

Diocese of Durham

St HILDA
SOUTH SHIELDS
(110)

Ecclesiastical Jurisdiction and Care of Churches Measure 2018

QUINQUENNIAL REPORT
on the architect's inspection on

8 May 2024

Sunderland Archdeaconry

Jarrow Deanery

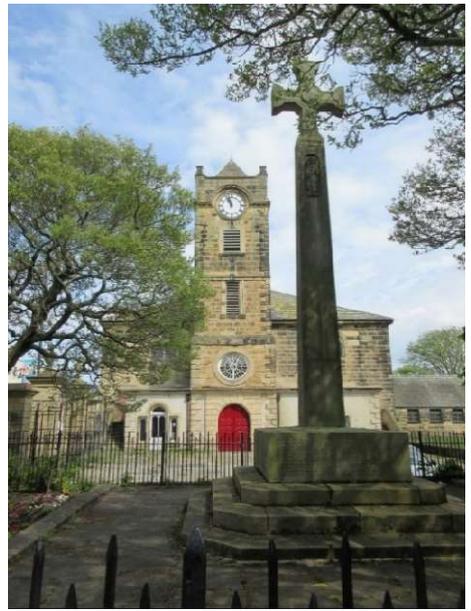
Listed building grade II

not in a conservation area

Priest in Charge Fr Mark Mawhinney



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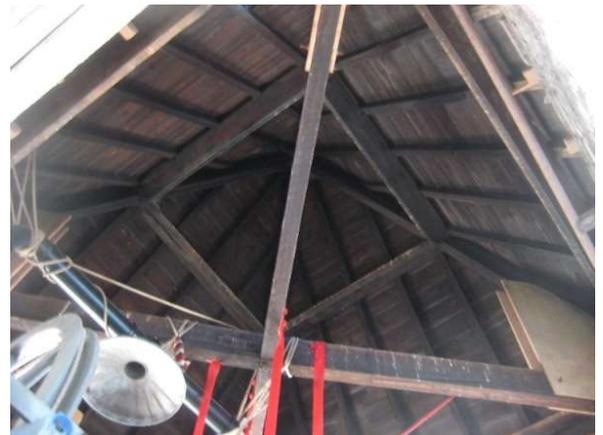




Song Room - former S Porch door case now internal



Ringing Chamber



Tower roof

PART ONE

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 level, roof void and ladders. 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. The chimney flues were not inspected and none of the services were tested. Damp meters were not used.
2. No material seen is likely to contain asbestos (see note on heating pipe para.116) apart from a former flue pipe in safe form in the basement but the history of the church is such that asbestos could be present. However this report is not a survey under the Control of Asbestos at Work Regulations 2002. The PCC may wish to see the guidance note issued by the Council for the Care of Churches.

Brief description

3. Prominent on the S side of the Market Place, thought to be where in c648 St Hild founded the monastery around which South Shields grew. A medieval church was rebuilt in 1810-19 as a broad stone rectangle given some Classical character by two tiers of round arched windows and an E apse enriched inside by plaster pilasters. A simple hipped slate roof. As common at ancient sites the street and especially churchyard levels have risen but the church floor has not so we step down to enter.
4. A high round arch in the W Tower (visible only in the Ringing Chamber) and part of the Nave W wall are thought to be remains of the older church. The Tower was recased and heightened (stone outer, brick inner faces at top) with rusticated quoins, a large round window over the W door, rectangular louvred openings, round clock faces at top with semi-circular pediments and a parapet with raised corner plinths. The Tower was flanked pre-1870 by flat roofed rendered vestries (now N Vestry and S Kitchen) and external Gallery stairs.
5. In 1875-9 J.H. Morton inserted a central plaster barrel ceiling supported by arcades of cast iron columns (Tuscan lower, Corinthian upper) with wide Galleries filling the N, W and S sides apart from the SE corner occupied by a tall pipe organ. A very high marble, sandstone and brass pedestal pulpit and stair of 1882 made a preacher visible from the Galleries.
6. A S Porch with fine segmental doorcase was absorbed into a Victorian Song Room extension over the S churchyard. Its floor is five steps higher than the Nave.
7. A modern Nave altar platform in the two eastern Nave bays. The N Aisle is fitted as a Lady Chapel.
8. At Nave SE corner an external semi-basement flat roofed Blower room and disused Boiler room with brick vaults under raised paving.
9. The S edge of the churchyard was taken for Coronation St and the sloping remainder is now laid out as municipal park with fine gates and piers facing the Market Place at N.

Recent structural history

10. The church is little altered since the striking interior was finished in 1879. Almost all glass was lost in the war after which the windows behind the Organ and Chapel were blocked. The altar has been moved forward to a Nave platform. The N door was reopened in 1988 with new internal ramp down and a fine glazed screen separating a Visitor Centre under the W Gallery. Nave floor decay was repaired.
11. Exterior repairs in 1999 included Tower roof timber renewal with new parapet gutter linings, reslating the S Nave slope and Tower roof, new rainwater goods, indenting new stones at Nave and Tower, new flat roofs and render at Vestries, new stone piers and gates.
12. Eight bells from Blackhall were retuned and hung in 1999 in a new steel frame replacing eight in an oak frame.
13. The basement boiler room was abandoned in the 1990's when the 19th century hot water pipes were removed and hot air blowers fitted on the W Galleries. Changed again to internal gas boilers and low volume hot water zoned central heating 2010.

14. Main work since 2001:

- Organ restoration and case alteration 2003-4
- Roof repairs including new lead back gutter E of the Tower 2005
- New stained glass figures by Alan Davies inserted at six windows and new stations of the cross 2006
- Structural strengthening of the bell tower 2006
- Gallery floor boards and stair enclosures repaired 2010
- Pews refinished, general redecoration and new carpeting 2011
- Vestry door renewed and exit doors strengthened
- Wall above Vestry roof repointed and damp sealed
- Remedial works after electrical report
- New organ blower in basement after flood caused by sewer fault

15. A restarted Log Book shows since the last report

- | | |
|------|--|
| 2019 | Lighting circuit replaced at Visitor Centre (the area W of the ground floor partition)
Repair of W end of the main roof |
| 2022 | Organ tuned and maintained
Windows at Kitchen and Vestry reglazed with new protection outside
Repairs in accessible wc
Heating boiler service
Lightning Conductor test |
| 2023 | Entry doors and W windows repainted
Organ repairs
Gutters cleared
Boilers serviced
Lightning Conductor test
Boilers retested
Condensate from boiler draining onto flat roof
Further boiler faults November – March 2024 |

Summary of structural condition

16. St Hilda's is in good general condition and appears stable.

In the Vestry water continues to run down the S wall at times.

The clock has stopped.

PART TWO

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE EXTERIOR

Roofs

17. Coverings seen from ground level only. Main roof a simple slate rectangle with ridge and hips at E and W. Clay ridge and hips, part blue/grey welsh and part westmorland slate in fair order.
18. No access to Tower roof this time. A slate pyramid with metal hips in short lengths clipped through the slates. Visible parts sound except one N slate missing.



Slate missing from Tower N side

19. The hidden Tower parapet gutter previously seen is continuous lead welded at corners and middles of each side, without steps or other flexible joints so may be prone to damage by thermal movement unless the lead is very thick. A cover strip is stuck over the middle of the W side gutter. Single side outlet over the Nave. Deep lead cover flashings.
20. In the past the Tower gutter has been deep in nest debris, risking blockage and spilling of heavy rain into the Tower. Timber rot repair in 1999 was needed due to damp from gutter damage or spillage. This time no access to the clock dial stage to see the Tower roof timbers.
Gutter clearance by steeplejack say every two years may prevent repeat.
21. A tunnel between the W Tower and W hip has a flat lead roof and slate cheeks all seeming in good order except plants in a mortar fillet between the N cheek and the hip slates must mean the fillet is cracked and leaking. At S side no fillet, indicating concealed lead soakers.



plants in cracked mortar fillet N of the tunnel between Tower and Nave roof and a slipped slate lies on lower slates



22. The Nave W hip slates are mortar torched inside, no felt. Large glass slate. Slate fair with some patching. One slate has slipped out N of the top of the tunnel and lies on the lower slates.
Lead back gutters at the Tower corners, N renewed 2005.
Plants grow in a blocked secret gutter between the S side of the hip and the Tower, a perfect nest site.
23. N slope slate, felted, seems sound except two small slates missing towards top E end.
Top third is old diminishing westmorland, remainder smoother and more even, perhaps relaid after war damage. Bottom course fixed by screws and washers.



N

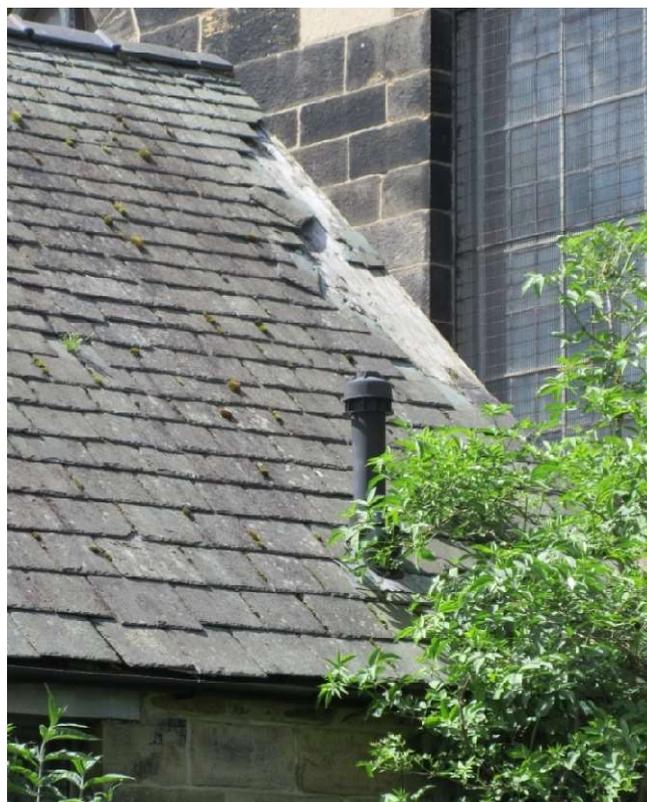


24. E hip and steeper conical apse in small westmorland, bottom course screwed like N.
 Lead roll ridge and lead valleys (with some patches of roofing felt). Two small glass slates.
 Fair but one slate missing near top of hip and two N of the apse.
 Plants block the bottom of both valleys and grow between slates near N side eave.



25. S slope fair diminishing slates of mixed colour, felted.
 About four large slates missing near bottom of W hip. No obvious damage inside.

26. Song Room diminishing westmorland slates on boards. Some welsh patching at ridge and N verge. Mostly fair but patches now completely missing at N ends of both sides (largest at the more obscure E side) suggesting vandalism while standing on the flat roofed link to church, At E four others slipping, one missing. At W two others slipped out, one slipping. Others held with wide beads of mastic (not a permanent repair).



Song Room E side

27. Porch link has shallow pitched green mineral felt with upstands turned into Nave and Song Room walls.
28. Vestry and Kitchen covered in flat Sarnafil pvc membrane with deep upstands carried over parapet copings and their cast stone cornices. Sumps with side outlets through the parapets. Both roofs have patches in a different material, seeming sound but with unknown life.
29. Kitchen upstands silicon pointing into church joints. Eight patches. Silt build up in corner and in the sump, below which the ceiling is damaged suggesting leakage.

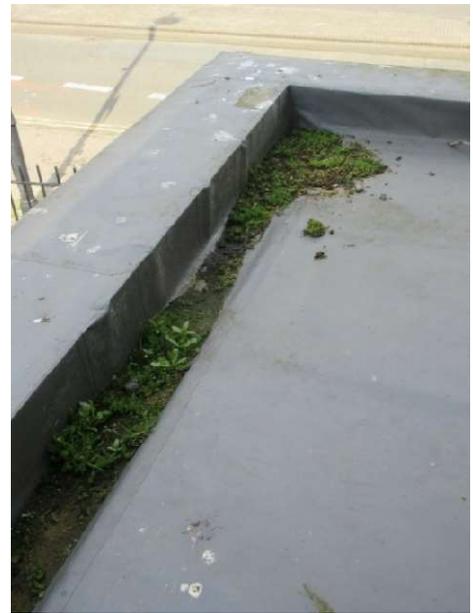


Kitchen



Kitchen roof with condensate drain from boilers now extended to outlet sump

30. Vestry Sarnafil appears sound. Has been improved since last report with sealant fillets over the upstands. If there is any future leakage it may be better to change to the stronger upstand detail recommended by Sarnafil (metal strip with sloping silicon top bead) but note water running down the Vestry interior may bypass the roof through a void in the Tower wall during severe overflow from the Nave gutters (para 34) Seven patches (four Sarna, three substitute – well stuck but limited life). Silt and plants in the internal gutter.



Vestry Roof

Rainwater System, Drainage

31. Black ogee cast aluminium level gutters on damp proof course on stone cornice. Generally sound but level gutters at height tend to fill with uncleared debris and to overflow unless cleared at least once a year. Two pipes each at N, E and S sides.
32. Nave E appears clear except plants in gutters at outlets each side of the Apse.
33. Nave S gutter good.



Typical Nave gutter - N gutter E outlet



wall over Vestry remains wet

34. Water appears to run down the stone wall under the W end N gutter (over Vestry) which is green with damp. Reported runs on the Vestry wall below probably caused by storm water spills causing the green algae and bypassing the roof upstand through the wall. The secret gutter and cornice gutter above (appear clear now but have been blocked previously) need to be kept clear.

35. Nave N gutter shows small plants again so needs clearance soon.



36. Round downpipes and gullies except S of the E Apse where no gully (disused vaulted boiler room below) so rainwater runs over the raised E paving, which must increase damp in the disused room below. Plants in all paving joints.

37. At N Nave the W gully does not run well, spilling water over the pavement. Grating missing.



In rain N Nave W gully spills across the public pavement



Nave SE

38. At the S Nave E end a modern gully needs to be cleaned.

39. The Song Room has plastic half round gutters, old cast iron hoppers and one rusting pipe at NW. Other pipes plastic, including at the Porch link a pipe still so loose and misaligned that it appears to end in a hole in the stone wall. Now so overgrown by a shrub that difficult to see.



Song room NW



Song Room NE



Song Room NE - 2019 photos repeated because now hidden by growth - Misaligned pipe misses the hopper

40. The Vestry and Kitchen sump outlets drain to cast iron hoppers, pipes and shoes.
Both hoppers now clear. The Kitchen pipe overflows at its mid joint suggesting the bottom half is blocked,
soaking the wall in heavy rain.
Their gullies are prone to blockage by soil and should be cleared twice a year.



- 41. All hoppers, gullies and drains need to be cleaned regularly to prevent blockage and damp walls. The history of decay in the floor makes clear drainage extra important.
- 42. Remaining cast iron rainwater goods at Tower (E side high level), Vestry and Kitchen are rusting and need preparation and paint.

Walls

- 43. Large irregular coursed sandstone blocks, well pointed. Plain apart from chamfered quoins at Tower and Vestries and a wide Nave cornice where the ogee gutter completes the classical moulding. Clean stone indents and infilling of the former heating grills are scattered among the old stones. Generally in good condition. Three old mortar repairs at SW. Stone uncleaned. Pointed in mixed materials. S side stone blackest so modern pointing stands out most.
- 44. Some surface decay low in Apse.
- 45. Against the Song Room E wall two saplings have been allowed to grow large – needing to be cut at ground level and poisoned.



Hidden plaque over Song Room porch

- 46. A hidden oval tablet over the S Porch erodes from the edges.
- 47. The rendered Vestry, Kitchen and stair walls have tempted spray painters but are clear now. A large patch lost at S end exposes solid brickwork. At W open joints in the exposed brick below the render would be better pointed.



para 47



para 49

48. The Tower stonework is less massive in design. Rusticated quoins, arched doorway, strings and architraves at the openings. Extensive 1999 stone renewals especially at the top stage. The external stone skin is in good condition. Since work to tie together the wall faces with Cintec Anchors, the floors to the walls and the Tower to the Nave wall the Tower is again stiff enough for ringing.

49. Where the Vestry/Kitchen cornice continues across the Tower ground floor it is not capped. Its sloping mortar top is mossy. The cornice has cracked slightly in two places, one extending down to a slightly cracked joint in the entry arch.

Heater and Blower Chambers and Paving over

50. Between the E end of the church and a sloping square of public paving a margin of raised concrete paving appears to be part of the church land. The margin is retained by a low stone wall part capped by the paving. Parts of the wall's pointing are missing and the paving has spread with plants between so it is not water resisting. A few pavioours are missing. The overall appearance is poor and it lets rainwater drip into a brick vaulted room under its S end.





51. At the SE corner two semi-basement rooms lie each side of an external stair. Most of the stair is now covered by a sheet metal roof and a locked metal gate, which improve the security of the rooms but still allow wet rubbish to fill the remaining stair. Regular clearance still required.
52. One wall enclosing the stair is rendered, part missing. Its cracks and loose brickwork behind show some movement. The stone wall itself shows some lean outward and minor displacement of stones. Not known whether the lintel at the (now concealed) former coal drop under the stone wall is sound. The dilapidation is not markedly worse than at the last report but the fabric will decay further. The exterior makes a very poor appearance to a public space which may become increasingly busy if the cleared sites are developed.



53. At one side a small Organ blower room has a flat roof with parapet above general paving level. After flood the door lintel, electrical switching and blower were replaced, the blower now raised on blockwork as a precaution. The lintel is decaying again. Both doors are pierced and air is drawn through into the Organ so the blower room is ventilated and said to be dry (no access 2024).



Decaying Lintel at Blower door

54. N of the stair are two brick vaulted chambers under the raised paving. The E chamber (former coal store now with gas entry pipe passing through) is now completely walled up with blockwork because decayed lintels at openings in the stone wall between chambers were removed and blocked to prevent collapse of the vaults.
55. The still accessible W chamber with rain dripping through its vault contains a disused boiler, disconnected asbestos cement flue pipe, rubbish and a live gas meter and supply pipe though the Nave wall. Remote reading of the meter has been attempted. The former flue pipe rises half way up the church E wall.



56. For public appearance alone there is a clear case to rebuild this whole E end margin more durably, perhaps including final clearance of the decaying remains of the boiler and flue.

Tower, Bells, Frame, Clock

57. Bells reported in use and satisfactory.



Tower roof timbers 2019 including 1999 repairs

58. The Tower is a composite structure. The 2006 strengthening work appears successful and overall the Tower is now in good condition. No access above Ringing Chamber this time. For the record to assist future care past findings are repeated here.

Externally the square stone shaft is in four stages plus parapet, without buttresses. The walls are straight apart from a small set-back above the second stage. The Entrance stage is restrained by the Vestry, Kitchen and Nave walls. The 2nd Ringing stage is pierced by a large round W window and by the wide E arch now opening into the void under the Gallery. The upper stages are weakened by limited masonry thickness, limited tying of the inner face to the outer, the use of timber inner lintels and floors crossing openings and by the close vertical spacing of the openings.

The 1999 bell and frame work reduced the total bell weight at the top of the Tower from about 47 to 43 cwt but increased the top tier of bells from 2 to 3 and increased the weight of bells swinging E-W from 16 to over 23 cwt. Most of the excessive movement measured was E-W and ringing was stopped 2000-6.

Cohesion of the structure was improved in 2006 with Cintec anchors tying the lower stage to the Nave and the Tower corners together, filling a large void found in the NE corner, grouting the core and spaces found behind modern face repairs, stitching cracks in the inner face and filling the inside of most of the tall lower openings with heavy blockwork.

Five internal stages with timber floors. The Clock chamber floor crosses the lower louvred openings. The stiffening effect of the floors is limited by stair openings and corners cut out for pulleys. A diagonal timber tie lies across an open corner at the second floor. The inner wall faces are aligned vertically apart from the top Bell stage whose walls set back some 28cm or 13". The lower two stages have stone walls between 90 and 97cm thick. The next two stages are about 83cm thick mainly stone inside but with ancient brick inside the top metre. The Belfry walls are 61cm thick in brick faced with stone.

Most of the Porch stage is hidden by the stair and meter cupboard. The 2nd Ringing Chamber walls are concealed by cladding except painted plaster at the E arch wall. Two former diagonal cracks over the arch, stitched and painted, are no longer visible. A hatch into the Gallery void where material accumulates, including ladders and loose platforms to make a loft ladder workable.

The 3rd stage has whitewashed random stone walls with the lower parts of the tall openings, now block filled except the E where the tunnel gives onto the top of the Nave ceiling vault. No new wall cracks. Occupied by slanting bell ropes and three clock weights on 'bicycle' chains.

The low 4th clock stage is cleaded, much of which was removed and replaced in 2006 to check the masonry was not cracked. At two of the four long openings the inner timber lintels continue as wall binders halved together at the corners.

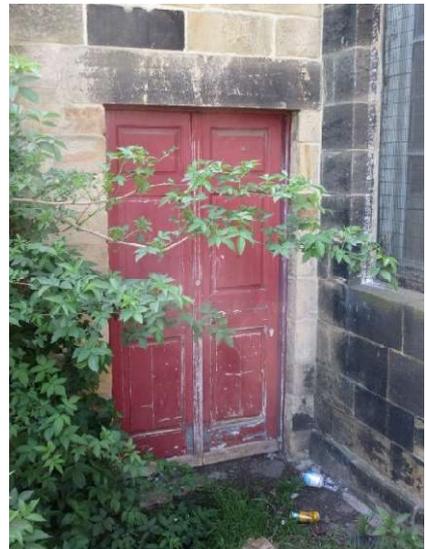
59. The 1886 Potts & Son clock remains with bell chimes and 1956 auto winder. Cast iron brackets from N wall. Installed and maintained by Potts at South Tyneside Council expense. Stopped at inspection.
60. *The high 5th Belfry stage is open to the timber pyramid roof, has regular brick inside with no visible crack. Old iron tie bars both ways at mid height and above the clock openings with rusted plates outside. Diagonal reinforced concrete ties across the corners near wall heads. The boarded louvred splayed openings have timber lintels (some stained by former leaks), brick relieving arches and concrete cills. The longer E opening is tied across by a timber at mid height. The new bell frames are founded on upper and lower grids of galvanised steels connected by cast posts and pocketed into the N and S walls on concrete pads. The upper steels have diagonal strap bracing. Three good 6' iron clock dials, illuminated by strip lights.*
61. Reports of several investigations, measurements and analyses of the nature and causes of the Tower movement 1999-2001 were summarised in the 2001 quinquennial. They informed the 2006 work which appears successful.

Window and Door Openings

62. Plain arched stone including some modern replacements, in good condition. Modern Tuscan lead capped N doorcase in excellent condition. Matching venetian windows at Vestries with good modern natural stone openings. A pity recent window protection has been fixed into the stone faces.
63. At E end two windows filled with pink artificial stone. Each side of the Organ in the SE corner the uppers are filled with pink art stone, the lowers with blockmarked render.
64. At Song Room a fine stone arch at the S gable window. Its side windows have painted wooden lintels and stone sills.

External Iron and Wood

65. Painted timber Tower louvres, Vestry and Ringing chamber windows, Nave upper windows and lower window subframes and doors at the arched W entrance, the Vestry, the Nave Gallery stairs and the Song Room Porch all need thorough preparation and repainting, for both appearance and preservation of timber. The S Gallery doors lack a weather mould and the bottom of one door decays.



66. The Nave lower windows and the longer upper windows over the N & S doors have leaded glass in painted iron frames in hardwood frames and sills.
The three Apse windows have painted timber frames with two external rusted iron bar transoms at each.
Paint flaking and poor at all frames.
67. The Song Room windows have timber frames and lintels, appearing sound. Paint is poor at all windows.
A ply cover over the W door deteriorates and the whole needs repair and paint.



68. Weathered varnish on oak N doors. The very weathered painted metal sign by the N doors looks poor.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE INTERIOR

Roof timbers

69. **Vestry** flat joists exposed and painted, appear sound. Concealed at **Kitchen**.
70. At **Nave** poor access to roof void due to insulation. Visible truss ends, purlins and rafters appear dry.
71. At **Song Room** four raised tie trusses with curved braces now semi-concealed by lowered ceiling, no visible defect.

Ceilings and External Stairs

72. Over Galleries red painted tongue and groove boards (some wide gaps sheeted over above to prevent draughts) on white painted moulded ribs. On S side sealed vent holes between paired ribs. W end hatches. Under Galleries painted plaster sound except some flaking at S Aisle unchanged.
73. At Nave an impressive three centred plaster barrel vault with hipped ends and painted deeply embossed paper between plaster ribs.
Good except minor loosening of paper and perhaps cracking of plaster at the Nave W end and SE corner.



74. Song Room painted flat and sloping softboard without insulation quilt. Minor watermark by small hatch. Its lobby sound painted boards.
75. Plaster at the Kitchen and lowered accessible wc ceilings sound except water damage at Kitchen ceiling and wall in corner under the roof sump and outlet.



NW corner of Kitchen ceiling

76. There are single wcs under both NW and SW external stone landings and stairs, which have no waterproofing. Cement skim on the NW stair is crumbling. The solid outer walls are rendered (part missing at S) but may have no dampproof courses preventing rising damp. Both wcs are damp.
77. The S wc has fully tiled walls and floor, beginning to loosen.

78. The N (Vestry) wc has masonry painted stone walls and ceiling, now very poor. A small amount of wood panelling now has dry rot.



para 76



NW wc (Vestry) 2019



2024



Apse Arch, Arcades

79. Painted decorated plastered arch at the Apse, painted iron columns and painted plaster over all sound.

Partitions, Doors, Panelling, Screens

80. Elegant modern Tuscan timber and reamy glass screen and doors painted blue/grey/rose pink under the W and N Galleries. The inner N door needs paint.
81. Tower lobby inner doors good pairs panelled with fanlight. Overhead closers good.
82. At Vestry, Kitchen and Gallery flush ply doors with applied beads and panels on outsides only. No latch at Gallery door. Mixed panelled and part glazed doors at wc and cupboards under stairs. Flush doors with bolts at wcs.
83. At lobby to Song Room, sound panelled doors at Nave, pair double acting panelled at Song Room with upper glass. Top corner of one door is broken.
84. In Aisles dado panelling up to sills has been stripped and varnished, but painted in Visitor Centre to match screen.
85. Vestry lower walls apart from chimney breast has painted matchboard dado panelling, appears sound.
86. Song Room lower walls boarded with cupboards in recesses below windows, good.

Plaster, Decoration

87. Decoration looks well. Former cracking no longer visible near the tops of the Gallery W corners.
88. The Apse has highly decorated plaster. Fluted Corinthian pilasters support decorated ribs between plaster reliefs of Christ Ascending and SS Peter and John. Four good panels with painted saints top a plaster reredos. The top of the stone sill below the reredos is cracked and slightly lifting.
89. Slight damp in base of wall at SW corner of Visitor Centre next to the external stair. On the other side of the wall slight rising damp at the wall monument in the Kitchen. In the adjacent SW wc a patch of wall tiling is missing.



Song Room NE

90. In the Vestry wc masonry paint all damaged by damp.
91. At Song Room NE corner top of wall and part of ceiling discoloured under the worst roof slate damage.

Ventilation

92. The suspended floors are ventilated by cast iron grills and turned down ducts through the Church walls both sides. At Song Room clay subfloor vents.
93. The Song Room wc and Vestry wall fans are switched with the lights, no overrun. None at Kitchen and Vestry.

94. Access wc off the Kitchen has a ceiling extract fan ducted through a ceiling void and the flat roof, switched with PIR light without overrun timer. The fan has dropped from the ceiling but works. Cowl broken so fan exposed to rain down the duct pipe.



Vent pipe through void over wc off Kitchen and its dropped fan

Glazing, Protection

95. In Apse vivid Nativity, Crucifixion and Ascension by H.M.Doyle 1952. Painted leaded glass on internal saddle bars each with two verticals. Sound. Some dirt inside. Unpainted galvanised mesh with minor rust.
96. Nave lower windows with arched heads have large cast white leaded quarries in painted steel internal grid. Mid uppers over doors similar. Some dirt. Painted figure inserted in the NE window (S Hilda, Sep Waugh 1980) and five similar (Alan Davies 2001). Good.
97. In timber Gallery windows sheets of white cast glass except coloured leaded survives in upper parts of two SW windows where two broken pieces at W are covered outside with clear glass. No protection.
98. Sound wired or cast glass in Vestry and Kitchen. Clear glass in Song Room.



paras 98 and 100

99. Grey painted mesh at the Apse. Black painted mesh at Song Room and lower Nave windows. All have some rust. If the mesh is removed and powder coated it may last many years. The windows should be cleaned and painted at the same time.
100. Recent mesh added at Vestry and Kitchen (para 62).

Floors, Rails, Galleries, Stairs

101. In **Apse** small tiles, some encaustic decorative. Rough cement infill where a former altar stood. Two very wide marble steps. Oak step extended with heating grill.
102. Hardwood Nave altar dais on two levels with self supporting kneeler rails.
Part of the upper nosing is missing.



103. In **Nave, Aisles and Visitor Centre** four areas of suspended boards at existing and former pews between three solid walkways. There has been local rot in the past and small grills (prone to clog with dirt) have been added in the flooring. No reduction in subfloor ventilation should be allowed.
104. Fitted carpet on the boards and solid floors in the **Visitor Centre, ramp, lower stair** and in **church** except under pews. Includes a coir mat in a well by the counter.
105. Hardwood strip in **Vestry**. Poor quarry tiles, some broken, in **Gents**. **Non-slip** sheet vinyl in **Ladies**. Quarry tiles in Vestry wc. Vinyl sheet in **Kitchen**. Concrete in **W entrance lobby**. Carpet in **Ringling chamber**.
106. Vinyl sheet on floating on solid floor at S lobby, five steps up to **Song Room** where lino on suspended floor slightly sloping down towards S end but seems sound. Sound balusters and metal handrails.
107. **Stairs** to Galleries sound. Handrails and panelled stair enclosures.
108. **Galleries** bare boards, part poor, and steps. Varnished softwood benches with curved backs. Graceful front painted on Nave side. At edge facing Organ hardwood balustrade too widely spaced for child safety.

Reredos, Monuments, Brasses, Furnishings, Organ

109. A small reredos has four painted panels. The high pulpit is rigid. Both 1880.
Ornate bishop's chair and two dark Pugin chairs. Softwood choir benches and clergy stalls.
Aumbry with pedimented surround. Brass eagle Lectern and platform.
Two modern Lecterns. Wooden candlesticks with paint embellishment.
Twist baluster Font 1675 and post war oak cover are sound.
Gilt chandelier and suspended model lifeboat 1802. Very large oak table by W screen.



110. Baby grand piano. Small pressed brass stations.
Comfortable varnished softwood pews. Pews removed from balcony NE bay.

111. In Vestry wall monument part hidden by floor safe.
 In Kitchen large Pemberton monument in painted Doric aedicule.
 In Nave and Visitor Centre 14 marble classical wall plaques all good quality but dirty in places. Five more in Gallery of which four are very high quality and deserve care and publicity to visitors. At S one is patched after loss of some marble.
 The NE Gallery monument is poorer in design, large part missing and may be better removed than repaired.



Example of fine but dirty marble monument

112. In Visitor Centre large brass Great War plaque. Headstone of Wm. Wouldhave moved inside is fine but obscurely placed. The headstone and its wall are slightly damp. It might be moved to stave off decay.
113. 1764 painted psalm panel. A fine wall clock in the Vestry. Kitchen refitted 2001.
114. In Song Room a piano, melamine vestment cupboards, tables and chairs, a silver processional cross.
115. T.C. Lewis organ 1867 said to be a good instrument in use. Restored since 2000 with new glazed sliding doors at consol.
 Very lively painted case and pipes by J.F. Bentley in red and blue with stencilled vine and Greek ornament.

Heating

116. Small parts of the former cast iron pipe system remain, notably behind the organ where a test in 2003 showed that the thin insulation wrapped in canvas and chicken wire does NOT contain asbestos.
117. Heating installed 2010 reverted to a modern wet system of two wall mounted gas boilers on Gallery, concealed piping and panel and column radiators. A separately controlled circuit for the Visitor Centre. Thermostats and timers. Insulation at parts of plastic circuit pipework in the void under the Gallery.
118. One of the boilers said to have a fault taking it out of use. The other has also developed a fault now being investigated.
119. A separate wall combi boiler at the Song Room, radiators and pressurised circuit above floor level. The shroud at the flue through the slates seems displaced and open to the weather.



Heating pipework under Gallery part insulated



Combi flue at Song Room

120. A small wall electric convector on a slightly damp wall in the Visitor Centre.
Loose electric panel radiator in the Kitchen.
121. Glass wool insulation and loose plastic membrane reducing air loss over the whole church ceiling. The Nave downlights may allow escape of warm air.
No insulation on the Song Room ceiling and none known at the flat roofs.

Electrical

122. In bottom of Tower intake and three phase main switches, one of them for the clock supply which is paid by the Council. Earthed to water supply pipe. Installation estimated more than 30 years old.
Circuit breakers and consumer unit with 16 ways varying up to 60A, distribution by MICC cables rising through Ringing Chamber to void under Gallery and boxing to Nave roof void.
123. Last Periodic System Test September 2023 said 'Unsatisfactory' on the following non-urgent grounds:
Improvement Recommended: Tape covers hole at 18 way grid switch
No circuit diagrams at Distribution Boards
Further Investigation needed without delay: Four circuits at DB1 could not be found
Could not verify there is a Main Bond to the Gas supply pipe
Not yet improved.
124. In Tower surface pyro cables, lights and surface metal twin 13A sockets at Bell and Clock stages.
125. Twin 13A surface metal sockets in Nave, Chapel, Gallery W end, Visitor Centre, Kitchen and Song Room. Plastic ditto in Vestry, Visitor Centre and Kitchen with cooker control.
126. An effective lighting installation:
- | | |
|---|--|
| Apse | two spots on Nave arcade, three on capitals |
| Nave | magnificent brass chandelier with 24 candle lights
ten downlights in boxes above the crown of the vault (only one working)
eight uplight boxes neatly installed in front of upper columns to light vault |
| Gallery | 16 GLS lamps in matching scallop shell glass shades on chains |
| Chapel | four spots (three not working) |
| Aisles, Visitor Centre, Porch, wcs, Tower stair | 20 round 2D fluorescent ceiling lights |
| Song Room | 4 twin tubes |
| Kitchen | 3 twin tubes - two tubes not working |
| Vestry | 1 twin tube - one not working |
| Accessible wc | batten holder |
| Entry Lobby | Two spots on ceiling to show stained glass fanlight at W door (not working
but lit by Porch ceiling light) |
- Recessed multi-gang metal switches by lobby
No light at N ramp or N lobby but borrowed light.
Light at N stair is 2D ceiling but none at half landing lobby.
127. Orange pyro cabling in underground chambers. Modern switch equipment for organ blower.
128. Sound equipment behind door beside the organ.
Microphone at Pulpit. Eight mini speakers at tops of columns.

Lightning Conductor

129. Air rod on Tower. Modern pvc sheathed conductors around Tower parapet and Nave gutters, on ridge and down all hips to 8mm aluminium tapes, test clamps and earth rod covers in paving. Appears complete.
Tests in both December 2022 and October 2023 satisfactory at 5.19 ohms overall combined earth resistance.
The British Standard sets a maximum 10 ohms but the insurer Ecclesiastical accepts up to 15 ohms
Note that the BS and Ecclesiastical require no more than five yearly testing (see Addendum) so annual testing does not seem necessary.

Fire Precautions

130. Extinguishers all serviced July 2023:

N Gallery stair	6 litre foam
W end Nave	6 litre foam
S Nave	6 litre foam
Song Room	2 litre foam
Organ	2 kg CO ₂
Kitchen	2 kg CO ₂ and fire blanket

131. In case of proposal for future change note the insurer EIG advises dry powder extinguishers should be confined to boiler rooms and kitchens because discharge (including accidental and malicious) in church risks serious damage to organs and delicate surfaces due to the powder being corrosive.

Water and Sanitary facilities

132. Kitchen stainless sink and basins at both wcs all have hot from a combi boiler with flue through S wall. At Vestry wc basin cold and hot from an electric wall storage heater with indicating switch. Tap stuck and the indicator does not light so appears defunct.

133. In Song Room stainless sink with hot and cold water from combi boiler with wall switch. Off adjoining Porch a recent wc with basin and hand dryer. At Visitor Centre tea point an electric hot water boiler.

Access and use by people with disabilities

134. Easy ramp at N door. Access poor at main W door (two steps down) and Song Room (five steps up). Accessible wc off Kitchen with handrails and alarm in the Kitchen and Visitor Centre but no lower pull or reset in room. Good handrails at stair to balcony for the infirm. No further improvement appears practical.

Security

135. Mortice deadlocks at N and W doors. Heavy barrel bolts at Gallery outside doors whose lower panels are reinforced inside. Deadlocks and bars across Song Room doors. Huge floor safes in Vestry and under the N stair (now used as a cupboard) and two wall safes in Kitchen.

Churchyard, boundaries, signs, paths, trees

136. Closed yard slopes down to Coronation Road which is on land still technically part of the churchyard. Headstones removed and laid out as public park with trees and bound gravel paths, part enclosed by railings. Two flat grave slabs remain. Like most churchyards it has become higher than Church floor level. The high ground is kept away from the Church S and W walls by a stone retaining wall and stone flagging.
137. Self seed trees growing against the Song Room E wall may cause damage soon and should be removed and poisoned.
138. Eleven headstones are cramped to the Song Room walls. Two on the W side are fallen and broken. Under faculty they should be either recorded and removed or assembled and refixed.
139. Renewed N gates, iron overthrow, stone piers and the sandstone flagged forecourt makes an attractive approach. The renewed N metalwork is galvanised and painted, now need repainting.



140. Some forecourt flags have been replaced or tarmac patched but vehicles continue to damage the flags. The base must be too weak for vehicles. Better to lift all flags, excavate, lay new base overall suitable for vehicles and relay sound and further replacement flags. May be Council responsibility. There may be archaeological interest in deep excavation in the historic churchyard. See para 144.



141. Modern steel handrails at the forecourt steps and S railings are ungalvanised, rusting and need to be thoroughly derusted, prepared and repainted to high standard and repainted regularly.
142. The earlier iron railings around the rest of the churchyard are painted only. They are severely rusted and delaminated. Such ironwork rusts slowly but will be destroyed unless thoroughly chipped, rust treated, primed and painted with suitable paint such as Hammerite.
143. Pedestal sundial of 1703 and four gate piers are separately listed and in good condition.
A fine large war memorial cross.

Archaeology

144. Consultation with the local authority archaeologist indicates that the church and its site are of archaeological importance and they should be consulted when significant works are being considered. Advice this year was that shallow work to change paving levels at the W Entry would not be archaeologically significant, requiring only normal care if human remains are found.

General comments

145. It is a pleasure to visit St Hilda's.
As well as simple annual clearance of gutters, hoppers and gullies maintenance needs to be extended to repair and painting of external joinery (windows and doors).
If resources allow it is time to improve the main W entrance and to rebuild the vaulted semi-basement rooms under the E margin to protect the blower and meter from decay, to exclude rubbish and to improve the appearance of the church E end (paras 50 – 56), perhaps including new colour in the blocked windows.

PART THREE

RECOMMENDATIONS in order of priority

For immediate action

Clear plants from roofs at E valleys, eave slates at N side of E end and SE corner of Tower	22, 24
Repair Song Room slates and consider deterrent to climbing on flat link	26
Clear silt and plants from Kitchen and Vestry flat roofs	29, 30
Clear and poison self-seeds at E side of Song Room	39, 45, 137
Clear rainwater pipes and gullies at Kitchen and Vestry, paint pipes and hoppers	40, 42
Remove rotten timber from wc off Vestry	78
Repair boilers before heating season	118

For completion within 18 months

Restart clock	16
Strip and remake mortar fillet at N side of slate tunnel from Tower	21
Repair slates at E hip, S Nave W end, W hip	22, 24, 25
Prepare and paint Song Room NW pipe	39
Re-align rainwater pipes at Song Room NE	39
Prepare and paint external joinery	65 – 68
Powder coat the mesh window protection, clean windows	99
Renew failed lamps	126

For completion within five years

Repair render on S wall of S external steps	47
Repoint bricks in W end plinths	47
Obtain periodic electric installation test in 2028	123 and Addendum
Obtain lightning conductor test in 2028	129 and Addendum
Prepare & paint all external ironwork	139, 141, 142

Desirable improvements

Repair (and alter?) the E end margin, to prevent collapse and improve appearance	50 – 56
Renew or paint metal sign by N door	68
Repair plaster in corner of Kitchen	75
Clean off external stairs and landings, cover with asphalt with upstands to dry both wcs	76 - 78, 89, 90
Improve level access and appearance at main W entrance	134

Recommendations on Maintenance and Care

Have steeplejack repair Tower slate and prepare and paint Tower rainwater pipe	18, 42
Have steeplejack clear Tower gutter every two years	20
Clear all gutters, hoppers, pipes, gullies and boiler house steps once a year	31, 32, 34, 35, 37, 38, 40, 51

ADDENDUM to the SURVEY REPORT

Required under the Care of Churches and Ecclesiastical Jurisdiction Measure 1991

PURPOSE OF REPORT This is a general report only, as is required by the Measure. It is **not** a specification for execution of repairs and must not be used as such. The parish is reminded that it will be necessary to obtain either the Archdeacon's permission or a Faculty if it is intended to make repairs for which an architect's specification should be sought. The PCC minutes must record that an application is being made for permission or faculty and a copy of that minute must accompany the application together with a full specification, drawing where appropriate and an estimate of the cost of the work. In any application for grant aid a full specification is always required.

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.

MAINTENANCE Continual vigilance to guard against blockages in gutters and the rainwater system as a whole is needed. Every parish must find for itself a reliable procedure to ensure that gutters, ground gutters, gullies and drains are kept clean. It might be:
maintenance under contract by a local builder or handyman or
maintenance by church working party
Whatever system is adopted the problem remains to remember when to organise the work. Gutters and pipes should be checked at least twice a year. If the Log Book is used as a check list of action every year and kept as an up to date record this will itself act as a reminder.

HEATING INSTALLATION A proper examination and test should be made by a qualified engineer annually **and a written report obtained for the log book**

ELECTRICAL The installation should be tested every five years and immediately if not done within the last five years by a competent electrical engineer, that is a certificate holder of the National Inspection Council of Electrical Installation Contracting (NICEIC) or a member of the Electrical Contractors Association (ECA) and a resistance and earth continuity test should be obtained on all circuits. **The test report should be kept with the Log Book.** The present report is based on a visual inspection of the main switchboard and certain random sections of the wiring without the use of instruments.
To check registration with NICEIC and ECA see www.electricalsafetyregister.com

LIGHTNING CONDUCTOR Any lightning conductor should be tested by a competent electrical engineer every five years (in addition to any recommendation in this report) in accordance with the British Standard Code of Practice. Records of the results and condition should be kept with the Log Book. Note that there is no general requirement for a Lightning Conductor.

CHURCH WARDENS' INSPECTION Although the Measure requires the church to be inspected every five years serious trouble may develop in between these surveys if minor defects are left unattended. It is recommended that the wardens should make or have made a careful inspection of the fabric at least once a year and arrange immediate attention to such matters as displaced slates and leaking pipes.

PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES 'One of the striking characteristics of the Gospel narratives is Jesus' concern for people with disabilities but sadly the Church has, in the past, given little attention to their needs. The design of our buildings has often proved a barrier to those who attend church services' (Chairman of the Church Buildings Council). The PCC are reminded that the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 places a duty on churches to review all practices and facilities and to take all reasonable steps to avoid discrimination against people with disabilities caused by physical features, bearing in mind the limitations often found in historic buildings
Useful advice and audit sheets are to be found in 'Widening the Eye of the Needle' published by the Church Buildings Council 1999 £10.95.

INSURANCE The PCC is advised that insurance cover should be reviewed annually to take account of any rise in the cost of rebuilding.