



# Deciding the future of The Chapel, Fowlmere

Initial proposals and Business Plan (v.5)

v5 Spring 2026

## The Future of the Chapel

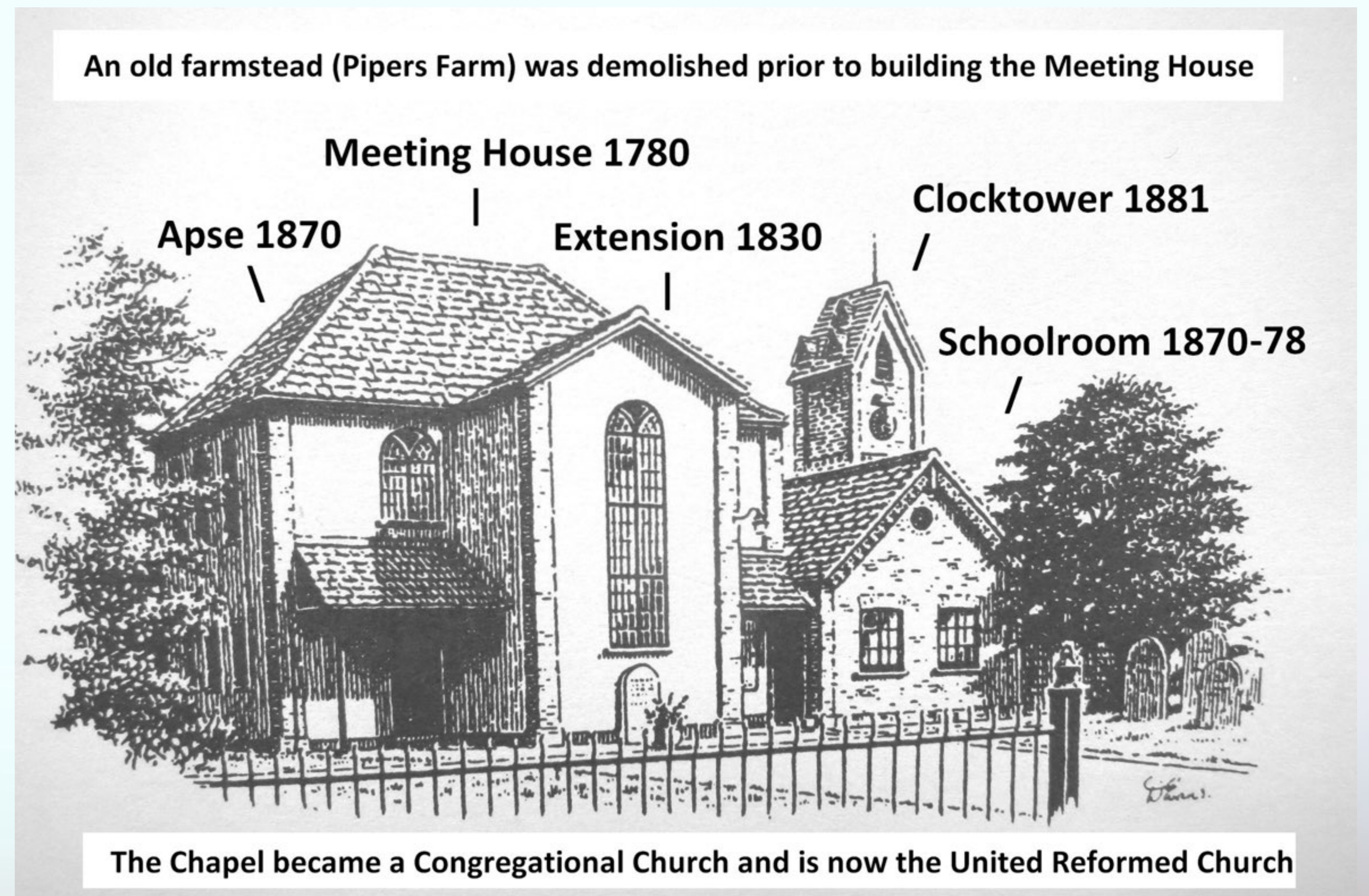
The Chapel in Fowlmere, a building that has served the community for over 200 years, is at a crossroads in its history. The United Reformed Church (URC) has decided to sell the building as they are no longer using it as a place of worship.

The Parish Council, on behalf of the village, must decide whether or not the Chapel will continue to serve the village as a key community facility.

For the Chapel to continue as a community building, it must be purchased on behalf of the village and become a facility that meets the needs of Fowlmere today. It must then operate in the long term without creating a financial burden on the Parish Council precept.

This business plan covers two key issues:

- 1) Proposals for purchase and development of the building to make it fit for purpose as a village Community Hub;
- 2) A financial plan for running the building during its initial years of operation.



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## Background

Since the Chapel was built in 1780, it has served the community primarily as a place of worship for its non-conformist congregation, but also as a community building with a range of wider uses. In recent years, the Chapel has hosted Fowlmere Playgroup as well as numerous children's parties, village meetings, music events, village fêtes and concerts. It has also served as the polling station for the village.

As the size of its congregation dwindled in recent years, its use as a community venue for this range of activities has provided the regular income required to support the maintenance of the building. As with many other venues, the COVID era took its toll.

Realistically the building has been sustained primarily by its most regular user, Fowlmere Playgroup, for a decade or more.



## A Venue for the Community

As a long-standing community building, the Chapel has served Fowlmere for many years as a traditional venue for music concerts, meetings & parties. It is located centrally, within easy walking distance of most of the village, and this has made it the first choice for activities that need to be widely accessible. Responses to the Community-Led Plan survey conducted by the Parish Council in April 2024 included significant support for the Chapel to be revitalised and brought into more regular use as a versatile community space for a range of activities.

For over 40 years, the Chapel and Fowlmere Recreation Ground & Village Hall have served the village together as complementary venues. They are very different, with the Village Hall being a much larger, modern facility with large sports fields on the southern edge of the village, with many of its users driving there. Today, the Village Hall hosts activities every day that attract people from Fowlmere and beyond, and is often fully booked.

## Developing the Chapel

These proposals detail a plan to purchase and develop the Chapel to serve the village more effectively in the future. Various levels of development ambition are covered, depending on the level of funding secured, as well as a range of possible scenarios for its future financial management to help ensure its financial independence and success.

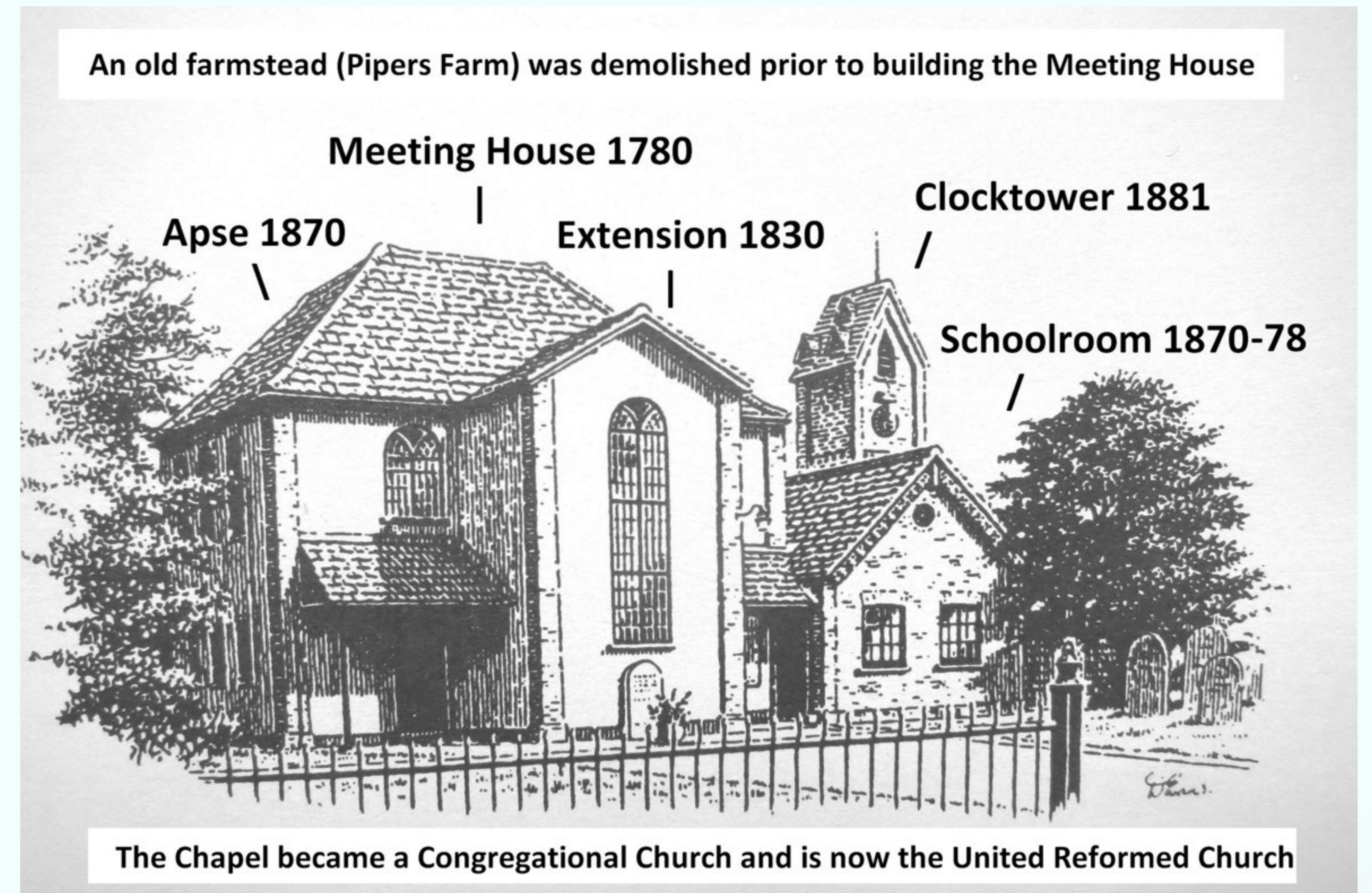


## History of the Chapel

During the 17th & 18th Centuries, a significant community of non-conformists developed in Fowlmere and the surrounding villages. Non-conformists or dissenters were people who did not subscribe to the articles of faith of the Church of England, and they represent the groups that later became known variously as Baptists, Congregationalists, Quakers etc. By 1728 almost half the village was non-conformist and in 1768 it was written that the village 'abounds with dissenters'. In 1770, an old farm known as Pipers was bought by three brothers of the Wedd family to build a Meeting House. The Chapel was built on the site 10 years later and licensed for use the following year.

In 1796 the pastor started a Dissenting Academy at Whitehall, across the road from the Chapel, so that the children of dissenters, who were not permitted to go to university, could be educated. This existed until 1848. By the 1830s the number of worshippers was so great that the Chapel had to be enlarged. In 1851 more than three times as many people attended the three Sunday services held at the Chapel as attended St Mary's Church.

These services typically accommodated 250 people in the morning, 300 in the afternoon and 80 in the evening. In 1879 Fowlmere Chapel joined the Cambridgeshire Congregational Union.



In 1880, Chapel Cottage was built next to the Chapel as accommodation for a caretaker, who lived rent free and had to tend the heating stoves and lamps, clean the Chapel and cut the grass.

In 1972 the Congregational Church in England combined with the English Presbyterian Churches to form the United Reformed Church (URC), and this is how the Chapel has been known ever since.

The original building in 1780 was rectangular and built with the porch we see today on the front. In 1830 a vestry was added, and in 1870 the apse was built at the rear to accommodate the new organ.

## The Clock Tower



### History of the Chapel continued

In 1878 when the Chapel was nearly 100 years old, it was renovated with the outside corners being bricked and the flooring renewed. At this point the schoolroom (known today as the Hall) was added, originally to serve as a vestry. Finally, the building achieved the form we recognise today with the addition of the clock tower in 1881. In 1986 the Chapel was designated a Grade II Listed Building with the memorial stone beside the north wall mentioned in the listing title.

In 1985, a legacy from Miss Edith Grace Law, the village postmistress, funded significant restoration work completed in 1991. This included a new ceiling, replacement flooring, interior repainting, new electric heating and a paved entrance driveway. Further work in 2004 included building a new entrance to the main auditorium, works to enlarge the schoolroom, significant redecoration and the addition of a new vestry.

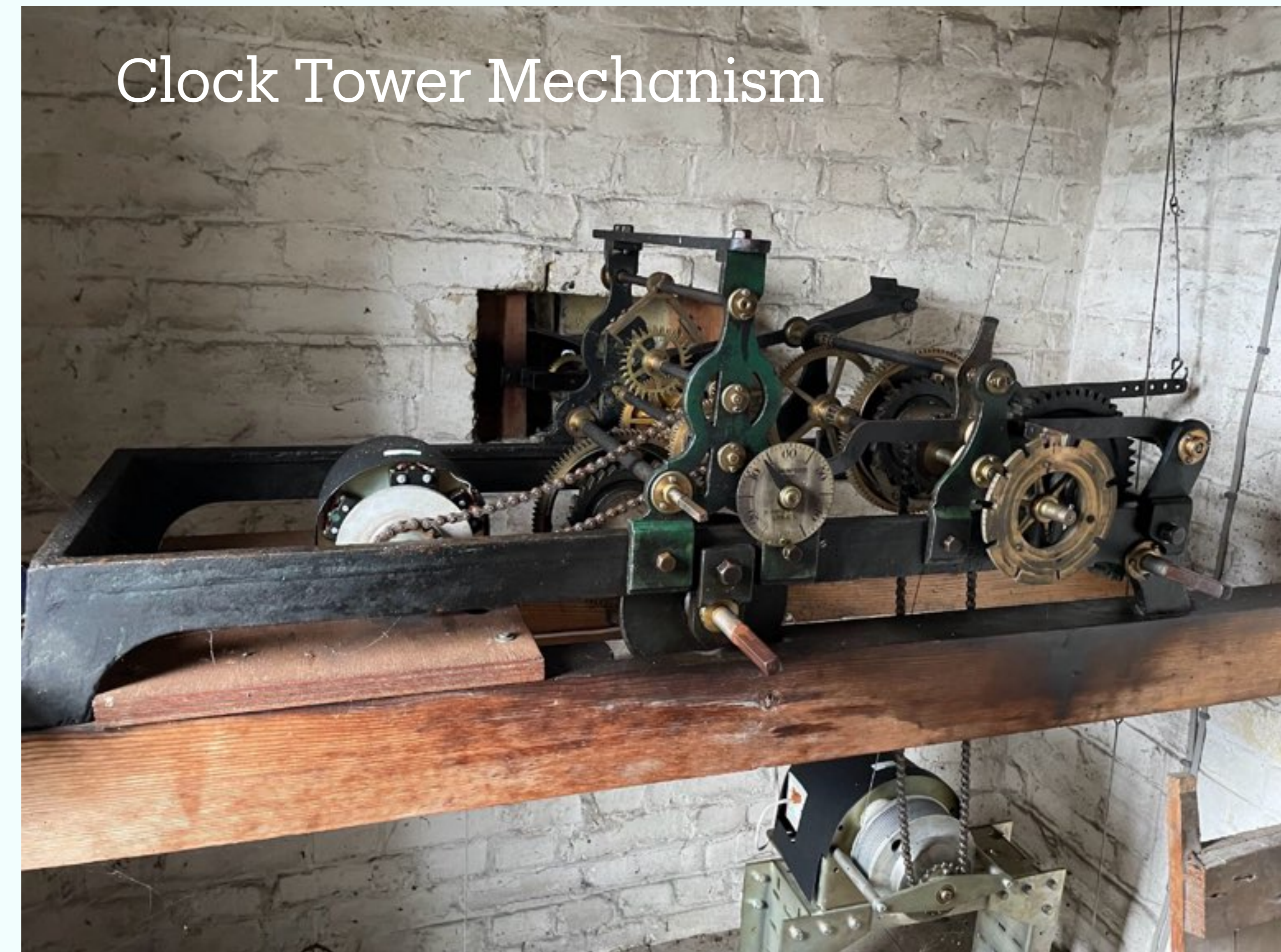
The Chapel appears to have served the community as more than a place of worship for most of its history. In recent decades there are many records of its significant roles in village life. Fowlmere Playgroup was formed in 1977 and has met regularly in the schoolroom ever since. The Playgroup has been relied upon by parents for early-years education within the village, as well as providing a key point of contact for parents and creating friendships between generations of young children.

The bicentenary of the building was celebrated in 1980 with a large village garden party and there are records of many musical events from the 1980s and 90s. These included music featuring the combined choirs of the Chapel and St Mary's Church. A sports club for younger children was held during the 2000s. Other recorded events around this time include talent shows, book sales, bazaars and organ recitals.

## History of the Chapel continued

During the last 20 years years, the Chapel Hall has hosted birthday parties, anniversary parties and wakes. It has been the location of Christmas Bazaars, and served as the village Polling Station. Community groups, including the Parish Council, have used the schoolroom as a meeting space.

The main Chapel building has hosted school events, including Christmas Nativity plays and music recitals. It has also been a venue for village events such as *Fowlmere's Got Talent*, and local choral concerts. In all these cases, the Chapel's location within convenient walking distance of much of the village has made it a convenient and sustainable venue.



Like many venues, the Chapel has suffered from the impact of the COVID era. In the past few years, its congregation has dwindled, and these two factors combined have led to far fewer bookings for community events. Since early 2024 there has been no-one to organise bookings so it has been used only for occasional meetings in addition to its regular use by Fowlmere Playgroup.

The Chapel is an unusual and notable survivor as a building that tells the story of 18th-Century nonconformist history in this area. Our historic buildings are always best preserved when they can be made relevant and useful.

Keeping the Chapel as a building that continues to thrive and serve the community would enhance our connection with local history and allow future generations to enjoy this attractive setting for years to come.

## Support for developing the Chapel

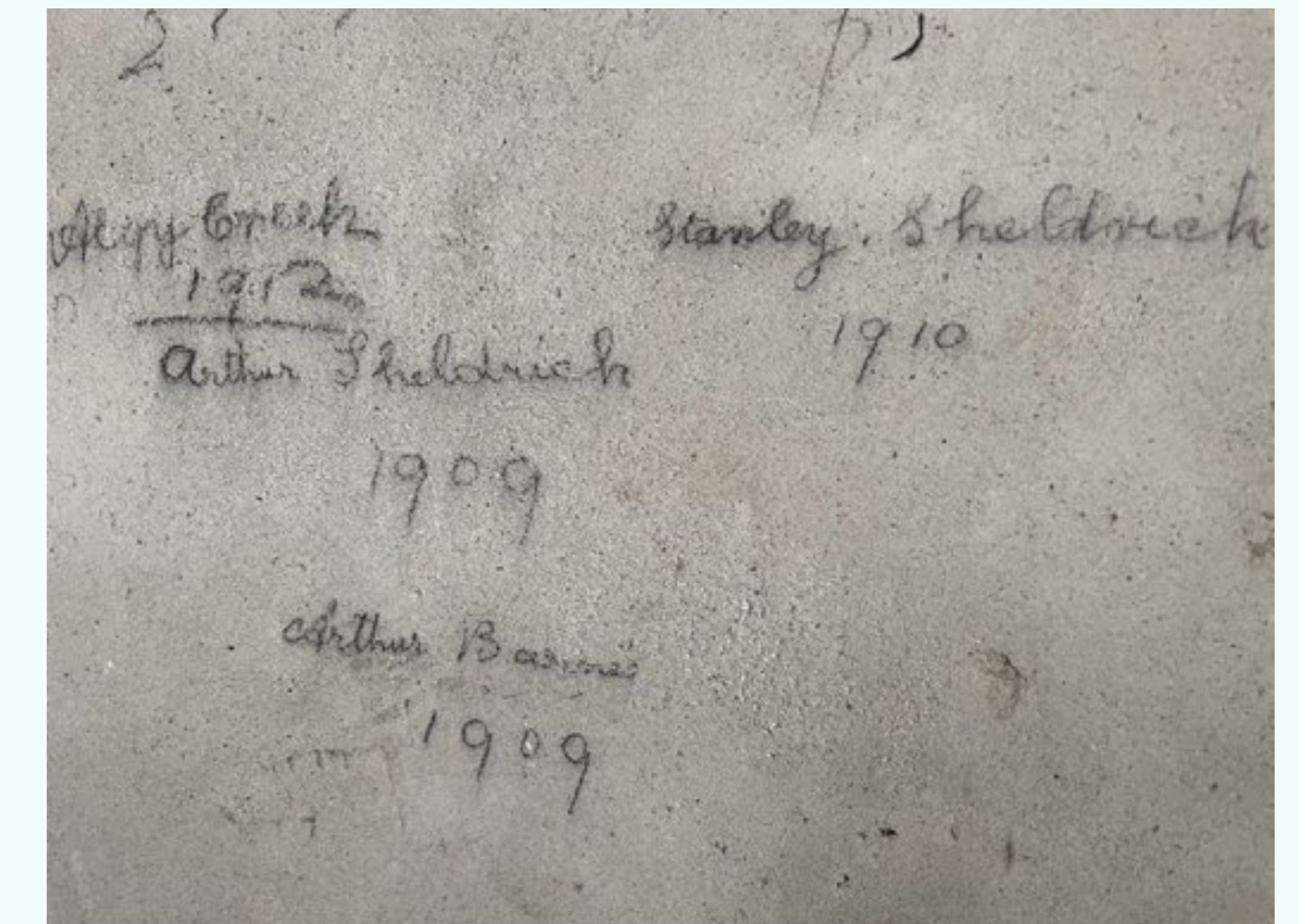
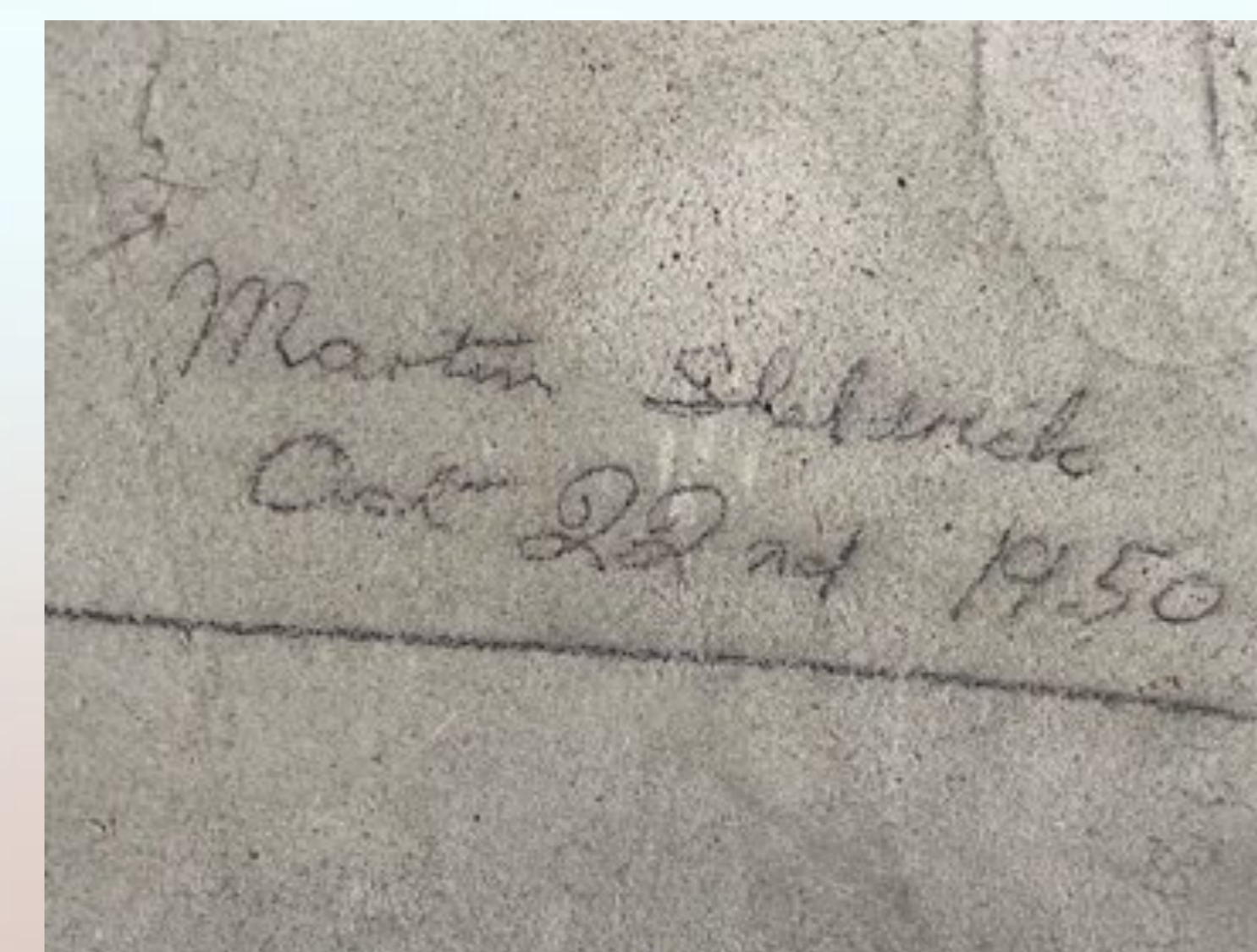
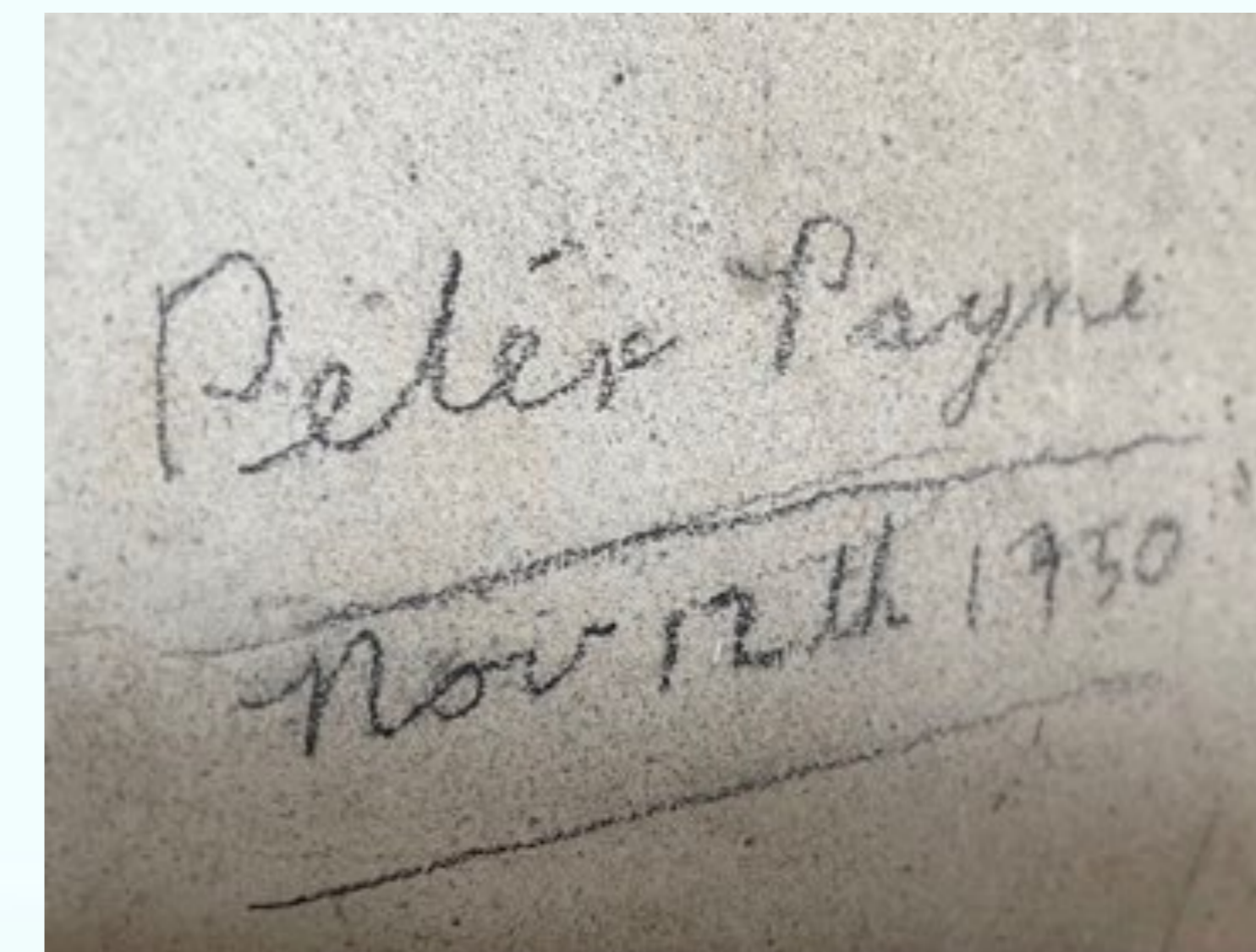
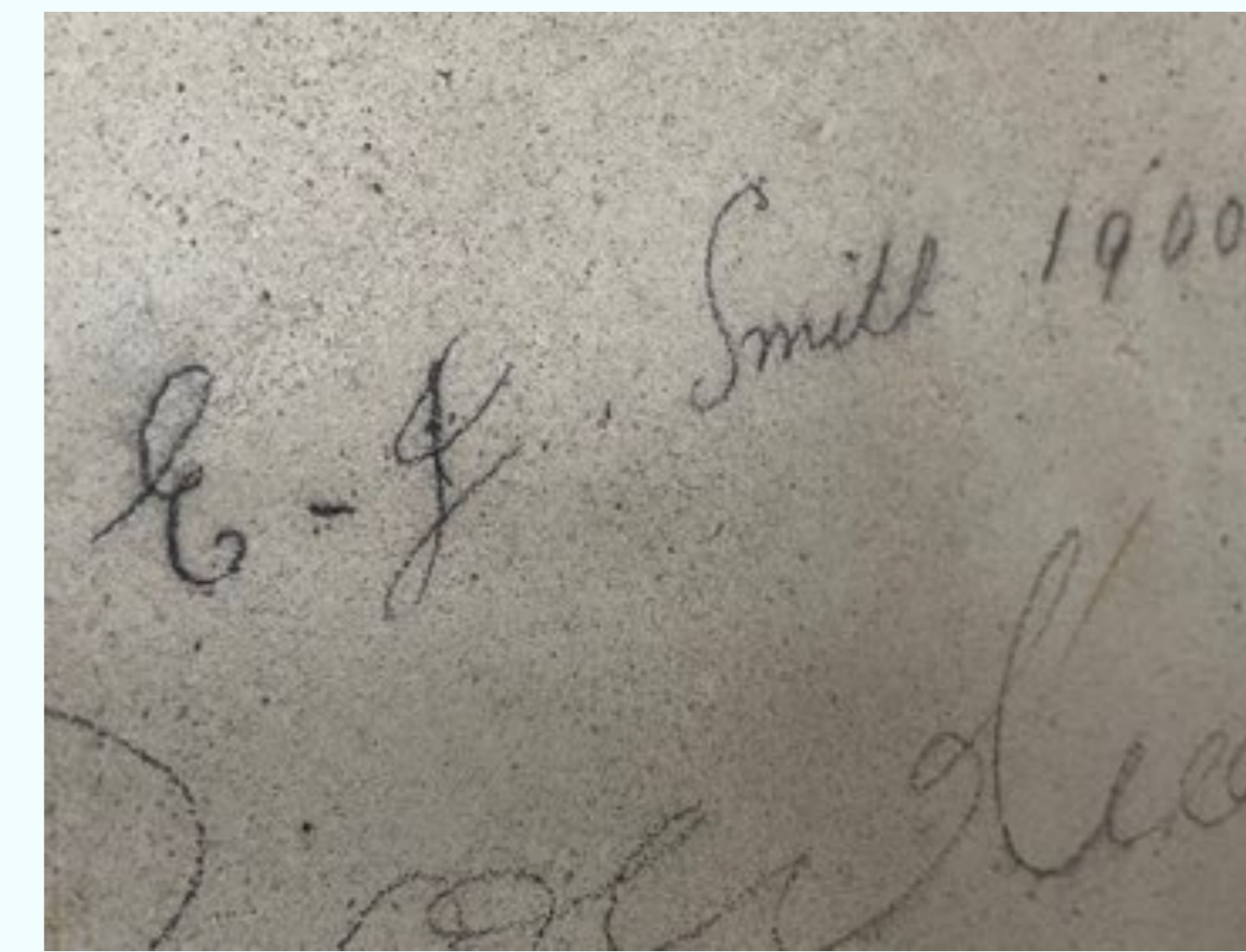
Fowlmere Parish Council was approached in January 2024 by Fowlmere Playgroup and many residents who were concerned both about the future of the Playgroup and the building's future for the community.

Given the prominent role the Chapel has played in the village over many decades, the Parish Council identified the building as an Asset of Community Value (ACV) and applied immediately to South Cambridgeshire District Council to have its status as an ACV validated. This status was confirmed in April 2024.

The ACV application process required the collection of testimonials from across the village attesting to the Chapel's many community roles. These testimonials provide a useful record of the many ways in which the Chapel has touched and enhanced the lives of people across the village over many years, and they are included in Appendix A.

The events above coincided with a wide-ranging survey of the village for the Parish Council's Community-Led Plan, in which residents had the opportunity to comment on the demand for new community events and on community venues in the village. The responses indicated a significant demand for a range of new activities, most prominently adult education. Many responses also mentioned the Chapel and asked if it could be used more effectively as a community venue.

A summary of these responses is included in Appendix B.



## Clock Tower Names

The Clock Tower has 3 levels with the clock workings housed on the upper level.

The middle level was once used as small teaching space for the Sunday School. A tradition developed that children would sign and date their names on the wall.

Sadly some of these names also appear on the village war memorial.

## Securing the future of Fowlmere Playgroup

One of the motivations for the Parish Council purchasing the URC Chapel is to provide a long-term, secure and stable home for the much loved Fowlmere Playgroup who have been ever present at the Chapel Schoolroom for almost 50 years since it was set up in 1977. Playgroup has seen close to 700 village children pass through its doors during that time, as they start off on their life journey away from the security of parents or other family members for the first time and helps prepare the children for the big step up to Primary School.

From the humble beginnings of a few mornings a week, Playgroup now operates 5 days a week, employing 3 members of staff and providing the early years care that allows parents to return to work. Currently Fowlmere Playgroup has 15 children on roll with a healthy waiting list for next September. This indispensable facility is without doubt one of the village's most treasured amenities that benefits and enriches the entire community.

It was the rent paid by Fowlmere Playgroup to the URC that has meant the church has survived financially for as long as it has with a dwindling congregation. Without this rent, the decision to close might well have been taken a decade ago. The rent paid by Playgroup has therefore been crucial in allowing the URC to maintain the condition of the building as well as they have and will be important for the Parish Council to do the same in the future.

When Playgroup was informed by the URC Synod that they wished to sell the building, they made efforts to seek alternative premises in the village. Unfortunately there were no viable options available away from the Chapel.

Fowlmere Playgroup receives the vast majority of its income via the central government funding for early years hours in an area of policy that is broadly agreed by all the main political parties. This funding is therefore as secure as any funding can reasonably be said to be.

Retaining Fowlmere Playgroup as a “anchor tenant” therefore allows the Parish Council to make the decision to take on the Chapel building with the confidence that a base level revenue stream is assured and the risk level is low.



## The Chapel Cemetery

In addition to the history of the buildings themselves, the grounds of the Chapel include a small cemetery.

The memorial headstones date back as far as the building itself. Burials no longer take place here but members of the congregation have continued to plant rose bushes in memory of loved ones until very recently. By keeping the building in community ownership, the cemetery area can remain available for visitors to spend a little time remembering those who have passed.

The Parish Council took on the maintenance of the grounds in the 1980's and this has continued to the present day meaning that the Council has already been looking after at least part of this site for 40 years.





## Survey and building condition

The Parish Council commissioned a Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors (RICS) Level 3 survey of the Chapel before deciding whether or not it would be appropriate to enter negotiations to buy the Chapel on behalf of the village. This level of survey provides a detailed assessment of the condition of a building ahead of a possible purchase. This survey identified several minor issues, including a patch of damp in the wall beside the stage area in the main Chapel, some rising damp in the porch, and some paintwork that needs renewing. However, it noted that the building was generally in good condition for its age, and appeared to have been properly maintained in recent years. Most importantly, the roof has been kept in very good condition.

A group of volunteers from the Parish Council cleared the gutters around the main Chapel and Hall in August 2024, as several of these appeared to be blocked. During this work, a blocked down pipe was found, which had been the source of the damp observed on the wall inside. This has now been fixed.

As a precaution against future damp problems, it is common in similar buildings to add a French drain. This could be added around the main building (there is already one around the Hall).

The other maintenance issue of note is that the outside window frames on the main Chapel are in need of repainting.



## Fowlmere Community Hub

This document presents a vision for the opportunities the Chapel could offer as a central hub of activity for Fowlmere, hosting a wide variety of village events.

As a reference to its history, the building could be referred to as 'The Old Chapel', in line with other repurposed buildings in the village (e.g. The Old Stores, The Old Police House). Bookings would be managed by an entity which for convenience this plan refers to as 'Fowlmere Community Hub'. Its aim would be to offer a central, affordable facility to serve a wide range of local groups and their activities.

The multi-purpose village community building described here to some extent follows the model adopted for similar buildings in other villages, the nearest being Melbourn.

It would host some or all of the following (or other) activities, which already have a level of support within the village (frequencies for each activity are indicative only).

1. Coffee bar for socialising, with wifi and tables where people can work or study
2. Mini shop or post office (daily)
3. Council outreach programmes (Children's/Family services etc; quarterly)
4. NHS outreach sessions (Antenatal, vaccination, weight watchers etc; weekly)
5. U3A courses (weekly)
6. Adult education and craft classes (sewing, pottery, painting etc; weekly)
7. Evening social club with quiz nights (weekly)
8. Board games club (for teenagers, fortnightly)
9. Gaming night (big screen multi-player gaming, table tennis, darts; monthly)
10. Informal village library (bring unwanted books, curated by volunteers)
11. Cinema club (monthly)
12. Folk night (booked acts and open mic, quarterly) + similar comedy nights
13. Touring theatre (twice a year)
14. "An evening with" talks or lectures (quarterly)
15. Takeaway food truck (weekly in the driveway)
16. Small market with children's soft play (monthly)
17. Children's parties (monthly on average)
18. Family celebration parties (quarterly)
19. Repair cafe (twice a year)
20. School concerts (twice a year)
21. Other miscellaneous meetings
22. Gallery area for local artists to display art and offer for sale [% of sale to venue]
23. Host the Les Price "Village Archive" including a display of village history.

## Purchase plan

In May 2024 Fowlmere Parish Council agreed to 'proceed to making a clear expression of intent to purchase the URC Chapel and begin negotiations to lead towards a purchase agreement'.

The Parish Council was awarded a grant of £4,190 by the Plunkett Foundation, an organisation that specialises in supporting the establishment of community-owned facilities in rural areas. The Plunkett Foundation also provided advice to the Parish Council on funding models and related issues. This grant has funded the RICS Level 3 survey and a Red Book Valuation which allowed the Parish Council to assess the market value and structural condition of the building.

After putting together earlier versions of this business plan the Parish Council voted to in January 2025 to "To agree in principle to pursue the purchase of the URC Chapel, subject to change of use planning permission and listed building consent being granted to allow for the main chapel building to be used for community use."

The two planning permissions were granted by SCDC in October 2025 and the Parish Council proceeded to negotiate a price with the Eastern Synod. In December 2025 a price of £250,000 was agreed.

The Parish Council has instructed solicitors and is now in the final stages of the purchase and hopes to complete very soon.

The purchase has been made possible due to the generous endowment of Ronald Arthur Ward, who was born in 1928 in and lived in Fowlmere up until he retired to Selby around 1990. Despite the move away, Mr Ward clearly treasured his time in Fowlmere as he bequeathed £212,349.29 to the Parish Council in his will.

Since being gifted to the Parish Council, the Ward Endowment has been placed in high interest accounts and has accrued approximately £23,000 in interest. This coupled with the original sum gets us almost to the purchase price with reserves making up the shortfall.

Early thoughts of a Public Works Board loan have been dismissed as it has been deemed no longer necessary.



## Refurbishment work

Some work will be required to allow the building to be used as a multi-purpose community centre. This revolves around i) allowing the main Chapel building and Hall to be used simultaneously by separate groups, and ii) equipping the main Chapel for multi-purpose use rather than simply as a place of worship. This plan considers four possible levels of refurbishment, depending on the funding that has been raised at the point when the building is purchased.

With no refurbishment, use would be somewhat limited as the only lavatory available at present is in the Hall. Minimal refurbishment would provide a separate lavatory for the main Chapel, allowing activities to take place simultaneously in the main Chapel and Hall.

Under moderate refurbishment, the facilities in the main Chapel area would also be improved, with a new floor and refreshments area. This would create a more versatile space that is better equipped for a wider range of events and activities.

The most ambitious level of comprehensive refurbishment would convert the main Chapel area into a well-specified multi-use auditorium and function room suitable for a high intensity of activity including regular events that would attract people from the surrounding area.



These three levels of refurbishment (minimal, moderate and comprehensive) broadly correspond with the three levels of activity (low, medium and high) that they would facilitate, as considered in detail below.

All these options would require great care and sensitivity due to the building's historic significance for the village and its corresponding Grade II listed status.

## No refurbishment (Option 1)

If no money is available to invest in refurbishment, it would still be possible to use the main Chapel and Hall for events, but their use would be limited by the fact that the only lavatory facility available is in the Hall. Some basic work would be required to make the main Chapel suitable for general community use, and this could be done on a voluntary basis if necessary:

1. Remove the pews (and offer them for sale) from the main auditorium and replace with versatile seating suitable for a range of activities;
2. Arrange basic access to the main Chapel, separated from the Hall access (probably along the eastern boundary, to allow the two parts of the building to be used by separate groups);
3. Remove the lower staging area to open up the space;
4. Paint the walls and windows (interior and exterior).

Given the building's listed status, even these basic works are likely to require planning and listed building consents, although the process for such simple changes is likely to be straightforward and require minimal input from an architect.



## Minimal refurbishment (Option 2)

In addition to the option 1 above, option 2 covers the minimal work required to allow the main Chapel building and Hall to be available for general use simultaneously, requiring basic planning and architectural services to draw up the plans:

1. Add a small rear lavatory extension that can be accessed from the main auditorium without entering the hall (required for events held in the main auditorium while the playgroup is in operation in the Hall);
2. Add a new high-quality, durable floor covering;
3. Remove or rework the upper staging area and purchase some flexible modular staging.

Planning permission and Listed Building Consent would be required and these applications and the specification of works would need to be drawn up by a planning consultant or architect.

## Moderate refurbishment (Option 3)

In addition to the options 1 and 2, this level of refurbishment would allow much more flexible use of the main Chapel building for community activities and would require more significant input from an architect:

1. Add a permanent refreshments area to the main Chapel auditorium to allow serving of drinks and snacks; This might also function as a counter for basic groceries; It would require refrigerated storage and some bar equipment;
2. Enhance the front outside space to allow flexible use between the main Chapel and Hall with well-designed separate access to these two areas.



## Comprehensive refurbishment (Option 4)

In addition to the options 1, 2 and 3, this would involve a more thorough reworking of the main Chapel interior including the balcony area to make the space suitable for a wider range of activities and users. It would require significant input from an architect from the point of conception.

At this stage there are no detailed proposals for this level of refurbishment as these would require professional services to prepare. It is likely that additional formal car parking arrangements would also be made to accommodate the greater use from outside the village that this level of refurbishment would enable.

## Refurbishment work continued

This business plan is designed to map out these four options sufficiently to allow confidence in the success of the plan regardless of the level of fundraising achieved.

Projected accounts covering costs and funding for each of the options are presented below, with further details provided in Appendix C. Clearly there are other possible routes to developing the Chapel that would fall in between these options.

The options presented here are designed to provide useful reference points to help understand and manage the spectrum of possibilities.

The decision on the level of refurbishment is one to be taken by the full council which will be influenced by what planning permission can be obtained. The fund-raising work would aim to achieve the funds for a high-quality, practical, suitable and ambitious refurbishment to provide a smart, well-equipped, flexible and sustainable venue that will serve the village well for many years to come. If a lower level of funds is achieved then this plan provides the assurance that those funds will still be used effectively.

<b>Refurbishment level</b>	<b>None</b>	<b>Minimal</b>	<b>Moderate</b>	<b>Comprehensive</b>
<b>Funding sources</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
PC contribution	150,000.00	150,000.00	150,000.00	150,000.00
PWB loan	100,000.00	100,000.00	100,000.00	100,000.00
Plunkett Foundation grant	4,190.00	4,190.00	4,190.00	4,190.00
Fundraising	15,000.00	65,000.00	100,000.00	200,000.00
<b>Total income</b>	<b>269,190.00</b>	<b>319,190.00</b>	<b>354,190.00</b>	<b>454,190.00</b>
<b>Costs</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
Purchase price	250,000.00	250,000.00	250,000.00	250,000.00
Stamp duty	2,000.00	2,000.00	2,000.00	2,000.00
Building survey	1,200.00	1,200.00	1,200.00	1,200.00
Professional advice	2,000.00	2,000.00	2,000.00	2,000.00
Conveyancing	2,000.00	2,000.00	2,000.00	2,000.00
Development planning costs	11,000.00	19,000.00	25,000.00	35,000.00
Development legal costs	0.00	1,000.00	2,000.00	2,500.00
Furnishings	900.00	2,000.00	6,000.00	15,500.00
Building costs	0.00	40,000.00	64,000.00	144,000.00
<b>Total expenditure</b>	<b>269,100.00</b>	<b>319,200.00</b>	<b>354,200.00</b>	<b>454,200.00</b>

**Costs and funding for purchase and the four levels of refurbishment considered.**

**These figures are purely indicative and subject to change. Some items may be subject to VAT. The Parish Council is taking appropriate advice to deliver best value for parishioners over all costs involved**

## Business model for operation

The basic business model proposed for operating the building is to have an established regular client to generate a steady reliable income, and to allow many other activities to be booked around this.

The main established “anchor client” would be Fowlmere Playgroup, on the basis of their historic patronage and stated desire to remain.



While establishing further regular clients is the goal as the community hub develops it is not essential for balancing the books as the income from the Playgroup will be sufficient to keep the building maintained and to provide a small surplus.

Additionally, the Parish Council currently spends around £2000 per year on meeting room hire and storage space. If the Parish Council made use of the Old Chapel for these purposes then it would also become an established client contributing the £2,000 p.a.

A potential semi-regular future client is possible after an expressions of interest from the PDC Community Fund which is keen to explore running its “Darts Maths” outreach programme which uses darts to teach Maths in a non classroom environment.

In addition to regular clients, the Community Hub would be available for use by a wide range of community groups, anticipating a mixture of regular and *ad hoc* bookings. The aim is to offer the two main areas of the Old Chapel (the main auditorium and hall) as well-equipped central facilities for hire at affordable rates, building up a range of regular clubs and activities in line with the demand indicated by the village in the Community-Led Plan responses and in representations from the village to the Parish Council.

## Business model for operation continued

This business model is designed to be flexible enough to adapt to different potential levels of use of these facilities, maintaining financial independence under all the projected scenarios. The Chapel has maintained financial independence under its present and historic patterns of usage for many years, with occasional significant fundraising taking place for the more serious extensions and repairs.



Our business model builds on this record of self-sufficiency with the expected additional usage over the historic pattern creating additional revenue, which will allow a fund to be established for more significant repairs. In the event of the Community Hub failing to attract sufficient interest within the village to remain as a financially-viable venue, it could be sold by the Parish Council.

The Chapel has co-existed with Fowlmere Recreation Ground & Village Hall for decades, with the two venues complementing one another since the latter was built in 1982. The proposals detailed here would make the Old Chapel more widely available than it was while in use as a place of worship.

The two venues are very different, one being a relatively small, traditional building located in the centre of the village, and the other a large, modern facility on the southern edge of the village with large sports fields. On the whole, the two venues are suited to different activities and will tend to attract different audiences. There is bound to be some overlap in demand. However, as the Village Hall in 2024 is frequently fully booked, there appears to be ample scope for both facilities to continue to serve the village successfully (in practical and financial terms) under this new arrangement.

## Recent financial history

Recent accounts for running the Chapel show that the books are broadly balanced, with the main costs of heating, insurance & electricity being approximately equal to the income received from Fowlmere Playgroup and other users of the Hall and auditorium.

The United Reformed Church has kindly provided summary accounts for the decade beginning in 2010 to allow an assessment of the income achieved from letting the Chapel and Hall, and the cost of running and maintaining the building. During this period the main Chapel was used primarily as a place of worship but was occasionally used for other events. The Hall was used on a daily basis by the Playgroup and additionally for meetings and parties.

	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	Average
<b>Income</b>											
Playgroup rent	£2,610	£2,770									
Other lettings income	£933	£1,246									
Total lettings income	£3,543	£4,016	£4,168	£4,120	£4,308	£5,586	£5,984	£6,082	£6,895	£7,955	£5,266
Lunches/coffee mornings								£1,062	£1,016	£715	£931
											£6,197
<b>Expenditure</b>											
Oil & electricity	£1,292	£1,010	£1,487	£1,558	£1,792	£1,349	£1,380	£1,100	£840	£1,693	
Insurance	£594	£640	£684	£731	£774	£819	£895	£969	£1,026	£1,086	
Water rates	£287	£299	£321	£346	£358	£329	£333	£185	£402	£361	
Building maintenance		£5,857		£3,143	£432	£1,270	£3,365	£3,602	£6,392	£11,868	£4,491
Fire inspection			£144	£57	£212	£52	£112	£53	£118	£58	
Clock service/repair	£241	£253	£260	£269	£277	£286	£294	£971		£322	
Grounds maintenance									£594	£912	
Disabled access path										£1,230	
Total building running costs	£2,173	£7,806	£2,636	£5,835	£3,568	£3,819	£6,085	£5,909	£8,778	£15,066	£6,168

Building-specific accounts for the years 2010–2019

## Recent financial history continued

Since the cost of building maintenance will vary from year to year, it is useful to consider the accounts for a decade to understand the long-term average maintenance costs. The period 2010–2019 is used as the most recent decade before the COVID period, to make the sample as representative as possible in gauging future use.

The income and running costs both increased gradually throughout this period. The accounts supplied listed the income from the Playgroup separately only before 2012. The costs listed here only cover the use of the building itself, not those costs associated with worship in the Chapel, such as hymn books and organ tuning.

Some costs, such as the servicing of the clock, have also not been included (the clock has remained unused for several years). These numbers are likely to overestimate the costs of running the Chapel for the groups letting it, as some costs (e.g. some heating costs) will relate to the Chapel's use for services. However, there is no way of separating these out so they have been included to give a conservative cost estimate.

During this period, maintenance costs varied significantly from year to year. The average annual income over the decade was approximately £5,300 and the average annual running costs approximately £6,200, of which £4,500 was building maintenance. There was therefore an average annual shortfall of around £900. In the last 3 years of the period this shortfall was covered by funds raised through lunches & coffee mornings.



## Projections of accounts

Despite the impressive degree of enthusiasm the village has expressed for adopting the Chapel as a community venue, it is important to plan for a range of possible outcomes.

It is difficult to predict at this stage how strong the demand will actually turn out to be for the many different village activities that have been requested, and to predict how quickly these activities will materialise.

This plan therefore includes estimated accounts for three possible scenarios, where the level of take-up is low, medium and high. It is important that the Chapel can continue to function and maintain financial independence from the Parish Council in all these scenarios.



Scenario	Low	Medium	High
<b>Income</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
PC meetings	800.00	800.00	800.00
PC storage	1,200.00	1,200.00	1,200.00
Meetings/events/parties	1,200.00	2,000.00	3,000.00
Playgroup	9,000.00	9,000.00	9,000.00
2nd regular client	0.00	3,500.00	3,500.00
Gigs	2,000.00	3,000.00	8,000.00
Clubs	1,000.00	1,500.00	1,500.00
Educational use	1,200.00	1,800.00	3,000.00
Exhibitions/art sales	100.00	400.00	800.00
Community hub/cafe	1,000.00	2,000.00	3,000.00
Council/NHS outreach	200.00	500.00	500.00
Polling station	200.00	200.00	200.00
Food truck	2,500.00	5,000.00	5,000.00
Mini shop/post office	0.00	1,000.00	3,000.00
Fundraising	1,000.00	1,500.00	2,000.00
<b>Total income</b>	<b>21,400.00</b>	<b>33,400.00</b>	<b>44,500.00</b>
<b>Expenditure</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
Loan interest	5,200.00	5,200.00	5,200.00
Loan repayment	2,000.00	2,000.00	2,000.00
Advertising & Marketing	500.00	800.00	1,500.00
Audit & Accountancy fees	500.00	500.00	500.00
Business rates	600.00	600.00	600.00
Consumables	500.00	1,000.00	1,000.00
Cleaning	0.00	2,000.00	3,500.00
Administration	0.00	6,000.00	10,000.00
Refuse collection	450.00	450.00	450.00
Insurance	1,500.00	1,500.00	1,500.00
IT Software	0.00	250.00	500.00
Printing & Stationery	0.00	100.00	200.00
Repair fund (building & plant)	4,000.00	5,000.00	6,000.00
Fire safety	250.00	250.00	250.00
Subscriptions	250.00	250.00	250.00
Telephone & Internet	480.00	720.00	900.00
Electricity	1,800.00	2,500.00	4,000.00
Oil	1,000.00	1,750.00	2,500.00
Water	450.00	450.00	450.00
Misc	500.00	1,000.00	1,500.00
<b>Total expenditure</b>	<b>19,980.00</b>	<b>32,320.00</b>	<b>42,800.00</b>

## Low take-up scenario

This scenario assumes that only one regular user can be found (presumed to be Fowlmere Playgroup), and that there is a relatively low level of additional activity and therefore income on top of the basic income from the regular user.

In this situation, the level of bookings and cleaning required will be low, and essentially similar to that required by the Chapel in recent years. Managing bookings and cleaning would therefore be done on a voluntary basis, exactly as they have been while the Chapel has been a place of worship.

The low take-up scenario is based on:

- Use by Fowlmere Playgroup as at present
- Use by the Parish Council for meetings and storage
- Use by regular clubs totalling 2 hours per week
- Other meetings, events and parties totalling just over 2 hours per week
- Educational use totalling just over 2 hours per week
- 4 music gigs per year (Folk music)
- A low level of sales of art exhibited in the main Chapel
- Use as a Community Hub and café for 2 hours per week
- Use as a polling station once a year
- 2 Council outreach events per year
- A food truck visit every fortnight
- A basic level of fundraising activity by volunteers





## Medium take-up scenario

In this scenario, two regular users have been secured, one of which would be Fowlmere Playgroup. On top of this there is a reasonable level of additional activity and income. This level of activity would require a cleaning contract, and bookings would need to be managed using a low cost online booking system.

## High take-up scenario

This is the most optimistic scenario. There are two regular users, one of which is presumed to be Fowlmere Playgroup, and a high level of additional activity from regular and *ad hoc* bookings. The facility is essentially in daily use and would require a professional cleaning contract, a well-specified online booking system, and part-time professional administration.

Projected accounts for all three scenarios are shown on page 24. The low take-up scenario is evaluated in detail because it is important that even in this scenario the Old Chapel can remain financially independent in the long term. The figures represent averages in a steady-state scenario, so in the first couple of years activity is likely to build up towards these levels.

Further details are supplied in Appendix C.

## Management structure

Although the Chapel will be owned by the Parish Council, in the long term it must be able to function without requiring the direct financial support of the Parish Council.

Some neighbouring Parish Councils run their community buildings directly whereas others defer operations to a trust that operates with long-term independence. The approach that has been adopted by the Village Hall, which is also owned by the Parish Council, is that it is managed by a separate management committee. In Great Shelford and Stapleford there are nearby examples of community buildings run by their Parish Councils.

The management structure proposals outlined here are designed to foster a thriving range of community activities that serve the village as comprehensively as possible.

For openness and transparency a management committee (either internal or a charitable body separate to the PC) would be appointed by the Parish Council to create a formal accountability for the village via the Parish Council electoral cycle. The management committee will have 5 or 6 members who will serve terms on a pre-determined cycle of service.

This committee would be responsible for decision making related to running the Community Hub. The cycle of membership is designed to ensure that the management committee remains in touch with the users of the building.

There will be provisions to make sure that the membership is representative of the village, including ensuring that different age groups are represented on the committee (e.g. at least one under-30, at least one over-60, and at least one aged 30–60).

Major decisions will be referred back to the landowner (the Parish Council) but most operational decisions will be made by the management committee.

Day-to-day operations will be handled by a small team of volunteers, some of whom may be on the committee, but this will not be a requirement. This will allow a flexible and organic team to operate, bringing in the talent available across the village, and allowing volunteers to choose whether their contribution is on a practical basis or in a decision-making role. The everyday work of the volunteer team will be overseen by the management committee, which will monitor the practical operation, financial health, operational safety and legal aspects of all activities taking place.

For the first year or two of running the Community Hub, it might be advantageous to defer the creation of the charitable body to allow the mechanisms and facilities available to the Parish Council to be available while the team of volunteers and future committee members are established.

## Appendix A: Testimonials for the ACV application

Fowlmere Parish Council submitted an application in March 2024 to have the Chapel listed as an Asset of Community Value (ACV). This is a designation that provides some protection for buildings that are important to a community to help prevent their removal from public service. The Chapel was awarded Asset of Community Value status in April 2024.

As part of the application process, the Parish Council put out a request for testimonials to illustrate the role the Chapel has played in village life over many years. These are included here for reference, as they help to illustrate the extent to which the Chapel has featured in village life and the support for its continued role as a key village community facility.

### Testimonial 1)

We have lived in the village for just over 9 years and have derived significant benefit from the URC over this time. I write this testimony in support of registering the URC as an Asset of Community Value due to the wide range of social benefits that it has been provided for us as well as many other members of our community.

All of our three children attended Fowlmere Playgroup and thoroughly enjoyed their time there. Having a facility like that so conveniently placed in the village was of significant benefit, particularly for working parents. It also served as an important hub for parents and carers as part of our village community.

During our 9 years here in Fowlmere we have also used the facilities for a range of other purposes, most notably a number of the children's birthday parties as well as other social occasions. I am also aware of how valuable using this facility as a Polling Station has been to so many residents in the village both from a social perspective as well as providing a local and simple means for them to cast their vote.

In a relatively small village such as ours, having a facility such as this is invaluable for supporting social cohesion as well as for providing a focal point for so much community based activity.

### Testimonial 2)

I am extremely sorry about the intended closure of the Church, particularly as I have only been attending the Sunday services for a short time. Even so, during that time I was made to feel really welcome and made some new friends.

Having lived alone since my wife passed away almost twenty years ago and of advanced years I have found it difficult to make friends but going to church gave me a purpose to go out and the confidence to do it.

I do not suppose that I am the only person in this position but it would surely be preferential if the Church could be used, not only for people like me but in various ways which would allow all members of the community to share their common interests together and enjoy making new friends.

## Appendix A: Testimonials for the ACV application continued

### Testimonial 3)

It was with surprise and sadness we heard that Fowlmere Chapel is due for closure as a church at the end of February.

The Chapel has been part of the fabric and community of Fowlmere for over 150 years. Our grandparents were strong supporters of the Chapel and we remember two services on a Sunday and also a Sunday school.

Apart from its use for the celebration of marriages, the joy of christenings and for services to celebrate the life of those who have passed it has provided many other services to the community. It has been used as a mother and baby clinic, a place for locals to meet and enjoy coffee mornings, British Legion fundraising events, harvest thanksgiving, yoga classes and for children's birthday parties to name a few. It is currently being used as it has been for many years as a pre school playgroup.

The playgroup was well established in the 80s when our own children attended. It holds many memories for many people as it has been used not only a chapel but has provided a place for people to meet and interact which is so important in a rural village such as Fowlmere.

Its position too, in the centre of the village makes it accessible and convenient. It would be tragic if it were to be lost to the community after so many years of being not only a place of worship but a place which has offered comfort and a great benefit to the community.

### Testimonial 4)

The Chapel Hall has been a home from home for my son. He is four now and attends the playgroup there. It is the only affordable childcare in the village and it is brilliant. It is great that we can walk there every day - my four year old often goes on his bike too. It's one of the only things we don't have to get in the car for. It has a lovely outdoor space for the playgroup children and they often walk round the corner to the Round Moat for 'Wellies in the Woods' sessions (bug hunting, den building, bark rubbing, etc etc) - it's really convenient for that - not too far for little legs.

When we moved to the village 2 years ago, we didn't know anyone. But because of the playgroup at the Chapel Hall, we soon became part of the community. My son made friends there and I joined the committee and we connected with other families in the village through fundraising efforts and social events.

The Chapel Hall is the real centre of the village particularly for young families.

## Appendix A: Testimonials for the ACV application continued

### Testimonial 5)

I would like to take this opportunity to express my gratitude to this great part of our community, that has brought me many happy memories.

Fowlmere Playgroup is an amazing asset to the Village. It's been running for over 40 years and is still thriving which is an amazing achievement. I have great memories attending as a child and my children also have had many happy years there. It supports the development of children, so that they are ready to attend the local primary school, providing the perfect stepping stone from early years education into Key Stage 1.

The School house has also hosted many great community events:

- A Fowlmere Got Talent Afternoon
- Christmas Nativity
- Many Christmas Bazaars.
- Voting in Local and general elections.

From my own personal experience, I have used it for children's birthday parties. I have also used the Chapel for my own Wedding and for my children's Christenings.

Today I went to the last URC Service. Whilst sitting in the Chapel the church was full. A community that still comes together and I would love to see it continue to provide a safe space a for whatever the future holds.

It has so much potential to provide a hub for all ages of the community.

### Testimonial 6)

We couldn't be happier with Fowlmere Playgroup, it is an outstanding facility. My husband and I think it's a fantastic setting with amazing staff and facilities so we are very disappointed that we may lose this asset to the village. Our son is happy and settled at the playgroup and we would not want to have to move him elsewhere if it were to close.

As a working mum, having this local, reliable, and well-run playgroup is a massive help. The Playgroup is an amazing part of the community and a safe environment. Alternative playgroups are some distance away with the need to travel by car and park at a drop off point. At present, we can walk to Fowlmere Playgroup which is better for us and the environment.

## Appendix A: Testimonials for the ACV application continued

### Testimonial 7)

With sadness I heard about the plan of the reformed church to sell off their Fowlmere church. We lived in Fowlmere from 2010 until 2022 and were regular users of the church hall. Our children attended Fowlmere playgroup, the school held Christmas carol concerts in the church, children's birthday parties were celebrated and I hired the hall for social gatherings like music evenings where adults from the villages would gather and play music to each other. My parents, reformed Christians from the Netherlands, used to attend church services when they visited us. And of course not to mention the role of the hall in the elections.

It is paramount that these services keep being provided for local residents as other alternatives are unsuitable. St Mary's does not have a similar hall for rental and the Village Hall is far to big and expensive for ordinary people to hire regularly.

I would like to urge to consider the URC as an "Asset of Community Value" so this can be used for future generations.

### Testimonial 8)

As a family resident in Fowlmere, I am writing to express our support for the registration of the United Reformed Church (URC) building as an Asset of Community Value with South Cambs District Council. Our daughter attended the village playgroup, that is held in the premises, for a year and a half before going on to Fowlmere School. Being able to attend the local village playgroup was of huge importance to us both practically and socially, and enabled our daughter to integrate into the local community and make friends that she would go alongside with to school. In a village with a fairly low level of amenities (i.e. shop, post office), being part of the playgroup also helped us as parents integrate into the village community and helped hugely with the transition to school. The URC serves the playgroup very well as it has a good sized, secure and bright outdoor space and is in a fairly central position in the village, enabling most attendees to walk. There are also outdoor places nearby in the village for the children to visit on occasion for forest school for example; helping them to become familiar with their local area, and to appreciate their natural environment. We have also attended musical concerts put on by the school and playgroup nativity performances in the chapel, which worked very well as a space for these events. The URC is an important part of our community and we would be very glad to see it continue to be available for our village.

## Appendix A: Testimonials for the ACV application continued

### Testimonial 9)

As a resident of Fowlmere for over 30 years, I'd like to add my support to designating the URC site as an asset of community value. In addition to its spiritual side, it's always been a very valuable resource for the community. We have had many Parish Council meetings there, and of course it's been ideal as our Polling Station for many years. I know also from many other residents that it's been a really valuable venue for the Playgroup.

As a space, it has a very different character from the Village Hall, and of course is much closer to the centre of the Village. And although we are in the countryside, the grounds of the site give a valuable feeling of open space in the village. I think its potential as an arts and performance centre for the village is particularly exciting.

I strongly support registering it as an ACV.

### Testimonial 10)

It was very sad that the URC had to close, but it would be good news if the Parish Council were able to buy it to keep it in community use.

### Testimonial 11)

My family have proudly been part of the United Reformed Church (URC) community for many generations and fully support the Parish Council's motion to register the building as a community asset.

My grandfather attended the church and provided musical accompaniment on Sunday, Easter and Christmas services, my mother and I then carried on this tradition by playing the organ at services for a number of years. My parents were married at the church in 1963 and my brother and I were christened there and attended Sunday school along with other friends in the village. My three children were also christened at the church and had happy years attending Fowlmere Playgroup which found its home at the church hall. As the children grew older, we used the hall for birthday parties and have attended functions in the building that raised funds for the village and charitable organisations.

My family has also contributed to the physical history of the building, as the names of passed relatives are written on the walls in the clock tower, and in more recent years my father, brother and I, have extended and maintained the building, along with other members of the village community.

## **Appendix A: Testimonials for the ACV application continued**

### **Testimonial 12)**

The URC buildings have probably touched the lives of more people in the village than any other given its wide range of uses over the years.

From a personal perspective we have used the playgroup for all 3 of our children, attended concerts, hired the space for birthday parties, voted in elections and attended Parish Council and other meetings there.

Most significantly for us we also used the buildings for our daughter's celebration of life after she passed away in 2014. We were immensely grateful that the URC minister at the time was fully supportive in allowing us to hold a humanist service there.

As the buildings enter a new phase, being sold by the URC, it is essential that it remains an asset for the community to use and treasure both now and for many decades to come.

### **Testimonial 13)**

I am hoping that the Parish Council can register the Fowlmere United Reformed Church and School room as an Asset of Community Value.

At least 5 generations of my family have been Christened and Married there and at least 3 generations had their Funeral there.

The School room has been used for many things including Brownies, Guides, Sunday School, parties, Polling Station, coffee mornings, lunch clubs, bazaars and not least Playgroup. If we lose the hall there is nowhere else that is suitable to hold it in the village and this thriving and well subscribed playgroup would have to close, which shouldn't be allowed to happen.

### **Testimonial 14)**

In the 14 years that I've lived in the village, I have used the chapel and it's associated hall for a variety of reasons.

Not only in its most regular uses as polling station and playgroup premises (which both of my children attended, as well as my wife back in the day!) but also to attend parish meetings, to host birthday parties and to attend funerals. The grounds are even home to memorials for members of my wife's family.

The acquisition of the hall and/or attendant chapel as an asset will ensure the future of a well-needed versatile community space, whose existence and availability are sorely needed in a village where there are precious few such spaces available.

### **Testimonial 15)**

We love Fowlmere Playgroup! We moved to the area from London last August. The staff are so friendly, welcoming and brilliant with the children providing them with a great variety of activities both indoors and outdoors.

Playgroup has not only helped my daughter grow in confidence, but has helped me meet other Mums and feel part of a community. I have also had the opportunity to be part of the Thrift Sale, which is a great way to bring people together and help continue a Fowlmere Playgroup Tradition.

I would be lost without the Fowlmere Playgroup.

## Appendix A: Testimonials for the ACV application continued

### Testimonial 16)

I would just like to offer a few words of testimony faced with the potential sale of URC Fowlmere and its loss as a community asset.

As a small village with a strong sense of community, the URC played an important part in our lives in Fowlmere, particularly when my children were younger. We hired the attached hall there for numerous birthday parties for our children, and have many happy memories of these. Although there is also a larger village hall in Fowlmere, the smaller size of the URC is much safer and more appropriate for young children.

As the “home” of Fowlmere Playgroup, the loss of the hall at the URC would have an enormous impact on the village. As stated above, the smaller size and safe environment of the grounds for this purpose is ideal, and the playgroup plays a vital role in preparing children for the transition to primary school, which would be difficult to replicate elsewhere.

It was always lovely when events such as concerts and plays were held in the URC, allowing the children who had moved on to primary school to come full circle, and return to a place which had been pivotal in their lives. This really helped to underline the importance of the village as a community and a place for the residents to come together.

I sincerely hope that the URC buildings can remain as a village asset. Its use as a polling station, party venue, playgroup and a host of events of all kinds, to name but a few, really is irreplaceable.

### Testimonial 17)

Can I register support for the purchase of the chapel. I believe that it would be such an asset to the village, and if the hire charges are reasonable, then it would be a very attractive venue for wedding receptions, humanist funerals, cinema club, pods created upstairs for home workers, adult education classes, the list goes on.

It is a unique venue, central to the village

## Appendix A: Testimonials for the ACV application continued

### Testimonial 18)

Uses in the past include

1. Playgroup for more than 40 years. Parents who used it as children are now taking their children themselves.
2. Parish council and other meetings in the Hall.
3. Birthday parties, Christmas parties, Wedding receptions and other social events in the Hall.
4. Church services, Sunday school and associated events such as Church fairs, fetes and luncheon clubs
5. Concerts and recitals, including “Fowlmere’s Got Talent” and also rehearsals for similar events.
7. Art exhibitions organised as part of the harvest weekends which were organised in past years.
8. Polling station for many decades for local and national elections.
9. Other public meetings.

If the ground floor of the Chapel itself were able to be converted into a more flexible space by means of removing the pews, and using movable chairs instead, then the building's versatility would be greatly improved, particularly as regards performance events such as concerts, gigs, plays and drama, including for drama groups/clubs, poetry readings, art classes and exhibitions, film nights and the like. There could also be the opportunity for providing either a permanent or pop up post office-cum-shop.

All these uses and many others which may be mentioned by other residents should be considered in the context of the effect on the village if, say, the Chapel were to be sold for conversion and use as a private residence or possibly a commercial premises;

The Playgroup would be homeless and possibly disband, as the Village Hall, has relatively inflexible accommodation in that the main hall is too large a space to be used for the Playgroup, and has no secure outside space for under fives to play safely. Into the bargain, the Village Hall is on the outskirts of the village, rather than the more central location occupied by the Chapel and its Hall. There would also be no suitable or similarly convenient space within the village where the variety of other activities listed above could be held.

This in the context of the village having lost many of its previous amenities, eg three public houses including a small hall previously used for social events at the Black Horse, and a social club, and the local shop and post office. The social and cultural life of the village would therefore suffer considerably if the Chapel and Hall were not to be available on the basis being considered.

The Chapel and its Hall have served the village and its residents in the above ways for the past 266 years. It is held as a building in great affection by those who live here. If it were able to be retained by agreement with the URC as a village amenity/hub, this would be a great blessing to the people of Fowlmere, and provide a practical as well as a spiritual legacy.

In all this, the significance of the Chapel and Hall and their association with Whitehall [now a private residence] in Chapel Lane over hundreds of years is historically, spiritually and culturally profound. Whitehall was built as a non conformist Academy in what was then a strongly non-conformist/Parliamentary area, this having developed as a result of the village’s proximity to Cambridge, itself the cradle of the English Reformation. The Chapel was a natural extension of this. Its continued use as described would be of incalculable benefit to the future of Fowlmere and its residents.

## Appendix B: Responses from Community-Led Plan

Fowlmere Parish Council surveyed the parish in April 2024 for its Community-Led Plan, asking a comprehensive series of questions about life in the village, including general questions about what facilities residents most appreciate and what additional facilities they would like to see available. There were 172 responses, and these appeared to be broadly representative of the village population, with an even gender distribution and responses from working people, students and those in retirement broadly in line with the latest census figures. The responses were also distributed well across people who had lived in Fowlmere for a short or long period of time.

Here we include a summary of the responses to selected questions that are of relevance to the proposal to develop the Chapel as a community venue.

### **“What do you like least about living in Fowlmere?”**

This question generated 164 responses.

82 of these included a complaint about the lack of amenities in the village, citing the lack of a village shop and the lack of community activities and facilities.

### **“What village-based clubs, groups or activities would you like to see developed in Fowlmere for adults?”**

This question generated 119 responses.

The two most popular options ticked were ‘Adult education classes’ (49%) and ‘Local interest/history group’ (32%). Other popular options ticked included ‘Music classes/groups’ (24%), ‘Art classes’ (22%), ‘Community workshop’ (21%) and ‘Social society (e.g. Women’s institute, Men’s breakfast)’ (19%). Suggested additional responses included ‘Board games’, ‘Whist drive’, ‘Book group’, ‘Photography’, ‘Hack space’, ‘Tool library’, ‘Cinema club’ & ‘Craft group’.

### **“How would you describe the Fowlmere you would like to see and in which you would like to live?”**

This question generated 170 responses.

The three most popular descriptions ticked were ‘Friendly’ (90%), ‘Well-kept’ (81%) and ‘Welcoming’ (78%).

### **“Do any adults in your household travel outside Fowlmere to access any clubs, groups, or activities?”**

This question generated 163 responses.

68% of respondents ticked ‘Yes’.

### **“What additional indoor facilities/venues would you use if they were available in the parish?”**

This question generated 59 responses.

These were varied and many overlap with the aims of the Community Hub described in this plan. Responses included ‘Shop’, ‘Post office’, ‘Centrally-located café’, ‘Community hub’, ‘Library’, ‘Performance space’, ‘Live music’, ‘Art/craft/music space’, ‘Film club’ & ‘Quiet study space’.

### **“Would you like to see any new community events in Fowlmere? If yes, please give details of the events you would like to see”**

This question generated 117 responses.

56% of respondents ticked ‘Yes’. Suggested events included ‘Bring back the beer barrel race’, ‘Cinema club’, ‘Artisan markets’, ‘Community singing’, ‘Art exhibitions’, ‘Theatre group’, ‘Discussion groups’, ‘Local musician events’, ‘Farmers’ market’, ‘Quiz nights’, ‘Coffee events’, ‘Activities for teenagers’ & ‘Village hub’.

### **“Are there any buildings or land in Fowlmere that you think could further the social wellbeing or social interests of the local community? Please state location and ideas for use.”**

This question generated 71 responses.

By far the most popular responses were ‘The Chapel’ (cited 25 times) and ‘The Swan Inn’ (cited 19 times). Others included ‘The turkey sheds’, ‘The Village Hall’ & ‘The Round Moat’.

## Appendix C: Notes on capital costs and projected accounts

### Funding sources

All four scenarios for refurbishment are based on the same Parish Council contribution of £150k from the Ronald Arthur Ward endowment and a Public Works Board (PWB) loan of £100k. The minimal refurbishment scenario has been used as point of reference, where fundraising of £50k brings the total to approximately £300k. The 50/50 split of funding discussed in the main document is between the endowment and the combined funds raised via the PWB loan and other fundraising.

In the moderate and comprehensive scenarios, additional funding beyond this value is used to fund a greater degree of refurbishment. The grant from the Plunkett Foundation has been used to fund costs incurred during the preparation of this plan (surveys and professional advice).

### Capital costs

The purchase price in these tables is based on the valuation supplied by the United Reformed Church Synod. Fees for the survey and professional advice are known as they have already been paid. Conveyancing fees are rounded up from a market-based estimate of £1600. Planning costs in each scenario are conservative estimates based on current fees which reflect the increasing planning complexity in each case. Architect fees are estimated at about 7.5% of the building cost. Legal costs are estimated at about 2.5% of the building cost, with an economy of scale factored in. Furnishing costs assume that a number of good, durable chairs and tables will be purchased for flexible use. In the lower refurbishment scenarios this might be supplemented by some cheaper chairs that could be upgraded at a later date. The remainder of the funds available in each case are assigned to building costs, reflecting the different levels of project ambition that each fundraising level enables.

## Appendix C: Notes on capital costs and projected accounts continued

### Projected expenditure

The Public Works Board loan interest and repayment rates are based on repayment over 50 years at the current interest rate of 5.2%.

Advertising and marketing costs would mostly cover printed material, covering an indicative 10 print runs at £50 each for the low take-up scenario. Audit fees are based on Parish Council costs. Business rates are for 2024 and assume the 80% discount available to registered charities. The estimate for consumables is a simple buffer of £10 per week.

Cleaning is assumed to be done on a voluntary basis as today in the low take-up scenario, with professional cleaning added to reflect the increased use in the higher take-up scenarios. The same approach is applied to administration, with this being handled voluntarily in the low take-up scenario, and a part-time administration allocation for 10–12 hours per week added in the higher scenarios.

The repair fund contribution is for a sinking fund to pay towards building repairs, which will be highly variable from year to year. The figures are based broadly on the costs of repairs in recent years. It is expected that this would be supplemented by targeted fundraising as has been the case for the Chapel in the past. This is the model adopted for most historic buildings that require regular maintenance and occasional expensive repairs. Refuse collection costs and fire safety costs are based on recent figures. Broadband costs reflect current rates for basic and higher-speed services. Insurance, electricity, oil and water costs are also based on recent figures for the Chapel, with the service costs scaled up to reflect the expected higher levels of use.

Finally, there is a catch-all 'misc' category to cover any estimates that are not conservative enough.

### Projected income

Projected income from the Parish Council is taken as the amounts paid at present for meetings and storage. Projected income from the playgroup is taken from current rates with a small inflation-based increase. Hire rates of £10 per hour for the schoolroom and £12 per hour for the main Chapel are used to estimate income from event, meeting and party use, based on 2 rentals per week in the low take-up scenario. The same projection is made for educational use. Income from clubs is estimated on a similar basis but at a slightly lower usage rate. In the medium take-up scenario, it is assumed that the second regular client would use the facilities for around 6 hours per week. In the low take-up scenario, there are four gigs per year, each making a profit of £500, and these increase in the higher take-up scenarios. Polling station income is assumed to remain at current rates. Council outreach income is assumed to be modest in the low take-up scenario, based on perhaps two events in the year, each bringing in £100. Income from the sale of exhibited art is assumed to be modest, with a 10% commission on the sale of £20 of art per week on average in the low take-up scenario. Fundraising estimates for the low take-up scenario are based on similar fundraising achieved by volunteers running the Chapel in recent years.