

DIOCESE OF DURHAM

ST. JOHN THE EVANGELIST

ROOKHOPE

1128/Dch243

Inspection of Churches Measure 1955
(as amended 1995)

ARCHITECTS REPORT No.10
Made 16 September 2011

Archdeaconry of Auckland
Deanery of Stanhope
Incumbent: Reverend Susan E Kent

J B Kendall Dipl Arch RIBA AABC
Inspecting Architect
HLB Architects
Stockton Business Centre
70 Brunswick Street
Stockton on Tees
TS18 1DW
Tel: 01642 345174
Fax: 01642 345175
Email: info@hlbarchitects.com

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)

INDEX

- A: Background and General
- B: Scope of Report

- 1. Works Carried out Since Previous Report
- 2. General Condition of Church

EXTERNAL INSPECTION

- 3. Roof Coverings
- 4. Walls & Structure
- 5. Exterior Doors
- 6. Windows

INTERNAL INSPECTION

- 7. Roof Structure, Ceilings
- 8. Internal Doors and Panelling
- 9. Ground Floor Structure
- 10. Internal Finishes
- 11. Fittings, Fixtures and Furniture
- 12. Heating Installation
- 13. Electric Installation
- 14. Vestry
- 15. Security
- 16. Disabled Provision
- 17. Bats

CURTILAGE

- 18. Churchyard
- 19. Log Book
- 20. Previous Quinquennial Reports

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 village of Rookhope is on a minor road from Eastgate on the A689 leading to Blanchland. The Church of St. John is situated on a side road just outside the Village to the South. The site is surrounded on three sides by farmland having a steep slope from east to west
- A.2 Ordnance Survey Map reference NY 940 431.

GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF CHURCH

- A.3 The general layout is a simple rectangle with Nave, Chancel and Sanctuary in line, an organ chamber and Vestry in the south east and an entrance porch at the south west end of the Nave. At the west end of the Nave is the Baptistry with a stone font.
The Nave and Choir together measure approx. 15.5 metres by 6.5 metres and the Sanctuary 3.6 metres by 3.3 metres.
- A.4 The walls are of stone which were originally plastered internally but which were later hacked clean of plaster and the stonework exposed. Plastered walls however were retained in the Vestry and along the south side of the organ chamber.
- A.5 The floors are all solid. The Nave has woodblocks under the pews and stone paving to the remainder. The Vestry and Sanctuary are tiled in a neat decorative design. The Vestry has a cement concrete screed laid on a waterproof membrane.
- A.6 The roofs are of open timbered construction with roof trusses, rafters and boarding showing. The roof covering is of Westmorland slates.
- A.7 There is the remains of an underground Boiler House at the north west corner.
- A.8 Heating in the Nave is by means of two calor gas heaters with balanced flues and mobile calor gas heaters.
The original cast iron heating pipes have been removed.
Two gas bottles are stored in the open immediately east of the porch entrance and remain intact.
- A.9 Artificial lighting is by means of electricity from the mains by overhead cable.
- A.10 Listing Status - The Church is Listed Grade II from 5 June 1987, is not in a Conservation Area, and has no Tree Preservation Order attached to it.
- A.11 Pevsner: 'Buildings of England – County Durham' quotes
"ST JOHN. Built by Caroe and Passmore, 1905 (GR), 'in moorland style' using stone from the demolished church of 1822-4. Long and low, nestling into the hillside with an odd roof-end detail."

B SCOPE OF REPORT

- B.1 The inspection covers the Church Nave, Chancel, Vestry building exterior and churchyard. The roof areas were viewed with binoculars.
- B.2 This report is based on findings of an inspection made on 16 September 2011 from ground level.
- B.3 There were no floor voids or ceiling voids that could be inspected. The floor is of solid construction and the ceiling is the underside of the roof construction.
- B.4 There is one manhole/ well cover to the south of the entrance which could not be lifted.
- B.5 See Appendix 'c' in this report for a full description of the limitations of the report.

1.0 WORKS CARRIED OUT SINCE PREVIOUS REPORT

Advised by Churchwarden.

- Electrical Inspection carried out by R Lightfoot at £250. Repairs undertaken
- Fire Extinguishers inspected 4 May 2011
- Boiler House door secured
- West window panel repaired
- Votive candle stand installed

2.0 GENERAL CONDITION OF CHURCH

- 2.1 This simple church continues to be well cared for and is generally sound but in need of essential repairs. Roof repairs are needed particularly at the west end Belcote and the Vestry where leakage has been experienced. There have been some minor settlements at the North West corner previously recorded which was pointed but has re-cracked on the same line indicating active settlement.

EXTERNAL INSPECTION

3.0 ROOF COVERINGS

- 3.1 The roof is dual pitched at approx. 35° with gables at east and west ends. The Vestry on the south side forms a projecting transverse gable with dual pitch roof with valleys that are leaded. The entrance porch also on the south side forms a small projection with dual pitch roof and gable.

- 3.2 Slates are Westmorland to diminishing courses which have been repaired and replaced over the years but still offer a sound weather covering. The Porch roof ridge has loose slates at the south east corner and a repair is needed urgently. 2

- 3.3 A distinctive feature of the roof gables is the overlaid stone edging to the gable tops which is a novel device to stabilise the verge slates and appears to be effective if somewhat rustic. The stone edgings are held in place at the lower end by large iron cramps which are anchored in the wall thickness and penetrate the slate coverings. The west end, north side gable stone edgings are unstable and have caused the iron cramp to bend which has resulted in the stonework dislodging. The area should be opened up and restored as this is the location of leakage as seen on the inside ceiling boarding. 1

The other cramps should also be examined and checked at close quarters. The Vestry SE corner cramp was previously noted to be open at the slate face and this could have been a source of water entry, however there is no sign of leakage internally at this visit.

The west gable roof junction at ridge has a daylight gap seen internally, which allows rainwater entry on occasions. Seen externally, there is a mortar flaunching which appears to have separated from the back of the Belcote, leaving a vulnerable gap. This should be repaired without delay. 1

- 3.4 The North side of the Nave and Chancel roof has a covering of lichen growth, mostly at the west end, which should be cleaned off to prevent water retention. This is caused by the overhanging tree, but it would be unfortunate to lose this asset. Repeat cleaning off will be required in future years. 2
- 3.5 The leaded valley gutters to the Vestry roof have been temporarily covered with a bitumous coating and was showing signs of leaking at the recent visit. There appears to have been further repairs but the recommended action is to renew both lead valleys and re-roof the associated areas. 1
- 3.6 The stone chimney rising out of the Vestry roof ridge is in good condition and the lead flashings at roof level appear to be satisfactory but should be renewed with the Vestry roof repairs.
- 3.7 The chimney on the west gable from the former boiler house is now redundant but is an important feature and should be retained. There are signs of early decay which require attention and weather protection. Some re-pointing to the stone shack is required and lead flashings are required to replace the cracked mortar haunching at the roof abutments. The chimney saddle top has some open joints which will be allowing decay to the structure and should be examined at close quarters and repairs undertaken as required. 2
- 3.8 There is a small Belcote projecting from the west gable at high level formed in timber on brackets. The south side Belcote roof requires attention and the timberwork requires a stain preservative. 2
The single bell requires repair. Check bell rope. 2
- 3.9 The slate roof is generally in good condition with just the odd slate that requires refixing. See South side Nave.
- 3.10 The Vestry roof SE corner continues to show signs of slippage with attention required to gutter and downpipe.
- 3.11 There are cast iron gutters to all the roofs, which require redecoration and repair. The NE corner of the roof gutter requires checking where previously leaking. 2
- 3.12 There are no gutters to the porch roof and this appears to be causing no difficulty.
- 3.13 Rainwater downpipes discharge into an open stone trough at the perimeter wall face and this appears to drain away satisfactorily with the landfall.
- 3.14 The northeast Nave roof verge has dropped and requires renewal. 2
- 3.15 Repair/ replace cracked downpipe to east side of Porch 2

3.16 Repair rotten verge boards and redecorate all. 2

4.0 WALLS AND STRUCTURE

4.1 The walls are solidly built in random rubble with large quoins at corners, windows and door openings. Generally masonry is in good condition, little sign of erosion and well pointed, apart from the West Gable North side mentioned under 2.1

4.2 There has been settlement of the structure at the north west corner where a basement level boiler house once stood but the walls and roof were removed many years ago. There remains a depression in the ground at the north west corner and this is possibly the cause of the settlement now seen in the west and north walls. The full height vertical crack on the left of the west gable and the vertical crack below the right hand side and centre windows on the west show signs of active settlement and should be repointed with special attention to the NW full height crack. 2

4.3 The three west end lancet windows have an area of weathered masonry below each cill caused by water runoff from the glazing. It is recommended that there is repointing to the eroded stone. 2

4.4 The four windows on the north side of the Nave each display some minor settlement above and below on both side and these cracks should be carefully repointed. 2

4.5 There is also a minor vertical settlement crack below the south side east gable window which requires repointing. 2

5.0 EXTERIOR DOORS

5.1 The main entrance door is well protected under the entrance porch. The door is softwood framed and boarded and is in sound condition. The latch is stiff and needs lubricating and the hinges need oiling. Locking is secure and from the inside. The outer gate to the porch has now been removed. 2

5.2 The Vestry door has been painted in black gloss and is peeling and the bottom appears to be cracked or decayed and should be restored. The lower strap hinge is perished and should be repaired or renewed with a matching hinge. The bottom boards are rotting and the inside doorjamb to cill joint requires repair. 2

6.0 WINDOWS

6.1 All windows are leaded and have metal grilles externally. Only the east end windows which are figured glass dated 1905 have metal guards and these are in a state of advanced decay.

- 6.2 The glazing is now showing signs of decay and needs repair as follows:
- All metal grilles require redecoration including rust treatment 2
 - The centre west gable window has some missing leadwork and needs repair and the upper panel is distorted and should be releaded. 2
 - One of the north Nave windows with opening light is distorted and needs releading/ repair 2

INTERNAL INSPECTION

7.0 ROOF STRUCTURE

- 7.1 There are three arched trusses each with a collar tie in stained softwood. There is a single purlin to each pitch, which is diagonally braced from the wall plate. Rafters and boarding are exposed internally and was restrained approximately 40 years ago. The timbers are of generous proportions and there is no sign of distress or water entry. It was not possible to make a close inspection of the roof internally.

8.0 INTERNAL DOORS AND PANELLING

- 8.1 There is a Vestry door which is in satisfactory condition but the latch requires lubricating. 2
- 8.2 There is no panelling or dado.

9.0 GROUND FLOOR STRUCTURE

- 9.1 The floors are on solid construction with woodblocks under pews which are satisfactory. The central aisle is stone flagged and part overlaid with new carpet. The flags are slightly delaminated with age but are still serviceable. There is carpet covering in the Vestry. There are quarry tiles in the Choir and Chancel which are in good condition.

10.0 INTERNAL FINISHES

- 10.1 The Nave and Chancel walls are stone-faced in random pattern and appear to be sound. The Vestry and Lobby are plastered and records indicate were last decorated in 1989. The walls are now showing signs of damp penetration from the leaking roof valleys etc previously noted. It may be necessary to replaster some of the wall areas depending on the plaster condition. 3
- Replastering should be the Architects specification and not using lightweight gypsum the ceiling is showing sign of leakage over the Vestry external door. 2
- Redecorations should use breathable products, either Limewash or matt emulsion. 2

11.0 FITTINGS, FIXTURES AND FURNITURE

- 11.1 Chancel: Oak altar of sturdy construction is satisfactory. Oak altar rails, well polished but loose fixings and will need securing in due course. The Reredos is painted and gilded in good condition. A large Bishops upholstered chair with wooden back and decorative piercing.
- 11.2 Choir: Contains small pipe organ with makers name Cassons Patent: The Positive Organ Co. Ltd of London, and is understood to be in good working order apart from 2 notes which 'stick'. This should be maintained regularly. 3
There is a brass eagle lectern dated 1903. The pulpit on the north wall has a stone base with timber front and is in sound condition. The oak pews are in satisfactory condition.
- 11.3 Nave: Contains polished pine pews in good condition. A stone font is located at the west end centrally and has an oak canopy lid. The electronic organ is now a Technics model SXE11L and is understood to be in good order. The altar frontal cupboard is located at the rear of the Nave.
- 11.4 Vestry: Safe is in use and satisfactory.

12.0 HEATING INSTALLATION

- 12.1 There are two installed calor gas fired room heaters fitted with external horizontal flues and are understood to be in working order with earth wiring installed. The calor gas cylinders are stored on the east side of the porch and are secured. These heaters must be checked annually by a Corgi installer. 2
- 12.2 There remain the old lead vent pipes of the former heating installation at the west end and in the Vestry, these should be removed and the holes made good. 2
- 12.3 There is an old header tank and overflow pipe in the Vestry from the previous heating system now removed, so the tank, its supports and pipes should be removed. 2
- 12.4 There are two fire extinguishers in the Church:
- In the Nave is a 9-litre water extinguisher. New in 2005
 - In the Vestry is a 2kg multipurpose powder extinguisher installed 2005/06
- Both these extinguishers were checked in May 2011. Extinguishers must be checked annually and instructions made available for use and location.

13.0 ELECTRICAL INSTALLATION

- 13.1 Electricity enters the Church from overhead cables at the Vestry gable and terminates in the Vestry Lobby at high level where the main switch and distribution panel are located. Previous reports refer to a complete rewiring in 1986, however some new miniature circuit breakers (MCB's) are installed at the distribution board indicating recent work. Exposed cable seen inside is PVC and a 9-gang switch plan for lighting appears to be recent work. The installation has been checked by R Lightfoot recently.
- 13.2 Lighting in Nave comprises 8 no. traditional glass fittings with energy saving bulbs. 2 o. reflector fittings in the Chancel require attention or bulbs changing.
- 13.3 Externally a green earth from the Vestry window is presumably linked to the distribution board.
- 13.4 The electrical installation should be checked 5 yearly by a qualified electrician and a record kept in the church 'Log Book'. There is no lightning conductor.

14.0 VESTRY

- 14.1 There is no running water piped to the church but a plastic tank at the external NW corner collects rainwater from the roof and is used for flowers.
- 14.2 The Vestry contains a built-in cupboard and old fireplace
- 14.3 there is a safe by Cartwright and Sons for valuables
- 14.4 The plastered ceiling has a stain and probably relates to the leaking roof valley reported at the last inspection. Redecoration recommended. Part of the ceiling plaster at Vestry Entrance damaged by leakage. Repairs outstanding. 2
- 14.5 Dampness to the Vestry walls is referred to elsewhere. 2

15.0 SECURITY

- 15.1 Security of doors appears to be satisfactory

16.0 DISABLED PROVISION

- 16.1 Access for disabled users is via the Vestry door where fewer steps are an obstacle. A ramp may be required for wheelchair users. 6

17.0 BATS

17.1 There were no reports of bats roosting.

CURTILAGE

18.0 CHURCHYARD

18.1 The churchyard is entirely grassed with no burial or headstones recorded. The cemetery is on the approach road into Rookhope on the west side.

18.2 The churchyard boundaries are defined by dry stonewalling in traditional construction – one or two areas are bulging and need attention to repair. 3

18.3 The metal entrance gates will need redecoration 2

18.4 The groundsmans store at the southeast corner is in need of some attention.

18.5 The gravel path leading from the entrance gate to the church is gravel covered and in good condition.

18.6 New church noticeboard displays The Anglican/Methodist LEP and has been erected at the west end of the churchyard.

19.0 LOG BOOK

19.1 The logbook should be kept up to date annually with records of repairs and maintenance and costs incurred. 2

20.0 PREVIOUS INSPECTION REPORTS

The following previous reports are on file:

1	June 1959	Donald McIntyre FRIBA
2	August 1964	Donald McIntyre FRIBA
3	June 1974	Alan O Lee Dip. Arch ARIBA
4	June 1980	Alan O Lee Dip. Arch ARIBA
5	July 1985	Alan O Lee Dip. Arch ARIBA
6	July 1989	Alan O Lee Dip. Arch ARIBA
7	August 1994	Jeremy B Kendall Dipl Arch RIBA
8	July 1999	Jeremy B Kendall Dipl Arch RIBA
9	October 2006	Jeremy B Kendall Dipl Arch RIBA

RECOMMENDATIONS

URGENT WORKS REQUIRING IMMEDIATE ATTENTION: Category 1

	<u>Item</u>	<u>Budget Cost</u> £
-	Repair roof at west gable, vestry and verges	3.3/5&6 4-5,000

WORK RECOMMENDED TO BE CARRIED OUT DURING NEXT 12 MONTHS:

Category 2

	<u>Item</u>	<u>Budget Cost</u> £
-	Repair slating to porch and nave	3.2 70
-	Clean moss of north sides of roof	3.9 130
-	Repair chimney/ Belcote	3.7/8 500
-	Check and repair, decorate rainwater goods	3.11&15 3-400
-	Replace roof timber verge boards	3.14&16 500
-	Rake out, stitch & repoint settlement cracks to west gable	4.2/3&5 500
-	Door maintenance	5.1&8.1 DIY
-	Vestry door repairs	5.2 700
-	Redecorate metal bars to window	6.2 DIY
-	Repair leadwork to west windows	6.2 Quote
-	Repair Vestry/Lobby ceiling following roof repairs after drying out period	10.1&14.4 70
-	Redecorate Vestry and Lobby walls	10.1 DIY
-	Maintain organ	11.2 100pa?
-	Gas heaters to be checked annually	12.1 100pa
-	Remove old lead vent pipes	12.2 DIY
-	Remove old header tank etc	12.3 DIY
-	Redecorate metal boundary gates	18.3 DIY
-	Keep log book up to date	19.1 DIY

WORK RECOMMENDED TO BE CARRIED OUT DURING NEXT 5 YEARS:

Category (3)

	<u>Item</u>	<u>Budget Cost</u> £
-	After roof repairs and drying out period, check damp in walls and consider a) plaster repairs	10.1a) 200
	Or b) new plaster plinth band	10.1b) 1,500
-	Check electrical installation at next 5 year cycle	13.4 250
-	Repairs to churchyard walls	18.2 DIY

WORK TO BE CONSIDERED BEYOND 5 YEARS: Category 4

	<u>Item</u>	<u>Budget Cost</u> £
-	NONE	

WORK RECOMMENDED TO IMPROVE ENERGY EFFICIENCY: Category 5

	<u>Item</u>	<u>Budget Cost</u>
- NONE		<u>£</u>

WORK REQUIRED TO IMPROVE DISABLED ACCESS: Category 6

	<u>Item</u>	<u>Budget Cost</u>
- Provide temporary ramp if disabled users require	16.1	<u>£</u> DIY

NOTE:

Churchwardens should be aware of their responsibility under the Care of Churches and Ecclesiastical Jurisdiction Measure 1991 that includes 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.

A P E N D I X

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 absolutely essentially 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.

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.

HLB Architects
Unit 139
Stockton Business Centre
70 Brunswick Street
Stockton on Tees
TS18 1DW