

Diocese of Durham

Holy Trinity South Hetton

Incumbent – Rev. A. Stainsby

Inspection of Churches Measure 1955

ARCHITECT'S REPORT January 2011

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1.0 PREMISES IDENTIFICATION

Church: Holy Trinity, South Hetton
Deanery: Easington
Diocese: Durham
Date of Inspection: 24th January 2011
Weather: Cold and Sunny

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

The church is located near to the centre of the village on the south side of the main road. It is in an elevated and slightly exposed position and stands to the east side of a fairly large walled church yard. The former vicarage, now sold, lies to the north east corner and a new private housing development has been built adjacent to the northern boundary. Older local authority housing lies to the south and to the east on the opposite side of the main road exists mixed commercial premises.

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

The building consists of a rectangular nave to which was added approximately 50 years later a wide chancel and organ transept. A hall was added in 1987 and a new shared entrance formed between it and the south west corner of the church. The original vestry has been altered to accommodate a single boiler serving the church and two toilet cubicles. A small vestry area has been retained. The new entrance which acts as a narthex has a glass fronted screen facing towards the main road. The church building is constructed in two types of limestone and is roofed in natural Welsh blue slate.

Part of the small west gallery and adjacent landing area is now used mainly for general storage.

4.0 REPAIR WORKS OR NEW WORKS SINCE LAST INSPECTION

1. Repairs to gable copings.
2. Repair of mortar haunching and pointing to flashings to east gable and west side of organ.
3. Brush remove surface salts from internal stonework (chancel arch).
4. Replace moisture damaged plasterboard to reveals of east window.
5. Repair cracked east gable cross.
6. Repoint masonry joints to bell-cote.
7. External roof access hatch removed and slated over.

5.0 SUMMARY OF GENERAL CONDITION OF BUILDINGS

The building remains in reasonable condition considering the standard of the original construction and continues to be responsibly well maintained. There are no major defects and the majority of items recommended for attention are of a routine nature except for the need to attend to some areas of stonework particularly at high level which have been affected by structural movement.

6.0 DETAILED CONDITION OF BUILDINGS

EXTERNAL FABRIC

6.1 General Structure

There is some movement to the inner stone chancel archway where the joint has opened slightly which possibly relates to the fact that it was constructed later as an infill. This does not appear to have worsened since the last Quinquennial.

There are also movement joints adjacent to or below openings on the south side (chancel window) and north side (organ chamber) and sections of stonework at higher level have moved

slightly on the joints (south west corner of extension and north east corner of organ chamber and chancel). There is a slight settlement crack to the left side of the west gable at mid-point and slight movement cracking to the side joints between the buttress under the east window.

All of these situations will require monitoring to check for any deterioration in the future.

6.2 External Wall Surfaces

6.2.1 North Elevations

General – Buttress bases and sections below plinth course were repaired/rebuilt during the Quinquennial before last and remain sound.

Chancel – Generally sound but there are a few open joints to the upper left hand corner and under the lower string where there may have been a rainwater fixing.

Organ Chamber – Slight vertical settlement joint to left side and below the central window. The coping to the left side and the underlying stonework has open joints caused by the general movement of the left gable margin. The copings have also moved slightly on the right side.

Nave – Some areas of cement rich pointing joints to 2nd from right hand buttress are cracked or missing, with an eroded cap stone. Small portion of concrete slab remaining from original lean-to on window sill of right hand window with small area of open joints below above the plinth.

There are also a number of open joints at eaves level.

6.2.2 South Elevations

Stonework generally sound, but with some cement rich pointing particularly below string course. There are some areas of lean pointing particularly under the west nave window, and earlier cement rich pointing is now failing to most of the lower areas.

Some of the outer corner stones to the buttress are becoming eroded but this is not likely to affect the structure at present.

Wrought iron bands fixed to either side of the buttresses at high level have disappeared in a few positions and are in varying degrees of erosion where they remain. Their original function is not clear but their loss or removal would appear to have no consequence to the structure.

There is a slight settlement movement joint at the head and to left-hand side beneath the left chancel window this does not appear to have worsened since the last Inspection. The upper margin stones to the 2nd and 3rd and 4th from left windows on the south side have moved in the past and been cramped. These have corroded or disappeared and the 3rd window has a small open joint on the right side.

6.2.3 East Elevations

East Gable - Generally sound except for movement of both kneelers allowing the vertical joints to open up to both corners leading to slippage of coping stones and the opening of joints. The rear joints to the kneelers have been pointed with hard cement mortar which maybe making the condition worse. The east window tracery has been renewed at some stage but the surround stonework is severely pitted and may be attracting dampness. There are lean joints to the upper part of the south buttress.

The top branch of the stone cross which was noted as appearing to be cracked, at the time of the last inspection is reported as having been checked and repaired.

6.2.4 West Elevations

Generally sound, except for some open joints to nave gable including a large hole under the coping to the left side. The extension gable has erosion and failed joints at ground level with open vertical joints to the upper right side where some transverse movement has taken place and the lowest coping stone has lifted. The bedding and joints of the rest of the coping are missing or open in places.

The right corner section of the nave gable, which had cracked and allowed the coping stones above to move and open the joints has been roughly repaired using a hard mix of cement mortar to the lower half.

Organ Chamber – Some small holes to joints and one small hole in an individual stone.

The joints of the rubble course at ground level under the plinth course are lean.

6.3 Roof Coverings

Blue Welsh slate throughout, generally sound. The chancel was re-slatted, incorporating underfelt prior to the quinquennial before last. The roof pitches are relatively shallow and therefore any defect will tend to result in some water ingress if not attended to promptly.

6.3.1 North Elevation

Chancel – Generally sound with some openings to the ridge bedding.

Nave – Generally sound with some small areas of missing bedding to ridge.

Porch – Appears to be sound.

6.3.2 South Elevation

Nave - There are some small gaps to the bedding of the roll top ridge tiles and evidence of water ingress within the roof space.

The slate covering is complete but the slates are very uneven with excessive gaps between slates in many places.

Chancel – Some chipped slates and a number of clipped repairs with some courses close to the ridge lifted slightly.

Porch – Generally sound.

6.3.3 East Elevation

North Transept - Sound.

6.3.4 West Elevation

North Transept – Generally sound.

Narthex Link – Fibre cement slates all good.

6.4 Rainwater Disposal System

Consists of uPVC on timber fascias with uPVC down-pipes throughout which are generally sound. Except for the following defects:-

1. No outlet shoe to down pipe from chancel roof to north side. This is causing wetting of the wall below.
2. Right hand end of eaves gutter to east side of Organ chamber has dropped causing wetting of corner buttress.

3. Connection at mid height loose to right-hand down pipe on south side of nave causing wetting of wall blow.
4. Loose downpipe on west side of organ chamber.
5. Blocked ground gully to left down pipe on north side of nave.

6.5 External Windows & Doors

Windows - Fixed cast glass or clear glass overglazing to leaded lights except for east window which is not protected, all in sound condition except for cracks to over panel to right window on north side and loose upper over panes to 2nd left window on south side with loose lead cover strip.

Newer clear glass timber framed window to west gable.

There is a recent full height timber glazed entrance porch which has sealed double units which are in good order.

6.6 External Metalwork, Woodwork & Paintwork

External doors - Painted or stained, generally sound except for rot to foot of door frame to main entrance and missing beading to one pane. Paintwork flaking to boiler room and adjacent hall door.

Timber Facia Boards – These are either painted or varnished and appear sound but paint generally flaking.

External Windows – Cill to west gable window needs decorating.

6.7 Tower, Spire, Bells & Frames

(Date Bell(s) last serviced: Not known)

There is a single bell which is rung electrically and it appears sound. The open gable bell-cote had open or damaged joints on the east side partially caused by rusting of metal clamps which has been repaired during the Quinquennium. The top coping stones are also eroded.

Two main supporting stones on the west (right-hand) side are eroded on the west side.

Water occasionally penetrates the roof space through cable opening on south side.

INTERNAL FABRIC

6.8 Roof Structure

The roof structure to the main church consists of a series of twin post trusses with two purlins either side, the rafters are 3 x 2 at 16" centres with the slates fixed to T&G softwood boarding. There has been some water ingress at the west gable and the adjacent timber. There is accumulation of debris to the gable walls. There is a level ceiling to the church area formed by ceiling joists between the cross beams of the trusses with a lath and plaster lining. This ceiling appears to be sound and some previous woodworm activity in the ceiling joists has been treated during the quinquennial before last. The original access hatch through the roof which allowed for maintenance of the bell mechanism has been removed and slated over.

One purlin and the rafter adjacent to the south side of the west gable are weakened by previous woodworm infestation.

The ceiling is not insulated.

The roof to the chancel is composed of a pair of attractive hammer-beam timber trusses supporting pairs of timber purlins to each slope over laid with diagonal dressed timber boarding. This roof structure appears to be sound.

6.9.1 Internal Partitions

These are restricted to the new toilets which have been installed at the west end. They consist of timber framed plasterboard partitions which are in good condition.

6.9.2 Internal Ceilings

The ceiling to the main nave is flat, plastered with an ornate cornice, there are projecting beams with small corbel supports. There is evidence of occasional water ingress above the gallery adjacent to the west gable which may be wind blown.

The ceiling to the chancel is open to the underside of the roof and finished with diagonal T&G boarding. This appears to be in sound condition.

6.9.3 Internal Walls

The walls are plastered throughout except for pitched pine dado boarding to approximately 6ft. in the nave area only. The finish is in the form of dry lining lath and plaster on timber grounds. Renewal using plasterboard has been carried out prior to 1994 and appears to be generally sound except to window reveals to the north east window in the nave and south chancel. There is some accumulation of salts to the bottom of the timber dado panelling.

Remedial work has also been carried out to the chancel arch where extensive dampness was previously reported prior to the quinquennial before last. The stonework now appears to be dry but continues to have surface salts and stone dusting to about 3m height particularly to the south side of the chancel arch.

There is a slight settlement crack present around the outer edge of the inner chancel arch which does not appear to have worsened since the previous inspection.

There is deterioration of wall plaster to the west side of the west gable within the enclosed north storage area. There is one open un-plastered areas of walling adjacent to gallery doorway with exposed metal clad wiring.

6.9.4 Internal Doors

These consist of a mixture of modern flush doors, half and whole glazed doors and traditional panelled doors, all of which appeared to be in good condition

6.10 Internal Decoration

This is in reasonable order throughout except where affected by water ingress particularly at the gallery level.

6.11 Floors & Balconies

The floors to the main nave areas are T&G softwood which are exposed under the pew areas and carpeted to the central walkway and crossing area. The floor to the chancel area consists of oak blocks laid in herringbone fashion which are a little uneven with some open joints, but otherwise sound, and partially carpeted. The floors (and pews) have settled to the outer walls and there is unevenness adjacent to the alter rail. The central carpeted walkway has a difference of level to the adjacent floor of up to 50mm which could be a trip hazard.

The sanctuary area has 2 steps faced with marble, two sections of which are loose to the risers. The top surfaces are carpeted except to the altar which has a tile inlay which is sound. The stone plinths to the chancel screen is severely eroded on the north side. The access stair to the balcony has settled to one side near the bottom but otherwise appears sound. The balustrading which is composed of unframed soft board and window guarding are not adequate for public access.

6.12 **Glazing & Ventilation**

The glazing consists of either fixed cast glass or leaded stained glass, all in reasonable condition except for bowing of sections and one breakage of leaded glass adjacent to pulpit, slight movement to central windows on south side including one breakage with one loose top panel and bowing sections of window adjacent Gallery on south side. There is a cracked pane to plain glazing on the south west corner.

6.13 **FIXTURES & FITTINGS**

6.13.1 **Furniture & Fittings**

The pews and choir stalls are all of pine as is the organ case. The chancel screen, pulpit and clergy benches and kneelers are in carved oak as is the altar rail. The altar is of a pine construction but is entirely clothed. There is an impressive carved timber eagle lectern. All the furnishings, although not of the highest quality are in good condition.

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

The organ is a Harrison & Harrison 2 manual with 17 stops and is regularly tuned by K Kitchen (0780 945 5354) (Date of last visit – 10 November 2009, with a number of minor repairs carried out in May 2009).

1 Piano in crossing by Chappell of London.

6.14 **Monuments and/or peculiar features**

There is a brass war memorial and an interesting cast metal memorial with stone surround under which there is a tiled inscription recording the dedication of the 2 adjacent stained glass windows. Also in the nave is an original Durham Miners banner for the South Hetton Lodge. This has been repaired and re-sited on the south wall to avoid direct sunlight.

There is a modern abstract sculpture fastened to the wall in the entrance porch.

SERVICES

6.15 **Heating System**

(Date of last service: December 2010)

This consists of a gas fired low pressure hot water system. The boiler is situated in a new boiler house position which now only serves and the church through large bore pipes. The heating system is reported as currently in good working condition.

A section of cast iron pipe-work in the chancel has been replaced with copper piping. The heating is run on a constant background setting to maintain a minimum background level.

6.16 **Electrical System**

(Date of last service: 29 January 2010)

The main supply is single phase 500 volts with 60 amp. loading. The system is protected by an 100 amp. current operated leakage circuit breaker. Wiring distribution to lighting and power is mainly in M.I.C.C. cable. Artificial lighting is by Tungsten pendants to the nave and high wattage flood lights to the chancel, all of which were in working condition.

One distribution board and some equipment were renewed in January 2010 at the time of the last inspection.

There is a set of exposed metal clad distribution cable adjacent to the glazed door to the gallery.

6.17 **Lightning Conductor**

(Date of last test: N/A)

None present.

6.18 **Fire Precautions**

(Date of last test of extinguishers: October 2010)

There is a Carbon Dioxide type extinguisher adjacent to the organ and 2 A-FFF foam type extinguishers adjacent to the main entrance and the gallery. All are regularly serviced.

6.19 **Sanitary Facilities**

There are two toilet cubicles which have been provided within the old vestry area, one is large enough to be used by a disabled person but it is not fully equipped with support rails etc. Each cubicle has a WC and WHB with electric instantaneous water heater.

6.20 **Disabled Persons Facilities**

Access – There is a level access from the upper gate of the north and south entrances which are level. Internally the floor is level into the church and hall and continues to be level to the chancel step which is comparatively high at 220mm.

Sound – there is a speech reinforcement installation with an induction loop facility.

Sight – The natural and artificial lighting levels appear to be satisfactory.

6.21 **Security Situation**

These consist of standard rim and cylinder locks, to the external doors. The church is in a fairly prominent overlooked position and security is fortunately not a problem at the present time.

A wireless alarm was installed in 1996 but is not used.

6.22 **External Areas**

There is an extensive walled church yard with a number of grave stones and the western end is still in use. The boundary walls, which are of rubble construction, have partially been re-built in recent years and are all generally in sound condition. The church yard is generally in good tidy condition. There are paved pathways to each side of the church. The asphalted section to the main entrance is in good condition and the previous concrete path on the south side has been renewed in asphalt. A small section of mild steel rails on the south east corner are surface corroded but still structurally sound. The upper gates are painted metal in good condition.

There is a large double notice-board adjacent to the lower entrance path which was erected in 1999.

One paving stone has settled and broken on north side close to the wall of the nave.

As the churchyard remains 'open' the parish are responsible for maintenance and safety. The standing gravestones are inspected regularly and any loose or severely leaning stones are laid flat.

The original village war memorial which was located adjacent to the east gable of the building has been removed and replaced by a new granite memorial in a slightly different location to the north-east of the east gable during the quinquennium by the Parish Council.

6.23 **Archaeological Situation**

Consultation with the Diocesan Archaeological Advisor and Local Authority Archaeologist indicates that the church and its site are not of archaeological importance

6.24 **Areas not Inspected**

(This may not be an exhaustive list)

1. Underfloor voids.
2. Attic to chancel.
3. Organ pipework etc.
4. Boiler House.

7.0 **RECOMMENDATIONS**

7.1 **ITEMS REQUIRING ATTENTION IMMEDIATELY**

Floors and Balconies

Provide balustrade and guarding adjacent to head of stair landing or prohibit public access to balcony.

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

Rainwater Goods

Repair/replace rainwater goods as follows:-

1. Provide new outlet shoe to downpipe from Chancel above west side of organ chamber.
2. Level and adequately fix dropped section of eaves gutter on east side of organ chamber.
3. Adequately re-fix loose right-hand down pipe on south side of nave and loose down pipe on west side of organ chamber.
4. Clear blocked gully to left-hand side on north side of nave.

External Walling

Repair and re-point all gable copings which have slipped incorporating lead undercloaks and non-ferrous pins or clamps to prevent future slippage to east, north and west gables, ensuring that the kneelers are adequately rebuilt and bedded on the level where this has not previously been done satisfactorily.

External Windows and Glazing

Re-fix loose stained glass panel and over glazing panels to windows on south side of nave.

Renew missing timber beading to 1 No glass pane to screen of main entrance.

Decorate cill to west window frame and flaking fascia boards.

External Doors

Repair rotten feet to frame of main entrance door.

Internal Walls

Brush, using a stiff bristle brush, surface salts on internal stonework to chancel arch.

Box in or cover exposed metal covered wiring adjacent to gallery doorway.

Brush down moisture damaged paint decoration within gallery store and allow to dry out following repairs to coping stones prior to re-decoration using breathable paint.

Floor Finishes

Re-fix loose sections of marble to sanctuary steps.

External Areas

Replace broken paving slab adjacent to north wall of nave.

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

External Stonework

Re-point all areas of open, lean or defective mortar jointing as listed in **Section 6.2** not included with the repair of the copings as listed in the previous section.

Roof Structure

Renew defective timber purlin and rafter to west nave gable.

Roof Spaces

Remove accumulations of stone dust and debris from ceilings adjacent to gables in main roof space.

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

External Wall Surfaces

Remove section of concrete slab remaining from former lean-to and make good.

Roof Space

Consider providing thermal insulation to ceiling within main roof space.

Note: This work should follow or be included with the removal of dust and debris from the roof space.

Sanitary Facilities

Consider providing full support rails within accessible toilet for the benefit of physically disabled persons.

7.5 **ITEMS FOR FURTHER INVESTIGATION**

General Structure

Continue to visually monitor structural movement cracks listed in **Section 6.1** on a routine basis and report any apparent progressive i.e. worsening situation, to the Inspecting Architect for further advice.

External Walling

Consider renewing the eroded jamb stones to the east window if internally dampness remains following the repair of the copings (see Section 7.2).

Glazing

Obtain report from stained glass repair specialist on cost and value of repairing buckling leaded glass within church.

Bell and Bell-Cote

Inspect bell installation and service/repair as required.

8.0 ESTIMATION OF COST OF REPAIRS AND OTHER WORKS

Notes:

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

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

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

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

8.1 **Items requiring immediate attention**

£250.00 – £500.00

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

£2,500.00 - £3,500.00

8.3 **Items to be attended within the next 5 – 10 years**

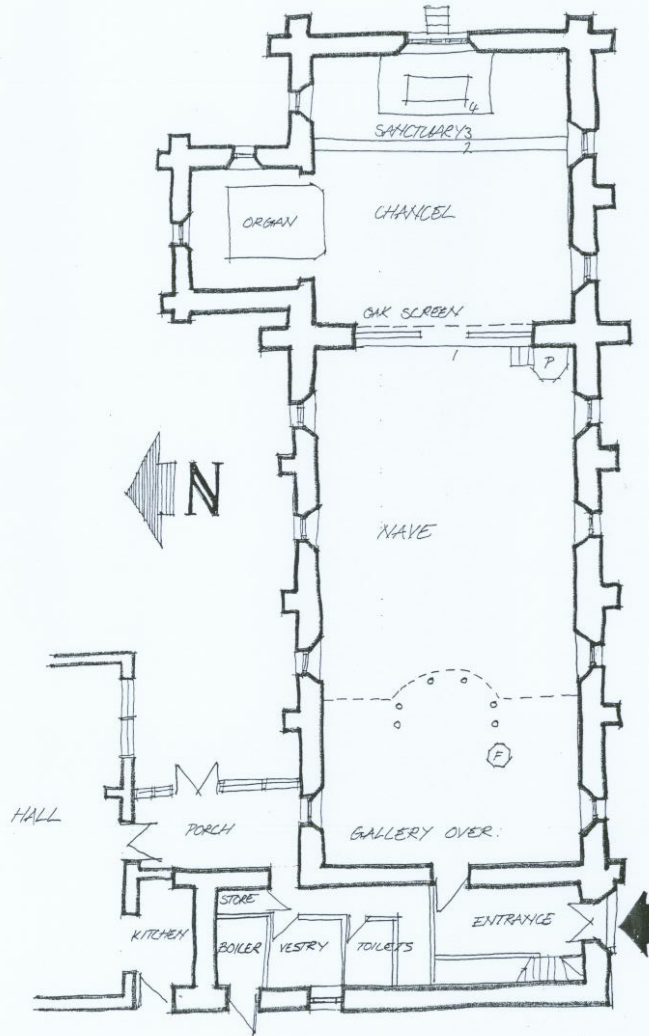
£2,500.00 - £3,500.00

8.4 **Items which are desirable**

£1,500.00 - £2,000.00

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

£3,000.00 - £4,500.00



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SOUTH HETTON CHURCH

EXISTING GROUND FLOOR PLAN.

Scale	Date	Drawn by	Checked by	Drawing No.	Revision
WTS.					