



The story so far

1992

Old village hall demolished

Avonwick's first Village Hall, next to the old School House on the Plymouth Road, was demolished in 1992, having become unsafe.



2011

Space for new hall allocated

To allow the sale of land at Higher Moor and the building of the Higher Moor estate, land was set aside for community use next to the Tennis Club on Blackhall Lane. The land was specifically assigned for a play area and site for a future village hall.



2014

Hall working group set up

Although land had been assigned, there was no mechanism set up for developing plans for a hall or funds for building one. A group of residents met to form an initial committee to look into the practicality of building a new hall. This became the Avonwick and North Huish Community Hall Project (ANHCHP).



2014

First Apple Pie Fair

The ANHCHP organised a community fair to begin engagement with the community.



2015

Residents' survey shows majority support

An external body, Catalyst, was commissioned to carry out a survey to determine whether there was a need or desire for a new hall in Avonwick.

The survey was delivered to every household in the parish, and 62% of the parish responded.

84% supported the concept of a new community hall for the parish.

2015

Desktop feasibility study

The ANHCHP commissioned APSE architects to check the suitability of the hall site. They considered a wide range of factors including the site's geology, flood risk, ecology, restrictions on the land and more. The study found few likely obstacles to development, but listed access and parking as areas of concern.

2016

Meeting with SHDC

The ANHCHP met with South Hams District Council's Planning and Highways teams to discuss the community hall land. This threw up additional parking requirements that would exceed the space available.

2016

Parking problems

The ANHCHP approached the owner of the surrounding land to discuss whether it might be theoretically possible to purchase or lease additional land for overflow parking. This was refused.

2016

Project parked

We held a further meeting with the landowner, at which we were informed that alternative plans were being drawn up for the church, and that we might be approached for help with funding: the ANHCHP were asked, and agreed, not to reveal this until the church's plans were made public. We also agreed to wait for those plans to see if they would meet the needs of the community before pursuing the parking issue.

A long wait began.

2020

Church plans revealed...

Planning permission for alterations to the Church to create a small meeting space with kitchenette and lavatory were published in early 2020.

2020

...as Covid-19 arrives

The pandemic promptly threw everything into disarray.

2021

Plans at the Tennis Club

Avon Vale Tennis Club began to seek funding for improvements to the club's pavilion. The club approached the ANHCHP to see if the building might meet the community's needs and to request help with funding if it would.

2021

So here we are...

With three 'community space' projects going on without much publicity, we thought we ought to get you all together to see what's the best way forward.



The ideal hall?

Considering the responses to the Community Survey, and after discussion with the Community Hall Project, APSE architects drafted a rough estimate of the spatial requirements for a full-size hall. This would be a building of approximately 432 square metres (4650 square feet) and include:

- * A main hall to seat 120 banquet style (160 in rows)
- * A meeting room to hold up to 30 people
- * Storage for equipment, including a demountable stage
- * A bar area
- * Foyer with space for coat racks
- * An office for managing the hall
- * Lavatories, including enhanced ladies' facilities
- * Changing room for sports or productions
- * Optional library

Potential space available	Main hall 134 square metres (1440 square feet) Side room 40 square metres (430 square feet)
WCs	Four ladies', three gents', one accessible
Kitchen	Catering kitchen
Additional facilities	Ladies' and gents' changing rooms Dedicated bar area Office
Ownership	Community via charitable body
Use & Availability	Unrestricted use



Site Feasibility Study

A desktop feasibility study was carried out by APSE architects to determine the suitability of the site for a hall seating 120 people 'banquet style' with a side-hall for 50. This considered 12 issues.

Issue	Threat to viability
Geology	Unlikely
Archaeology	Unlikely
Ecology	Unlikely
Flood Risk	Unlikely
Land Use	Unlikely
Contamination	Unlikely
Vehicular access, travel and transport	Possible

Issue	Threat to viability
Utilities	Unlikely
Landscape Character	Unlikely
Planning Context	Possible
Spatial Requirements	Likely
Easements/Covenants/RoW	Possible

🌸 Vehicle access

The site's access from Blackhall Lane has poor visibility.

🌸 Planning Context

This is a green field site in an AONB, which would normally be unsuitable for a hall. However, the allocation of the site specifically for a hall in the Higher Moor Section 106 agreement would increase the likelihood of being able to build a hall on the site.

🌸 Spatial Requirements

The land is not large enough for the scoped hall and sufficient parking: SHDC would likely require at least 15 permanent spaces.

🌸 Easements/Covenants

The original deeds to the land have not been seen.



What *could* fit?

The space allocated for a village hall must have been chosen for a reason, and it must have been calculated in a way that satisfied South Hams District Council's planners: unfortunately, no-one knows what calculation was used to specify the land required.

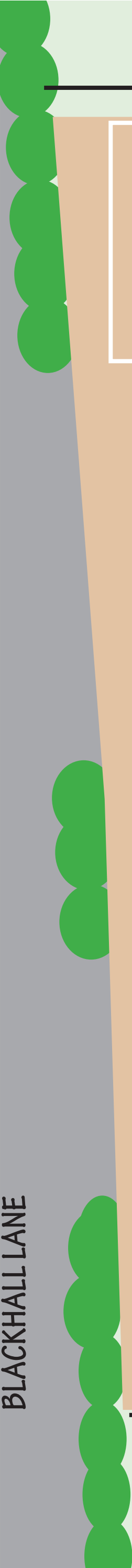
Balancing the size of the hall with the minimum parking requirement for a building of its size, we believe that a small facility *might* - just - fit on the site if almost every inch of land were used and only the minimum parking, in the tightest permitted configuration, were provided.

This would include a main hall large enough for three carpet bowls mats, or two table-tennis tables, but not badminton. The space would seat up to 90 either with a temporary stage or 'banquet' style; with overflow parking, up to 120 could be seated in rows.

A side room large enough for small meetings (which could also house bookshelves), a modest kitchen and the required lavatories would be included, as well as a store room.

Potential space available	Main hall 100 square metres (1080 square feet) Side room 25 square metres (270 square feet)
WCs	Two ladies', Two gents', one accessible
Kitchen	Fitted kitchen 4 x 3.7m (13' x 12')
Ownership	Community
Use & Availability	Unrestricted use

BLACKHALL LANE



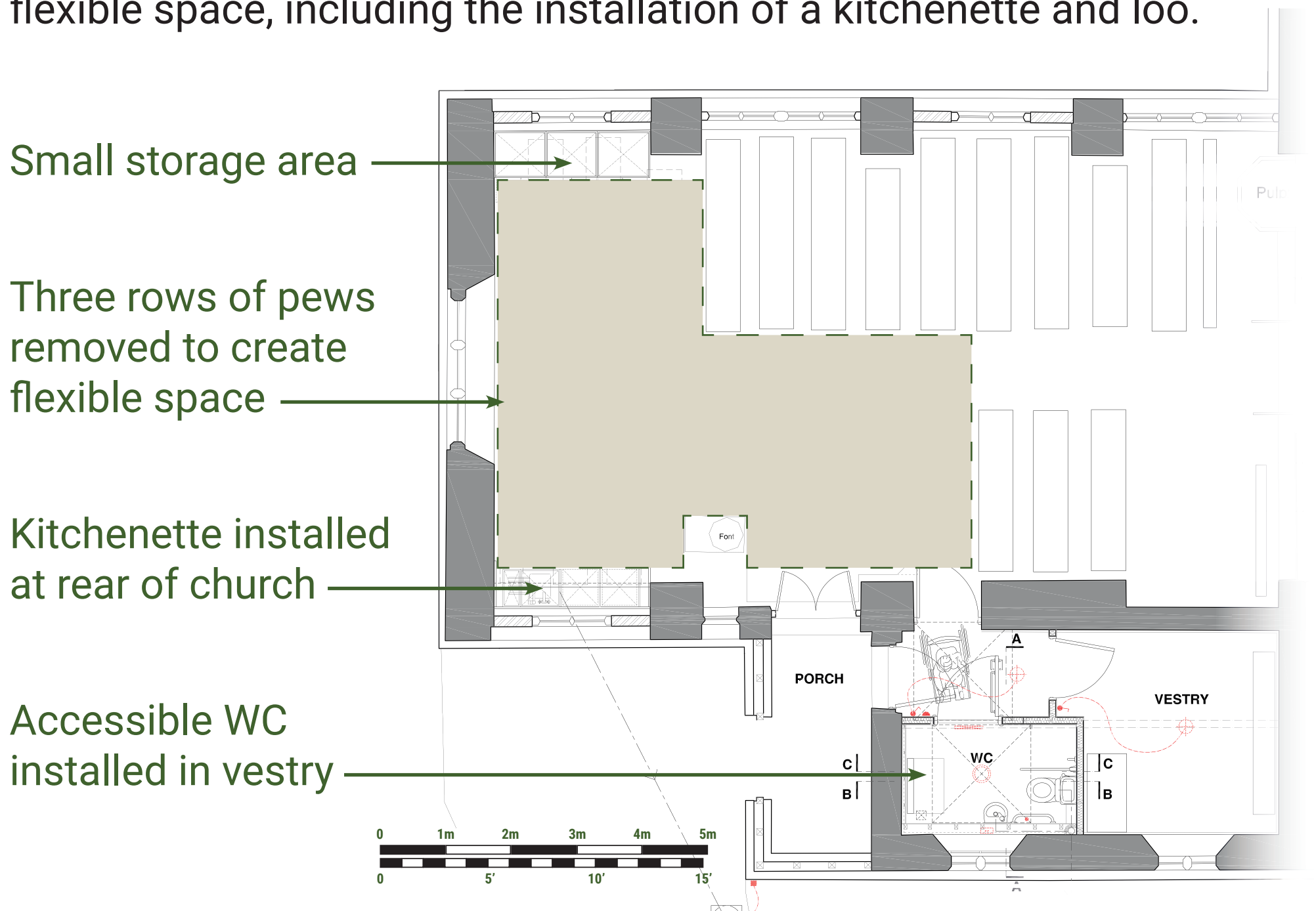
Field





Plans for the church

The Church Council of the Church of St James have planning permission to modify the Grade I listed building to provide a more flexible space, including the installation of a kitchenette and loo.



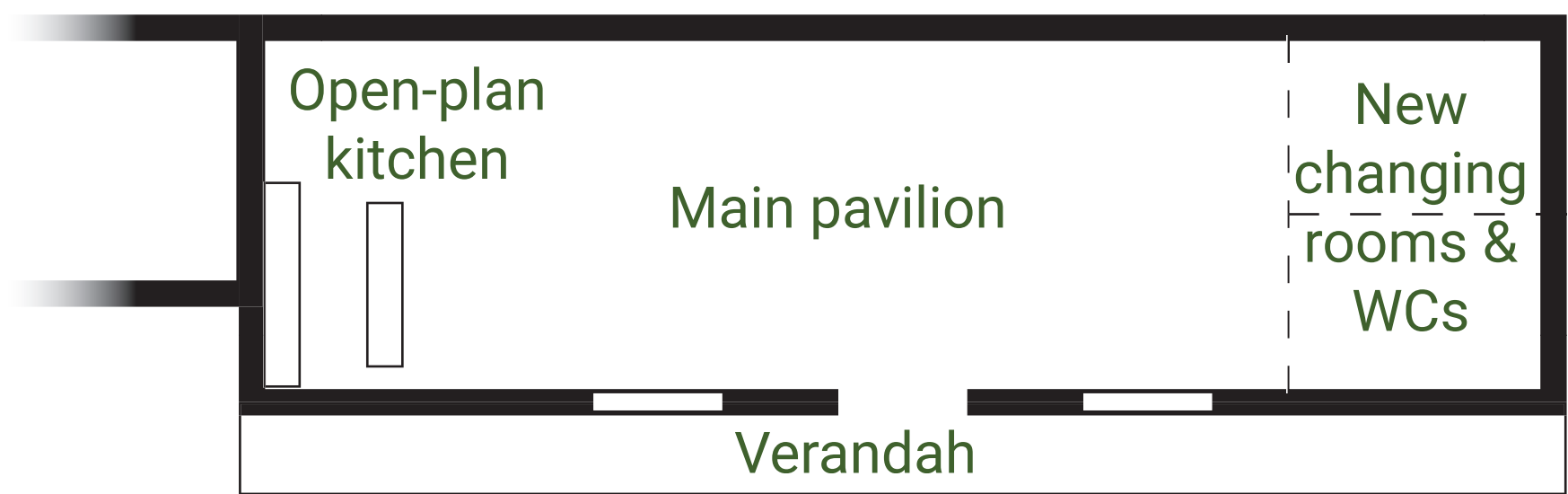
Potential space available	35 square metres (375 square feet) of clear space, plus pews
WCs	One
Kitchen	Drinks/cold snacks only
Additional facilities	None
Ownership	Black Hall Estate
Use & Availability	Some restrictions by nature of religious building



Plans for the club

The Avon Vale Tennis and Croquet Club have plans to improve their pavilion to make it more usable throughout the year, including:

- * Installation of mains electricity
- * Improved water supply
- * New loos and changing rooms
- * New roof



Potential space available	After modifications, about 72 square metres (775 square feet)
WCs	Ladies' and Gents'
Kitchen	Open-plan fitted kitchen
Additional facilities	Changing rooms Tennis and croquet courts for members
Ownership	Avon Vale Tennis & Croquet Club
Use & Availability	Available when not required by club



Meeting local needs

The residents' survey of 2015 identified many uses that were popular with the respondents. Here is a summary of the most popular responses, and their likely ability to be held in each facility.

Activity	Number replies	Community Hall		Tennis Club		Church	
		Day	Eve.	Day	Eve.	Day	Eve.
Drama & Entertainment	127	Y	Y	N	N	Y	Y
Dances	125	Y	Y	N	N	N	N
Socials		Y	Y	N	N	Y	Y
Coffee mornings	119	Y		Y		Y	
Breakfast Club	118	Y		Y		Y	
Over 60's luncheon club	100	Y		Y		Y	
Keep fit, Zumba, Yoga, Pilates	98	Y	Y	Y	N	N	N
Film nights	95		Y		Y		Y
Library	88	Y	Y	N	N	Y	Y
Community events	79	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Crafts and Produce Fairs	76	Y		Y		Y	Y
Whist drives/Bridge	72	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Dance Classes	71	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	N
Arts and Craft Classes	65	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	Y
Educational Classes	64	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Badminton	59	N	N	N	N	N	N
Private parties	51	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Giving blood	48	Y		Y		N	
Table Tennis	47	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	N
Exhibitions/Shows	44	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	Y