

Diocese of Durham

St Peter, Bishopton

Ecclesiastical Jurisdiction and Care of Churches Measure 2018

Quinquennial Report

On the architect's inspection of

18th January 2024

Archdeaconry of Aukland
Deanery of Stockton

Grade II listed – Bishopton Conservation Area (Darlington BC)

Incumbent – In Vacancy



Report prepared by

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REVISION A – *First Issue*

Dates of inspection - 15.01.2025

Weather – Dry and cold, 4°C

Date of report – February 2025

Date of previous inspection/ report– 3rd December 2019/ 20th Jan 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 and tower roof level. 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 There is no available register of any asbestos containing materials in the church, however, It has previously been reported as being within the Organ. 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

The following is informed by an earlier Quinquennial inspection Report by David Beaumont and information by PF Ryder,

- 2.1 A church with medieval origins, constructed over four distinct phases, beginning in the 12th century. The oldest part of the structure is the nave, followed by the chancel. A significant reconstruction took place in 1846–47 under the direction of Revd. Holgate, during which the north aisle and tower were added. This work was designed by Sharpe and Paley of Lancaster. In 1877, an organ chamber was introduced, replacing the original 1846–47 vestry, which had to be rebuilt due to ground movement over a grave. Historically, the church's roofs were leaded, but repairs undertaken around the 1820s altered this feature.
- 2.2 The building comprises a nave with a north aisle, providing seating for approximately 150 parishioners. The chancel and sanctuary are located at the eastern end, with a vestry integrated at the east end of the north aisle. The organ chamber, originally serving as the clergy vestry, sits adjacent. To the northwest corner of the church there is C19th tower, which includes the main entrance porch. The tower also accommodates a clock and a set of three bells. A basement boiler house, accessed via an external stairway, is situated beneath the organ chamber.
- 2.3 The Parish Hall defines much of the church's northern boundary, and the entire site occupies a prominent elevated position, bordered on all sides by retaining walls adjacent to village roads.



Internal View looking to Chancel



Internal view from Chancel

2.1 Listing Description

BISHOPTON HIGH STREET NZ 3621 (East side)

13/18 Church of St. Peter 20/3/67

II

Parish church. Probably C13; largely rebuilt and north aisle and tower added 1846-7 by Sharp and Paley. Coursed sandstone rubble with C19 red sandstone dressings; dressed limestone late medieval east bay of chancel; graduated green slate roofs. Tower on west end of north aisle; nave with north aisle; chancel with north organ chamber (former vestry). Mid C19 lancets and Geometrical traceried windows.

3-stage, diagonally-buttressed tower: polygonal stair turret on south-west corner; pointed windows and 2-light bell openings; medieval grave-slab fragment and cusped niche built into west face; embattled parapet. Mid C19 buttresses on nave and chancel. 3-bay nave: chamfered plinth; 3-light window in diagonally-buttressed west end; mainly 2-light windows, medieval grave slab and large diamond-shaped wall sundial (dated 1776 and inscribed FUGIT HORA) on south; steep roof with coped gables. Lower and narrower 2-bay chancel with lancets: 2 dedication crosses and 3 stepped lancets on diagonally-buttressed east end; steep roof with coped east gable. North aisle has mid C19 shouldered doorway and pent roof. Organ chamber has low-pitched pent roof.

Plain, plastered interior. In nave: C13 font (octagonal bowl on cylindrical stem) with C17 wood steeple cover; 1811 Hutchinson wall monument on south; mid C19 3-bay north arcade of double-chamfered pointed arches on cylindrical piers. Tall, chamfered mid C19 chancel arch; an original C13 trefoil-headed lancet in wall to north of arch. 1889 Caen stone and marble reredos. Mid C19 roofs: nave with 4 braced-collar trusses; chancel with 2 similar trusses.

Listing NGR: NZ3652121247

3. Previous Inspections

This is the author's first inspection; however, the previous 2020 and 2013 reports have been obtained from Mr David Beaumont, the previous inspecting architect, who was consulted prior to the inspection and for continuity to discuss current issues.

4. Recent recorded works

4.1 There was a log book on site, minor works were reported as below.

Works completed since the last inspection		
Date:	Description:	By whom:
Feb 2020	Repairs and service of oil boiler	Nigel Stoves
July 2021	Nave floodlights fault addressed and safety bulkhead light replaces	MH Gorman
The logbook does not appear to have been updated following this period, it is vital that the logbook be kept updated with any works, I note in 2023 a quotation was received for other repairs and was not accepted, but no further reference has been made to the 'Stonework and Rainwater Goods Repair Project'.		

4.2 The last QI report also included details of some major works as follows:

4.2.1 The Nave and Chancel and were re-slatted in Westmoreland slates to diminishing courses with stone ridges in 2016 funded by a LPOW grant. The works also included adding ceiling insulation (as had been installed to the north in the past). The water table pointing and all of the abutment flashings were also renewed at this point and all rainwater goods were overhauled. At a similar time, a large re-pointing and stone replacement scheme was undertaken. In 2019 the church saw a full re-decoration project.

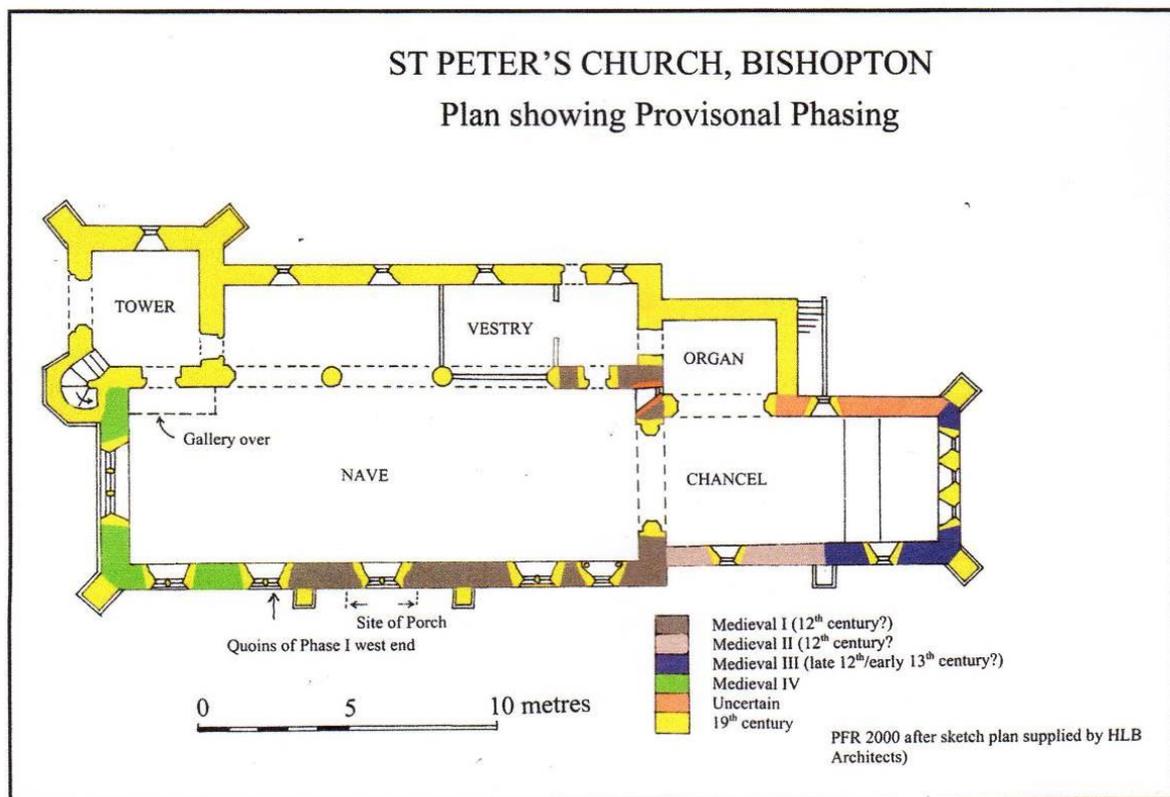
5. Summary of condition

5.1 The recent re-pointing scheme and re-roofing has made a substantial improvement in the overall condition of the church. There are a number of areas which still require attention, namely the tower and gallery. The gallery floor is still physically damp to touch and the adjacent gable wall has damp penetration, even since the external areas have been re-pointed in lime mortar. The rainwater goods will need further investigation in this area to find the root cause, following this, repairs to the floor of the gallery can commence. Initial suspicion was that the box gutter may not be working correctly- this has already been reconfigured due to past poor performance. It used to discharge to the west but now discharges to the east, over the north aisle and appears well designed from photos provided by the contractor. It may be that the tower downpipe, which winds around the box gutter and down the west face may not be flowing correctly. The general arrangement needs a closer inspection in wet conditions.

5.2 The tower has many damp and rotten timbers, which appear to have gotten worse since the last inspection. There are a few defects on the main roof covering that could be leading to this deterioration but a full tower roof replacement may need to be considered, or at least the box valley. The crenelated parapet was strengthened in 1983 and repaired in 2016 and whilst there is a small amount of cement mortar missing off the backing, all appears ok.

- 5.3 In the bell chamber, the louvered windows have cracks to the mullions which are needed to be repaired to improve structural stability of the openings. The louvres and tracery are also rapidly deteriorating and require immediate attention.
- 5.4 The Tower has vertical cracking to the West and East bell chamber level as noted at the previous QI and there appears to be no change to it but it should be pointed up, the repair of cracks enable us to understand whether there is movement, though there doesn't appear to be anything externally.
- 5.5 The top SE corner of the Chancel has cracking externally and it is unknown if this is progressive, therefore needs to be monitored carefully.

Plan of the church (from Peter Ryder's Historic Churches of County Durham)



PART TWO

6. Roof Coverings

6.1 Tower



Figure 1- Tower roof

6.1.1 C19th crenellated tower with single pitch lead roof falling to a southern box gutter, outlet through the S parapet into a hopper. Hatch to the southeast corner and flagpole centrally. 6 bays of lead with rolls between each, all in single sheets apart from the area adjacent to the hatch, there is no step in level at this joint and the pitch is not steep enough to rule out water tracking back here.

6.1.2 The crenulations are generally ok, though the backings to the merlons are in brickwork with cement render, the corner nearest the hatch has a crack to the southern joint. The stonework to the back of the merlons have a few minor open joints that would benefit from re-pointing. The stability of these top stones should be checked regularly. There is a significant amount of vegetation growth at lower level, particularly above the box gutter which may suggest this area is permanently damp.



Figure 2 – hatch and E box gutter

6.1.3 The lead appears ok and there are no obvious splits or defects, however the condition to the underside of the box gutter to the east suggests there is a leak here. Dirt and moss were cleared from one area but present throughout, one step half way along the gutter doesn't appear to have an appropriate fall.

6.1.4 Glass fibre flagpole intact, the cable stays are ok but the connecting hooks are all rusted. The bolts at the base plate also look a little rusted. There is a loose rope attached to the base. The fixings into the stonework are ok but the shackle on the Northside is beginning to open up slightly, as reported in the last QI.



Figure 3 – cable stays

6.1.5 The hatch is very heavy to raise and lower, therefore replacement should be considered with a lighter covering or assisted hydraulic opener installed. There is no stay, therefore in the open position it is pulling on the hinges. The ladder access to this point and safe transfer to the roof is discussed in section 9.3

6.2 The **Nave and Chancel** roof coverings were completely replaced in 2016 with natural stone ridges and heavy grade Lakeland green Westmoreland slating with eaves protection and insulation. These all look in good condition, no defects to report. All the water tables were

also repointed in 2016, again no defects to report here.

6.3 **North Aisle and organ:** The north aisle was re-slatted in Westmoreland slate pre-1997. Both areas have no defects in the slating, both have a build-up of moss. The chimney to the e end of the nave appears ok, but it is unknown if this is adequately capped.

7. **Rainwater Goods** – The rainwater goods were overhauled at the Chancel and Nave in 2016 and they are cast iron ogee gutters and circular cast-iron downpipes.

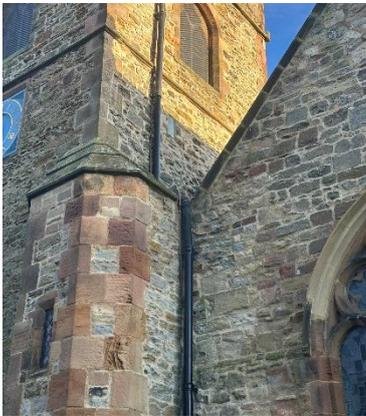


Figure 4 – Tower downpipe

7.1 **Tower** - Downpipe leading down the S side of the tower, over the west end of the nave and down between the stair tower and W gable

7.2 **Westside** – The rainwater pipe from the tower leads down to this elevation, there is a change in direction above the lead valley between the nave and the tower and a joint at the top of the downpipe, leading to a hopper. It is unknown if this is all working as it should, the condition of the west wall internally raises concern therefore further inspection should be carried out with testing in wet conditions.

7.3 Southside

7.3.1 **Nave:** gutter appears to be dropping in the

middle and it looks adrift from the eaves. check in rain to see if it is adequately catching and draining water. The downpipe looks to discharge directly onto the ground – is there a gully here?

7.3.2 **Chancel:** Gutter drops down significantly at the end with the hopper, check this doesn't overflow in heavy rainfall. Downpipes are into salt glazed gulleys appear ok.

7.4 Northside

7.4.1 **Chancel:** gutter appears ok, downpipe is rusted in places and discharges into a gully. Leaves cover gully but otherwise ok.

7.4.2 **Organ:** Paint condition still deteriorating, revealing red beneath. Downpipe looks ok, goes into a gutter which is completely clogged with leaves and soil. The shoe also requires decoration.

7.4.3 **North Aisle:** Gutter brackets rather rusty here, downpipe looks ok but the gully appears to be silted up. Persistent green staining of the wall to the west end suggests there could be a leak here, it is a long run and therefore may not drain properly, this should be checked.



Figure 5 – W end of N aisle

8. **External Walls & Buttresses** - The walling material and laying technique reflects the four Medieval periods of rebuilding and the Victorian. Mostly squared and coursed stone using a mixture of different sandstone. Peter Ryder's Archaeological Assessment of January 2001 provides significant detail on the variations. There are many stone types, different techniques and pointing materials – the recent re-pointing scheme with lime mortar greatly assisted with consolidation in an appropriate material.

8.1 Nave:

8.1.1 **Westside** –The wall has been fully re-pointed with lime mortar and sections of the hoodmould replaced. Internally this wall is still damp, which does not



Figure 6 – W gable

reflect its renewed external condition – more investigation required. There are very minor open joints at the base of the plinth course.

8.1.2 **Southside** – This is a Medieval wall made out of large units, the stonework is generally ok and has been mostly re-pointed in lime, though the past cementitious mortar has caused some erosion to the stones. There are grave slab covers and sundial built in, these low level items are susceptible to damp and thus erosion. The previous QI suggested they could be removed for their longer term preservation- though no action without a Conservator's Report first.



Figure 7 – E nave, S side

8.1.3 **Eastside** – Slight open joints by the hopper with missing stone and some heavy cement patching in the past. This would benefit with some consolidation and cement replaced with lime mortar.

8.2 **Chancel:**

8.2.1 **Southside** – It is a mixture of squared limestone at the Eastern most end sandstone at the other. There are areas of cement over-pointing particularly in the corner to the Nave. Buttresses are slightly cracking, worst on the South East corner, which is dropping, it is unclear if this is historic or progressive. There is pocket erosion to the sandstone cill, a mortar repair would be acceptable, rather than indent of new stone.



Figure 8 – SE corner of Chancel

8.2.2 **Eastside** – There is some movement in the South East corner – reported as not major by the last QI. The three lancets are generally ok though the Northern most is a bit more worn than the others, as is the adjacent walling. There is a gravestone in the wall at low level, the face of which is delaminating.

8.2.3 **Northside** – Open joints to the top lefthand side and some erosion by the oil tank. Lancet window looks ok other than an open joint to the top lefthand side.

8.3 **Organ Loft:**

8.3.1 **East Elevation** – mostly stone but has brickwork at low level to the boiler room, upper part stonework has a few eroded stones, little progression from pictures in

the last report. The brickwork near the steps appears damp and has open joints.

8.3.2 **North Elevation** – Stonework fair apart from two or three eroded stones. There is a vent to the base which has a loose top and the walling surrounding this has open joints.

8.4 **North Aisle:**

8.4.1 **Eastside** – Erosion to the stonework as a consequence of hard cement and there has been a bit of patching in the past but it seems ok.

- 8.4.2 **Northside** – Near the rainwater downpipes there is significant erosion and green wall staining at either end, as per section 7, this needs to be checked. A large hole with penetrating pipework needs to be closed off. This elevation would benefit from the same full re-pointing as the west, as many holes, open joints and stone erosion prevails. Concrete at the base to the west end may encourage water inside due to its high level and no fall away, see further discussion at item 15.3.



Figure 9 – N Aisle, concrete step circled

9. Tower Bells, Frames & Clock

- 9.1 **Tower:** Three stage rubble tower with buttresses to two sides, and a stair tower to the southwest. Crenellated parapet, string courses and a clock face to the west. Lightning conductor tape comes down on the north elevation. High level two-light trefoil lancet with quatrefoil tracery on all sides.

9.2 Tower Elevations:

- 9.2.1 **West Elevation** – Slight easing of the door head has caused an open joint, no progression here, this elevation has some minor erosion, which is worst just beneath the clock and at either side of the door, though not currently cause for concern, the stone to the bottom left of the door should plan to be replaced. It appears like the top stage has been re-pointed.



Figure 10 – West tower elevation

- 9.2.2 The **stair tower** stonework and pointing was included within the recent works and all now looks in good condition. There is also a lightning tape coming down on the Southwest corner of the stair turret.

- 9.2.3 **South Elevation** – All reportedly repointed as part of the recent repairs, limited view from ground level.

- 9.2.4 **East Elevation** – This was repointed down to the roofs, the bottom stage hasn't been re-pointed. Some slight honeycombing to the stonework on the North East buttress but no concern yet. The lowest stage has had cement pointing which is too hard, there are open joints and a hole which should be patch repaired with lime mortar, alongside a small crack to the buttress, which may be historic. Between the tower and north aisle there are two concrete steps – see discussion at item 8.4.2.



Figure 11 – base of N tower

- 9.2.5 **North Elevation** – Only the top stage has been repointed, some honeycombing and eroded

stonework but generally in fair condition, possible crack radiating up from the bottom stage lancet window reported at the last QI can still be seen, should be re-pointed for monitoring purposes. Some slight open joints by the North East buttress both buttresses, there is an area of rendering at low level which is breaking away and revealing poor quality stone with many open joints.

9.2.6 The down tape is on this elevation and is unprotected.

INTERNAL TOWER

9.3 Belfry

9.3.1 **Ceiling** – The ceiling (forming the deck of the lead roof above) is boards over joists, with larger perpendicular support beams below. The beam below the box gutter looks to have been strengthened in the past but still has rot to the eastern end. The ceiling boards have damp staining to both the west and east sides, though notably worse to the east with signs of rot. The lifting beam for the bells is rusting and would benefit from decoration so as not to deteriorate. The support beam for the clock weights looks ok, with slight staining. The base of the flagpole penetrates through the boarding and the bolts are rusting, these would be best replaced in stainless steel.



Figure 12 – Belfry ceiling

9.3.2 **Walls** – Random rubble, some open joints, particularly at high level. Cracks in the South East and to a lesser extent, South West corners as noted in the last inspection report, only the southeast was pictured, which shows little to no progression as far as I can see. A crack radiates from the top of the western lancet, not noted in the last report. These need to be pointed as soon as possible to allow any movement to be monitored. The sandstone quatrefoil belfry louvres are in very poor condition, these appear to have deteriorated since the last inspection, many louvres are dislodged. The tracery is also in need of repair, many cracks with some areas at risk of falling. There is external expanded metal mesh sheeting that looks in acceptable condition but should not be relied on to stop falling stone. The louvres and tracery need repairs urgently.



Figure 12a – Belfry Ladder



Figure 13 – Crack to E side belfry

9.3.3 **Floor** – has a buildup of debris and sandstone dust, all of which needs clearing so we can better inspect the condition of the floor and help determine the possible causes of issues below.

9.3.4 **General** – The timber bell frame is difficult to inspect safely, there was a report of some woodworm in the frame but it is unknown if this has been treated. The ladder access up to the Tower roof is quite dangerous, the ladder is at the wrong angle for the type, so the treads slope down, making securing oneself to open the hatch very difficult. The ladder itself has woodworm and signs of historic rot. This should therefore be completely replaced with a more suitable alternative.



Figure 14 – Lancets to belfry

9.4 Clock Chamber-



Figure 15 – Clock Chamber ceiling

9.4.1 **Ceiling** – Floorboards above with joists and perpendicular beam below. The rot in the southwest corner persists, with the loss of the floorboards here. The southernmost joist looks in poor condition. There are several other damp patches, and the beam below is also very damp to touch at the south side. Some floorboards above are missing. One floor joist cut away for the clock mechanism. Once the floor above is cleared (safely) further inspection is recommended, possibly with an experienced joiner who can assist with determining which timbers require replacement.

9.4.2 **Walls** – White painted, generally ok apart from the cracking to the East and the South East corner which was reported in the last report but would be best to be filled and decorated to aid monitoring. Crack to the southwest corner also noted, with an adjacent hairline crack below the window, these should also be monitored. The walls have small single glazed windows, two of them are broken and one is missing its secondary glazing, one has broken secondary glazing.

9.4.3 **Floor** – The floor is slightly soft at the foot of the stair ladder, at the joint of two boards otherwise generally ok.

9.4.4 **General** – Contains the clock also the clock weight cupboard, now redundant, the boxing is also incomplete.

9.5 Ringing Room:

9.5.1 **Ceiling** – The last QI report notes this was recently painted, but showing some discolouration already, is this damp may be from above or condensation staining.

9.5.2 **Walls** – As above, assume to be part of the re-decoration but now discolored, particularly around windows and at high level, what type of coating was used here? There are signs of a slight hairline crack beginning to show back through the new paint under the west window, though not currently of concern.

9.5.3 **Floor** – Slight lifted floorboard in the Northeast corner by the boxing leading onto the gallery and in the middle. There is also a hole in the flooring near the paneling.

- 9.5.4 **General** –There is a temporary cable providing power to the clock chamber – if this is a constant requirement a more permanent solution should be considered, The gallery door and to the stair catches the floor.

9.6 Gallery:

- 9.6.1 As per the last report, this has rot to the floor on the West side, which remains unchanged and is notably still wet. Previously thought to be associated with the poor walling conditions externally, now re-pointed. Therefore thought to be linked to the rainwater arrangement, see item 7.1 though the wall is not green externally. The area remains cordoned off and should stay this way until the water issue is resolved and the timber structure can be fully inspected and repaired as necessary.
- 9.6.2 Once the above issue is resolved the area would benefit from re-decoration.
- 9.6.3 The extension cable runs across this area and should be removed prior to allowing access.



Figure 16 – Gallery floor and W wall

- 9.7 **Tower Stairs** - Are all ok, some slight damp showing but looks to be drying up following re-pointing scheme, glazing ok. Steps are ok and top guard rail is adequate. At the foot of the stairs is a collection of cleaning materials and lumber just underneath the spiral, check this complies with the health and safety plan. The Tower door is ok but doesn't have a lock as previously reported, therefore access is unrestricted. The doors require easing to make them easier to operate.

- 9.8 **Bells** - Three bells hung on a softwood frame by C & G Meres of London dated 1847. The bells are a treble, II and tenor. Previous QI's have reported woodworm holes to the timber frame and ladders, which does not look to have been addressed. It is unknown if the bells are rang regularly, nonetheless a maintenance scheme should be in place. The access around the headstocks and frame was restricted but there was some rust to areas, therefore it is recommended that a specialist inspection is carried out at regular intervals.

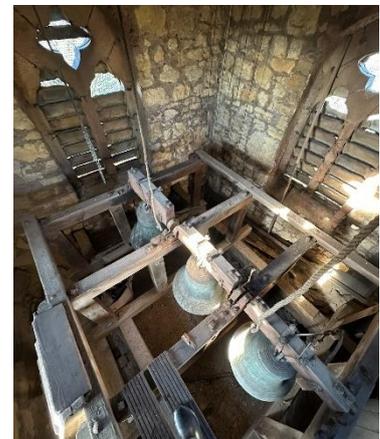


Figure 17 – bells

“The Bell Frames are probably contemporary with the tower; they have three parallel pits and are of long-headed type with two queen-posts and end-posts to each truss, but no bracing. One of the three Bells has an inscription dating it to 1847, the other two are uninscribed.” (Peter Ryder, January 2001)

“Bishopton, St Peter – Rehung with modern fittings for swing chiming, retaining canons, but indications were that they had previously been hung for ringing. Ringing chamber formerly had a balcony on the nave, but this had been boarded off. The tower is on the north side of the nave so the gallery was sideways on to it.” (Peter Rivet 1975)

- 9.9 **Clock** -1847 clock by Windle of Stockton on Tees is reportedly checked regularly, there is now a digital winder in place.

- 10. Boiler Room:** Brick Barrel vaulted room with brick walls, assumed brick or stone floor. Contains boiler, spare materials (slates) and a little bric-a-brac and lots of dirt/dust.



Figure 18 – Former Coal Chute

10.1 The room contains the oil fired Trianco boiler TRO37/45 and is heavily rusted, it has a Mectron 10E burner and a Grundfos pump. The rusting distribution pipework has some insulation on it going up through the ceiling and expanding foam seal – is this fire rated?

10.2 The room is relatively dry for a subterranean space, some spalling of brickwork, lime wash is coming away, particularly on the Northern side, and some open joints. There is a former coal chute which is letting more damp in (probably due to broken top as noted in section 8.3.2), part of the barrel is held up by a lintel here that is eroding and should be assessed for adequacy.

10.3 The door ironmongery needs replacing and the door itself needs easing and decoration. Better lighting would be useful and an accessible light switch would aid the safe access of the space.

10.4 Room contains a 6kg powder fire extinguisher but this is loose on the floor and should be stored correctly.

11. External Windows & Doors

11.1.1 At the West end of the Nave is a large lancet window, 3 light. With pictorial glazing which has recently been subject to stone replacements and re-pointing.

11.1.2 To the South Nave, there are five lancet windows in it and they are generally ok but note as follows

- W1 – crack to the mullion on the left hand side
- W2 – erosion to mullion and tracery
- W3 – cracks at head and cill
- W4 – ok, some minor erosion
- W5 - losing its pointing and has broken glass

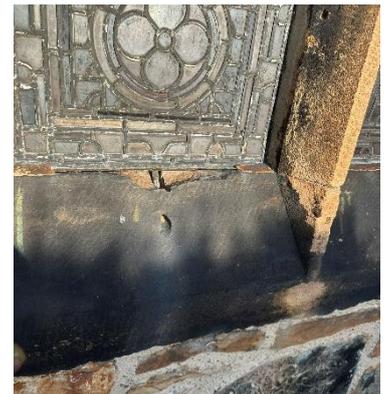


Figure 19 – South Nave W 3

11.2 To the South Chancel, the frame is rusting to the Eastern most lancet at the top of the window.

11.3 At the North Aisle the window dressings of lancets are all ok, there is a significant crack below the shoulder of the door opening.

11.4 The louvres to all of the high level tower lancets are in very poor condition, as well as having many cracks in the tracery, as discussed in section 9.3.2, these require immediate and urgent attention.

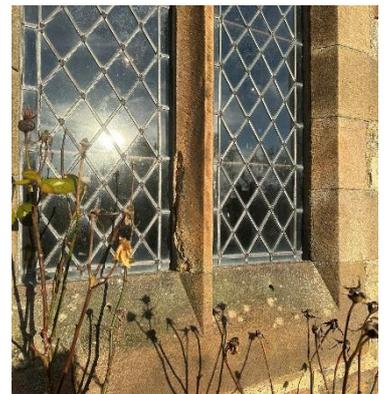


Figure 20 – South Nave W 2

12. External Metalwork, Woodwork & Paintwork

12.1 Main entrance door is a large timber door with decorative band and gudgeon hinges, it is studded to all sides. Average condition, the door needs re-decoration to protect the base.



12.2 The Vestry outer door is also a timber door with decorative band and gudgeon hinges, there has been a weatherbar installed and all appears ok,

12.3 Double gates at entrance with arch above are a little rusty and would benefit from decoration, though perhaps not urgently, one welded finial top missing. Single gate to the rear in similar condition.

Figure 21- Main door



Figure 22- Vestry door (as item 11.3)

INTERNAL FABRIC

13. ROOF STRUCTURE & CEILINGS

13.1 **Nave & Chancel:** 4No scissor trusses with collar beams to Nave and 2No. to chancel, exposed rafters and purlins. These were redecorated in June 2016 as part of the LPOW works and they are all in good condition.

13.2 **North Aisle:** Exposed common rafters, primary rafter and purlin with a strut to the arcade. The lightweight vestry partition has settled slightly creating a gap, as noted in the last report. However there also appears to be some movement at the abutment of the strut to the arcade, this should be monitored.

13.3 **Vestry & Choir Vestry:** A continuation of the north aisle. Sloping ceiling painted and in good condition, other than the high level damp reported at the last QI, above the incoming door, slipped tiles thought to have caused this and it is unclear if these have been repaired – PCC to carry out checks.

13.4 **Organ Loft:** Only partially visible, this area has a ceiling of (probably zinc) metal sheets which slope down to the north side where there is a small gutter and hopper, but the downpipe is short and leads to nowhere, it is assumed that this has been installed to protect the organ from any roof failures but makes its condition very difficult to check.

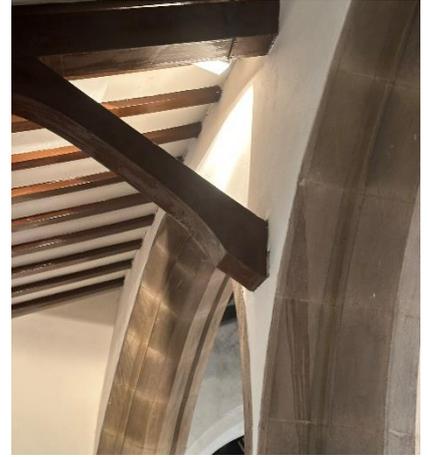


Figure 23 – Strut to Arcade in N Aisle

14. CHANCEL ARCH, ARCADES & MASONRY / STRUCTURE

14.1 Very simple **chancel arch**, stepped back from main masonry and chamfered, unlike the arcade which has exposed stone, this is fully decorated. No structural defects to note.

14.2 There are hairline cracks above each of the windows to the **North Aisle**. Due to the recent re-decoration scheme, these have become easier to monitor.



Figure 24- N Aisle slight easing



Figure 25- S window cill



Figure 26 – Arcade open joint

14.3 To the south side of the **Nave** the western most window cill is breaking up. There is a minor hairline crack in the plaster at the centre point of this wall, another small hairline crack is visible on the westernmost double lancet from the apex up to the

wall plate. These are all very minor and should simply be monitored for the time being.

14.4 To the **arcade**, there is one open joint to the top of the eastern most arch, again not currently of concern, but would perhaps benefit from re-pointing, being sure not to get lime mortar onto the face of the stone.

15. Plaster & Decoration

15.1 There appears to be an area of damp above the **Chancel Arch** on both the chancel and nave sides. Given the recent decoration, it would lead me to believe this is a current issue and the water table above should be checked. Slight damp to the base of the chancel arch is to be expected.



Figure 27- Damp to Chancel Arch

15.2 **Nave & chancel:** Redecorated in 2019 and in good condition. Redecoration revealed that there were remnants of Victorian stencils that had been overpainted in the past. These were recorded during the works. The lower walls in the nave south and west are Newton Lath- over boarded in gypsum plaster (the remaining walls are all lime) Suggesting that there could have been a timber dado in the past.

15.2.1 The west wall by the gallery floor beam remains very damp, this is thought to be linked to the downpipe from the tower overflowing wetting the wall, however there is also another distinct area of staining at high level. It may be that the high-level area was a past issue and is still drying out which has affected the recent decoration. Nonetheless this area needs further inspection either in heavy rain conditions or other replicated test conditions.



Figure 28- Damp to W gable

15.3 To the west end of the **North Aisle**, the salts are coming through the paint and what appears to be gypsum plaster, destroying the new decoration. This is most likely linked to the concrete steps between the buttress and the north aisle wall externally, in addition to this area not being lime pointed. Removal of these steps should be considered, or at least a fall to the top away from the building.

15.4 Some slight blowing of the plaster on the North Wall at the **Chancel** step up to the sanctuary, but appears the same as the last report.

15.5 **Vestry & Choir Vestry:** Are all decorated out and are generally ok, though most of the vestry is covered by panelling/ cupboards. At high level above the water tank there is damp showing, which had been reported previously, unknown if this is this an active issue, monitor and ensure all recommendations of last report were carried out in this area. There is also some slight loss of plaster at lower door jambs and it would be good to repair this.

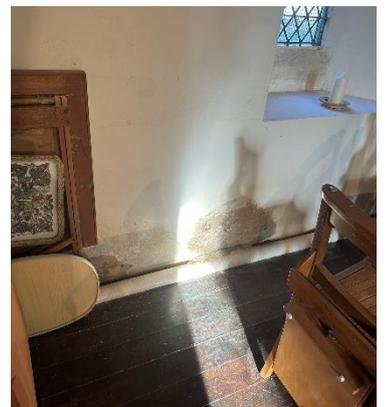


Figure 29- Damp to N Aisle

15.6 **Porch Entrance/ tower base:** Major loss of recent decoration surrounding stairs to the west, could this be linked to the damp on the main west wall. However the entire area appears damp and has lost some of the recent decoration, is this simply drying out following recent re-pointing and decoration schemes, is water collecting in rubble filled

walls, if so the only way to fully resolve this would be to grout with lime. The issue to the west wall should be resolved first and this area monitored to make a longer term assessment.

15.7 **Organ loft:** As per the last report, the walls are a combination of timber boarded, some which are loose, and bare walls that are poorly plastered and dusty. No changes here but not possible to view behind the organ.

16. Partitions, Doors & Paneling



Figure 27- easing to vestry partition

16.1 Within the Choir Vestry it is cup boarded out, containing robes etc. This is formed from the North Aisle by a glazed screen into the Nave and painted partition to the north aisle, which is all in good condition. There is a hairline crack to the North Aisle side beneath the purlin, but as this is simply a partition and likely to move differentially to the other walls, not of concern.

16.2 **Doors:** The external doors are all in good condition. The Vestry door remains loose fitting and draughty. The internal doors are all ok, but like the external doors could do with some oiling of the locks, handles and hinges.

16.3 The entrance door catching on the floor and really needs to be lifted at the hinges as it has in the past, it latches but does needs easing slightly. There is an open joint between the frame and stonework where this is eroded.

16.4 Doors to the Nave are slightly warped but ok. The door to the North Aisle is ok but the doorknob still needs fixing correctly.

17. Ventilation

17.1 No external vents visible for any underfloor voids which may be present – of particular concern for the vestry floor, discussed further in section 19.

17.2 One of the windows to the North Aisle has a hopper, though it is unknown if this is functional. The Nave and Chancel are generally lacking ventilation, which may result in condensation issues.

18. Glass

18.1 All the glass needs washing down and de-rusting of its support bars, it is recommended that they be cleaned and then assessed for repairs at this time. Glass is a mixture of clear in diamond pattern and leaded pictorial. There is metal grill protection to pictorial glass windows apart from the West Nave window which features Septimus Waugh glass of recent years and window 5 on the Nave South. The plain glazing is unguarded at the vestry. Guarding is by metal mesh in reasonable order. The previous QI identified the Chancel East glass as ageing and needed re-leading in due course, there is a missing piece and specialist advice should be sought on this, though not currently thought to be urgent.

19. Floors, Rails

19.1 **Nave & Chancel** - A mixture of timber pew platforms and ceramic tiles for the circulation areas and near the font, the aisles are carpeted and average condition. Herringbone flooring near the lectern with a lacquered finish, scratched but ok. Pew

platforms redecorated as part of the recent works. The heating pipes run to the sides of the pews making exit to the north aisle from the nave pews very difficult.

19.2 The **Chancel** has two sandstone steps up, the joints of these are open. The choir stalls are on a pew platform. Steps down to the organ, all appears ok. The Chancel has decorative tiles which are in good condition.

19.3 **Vestry & Choir Vestry**: One step up from the main nave, timber boarded suspended floor painted black with a rough finish, there are various temporary boards and an area of blue protective sheet placed over uneven floor boards. The floor fall away to the North. The last report noted it required opening up to investigate, the PCC should report back if this was carried out and the findings, or undertake the recommended inspection.

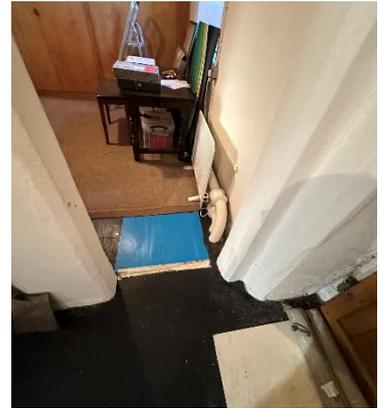


Figure 28- Vestry floor

19.4 **Organ**: The floor is below the Chancel and Vestry level, in a pit, timber boarded from what can be seen- seems ok, though there is a lot of dust and possible areas of damp, the dust should be cleared to allow a better inspection. The PCC should follow recommended guidelines for cleaning in close proximity of the organ.

19.5 The **entrance** has a tiled border with concrete centrally and is ok, but not a desirable material.

20. Monuments, Brasses, Furnishings, Organ & Clock



Figure 29- Font

20.1 **Font**: Stone octagonal bowl with no lining and mounted on pedestal with 17th Century timber spired & crocketed lid. In good condition except for a loose moulding to bottom edge and general wear and tear.

20.2 **Pulpit**: Sturdy construction in light oak of modern design and in good condition.

20.3 **Pews**: Modern design in light oak with plain gables and panelled backs. Sound construction and in good condition. There are separate chairs in the north aisle and to the front row of the Nave.

20.4 **Choir Pews**: Oak with fielded panels & Scotia beaded panel frontals.

20.5 **Reredos behind Altar**: Stone arcade decorative design with marble columns. There are three central canopy niches decoratively carved. All painted in white except for the marble, in good condition. Redecorated in 2019 as part of the internal redecoration.

20.6 **Timber Framed Altar**: Located in Front of Reredos with Braced Legs & Decoration to Corners, covered at the inspection, but fine where the cloth was lifted.

20.7 **Altar Rails**: Are in oak on brass columns with decorative brackets all seems sturdy.

20.8 **Chair**: In the Chancel is of aged oak with decorative back and turned legs. Appears to be of value and should be checked for insurance purposes.

20.9 **Lectern**: Brass on pedestal with decorative details, well-polished and sound.

20.10 **Oak chest**: Of some antiquity should be valued for insurance purposes.

20.11 **Organ:** Located on Northside of Chancel. The last inspection date is unknown. No reports of use. Electronic Clavinova organ is in the Nave and used for services. Not inspected.

21. Heating

21.1 Trianco TR037/45. 45kw oil fired boiler over 30 years old, has a rusting case and poor flue joints as reported at the last QI. Supply from an oil storage tank on the Northside of the Chancel with timber screen.

21.2 It has an annual inspection but is generally only fired up only for services. No test certificate or servicing information available. The PCC noted the system was recently fixed but the engineer noted that it would be difficult to repair if it was to break again, therefore a new heating system should be planned into future expenditure.



Figure 30- Boiler

22. Electrical

22.1 The supply enters the building via an overhead electric cable on the Nave gable at the East, running externally down this gable into the vestry window. The distribution panel and meters are located in the Vestry and are exposed at high level. The date on the consumer unit states there was a test in 2018, but no inspection report in logbook available to know if this test included any improvements or recommendations. It is vital that an up to date electrical test report is kept in the logbook.

22.2 There were repairs to the lighting system in 2017 and again in 2021, however halogen lamps were still being installed at this time, which should really be superseded by LED technology. Along with the electrical system they would have been tested but there is no test certificate available. Internally the Church is lit by tungsten lighting which is not complementary to the building. A modern low energy scheme using warm white LED's would improve lighting and be more cost effective in the long term.

22.3 There are 4 external lights, one of which is listed as replaced with LED in 2021. It is unknown if the light on the arch over the main gate is working.

22.4 **Sound system:** Installed in 2010 and comprising of lectern mic, radio mic, lapel mic and speakers. There is no loop system.

22.5 **PAT:** – Tested last in July 2024.

23. Lightning Conductor - Two down tapes on the tower North wall and the South to ground level, the test certificate in the logbook is dated 2013 though the PCC note this has been carried out since, documentation should be updated in the logbook.

24. Water & Sanitary Facilities

24.1 There is a sink at the Vestry which is served by an underground service probably from the Village Hall to the North.

24.2 **Foul drainage:** None.

24.3 **Surface water drainage:** Unknown system, most likely a soakaway.

25. Fire Precautions - Reportedly serviced annually, however no information in logbook. Date on extinguishers themselves of 12/22, indicating next inspection due 12/23.

Fire extinguishers noted:

Porch – Foam

~~Lectern area – 6 litre water.~~ – reported at last inspection but not seen.

Outer Vestry – 2kg CO2 & Fire Blanket

~~Organ Pit – 2kg CO2.~~ – reported at last inspection but not seen.

Boiler house – 6kg powder.

All tested in 2022.

25.1 The PCC are directed to the explanatory notes at the rear of the report. Advice can be obtained from the fire prevention officer of the local brigade and all extinguishers should be inspected annually. Certificates should be stored in the log book.

25.2 Dual means of escape through the tower and vestry door, though the vestry door was not opened at the inspection to check functionality. The PCC should produce a risk assessment for means of escape.

25.3 The PCC should have carried out 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). There should also be a nominated fire officer, no records in logbook so unknown if this is the case. The tower captain should also be involved with the fire risk assessment especially with regard to evacuation of ringers in case of fire and indeed of sudden illness.

25.4 H & S policy: The church is in the process of updating its H&S policy and is not available at this time.

26. Security –

26.1 The church is left open during the day with valuables locked in the vestry. This is in line with current Ecclesiastical Insurance guidelines, however the PCC should make themselves familiar with all recommendations. The church also lies at the centre of the village, between three roads, increasing passive security throughout the day.

27. Access - Access for the Disabled: A formal access audit has not been carried out, however recent discussions by the PCC have taken place regarding access.



Figure 31- Main gate access

27.1 Wheelchair access: There is ramped access footpath, albeit steep from two entrance gates. There are three steps up from the pavement at the northwest access, and this is directly onto a highway. The south access is to a footpath which would seem like a more logical location to have (temporary) ramped access as this would not lead onto a highway, however there is no dropped kerb here so this would need to be requested from the council. The path may also need to be widened to its original width, and cleared of shrub overgrowth. There is also a step up into the porch which is managed by a temporary aluminium ramp.

27.2 The PCC is advised to carry out a full accessibility audit to include places for wheelchair positioning in the church (suggested to be the front row in place of loose

seats) and determine what improvements can be made within the restrictions of the building. It may be possible to re-lay the step into the porch at an angle.

28. Churchyard, boundaries, signs, paths, trees



Figure 32 – Rear gate access

28.1 **Trees:** Several trees have been pruned by the council since the last inspection, it is recommended that the PCC keep an updated tree survey noting the condition of the trees, as many sit close to the boundary walls.

28.2 Closed graveyard with many memorials, some are leaning and others have erosion, an inventory is recommended. Tarmac paths from the South and the West entrance generally ok, are a bit mossy and the widths have narrowed with grass encroachment (especially to the rear). The evergreen against the South Nave that was mentioned to need removal in the last report still remains and is now larger, this could cause issue if it remains much longer.

28.3 The graveyard walls retain the graveyard and they are cement pointed in many places there is quite a few open joints as well to them, the council should implement a repair and maintenance plan here.

28.4 **Northside** -Is partially shared with the Village Hall towards the west end, in front of the parking area, the wall is bulging at the base, the council should be advised to appoint a structural engineer to check its integrity. The tree in close proximity to this is likely to be the root cause. The nearby tree has been cut down.

28.5 **Westside** –Open joints all as a consequence of being pointed in cement. There are Yew and Pine trees to this boundary which require monitoring and management to ensure their stability/growth is controlled and they do not affect the boundary wall.

28.6 **Southside** - The cement repair to the South gate pier is poor, the council must note that all future repair works should be with an appropriate lime mortar.

28.7 **Eastside** - Wall bulging out a bit on the East end, otherwise ok. Again, some large deciduous trees adjacent to the retaining boundary wall so it will be important to continuously monitor the walls condition and report any changes to the council.

28.8 The **sign** is modern and in good condition



Figure 33 – Boundary to North

29. Archaeology - Consultation with the local authority archaeologist indicates that the church and its grounds may be of archaeological importance, and they should be consulted when significant works are being considered.

PART THREE

Summary of repairs in order of priority

	Comment	Item ref	Budget
Category 1 - Urgent, requiring immediate attention.			
1	Carry out electrical test, lightning conductor test, fire extinguisher service H & S policy: Carry out updating. Fire matters: Establish if the Fire Risk Assessment has been carried out.	21, 22, 25	£0 £1,999
1	Mason assessment of repair needs of the louvres and belfry tracery. Repair or replace stone mullions, tracery and louvres to all upper tower lancets.	9.3.2, 11.4	Repair c. £10 -15k
Category 2- Requires attention within 12 months.			
2	Investigate damp in box gutter to tower roof , could be the fall to the gutter at the step or joins in sheets at the hatch, possibly plan for roof replacement.	6.1.1, 9.3.1	£2,000 - £9,999 New boiler c. £8- 10k
2	Investigate cause of w nave damp – downpipe inspection in wet conditions	7.1, 7.2, 8.1.1, 9.6.1, 15.2.1	
2	Check rainwater goods are working effectively at S Nave. To north aisle decorate gutters and check flows due to green stained walls, clear gulleys.	7.3, 7.4.3	
2	Repair top of former coal chute	8.3.2, 10.2	
2	Re-point cracks in tower to allow monitoring	9.3.2, 9.4.2	
2	Heating: Plan for replacement of boiler, put the test certificate and note of repairs into the log book.	10, 21	
2	Bells: Check records for woodworm treatment to frame and ladders.	9.8	
2	Accessibility: Carry out an access audit and keep a written record in the Parish records, make improvements where possible.		
2	North Aisle: clean out gully, investigate possible gutter leak		
2	Check watertable above chancel arch for possible cause of damp	15.1	
2	Clock Chamber: look over the floor with a joiner to assess condition, also check the ceiling joists and damp corner.		
2	Gallery: exclude access until repaired, repair floor, complete decoration and remove temporary power cable, or replace with permanent solution.	9.5.4	
Category 3- Requires attention within the next 12-24 months.			
3	Tower: look over the cable stays, Point rear of merlons, Remove vegetation from inner south side of tower. Replace rusting bolts and hooks in stainless steel, decorate rusting beam.	6.1.2, 9.3.1, 6.1.5	£0 - £1,999
3	Belfry: repoint wall cracking, sweep up floor to investigate rot to Clock chamber ceiling/ belfry floor	9.4.1	
3	Ringing Room: ease doors		
3	Repair glass to windows and point cracks	9.4.2, 11.1.1	
Category 4- Requires attention within the quinquennial period.			
4	Masonry: the rest of the tower should be repointed to continue the 2016 repairs, in conjunction with a complete repoint of N side and East of Nave.	8.1.3, 8.4, 9.2.5	£2,000 - £9,999
4	Boiler Room: clear room and check fire rating of foam seal and lintel capability, install adequate lighting, decorate door and replace ironmongery	10	
4	Vestry & Choir Vestry: investigate damp at ceiling apex, Check capping of chimney at N vestry. Open up floor to establish underfloor defect cause and remedy.	6.3, 19.3	
4	Porch Entrance: lift entrance door, fix back knob to aisle door		
4	Monitor movement of SE corner of Chancel, re-point with lime mortar, Monitor movement of cracks internally	8.2.1 13.2	
4	Plan replacement of stone to LHS of main entrance door	9.2.1	
4	Consider removal of concrete steps or improve drainage away from N Aisle	8.4.2, 9.2.4, 15.3	
4	Replace ladder to upper tower access, add hydraulic opener or re-cover hatch and add stay	9.3.4, 6.1.6	

Category 5- A desirable improvement with no timescale.			
5	Externals: Keep paths clear, widen where overgrown, consider alternative ramped access	28	£0 £1,999
5	Organ: Establish tuning and testing routine.	19.4	
5	Consider future of grave slab covers	8.1.2, 8.2.2	
5	Consider wider ventilation strategy	9.5.1, 17	
Advice & routine maintenance. This can mostly be done without professional advice or a faculty.			
	Complete and maintain the Log Book		
	Keep the tower gutters, eave gutters and gullies clear. It is recommended that the Church undertake a twice yearly inspections of the rainwater goods by an experienced roofing contractor.		
	Ensure local council maintains grounds and ensures stability of gravestones and boundary wall and monitor trees. Keep tree survey updated.		

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

- Under floor voids (where present)
- 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>