

A CHURCH which has served the community for 900 years is in desperate need of repairs and refurbishments.

The Mail (online news)

Ulverston Parish Church has launched a restoration project which it is estimated could cost up to £1.4m. This figure was an estimate from architects and quantity surveyors for vital repair work on the tower, the stone work on the main building, as well as refurbishments for spaces such as the youth hub and the debt relief centre.

Church leaders are hoping the work will be completed by April 2022 if the money is raised soon enough.

Alan Bing, rector of Ulverston Parish Church, said: "We hope this figure is realistic, however we may have to scale it back based on how much money we raise. The repair work to the church is the priority as we have a duty to protect the ancient building."

The church tower was built in the 1540s and it is hoped heritage funding can be obtained. It is also hoped the project will attract community funding due to a plan of making the 'tired' parish room a community hub.

Robert Brown, an Ulverston town councillor, said: The restoration project is important for the area as the church is the centre of this community and its history."

The damage was brought to the attention of bosses in a recent building inspection. It was caused by the use of cement mortars which is making much of the stonework crumble and decay. It was standard practice in the mid 1900s to replace lime mortar with cement. It is only over time that it has become apparent that cement pointing traps moisture and results in damage to the stone and the structure in the church.

The repair work required starts with the tower which needs repointing, followed by stone replacement, removal of damaged plaster and internal linings, as well as the replacement of the timbers.

After the repair work is completed the church is aiming to improve the youth hub in the basement by making it more accessible for those with mobility issues. Church bosses would like space where activities can be held, teaching and training is given, and events can be celebrated.

One big component of this is the debt relief centre which they launched recently where they have partnered up with Christians Against Poverty to provide financial advice.

