

**DIOCESE OF DURHAM**

**KIRK MERRINGTON PARISH CHURCH**

Church of St John the Evangelist  
1017/Dch182

Inspection of Churches Measure 1955  
(as amended 1995)

Architects Report made 13<sup>th</sup> April 2010

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This Report has been prepared on the basis of the 'Model Diocesan Scheme' recommendations for inspecting Parish Churches as published in 1995 by the Council for the Care of Churches 'CCC' in conjunction with the Ecclesiastical Architects & Surveyors Association 'EASA'.

## INSPECTION OF CHURCHES MEASURE 1955 (AS AMENDED 1995)

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## RECOMMENDATIONS

Where work is recommended a code number in brackets is entered in the right hand side page margin to indicate the priority: as follows:

- (1) Urgent works requiring immediate attention.
- (2) Work recommended to be carried out during the next 12 months.
- (3) Work recommended to be carried out during the Quinquennial period.
- (4) Work needing consideration beyond the Quinquennial period.
- (5) Work required to improve energy efficiency of the structures and services.
- (6) Work required to improve disabled access.

## **A. BACKGROUND AND GENERAL**

- A.1 The Church of St John is situated to the south east of the village of Kirk Merrington in the County of Durham, and is located near the centre of its site, which is about 2 acres in area.
- A.2 Ordnance Survey Map reference NZ 263 315.

## **GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF CHURCH**

- A.3 The original building dates from the 11<sup>th</sup> Century but in 1840 it was demolished and the present building constructed with the original stone and completed in 1850.
- A.4 The Church comprises a Chancel, nave and north transept. To the west of the Nave there is a gallery, access to which is by a timber stair. The organ is in the north transept.
- A.5 The entrance porch is to the west end of the south wall and the clergy vestry is off the entrance vestibule on the north side. A new toilet has been installed in the Lobby Store, the Vestry increased in size, and the Entrance Lobby reduced to suit the Vestry alterations.
- A.6 There is a very dominant squarely proportioned central tower over the crossing of the nave and north transept. Access to this tower is by a spiral stone staircase with an external door. Before the rebuilding of the Church, the parapet wall was castellated with a group of three ornamental pinnacles at each corner. The tower serves as a landmark for many miles around.
- A.7 The walls of the Church are of stone, plastered internally.
- A.8 The roofs over the nave and north transept are steeply pitched and covered with Westmorland slates. The roofs to the chancel and tower are flat pitched and covered with lead.
- A.9 Internally there is a central walkway with pews on either side. The floor underneath the pews is of boarding on joists and raised slightly above walkway level. The walkway is of stone flags.
- A.10 Heating is by means of a low-pressure hot water installation served by a gas boiler located in the vestry.
- A.11 Artificial lighting is by means of electricity from the mains.
- A.12 The oak chancel screen is of very fine Cosin style in excellent condition.

- A.13 The churchyard is enclosed by stonewalls and contains a mixture of trees. There is a new burial ground at the east end of the churchyard with enclosing wall and fence with access gate. The main churchyard shown on the location plan is closed and maintained by the local authority.
- A.14 The church is described in N Pevsner's 'The Buildings of England: County Durham Volume 1983' as:  
*ST JOHN THE EVANGELIST, standing on a high ridge. 1850-1 by G Pickering (GR), a copy of its predecessor, which was one of the most interesting Norman churches in the county, surrounded by a vallum of 1142-3. Tripartite, with aisleless nave, central crossing tower with twin bell-openings, and aisleless chancel of the same length as the nave. In 1850 a further chancel was added. The crossing tower rests on arches with pier-responds. Three-order S portal into the nave. Inside, the most interesting thing is the SCREEN, of typical Cosin forms, c. 1660-70 (cf. Bishop Auckland). (The church belonged to Darlington Dean and Chapter.) The sections above the dado are divided by balusters and have cusped leaf tracery. Above them runs a broad acanthus frieze, and on this is a crude version of the cresting on the Sedgefield chancel panelling with cherubs' head on the brackets. Of the same date and style the CHANCEL STALLS, independent of the screen, with poppy-heads and garlands at the ends, and the COMMUNION RAIL with slim balusters and poppy-head ends. The altar, like medieval ones, still placed a few feet away from the E wall.*
- A.15 The Church is Grade II\* listed status, a copy of the history status is attached to this report.
- A.16 An Archaeological Assessment of the church has been carried out by Peter F. Ryder dated June 1999, 21 pages, copies are held by the Diocese and Architects. A copy has been forwarded to the church.
- A.17 There are no Tree Preservation Orders or Ancient Monuments attached to the church.
- A.18 The Church is in a Conservation Area.

## **B SCOPE OF REPORT**

- B.1 All areas accessible were inspected from ground level and a view of the pitched and leaded roof areas was gained from the tower roof. Floor voids were not opened up for inspection or carpets lifted. High-level internal wall areas and roof timbers were not accessible for close inspection. Binoculars were used for roof inspections externally. Access onto the Chancel roof was not possible as ladders were not available
- B.2 There were no roof voids in the Church as construction is open to the underside of the roof boarding.
- B.3 The extent of the churchyard is shown on the location plan in the appendix.
- B.4 No manhole covers were visible or drains checked.
- B.5 See appendix 'c' in this report for a fuller description of the report limitations.

## **1.0 WORKS CARRIED OUT SINCE PREVIOUS REPORT**

Attached Information taken from the Church Log Book entries 2005 - 2009

## **2.0 GENERAL CONDITION OF CHURCH**

- 2.1 The church continues to be sound structurally, the interior has been redecorated and is well maintained and is a pleasing church for worship.
- 2.2 A number of roof repairs have been carried out in the last quinquennium as listed in the Log Book.
- 2.3 The Chancel roof was not inspected at close quarters and it is recommended that when access is available the Architect be invited to attend and make a separate inspection.
- 2.4 Tower roof outlet has been installed with mesh to prevent bird nesting and this has so far been successful.
- 2.5 The Chancel and Entrance Lobby stone floors are still indicating high levels of damp and should be monitored regularly to ensure they are allowed to breathe. The Chancel carpet underlay appears to be impervious with damp trapped under.
- 2.6 The North Transept interior gable wall behind the organ has been treated for damp; replastered and redecorated.
- 2.7 The tower timber floor has been replaced with new oak boards.
- 2.8 This report also covers items where continuing repair and annual maintenance are required and are listed elsewhere.
- 2.9 A new Disabled Toilet has been installed with 'Trench Arch' drainage, being the first installed for a Church in the Diocese.

## EXTERNAL INSPECTION

### 3.0 ROOF COVERINGS

- 3.1 Nave: Steeply pitched roof with gable and table stones at east end. The west end abutment is onto the central tower. Westmorland slates are laid in diminishing courses with flashings to tower abutments. The stone ridge tiles in satisfactory condition. The roof generally is showing signs of aging with a number of repaired and replaced slates, which are in non-matching Welsh slate. The south slopes have the majority of repairs being the exposed side to prevailing winds. There are several exposed lead soakers on the south side Nave roof at the Chancel Arch. This could be a source of water entry and should be repaired without delay. It was noted that there is no lead cover flashings to this length of roof, which should be considered as a matter of priority. Architect will prepare a specification

1

The north side of the nave includes the North Transept roof junction with valley gutters. This roof area was repaired and the valley releaded in 1999. The east side of the valley gutter has a restricted outlet at eaves level where the valley meets the kneeler of the gable wall. This has collected debris and vegetation at the outlet and needs to be cleared to prevent leakages, which has been previously experienced. It may be necessary to modify the outlet to improve drainage. The Architect will advise when access is available.

2

- 3.2 Gallery/Vestry: A similar high level steeply pitched roof to the Nave with west gable and tablestones. The east side abuts the central tower. Again Westmorland slates in diminishing courses. Noted a number of wired repairs indicating an aging roof with possible nail sickness. Some repairs in Welsh slates which gives a patchy appearance. Gutter repairs have been carried out previously.

- 3.3 North Transept: This roof, also steeply pitched in Westmorland slates has been repaired in the last quinquennium. Gutters were repaired and releveled in 1999. The east side sloping valley gutter continues to collect debris at the foot of the gable stones where there is an offset. This must be cleared annually to prevent a build up and blockage. See Item 3.1 above, which covers the same topic.

2

3.4 Chancel: The roof was re-leaded in 1986 following lead theft. No ladders were available for access onto the Chancel roof on the day of inspection, so viewing was restricted from the Tower roof.

- Leaf/ debris clearance should continue on an annual basis.
- Four temporary patch repairs to the lead work were noted on the south side slope at the east end and one long temporary strip on the north side 3<sup>rd</sup> bay from the east. These appear to be temporary patches and may cover a defect in the lead that requires permanent repair. A close rooftop inspection is strongly recommended when ladders can be made available.
- Add 'Smartwater' identifying liquid to all lead bays on Chancel Roof and display 'Smartwater' Warning Notice on Building/ Notice Board

1

#### **4.0 RAINWATER GOODS AND DRAINAGE**

4.1 Repairs/replacement gutters to the North Transept appear to be in good working order with no reports of leakage or internal signs of damp penetration. The downpipes on the north gable of the North Transept have loose fixings with perished bracket pins at the risk of falling. Both downpipes should be refixed with new plastic bobbins and galvanised pins.

4.2 The Chancel north side downpipe has a hole above a socket and should be renewed.  
There was a damp patch internally which approximated to the downpipe position but redecoration has now covered the stain.  
Gullies should be checked annually for discharge to ensure there are no blockages or build up of water at the wall foundation.

2

4.3 The Gallery west end roof gutters were repaired in the previous quinquennium and appear to be functioning satisfactorily.

4.4 Generally all gutters and downpipes require redecoration and the insides of gutters wire brushing and painted with bitumen paint.

2

- 4.5 Generally downpipes discharge into gulleys at ground level and appear to drain away to soakaways. The proximity of trees on the south side may indicate root invasion of the drainpipes below ground level and if this is the case relaying of drains may have to be considered. Initially a CCTV drain survey should be undertaken if gullies/ drains are blocked.
- 4.6 There are no manholes visible in the churchyard to give access to drains and in the event of drainage having to be opening up new access points for rodding are recommended.
- 4.7 An existing drain adjacent to the South Entrance has been repaired following blockage and root invasion. Other rainwater gullies should be checked following heavy rainfall to ensure water is discharging away from the building. 2
- 4.8 A new 'Trench Arch' biodegradable soil waste system has been installed in the Churchyard with Building Regulation approval.

**5.0 WALLS AND MASONRY**

- 5.1 There are no current active settlement cracks and the structure appears to be stable, apart from some minor hairline cracks in the tower, which should be repointed as a monitor of future movement. 3
- 5.2 The west gable wall upper level with tablestones was repointed in 1999 and the stone cross repaired and this is still in good order.
- 5.3 South Elevation: The entrance porch stonework continues to show deep erosion to part of the arch and jamb reveals. There have been some previous repairs to this stonework in render which ultimately should be replaced in stone, but only when further restoration is required. 4  
 There are six or seven carved voussoirs which are deeply eroded and will require replacement in due course and preferably within the next 5-10 years or when funds are available.  
 There are areas of masonry between the tower and chancel where some isolated stones have eroded in pockets and will need replacement together with areas of repointing. 3  
 At the southeast corner of the nave an old metal bracket, now redundant, should be removed and holes made good.

- 5.4 North Elevation: The north wall of the Chancel may contain old or original masonry according to Peter Ryders Archaeological Report & the listing description. There is a variety of different pointing, some sound and some soft and weak with pockets and crevices. An assessment and specification is required for a repointing programme, which may be phased to judge results at initial stages. The Architect will advise. 3
- The former lean-to boiler house abutment wall was repointed in a hard mortar following demolition of the boiler house. The mortar is unsatisfactory and should be replaced to an approved specification. 4
- 5.5 The projecting buttress at the internal corner of the North Transept and Chancel has dried out following gutter repairs. The interior plaster has been replaced and redecorated and is now clear of any damp.
- 5.6 A number of small 'air brick' openings at the base of walls have lost their protective grilles and are open to debris and vermin. It is recommended that traditional cast iron air grilles be installed. A variety of sizes and patterns are available from specialist suppliers. 2
- 5.7 Repointing to open joints in the plinth of the North Transept gable wall is required. 3

## **6.0 TOWER**

- 6.1 Access to the first tower chamber over the nave is by stone spiral stair from an external door. The door and locking appear to be satisfactory and secure. Clear rubbish behind door. 2
- The stairs need sweeping of accumulated stone dust and improved artificial light should be considered. Glazing repairs have been carried out to the narrow stair windows.
- The floor boarding has been renewed and is now in excellent condition. The wiring is in poor condition and requires urgent inspection or replacement. Additional lighting is recommended 1

- 6.2 From the first tower chamber floor is a timber ladder up to the belfry chamber, which is in satisfactory condition, but improved safety with handrail should be considered. The ladder is flexible because of its span but a midpoint fixing to the adjacent wall would give stability. 2
- The door at the top of the spiral stair appears to be weathertight.
- Existing settlement cracks are evident on east and west walls, which have previously been repointed up but are reopened in adjacent line and should now be repointed as a monitor for future movement. 3
- 6.3 The belfry chamber has a timber-boarded floor on timber beams and there is a timber bell frame in satisfactory condition. The bell wheels are damaged and in feeble condition and must not be swung.
- There are two bells but only one is rung by clapper, the bell is static.
- The bell was sounded and appears to be in good condition. Maintain moving parts of bell by lubrication. 2
- The working bell is rung at ground level at RHS of nave and is in satisfactory condition. The bells were inspected by Mr. Howard Smith on 18.05.2005 who reported that one bell was cracked. The promised report was not seen and recommendations are awaited. Consider repairs to bring second bell into ringing condition if funds can be found. 4
- There are new hardwood timber louvres with stainless steel mesh to the interior faces, which have been manufactured to a good standard by Foster Brothers.
- Walls are structurally sound except areas of repointing required to the northeast corner, which is deeply eroded and should be undertaken in the foreseeable future. A vertical crack over the south side window louvre requires repointing. 3
- Floorboarding previously soaked from the roof leakage appears to be satisfactory.
- 6.4 The tower roof was reroofed between 1989-94 and is still in excellent condition. Only three items require attention:
- The access door hinges onto the roof need lubrication and painting. 2
  - Small lengths of lead flashings to the north parapet wall needs repointing. 2
  - Redecoration to the centre metal post will be required in the quinquennium period. 3

- 6.5 There is a single lightning conductor downtape from the tower at the NW corner. This should be tested at least every 5 years to comply with British Standards. No details of a test were available. 2
- Protection to the conductor downtape should be considered at ground level to prevent tampering or theft.
- The British Standard for lightning conductors recommends two downtapes for towers; a second tape should be considered when funds allow.

## **7.0 EXTERIOR DOORS**

- 7.1 The main entrance door is a large single leaf door with arched head of heavy construction. The hinges are sturdy and sound and need occasional grease lubrication. There is no step and access for wheelchairs is satisfactory. 2
- The external boarded surface is stained and there are wide gaps between boards, which may need attention in the future if deterioration becomes evident. A wide gap under the door may allow driving rain in and could be prevented with a brush strip.
- 7.2 There is an external chancel door on the south side, which is not in use. The boarded door has wide gaps, which would benefit from cover laths to protect the open joints. 3
- Metal studs and decorative metalwork are satisfactory. It is understood that this door is to be used as an Emergency Exit and as such the following works should be undertaken: - **1.** Fill in keyhole with matching timber and add existing lock block for historic value. **2.** Supply timber wedge on retaining cord for security of latch/ locking. **3.** Weld finger dowel to latch for lifting operation. **4.** Add cast iron pull handle. **5.** Decorate step/ upstand in white emulsion for safety/ visibility. **6.** Note/ advise Churchwardens and Health & Safety file that this is an Exit Door for Emergency use. **7.** Ensure that there is a flat platform on the exit side of the door leading to safety and an external light is operable. **8.** Install brush strip at threshold to prevent rain ingress and vermin entry.
- 7.3 The external stair door and frame to the tower is on the north elevation and is in satisfactory condition but requires stain protection and hinge lubrication. 3

## **8.0 WINDOWS**

- 8.1 The windows externally are mainly protected with polycarbonate secondary sheeting or as with the chancel east windows are wire mesh protected. These all appear to be in satisfactory condition.
- 8.2 The tower and chancel south facing windows are unprotected but have metal saddles bars some of which are rusting and need protective coating. 2  
In due course the unprotected windows should be covered as a preventative measure even though there has been no damage to date.
- 8.3 The vestry window is glazed in wire mesh reinforced fibre resin type sheet, which appears to be a temporary measure and is out of keeping with the other windows. When funds allow the window should be reglazed with leaded lights and have outer protective sheeting to match others. Additional ventilation has been recommended by the Boiler Engineer and the window grille/new opening should be considered for high-level ventilation. Details to be approved by DAC. 3
- 8.4 A new stained glass window has been installed approximately 2 - 3 years ago in the east wall of the North Transept adjacent to the organ and in memory of Mr. Backhouse; an organist for many years. The artwork is of St Cecilia in modern style.

## **INTERNAL INSPECTION**

### **9.0 INTERNAL DOORS**

- 9.1 The lobby door leading into the nave is of large sturdy plank construction in good condition. Hinges should be lubricated periodically. 3
- 9.2 The Vestry and Toilet door are modern flush style with handles/latches.

### **10.0 GROUND FLOOR STRUCTURE**

- 10.1 The entrance lobby floor is stone flagged; some dampness appears to be inherent.
- 10.2 The vestry is carpeted and in good condition.

- 10.3 The nave aisles and chancel are carpeted in blue needle cord, which is in good condition.
- 10.4 The pews are on raised boarded floors and appear satisfactory.
- 10.5 The chancel has a new carpet following flood damage in 2002. The carpet is laid on breathable underlay and there appears to be no decay or mould since installation in August 2004. Note the previous carpet had mould growth. Advise Architect if situation deteriorates. The east end of the chancel has a stone floor, which is damp and requires monitoring. A carpet is laid under the altar and was noted to be damp under the underlay. 2  
 The lower steps and floor at the south side Priest's door are exposed stone and are damp. Continue to monitor.  
 A green/ damp patch was noted under the LHS altar rail, which may start rot in the rail base. A damp barrier should be considered to prevent deterioration. 2

## **11.0 INTERNAL FINISHES**

- 11.1 Vestry: The exterior wall was treated for damp and replastered in 1999. Damp on the north wall extending under the Gallery stair was repaired by Protim under guarantee on 20.11.2008
- 11.2 Store Room off Entrance Porch: There was rising damp in the SW corner that appears to have been treated with the Toilet installation works in 2009.
- 11.3 Nave: Some of the timber dado panelling is loose and should be refixed. 2  
 The entire interior walls and roof timbers were redecorated by P L Smith in 2009 and the appearance is much improved.
- 11.4 North Transept: Previous plaster disruption caused by water saturation from defective gutters on the east elevation has been replaced and there is no sign of further disruption. The north gable wall at high level over the organ was badly disrupted with flaking paint. The area has been hacked off and replastered by Messrs Protim in 2008 and appears to be good order.

- 11.5 Chancel: Exterior/priest door stone surround has surface decay.  
 Damp patches on north wall at mid and low levels have been decorated out and are not reappearing.  
 The stone memorial on the north wall of the Chancel continues to flake and decay caused by damp in the wall. This appears to be of long standing and could be arrested by specialist treatment/ or remounting.

## **12.0 FITTINGS, FIXTURES AND FURNITURE**

- 12.1 The pipe organ is located in the north transept and is made by E Wadsworth of Manchester 1886, has 2 manuals, 15 stops and was rebuilt in 1985 and is now maintained by Harrison & Harrison of Durham and is understood to be in good working order. The organ was locked and could not be inspected. Continue to maintain annually. 2
- 12.2 The pews are sturdy varnished softwood with fleur-de-lis gable ends, and sound.
- 12.3 The ancient carved chancel screen is impressive and continues to be in good condition. The gates require careful handling as the higher floor level now prevents the gates from closing. Any attempt to close the gates will cause damage so they must be fixed in an open position. In the Transept the Eden box pew contains four ancient tombstones - accompanying notes give historic details. 3  
 In the chancel an old decorative chest, carved pews, altar and altar rails, also two old decorative chairs are of some antiquity. All these items should be fully insured, photographed and recorded in the Church records/terrier if not already covered. The period altar rails have woodworm holes in one location but it is not known if this is active. For safety the affected area should be retreated with recommended fluid. 2
- 12.4 Pulpit: Softwood timber decorative panelled construction on timber base. The handrail is loose and should be secured. 3
- 12.5 Font: A memorial to G Holmes, stone bowl on pedestal, has decorative oak lid dated 1937, all in good condition and in use.
- 12.6 In the vestry: a safe is anchored to the concrete floor and is well secured. The period-carved oak linen cupboard has now been relocated to the back of the Nave due to re-ordering.

### **13.0 GALLERY**

- 13.1 This is located at the west end of the nave over the entrance lobby and vestry with access via an open stair off the nave. It is understood this is only used for storage. The gallery has a low barrier at the front edge and is not considered a safe height for public use.
- 13.2 The stair up to the Gallery is steep and has a single side handrail that does not appear to be at a safe height. If the Gallery is brought back into public use the stairs and gallery front should be upgraded for safe use.

4

### **14.0 NEW DISABLED TOILET & WASHROOM off ENTRANCE**

- 14.1 New disabled toilet and hand basin with grabrails installed in 2009 including new stainless steel sink and drainer for flower use. New extract fan installed and emergency call alarm with warning light. Recommended that a Warning Notice should be posted over the WC to prevent non-biodegradable products being flushed away. See 2.9 & 4.8  
As the toilet audible warning sound could not be heard in the church it is recommended that the electrician should check for any adjustment to increase volume.
- 14.2 Incoming electrics are located at the south side with switchgear at high level in a new cupboard.

### **15.0 SECURITY**

- 15.1 External doors appear to be adequately locked and there have been no reported break-ins.
- 15.2 Windows are out of reach and mostly protected - See 8.2.

### **16.0 HEATING INSTALLATION**

- 16.1 The former external lean-to boiler house was demolished and the basement infilled in 1994 by J Marshall & Partner.
- 16.2 The gas-fired boiler was installed prior to 1989 and is a Clyde Combustion O45 MK2 348,000 Btu's model installed by G Atkinson of Consett. Controls for the boiler are in the vestry store. The heating maintenance engineer has commented on poor ventilation. Proposals are awaited and details should be discussed with the Architect if affecting the building structure. See Church Log Book report 28.04.2005

2

The boiler is now maintained annually by Gas Force. Continue to maintain.

There are Dunham Bush convector heaters installed in the chancel and nave, and the air filters should be cleaned annually. 2

The fan motors should also be maintained. There are also radiators installed in the nave, see 11.0, where dado panelling is loose and requires refixing. 2

It is understood the heating is adequate and runs satisfactorily.

A new flue terminal was installed I 25.05.2009 following bird nest removal in flue.

## **17.0 ELECTRIC INSTALLATION**

17.1 The incoming electric cable is underground and rises on the external wall to the left of the entrance door and terminates in the store off the entrance lobby. There are no identification of fuses on the switch panel and should be marked up for future maintenance. 2

17.2 The pulpit light was should be checked and repaired if required.

17.3 Lighting is a combination of pendant fittings and tungsten luminaires to the altar, which will give a poor level of illumination. High-level fittings are difficult to replace. When funds allow improvement to illumination levels with a new heating scheme should be considered. 4

17.4 An electrical test was carried out in 16.11.2009 by Messrs Teasdale of Bishop Auckland but was a partial inspection and recommendations need to be addressed. Future tests should be maintained at 5 yearly intervals. 1

17.5 Check and upgrade lighting from the tower stairs to roof level and review the suspension cabling through the lower tower chamber floor to the Nave. 1

17.6 Lightning Conductor tested in February 2000. Details of test certificate required for Log Book and further test required at 5 yearly intervals. 2

17.7 An audio system upgrade was installed in Jan 2007 with new speakers; the old speakers are still in place but not in use.

## **18.0 FIRE PRECAUTIONS**

- 18.1 There are 3 extinguishers in the Church, all covered by annual maintenance and recently maintained in 2010. Continue to maintain annually.  
In the north transept a 2 kg carbon dioxide extinguisher is for electrical appliances, which should be wall mounted and accessible. 2

## **19.0 DISABLED PROVISION**

- 19.1 Access to the Church for disabled/wheelchair users appears to be satisfactory. At the entrance gate assistance is required to open the closed gates. There are no steps into the Church, which would present problems to wheelchair users. Access within the Church is satisfactory for disabled users.
- 19.2 The church should commission and 'Access Audit' under the terms of the Disability Discrimination Act. 2  
Hearing and sight disablement should also be considered under the Act.

## **20.0 BATS**

- 20.1 There are no records of bat roosting within the Church.

## **CURTILAGE**

### **21.0 CHURCHYARD**

- 21.1 The churchyard is closed and grass is cut by the Local Authority. Damage has been noted to headstones caused by cutting equipment and the Authority's contractors should be advised that more care should be exercised particularly as some of the headstones are ancient and valuable. 2  
A new churchyard located beyond the existing one at the east end has now been consecrated.
- 21.2 The tarmac path from gate to church was resurfaced by Sedgefield Borough Council and is in good condition.
- 21.3 There are a variety of established trees: sycamore, ash, holly, beech, silver birch, alder, and some new planting presumably by the Local Authority. A tree survey is recommended to ensure that the existing stock is safe or in need of any surgery. 3

As the Local Authority are responsible for the Closed Churchyard, they should advise and undertake any tree work but Chancellor approval is needed before any work undertaken.

- 21.4 Boundary walls to the churchyard are random rubble stone, some with flat copings, and in satisfactory condition. The south boundary wall adjacent to the road is a partial retaining wall and uneven and bulging in places caused by tree roots. This should be monitored to ensure the walls are secure or repairs undertaken. This may be a Local Authority responsibility. 3
- 21.5 The entrance gate at the west end are metal and in need of redecoration. The hinged gates would benefit with lubrication to keep the gates secure.
- 21.6 The church Notice Board has been installed at the churchyard gate is in good order.
- 21.7 The churchyard seat installed on the north side of the Chancel has rot in the seat and is need of repair. 2

## **22.0 CHURCH LOG BOOK**

- 22.1 This was inspected and noted to be an excellent and comprehensive record of maintenance and repairs with details of contractors/suppliers and costs. Continue to record as before. 2

## **23.0 PREVIOUS REPORTS**

1969 June	Cordingley & McIntyre
1974 July	AO Lee, Hayton Lee & Braddock
1979 July	AO Lee, Hayton Lee & Braddock
1984 April	AO Lee, Hayton Lee & Braddock
1989 April	AO Lee, Hayton Lee & Braddock
1994 April	JB Kendall, HLB Architects
1999 November	JB Kendall, HLB Architects
2004 November	JB Kendall, HLB Architects

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **URGENT WORKS REQUIRING IMMEDIATE ATTENTION: Category 1**

	<b><u>Item</u></b>	<b><u>Budget Cost</u></b> <b>£</b>
- Repair south nave roof abutment with chancel gable install lead cover flashing under table stone	3.1	700
- Provide high level access for chancel roof inspection by architect, and add 'Smartwater' to leadwork and display warning notices	3.4	250
- Carry out recommendations of Electrical Test including wiring in Tower. Check that fuses are identified on switch panel	6.1, 17.1 17.4 & 17.5	150

### **WORK RECOMMENDED TO BE CARRIED OUT DURING NEXT 12 MONTHS:**

#### **Category 2**

	<b><u>Item</u></b>	<b><u>Budget Cost</u></b> <b>£</b>
- Clear debris from north transept east side valley outlet and consider modifying outlet to prevent build up of debris	3.1 & 3.2	50
- Renew holed downpipe to north side of chancel	4.2	200
- Redecorate all gutters and downpipes and ensure that chancel downpipes are painted with anti climb paint at high level to prevent access to the chancel roof	4.4	2000
- Check gullies for discharge of rainwater following heavy rainfall, clear gulley traps of silt/ debris and flush gullies to test for discharge flow	4.7 & 9.5	DIY
- Install traditional cast iron gratings to ventilation openings at wall bases. Include for decoration of gratings before installation	5.6	500
- Sweep Tower stairs of stone dust and debris	6.1	DIY
- Fix ladder at first stage of Tower to adjacent wall to stabilise	6.2	DIY
- Maintain moving parts of bell and ringing mechanism with approved lubricant	6.3	DIY
- Lubricate Tower door hinges/ painting	6.4	DIY
- repoint lead flashing to North side of roof upstand in flexible caulk	6.4	DIY
- Retest Lightning Conductor every 5 years and obtain Certificate	6.5 & 17.6	100
- Attend to gaps in entrance door boards and add brush strip to inside face to prevent draughts/ water entry	7.1	DIY

-	Treat rusted saddle bars of south windows with specialist rust treatment paint and redecorate in matt black	8.2	DIY
-	Add polycarbonate or stainless steel mesh protection to windows when funds allow	8.2	Obtain Quotes
-	Continue to monitor damp floor in chancel	10.5	DIY
-	Install damp proof course under LHS Altar rail to prevent rot	10.5	150
-	Refix loose timber dado panels in Nave	11.3	100
-	Continue to maintain organ as required	12.1	200
-	Treat woodworm affected timber with specialist insecticide – Altar rails etc	12.3	DIY
-	Continue to maintain gas boiler and obtain Certificate	16.2	Maintenance Contract
-	Continue to maintain Fire Extinguishers	18.1	Maintenance Contract
-	Consider compliance with Disability Discrimination Act including Access Audit and Health & Safety Requirements	19.2	DIY
-	Consider Health & Safety of public in relation to unstable headstones in Churchyard, consult with Local Authority who maintain the Churchyard	21.1	DIY
-	Repair Churchyard seat which is rotten and could be a hazard	21.7	250
-	Continue to update Church Log Book Records	22.1	DIY

**WORK RECOMMENDED TO BE CARRIED OUT DURING NEXT 5 YEARS:**

**Category (3)**

	<b><u>Item</u></b>	<b><u>Budget Cost</u></b>	
		<b>£</b>	
-	Repoint masonry settlement cracks in Tower and eroded NE corner as a monitor of movement. Record date of pointing in wet mortar. Use lime mortar only to Architects specification (Include other Repointing Work)	5.1, 6.2 & 6.3	-
-	Remove redundant metal brackets in nave and repoint (Include other Repointing Work)	5.3	-
-	Prepare a programme of Repointing north chancel wall etc, seek grant funding & obtain Architects & DAC advice	5.4	200
-	Plinth repointing required. Include in overall works	5.7	-
-	Redecorate metal stays and flag post base on Tower roof	6.4	DIY or 100
-	Repair, maintain Chancel external door and		

upgrade for emergency use. See 8 recommendations		
- Maintain Tower/ Access doors	7.2	250
- Reglaze Vestry window with opening ventilation light and traditional leaded lights to match existing	8.3	2000
- Lubricate internal doors periodically	9.1	DIY
- Secure loose handrail to Pulpit	12.4	DIY
- Local Authority to advise of any tree work required	21.3	LA
- Churchyard walls to be maintained by Local Authority now a "Closed Churchyard" DAC approval of any work needed	21.4	LA

**WORK TO BE CONSIDERED BEYOND 5 YEARS: Category 4**

	<u>Item</u>	<u>Budget Cost</u> £
- Plan to renew eroded Voussoirs (Arched stones over the Entrance door) obtain costs to identify a building fun/ target	5.3	Obtain Quotes
- Replace unsatisfactory cement pointing to north wall of Nave. Include in repointing programme of work. See Category 3 item 5.4	5.4	-
- Obtain details/ recommendations of Bell Advisor and estimate of costs	6.3	-
- Consider upgrading stair as part of Gallery Refurbishment Scheme if funds allow	13.2	-
- Consider relighting scheme based on high efficiency, long life fittings. When funds allow. Specialist advice will be required	17.3	-

**WORK RECOMMENDED TO IMPROVE ENERGY EFFICIENCY: Category 5**

	<u>Item</u>	<u>Budget Cost</u> £
None		

**WORK REQUIRED TO IMPROVE DISABLED ACCESS: Category 6**

	<u>Item</u>	<u>Budget Cost</u> £
- Consider requirements of DDA Act	17.1	DIY

**NOTE**

Churchwardens should be aware of their responsibility under the Care of Churches and Ecclesiastical Jurisdiction Measure 1991, which included guidance to routine maintenance and inspection of Church property. 'A Guide to Church Inspection and Repair' published by the Council for the Care of Churches can be obtained from SPCK bookshops.

## APPENDIX

### a GENERAL

This report is not a specification for the execution of works and must not be used as such. It is a general report only as required by the Inspection of Churches Measure 1955.

The Architect has indicated in it such maintenance items, if any, which may safely be carried out without professional supervision.

Conservation and repair of Churches is a highly specialised subject if work is to be carried out both aesthetically and technically in the best manner, without being wasteful in expenditure. It is, therefore, essential that every care is taken to ensure that no harm is done to the fabric or fittings and when the Parochial Church Council is ready to proceed it should instruct the Architect accordingly, when he will prepare specifications and schedules and arrange for the work to be carried out by an approved Contractor under his direction.

Costs on much of the work or repairing Churches cannot be accurately estimated because the full extent of damage is only revealed as work proceeds, but when the Architect has been instructed to prepare specifications he can obtain either firm prices or considered approximate estimates, whichever may be appropriate.

The Architect will be glad to help the Parochial Church Council complete an appeal application to a charitable body if necessary, or to assist in applying for the essential Faculty or Archdeacon's Certificate.

### b. PRIORITIES

Where work has been specified as being necessary in the preceding pages, a code number in brackets, from 1 to 6, has been inserted in the Margin indicating the degree or urgency of the relevant works as follows:

- (1) Urgent works requiring immediate attention
- (2) Work recommended to be carried out during the next 12 months
- (3) Work recommended to be carried out during the Quinquennial period.
- (4) Work needing consideration beyond the Quinquennial period.
- (5) Work required to improve energy efficiency of the structure and services.
- (6) Work required to improve disabled access.

c. SCOPE OF REPORT

The Report is based on the findings of an Inspection made from the ground and from other easily accessible points, or from ladders provided by the Parochial Church Council, to comply with the Diocesan Scheme under the Inspection of Churches Measure 1955.

It is emphasised that the inspection has been purely visual and that no enclosed spaces or inaccessible parts, such as boarded floors, roof spaces, or hidden timbers at wall heads have been opened up for inspection. Any part which may require further investigation is referred to in the appropriate section of this Report.

d. CLEANING OF GUTTERS etc

The Parochial Church Council is strongly advised to enter into an annual contract with a local builder for cleaning out the gutters and downpipes twice a year.

e. POINTING AND MASONRY

Wherever pointing is recommended, it is essential that the procedure in item (a) of this appendix be adhered to as without proper supervision; much harm can be done to the fabric by incorrect use of materials and techniques.

f. HEATING INSTALLATION

Subject to any comments to the contrary in Section 21.0 of this Report, the remarks in this Report are based only upon a superficial examination of the general condition of the heating installation, particularly in relation to fire hazards and sightliness. The installation and maintenance of any oil-fired equipment should be in accordance with current editions of the British Standards Code of Practice CD 3002 and British Standards BS799.

NB: A proper examination and test should be made of the heating apparatus by a qualified engineer each summer, prior to the start of the heating season and the report of such examination should be kept in the Church Log Book.

The Parochial Church Council is strongly advised to consider arranging a regular inspection contract.

Wherever practicable, subject to finances, it is recommended that the installation be run at a low setting throughout the week, as distinct from

being 'ON' during services only, as constant warmth has a beneficial effect on the fabric, fittings and decorations.

g. ELECTRICAL INSTALLATION

Any electrical installation should be tested every quinquennium and immediately if not done within the last five years (except as may be otherwise recommended in this Report) by a competent electrical engineer or by the Supply Authority and an insulation resistance and earth continuity test should be obtained on all circuits. The engineer's test report should be kept with the Church Log Book.

Where no recent report or certificate of inspection from a competent electrical engineer (one who is on the Roll of Approved Contractors issued by the National Inspection Council for Electrical Installation Contracting) is available, the comments in this Report are based upon a visual inspection made without instruments of the main switchboard and of sections of wiring selected at random. Electrical installation for lighting and heating, and other electrical circuits, should be installed and maintained in accordance with the current editions of the Institution of Electrical Engineers Rules and the more specific recommendations of the Council for the Care of Churches, contained in the publication "The Lighting of Churches".

h. LIGHTNING CONDUCTORS

As a defective conductor may attract lightning, the lightning conductor should be tested every quinquennium in accordance with the British Standard Code of Practice (current edition) by a competent electrical engineer and the record of the test results, conditions and recommendations should be kept with the Church Log Book.

Conductors on lofty spires and other not readily accessible positions should be closely examined every ten years, particularly the contact between the tape and the vane rod or finial. If the conductor tape is without a test clamp, one should be provided above ground level.

j. MAINTENANCE BETWEEN INSPECTIONS

Although the Measure requires the Church to be inspected by an Architect every five years it should be realised that serious trouble may develop between surveys if minor defects such as displaced slates and leaking pipes are left unattended.

k. FIRE INSURANCE

The Parochial Church Council is advised that the fire insurance cover should be periodically reviewed to keep pace with the rising cost of repairs.

At least one fire extinguisher should be kept in an easily accessible position in the Church, together with an additional extinguisher of the foam or CO2 type where heating apparatus is oil fired.

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