MAYA POLENZ ARB AABC

Accredited Conservation Architect

Heritage Consultant

St Edmund's Chapel, Gateshead Quinquennial Inspection Report

March 2025

Executive Summary

The church is warm and inviting, generally in good condition and well maintained.

The slate roofs and rainwater goods are in good condition. The stonework to the east and south elevation remains in reasonably good condition following the comprehensive repairs in 1999. The west front, whilst also repaired at the time, requires further attention urgently. It has been suffering from water ingress at lower level due to (a) broken drainage and (b) failed joints and stonework in the string courses and hood moulds. The latter are cracking and delaminating, including several C19 replacements. Much of the lower medieval stonework is friable. An area at high-level requires repointing following an earlier blocked gutter. The outlets to the central gutter require enlarging and regular inspection to prevent blockages. The below-ground drainage should be repaired.

The interiors are in good condition and well presented. Not yet visible, the plasterwork seems to be delaminating in many places and might require renewal in the future. The plaster at the base of the northwest wall is affected by dampness from the broken drainage. The external window perspex covers should be replaced and the condition of the windows be inspected, ideally ahead of the next QIR. The sagging and cracking Vestry ceiling should be renewed.

Recommendations for smaller repairs and ongoing observation have been made in this report.

Table of Content

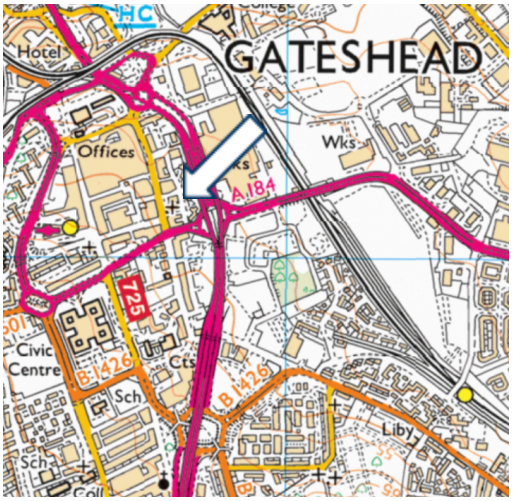
Scope of Inspection, Limitations & Context

The inspection was instructed by the PCC of Gateshead and carried out Thursday 19th September 2024. The day was partly cloudy at 15^{0}C. The survey was undertaken by Maya Polenz ARB AABC in the presence of a member of the PCC. A follow-up inspection of the west front was undertaken on Wednesday 12th March 2025. There were periodic showers at 7^{0}C.

The surveys were undertaken from ground level only.

This report follows the general guidelines set out by the Care of Churches Measure 2018; it is not a specification and must not be used for the execution of the work.

Description of the Church



Name:	Gateshead St Edmund
Church Code:	613071
Diocese:	Durham
Archdeaconry:	Sunderland
Parish:	Gateshead
Listed Building :	Grade I
Conservation Area:	N/A

Mid-weekly Holy Communion attracts around 10 worshippers. Weekly Sunday services with around 60 worshippers held by The Redeemed Christian Church of God, which also holds weekly Saturday events for young people/choir as well as monthly prayer nights. Local club attracts around 15 attendees on a Tuesday afternoon.

St Edmund's Chapel dates from the early C13 and was first cited as part of the 'Chapel and hospital of St Edmund the King and Confessor.' created by Bishop Nicholas de Farnham in the mid-C13. The hospital later became a nunnery. Following the dissolution of the monasteries, the site was sold to a local merchant who built Gateshead House; its late C16 stone gate remains and was relocated to the south side of the forecourt. House and chapel were damaged by fire in 1746 and left as ruins. In 1836, ownership of the ruined chapel was transferred to the Rector and Churchwardens of Gateshead and the chapel was restored by John Dobson. By 1894 a larger church was needed. The chapel's north wall was demolished and the chapel incorporated as the south aisle of the new church of the Holy Trinity.

In 1969, Holy Trinity was declared redundant. In 1980s, Holy Trinity was separated from the chapel and converted for community use. The chapel was rededicated as a parish church in 1982. The interior was reordered between 2008/10 and the pews removed. Between 2010 to 2020, St Edmunds was a venue for Sanctuary Artspace and hosted changing art exhibitions on its North wall.

Accessed from the west, the chapel presents as a single cell. At the northeast, a door leads into Holy Trinity. A similar door in the northwest leads to a small vestry and toilet, contained within the footprint of Holy Trinity.

Works carried out since the last QIR

St Edmund's was considered as a potential seed church for St George's Gateshead. In preparation, the main entrance door was repainted and new LED lighting was installed. Following considerable water damage due to a blocked gutter, the chapel was redecorated, the carpet partly replaced, the walls to the northeast and around the main door replastered and decorated, and water marks removed from the stonework.

A marble war memorial originating from the Church of the Venerable Bede was transferred to St Edmund's chapel. It is accompanied by a flag on a small freestanding pole.

QIR History

The last inspector, David Beaumont BA (Hons) Grad Dip RIBA AABC, kindly passed on the hardcopy files of the previous quinquennial inspecting architects, Hayton Lee & Braddock Architects. The files contain copies of the 1996/99 scope of works and specifications, copies of QIR 1996, 2002 & 2007 as well as notes from the reordering in 2007/09.

Quinquennial Inspection Report

1. Roof, Roof Coverings & Rainwater Disposal

Summary

The pitched slate roofs are reported to be in reasonable condition. The shared gutter has been leaking repeatedly. It should be repaired. Its east and west outlets should be increased, and safe access for maintenance and inspection should be provided.

The roof abutment to the southwest gable should be inspected as there is a potential leak.

The below-ground drainage is damaged and causing damage to the medieval stonework of the west front, the timber door frame and internal plaster. It should be repaired.

Roof

Pitched Welsh slate roof with gable abutments. The large stepped lead valley gutter to the north, shared with Holy Trinity, drains into hopper heads at the east and west. The leaded box gutter behind the stone parapet to the south drains into two hopper heads situated along that elevation. Its lead aprons are extended to cover the parapet coping stones on the south, but not the east or west.

QIR 2007 notes that the south pitch was re-slated in 1976 with repairs carried out in 2002. Its lead roof gutter was reported as formed 'during the restoration work' (1999?) to 'prevent water on the wall coping discharging down the wall face'. The north roof pitch was renewed in 1999. There should be two roof ventilators.

The condition of the pitched slate roof cannot be seen from ground level and there is no safe inspection access. A 2024 condition survey of Holy Trinity by Simon Nesti of RNJ reported the north slope to be in reasonably good condition but repairs being required to the central gutter and its outlets.

No.	Repair required	Priority
1.1	Roof & Rainwater disposal. Repair or renew the shared lead valley gutter to prevent future water ingress. Increase the size of its east and west outlets, and provide safe access for maintenance and inspection. *The gutter is owned jointly. The above are envisaged to be undertaken by the buyers of Holy Trinity as a condition of the property sale.*	**B**
1.2	Roof. At the next gutter clearance, ask the roofing contractor to inspect the southern box gutter as well as the roof abutments to the east and west, and to provide a short condition report with photos. Internal drip marks indicate potential leaks at the	**B**

	southwest roof abutment as well at the western gutter end. Commission repairs as necessary.	

Gutter, Downpipes & Gullies

The hoppers and downpipes are cast iron, partly galvanised and all painted black. They appear generally to be in good condition but the paint is failing on some of the galvanised sections.

The gullies are holding water; this was the case on both inspection dates. It is evident that the below-ground drainage system is blocked or broken, and there are signs of rising damp in the west wall and in the northwest corner of the chapel. It is worth noting that QIR 2007 noted that 'the front west elevation has a history of blockages'.

No.	Repair required	Priority
1.3	Below-ground rainwater disposal. Survey and repair the below-ground drainage system to stop water ingress into the base of the west wall. *The drainage is either owned jointly or adopted by the council. The ownership and repair responsibility should be clarified prior to repairs. If owned jointly, the survey and repair should be negotiated with the diocese as part of the sale of Holy Trinity*.	**B**
1.4	Rainwater disposal. Replace the missing fixings to the hopper.	**B**
1.5	Rainwater disposal. Redecorate failing paint to galvanised downpipes.	**C**

General Note

An ecologist should confirm the absence of protected species prior to any roofing repairs.

2. External Stonework & Walls

Summary

The medieval stonework is friable and further eroding due to water ingress from (a) open joints and decayed sections in the string courses; (b) past water ingress from a blockage in the central gutter outlet; (c) rising damp from the damaged below-ground drainage system. The west front requires urgent conservation work.

The remaining external stonework is heavily eroded but well pointed, and is generally in reasonably good condition.

Summary Descriptions

The **west front** was made of fine mediaeval sandstone ashlarwork, now heavily eroded. It was partly restored in late C19 and again late C20. In the middle, a heavily moulded doorway with three orders of nook shafts flanked by upper and lower pairs of trefoil-headed, multi-moulded blank arches. Above it an elaborate design of seven stepped and moulded lancets (three glazed, the others blocked) under dripmoulds with nailhead below.

The **five-bay south wall** is made of snecked stonework with ashlar quoins. It has single lancet windows with plain chamfered heads and nook shafts, and supported by stepped buttresses at the bay divisions. At its base traces of early windows and arches, now blocked. Also vent grilles for the suspended timber floor.

The **east gable** is similar to the south but with a continued hoodmould around the lancets and miniature garderobe-like features to the south and north end. Its base is eroded random rubble holding evidence of earlier blocked openings and original sills and nook shaft bases to the east windows. Above this mostly C19 ashlarwork replicating the mediaeval design.

The external fabric was repaired and partly restored in 1999.

Condition

The **west front** suffers from water ingress from open joints and decayed sections in the string courses as well as rising damp (see next paragraph). The medieval stonework is friable and eroding, and some of the sky-facing C19 stonework replacements are also affected. Appendix B provides an overview of the current condition. The west front requires urgent conservation work, which should include:

- Repointing of all string courses; conservation of friable sections; replacement of sections that have lost their ability to shed water away from the building;
- Stonework conservation to all friable medieval stonework including carvings. C19 replacements should be conserved where reasonably possible, otherwise replaced;
- Careful raking out & repointing all areas of friable stonework to aid drying out;

- Repointing coping stones where necessary;
- Works should include the immediate southwest return.

The PCC holds copies of the stonework replacement drawings for the 1996/99 repairs; the drawings are largely correct. The files contain no detailed mortar or stone specification. The replacement mortar presents as a lime mortar, potentially with cement added.

The **base of the west wall is wet**, most likely due to damaged below-ground drainage. Internally at the West door, the base of the wall is damp to both sides of the door. The problem is considerably worse to the north of the door with very high moisture content even at 1m above ground level, with internal plaster showing salt efflorescence, the electrical socket having failed due to moisture ingress and the floor below the carpet being wet to the touch. The base of the door frame showed elevated moisture readings of 18-22% equivalent moisture content (EMC) to both sides - a moisture content of 6-8% for timber inside a heated building is considered 'dry', extending to about 9-14% for external timbers. Timber is likely to decay if exposed to conditions of over 20% EMC for an extended period of time.

The stonework to the **south wall** is heavily eroded and friable but in reasonable condition. Most of the capitals over the nook shafts are cracked and starting to delaminate. The stonework at the west and east returns is covered by organic growth and the pointing is being washed out. The lead drip detail installed in 1999 (?) prevents this from happening along most of the south wall but it was stopped short of the gable copings to the east and west.

The condition of the **east wall** is similar to the south wall. The lower nookshafts have been partly replaced. As some are bowing, it is unclear if the repairs have been suitably secured or connected, or whether the sections are loose. The cross to the apex stone is missing.

No.	Repair required	Priority
2.1	External Stonework. Undertake repairs to the west wall to stop water penetration and conserve friable stonework. Include the immediate southwest return; extend the lead drip detail or replace the coping stone to provide better protection in future.	**B**
2.2	External Stonework. Undertake localised conservation of the friable capitals to the nook shafts on the south elevation. Inspect the indent-repaired lower nook shafts to the east elevation to ensure they are secure. Consider consolidation of the friable stonework to the walls whilst access is available.	**C**
2.3	External Stonework. Consider replacing the missing cross to the east gable.	**D**

3. Doors & Windows

Summary

Doors are generally in good condition. The water ingress to the base of the west door must be stopped to prevent decay to the door frame. Windows appear to be in good condition internally. The yellowed perspex protections need to be replaced and the windows inspected externally.

Windows

All stained glass dates from late C19 and is signed with *'Atkinson Bros. Newcastle-upon-Tyne'*. Two of the five south windows have ventilation hoppers.

The glazing appears to be generally in good condition. There are some minor damages to the eastern windows. The top light of the northeastern window appears to have been installed in a contorted position, potentially to accommodate previous damage. There is wide-spread splashing of white wall paint onto the stained glass. This appears to have happened during the most recent redecoration works and **is unacceptable.**

The condition of the lead cames could not be ascertained as the external perspex protections have yellowed to the point that the windows can no longer be inspected externally. The perspex provides protection from vandalism, which remains essential in the urban environment.

No.	Repair required	Priority
3.1	Windows. A suitably experienced glazier should inspect the eastern windows and recommend repairs or further observation of the following: - middle window: lead corrosion within the central group; - middle window: 4th ferramenta from top not engaging with stonework surround. It requires extension to prevent movement and damage; - northern window: Damaged glazing to pilaster north of angel holding 'St Thomas' scroll with light visible through the wall abutment; - All: wall paint has been splashed over all window abutments. Does this need removing immediately or can it be left until access is available in future?	**C**
3.2	Windows. The external perspex has yellowed to the point that the windows can no longer be inspected. Consider replacing the external protections. As part of these works, a suitably experienced glazier should inspect and report on the condition of all windows. Ideally, prepare the report before the next QIR is due.	**C**
3.3	Windows. The top light of the northeastern window has been installed in a contorted position but appears stable. Arrange for inspection if there was any change.	**O**

3.4	Generally. Building contractors should be carefully chosen, suitable protection of the building fabric insisted upon and any building works closely supervised. The wide-spread splashing of wall paint over stained glass windows is not acceptable.	**M**

Doors

Inward-opening arched double doors with ornate iron hinges to the main entrance. The doors are double battened over concealed ledges & braces. All in good condition and recently redecorated. The base of the door frame shows elevated moisture readings on both sides, due to water ingress into the base of the west wall - see Section 2.

The timber & glass lobby contains three doors. Firstly, a central set of tall timber-framed glazed doors with applied timber slats, secured with recessed flush bolts at the top and bottom. To the side, a similar smaller single door used daily. All in good working order.

Internal doors to Vestry and Holy Trinity are hollow-core doors with applied beading and plan square oak frames towards the chapel. Other faces plain and frames with painted profiled door surrounds. All doors, frames and ironmongery appear to be in good condition.

4. Church Interiors

Summary

The church is in good condition, well-lit and welcoming. Whilst not yet visible, the wall plaster appears to be delaminating and replastering might be required beyond the quinquennium. The base of the west wall remains wet - see Section 2.

The vestry ceiling should be renewed and the room would benefit from redecoration.

Chapel

An open space with plastered walls, fitted red carpet and a pitched roof. The chapel is accessed through a later-added lobby made of slatted timber and glass. There are three lancet windows in each east and west elevation, and four windows to the south. The three C19 stonework arches in the north wall are filled with concrete blocks, which were overlaid by white wall panels to exhibit art (the eastern one retaining a graffiti from 2013). A small door within the western arch leading into Holy Trinity, a door in the eastern one into the Vestry. The carpeted floor was laid over new boarding. Photos show that the original floor underneath consists of floor boards running east-west with an off-centre concrete aisle with off-shoots to the north, potentially to suit an earlier heating system. At the east end, a step-up behind the altar conceals a pit filled-in with concrete, which has reportedly been archaeologically recorded. The roof

consists of timber boarding on rafters over purlins. They are supported by seven arched roof trusses with gilded edges and carved bosses, which arise from small corbel stones.

The interiors are generally in good condition, well-lit and inviting.

The wall plaster sounds hollow when tapped, which indicates that it is not fully adhering to the stonework or its layers are delaminating. This should be monitored for now. It is possible that replastering might be required beyond the quinquennium. The recently replastered areas at the northwest are firm, however the wall remains wet at its base - see Section 2. Some water marks remain on the stonework arch in the area, and there is salt efflorescence where the stonework has been drying out. Blistering paint, which could indicate wetness in the wall behind, is evident within window reveals and at high level on the south wall. It was painted over at the last redecoration and appears to have been stable since.

An area of storage is well concealed behind curtains at the east end. The more recent accumulation at the west end, south of the lobby, needs reducing.

No.	Repair required	Priority
4.1	Interiors. The wall plaster to the southern dado as well as several window reveals and surrounding walls sounds hollow when tapped. The plaster failed at the base of the wall where trunking was fixed against it. However, no problems were reported during the installation of the war memorial or the redecorations. The situation should be monitored (O). It might be necessary to undertake plaster repairs within the next 5-10 years. (C+) The recently replaced plaster to the northwest is firm.	**O/C+**
4.2	Interiors. At the south end of the west wall, there are drip marks at high level. As the wall was only fairly recently redecorated, the marks are of concern. They could indicate water ingress and the area should be observed during heavy rain.	**O**
4.3	Interiors. Monitor the existing cracking to the apex and reveals of the middle windows to the east and west walls.	**O**
4.4	Interiors. Periodically touch-up decorations below dado rail.	**M**
4.5	Interiors. The storage at the west end, south of the lobby, should be reduced to ensure the area is fully accessible and to limit the fire load near the main exit.	**M**

Vestry

A small window-less L-shaped room with plastered walls, plasterboarded ceiling and fitted red carpet. At its east end, past a small kitchenette, a door leads to a small basin followed by a further door to a toilet - again window-less but with an extraction fan through the external wall.

DB board, heating thermostat and light switches mounted on the south wall.

Cracks in the ceiling boards have been taped but the tapes are becoming loose, the cracking is increasing and the boards are sagging.

In the toilet, the paint to the external wall is blistering due to salt efflorescence/water ingress.

4.6	Interiors. The sagging and cracking vestry ceiling requires replacement. Whilst in reasonable condition, the room would benefit from redecoration at the same time. *I note that fire separation and building works are planned as part of the planned sale and conversion of Holy Trinity, which would likely include a replacement ceiling.*	**C**
4.7	Interiors. Toilet. Following external repairs, replace the salt-damaged internal plaster. Consider increasing ventilation to the toilet as well as rerouting a heating pipe along the base of the wall to reduce condensation.	**C**

5. Fittings & Furniture

Summary

All fittings and fixtures are in good condition.

Liturgical fittings & furniture

Later C20 timber chairs, altar and lectern, all in good condition. Also the older 'Bishop's Chair' beneath the east window, transferred from St Mary's Gateshead after a fire in 1979.

Wall Memorials

The fixing of the Elliot family marble memorial on the south side, queried in the last QIR, remains unclear but there is no sign of movement and the memorial appears firmly fixed.

War Memorials

The recently installed marble war memorial and flag near the altar originally belonging to the Church of the Venerable Bede are in good condition. There is a smaller WWI war memorial near the west entrance, also in good condition.

Pews, Organ, Bells, War Memorials - N/A

No.	Repair required	Priority
5.1	Wall memorial. The masking tape left around the top of the Elliot wall memorial should be carefully removed.	**M**

6. Installations & Fire Safety

Summary

All existing installations appear to be in working order.

Electrical Distribution

The electricity meter is located within the office in Holy Trinity. The main electrical distribution board (DB) is situated in the Vesty. The latest Electrical Installation Condition Report (EICR) was not available for inspection but reportedly undertaken within the last five years.

Lighting

All lighting is operational and emergency lighting exists. The lighting in the chapel was replaced within the last 5 years with LED spotlights and uplights. The strip lights to the Vestry are older.

Lightning Conductor

There is a lightning conductor on the higher roof of Holy Trinity.

Gas & Heating

The gas meter and the gas boiler are located in the shared boiler room underneath Holy Trinity. There are 2 No. Ideal Falcon 5 GTS boilers, one for St Edmunds and one serving Holy Trinity. A gas safety inspection was carried out in 2024 and repairs were undertaken.

Water

The single water meter for both properties is located somewhere within Holy Trinity.

Water Drainage

Surface water drainage: The below-ground drainage system is known to run from the west, along the southern side alley and from there to cross below the existing boundary wall into the road south of the side. It appears to be broken or blocked, leading to wetness in the west wall. The ownership of the below-ground drainage should be clarified prior to repairs.

Foul drainage: Assumed to run into the highway east of the chapel.

Fire Safety

There is no fire alarm. The fire extinguishers were checked and serviced in March 2024.

The PCC has prepared a fire risk assessment (FRA). A new fire risk assessment to cover the proposed construction works at Holy Trinity (when access to/exit via Holy Trinity would not be possible) was prepared by Chris Hockaday of Elite Ltd in July 2024.

Asbestos

An asbestos register is kept, its findings are displayed within the Vestry and a contractor register employed for any works in or around areas with known asbestos (installations in Vestry, boiler room and gas meter room). The last asbestos inspection dates to 2014 but the condition of the retained asbestos should be inspected annually.

Sound System

A sound system and an induction loop exist.

No.	Repair required	Priority
6.1	Asbestos management. Commission the annual reinspection of all retained asbestos.	**B**

7. Environmental Sustainability & Vulnerability

Summary

The chapel's carbon emissions are likely low. A small range of thermal improvements are possible and could be facilitated as part of future repairs. Optimising the heating system, for example by connecting to the Gateshead district energy system, should be considered.

The building does not appear to be at a particular risk from climate change.

Observations

Although the chapel's carbon emissions are likely to be low, the PCC are encouraged to calculate their energy footprint using guidance available from CofE.

The chapel is generally well built and in reasonable condition. The small lobby at the main door provides a small degree of thermal buffering, which is good.

The following potential for thermal improvements of the building fabric exist in principle but are all subject to early liaison with the conservation officer and Historic England:

- there is some potential for internal wall insulation, in particular with the likely need to replace the existing plaster (see Section 4). Internal wall insulation would require careful modelling of the moisture movement through the wall and dew points at the window reveals to prevent damage to the historic fabric.
- there is potential for thermal improvements to the glazing, in particular with the need to replace the current external protections (see Section 3). This should ideally be considered together with any improvements to the walls and window reveals.

- Whilst there is potential for insulating the roof, this is limited to adding insulation above the existing timber boarding. It would raise the ridge line and change all roof abutments, thus leading to a visual change. The current roof covering is in reasonable condition.
- Whilst there could be potential for thermal improvements to what is likely a suspended timber floor, such works would be disruptive and the current floor is in good condition.

The existing gas-fired wet heating system works well but is neither carbon neutral nor the most efficient way to provide thermal comfort in a room with a very high ceiling as it predominantly heats air, which then rises. The system should be reviewed in the medium to long-term.

The south-facing roof could support solar panels, which would not be visible and is unlikely to be much overshadowed by the existing neighbouring buildings. The large roof size would support rainwater harvesting. Given the history and urban context of the site, a ground source heat pumps is unlikely to be supported. Air-source heat pumps would need to be considered carefully to avoid unacceptable noise levels for the neighbouring residential areas. The best solution would be a connection to Gateshead's district heating scheme.

Climate Change Vulnerability. The roof is neither very high nor exposed, and not deemed to be at high risk from increasing storms. As is best practice, the sizing of gutters and downpipes and the adequacy of the existing drainage system should be considered as part of future re-roofing works; or early should there be any indication that they are inadequate.

The building is not in a flood risk zone.

8. Accessibility

Summary

There is no step-free access into St Edmund's directly but ramped access is possible via the adjacent Trinity Centre. The interior of the Chapel is reasonably accessible, but the existing welfare facilities are not. Pending the ongoing sale and redevelopment of the Trinity Centre, the level access provision might be removed or become less reliable. I recommend making the main entrance to St Edmund's Chapel accessible and to undertake other improvements that will make the chapel more accessible and inclusive to the public.

Details of Existing Access

Three steps and a sloping ramp lead up from the street onto the forecourt shared with Holy Trinity church. The small paving in the forecourt is uneven in places but remains accessible.

From the forecourt, two sandstone steps lead up to the chapel's main entrance doors, which are a set of historic arched timber doors. Arriving into a later added timber lobby with wire-glazed

panels, another door leads into the chapel. The lobby provides relatively low natural light levels but is sufficiently wide to allow a wheelchair to pass through.

The church is a single room with good natural light levels. The floor is even and covered with a firm, accessible carpet. The chair seating can be moved to accommodate wheelchairs anywhere within the church and there is sufficient space for access in general. Behind the altar, there is a small raised dias at the very East end, above what is believed to be mediaeval vaulting. The area is mainly used for concealed storage.

All doors in the church are manually operated.

The church benefits from an induction loop.

At the east end, a door leads into the Vestry, and from there along a narrow corridor to a small toilet. There is no natural light in either space but good artificial lighting. The floor is even and carpeted but neither space is fully wheelchair accessible.

At the west end, a similar door leads into the adjacent Holy Trinity church building. The stone steps to Holy Trinity have been covered by a short steep ramp and an agreement is in place that disabled visitors to St Edmund's could come through Holy Trinity.

No.	Repair required	Priority
8.1	Access. Provide level access between the High Street and St Edmund's Chapel by relevelling the shared forecourt. Use suitable paving materials and make all gradients easy to use and fully compliant with current building regulations. *The potential sale of Holy Trinity would leave St Edmund's less accessible. The above improvements should be delivered as part of the separation from Holy Trinity.*	**C**
8.2	Access. Consider improvements to light levels to the shared forecourt and entrance to the chapel.	**D**
8.3	Access. Consider improving lighting levels within the internal lobby. Consider automatic opening/ power assisted opening to the internal lobby door.	**D**
8.4	Access. Consider negotiating access to new, accessible WCs in the renovated Trinity Centre, at least for large services and community use. The existing internal door opening should be enlarged and a power assisted door installed.	**D**
8.5	Access. Consider improved interpretation (physical and/or digital) about church mission and ministry in Gateshead Parish and the significant heritage of St Edmund's.	**D**

9. Churchyard & Boundary

Summary

The churchyard and boundary features are generally in reasonable condition. The paving and mosaic cross to the front require localised repair. The C16 doorway will require localised conservation within the next 5-10 years.

Front Yard & C16 Gate

The front yard was relandscaped in 2007 when a metal entrance ramp was added to Holy Trinity. The entrance through the external railings was reconfigured and the mosaic inlay St Cuthbert's cross installed in memory of Lindisfarne School.

The concrete paving is sinking in places and the edges of the mosaic inlay are damaged, but the forecourt remains accessible and welcoming.

The late C16 stone doorway from Gateshead House sits at the south side of the forecourt, built against the boundary wall. It is a flattened Tudor arch with entablature and short fluted pilasters. It was repaired and some stones replaced in 1996/99. The structure would benefit from the careful removal of moss and conservation in the future.

No.	Repair required	Priority
9.1	West Forecourt. Relay sinking concrete paving and repair damage to mosaic cross. *Relandscaping considered as part of sale and refurbishment of Holy Trinity.*	**C**
9.2	C16 gateway. Consider conservation works within next 5-10 years.	**C+**

Side Alley

The southern boundary is formed by a rubble stone wall with stone copings, approx. 2m tall. A modern decorative steel gate separates the side alley from the forecourt, but the gate is generally held in an open position. The forecourt paving continues down the alley.

The gate is in very good condition. The boundary wall is mossy but in good condition. The paving is somewhat uneven but remains safely accessible.

Parking Area to the East

The tarmac extends to the base of the east wall. To the north, a ramp leads towards the rear entrance of Holy Trinity. A low brick wall with concrete copings forms the eastern boundary towards the highway. The brickwork requires repointing.

10. Maintenance

Summary

The church is generally well maintained. Internally, some of the recent storage should be reduced. Externally, gutters and gullies should be inspected and cleaned regularly.

Observation & Guidance

The PCC are commended for keeping the building and grounds well maintained. If needed, advice on maintenance is available from the SPAB Faith in Maintenance calendar.

Storage should be reduced to the area south of the entrance lobby as it is unsightly and increases the fire loading near the main exit. As there is a history of water ingress, gutters and gullies should be cleaned twice per year, which is also an opportunity to check for leakages.

Recommendations

No	Description	When	Contractor	Budget
1	**Recommendations for Repairs to Roofing & Rainwater Goods**			
1.1	Roof & Rainwater disposal. Repair or renew the shared lead valley gutter to prevent future water ingress. Increase the size of its east and west outlets, and provide safe access for maintenance and inspection. ***Not priced*** *as gutter is owned jointly and works are envisaged to be undertaken by the buyers of Holy Trinity as a condition of the property sale.*	**B**	Roofer	**£0**
1.2	Roof. At the next gutter clearance, ask the roofing contractor to inspect the southern box gutter as well as the roof abutments to the east and west, and to provide a short condition report with photos. Internal drip marks indicate potential leaks at the southwest roof abutment as well at the western gutter end. Commission repairs as necessary.	**B**	Roofer	**£200**
1.3	Below-ground rainwater disposal. Survey and repair the below-ground drainage system to stop water ingress into the base of the west wall. ***Not priced*** *as drainage is owned jointly or adopted by the council, and survey and repairs are envisaged to be undertaken as part of Holy Trinity works.*	**B**	Specialist	**£0**
1.4	Rainwater disposal. Replace the missing fixings to the hopper.	**B**	Roofer	**£200**
1.5	Rainwater disposal. Redecorate failing paint to galvanised downpipes.	**C**	Decorator	**£200**
2	**External Stonework & Walls**			
2.1	External Stonework. Undertake repairs to west wall to stop water penetration and conserve friable stonework. Include immediate southwest return and consider extending the lead drip detail. ***Ball park figure of £100k tbc***	**B**	Masons or Conservator	**£100k**
2.2	External Stonework. Undertake localised conservation of the friable capitals to the nook shafts on the south elevation. Inspect the indent-repaired lower nook shafts to the east elevation to ensure they are secure. Consider consolidation of the friable stonework to the walls whilst access is available. (not priced)	**C**	Stonework Conservator	**£5,000**
2.3	External Stonework. Consider replacing the missing cross to the east gable.	**D**	Mason	**tbc**
3	**Doors & Windows**			
3.1	Windows. A suitably experienced glazier should inspect the eastern windows and recommend repairs or further observation of the following: - middle window: lead corrosion within the central group; - middle window: 4th ferramenta from top not engaging with stonework surround. It requires extension to prevent movement and damage;	**C**	Glazier	**£500**

	- northern window: Damaged glazing to pilaster north of angel holding 'St Thomas' scroll with light visible through the wall abutment; - All: Does the wall paint splashed over all window abutments need removing immediately or can it be left until access is available in future?			
3.2	Windows. The external perspex has yellowed to the point that the windows can no longer be inspected. Consider replacing the external protections. As part of these works, a suitably experienced glazier should inspect and report on the condition of all windows. Ideally, prepare the report before the next QIR is due.	**C**	Glazier	**£15,000**
3.3	Windows. The top light of the northeastern window appears to have been installed in a contorted position, potentially to accommodate previous damage. Arrange for inspection if there was any change.	**O**	PCC	**£0**
3.4	Generally. Building contractors should be carefully chosen, suitable protection of the building fabric insisted upon and works closely supervised. The wide-spread splashing of wall paint over stained glass windows is not acceptable.	**M**	PCC	**£0**
4	**Church Interiors**			
4.1	Interiors. The wall plaster to the southern dado as well as several window reveals and surrounding walls sounds hollow when tapped. The plaster failed at the base of the wall where trunking was fixed against it. However, no problems were reported during the installation of the war memorial or the redecorations. The situation should be monitored (O). It might be necessary to undertake plaster repairs within the next 5-10 years. (C+) **(not priced)** The recently replaced plaster to the northwest is firm.	**O/ C+**	PCC	**£0**
4.2	Interiors. At the south end of the west wall, there are drip marks at high level. As the wall was only fairly recently redecorated, the marks are of concern. They could indicate water ingress and the area should be observed during heavy rain.	**O**	PCC	**£0**
4.3	Interiors. Monitor the existing cracking to the apex and reveal of the middle windows to the east and west walls.	**O**	PCC	**£0**
4.4	Interiors. Periodically touch-up decorations below dado rail.	**M**	PCC	**£0**
4.5	Interiors. The storage at the west end, south of the lobby, should be reduced to ensure the area is fully accessible and to limit the fire load near the main exit.	**M**	PCC	**£0**
4.6	Interiors. The sagging and cracking vestry ceiling requires replacement. Whilst in reasonable condition, the room would benefit from redecoration at the same time. ***Not priced*** *as fire separation and building works planned as part of the sale and conversion of Holy Trinity, which would likely include a replacement ceiling.*	**C**		
4.7	Interiors. Toilet. Following external repairs, replace the salt-damaged internal plaster. Consider increasing ventilation to the toilet as well as rerouting a heating pipe along the base of the wall to reduce condensation.	**C**	Builder	**£1,000**

5	**Fittings & Fixtures**			
5.1	Wall memorial. The masking tape left around the top of the Elliot wall memorial should be carefully removed.	**M**	PCC	**£0**
6	**Installations & Fire Safety**			
6.1	Asbestos management. Commission annual reinspection of retained asbestos.	**B**	Specialist	**£500**
7	**Environmental Sustainability & Vulnerability**			
7.1	The PCC are encouraged to calculate their energy footprint and consider improvements using the observations made in the QIR and the CofE guidance.	**O**	PCC	**£0**
8	**Access**			
8.1	Access. Provide level access between the High Street and St Edmund's Chapel by relevelling the shared forecourt. Use suitable paving materials and make all gradients easy to use and fully compliant with current building regulations. ***Not priced*** *as expected to be delivered as part of the separation from Holy Trinity. The potential sale of Holy Trinity would leave St Edmund's less accessible.*	**C**		
8.2	Access. Consider improvements to light levels to the shared forecourt and entrance to the chapel. ***Not priced*** *as expected as part of Holy Trinity project.*	**D**		
8.3	Access. Consider improving lighting levels within the internal lobby. Consider automatic opening/ power assisted opening to the internal lobby door.	**D**		
8.4	Access. Consider negotiating access to new, accessible WCs in the renovated Trinity Centre, at least for large services and community use. The existing internal door opening should be enlarged and a power assisted door installed.	**D**		
8.5	Access. Consider improved interpretation (physical/digital) about church mission and ministry in Gateshead Parish and the significant heritage of St Edmund's.	**D**		
9	**Churchyard and Boundaries**			
9.1	West Forecourt. Relay sinking concrete paving and repair damage to mosaic cross. ***Not priced*** *as relandscaping considered as part of Holy Trinity project.*	**C**		
9.2	C16 gateway. Consider conservation works within the next 5-10 years.	**C+**		
	Please note that the estimate for 'B' includes a ball-park figure of £100k for West Wall conservation works, which should be confirmed by a QS or with contractor estimates; savings might be possible if coordinating with the external works to Holy Trinity	**A**		**£0**
		B		**£100,900**
		C		**£21,700**
		O/M		**£500**
			Total:	**£123,100**

Recommendation timeline:

- **A** immediate attention
- **B** within 12 months
- **C** within 2-3 years
- **O** observation & investigation
- **M** maintenance

This report was prepared by Maya Polenz ARB AABC in March 2025.

MAYA POLENZ ARB AABC

Accredited Specialist Conservation Architect

Heritage Consultant

T 07871 616721

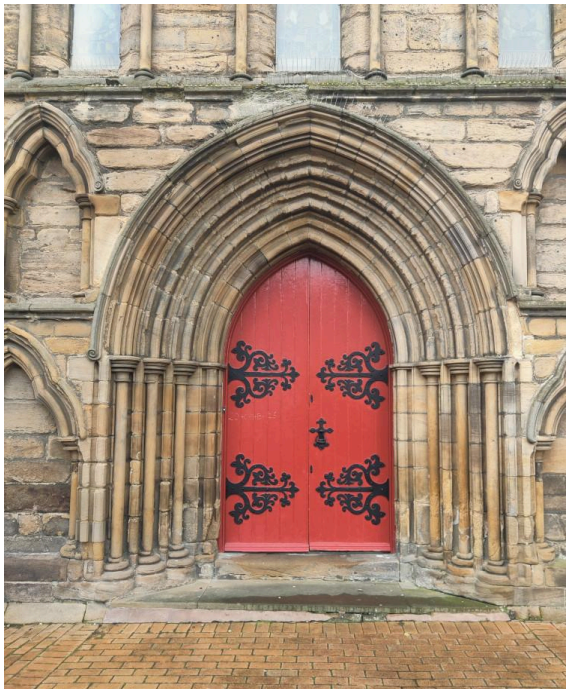
E heritage@polenz.co.uk

Appendix A - Annotated Site Photographs

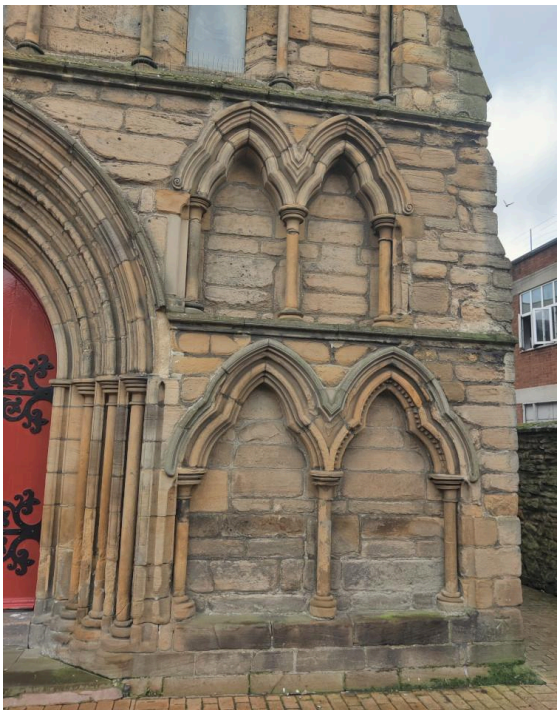
1 (above). View from SW

2 (below). C19 Gateway, S boundary

3. Water ingress at NW corner of W facade

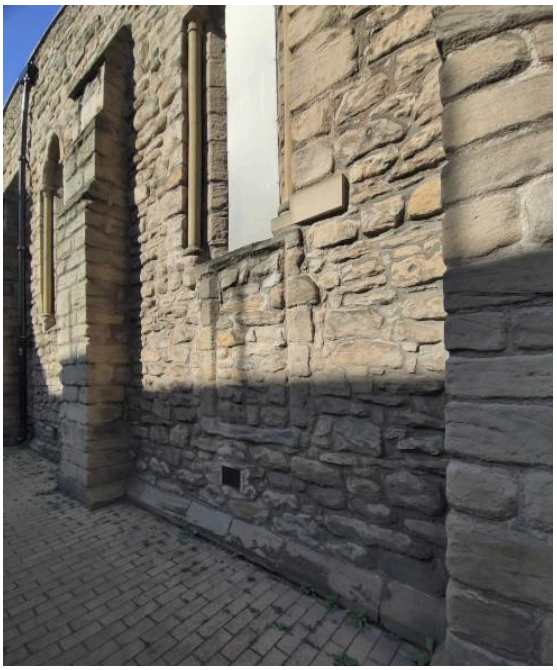


4. W door stonework



5. Wet base at SW corner of W facade

6. S Side alley

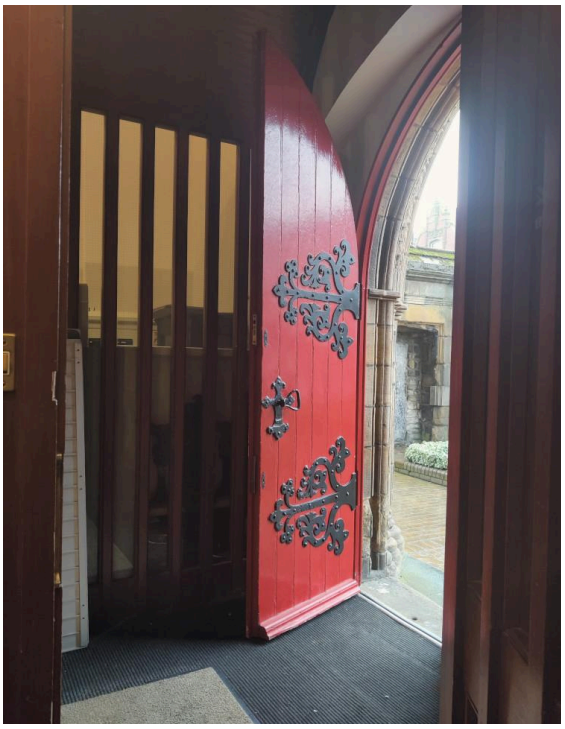


7. Archaeological remains at base of S wall)

8. Lead drip to S gutter and SE corner without it, leading to water saturation and organic growth

9. E facade and E boundary brickwork wall

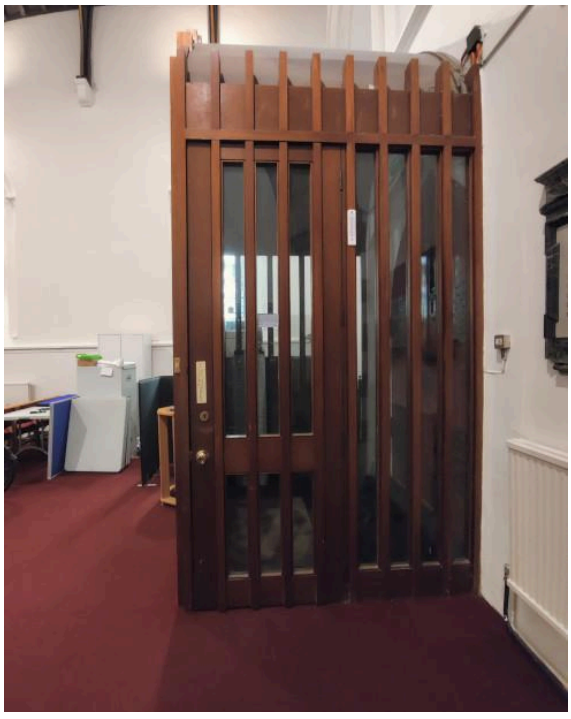
10. E junction with Holy Trinity



11. W door and lobby

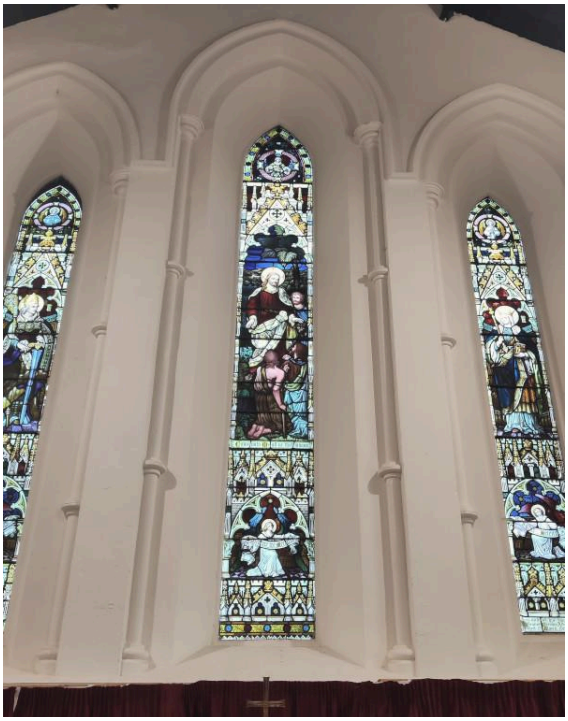
12. Chapel looking W

13. Chapel looking E

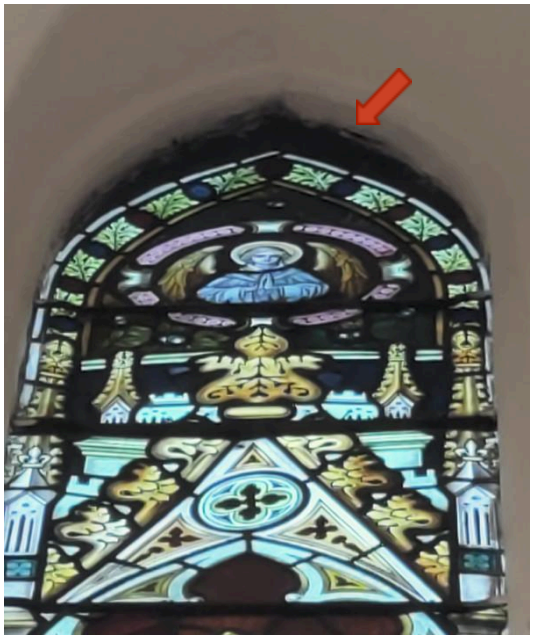


14. Side door in W lobby

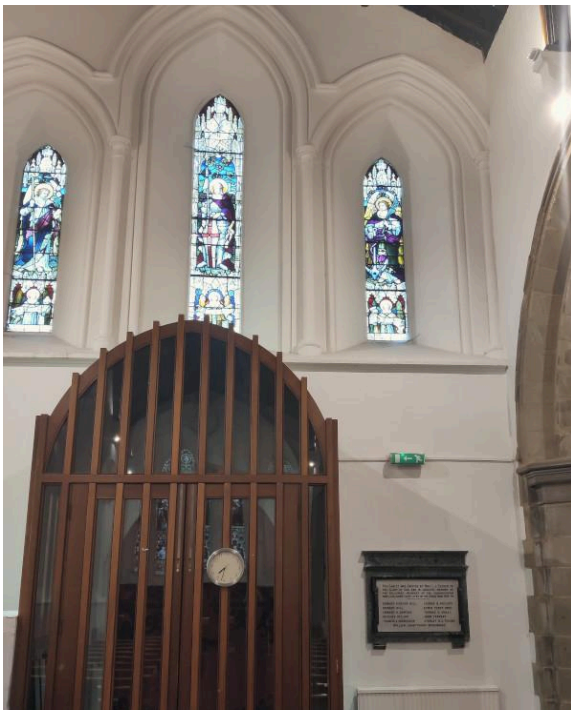
15. View of of Chapel Roof



16. E windows

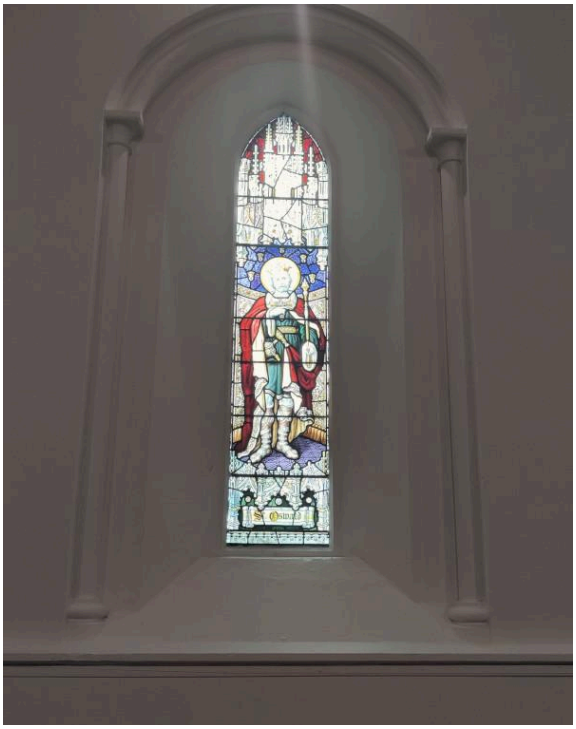


17. Distorted NE light appears stable

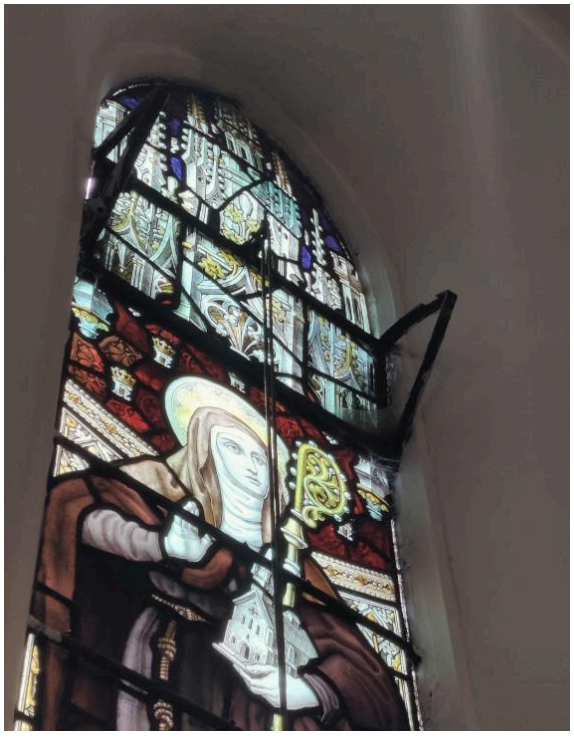


18. W windows and lobby

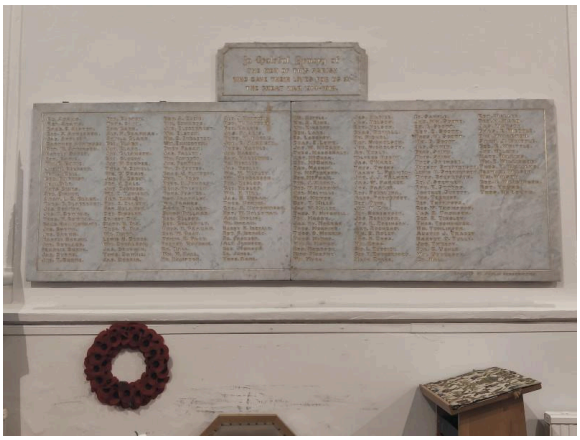
19. Wall paint smeared onto windows



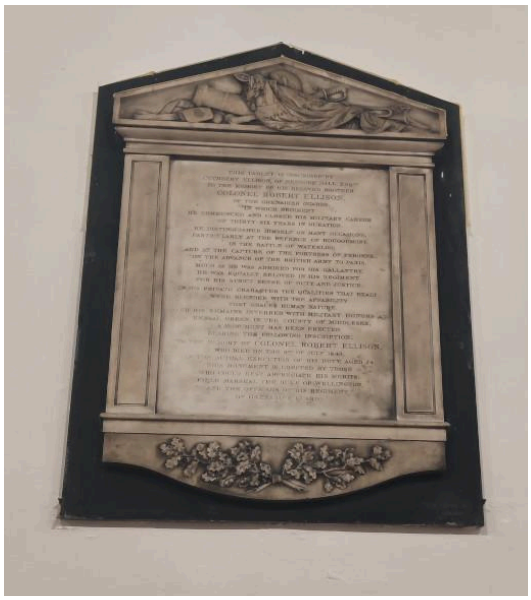
20. One of the S windows



21. S window with ventilation hopper

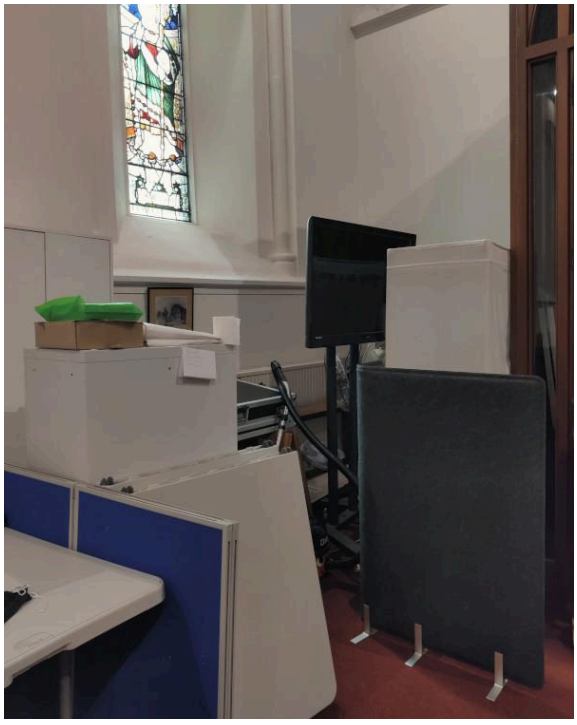


22. Recently relocated war memorial on S wall



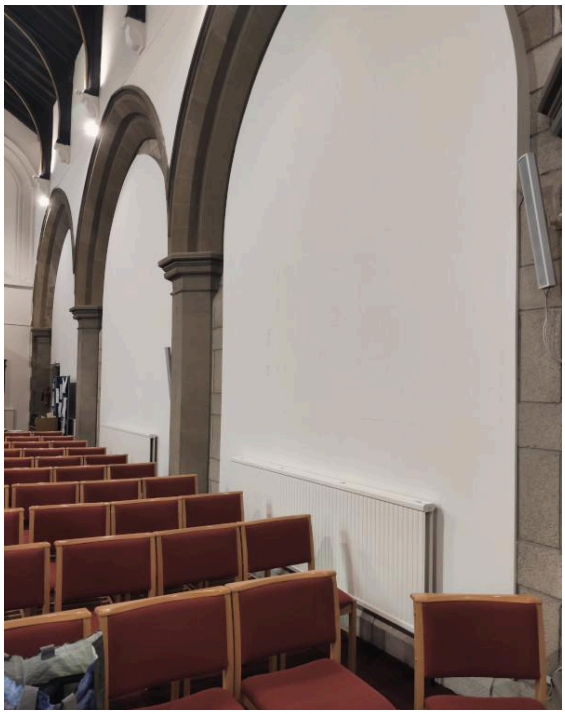
23. Elliot memorial on S wall

24. War memorial on W wall



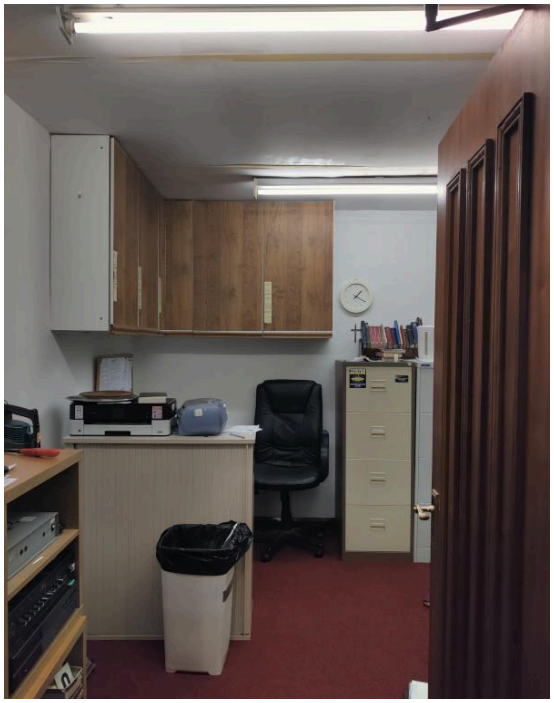
25. Storage accumulation at W lobby

26. Door to Holy Trinity in N Wall



27. Plaster screens on N wall arches

28. Door to Vestry in N wall



29. View into Vestry. Note taped and sagging ceiling boards

30. Vestry looking E

31. Salt efflorescence on external toilet wall

Appendix B - Summary of West Wall Conservation Needs