Diocese of Durham

Church of St Anne, Bishop Aukland

Ecclesiastical Jurisdiction and Care of Churches Measure 2018

Quinquennial Report

On the architect's inspection of

24th July 2022

Archdeaconry of Aukland
Deanery of Aukland
Grade II listed – In Bishop Aukland Conservation Area

Incumbent – Reverend Matt Keddilty

Report prepared by

Sarah Harrison RIBA

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REVISION A

Dates of inspection – 24/07/2025
Weather – Partially overcast warm and dry, 18°C

Date of report – August 2025
Date of previous inspection – July 2020

PART ONE

1. Inspection notes

1.1 I have made a thorough general survey of the condition of the church and grounds. The inspection was such as could readily be made from ground, ladder, and roof valley levels. I have not inspected woodwork or other parts of the structure which are covered, unexposed or inaccessible and I am therefore unable to report that any such part is free from defect. None of the services were tested. Damp meters were not used.

1.2 It is not obvious that there are any asbestos containing materials in the church, however it could still be found in such things as 20th century additions or pipe lagging. This report is not a survey under the Control of Asbestos Regulations 2012. If the PCC determines that a survey is required following their own assessment, a specialist contractor should be approached. The parish should make themselves familiar with the guidance provided to parishes by the HSE through The Church of England website.

1.3 We must stress that we have not carried out any investigation to determine whether any high alumina cement was used during the construction of the building inspected and we are therefore unable to report that the building is free from risk in this respect. In view of the possible potential danger connected with high alumina cement we strongly recommend that the appropriate investigations, inspections, and tests be carried out immediately by a suitably qualified engineer.

2. Brief description

St Anne's Church occupies a prominent position in the Market Place at the heart of Bishop Auckland, immediately adjoining the 19th-century Town Hall which obscures much of its north elevation. The Grade II listed building, designed by local architect William Thompson with advice from Anthony Salvin, was constructed in 1846–48 in a restrained Early English style using coursed rubble local sandstone with ashlar dressings, and steeply pitched Westmorland slate roofs. A later South-East Vestry, built in 1879, is roofed in lead.

Internal View of Nave

Internal view of Chancel

The church comprises a nave with clerestory, chancel, north and south aisles, south porch, vicar's vestry with store above, organ chamber, bell turret, and the South-East Vestry now adapted for toilets and boiler facilities. In the 1980s, the south aisle was altered to provide a café, kitchen, WCs and community rooms at first-floor level, allowing the building to function both as a place of worship and as the St Anne's Community Centre, integrating office space above.

Although the current structure dates from the mid-19th century, the site has a much longer ecclesiastical history, with at least three earlier chapels recorded since the 14th century, the earliest possibly originating in the 12th century as a chapel of ease serving the Bishop of Durham's household at Auckland Castle. Over the centuries, the building has been fully rebuilt and adapted on several occasions to meet the needs of the town's growing population. Internally, the church retains much of its 19th-century character, with timber roof structures, lancet windows, carved oak furnishings, and notable fittings including the 1882 Harrison organ (now out of use due to asbestos contamination), the carved reredos with figures of the four Gospel saints, and stained-glass work by the Percy Bacon Brothers.

St Anne's remains a significant architectural and historic landmark in Bishop Auckland, valued both as a place of worship and as a flexible community venue, continuing the site's centuries-old role as a focus for local life

2.1 Listing Description

BISHOP AUCKLAND

NZ2130 MARKET PLACE 634-1/8/95 Church of St Anne 20/09/72

GV II

Chapel of ease, with railings and gate attached. Incorporating community centre since 1985. On site of medieval chapel. 1846-8. Designed by William Thompson. Built by William Edgar. Alterations 1867, and internal alterations 1893. MATERIALS: coursed squared sandstone with ashlar plinth, quoins and dressings. Graduated Lakeland slate roof with stone gable copings. PLAN: chancel with north organ chamber and south vestry, aisled 4-bay nave with south porch, and west belfry. EXTERIOR: Early English style. East elevation has 3 lancets to chancel, boarded doors in pointed arched surround to aisle and straight headed vestry door. South elevation has 3-light vestry window under low gable with stone cross finial. Other lights lancets, paired in aisles and very long in west, with dripmoulds with head stops. Gabled porch in 3rd nave bay has deeply moulded surround to double boarded doors. West elevation has stepped buttresses to clerestory height, boarded central door in moulded surround, corbelled octagonal belfry rising between lancets to arcaded lancet louvres and stone spirelet. Steeply gabled roofs, lower over chancel and pent on aisles, have stone gable copings with stone cross finials. Railings attached to east end enclose door to chancel aisle and have spike heads and iron gate loop. INTERIOR plastered with ashlar arcades and dressings. Chancel and porch waggon roofs, nave arch braced trusses with high collar with trefoil in western apex. Dripstrings to double chamfered pointed arches of nave arcades with moulded capitals on octagonal piers. South arcade blocked and community centre formed by glazed screen with filleted mullions and transoms. Pointed chancel arch on shafts. Wider organ arches to chancel and north aisle, the latter filled with Gothic wood screen. FITTINGS include chancel panelling and reredos with blind tracery and high cresting, the reredos also having painted panels. Perpendicular tracery to organ arch. Octagonal pulpit with brass handrails, octagonal font of painted stone dated 1892, gift of the children of the Barrington School, with C17 style carved wood cover dated 1893 gift of the teachers. Choir pews have poppyheads and pierced flowing tracery, nave pews have shaped ends with nailhead decoration. Glass with heraldic devices, including arms of Bishop Cosin in west windows, set in clear lights. East window memorial to John Proud and his wife Ellen d.1905 & 1882, figures set in grisaille and signed Percy Bacon Bros 11 Newman Street London. The church paid for by public subscription, including 1,000 guineas from Bishop Maltby. (St Anne's Bishop Auckland; A Brief Historical Sketch: Bishop Auckland; Directory of County Durham: 1894: 328).

Listing NGR: NZ2116630116

3. Previous Inspections

This is the author's first inspection; however, the previous 2020 report has been obtained and was conducted by Geoffrey Holland AABC, who carried out the previous seven inspections. Only the 2019 report was available for reference.

4. Recent recorded works

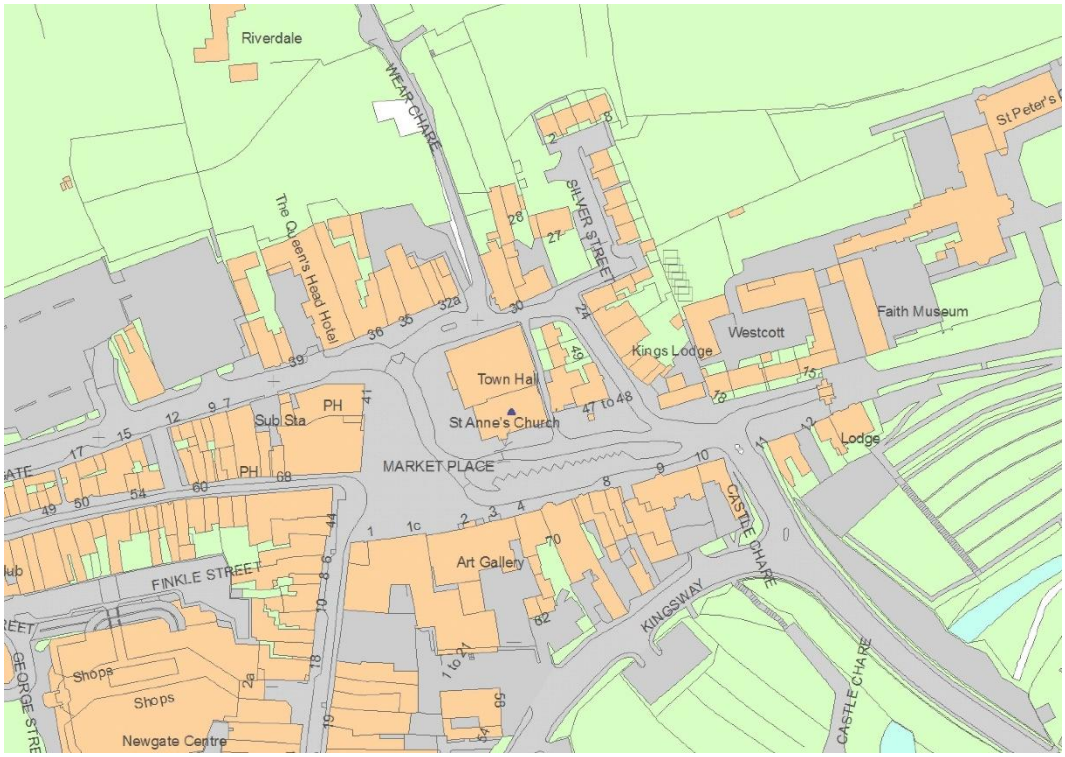
There was no logbook on site and no records available at the time of inspection, the importance of maintaining accurate records cannot be stressed enough. These need to be made available to the QI at each inspection. The previous QI reports some notable works since 2015:

a) Installation of a new boiler serving the rooms on the south side and at first floor level;
b) Installation of new LED and energy saving lighting in the café;
c) Re-decoration of and re-carpeting of first floor south aisle room at west end;
d) Asbestos management survey. This found that there is a coating of asbestos on the walls of the former boiler room, and asbestos fibres in the organ blower which means that the organ chamber has temporarily been condemned.

5. Summary of condition

5.1 St Anne's generally appears structurally sound for the time being, though several issues now require immediate attention. The south roof slopes are failing and will need renewal within the next 12 months, allowing time to prepare specifications and obtain quotations. The floor at the west end of the Nave also requires urgent replacement. Externally, areas of stone decay and open joints will need phased repairs through stone replacement and repointing. As visibility during this survey was limited, the Belfry turret warrants closer inspection. These and other matters are discussed in more detail within the report.

Location Plan of the church (no other plans available – NTS, Courtesy of Historic England)



6. ROOF COVERINGS - *Starting from the northwest, working west to east.*

6.1 North Nave

6.1.1 It is reported previously that all of the north facing roofs were renewed in 2014-15 using predominantly second-hand slates. This was funded in part by the HLF.

6.1.2 Westmorland slate of random widths, laid in diminishing courses, to a very steep pitch. Generally, the condition remains good, with some moss growth towards the top.

6.1.3 The last QI report noted that there were no signs of disturbed areas, though a drip was reported from high level, no such drip was mentioned at this inspection, therefore deemed to be resolved.

6.1.4 Sandstone ridge tiles, all in good condition as far as can be seen from the limited view.

6.1.5 The flashing at the west end is reportedly 'Nicholson's Masterform' and appears in good condition, however the top coping stone appears not to be fully bedded, this should be checked and the joint re-pointed if seated correctly, or re-bedded[1].

Figure 1 – All north roofs

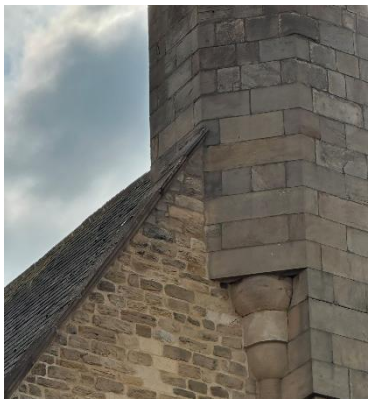


Figure 2 – Coping to NW Nave

Figure 3 – N Chancel and vestry

6.2 Chancel North

6.2.1 As per the Nave, this has Westmorland slates in random widths and formed part of the re-roofing scheme. Some undulation, thought to be due to the differentiation in the thickness of the reclaimed slate, in addition to many slates with chipped corners. None appear broken enough to warrant replacement and given they were second-hand slates, this may have been their condition as fitted.

6.2.2 Ridge is again in sandstone and appears ok from the limited view.

6.2.3 Abutment flashings are neat and undisturbed.

6.3 North Aisle

6.3.1 Part of the re-roofing, materials as above and appears in good condition.

6.3.2 There is a build-up of moss, particularly at the outlet from the nave clerestory rainwater downpipe. The roof is stained in this location and given the amount of water it takes and its hidden location, an extension to this downpipe to take water directly into the valley may be a desirable improvement[2], taking the stain off the tiles in this location.

6.3.3 The flashings to the Nave and chancel and abutments all appear ok.

6.4 Norh Vestry & Organ Chamber

6.4.1 Again, part of the 2015 re-roofing programme. All in good condition.

6.4.2 Felt flashing to the neighbouring brick building, sits low in the valley and water could get behind this if not well sealed, or raised – this is possibly the responsibility of the Town Hall.

6.5 South Nave

6.5.1 As with the north side, the roof is covered in Westmorland slates laid in diminishing courses on a very steep pitch. However, this roof, along with the other southern slopes, was not included in the previous re-roofing scheme.

6.5.2 The condition is very poor, there are many areas of slipped slates, patches of historic replacement and is in desperate need of wholesale re-roofing[3]. There is water ingress internally and light is visible near the bell turret.

6.5.3 The junction with the bell turret has lead flashings and looks to be holding-up from ground level, however given the roof's condition this will need to be re-instated alongside the urgent re-roofing scheme.

6.5.4 The copings to the east have large gaps, particularly towards the top and at the finial, this should be checked for stability[4]. The flashing to the west is in lead and appears ok, to the east there appears to be some cracks in the flaunching.

Figure 4- South Nave and Aisle

Figure 5- E Nave finial

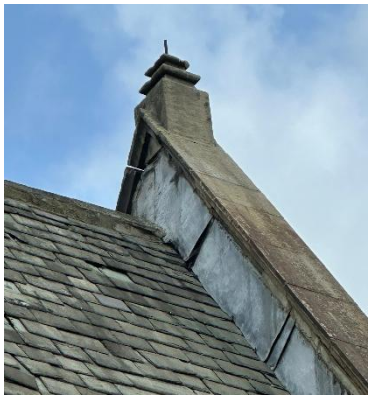


Figure 6 – E Chancel Finial

6.6 **South Chancel**

6.6.1 As per the South Nave and in very poor condition. Many slipped slates, leaving the sarking boards below exposed in several locations. The urgency of this replacement cannot be stressed enough as no action has been taken since the last inspection report which reported a poor and deteriorating condition, serious irreparable damage to the timbers internally could be caused if the roof continues to be left in this condition.

6.6.2 The finial to the east gable has an open joint to the rear, and this should be investigated at close proximity urgently[5], access is good for a cherry-picker.

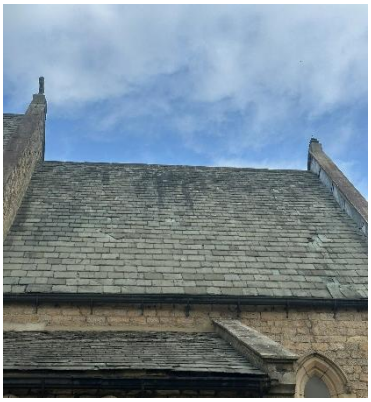


Figure 7- Chancel South

6.7 South Aisle Roof

6.7.1 A more shallow pitch than the nave, but with the same slates, and suffering the same issues. To the west of the porch, a large patch of slates is missing, leaving the sarking boards exposed and many more have slipped to the east and west of the porch. This roof required urgent replacement, it is now beyond reasonable repair[6].

6.7.2 The mortar flashing at the head of the roof appears to have been badly patched in the past, this is now beginning to crack.

6.7.3 There is an extension to the south aisle at the east end, similar to the organ chamber on the north side. This roof has uneven patches of slate, several slates chipped and a couple missing. This does not appear to be as bad as the other roofs, but would be best to be included in the proposed re-roofing scheme. This roof is also likely to see additional damage from slates falling onto it from the chancel.

6.7.4 Lead flashings appear ok, to the eastern parapet, the flaunching is cracked, which appears to be causing water ingress internally.

6.8 South East Vestry (now WCs)

6.8.1 This roof is covered with lead in seven bays, with one drip, falling to the east. There are many patch repairs and a significant amount of debris on this roof, including large fallen slates. These have punctured the lead in a few locations, causing some dents and one split[7]. This will need to be properly repaired but only once the main roofs have been replaced.

6.8.2 It was reported previously that there was a crack in the lead to the southwest corner, it does not appear to have been repaired. There is also a crack to the north east corner, near the outlet. There is also some large vegetation growing in this location, this was partially removed at the time of the visit. The lead in this area will need repairs as another section has come loose completely.

6.8.3 The flashings to the wall of the South aisle and the chancel are in fair condition, the mortar above is beginning to break away.

6.8.4 The middle stone to the south parapet was visibly loose and laid down at the time of inspection to prevent it from falling. This full parapet section requires urgent attention[8].

Figure 8 – SE lead roof (over WCs)

Figure 9 – as item 6.8.4.

6.9 Porch

6.9.1 Westmorland slate in slightly diminishing courses laid to a steep pitch. Generally, not quite as bad as the other southern roofs, but there are still several slipped slates, one patch to the east at high level and to a lesser extent on the west. The risk of severe deterioration is high so full replacement with the other roofs would be better than repairs, given its prominent location if future slates were to slip[9].

6.9.2 The ridge is sandstone and the bedding to the east is missing.

7. Rainwater Goods – The rainwater comes down from the Nave and Chancel roofs to the Aisle roofs via lead hoppers and ogee rainwater pipes. To the north, rainwater is collected in a valley gutter between the church and the town hall. To the south downpipes lead to gulleys.

7.1 The rainwater goods were reportedly renewed 'recently' at the last inspection, but it is unknown when, perhaps as part of the re-roofing scheme to the north in 2015. Some larger pipes now discharge into narrow pipes, limiting flows which could lead to overflowing.

7.2 **Nave -** Cast iron rainwater goods to clerestory, outlets into cast hoppers and onto aisle roofs. Small amounts of debris should be cleared, and this should be done on a regular basis. Generally, they appear ok, though there is evidence to the north that the hopper may be overflowing and staining the wall, this should be checked and remedied as it appears to be causing damage internally[10].

7.3 **North Aisle**

7.3.1 The valley gutter which abuts the town hall has been re-formed and covered with stainless steel, generaly in good condition but there is a build-up of vegetation to the west and some debris in the gutter[11]. The small parapet upstand was also re-covered with 'Nicholson's Masterform'.

7.3.2 The lower box valley over the town hall section is in a single-ply fleece backed membrane and in good condition, although there is a lot of moss build up which would be best cleared (this may be the

Figure 10 – N valley

responsibility of the town hall – who have an access door to this section). Further to the east over the organ this changes to what appears to be a GRP type product. This is not finished well at the outlet to the east.

7.3.3 The gutter in the centre of the North Aisle roof takes water from the Town Hall next door via 100 mm diameter rainwater pipe and there is some responsibility on the Town Hall to maintain the gutter and the rainwater goods.

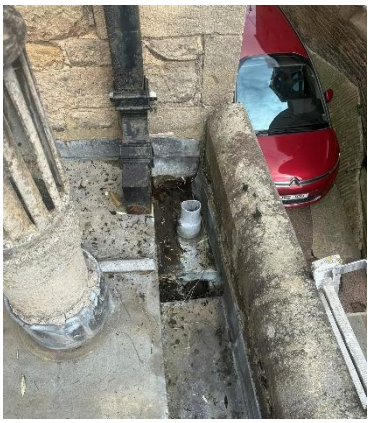


Figure 11 – SE Vestry & chancel

7.4 **South Aisle** – Cast iron box eaves gutters, rusted and there was reportedly evidence of leaks at junctions. These should be overhauled in conjunction with the roof replacement[12]. The gutter at high level is a large section ogee cast iron gutter falling East and West which requires redecoration. The gutter above the fifth lancet from the west appears to be broken and leaking badly with staining on the south aisle roof below. It should be repaired as soon as possible. The base section is missing to the SE downpipe.

7.5 **SE Vestry (WC's) –** The rainwater hopper and outlet to the east side is completely blocked by vegetation. Some cleared but a thorough clear will be necessary. The downpipe from the chancel has a base section which is completely loose and simply sitting on the lead roof[13].

7.6 **Porch –** large cast iron gutters rusted and in need of decoration and ensuring there are no leaks at the joints.

7.7 **Chancel –** The cast iron gutter and downpipes at the base of the South Chancel roof, which also serve half of the South Nave roof, drain eastwards. These were renewed around fifteen years ago and remain serviceable. A 100mm cast iron rainwater pipe discharges onto the South-East Vestry roof.

7.8 At ground level at the base of the external walls there is paving directly up to the base of the walls and the gulleys are often blocked and full of rubbish and vegetation. These must be attended to on a regular basis[14], it is not evident where these drain to.

8. External Walls & Buttresses

8.1 West Elevation – North Aisle

Figure 12 – N Aisle – W end

8.1.1 The coursed rubble masonry is generally in fair condition, although in some areas hard cement pointing has remained intact while the adjacent stone has weathered. Open joints are evident at low level on the north buttress and beneath the window, and these require repointing. See note regarding the coping in section 6.1, pictured here.

8.1.2 There is staining to the stone that indicates water may overflow onto this elevation from the parapet, though evident, it doesn't have appeared to deteriorate the condition of the stone or pointing.

8.1.3 The low-level iron ventilation grille is broken and needs to be replaced[15].

8.2 West Gable

8.2.1 A tall, narrow west gable dominated by the large bell turret at its apex (See section 8.4, below), with two lancet windows above a central entrance doorway, flanked by smaller windows and buttresses.

8.2.2 Generally, the stonework is in fair condition, though some areas see accelerated erosion, namely below the N lancet, above the southern lancet and buttress, and generally below the copings. Some 2015 repairs are evident, the other areas will need to be monitored for future replacement[16], but currently some localised re-pointing would suffice.

8.2.3 To the base of the walls, the paving directly up to the base of the walls appears to be causing damp areas, this was noted in the last report and may be more evident in wet conditions, but still legible in the prevailing dry conditions, especially to the door jambs.

8.2.4 There are signs of former fractures around the large lancet windows, notably from the bottom right-hand corner of the north lancet extending towards the small rectangular window below, and at the lower left-hand corner of the south lancet. These should be monitored, as they may reflect similar structural movement[17].

8.2.5 The low level windows have some erosion to the reveals, currently not causing an issue but should be monitored and the potential noted for repairs in the future.

8.2.6 The West doorway retains carved mouldings in generally good condition; however, previous patch repairs to the lower sections are now failing as erosion has continued. Both stone columns are showing exfoliation, and there is mortar loss to the joints above the moulding. These areas should be carefully monitored, and repairs may be needed in the next quinquennium.

Figure 13 – W lancet - S

Figure 14 – W lancet - N

8.3 **West Elevation - South Aisle**

Figure 15 – S side of lancet & cill

Figure 16 – SW Kneeler

8.3.1 The west wall of the South Aisle is generally similar in character to that of the North Aisle. The arch stones at the head of the lancet window are now eroding at an accelerated rate, and replacement should be planned in the near future.

8.3.2 A fracture is evident in the north side of the window sill, which should be monitored.

8.3.3 The pointing is generally fair, although the finish is poor; two stones at high and low level have been refaced with mortar with only limited success.

8.3.4 The south buttress remains in a similar condition to that recorded at the last inspection, with several stones continuing to erode at an accelerated rate. Deterioration should be carefully monitored to inform planning for future stone replacement. In addition, one stone at high level below the kneeler now requires replacement in the near future.

8.3.5 As previously noted - At the intersection of the buttresses on the South end of the West elevation and the West end of the South elevation there is a great deal of pointing to be carried out to the stonework[18]. This amounts to about 3-4m^2 and the stones themselves, which have been repaired in the past, also need more repair. In addition, approximately 8no. stones need replacement.

8.3.6 On the south side of the lancet window there is an area of eroded stonework, with pointing that is unsightly and inconsistent. One stone in this location now requires replacement. [19]

8.3.7 There is a crack that runs up from the kneeler where is looks as if this stone may have moved, causing a gap in the coping, this should be pointed or re-set as required[20].

8.4 **Bell Turret**

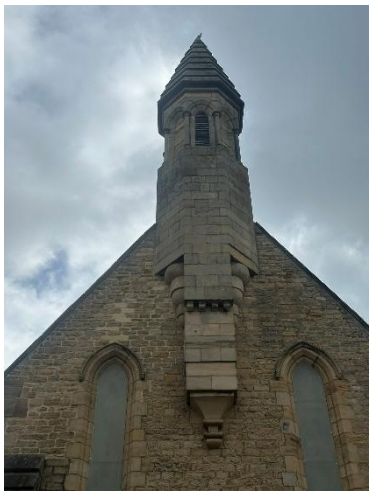


Figure 17 – Bell turret

8.4.1 The west gable is surmounted by an octagonal bell turret in ashlar stone, capped with a stepped stone roof and lead coverings. Below roof level the turret is arcaded with arched openings, four of which are pierced and fitted with timber louvres.

8.4.2 The stonework is generally in good condition; however, one or two stones have lost their face (possibly due to incorrect bedding), and a past repair is evident where a stone face has previously failed. On the bottom right-hand side, above a corbel, a corner repair is visible which appears vulnerable and may break loose. Several of the larger stones above the corbels appear similarly bedded, and their condition warrants closer inspection[21].

8.4.3 Two timber louvre blades are missing and require replacement in the south and east openings, a number of others have slipped which need fixing[22].

8.4.4 A close inspection of the turret masonry was recommended at the last inspection but has not yet been undertaken; this is now overdue and should be arranged to inform future repair needs.

8.5 **South Aisle – Clerestory**

Figure 18 – Crack above lancet

8.5.1 The high-level masonry and pointing appear to be ok from ground level, there is some cement over-pointing but generally ok apart from two open joints above the porch that require re-pointing.

8.5.2 As previously noted, there is a crack above the sixth lancet from the west which needs to be re-pointed and monitored for any progression. It appears though there may be a similar crack to the far westerly lancet and this should also be pointed and monitored as it was not previously highlighted.

8.6 **South Aisle**

8.6.1 The South Aisle walls are constructed of coursed rubble stone with dressed squared stonework to the twin lancet windows.

8.6.2 First Bay (from the West): At low level the stonework shows signs of erosion, likely caused by damp, and one or two stones now require replacement[23]. Previous repointing in hard cement mortar is evident; further sympathetic lime repointing is needed below sill level and at the west end adjacent to the buttress[24].

Figure 19 – second bay erosion

8.6.3 Second Bay: This bay shows similar deterioration, with extensive erosion below sill level. Approximately 3 m² of walling requires repointing, particularly beneath and around the window cills, where a large open joint is also present to the right-hand side of the sill and the buttress.

8.6.4 Third Bay: As with the second bay, there is erosion and unsightly hard mortar repairs that have accelerated decay. Around 2 m² requires sympathetic repointing with an appropriate lime mortar mix.

8.6.5 Fourth Bay (South Aisle extension): In slightly better condition overall, though there is erosion above the plinth. Much of the walling has been repointed in hard mortar which will accelerate decay. Several open joints

below the gutter at the junction with the South-East Vestry also require attention, along with a further 1 m² of open joints at high level beneath the gutter to the east.

8.6.6 East Return Wall: This contains a vesica piscis window. The wall is generally fair, but the moulded crown stone of the window arch is heavily eroded and has previously been mortared over. A few open joints at the head require re-pointing[25] as they are likely contributing to internal staining and water ingress. An open coping joint above this location also requires attention.

Figure 20 – East return window

8.7 South Porch

8.7.1 The fabric of the South Porch is of similar construction to the South Aisle. Large areas of the stonework are eroded, in places up to 25 mm deep, with deterioration accelerated by past repointing in hard cement mortar. In the long term, replacement of the most decayed stones will be required soon, as erosion is likely to continue. As a short-term measure, selective cutting out and repointing would improve condition. On the west elevation approximately 1.5 m² requires repointing[26].

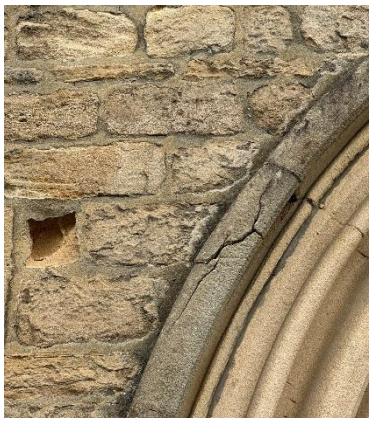


Figure 21 – Hoodmould and erosion

8.7.2 The south elevation contains an arched doorway, similar in form to the main west entrance. The stonework is generally reasonable, but with several areas of deep erosion and unsympathetic cement patch repairs, particularly above the right-hand arch, where intervention is now required. The coping at the gable apex has shifted it should be checked to be adequately seated; the large open joints should be filled[27].

8.7.3 The hood moulding to the left-hand side of the doorway is fractured, a repair may be advisable[28]. Some of the lower moulded stonework has been painted, and a decision is required whether to remove this or to repair sympathetically. Excessive rising damp is evident up to capital level around the door surround, with a number of open joints visible.

8.7.4 The east elevation, rebuilt in the more recent past, is in better condition than the west, though still shows signs of damp and stone erosion, particularly in the corner behind the rainwater pipe.

8.8 Southeast Vestry (WCs)

8.8.1 The Vestry extension at the south-east corner is constructed in stonework similar to the main church, with a shallow gable facing south and the former boiler room located beneath. Some areas remain in poor condition.

8.8.2 South Elevation: The stonework shows widespread erosion, with some stones decayed up to 30 mm deep. The crown coping has shifted and requires re-setting (as per item 6.8.4). Much of the pointing is open or badly recessed, and earlier use of hard cement mortar has exacerbated decay. The majority of this elevation requires repointing in the near future[29], and the overall condition is poor. The top left-hand corner of the window has very open joints, symptomatic of some movement, that need

Figure 21 – WCs south elevation

to be filled with an appropriate lime mortar and monitored. There is a minor fracture to the stone below the corbel but not currently of concern.

8.8.3 At low level, the boiler room window lintel is spalled and should be repaired or a replacement stone inserted[30]. The window itself has been replaced with air bricks. The stone cellar steps are broken or chipped in several places and require patching. A build-up of vegetation and litter is present around the cellar entrance and should be cleared[31].

8.8.4 East Elevation: This elevation is in somewhat better condition, although the pointing is poor in places. Several stone joints at the north end coping are open, these copings could be loose. One stone within the ashlar corbel course above the side doorway is exfoliating, any large pieces should be de-laminated to avoid any potential harm. There is a vent with no terminal cover on this wall[32]. The high-level area to the north was previously reported as badly stained from the blocked sump directly above overflowing. This condition persists and should be addressed (as item 7.4), with ongoing maintenance to prevent recurrence.

8.9 Chancel

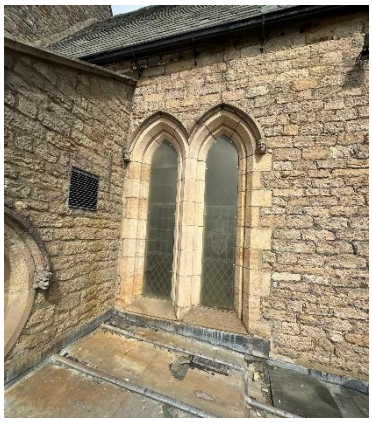


Figure 22 – S Chancel

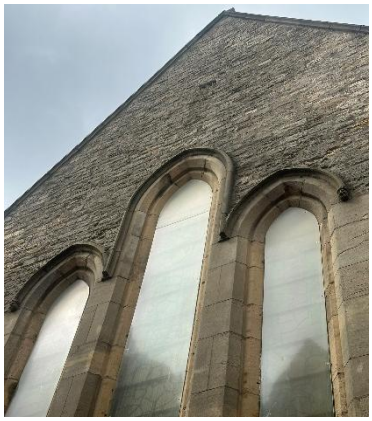


Figure 23 – E Chancel

8.9.1 South - Above the eastern part of the South Aisle roof there is a short section of rubble walling, only three courses high, which is in fair condition. One or two open joints are visible and require repointing. The eastern half of the Chancel wall is of similar rubble stonework, also in reasonable condition. There may be an open joint at high level, though this could not be definitively confirmed from ground level. An external spotlight is fixed to this elevation; its electric cable is loose and requires securing.

8.9.2 East - The east elevation is simple in form, centred on the principal triple lancet window. The rubble stonework is generally in fair condition for its age, though there are several areas of notable erosion, particularly below sill level where rising damp may be a contributing factor. Pointing is harsh in places and poorly executed; in several areas stones have been faced up or rendered, but water has penetrated behind and further weathering has caused deterioration. Over time, this defective pointing will need to be replaced. The arched head of the central lancet is also eroding, though not yet to the point where repair or replacement is immediately required.

8.9.3 The arched head of the lancet windows continue to erode centrally and to the north, but don't appear significantly changed from photographs included in the last inspection report, therefore no immediate action required.

8.9.4 North - This is a short upstand section of wall at the head of the North Vestry roof. The rubble stonework is generally in reasonable condition, though a few stones are eroded. At the east end there is some unsympathetic pointing; a crack noted previously is not now visible and may have been pointed in, but the area should continue to be monitored. Repointing has recently been carried out at the west end.

8.10 East Nave (high level) - The wall is of coursed rubble construction and remains in reasonable condition overall. A number of stones (approx. 10) are eroding, some up to 25 mm in depth; replacement of one or two of the worst affected may be required in the near future, but re-pointing in the immediate future will slow erosion Several areas also require repointing, particularly around the kneeler stones. [33]

8.11 Vicar's Vestry - The walling is similar to the Chancel east face, constructed in rubble stone. There are one or two deeply eroded pockets, notably below the Chancel kneeler and to the south of the window head near the alarm box, where stone replacement should be considered soon. Elsewhere, repointing is required, particularly below the lancet window. On the north side,

the stonework is damp and green, largely due to the previously blocked rainwater hopper. Past repairs in hard cement mortar have contributed to decay, and there are several open joints requiring sympathetic repointing. The stonework above the lancet is also eroding and there are open joints at the hoodmould which is causing deterioration of the plasterwork internally, which is damp – see section 17. The waste pipe serving the internal sink is missing and should be reinstated urgently[34], even though this sink is reportedly not used. The surrounding area also needs vegetation clearing.

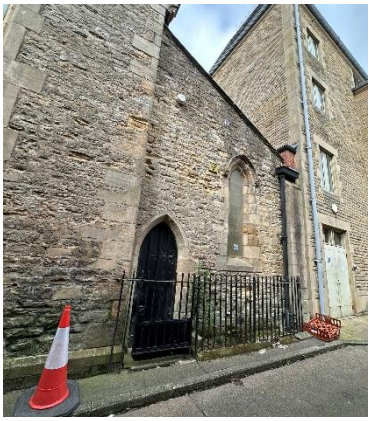


Figure 24 – E vestry

Figure 25 – vegetation nr door

Figure 26 – N Clerestory

8.12 North Clerestory

8.12.1 The north clerestory walling, constructed of rubble with dressed stone surrounds to the windows, remains in a similar condition to that recorded at the previous quinquennial inspection. Overall, the masonry is in reasonable condition, though several stones show erosion. The deterioration is not yet severe enough to justify immediate replacement but should continue to be monitored.

8.12.2 Localised repointing is required, amounting to approximately 10 m², particularly around the western and eastern rainwater pipes. The cast-iron gutter above was reportedly repaired and repainted in 2015 as part of the re-roofing works. However, the wall is very stained both internally and externally, suggesting there is still an issue here which needs attention, check hopper as per section 7.2.

8.12.3 North Aisle Walling - There is no exposed north aisle wall, as this side of the church is abutted by the adjoining Town Hall.

9. External Windows & Doors

9.1 The window to the West end of the North Aisle is a single lancet, generally ok as the stonework and glazing were reportedly repaired in 2015, evident at the hoodmould. There is a condensation groove in the cill but no corresponding condensation tray.

9.2 Protective sheets now cover all of the windows which is generally quite obscured and dirty in places.

9.3 West Gable - At high level the 2no. lancets with glazing in reasonable condition but it is difficult to tell their true condition of the reveal stonework as there are protective acrylic panels to each window. Similarly, lower down at ground level there are 2 no. narrow windows either side of the West doorway and these are in fair condition but again the glazing is obscured by acrylic sheet.

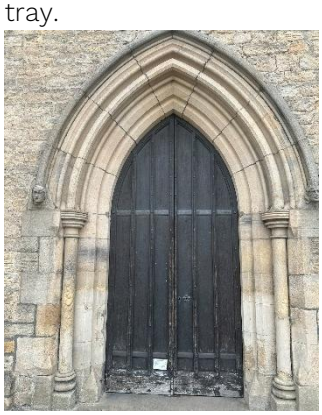


Figure 27 – West doors

9.4 The main **west entrance doors** are made of oak, boarded and battened. The decorative finish is deteriorating, most noticeably at the base where weathering has exposed bare timber, and at hand-height where repeated contact has caused surface wear. One board is split at the bottom, and areas of exposed timber are now vulnerable to decay if left untreated[35]. The doors are no longer in regular use and remain closed.

9.5 **South Clerestory -** The lancet windows are in reasonable condition there are several broken panes and replacement quarries, and the ferramenta requires painting. It is assumed that the metal hoppers do not open[36].

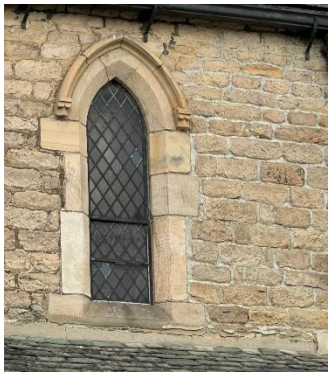


Figure 28 – Clerestory window

9.6 **South Aisle** - The twin lancet window stonework is generally in good condition. However, the ferramenta to the eastern lancet requires repainting. The metal opening light to the lancet window in the third bay from the east also needs redecoration; its acrylic guard is poorly fixed with silicone mastic, which is unsightly and should be improved.[37]

9.7 **North Clerestory** – There are four pairs of lancet windows with diamond-leaded glazing. These remain in fair condition overall; however, the ferramenta is rusty and requires painting. In addition, the window-to-wall joints would benefit from repointing.

9.8 **South Porch** –The rectangular windows to the east and west sides are fitted with reinforced acrylic protective sheets. The glazing is in fair condition, though inspection of the stone surrounds is limited due to the coverings.

9.9 **South-East Vestry**

9.9.1 The **south elevation** contains a simple three-light rectangular window. Protective acrylic panels obscure inspection; the protection itself is heavily faded. At the last inspection, the ferramenta of the central hopper was noted as requiring painting, and this remains outstanding. The left-hand leaded diamond quarries are reportedly bulging, with some ill-fitting panes; full re-leading will be required[38] in due course once the protective sheeting is removed.

9.9.2 On the **east elevation**, a rectangular window with diamond quarries appears in fair condition, though a number of quarries are cracked. The glazing and frame are partly obscured by acrylic sheeting, which is dirty on the inner face.

Figure 29 – WCs door

9.9.3 **South-East Vestry – Doors**

- The side doorway on the east elevation is set beneath an ogee-headed lintel and moulded stone surround, both in good condition. The timber door is oak boarded and in very poor repair. The threshold piece has come away (as noted at the last inspection), and the lower boards are now extensively decayed.[39]

9.9.4 At the south cellar entrance, the timber door and associated ironmongery require redecoration.

9.10 **Chancel** – The south wall contains a pair of lancet windows. These appear to be in reasonable condition, although the ferramenta requires repainting.

9.11 **Chancel – East** The triple lancet windows are in reasonable condition overall, though rather dirty. The leading remains sound, but the ferramenta requires repainting. Protective acrylic covers are in place and are reasonably clear, allowing the glazing to be seen.

9.12 **Vicar's Vestry** – The single lancet window is set within stonework of reasonable condition. The two lower leaded panels have previously been replaced and remain sound; however, the leading to the hopper is poor and may require replacement in due course.

9.13 Vicar's Vestry – Doors. The doorway, no longer in regular use, is generally in fair condition. It reportedly opens but was not open at the inspection. The door is oak with decorative hinges and ferramenta, the handle is loose and rusted.

9.14 Entrance door is a pair of large double timber doors, similar to the west entrance. All historic and in good condition, slightly worn decoration, particularly at the lock.

10. Boiler room

Figure 30 – boiler room

10.1 Roof - The roof structure comprises steel beams with in-situ reinforced concrete infill, likely reinforced (concrete type is unknown and unchecked – further advice should be taken by the PCC)[40]. The beams themselves are rusty and require brushing down and repainting.

10.2 Walls - The walls are of brick and rubble stone and are generally fair for their situation, though there are many open joints, disturbed areas, holes, and a noticeable degree of efflorescence.

10.3 Floor - The floor is of concrete, assumed to be in fair condition, though it is covered with a raised timber deck to keep stored items clear of damp.

Figure 31 – ceiling and former window

10.4 Services - Ventilation is provided by a vent on the east wall, opening at ground level, and a further vent on the south wall. The gas meter is also situated on the east wall.

10.5 Steps and Access - The stone steps down to the boiler room are in reasonable condition, though covered in vegetation and debris, additionally many nosings are chipped or missing and several horizontal joints require repointing. A handrail should be provided for safety.[41]

10.6 Doors and Metalwork - The oak door is in fair condition but requires easing and repainting. At the head of the steps, the steel enclosure fencing is structurally sound but requires repainting.

11. External Iron & Metalwork

11.1 South-East Vestry – The ferramenta to both the south and east windows, as well as the east door, requires repainting.

11.2 Vicar's Vestry – In front of this elevation there is a short run of iron railings in poor condition. Several uprights have rusted through at the feet, which no longer connect properly with the badly eroded stone plinth. The railings require redecoration, but ideally a more comprehensive repair or consolidation scheme should be considered. The narrow space is untidy and currently used for storage.

12. NAVE

12.1 Roof Structure & Ceilings -The roof is formed of large arch-braced trusses bearing onto stone corbels, with intermediate principal rafters. A former central roof vent is now blocked and has been removed externally. All timbers, including rafters, purlins and boarding, are stained dark and appear in fair condition from floor level, although low light levels limit detailed assessment. There is daylight visible at the west end, and it should be noted that the south slope has no roofing felt and is in very poor condition externally, though only slight signs of staining currently.

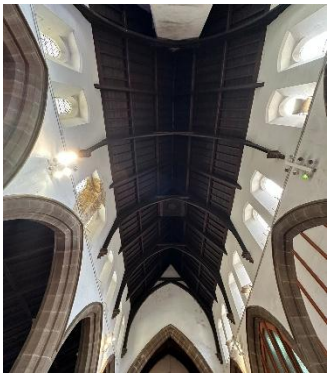


Figure 32 – Nave ceiling

12.1.1 Timber-boarded ceilings are present above the recesses either side of the west doorway. These show signs of past wet rot and localised decay, particularly near the doorway. The cause may be penetrating damp or water ingress down the spiral stair within the Belfry; the external stonework should be repointed and defective ceiling boards renewed[42].

Figure 33 – ceiling at 12.1.1

12.2 Walls - The nave arcade is supported on octagonal stone columns and simple chamfered arches. The stonework is generally very good, though low-level damp and efflorescence are affecting many columns, especially on the north side, up to around 1.2 m. This is causing powdering of the stone faces and disfigurement.

12.2.1 The east, chancel arch wall is plastered and fair overall. There are signs of slight deformation to the northern part of the arch but no recent movement. Localised discolouration is present at high-level, along with a small crack in the plaster at the right-hand apex.

Figure 34 – N Clerestory

12.2.2 Both north and south clerestory walls include window recesses. Most plasterwork is sound, but defective plaster and paint loss have worsened on the north side, especially around the second pair of lancets from the west. This may be linked to an overflowing hopper externally, see item 7.2.

12.2.3 The west wall has an unusual arrangement with an inner porch structure supporting the bell turret. Plaster finishes here are patchy and defective, with loss of decoration on the walls and window reveals spreading onto the arcade walls. On either side of the porch are narrow recesses, where the outer walls show low-level damp and loss of decoration, particularly to the south.

Figure 35 – W Nave

12.2.4 Inside the west porch area, there was limited visibility but the walls appeared sound other than damp affecting the stone at low level.

12.2.5 A full-height fracture in the plaster at the southwest corner requires investigation[43]; the previous inspector reports that this may relate to similar historic movement previously repaired at the northwest corner, though no records of this are available to cross reference.

12.2.6 The south arcade walls include a section infilled with Douglas Fir timber framing and lightly rendered concrete blockwork. Although slightly uneven in appearance, the structure is serviceable, but it is reportedly unknown to what specification this was constructed and there was no faculty approvals.

12.3 Plaster and Decoration - Decoration across much of the nave is deteriorating, particularly at the west end, where patchy and defective finishes extend into the arcade walls. Paint loss is also noted to some window reveals.

Figure 36 – W Nave floor

12.4 Floors - The nave floor is largely carpeted to the aisles, limiting inspection of the stone slabs beneath. Pews have been removed from the west end, exposing a large area where timber joists and boards were found to be rotten, in some cases to full depth. The joists sit on sleeper walls, and moisture transfer from these appears to be the cause. This floor needs to be fully replaced[44], there may be an opportunity to level the floor here, as I believe is the PCC's desire. This area has been cordoned off and should remain so until the issues are resolved.

12.5 Another area was lifted to the south and under the central platforms and although the same damp issues appeared evident, the impact was to a much lesser extent and the structure was intact, though some level of intervention is advisable to prevent further deterioration.

12.5.1 The floors to the west porch are stone-flagged and remain in fair condition.

12.5.2 The pews are supported on softwood boarding, which itself shows significant woodworm in places. Ventilation is poor; small stall riser vents are insufficient, as confirmed by the decay in the underlying floor structure[45].

12.6 Windows and Doors

12.6.1 Clerestory windows are fitted with original mechanical winding gear, but hoppers appear permanently closed and unused. Handles are no longer available; restoration of the opening system should be considered.

12.6.2 The western door is covered with brown felt internally, assumed for acoustics but gives a poor aesthetic, not aligned with the rest of the church.

13. CHANCEL

Figure 37 – Chancel South roof

13.1 Roof Structure & Ceilings - The roof is of similar construction to the Nave, with arched trusses, but here they support a mansard or wagon-shaped ceiling rather than a simple double pitch. The spaces between purlins, trusses, and principals are divided by timber mouldings.

13.1.1 Large areas of water staining is visible across the boarding on the south side, clearly a result of the defective roof covering above. The ceiling appears structurally intact but compromised by the extensive staining to lower sections where water collects, the boarding could also be masking worse conditions above.

13.2 Walls - The walls are plastered and ruled out, and generally remain in good condition. However, signs of old fractures are visible on all elevations, including the east wall. These were reported at the last inspection and should continue to be monitored, although there is no evidence of recent movement. The north and south walls exhibit a degree of inward bowing at their centres, though again without signs of

recent cracking or instability. The west chancel arch wall is plastered, ruled out, and painted; this is in fair condition.

13.3 Plaster and Decoration - The lower sanctuary walls are panelled in oak with enriched heads and a tracery frieze. These are in good condition, requiring only cleaning. The carved oak reredos, with rich gilded decoration and figures, also remains in very good condition. Decoration overall is fair, with some staining on the east wall at high level and water staining on the south wall, this could benefit from cleaning and redecoration in localised areas once the roof has been renewed. There is some staining near the North east rafter, closest to the east wall with cracking to the plasterwork beneath, this would benefit from closer inspection, along with the other roof areas noted (Fig. 48 below).

13.4 Floors - The choir and sanctuary floors are formed in terrazzo tiles with stone stop facings. These are now carpeted, limiting detailed inspection, but no major defects were apparent.

13.5 Windows - The principal east window is of three lights with arched head stones and mouldings supported on four shafts. All associated stonework is in good condition. The south wall contains a twin lancet window, also in good order.

Figure 48 – crack to LHS of E and rafter closest to E wall

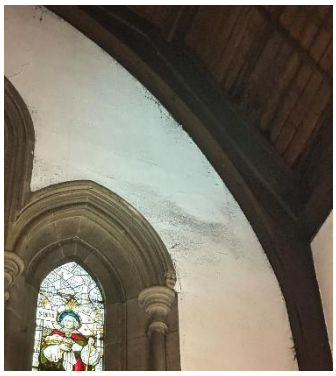


Figure 49 – staining to SE

Figure 50 – easing to S

14. NORTH AISLE

14.1 Roof Structure & Ceilings - The North Aisle roof comprises large principal timbers at every third bay with down posts bearing onto stone corbels. The boarding and timbers are stained dark brown and generally in fair condition, though several purlins display significant shakes. It is reported that some boarding was replaced during the 2015 works. Evidence of historic woodworm attack is still visible in places. White streaks can be seen on the boarding in several locations; it is uncertain whether these indicate an ongoing issue. They may represent residual salt deposits from past water penetration. As no clear reference point exists, this condition should be closely monitored. Reportedly anti-fungal treatment was applied locally during the 2015 works, but woodworm may still persist.

Figure 51 – Staining at mid N Aisle

14.1.1 There are further marks on the boarding at the extreme west end, a problem also noted at the last inspection. This was then attributed to defects in the west gable masonry and roof slating, which were repaired. However, staining remains evident, and similar marks are now also present at the east end. Both gables require areas of repointing, and once these works are undertaken, the condition should continue to be monitored. During future

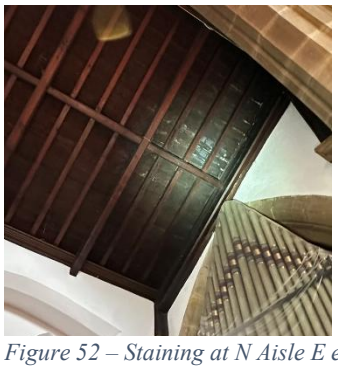


Figure 52 – Staining at N Aisle E end

roof works, a closer inspection of these areas would be prudent to establish both the cause of staining and the condition of the timbers.[46]

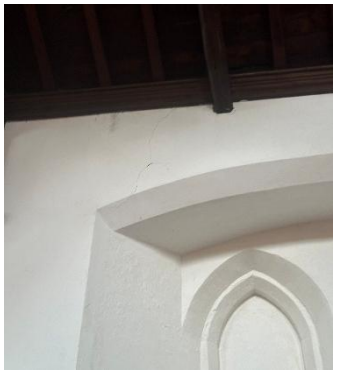


Figure 53 – N 2nd from E LHS

Figure 54 – N 2nd from E RHS

14.2 Walls - The aisle walls are plastered and generally remain in fair condition following patch repairs in 2015. Several blocked window openings are present on the north elevation, including two twin lancet recesses. The associated stonework is in reasonable condition, though slight fractures are visible above the second recess from the east, which should be monitored.

14.2.1 At low level, the north wall has a pine wainscot matching the pew backs.

14.3 Plaster and Decoration - Overall, plastered surfaces are in good order, though localised repairs are needed where decoration has failed. A few small areas of blown decoration are visible and should be filled or touched in.

14.4 Floors - The aisle floor is now carpeted, limiting inspection. The west end floor is reportedly terrazzo tiling, similar to the Chancel, but could not be confirmed due to carpet covering. A small area of timber boarding is also said to exist here, again not visible at inspection. Beneath the pews, the floor is timber boarded on stall risers and is generally in fair condition, though also covered by carpet. At the east end, the small altar chapel beneath the organ pipework and casing sits on a suspended timber floor, also carpeted.

15. SOUTH AISLE - The South Aisle was converted in the 1980s to provide a kitchen and tea room at ground level, toilets at the east end, and a charity shop and meeting rooms above.

15.1 **Kitchen**

15.1.1 Ceilings - Plastered ceiling in fair condition.

15.1.2 Walls - Walls are lined with acrylic sheeting, likely installed for hygiene reasons. While this appears sound, the non-breathable nature of the material conceals the true condition of the stonework behind and may cause interstitial condensation.

- North wall contains a hatch through to the Nave.
- East wall includes a stable door and hatch through to the entrance area.

Figure 55 – Kitchen

15.1.3 Floors - Solid floor finished with vinyl sheet in average condition. There is a central stain of unknown cause which could not be investigated further as the floor finish could not be lifted.

15.1.4 Other fittings - Modern kitchen units and worktops, all in good condition.

15.2 **Entrance Area**

15.2.1 Ceilings - Similar to the kitchen; in sound condition.

15.2.2 Walls - Primarily painted blockwork with Douglas Fir doors, staircase, and skirtings, all in very good condition.

- Damp is evident at the base of the painted stone column on the north wall. Sealing treatments are not recommended, as they risk driving the damp further up. Removing the paint to allow breathability may improve the situation.
- Cupboard beneath the staircase is very damp internally. Installing a vent or grille to the cupboard door would help provide ventilation. This should be reviewed within the fire risk assessment. Provided no high-risk items are stored, it is unlikely to increase fire risk given the open-plan nature of the stair.

15.2.3 Floors - Carpeted floor in fair condition but with some staining.

15.3 Tea Room and Toilets

Figure 56 – Columns with damp issues

15.3.1 Ceilings - Similar to entrance area; plastered and in fair condition.

15.3.2 Walls - North wall columns and the area adjacent to the WC door show signs of persistent damp, requiring local plaster repairs and redecoration.
- East wall of the WC has damp penetration below the window, with a blocked doorway also noted (see item 8.1.5).

15.3.3 Windows - Leaded windows on the south wall are generally in good condition but dirty. Window hoppers appear not to open.

15.3.4 Floors –

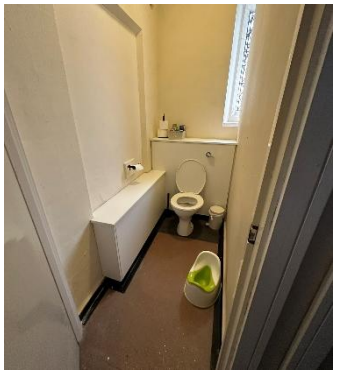


Figure 57 – WC area where floor had temp repairs

- Tea room: finished with new ceramic tiles, generally in good condition.
- WC area: vinyl sheet flooring. In the easternmost cubicle, the floor had previously collapsed due to severe timber decay and was partially replaced. The remainder of the floor is bouncy, particularly near the door, suggesting ongoing structural issues. This requires urgent investigation and a programme of repair.

15.3.5 Fittings - WC provision includes three cubicles, one nominally accessible. However, the layout does not meet current accessibility regulations.
- Wash hand basin and wall-mounted water heater are adequate for present usage.

15.3.6 Services - Two relatively new wall-mounted boilers and one floor-mounted unit are located on the north wall, the latter enclosed within a protective steel cage. All appear in good condition.
- Redundant large-diameter flue pipe from a previous boiler is to be removed and may contain asbestos.

16. UPPER SOUTH AISLE- The upper floor of the South Aisle is divided into four areas: a room at the west end, a landing, a central room, and a room at the east end.

16.1 Roof Structure –

16.1.1 The South Aisle roof structure is closely visible at this level. It is currently covered in polythene sheeting to channel roof leaks into receptacles, but this is a temporary and unsatisfactory measure. The structure remains just intact but will soon deteriorate further as damp leads to rot. Daylight is visible through parts of the ceiling boarding. Urgent external roof repairs are required (see section 6).

Figure 58 – ceiling S aisle W end

16.1.2 In the east room, the under-boarding to the ceiling is concealing damage from roof leaks. The rafter covering timber adjacent to the wall sounds hollow and may indicate rot within the structural timbers. This represents a serious risk, requiring urgent remedial action.

16.2 Ceilings

16.2.1 West room: Ceilings decorated following earlier minor plaster patching are now badly stained by roof leaks.

16.2.2 Central room: Roof boarding has been plastered or boarded over to form a ceiling, but this is rapidly deteriorating.

16.2.3 Landing: Ceiling generally in fair condition.

16.3 Walls (incl Plaster/Decoration)

Figure 59 – ceiling S aisle central

Figure 60 – damp to E wall

16.3.1 West room: Signs of penetrating damp are evident on the south wall, likely related to defective gutters and outlets at eaves level.

16.3.2 Central room: The east wall, dominated by a large archway, shows penetrating damp at the junction with the north wall at eaves level. This may relate to missing slates or leaking gutters.

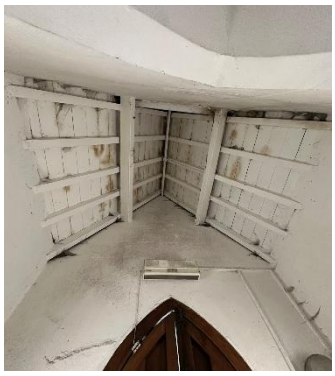
16.3.3 East room: Penetrating damp is badly affecting the decorative finishes and surface plaster on the east wall, the return south wall, and into the southwest corner at the spring point of the arch.

16.3.4 Landing: Walls are in fair condition. The upper parts of the arcade opening to the Nave are filled with obscure glass panels in a Douglas Fir framework, all in very good condition.

16.4 Floors - Suspended timber construction throughout, carpeted. General condition is fair, though full inspection was not possible due to coverings.

16.5 Partitions - The landing links the west and central rooms. Partition and door divide the central upper room from the staircase, reportedly fire rated. However, the doors into the rooms lack closers and should be upgraded.

17. SOUTH PORCH



17.1 Roof Structure and Ceilings - The porch roof is formed with painted pine purlins, ridge, rafters, and boarding, all generally in good condition. The rafters are stained, and external roof repairs should be carried out before any internal redecoration is undertaken.

17.2 Walls (incl Plaster/Decoration)

17.2.1 The walls are plastered and in fair condition, though with signs of penetrating damp on the south wall.

17.2.2 Some damp is also present on the north wall, likely caused by roof defects above and possible rising damp.

Figure 61 – Porch ceiling

17.2.3 A pine dado runs to approximately 1 metre high. The walls are rather grubby in places, and redecoration would be of benefit.

17.3 Doors - The main doors are oak with a matching frame, both in good condition. They are fitted with high-quality cast iron "Collinge" hinges.

17.4 Windows - Rectangular windows in the east and west walls are covered with reinforced acrylic sheet, in fair condition.

17.5 Floors

17.5.1 The floor is of sandstone flags laid in a diamond pattern. These are slightly uneven and open joints would benefit from repointing. Two floor slabs require replacement.

17.5.2 There is a trip hazard where the matwell is well below the carpet trim; a new matwell would resolve this issue.

18. VICAR'S VESTRY

Figure 62 – Vestry ceiling and E

Figure 63 – mantel to N wall

18.1 Roof Structure and Ceilings - The Vestry has been altered to form an additional upper storeroom accessed by a timber staircase dating from the 1990s. At this level, the walls are plastered and generally in fair condition, although damp is evident on the north wall.

18.2 Walls (incl Plaster/Decoration)

18.2.1 Decorations overall are in fair condition but would benefit from redecoration, particularly around the doorway on the east wall and at high level on the east reveal, where the external stonework is eroded at the head and open joints remain at the hoodmould (see section 8.11).

18.2.2 A painted timber dado runs to one metre in height around the lower walls. This is in average condition, requiring cleaning and redecoration.

18.2.3 Damp is evident above the dado on both the south and north walls, with redecoration required.

18.2.4 On the north wall above the dado there is a stone feature, presumably a former fire opening mantle, which is severely eroding. Dust from the decay covers the area below.

18.2.5 On the west wall, there is a crack above the wall safe that has not been previously reported and should be monitored.

18.2.6 At upper level, further damp penetration is evident at the head and reveals of the east window, with loss of decorative finishes. Plaster and paint layers are detaching and falling to the sill and stair below.

18.3 Doors

18.3.1 The external east wall contains a boarded and framed arch-headed door, apparently in fair condition, though currently blocked by loose items. The PCC should confirm whether this door forms part of any means of escape strategy and take corrective action if necessary.

18.3.2 The internal entrance doorway from the area adjacent to the organ chamber is set beneath a shouldered arch. The softwood boarded door is in reasonable condition, but the threshold and base of the external east door show signs of water ingress.

Figure 64 – Vestry door

18.4 Windows

18.4.1 The east window is in only fair condition. The arched stone head is eroding with loss of surface stone and decoration, and there is significant evidence of damp penetration through the reveals, arch head, and north side. This deterioration appears to be accelerating. Increased ventilation, either natural or mechanical, would benefit this room.

18.4.2 The window ferramenta requires repainting, and the vent does not open properly.

18.5 Floors

18.5.1 The floor at ground level is solid and carpet-covered, therefore the condition could not be assessed.

18.5.2 At the upper storage level, the floor is timber and carpeted but largely concealed by stored items and furniture.

18.6 Fittings

18.6.1 A disused sink and water heater are located beneath the staircase, both in fair condition.

18.6.2 A wall safe and floor safe are present on the west wall and remain in good condition.

18.7 Staircase and Storage Platform - The timber staircase, dating from the 1990s, provides access to the storage platform above. From this level, the full extent of deterioration to the east window is visible (see above).

19. ORGAN CHAMBER

Figure 65 – area of organ accessed

19.1 Roof and Chimney – A clear visual inspection of the roof was not possible from the accessible areas, and the presence of asbestos made closer inspection inadvisable. It was reported that a chimney had previously been removed from this location.

19.2 Walls and Openings - Within the Organ Chamber archway, the doorway and adjacent pier to the Vestry are heavily affected by rising damp. Stonework is significantly eroded, and there is also deteriorating render at low level. This damage appears to relate to historic rather than recent water ingress.

19.3 Floor - The floor is suspended and has a noticeable degree of deflection underfoot. This may indicate weakness in the supporting structure, possibly linked to damp-affected joists. Further investigation is recommended to confirm the condition beneath and identify any necessary remedial work.

20. BELFRY

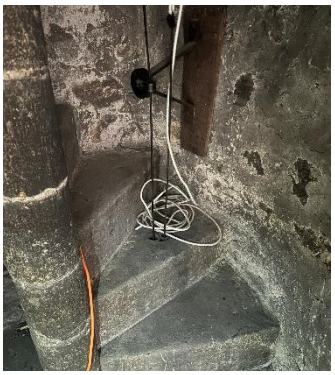


Figure 66 – staircase wires

Figure 67 – missing step

Figure 68 – louvres

20.1 Access - The belfry or bell turret is reached via an opening in the north wall at the West end of the church at the base of the belfry tower. There is no permanent access up to the north landing below the opening, so an unfixed ladder is the only means of ascent. Ideally, a handrail should be installed to prevent falls, or a clipped mansafe system introduced so as not to alter

the aesthetics. The floor of this area (which is also the ceiling of the west entrance/store) is rotten in places and not currently safe to stand on; this needs to be repaired or replaced. An irregular narrow stone spiral stair then leads up to the bell turret. The stair has no external windows, and lighting should be introduced as the current arrangement of exposed cables running up the centre, with some hanging from the side, is unsatisfactory. A more formal power supply should be installed, and a central rope handrail would improve safety.

20.2 Staircase Stonework - The walls of the staircase are of rough rubblestone and generally in fair condition. The steps are mostly ok except for the top five, which are broken, missing, or badly eroded. A timber board has been substituted for one step. Consolidation of the stonework below the access hatch is also required. The defective steps should be replaced and consolidated within the next couple of years.

Figure 69 – bell chamber

Figure 70 – upper bell

20.3 Access Hatch - The timber access hatch to the chamber is completely rotten and unsafe. At the time of inspection, it was propped by a temporary timber support, which was removed as it was loose. The hatch itself has a hole through it, rendering it largely redundant. A new, safe hatch should be constructed as soon as possible.

20.4 Bell Chamber - The bell chamber contains two bells hung above one another and is partly visible from the semi-safe access areas, though confined and difficult to assess, particularly with two people present (which was deemed necessary for safety). Externally of stone, the internal structure comprises four angled stone and brick piers supporting a brick ring at the base of the spire. This ring is capped with large sandstone slabs spanning inward, forming the transition between the tower walls and the spire above. The brickwork appears weathered, and some mortar bedding has been lost over time, making the construction worthy of closer inspection, as it does not appear to have been safely inspected in recent years. This is required to assess the stability of both the brickwork and the stone capping at the spire base, alongside the supporting structure of the bells themselves.

20.4.1 The timber louvres to all sides are defective, with several missing or dislodged and at risk of falling. They were originally slotted into the masonry, but many are now loose. Bird mesh has been installed and reportedly repaired, yet gaps remain and the risk of bird ingress persists.

21. MONUMENTS, BRASSES, FURNISHINGS, ORGAN & CLOCK

21.1 Nave - The oak pulpit, by Goodalls of Manchester, is a fine carved example with brass handrails and wrought iron supports. The brass lectern, timber steps, and other furnishings are all in good condition. The west doorway is hung with a door covered in burgundy baize, in fair but slightly worn condition.

Figure 71 – brass lectern

21.2 Pews are generally sturdy pine, in fair condition, though decoration would be beneficial. Some evidence of minor woodworm persists despite previous treatment.

21.3 Chancel - The choir stalls and back screens are of finely carved oak, confidently executed and in good condition. The organ, located on the north wall, has attractively painted pipework which would benefit from careful cleaning. At the time of inspection the organ was covered in protective plastic sheeting due to asbestos risks associated with the blower. The communion rail is loose and requires securing.

21.4 North Aisle - The pews are pine and in fair condition, consistent with the wainscot. At the west end stands the font, dating from 1892, of limestone and marble with a carved oak bracket cover. It remains in good condition, although at the time of inspection it was partly obscured by stored items. There is a brass lectern amongst other storage at the east end.

22. HEATING

22.1 The boiler serving the radiators in the South Aisle is located on the east wall of the former South-East Vestry (now the toilet area). It is gas-fired and relatively new, no inspection or gas safe records were made available at the time of inspection and it is unknown when these were last carried out.

22.2 Heating for the Nave and North Aisle is provided by two smaller boilers sited on the north wall of the South-East Vestry. These supply a new perimeter radiator system.

22.3 Upper South Aisle - Heating provided by radiators; new units installed in the west room.

23. ELECTRICAL

23.1 The last electrical test report was not provided and it is unknown when the last testing was carried out. It is vital that this information is kept in a log book which is available for inspection.

23.2 Nave - Lighting is provided by modern spotlights and floodlights fixed below clerestory level on both sides. These give adequate light but are inefficient, with visible white cabling in some areas. The fittings currently use non-LED lamps, controlled remotely from the kitchen. Plans are reportedly in place to update these.

23.3 Lighting in the Chancel mirrors that of the Nave. It provides adequate levels but could be improved with more efficient or better-positioned fittings.

23.4 Lighting to the vicar's vestry is by fluorescent tubes, which should be replaced with LED to improve energy efficiency.

23.5 South Ailse Upper - Lighting throughout by square fluorescent ceiling fittings. East room contains an extract fan.

23.6 Loudspeakers are installed within the Nave, although they are accompanied by a large number of visible surface cables that would benefit from better organisation.

23.7 PAT: test unknown.

24. LIGHTNING CONDUCTOR.

There appears to be no lightning conductor installation, likely due to the proximity of the taller Town Hall building next door.

25. WATER & SANITARY FACILITIES

25.1 As per section 15 WC and kitchen facilities are provided, the WC's would benefit from a refurbishment and improved accessible facilities. The kitchen is also dated but functional.

25.2 Foul drainage: No details provided but assumed to connect to the highway.

25.3 Surface water drainage: No details known, gulleys to the base of outlets assumed to be connected to town centre drainage.

26. FIRE PRECAUTIONS

26.1 Fire precautions: Good two-way escape. It is unknown if the PCC have a fire risk assessment in place, this should be adhered to and a copy kept with the logbook. The vicars vestry door is

currently blocked if this is needed as an alternative means of escape, though it has stepped access.

26.2 Fire matters: The PCC should carry out or arrange a Fire Risk Assessment in accordance with latest Regulatory Reform (Fire) Order 2006 (details available via the DAC, the local Fire Officer and/or the internet).

26.3 Fire extinguishers were noted in several locaions around the church, their last date of maintenance was not reported.

27. SECURITY PROVISIONS – Unknown

28. ACCESS

28.1 The PCC are required to have a resolution in place which addresses the requirements of the Discrimination Against Disabled Act. An access audit should be carried out and a written record is retained in the Parish records and made available for inspection.

28.2 Wheelchair access: there is level access from the roadside entrance up to the chancel step, none of the chancel is accessible.

29. CHURCHYARD, BOUNDARIES, SIGNS, PATHS, TREES

29.1 The church occupies a civic setting with no associated churchyard. To the east, it is closely bounded by Bakehouse Hill, a narrow roadway that passes within approximately 600 mm of the wall. To the south and west elevations, the immediate surroundings are laid with relatively recent stone flags, all generally in good condition.

29.2 At the eastern end of the south elevation, a short flight of steps leads down to the boiler room entrance. These are enclosed by modern-section railings which now require repainting.

29.3 Several timber benches are positioned around the south and west sides of the church; one is damaged. Responsibility for these benches is unclear, and they may belong to the local authority rather than the church.

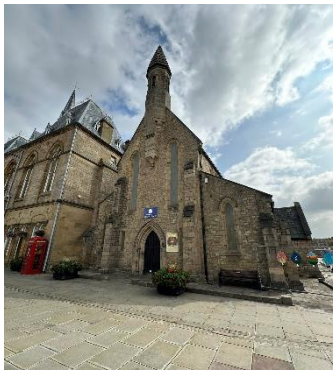


Figure 37 – cracking to W wall

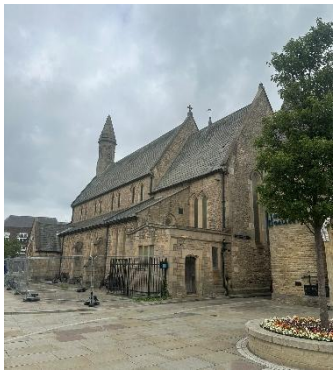


Figure 38 – new fence and gravel

Figure 39 – raised areas

29.4 The church is currently enclosed by Heras fencing, erected to protect the public from the risk of falling slates. This is not a sustainable solution, and urgent action is required to enable its removal. The fencing is inadequately secured, being tied only with a short length of rope to the adjacent railings, and its effectiveness is therefore questionable.

30. ARCHAEOLOGY

No archaeological information is available; it is suggested that if any works are to be carried out to the church paths or grounds that the county archeologist be consulted prior to starting.

31. ECOLOGY

31.1 Bats: None reported. No surveys are available, should any works be carried out which will affect roofs a suitably qualifies ecologist should be appointed.

32. SUSTAINABILITY

32.1 It is unknown if the PCC have carried out their assessment on the DAC's carbon footprint tool and are encouraged to follow the recommendations provided in 'A practical guide to help your church reach net zero carbon'.

32.2 Insulation: There appears to be no thermal insulation to several of the roof areas but it is understood when the re-roofing to the south is commenced both insulation and solar panels will be explored as options.

33. SUMMARY

33.1 The overall structure of the church fabric is reasonably sound, though there remain a significant number of issues requiring attention, many of which have been noted repeatedly in previous inspection reports spanning over twenty years. Some structural fractures are visible, particularly at the south-west corner of the Nave, but these do not at present appear to have major implications, nonetheless will need to be monitored and any recommended further investigations carried out.

33.2 The condition of the roof slating, particularly to the south slopes, is a serious concern. Numerous slipped and defective slates are clearly evident, and piecemeal repairs are no longer sufficient. Full re-slating of affected slopes should now be considered as an urgent priority.

33.3 Replacement of original areas of decayed stonework, especially on the south and west elevations and is also required. A phased programme of gradual replacement, either by elevation or on a rolling annual basis, would be the most practical approach.

33.4 Extensive repointing is needed throughout the external fabric, as open joints are widespread. The south face of the South-East Vestry and parts of the west gable are priority areas. A planned programme of masonry repointing should be established to address this universally. The stonework and leadwork to the east window of the Vicar's Vestry show significant deterioration and should be repaired as a matter of priority.

33.5 The leadwork to the South-East Vestry roof is reaching the end of its serviceable life. This has been patched on multiple occasions with limited success, and full renewal should be planned following removal of the redundant asbestos flue.

33.6 The rotten floor to the West Nave requires urgent repairs, the PCC have noted that they would prefer to remove the raised platform here for the area to be more multi-functional. A specification would need to be drawn up for this and submitted for Faculty approval, any proposals should include appropriate materials and not risk pushing any more ground water into the already damp columns.

33.7 The rainwater goods on the south side require repairs and painting, with many joints rusty and leaking. Regular clearance of hoppers and outlets is also essential to prevent blockages and associated water ingress.

33.8 The Belfry turret remains of concern. The brick ring and sandstone capping at the base of the spire appear weathered, with some mortar loss, and the timber louvres are defective and dislodged in places. Closer inspection is required, ideally by mobile platform while other high-level works are undertaken. Safe permanent access arrangements should also be provided to enable ongoing inspection, maintenance, and repair.

PART THREE

Summary of repairs in order of priority

	Comment	Item ref	Budget
Category 1 - Urgent, requiring immediate attention.			
1	Check NW coping stone, repoint or re-bed.	**6.1.5,**	**£250,000 +**
1	Check Nave & Chancel finial	**6.5.4, 6.6.2**	
1	Re-roof Nave	**6.5.2**	
1	Replace South Aisle Roof	**6.7.1**	
1	Check stability of all parapet stones, re-set finial	**6.8.4**	
1	Replace porch roof	**6.9.1**	
1	Replace floor to west end of nave under removed pews	**12.4**	
1	Obtain and keep a copy of the electrical test certificate, gas safe certificate and all other relevant information in Log Book	**4, 22-28**	
Category 2- Requires attention within 12 months.			
2	Fix gutter/ hopper to N Nave W end.	**7.2**	**£10,000-29,000**
2	Overhaul southern rainwater goods – check for leaks	**7.4**	
2	Clear gutters – particularly N nave and S WC's, Fix downpipe from chancel and keep south vestry (WC) outlet clear	**7.3.1, 7.5**	
2	Repair/ replace areas of lead roof once main roof repairs complete	**6.8.1**	
2	Inspect bell turret closer for condition of stonework and delamination	**8.4.2**	
2	Repair louvres to bell tower	**8.4.3**	
2	Re-bed or point apex coping to south porch	**8.7.2**	
2	Re-point South Vestry (now WCs), re-bed coping stones and monitor	**8.8.2**	
2	Install vent terminal to E WC's wall	**8.8.4**	
2	Re-instate sink waste and clear vegetation here	**8.11**	
2	Replace ceiling boards to west nave intermediate level	**12.1.1**	
2	Check other floor areas and improve ventilation beneath pew platforms	**12.5.2**	
2	Inspect internal roof members at closer proximity, especially N aisle, chancel and Nave	**13.2**	
Category 3- Requires attention within the next 12-24 months.			
3	Replace selected West Elevation eroded stones & to south aisle	**8.3.6, 8.6.2**	**£2,000 - £9,999**
3	Re-point/ re-set kneeler to SW corner S aisle	**8.3.7**	
3	Re-point 3-4sqm to West façade & to south aisle, total approx. 10sqm. Re-pointing to porch	**8.3.5, 8.6.2, 8.7.1**	
3	Pointing to vesica piscis window E return	**8.6.6**	
3	Re-point E nave and E vestry hoodmould	**8.10**	
Category 4- Requires attention within the quinquennial period.			
4	Replace grille to LL NW elevation	**8.1.3**	**£0 £1,999**
4	Monitor stone erosion for scheduling repairs/ replacement stones	**8.2.2, 8.6.2**	
4	Monitor cracks to w lancets, further SE advice may be sought	**8.2.4**	
4	Plastic repair to porch hoodmould or monitor condition	**8.7.3**	
4	Repair or replace boiler room lintel	**8.8.3**	
4	Re-decorate west entrance doors, Repair east WCs door	**9.4, 9.9.3**	
4	Replace broken glass, ease hoppers and replace openers	**9.5**	
4	Re-lead SE Vestry (WCs) windows	**9.9.1**	
4	Take advice on boiler room ceiling structure	**10.1**	
4	Provide handrail to basement and re-paint railings	**10.5**	
4	Investigate plaster crack to SW nave – check previous inspectors information on other similar fracture	**12.2.5**	
Category 5- A desirable improvement with no timescale.			
5	Extend RWP to north clerestory over the N aisle - desirable	**6.3.2**	

5	Re-fix acrylic guard to South aisle, consider replacement of all protection	**9.6**	**£2,000-£9,999**
Advice & routine maintenance. This can mostly be done without professional advice or a faculty.			
	Clear all gutters and gulleys on a routine basis	**7.8**	
	Clear entrance to boiler room and check steps	**8.8.3**	

AREAS NOT INSPECTED (The following list may not be exhaustive)

- Under floor voids (where no access was provided)
- Organ Pipework
- Covered timbers
- Rear of tanks and pipes where inaccessible

Advice to the PCC

- This is a summary report; it is not a specification for the execution of the work and must not be used as such.
- The professional adviser is willing to advise the PCC on implementing the recommendations and will if so requested prepare a specification, seek tenders and oversee the repairs.
- The PCC is advised to seek ongoing advice from the professional adviser on problems with the building.
- Contact with the insurance company to ensure that cover is adequate.
- The repairs recommended in the report will (with the exception of some minor maintenance items) be subject to the faculty jurisdiction. Guidance on whether particular work is subject to faculty can be obtained from the DAC.
- LOGBOOK The parish has a duty under Canon F13(4) to keep a Log Book recording all work carried out on the building. I commend this practice to the PCC. Not only does it help the inspecting architect but it can prove a valuable aid to the parish.

- Fire Safety Advice can be found at https://www.firesafe.org.uk/places-of-religious-worship/ https://www.ecclesiastical.com/risk-management/church-fire-articles/

- Electrical Installation

Any electrical installation should be tested at least every five years in accordance with the recommendations of the Church Buildings Council. The inspection and testing should be carried out in accordance with IEE Regulations, Guidance Note No. 3 and an inspection certificate obtained in every case. The certificate should be kept with the Church Log Book.

- Heating Installation

A proper examination and test should be made of the heating system by a qualified engineer each summer before the heating season begins, and the report kept with the Church Log Book

- Lightning Protection

Any lightning conductor should be tested at least every five years in accordance with the current British Standard by a competent engineer. The record of the test results and conditions should be kept with the Church Log Book.

- Asbestos

A suitable and sufficient assessment should be made as to whether asbestos is or is liable to be present in the premises. Further details on making an assessment are available on http://www.churchcare.co.uk/churches/guidance-advice/looking-after-your-church/health-safety-security/asbestos

- Equality Act

The PCC should ensure that they have understood their responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010. Further details and guidance are available at http://www.churchcare.co.uk/churches/open-sustainable/welcoming-people/accessibility .

- Health and Safety

Overall responsibility for the health and safety of the church and churchyard lies with the incumbent and PCC. This report may identify areas of risk as part of the inspection but this does not equate to a thorough and complete risk assessment by the PCC of the building and churchyard.

- Bats and other protected species

The PCC should be aware of its responsibilities where protected species are present in a church. Guidance can be found at: http://www.churchcare.co.uk/shrinking-the-footprint/taking-action/wildlife/bats

- Sustainable buildings

A quinquennial inspection is a good opportunity for a PCC to reflect on the sustainability of the building and its use. This may include adapting the building to allow greater community use, considering how to increase resilience in the face of predicted changes to the climate, as well as increasing energy efficiency and considering other environmental issues. Further guidance is available on http://www.churchcare.co.uk/churches/open-sustainable and http://www.churchcare.co.uk/shrinking-the-footprint

Endnotes – linking back to main body of text, do not use as a priority list – see Part 3.

[1] Check NW coping stone, repoint or re-bed
[2] Extend RWP to north clerestory over the N aisle - desirable
[3] Re-roof Nave
[4] Check Nave finial
[5] As above – chancel finial
[6] Replace South Aisle Roof
[7] Repair/ replace areas of lead roof once main roof repairs complete
[8] Check stability of all parapet stones, re-set finial
[9] Replace porch roof
[10] Fix gutter/ hopper to N Nave W end.
[11] Clear gutters – particularly N nave and S WC's
[12] Overhaul southern rainwater goods – check for leaks
[13] Fix downpipe from chancel and keep south vestry (WC) outlet clear
[14] Keep gulleys clean
[15] Replace grille to LL NW elevation
[16] Monitor stone erosion for scheduling repairs/ replacement stones
[17] Monitor cracks to w lancets, further SE advice may be sought
[18] Re-point 3-4sqm to West facade
[19] Replace selected eroded stones
[20] Re-point/ re-set kneeler to SW corner S aisle
[21] Inspect bell turret closer for condition of stonework and delamination
[22] Repair louvres to bell tower
[23] Replacement stones to south aisle
[24] Re-pointing to south aisle, total approx. 10sqm.
[25] Pointing to vesica piscis window E return
[26] Re-pointing to porch
[27] Re-bed or point apex coping to south porch
[28] Plastic repair to porch hoodmould or monitor condition
[29] Re-point South Vestry (now WCs), re-bed coping stones and monitor
[30] Repair or replace boiler room lintel
[31] Clear entrance to boiler room and check steps
[32] Install vent terminal to E WC's wall
[33] Re-point E nave and E vestry hoodmould
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[35] Re-decorate west entrance doors
[36] Replace broken glass, ease hoppers and replace openers
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[38] Re-lead SE Vestry (WCs) windows
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[41] Provide handrail to basement and re-paint railings
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[43] Investigate plaster crack to SW nave – check previous inspectors information on other similar fracture
[44] Replace floor to west end of nave under removed pews
[45] Check other floor areas and improve ventilation beneath pew platforms
[46] Inspect internal roof members at closer proximity, especially N aisle, chancel and Nave