

**Diocese of Sunderland**

**ST. CUTHBERTS  
East Rainton**

**CH93**

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**Incumbent - Revd. Michael Beck**

**Inspection of Churches Measure 1955**

**ARCHITECT'S REPORT  
April 2011**

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1.0 **PREMISES IDENTIFICATION**

**Church:** East Rainton, St. Cuthbert  
**Archdeaconry:** Durham  
**Diocese:** Durham  
**Date of Inspection:** 19<sup>th</sup> April 2011  
**Weather:** Dry and Sunny

2.0 **PARTICULARS OF SITE** (Location, adjacent buildings etc.)

The church stands in a closed churchyard towards the southern edge of this now expanded small rural village. There is residential development to the north with the largest part of the churchyard to the south, an open public green area to the west, on the opposite side of an adjacent road and farm buildings some distance to the east beyond the churchyard boundary. A free-standing brick built church hall lies immediately to the north adjacent to an access road which leads to the farm (see supplementary report).

3.0 **PARTICULARS OF PREMISES** (General Construction, layout etc.)

The church erected in 1866 consists of a simple stone built rectangular building lying on a traditional east-west axis with a small lean-to vestry on the north side. The pitched roof is covered in natural blue Welsh Slate. Internally the chancel area is defined from the rest of the church by a single step and a projection of one of the roof trusses to form a chancel arch.

4.0 **REPAIR WORKS OR NEW WORKS SINCE LAST INSPECTION**

**2006**

**December**

Replacement of digital PCB in electric organ - £400.00

Rewired external light to south entrance – Stewart Electrics - £100.00

**2007**

**March**

Redundant external conduit removed from vestry wall

**April**

Inspection and test of Electrical Installation - £558.00

**June**

Fire Risk Assessment carried out for Church and Hall

**July**

External Vestry door refurbished

**August**

Interior of entrance porch redecorated

**October**

Faulty internal light replaced - DMC Electrical Services - £50.00

**November**

Lead theft from porch roof replaced by Durham Stonemasonry and Restoration - £1684.95 (Insurance Claim)

**December**

Items of value smartwatered including replacement lead

**2008**

**January**

Interior of Hall decorated – Youth Offenders Community Service

**February**

Topple Testing of gravestones by Sunderland Council

**April**

Facia boards to hall renewed in brown uPVC – Home Maintenance – (0191 4193643) - £519.25.

**June**

Environmental Health Inspection by Sunderland Council – Recommended upgrading of access step ladder to EN131 or Class 1 (Industrial)

**November**

Replacement of Lead to Main Entrance door - £810.00 (Insurance Claim)

**2009**

**July**

Replacement of Lead to Main Entrance door - £834.00 (Insurance Claim)

**2010**

**March**

Garden of Remembrance laid out to east of hall – Watson Brothers Builders

**June**

West gable wall and bell cote repointed - £1386.50

5.0 **SUMMARY OF GENERAL CONDITION OF BUILDINGS**

The building remains generally in very good condition except for areas of external stonework in particular the west gable which have required repeated repointing, and the internal plasterwork to the solid wall located between the chancel and the vestry.

6.0 **DETAILED CONDITION OF BUILDINGS**

**EXTERNAL FABRIC**

6.1 **General Structure**

This is sound with no significant structural movement or defects visible externally but there are minor shrinkage or settlement cracks internally to each window or door opening on the north and south walls.

These do not appear to have worsened since the last inspection.

## 6.2 **External Wall Surfaces**

These are of coursed random sandstone rubble throughout with dressed stone surrounds to door and window openings. There is a shallow stone capped projection around the south entrance door which provides for an inner draught door. The whole of the external walling was repaired and re-pointed in 1991 with an area to the west end of the south wall re-pointed in February 2006 and to the lower part of the west gable in May 2006, with further repointing to the west gable and bell cote in June 2010.

### 6.2.1 **North Elevations**

This was previously the least eroded elevation but was re-pointed so as to match the remainder of the church. All stonework is in sound condition except for a few individual eroded stones to the chancel, vestry and nave.

### 6.2.2 **South Elevations**

This was previously the most eroded elevation with badly eroded individual stones and areas cement rendered over. The stonework was repaired and re-pointed in 1991 and is in generally sound condition except for surface erosion of a few individual stones under the string course level towards the centre of the nave and to the lower level of the chancel. The west corner where the mortar had been washed out, as it is particularly exposed to the weather, was repaired and re-pointed in February 2006. There are a few lean or open joints in this area above the string course.

### 6.2.3 **East Elevations**

This elevation had previously been partially re-pointed but this was removed and the whole gable re-pointed to match in 1991. All present stonework is in sound condition although the lower 1m band has surface erosion of the stones which is creating proud pointing. The apex stone cross is missing and the base is now exposed. Some of the lower joints to the coping stones require re-pointing on the south side.

Vestry – sound

### 6.2.4 **West Elevations**

This elevation had previously had a number of individually badly eroded stones, particularly at low level. These were replaced or re-cut and the whole gable re-pointed, including the small apex belfry in 1991. The bedding to the stone coping which was cracked or missing particularly on the south side and the joints to the copings have been repointed. The section below the string course was re-pointed in May 2006 and again in June 2010. The mortar, which may be cement rich has dried out too quickly and has cracked as a result.

## 6.3 **Roof Coverings**

These consist of blue Welsh slate throughout. The coverings were renewed in 1983 incorporating a roof underlay and are generally in good condition except as noted below. The ridge is of red terracotta angle and appears generally well bedded.

### 6.3.1 **North Elevation**

Sound throughout except for approximately six chipped slates, two of which have been re-fixed with metal clips.

Vestry Lean-to - sound

### 6.3.2 **South Elevation**

Generally sound throughout except for some slipped slates towards east and west ends and a number of twisted slates suggesting that one of the fixing nails to each slate has become loose.

The cement haunching to the east abutment is cracked.

### 6.4 **Rainwater Disposal System**

The eaves gutters and downpipes which were renewed in 1983, are of square section PVC. These are sound except for: -

- (i) Missing gully cover to down-pipe on south side of nave
- (ii) No access to gully on north side of nave.

The downpipes discharge directly onto the surrounding concrete apron except for the north nave downpipe which is set into the ground and the south nave where the gully has no cover.

### 6.5 **External Windows & Doors**

The windows (except for 3 small stained lights) are new (1991) leaded lights with clear polycarbonate overglazing all in good condition except for dirt on the inner face of the overglazing. The doors consist of oak boarding to the south entrance and boarded deal to the vestry which is painted and is in fair condition, both were redecorated in 2007.

The vestry window is glazed with vandalite.

### 6.6 **External Metalwork, Woodwork & Paintwork**

This consists of the external doors which are in fair condition and the bell mechanism which was last cleaned, oiled and redecorated in 1991.

The lead flashing to the south porch has been stolen on 3 separate occasions and has always been renewed in lead.

The incoming electrical service cable is partially pulled from the wall fixing on the vestry wall.

### 6.7 **Tower, Spire, Bells & Frames** (Date Bell(s) last serviced: 1991)

There is a small open stone apex belfry to the west gable. This was re-pointed as part of the 1991 masonry repairs and appears sound. It is reported that further pointing was carried out in June 2010 but this is not readily visible from ground level. The small stone apex cross appears cracked at the base. There is a single swing bell the

mountings of which were cleaned, oiled and redecorated at that time but are now in need of attention. The bell pull rope passes through a lead sleeve in the roof to the inside and rainwater can penetrate on occasions but is not considered a serious problem. It is understood that the bell is not used at the present time.

## **INTERNAL FABRIC**

### **6.8 Roof Structure**

This consists of exposed cross braced timber trusses at close centres with T&G timber infill. The ceiling was cleaned during the 1991 re-ordering and appears to be sound. The earlier electrical lighting outlets remain in situ.

### **6.9.1 Internal Partitions**

There is a fine glazed oak internal porch which was installed in 1991. This is in good condition.

### **6.9.2 Internal Ceilings**

These consist of the timber underboarding to the main part of the church, which appear sound, and plasterboard to the vestry which is also sound.

### **6.9.3 Internal Walls**

These consist of pine boarding to dado height which was all renewed as part of the re-ordering, with plaster to the upper sections, part of which, mainly to the north and south walls, was renewed in 1991. This is sound except for cracking and extensive spalling beside the pulpit and on the other side of the same wall in the vestry and in the north west and south west corners. The plaster, which was badly affected by dampness in the outer porch and in the vestry, was renewed during the previous quinquennium. There is an unplastered section of wall above the rafter level at the west end which is creating a dust problem.

### **6.9.4 Internal Doors**

There are boarded deal inner doors to the south porch and the vestry, both painted and a new oak internal porch with a single door for general use and double doors for special occasions. All are sound.

### **6.10 Internal Decoration**

This consists of flat paint to the plaster surfaces and timber stain to the woodwork which was renewed or new in 1991, and in the porch and vestry in 1997. It is in good order except where the plaster has cracked, particularly to the section of wall between the chancel and the vestry and where it is peeling to the porch.

### **6.11 Floors & Balconies**

The original solid or timber floors were defective and have been removed and replaced by a "floating" insulated plywood floor on a concrete slab base. The floor is carpeted throughout and appears sound.

6.12 **Glazing & Ventilation**

The glazing is leaded "antique" quarries or stained glass throughout in good condition. There are no opening lights but the church appears adequately ventilated by natural infiltration.

There is a noticeable accumulation of dirt between the outside face of the glazing and the polycarbonate overglazing to the south nave window.

6.13 **FIXTURES & FITTINGS**

6.13.1 **Furniture & Fittings**

The altar furnishings including a plain oak panelled reredos, a modern but traditional style altar with an 18th century style altar rail are all of oak or oak faced plywood and are in good condition.

The small oak pulpit and Prie-dieu are by "Mousey" Thomson and came from Quarrington Hill Church.

The pews which came from St. Aidan's Church, Herrington are of pitch pine and have been stripped and re-polished and are in good condition.

6.13.2 **Organ and/or other musical instruments**

The original pipe instrument was removed as part of the 1991 re-ordering and has been replaced by a 2 manual Chorus III Gem electronic pipeless organ.

6.14 **Monuments and/or peculiar features**

There are no monuments in the building. There is a set of five framed printed illustrations of the 'stations of the cross' and two small fabric banners.

**SERVICES**

6.15 **Heating System**

(Date of last service: April 2007)

This was a new electric installation (1991) and consists of skirting convector heaters fixed along either side of the church, a convector panel sited behind the altar, 3 fan assisted convectors sited at the west and east end together with an air curtain to the porch entrance. Each section of the installation is controlled by thermostats and was reported to be working satisfactorily at the time of the inspection.

6.16 **Electrical System**

(Date of last service: April 2007)

This is a 3 phase supply which is protected by an E.L.C.B located in the hall. The whole installation, part of which was new in 1991, (the lighting was renewed in 1981), is wired in MICC cable and is in good condition. Some remedial work was carried out as a result of the inspection before last and the installation is understood to be in good order.

6.17           **Lightning Conductor**  
(Date of last test: Not Known)

This is of the flat copper type which has a single terminal on the apex belfry. The earthing of the installation was upgraded at the time of the inspection in 2005 and is adequate, however it no longer conforms to the British Standard which requires a minimum of two down tapes.

6.18           **Fire Precautions**  
(Date of last test of extinguishers: Not regularly tested)

There are 1Kg Powder type extinguishers, located one in the vestry and one at the entrance.

6.19           **Sanitary Facilities**

There are none in the church. (There is one toilet not suitable for disabled persons in the adjacent hall).

6.20           **Security Situation**

As a precaution against intruders an electronic intruder alarm was installed in 1995.

The south door is bolted from the inside and the vestry door is double locked.

The church is overlooked except on the north side and to an extent on the east side where there has been limited vandalism in the past.

6.21           **Disabled Persons Facilities**

**Access** – 1 step at entrance – level floor up to chancel step. A movable ramp is provided at the entrance when required.

**Sight** - Lighting levels seem to be adequate.

**Sound System** – There is a simple sound system with an induction loop facility.

**Toilet** – see 6.19 above

6.22           **External Areas**

The churchyard and boundaries are maintained by the Local Authority who took up responsibility for them in 1981.

There is no proper vehicle access into the churchyard, but there are footpaths from the access lane to the north, via the hall and from the adjacent street on the west to the south door. The latter can accommodate a small vehicle for maintenance purposes only.

The low retaining wall at the east end of the hall, which is in poor condition, has been partially demolished. The east brick gate pillar has cracked joints to the top section.

There are a number of gravestones kerbs and monuments which have been damaged, broken or pushed over.

There are a few deciduous trees mainly on the boundary with one standing close to the south side of the building which has been pruned in the past to avoid damaging the slating.

6.22

**Areas not Inspected**

(This may not be an exhaustive list)

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7.0           **RECOMMENDATIONS**

7.1           **ITEMS REQUIRING ATTENTION IMMEDIATELY**

**Electrical Installation**

Should be tested for earth continuity and resistance in accordance with the current I.E.E. regulations within 5 years from the previous test. A copy of the test certificate should be placed with the Church Log Book and any recommendations carried out or reported to the church Architect for further advice.

**Lightning Conductor**

To be tested in accordance with the requirements of British Standard 6651. Any defects or sub-standard elements to be repaired or replaced and/or reported to the Inspecting Architect and copy of The Test Certificate placed in the Log Book.

7.2           **ITEMS TO BE ATTENDED TO WITHIN THE NEXT 12 – 24 MONTHS**

**External Masonry**

- (i)       Re-point open or cracked joints to coping stones to east gable.

**Roof Coverings**

Re-fix slipped or twisted slates at east and west ends of south side.

**Rainwater Goods**

Replace missing gully cover to down-pipe in south side of nave.

Provide access to gully to down-pipe on north side.

**Internal Walls**

Remove defective wall plaster from both sides of wall between chancel and vestry and renew with either moisture resistant render or micro porous lime plaster depending on the condition of underlying masonry.

7.3           **ITEMS TO BE ATTENDED TO WITHIN THE NEXT 5 – 10 YEARS**

There are no items in this category.

7.4

## **ITEMS WHICH ARE DESIRABLE BUT NOT ESSENTIAL**

### **External Walling**

Replace missing east gable stone cross.

### **External Glazing**

Remove, clean and re-fix polycarbonate over-glazing to all external windows.

### **Bell**

In the event that the bell is to be re-used, the mountings and movement should be checked, greased and exposed metal re-decorated.

### **Internal Walls**

Line the exposed area of wall to the top of the west gable with plywood to prevent dusting.

7.5

## **ITEMS FOR FURTHER INVESTIGATION**

### **Lightning Protection**

Check if the church insurers require that the lightning protection should satisfy the current British Standard and if so upgrade accordingly.

### **Facilities for Persons with disabilities**

Consider upgrading the existing toilet in the hall to accommodate persons with disabilities.

### **External Areas**

Discuss/agree with the Local Authority and/or Parish Council the repair/replacing of broken or damaged gravestones.

### **External Stonework**

Check condition and security of the stone apex cross to the belfry and repair if required.

## **8.0 ESTIMATION OF COST OF REPAIRS AND OTHER WORKS**

### **Notes:**

To assist the Parish, the Diocese and potential funders, including English Heritage, the following approximation of costs is provided as a guide for budgeting purposes.

The costs are based on typical costs for the work described currently at the date of the report i.e. no allowance is made for any special arrangements which may be required or for the effect of inflation.

An allowance is made for Architects and any other relevant fees where these may be payable and for VAT.

Where work might be expected to be carried out by unskilled or voluntary labour, no allowance has been made except for materials.

### **8.1 Items requiring immediate attention**

£500.00

### **8.2 Items to be attended within the next 12 – 24 months**

£1,500.00

### **8.3 Items to be attended within the next 5 years**

Nil

### **8.4 Items which are desirable**

£2,500.00

### **8.5 Items for Further Investigation (which may require further work)**

£2,500.00

## **SUPPLEMENTARY REPORT EAST RAINTON CHURCH HALL**

### **PARTICULARS OF PREMISES**

This is a single storey doubled pitched roof brick built building with brick and a slate lean-to on the east end providing a toilet and store, and on the north side a kitchen.

### **STRUCTURAL**

Appears generally sound and horizontal cracks noted in 1996 at mid height on south and west walls and which have been re-pointed have not re-opened. The redundant chimney is leaning slightly and as it is quite slender could be removed.

#### **External Walls**

Mixed red and buff common brick generally sound with all areas re-pointed prior to 2006.

The underfloor ventilation grills are clear.

#### **External Roof Coverings**

These consist of natural blue Welsh slate throughout generally sound except for one missing and one loose slate on the south side and two missing slates on the north side. There is a rolled terracotta ridge, the bedding of which is missing in places.

There is old distortion at the mid-point on the south side of the line of an internal twist. The toilet roof lean-to has been treated with some sealant.

#### **Rainwater Disposal**

Consists of black uPVC generally sound.

The outlet on the south side is blocked with vegetation.

#### **Windows**

All the hall windows have been renewed with single glazed fixed light uPVC framed windows, all sound.

The toilet windows are timber frames with very rusty wire guards. Kitchen windows are plain timber type. The putty has been renewed but not decorated.

#### **External Timber Work**

The external door frame requires some repair to the foot.

The barge boards, and gable infill panel have been renewed in uPVC and painted plywood. The timber fascia boards require redecoration.

**External Metal Work** – steel angles supporting barbed wire to toilet block and toilet window guards are very rusty.

The timber door to a redundant meter or bin store on the north side is in poor condition.

## **INTERNAL ELEMENTS**

### **Ceilings**

These consist of suspended lightweight tiles to main hall and kitchen and are in reasonably good condition but those in the kitchen are slightly mildewed. The ceilings to the toilet and store are plastered and are sound.

### **Walls**

These are plastered throughout. There has been some renewal at window reveals following window replacement on the south side and some previous perishing towards floor level near the entrance door and in the south east corner of the hall has been repaired.

There is some peeling of paintwork to the old fireplace in the kitchen.

### **Floors**

The hall and kitchen appear to be suspended timber which appears sound and is covered with vinyl sheet. The store is exposed cracked concrete and vinyl covered concrete in the toilet.

The hall floor appears sound but there may not be sufficient ventilation to the void and rot there is a risk that may be present.

### **Decoration**

Consists of flat paint finishes in good condition.

## **SERVICES**

### **Lighting**

Consists of fluorescent strip lighting which is operational except for 1 lamp.

### **Heating**

Consists of wall mounted radiant convector heaters which appear operational.

### **Electrical Installation**

Is a 3 phase supply with conduit distribution which appears to be sound. There is a current operated earth trip but this does not appear to protect the hall system and may be for the church installation.

The portable items of electrical equipment have not been tested.

### **Ventilation**

There is no natural ventilation except for small trickle vents, but there is mechanical extraction to the hall and kitchen. The ventilation is inadequate for the building with condensation to the window in the kitchen.

### **Hot Water**

Is provided by an electric oversink heater in the kitchen. There is an oversink hot water heater to the toilet.

### **Sanitary Provision**

There is 1 WC with wash hand basin off the hall. This is not suitable for the disabled. The male toilet is now unused and serves as a utility storage area.

**Kitchen Facilities**

These consist of fixed cupboards with worktops in good condition and 1 domestic 4 ring cooker/oven.

There is no separate hand basin.

**Fire Protection**

There is one 2kg ABC powder extinguisher in the main hall which appears to have been discharged and 1KG ABC Powder in the kitchen, together with a fire blanket.

**Disabled Person Access**

The floor of the building is on one level and there is a concrete ramp to the external entrance door.

## **East Rainton Church Hall**

### **RECOMMENDATIONS FOR REPAIR OR REPLACEMENT**

#### **Electrical Installation**

Should be tested for earth continuity and resistance in accordance with the current I.E.E. regulations within 5 years from the previous test. A copy of the test certificate should be placed with the Church Log Book and any recommendations carried out or reported to the church Architect for further advice.

Arrange for all portable electrical equipment to be tested (PAT Tested) annually.

#### **Windows and Doors**

Remove and replace rusty metal guards to toilet/store windows.

Repair and redecorate external door and frame.

#### **External Timber Work**

Redecorate the timber fascia boards.

#### **External Metalwork**

Redecorate rusty steel angles supporting barbed wire, or consider replacing with rotating anti-climb device in low maintenance nylon or galvanised metal.

#### **External Walling**

Repair and repoint or remove the existing brick chimney.

#### **Roof Covering**

Replace missing slates to north and south sides of roof.

Clear blockage to gutter outlet on south side.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTHER INVESTIGATION**

#### **Toilet Facilities**

Consider converting existing toilet to accessible standard to allow use by persons in wheelchairs including provision for baby change. (Note: sufficient space is available with the WC/Sink area for this purpose.)

#### **Fire Precautions**

Replace or refill fire extinguisher in hall and test extinguisher in kitchen.

#### **T.O.h.P. Architects**

The Old Hall Practice Limited, West Auckland.

Date: 20<sup>th</sup> April 2011