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QUINQUENNIAL REPORT

INSPECTION OF CHURCHES MEASURE 1955

CARE OF CHURCHES AND ECCLESIASTICAL JURISDICTION MEASURE 1991

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NOTE: This report can be read at three levels of detail:

The SUMMARY AND PRIORITIES give a brief overview and checklist.

The APPRAISAL AND RECOMMENDATIONS give a fully reasoned report sufficient for most purposes.

The ARCHITECT'S INSPECTION NOTES give a finely detailed record of the inspection observations on which the report is based, for future reference.

PREAMBLE TO THE QUINQUENNIAL REPORT ON THE CHURCH

INTRODUCTION

The Inspection of Churches Measure 1955 and the Care of Churches and Ecclesiastical Jurisdiction Measure 1991, both of which have statutory force, require each Diocese to establish a scheme for the inspection of every church at least once every five years. Over the years Commissions of General Synod and Working Parties of the Council for the Care of Churches have made recommendations on the establishment of Diocesan Schemes, the selection and terms of appointment of the inspectors, and the scope, form and content of the reports. The current recommendations are contained in 'A GUIDE TO CHURCH INSPECTION AND REPAIR', Second Edition, 1995, published for the Council for the Care of Churches by Church House Publishing, Church House, Great Smith Street, London SW1P 3NZ. The following is intended to conform with those recommendations.

TERMS OF APPOINTMENT

Attention is drawn to the Terms of Appointment of the professional adviser included in Appendix B.

SCOPE OF THE REPORT

A thorough inspection of the structural condition and state of repair of the Church has been made, covering all parts visible from ground and floor levels, readily accessible roofs, galleries or stagings, and where applicable from ladders provided by the PCC. Inaccessible and hidden roofs and valleys are excluded, and ceilings have been examined from floor level only unless otherwise stated.

IT IS EMPHASISED THAT THE INSPECTION HAS BEEN PURELY VISUAL, and parts of the structure which are inaccessible, enclosed or covered such as boarded floors, roof spaces or hidden timbers at the wall heads have not been opened up for inspection (unless otherwise stated in the report). Such woodwork or other parts of the structure which are covered unexposed or inaccessible have not been inspected and therefore it cannot be reported that any such part of the building is free from defect. It is possible that any concrete used in the construction, alteration or repair of the church between 1923 and 1975 contains High Alumina Cement and/or Calcium Chloride additives. No investigation has been carried out to determine whether these substances are actually present and therefore it cannot be reported that such parts of the building are entirely free of risk in this respect. Where concrete of that period is persistently damp the risk of failure becomes significant and the appropriate investigations should be carried out.

Chimney flues were not inspected, nor were inaccessible flat roofs. Manhole covers were not lifted and none of the services, including the drainage, were tested. Damp meters were not used. Unless otherwise stated the inspection was carried out in dry weather, when it was not possible to ascertain whether the rainwater goods or gullies or surface water drains were watertight.

Recommendations for further investigation are included where suspicions have been aroused during the inspection but problems of access or the need for special equipment or opening-up have prevented full exploration. Where it is suggested that some part of the building be kept under observation this is for the attention of a future professional adviser as well as of the Church Council.

FORM OF THE REPORT

This is a general report only, as required by the Inspection of Churches Measure 1955, the Care of Churches and Ecclesiastical Jurisdiction Measure 1991 and the Diocesan Scheme. It follows, in broad terms, the form recommended in 'A GUIDE TO CHURCH INSPECTION AND REPAIR' 1995 (mentioned above) and the requirements of the current Diocesan Scheme.

This report is the COPYRIGHT OF THE PROFESSIONAL ADVISER and is provided to satisfy the statutory requirement for a quinquennial report ONLY. It is confidential to the Church Council, the Diocesan Authorities and their respective professional advisers. It describes defects observed, is NOT A SPECIFICATION for execution of any work and MUST NOT BE USED FOR OBTAINING BUILDERS' ESTIMATES. An indication of likely repairs costs is included, but it must be understood that the scope of repair work is undefined and no measurements have been taken, so the figures are no more than 'educated guesses' and should not be relied upon beyond the purpose of indicating the likely spending commitment to maintain the property to a high standard.

THE CHURCH COUNCIL IS REMINDED THAT IT MUST NOTIFY THE DIOCESAN ADVISORY COMMITTEE AND/OR OBTAIN A FACULTY BEFORE PUTTING ANY REPAIR WORK IN HAND. In most cases specifications, schedules and descriptions of the proposed repairs will be required. This report is not a substitute for such documents but it may be cited in support as identifying the need for repairs.

One copy of this Report should be kept with the Church Log Book and Records, for future reference. The Architect will send the requisite number of copies direct to the Diocesan Office.

REPORT ON THE 2010 QUINQUENNIAL INSPECTION
of the Parish Church of
S A I N T N I C H O L A S , H E D W O R T H

Diocese of Durham
Archdeaconry of Sunderland
Deanery of Jarrow
Historic Buildings Listing: Grade II
Conservation Area: None
Civil County and District: Tyne & Wear; South Tyneside
Ordnance Survey Map Reference: NZ 340 621
Date of Inspection: 16th April 2010
Date of Report: 10th December 2010
Report by CHRISTOPHER DOWNS, B.Arch. R.I.B.A.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION

The church consists of the Nave with four-bay arcade on its north side and Aisle with lean-to roof beyond, Chancel with Lady Chapel on its south side and a South Transept at the east end of the Nave opening into this Chapel, Organ Chamber opening off the north side of the Chancel with Clergy Vestry to its east and Choir Vestry/Store to the north again with the Boiler House to its west. The architectural design is a simple nineteenth-century reinterpretation of the medieval Decorated (14th century) style. A small bell-cote with pyramidal copper-covered spirelet is set towards the west end of the Nave roof.

The earliest parts of the building date from 1881/2 (datestone at base of eastern respond of arcade); various plaques in the church commemorate the addition or extension of the Chancel, Lady Chapel, etc., in the time of the second vicar (1892 - 1912), and specifically that the greater part of the Chancel was erected in 1911. The architect - probably for all these phases - was Charles Hodgson-Fowler. The Choir Vestry was erected in 1974/5, replacing an earlier structure, and still awaits its stone facing.

Externally, walls are of quarry-dressed sandstone blocks in snecked coursing and roofs are covered with red clay plain tiles (except the felted flat roof of the Choir Vestry). Internally, the timber roof structures are mostly exposed, walls are plastered and painted except for natural stone architectural features such as the arcade, and floors are generally carpeted on a solid base.

A major scheme of internal alterations carried out in 1995 involved partitioning off all but the easternmost bay of the North Aisle to accommodate Meeting Room, Kitchen and Toilets,

constructing glazed timber screens to separate the Transept from the Nave and the westernmost bay of the Nave to form a narthex to the rest, re-ordering the Chancel to allow more flexibility in use, provision of a new heating system, related alterations to the electrical installation and provision of foul drainage to the public sewer in Hedworth Lane to the west.

Drawings of the church are included on the buff-coloured sheets following the 'Summary and Priorities' section of this report.

PREVIOUS INSPECTIONS AND RECENT REPAIRS

This is the third time the present writer has reported on this church. As well as those prepared in 1994 and 2001, the 1989 report by Alan Lee (who also carried out the 1984 inspection) was available for reference in the course of writing the present one, together with a short report on the structure of the church dated March 1983 by Mr. Lee and a report including trial hole excavation results dated July 1983 by Maughan Reynolds & Partners.

These and any other previous reports, where they survive, will form a valuable record of the condition of the building and of the work carried out over the past forty five years and should be kept.

Repairs and works carried out since the last inspection have included:

Provision of additional gas supply pipe from meter to boiler (2004).

Re-tiling of the Nave, North Aisle and South Transept roofs following failure of the batten fixings; minor repairs to other roofs and associated watertablings, chimney stack, bell-cote, etc.; general overhaul of gutters and downpipes and provision of new gully, drain and soakaway to east side of Choir Vestry, upgrading of lightning conductor - all with English Heritage/Heritage Lottery Fund grant aid (2005).

Redecoration of Nave and Chancel ceilings with white emulsion paint (2005).

Repair of main door and fitting of new lock (2007).

Replacement of central heating pump (2007).

Repairs to boundary walls - phase I (2009).

Removal of the original font from the Meeting Area.

LIMITATIONS OF THE SURVEY

a) Attention is drawn to the recommendations of the **Preamble** to this report, and to the **General and Technical notes** given in **Appendix `B'**.

b) The following inaccessible parts were not included in the inspection:-

i) Any voids below floors.

ii) Roof voids, especially those above the Chancel and Transept ceilings and at eaves level generally.

iii) Interior of the Organ.

iv) Roofs were examined internally from floor levels and externally from ground levels and from the flat roof of the Choir Vestry. The valley between the Lady Chapel and Chancel roofs was seen from a ladder at its outlet end only.

c) The Architect's detailed inspection notes are given in the following appendix, with descriptions of various parts of the building where appropriate, and comments on the condition of the fabric. These notes are an important part of the report, and should be read by the Parish (PCC officers, etc.), for the appraisal, recommendations and priorities in this report have been prepared from them. They are not a specification for repairs, and are unsuitable for obtaining builders'

estimates. When the PCC is ready to proceed with any part of the recommended repairs, it is advised to contact the professional adviser for recommendations as to the appropriate course of action and ask him to prepare any necessary specifications and schedules.

APPRAISAL AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The following remarks inevitably concentrate on the defects noted during the inspection but it must be emphasised that the church is in very good condition generally, with a great deal of excellent work having been carried out since the last inspection - notably the re-tiling of the Nave, Transept and North Aisle roofs. This report is intended to help direct the efforts of those responsible towards an orderly programme for the work needed in the foreseeable future.

A) STRUCTURAL CONDITION OF THE FABRIC:

As summarised in the 2001 quinquennial report, that in 1994 recorded that the building had evidently undergone considerable structural settlement and distortion in the past, resulting in cracks in masonry and wallplaster, gaps between structural elements, and cracking and unevenness in the floors, all throughout the building. Most of the signs of movement appeared to be of considerable age, and some seemed to be associated with the history of the construction of the church, where the almost inevitable differential settlement had occurred between earlier parts of the structure and later extensions. An engineer's report in 1983 identified very wet subsoil conditions severely reducing the load-bearing capacity of the clay on which the church stands. As the trial hole was sited fairly close to the Heating Chamber this may have been associated with a leaking water supply pipe subsequently discovered there or, as the engineer suggested, with faults in the surface water drainage. However, the 1994 quinquennial report offered the more likely explanation that the church stands on shrinkable clay which will be affected by extremes of weather from time to time. This was subsequently vindicated in August 1995 when, after a long dry summer period, various cracks and other indications of movement developed over a fairly short space of time. Interestingly, the ground shrank away from the external walls of the building by approximately 25mm and cracks appeared in the grassed areas of the churchyard - particularly to the west and south of the building. A detailed record of the crackings in the building was made at the time, and comparisons were drawn with both the notes of the 1994 inspection and the state of the building at the time of its redecoration on completion of the internal alterations in April 1995. The movement was kept under observation and re-assessed in the following winter, by which time many of the crackings had closed up again, at least partially, confirming the diagnosis. All the crackings were reviewed in 1999, and found to be either much the same or slightly reduced. Reviewed again in the course of this current inspection, after an interval of more than ten years they remain much the same once again or, in some cases, closed up further. There is therefore no cause for alarm. However, the symptoms of movement should be kept under observation, particularly after prolonged dry weather, and the architect notified if any seem to be developing at an appreciable rate. Otherwise, they should simply be reviewed at

the next quinquennial inspection. For comparison purposes the crackings, etc., are recorded in detail in the appended notes.

The structural arrangement of the beam across the opening between the Lady Chapel and the South Transept seems to act as a magnifier for the foundation movement, with the north end of the beam sliding in and out of its bearing in the wall as weather conditions vary. This makes its northern bearing a very good place to monitor movement. The wall posts under this beam appear to help support it, and that at the north end had been pulled forward, exerting severe pressure on the outer end of the stone corbel that it rests on, which consequently snapped. Following the recommendations of the 1994 report the corbel was repaired and the foot of the post cut back at an angle to relieve this pressure. All seems intact now so the problem appears to have been resolved.

Gaps between the members of the roof trusses and behind the wall posts below the tie beams of the principal trusses in the Nave have been recorded in previous inspections and do not seem to have become any worse over the last fifteen years. The same applies to the slight eastward lean of the trusses in the Nave. The roof timbers of the Nave, North Aisle and Transept were inspected from above when the tiling was renewed in 2005, and found to be sound.

Much was done in 1995 to make good the worst effects of the structural settlement and cracking of the floors, in particular complete reconstruction of the flooring of the westernmost three bays of the North Aisle, now occupied by the Meeting Room, Kitchen and Toilets. Further differential movement occurred between this floor (together with the partitions standing on it), and the external wall soon after this was done but was only to be expected. Signs of slight continuing movement show but do not represent any cause for concern, as the general trend is for things to ease back to where they had been before. Any remaining gaps should merely be filled with a flexible sealant, to maintain acoustic separation between them. The same goes for the gaps between the partitions infilling the arcade and the arches themselves, along the north side of the Nave.

In the Sanctuary, the noticeable gap between the flooring and the wall panelling all round remains much as recorded in 1999.

As commented in the last report, the Choir Vestry constructed in 1974/5 appears to have been very badly built, on inadequate foundations. The walls and floor have settled differentially, with cracking in both, slippage of the walling on its damp-proof course and very considerable gaps between the original building and the new. The overall position seems much the same now as it was in 1999, with only minor additional movement. As this is merely a single-storey structure with nothing else depending on it for support, there still seems to be no need for immediate action other than filling the gaps to keep them weathertight. There is clearly no point in providing the stone facing originally envisaged and in the longer term

removal of this extension and replacement with something more worthy should be considered as a possible future project.

B) WALLS AND MASONRY:

The external walls of the church are of sandstone, with quarry-dressed (scutch-faced) general walling contrasting with smoothly-tooled ashlar dressings to windows, quoins, etc. In general the masonry continues to weather well, with only superficial erosion of exposed surfaces in limited areas. Some patch pointing together with filling of structural crackings was carried out before the last inspection, and the chimney stack rising through the north slope of the Organ Chamber roof has been re-pointed since, leaving all in fair condition generally. A few minor matters could do with attention over the next five years, including:

Bedding-in of loose stone pushed into former air brick aperture at base of west wall of North Aisle.

Pointing of open joints in the plinths of the east wall of the Chancel, west face of the Heating Chamber and north wall of the North Aisle.

Filling of cracked joints in thresholds of main (Nave) entrance and Transept entrance doorways.

Filling of gap in watertabling of east gable of Sacristy.

As mentioned in previous reports, the brickwork of the Choir Vestry is breaking down under frost action in the exposed parapet courses at its west end, and pointing is needed in the upper courses at its east end too if this structure is to be retained for the foreseeable future.

The walls incorporate a rudimentary damp-proof course in the form of a bed of ventilated clay tiles in the plinth but, as noted in previous reports, rising damp is affecting the very base of the walls generally, and in particular the jambs of the entrance doorway at the south-west corner of the Nave as well as the bases of the columns of the arcade. The rate of deterioration seems very slight but should be reviewed in future inspections. Little can or need be done about this other than perhaps periodic brushing off of the loose material and any efflorescing salts that appear and careful preparation for any redecoration - this might include minor plaster repairs as well. Inevitably, in raising the levels of the approach paths to the Nave and Transept entrance doorways the damp-proof course has been bridged, but this does not seem to have caused or exacerbated problems of rising dampness in the longer term. As recommended in previous reports, the external ground level should be kept at least 150mm (6 inches) below the damp-proof course except at the entrances.

C) ROOF COVERINGS AND RAINWATER DISPOSAL:

All the main roofs are covered with red clay plain tiles. As suspected at the time, the problem of failure of the fixings of the tiling battens noticed on the west slope of the Transept roof in the 1999 inspection subsequently became apparent on the south slope of the Nave roof too, where it developed even more rapidly and became urgent. The diagnosis was confirmed by detailed investigation. Consequently, with aid from the English Heritage/Heritage Lottery Fund joint grant scheme for places of worship, in 2005 all the older roofs of the church (Nave, Transept, North Aisle and Heating Chamber) were stripped and re-covered with new Eternit 'Acme' Traditional Red Smooth single camber natural clay plain tiles on new battens and breather underlay. New clay ridge tiles were provided to these roofs at the same time. Selected salvaged tiles from these roofs were used to make good the delaminations and breakages on the roofs of the Chancel, Lady Chapel and Organ Chamber, which have not yet developed symptoms of batten fixing failure, being on early twentieth century extensions to the original building. These later roof coverings are now the oldest, and retain their concrete ridges.

The re-tiling contract, which was carried out by Matthew Charlton (Slaters) Ltd., of Hexham, also included repairs to the bell-cote, re-pointing of the chimney stack, building-up the west wall of the Choir Vestry to give the North Aisle/Heating Chamber tiling something to stop against, overhaul/renewal of rainwater gutter and downpipes and provision of a new gully and soakaway drain from the downpipe on the east side of the Choir Vestry.

This project has left the main roof coverings in very good order generally, so only a very few minor defects were noted in this inspection, mostly in the older tiling. They include: One tile slipping from the eaves of the Chancel roof into the valley gutter between it and the Lady Chapel; a couple of slipping or broken tiles in the north slope of the Chancel roof; several slipping or broken tiles on the Organ Chamber roof; One slipping or missing from each slope of the Nave roof; one unsecured at the west end of the eaves of the Heating Chamber roof. See appended inspection notes for details.

The lead-lined valley gutter between the Lady Chapel and the Chancel was seen but not entered on this occasion, due to limitations of the ladder. A considerable quantity of accumulated leaf fall, debris and soil - supporting vegetation - was visible then and should be cleared promptly if not attended to already. Along with the other lead-lined valleys on the building (notably those to either side of the Organ Chamber roof) it should be cleared and checked regularly. At its eastern outlet, where the lead is dressed around the corner of the Lady Chapel to tuck into the chase on the east wall of the chapel, a tear has developed and sealant should be applied to this to make sure water does not find its way in.

The bell-cote at the west end of the Nave roof underwent repair in 2005, including repainting of its timber elements, and appears to remain in good order.

The pointing to the various ridges and hips, and the mortar fillets and leadwork at the abutments of the tiling with the gables all seem sound.

The felting of the flat roof to the Choir Vestry dates from shortly before the 1989 quinquennial inspection. As commented in the last two reports, the standard of workmanship when it was laid seems to have been poor as it is badly blistered over quite large areas and appears to be coming unstuck at some of the joints. Nevertheless, it remains much as seen in 1999, is still fairly flexible and so should continue to serve adequately for the time being, given the quality of the rest of this part of the building and the use to which it is put. However, the 'Flashband' repair to the tear where it meets the eastern parapet, caused by structural movement, has now split and needs renewal (if not done already), and at the same time the split that has developed in the felt at the western abutment of this roof should be patched over too. The felt will need to be kept under observation and is likely to need total renewal in the foreseeable future if this structure is retained.

The plastic eaves gutter on the north side of the Choir Vestry is badly distorted but appears to be functioning adequately, although its downpipe could do with being re-connected to the gutter outlet. The timber fascia board on which this gutter is set could do with repainting soon and, although not necessary for its preservation, the gutter itself should be included for appearance's sake. All the other gutters and downpipes on the building are of cast iron, either overhauled or renewed in 2005. All seem to be in fair condition but some elements could do with repainting within the next year or two and a couple of runs seem to drain the wrong way - perhaps having had their brackets strained by sliding snow in the winter of 2009/10. It would be worth seeing if these runs can be re-adjusted at the time of the repainting.

At the time of the inspection several of the eaves gutters were found to be choked with leaf fall, soil and vegetation. Along with the various valley gutters these and their downpipes and gullies should be checked and cleared regularly - particularly important with there being so many trees around the building. The drainage channel alongside the ramped section of path leading to the Transept door also needs clearing out - its covers will have to be unbolted in order to do this.

D) WINDOWS AND DOORS:

As recorded in the last two reports, since the loss of that in the east window of the Chapel in 1986 the only stained glass in the church is that in the east window of the Chancel. This is quite a fine design by Heaton, Butler & Bayne of London, given in 1912 in memory of the late Vicar. It appears to remain in fair condition. This and the now clear-glazed east window of the Chapel are protected externally by galvanized wire guards which, unfortunately, have been taken over the whole window area on the outside surface of the wall, concealing the architectural form of the windows. As recommended in previous reports, a better arrangement should be considered when they come up for renewal in the future, such as the polycarbonate overglazing which has been installed on the rest of the windows of the church. The only slight drawback with this is the tendency for cobwebs to accumulate behind the polycarbonate sheeting, giving the windows an uncared-for look seen from the inside.

Also as mentioned in previous reports, some of the plain leaded windows have been re-glazed in recent years, and that at the west end of the North Aisle has been given an attractive arrangement of leading. The rest retain their original glazing of tinted glass in rectangular and diamond patterns of leading. Much of this remains in fair condition but the windows in the west and south walls of the Nave, presumably the oldest windows in the building, are in rather poor condition, the glass much discoloured and the leading buckled. They would probably be leaking during wind-driven rain were it not for the overglazing which is serving to deflect the weather as well as vandalism, thus effectively deferring the need for action. However, these windows should be reviewed in future inspections and considered for improvement if and when funds permit. The glazing to the windows in the south sides of the Transept, Chapel and Chancel and north side of the North Aisle is little better and could also do with renewal in due course - the attractive example in the west wall of the Aisle could be taken as a good precedent to follow. The rusting iron vent frames are causing a good deal of the buckling and should be removed or reproduced in non-ferrous metal in any re-glazing.

The external doors at the main entrance are in good condition, having been repaired and provided with an additional lock following an attempted break-in since the last report. The external door in the Transept dates from 1995, as this doorway had to be widened to provide an alternative emergency exit from the sub-divided interior. It too remains in good condition. The original door to the Transept was adapted, together with its frame, and re-used as the external door to the Choir Vestry. Here the feet of its frame are decaying so could do with joinery repair and the door is reported to jam in certain weather conditions - whether due to structural movement or simply expansion of the door itself is not clear.

The Heating Chamber door presumably dates from the fire damage reinstatement work of 1983, and seems to be a copy of its predecessor. It is a substantial door in good order. The galvanising of the metal louvre assembly provided to the Heating Chamber window in 1995 is

now exposed extensively as the paint flakes off and it should be re-painted (externally and internally) within the next year.

E) FLOORS AND INTERNAL FITTINGS AND FINISHES:

The floors almost throughout the building are of solid construction, with wood block to much of the main worship area and through into the Sacristy. The passageways have concrete surfacing whilst the Chancel, Sanctuary and most of the Lady Chapel have stone paving. The suspended timber flooring of the former choir stall areas on either side of the Chancel was replaced by concrete in the course of the 1995 alterations. The only exception is the westward extension of the Chancel floor level through into the east end of the Nave, which is of timber construction on top of the original solid flooring beneath. All is now covered by the carpet laid in 1995. As already mentioned, structural settlement has caused cracking and distortion of the floor slabs, with consequent disruption of the finishes but the worst sections were attended to before the carpets were laid and all remains serviceable.

At the time of the inspection the hatch in the raised timber flooring at the east end of the North Aisle was opened up for investigation of undue springiness nearby. Despite the discovery of corroded and weeping heating pipes no evidence of decay was found and it appeared that all that was needed was some re-fixing or additional support.

Quite extensive plaster repairs followed by general redecoration carried out in 1995 left the interior finishes in good condition. Following the roof re-covering project the Nave and Chancel ceilings were repainted in 2005 and some other areas - such as the North Aisle wall - have been touched up at various times. Apart from the minor effects of rising damp at the base of some of the walls and the structural crackings already mentioned all remains perfectly satisfactory in the main body of the church. Certain areas of plaster which appear to have been loosened by structural movement may need renewal prior to the next redecoration - these include patches under the bearings of the purlins on the west wall of the Nave, under the north end of the beam spanning between the Transept and Lady Chapel, above the arch on the north wall of the Transept and where the partitions meet the external wall in the small W.C. compartment.

The Choir Vestry/Store has not been included in recent redecorations and, as mentioned in previous reports, the fibreboard ceiling has been badly damaged by water penetration through the roof. In view of the state of this extension generally it may not be worth replacement.

Seasonal structural movements cause some of the internal doors to bind on the flooring and head frames from time to time and they may need further easing as and when this occurs.

Most of the internal fittings and furnishings seem to remain in fair condition. However, woodworm still appears to be active in the altar in the Lady Chapel (its plywood elements in particular), so it would be sensible to repeat the previous treatment in order to be absolutely certain that the outbreak has been eradicated. If that fails the altar would be best removed and a replacement sought (perhaps from another church in the diocese). More urgently, extensive

woodworm attack has become apparent in the plywood forming the enclosure around the organ and seems to have spread to some of the timber elements of the instrument itself. The infested plywood should be removed (along with that stored in the Choir Vestry/Store) if that has not been done already, and any minor attacks in surrounding woodwork treated with woodworm fluid.

F) INSTALLATIONS:

The **electrical** installation dates from a general re-wiring with P.V.C.-insulated cable in 1984, with substantial alterations using mineral insulated copper covered cable together with re-siting of the distribution equipment in the course of the 1995 re-ordering. At the same time new lighting was provided in the Meeting Room at the west end of the Nave. Shortly after the 1999 inspection the light fittings in the Chancel and east end of the Nave were replaced with metal halide fittings that lack any form of glare control and unfortunately, along with some of the 1995 fittings, are now failing. Replacement is being considered. Lighting in the Organ and Heating Chambers was not working at the time of the inspection - presumably simply failed lamps.

The installation was tested in June 2010 and a number of deficiencies were identified by the electrician, mostly to do with compliance with current standards. A very few more serious defects affecting safety (e.g. where circuit protection does not match wiring type or degree of risk) are more urgent (defined as categories 1 & 2 in the electrician's report) and should be rectified within the next six months if not attended to already. Some externally exposed cabling is of ordinary P.V.C. insulated cable which is not suitable without protection by conduit. Where conduit has been used for extending the cable to the replacement light fitting over the main entrance its bare white plastic is visually intrusive and should be painted out. The next test will be due in June 2015. The emergency lighting system should continue to be tested regularly. An intruder alarm system was also included in the 1995 installations.

The **lighting conductor** was upgraded (with a 'pulsar' unit) as part of the 2005 grant-aided roofing and general repair contract. It will be due for testing in 2015.

The **heating** system dates from the 1995 alterations project, and consists of a gas-fired boiler in the Heating Chamber with steel pipework serving fan convectors in the main spaces and radiators in the peripheral rooms on the north side. This system is reported to be effective in heating the building, particularly since the circulating pump was replaced recently, but the fan convectors are now very noisy. This is likely to be because they need servicing and it would be sensible to approach the local representative of the manufacturers (Dunham-Bush) to arrange this. The system is reported to be expensive to run and there is perhaps very little that can be done about this given the size of the building. However, insulation of the pipework within the Heating Chamber should be considered to reduce heat loss. The problem with the gas supply pressure to the boiler mentioned in the last report has been resolved since by running an additional feed pipe from the meter to the boiler. As mentioned above, in the course of the inspection the access hatch in the raised flooring at the east end of the North Aisle was lifted and some of the pipework thus revealed was found to be corroded and weeping. Replacement of the affected lengths is understood to have been carried out shortly afterwards.

As remarked in previous reports, the gas supply pipe rising up the plinth of the west wall of the Nave is unprotected.

The Transept and Lady Chapel have electric convectors, which are understood to heat these areas adequately.

The **plumbing** and **drainage** installations, dating from 1995, are generally in good order but the drain from the W.C. in the smaller toilet has blocked on occasion. At the time of the inspection a notice was displayed asking people not to use it but whether this is due to another drain blockage or merely that the toilet seat had come loose was not clear. The cast iron vent pipe rising up the north wall of the Aisle could do with repainting to inhibit the rust that is beginning to show at its base.

The **organ**, by J.J. Binns, Fitton & Hayley of Leeds, is reported to remain in good working order, and continues to be maintained by John Lightbown. However, as mentioned above it appears to have been affected by the woodworm infestation in the surrounding plywood and its timber elements should be treated with woodworm fluid - preferably by the organ tuner - if this has not been done already.

The **bell** fixings and fittings were checked and overhauled by a steeplejack as part of the 2005 repair contract.

G) MEMORIALS:

There are a number of plaques and items of furniture which constitute memorials. Foremost amongst these is the carved and 'gilded' oak reredos which, together with the east window, commemorates Revd. Edwin Stanley Sykes (vicar 1892-1912). The altar was given by Joan Slater in 1961. The 'gilding' on this latter is actually gold paint and could do with renewal - as well as cleaning off where it has encroached over the edges - and that on the reredos would also benefit from freshening-up in places. There is a second world war memorial, in oak, worked in with the panelling on the north wall of the Sanctuary, and the carved oak screens between the Chancel and the Chapel were given in memory of Reverend Sydney Wilton, vicar from 1912 to 1939. These and appear to remain in good and stable condition.

H) CHURCHYARD:

The grounds of the church do not constitute a graveyard. They are mostly given over to grass and remain well tended by the P.C.C. A considerable number of mature trees are ranged around the periphery - one of which, an Elm, is unfortunately dead and at the time of the inspection was awaiting removal. All should be checked over and attended to where necessary by a specialist at least once every five years, especially those out on the road boundaries.

The tarmac and gravel path surfaces remain satisfactory. The boundary fencing ranges from good to barely adequate but the main problem is the erosion and disintegration of the rubble stone boundary walling on the road frontages. A first phase of general consolidation and re-pointing was carried out in 2009 - completing the whole of the west side and round the south-west corner - but the rest of the southern run remains urgent. At one point the stonework has fallen out and this should be rebuilt as soon as possible to avoid progressive deterioration - perhaps accelerated by local schoolchildren.

SUMMARY AND PRIORITIES

A tremendous amount of excellent work has been carried out since the last inspection, despite limited resources, and the building remains in good order overall. Particular mention should be made of the re-tiling of the roofs of Nave, Transept, North Aisle and Heating Chamber together with various minor external repairs in a project grant-aided by English Heritage/The Heritage Lottery Fund in 2005. This dealt with the most serious of the problems identified in the last report.

The structural movements which re-awakened in 1995 are clearly linked to periods of prolonged dry weather and although they have not recurred to the same degree since they can be expected to do so in the future. However, the building is clearly responding in an elastic manner, and although not returning entirely to its original position after each episode can be regarded as safe and sufficiently stable to warrant no action unless extreme conditions cause it to move more seriously in future.

The most immediate concerns (if not dealt with already) are the outbreaks of woodworm in the Organ Chamber and in the Lady Chapel altar, the need to clear gutters, downpipes and gullies, the disintegration of the southern boundary wall and the failure of the lights fitting in Nave, Meeting Area and Chancel.

In the longer term, consideration might be given to re-glazing the south and west windows of the Nave and to possible replacement of the Choir Vestry.

Most of the other recommendations of this report comprise little more than routine maintenance. The following order of priorities sets out, in broad terms, the relative urgency of foreseeable repairs over the next five years. However, it is not a definitive programme of work and items further down the list could be brought forward if desired.

An indication of the range of likely cost, at present-day prices, is shown for each priority category. However, in many cases the scope of repair work is undefined and no measurements have been taken. The figures are no more than 'educated guesses' and should not be relied upon beyond the purpose of indicating the likely spending commitment to maintain the property to a high standard. V.A.T. is not included but is likely to be incurred on all repair work. No allowance has been made for inflation or for any professional fees.

I. OF UTMOST URGENCY:

- a) Removal of woodworm-infested plywood and treatment of affected but retained timbers in Choir Vestry/Store, Organ Chamber and Lady Chapel altar, if not done already.

(Range of likely cost: £50 - £250)

II. ESSENTIAL within the next SIX MONTHS:

- b) Repair of collapsing section of churchyard wall.

- c) Clearing and checking of rainwater gutters, downpipes, gullies, etc. (repeat twice a year).
- d) Minor repairs to roof tiling; 'Flashband' repairs to Choir Vestry/Store roof and sealing of split in specified lead valley lining.
- e) Implementation of 'category 1 and 2' recommendations of the electrical test report.
- f) Remedying problem with W.C. in small compartment, if not done already.

(Range of likely cost: £1,000 - £2,000)

III. ESSENTIAL within the next YEAR:

- g) Painting of rainwater gutters and downpipes, fascia board on Choir Vestry, Heating Chamber louvre grille, etc.
- h) Protection of incoming gas supply pipe.
- i) Servicing of fan convector units.

(Range of likely cost: £750 - £1,500)

IV. NECESSARY within the next TWO YEARS:

- j) Replacement or protection of P.V.C. electrical cables exposed externally.
- k) Repair of decayed feet of frame of external door to Choir Vestry.

(Range of likely cost: £100 - £250)

V. NECESSARY within the next FIVE YEARS:

- l) Keep symptoms of structural movement under observation; notify architect of any sudden changes; review at next quinquennial inspection.
- m) Checking and where necessary renewal of patches of plaster loosened by movement or rising damp.
- n) Testing of electrical and lightning conductor installations (2015).
- o) Inspection and lubrication of bell bearings; painting of its fittings.
- p) Re-filling (with flexible sealant) of gaps around partitions, etc., resulting from structural movement or timber shrinkage.
- q) Re-pointing of specified minor areas of external masonry.
- r) Completion of consolidation and re-pointing of boundary walling.
- s) Checking of churchyard trees by specialist.

(Range of likely cost: £5,000 - £10,000)

VI. FUTURE Repairs:

- t) Consider replacement of Choir Vestry; re-felting of its roof if retained.
- u) Consider re-glazing of west and south windows of Nave.

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CHARTERED ARCHITECT

QUINQUENNIAL REPORT

on the Parish Church of

SAINT NICHOLAS, HEDWORTH

UNDER THE INSPECTION OF CHURCHES MEASURE 1955 AND
THE CARE OF CHURCHES AND ECCLESIASTICAL JURISDICTION MEASURE 1991

DATE OF REPORT

10TH DECEMBER 2010

DIOCESE

DURHAM

ARCHDEACONRY

SUNDERLAND

DEANERY

JARROW

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