St Edmund's Catholic Church

Parish Finance and Fabric Committee
REPORT Update on Installation Presbytery Wood Stoves - July 2025

Background

Under the 2025 expenditures, members approved the inclusion of a new wood stove for the presbytery. The project included installing a stainless steel flexible liner in an existing chimney stack. This work will contribute towards use of renewable energy sources, enabling diversity of energy type that is not reliant on fossil fuels. It is in line with the parish and diocese aims of meeting responsibilities in regard to climate change. After consulting multiple stove and flue companies, it was found that significant savings could be achieved by extending the work to include the rear lounge. Quotations for the work and different wood stove options were obtained and details of the preferred quotation were circulated to members in February for approval.

Discussion

A Parish Project Approval Form (PPAF) was submitted to the diocese in early March asking for approval to spend up to £9,500. Approval for expenditure has not yet been received from the diocesan Buildings Sub Committee. A planning application was submitted to East Suffolk Council for listed building consent on 19 March. This application was rejected by the council's Design & Heritage team on grounds the proposal would result in loss of historic fabric and irreversibly alter primary interior features.

A new application was submitted on 21 May. In discussion with the diocesan heritage officer, this removed the proposal for a wood stove within the rear lounge hearth and added justification to the case (under National Planning Policy Framework) for removal of the old irreparable iron range in the dining room. East Suffolk Council have accepted the case for removal of the range but require more details on the methodology for replacement before formal approval.

Financial Implications

The removal of one wood stove installation reduces the project cost by about half. A revised cost (including repairs to the hearth after removal of the range) is in the region of £5,000.

Budget Implications

The 2025 revenue budget does not contain this project. As the wood stove represents a long-term investment, the cost will be covered by capital reserves within the parish account with the diocese at the time of project completion.

Recommendation

Members are requested to note this updated information.

Neil Mayhew (Treasurer)