

Report sent to PCC to support the installation of wi-fi in the main church space.

Background

The CM has been investigating what would be required to install a workable wi-fi signal throughout the whole of the church building. Currently we only receive workable wi-fi in the office and its local environment. The current signal has a very limited range due to the position and thickness of the church walls and does not stretch further than the centre aisle, or approx.. 20ft from the office.

There is currently a low-cost booster in the Anderson meeting Room, but its efficiency is quite limited. The question as to whether we require a more comprehensive wi-fi solution has been prompted by a number of factors and has become more compelling in recent months with the plans for live streaming. Specifically:

1. the desire to regularly live stream without having to use extended cable from the office which would be a trip hazard
2. the hiring out of rooms to third parties who often require good wi-fi
3. the use of Nave space for fairs where traders require payment via card machines
4. to facilitate the use of our iZettle payment machine which could be used for collections from visitors (many of the larger churches are now doing this)
5. the general question as to whether staff, ministry team or choir require wi-fi at the east end of the church (inc. in the Alexander Room and Sacristy).
6. for use at our larger events, including the tree festival to enable cashless payments on the door or for use at other events where there is a retiring collection for example.

There may be other factors.

The installation of additional boosters would require quite a lot of extra cabling and therefore a Faculty. No structural work would be required with the caveat that should we need a strong signal in the Alexander Room, an existing hole in the west wall of that room would need to be enlarged.

Two quotes have been submitted, one from Midshires who are the suppliers of the office copier and which we felt was prohibitive at £2500 and a much more competitive quote from Micosmiths, who are a sub-contractor of BT. Their quote is £1410 inc. plus £180.00 annual network support. They proposed 3 boosters, to be fixed on window ledges in the north and south aisles.

The question of whether or not to have wi-fi has taken on new significance over the last 12 months and whether, as a community, we agree wi-fi is considered important going forward. My own feeling is that in the past, it has not been taken seriously enough and has now become an imperative. The PCC voted to proceed at their meeting of May 13th, 2020.

Please let me know if you require additional information.

Robin Bartlett

September 16, 2020