect them so it will be dark in the church and there will be protection built around the organ. Unfortunately this might mean we will not be able to use the organ but lets wait and see. Of course the whole building will be covered in scaffold, and metal and plastic sheeting right up to the top of the cross on the spire. There will also be scaffolding inside in the worship space so they can access the celestial windows.

All BMR staff, and many of the people they use, will be DBS checked and if they know of somebody who does not have a check they will be accompanied. They are also very mindful about modern day slavery associated with the building trade.

A great deal of the cost is getting all these professional people, scaffold and equipment on site so if they find something that is wrong on the roof then we will get it fixed properly while this work is going on.

As I always end these reports please let me extend a heart felt thank you to all who have given so generously. Without your support we would not be able to have and continue to have our beacon on the hill in Park Hill. I think Churchill said some famous words which could well apply here. Now this is not the end. It is not even the beginning of the end. But it is perhaps the end of the beginning.