



The main purpose of the church is to provide a place of worship for our Catholic parishioners but it's worth pointing out that we are open to the wider Portobello community with the church open all day every day and serving as a beautiful place for peaceful thought and prayer for all.

The church hall is also available to all and we have coffee mornings on the days that the Brighton Park market is open and it is also used for Slimming World, Ballroom dancing and Yoga and Pilates classes. The weekly collections taken during our church services are a key means of funding the running of the church and parish house but last year COVID limited the numbers allowed to attend church services from around 280 people down to 40 and so far this year we have been unable to open. Therefore, we are living hand to mouth at the moment in order to ensure we can remain within our means. However, this is not the reason for our application. Every 5 years we have a process of survey and inspection of the fabric of our property and buildings by a professional firm of building surveyors and they have reported that our church tower which is a famous landmark in Portobello is in serious need of urgent repair. This is because the pointing between the stones has been washed out by years of weathering and this has had a knock-on effect on the state of the stonework. The surveyors have produced tender documents and these were sent out to five selected contractors. The best quote, which we have agreed to proceed with, results in a total project cost of £352,000. We have funds of around £200,000 already but we need to raise another £150,000 to pay for the project. This would be challenging at the best of times but due to COVID we have no ability to run social events of any kind which is how we would normally fundraise. As the work is urgent on safety grounds we have no choice but to push on with the project and we have therefore been able to obtain a loan for the £150,000 but this leaves a large and long term debt for the church.

Any funds raised through small fundraising events and / or donations would reduce the debt and allow it to be repaid quicker which is our aim. We have applied for some grants but we are not hopeful that we will be successful with these either. We hope that this gives you enough information to make an informed decision and hopefully in our

favour.

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[www.stjohnsportobello.co](http://www.stjohnsportobello.co)