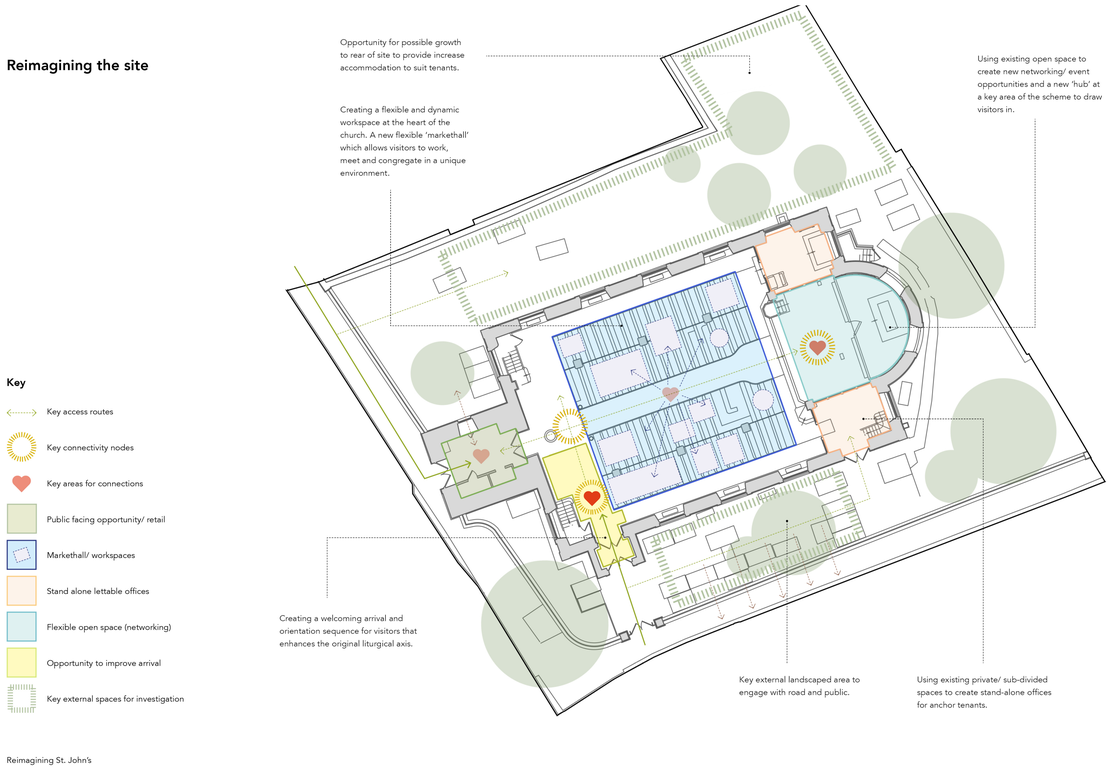
Saving St John’s - What ideas are there for the future of St John’s?

St John’s has not functioned as a place of worship for forty years. Nor has it ever found a sustainable new use, where the activities that take place in the building generate enough income to cover maintenance, repair and utilities costs. As a result, the condition of the building has deteriorated.

Capital investment of up to £1m is required to solve the problems of water ingress, repair the fabric, reinstate lost plasterwork, redecorate, and conserve the box pews and other special features.



Reimagining St. John’s



Investment is required to provide the facilities -WCs, kitchen, disabled access, separate meeting rooms, heating and lighting – that would enable the building to be used more effectively. Funding for measures to protect the building against future floods, to improve its nergy efficiency and to maintain the churchyard so that it is a benefit to people and nature is also required. Lancaster City Council has pledged 20% of the capital costs (up to £500,000) towards conservation repair work that supports a sustainable use for the building.

In 2020, with funding from the Architectural Heritage Fund, the CCT commissioned Buttress Architects to explore how St John’s might be sensitively converted for a new use.The Buttress proposals are for a ‘marketplace’ in the nave at St John’s and an extension in the north-eastern corner of the churchyard. This would provide flexible co-working and event space for businesses and entrepreneurs to work, meet, and host events.

In order to generate this scale of investment and keep up with future running costs, the building needs a new use. The CCT is exploring a partnership with the Lancaster & District Chamber of Commerce to create a co-working space at St John’s. The Chamber was founded in 1897 and is firmly rooted in the business community. Its principal aim is to create an environment where businesses in North Lancashire can grow and prosper.

Buttress

AHF Transforming Heritage
www.ahfund.org.uk

Churches Conservation Trust