Diocese of Durham

St JOHN'S CHURCH NEVILLES CROSS

(305)

Care of Churches and Ecclesiastical Jurisdiction Measure 1991

QUINQUENNIAL REPORT

on the architect's inspection on

21 April 2022

Archdeaconry Durham

Deanery Durham

an unlisted building
not in a conservation area

Incumbent Revd Barnaby Huish

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PART ONE

1. I have made a thorough general survey of the condition of the church and grounds. The inspection was such as could readily be made from ground level and ladders. I have not inspected woodwork or other parts of the structure which are covered, unexposed or inaccessible and I am therefore unable to report that any such part is free from defect. The chimney flue was not inspected and none of the services were tested. Damp meters were not used.

2. No material seen is likely to contain asbestos but a specialist survey March 2013 with the Log Book records analysis showing
   a) the organ blower box was lined inside with all types of asbestos (blue, brown and white) in friable and damaged condition. Removal or encapsulation was recommended.
   b) the floor of the basement boiler room had small amounts of debris of all types of asbestos and access should be prohibited

Brief description

3. A modest mission church by Newcastle architects Plummer and Burrell. Begun 1896 as a five bay Nave with SW door and a Vestry in a small N transept over a boiler room. Sandstone with welsh slate roofs and a small turret over a ridge vent. Later additions a slightly narrower two bay Chancel, a second N gable for an organ chamber and passage to a lean-to Vestry at the NE corner. The transept became a Baptistery.

4. In 20th century a small amount of stained glass, a Chancel screen and pews by Thompson of Kilburn were added.

5. In 1993 a new gas boiler was fitted in a new ground floor compartment next to the organ leaving the basement disused, unheated and less ventilated.

6. In the 1990's a 'Church Centre' extension at the W end by architect J. Sansom. Social rooms on two floors and an entrance lobby shared with the Church. Slate and artificial stone with timber framed and boarded S offshot and N porch.
   A stone window formerly set in an arch in the W gable was moved to replace the S door in the W bay of the Nave. The carved timber Chancel screen was moved to become part of the Church W entrance screen.

Recent structural history

7. Significant work recorded in the Log Book since 2000 :

2000 structural appraisal begun after movement at the E end

2001 site investigation holes dug, monitoring begun, tree survey

2002 – 7

Lead repairs - rebedding of cover flashing at Baptistery W watertable, repair of valley gutter between Organ and Baptistery

New lead to cover stone upstand between Chancel and Nave roofs

At Chancel movement cracks in joints pointed, plaster cracks filled and decorated

Decayed stones at Organ gable peak replaced, watertable joints pointed

Decayed stones over shoulder of E window in S of Nave replaced

Failed plaster at Chancel arch removed, repaired and decorated

Ground level outside Vestry and Passage reduced and subfloor ventilation improved

Reordering 2007

Insulated plaster added under the Nave and Baptistery roofs

Relighting and general redecoration

Pulpit and all Chancel furniture removed and Chancel floor levelled down to the Chancel step

Short Nave platform and communion rail added, front pews removed and chairs introduced

Main work 2007 - 12

New Chancel furnishings

Paint disguise of lead and change to some substitute materials around the N valley gutter after further lead theft 2011

Large array of photovoltaic panels fixed to S Nave roof 2011

Trees along the SE boundary removed

2012 Security lights added at roof lead

Baptistry wall plastered and painted

New church boiler, air intake converted to balanced flue, stone chimney made redundant

2013 Asbestos survey (report in Log Book and summarised at para 2)

2015 Plaster repair and redecoration at Vestry and Vestry Passage, new Vestry sink, water heater

2016 Two trees removed from NE corner of grounds

New concrete kerb around the cellar steps

Door from Baptistery reversed to out-opening for faster fire escape

2017 Carpets replaced at Kitchen, Upper Room, landing

Plaster repair and decoration at Baptistery, S Nave near Chancel, Upper Room, stair, wcs.

2018 Two sycamores at S side removed

Car park brick wall repaired

Crack at Church Centre outside wall checked by structural engineer as insignificant

2020 S windows at extension replaced with wide gap double glazing in upvc, new window fan.

Lightning conductor retested

2021 Two new cameras fixed to roof beams

Polycarbonate window protection replaced

S Nave cast iron gutters replaced, slate repairs

Summary of structural condition

8. The Church remains very well cared for and in good general condition.

9. Very minor plaster fall from the Chancel side of the Chancel arch is not likely to be significant.

10. There is no sign of continuing movement near the Chancel SE corner and at two S Nave windows. However there is new minor wall plaster damp by a Nave window at the far E end of the S Nave.

11. The former damp in the Vestry appears solved but there are signs of continuing slight damp at high level in the Baptistery NW corner and at mid level at the Nave SE corner.

PART TWO

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE EXTERIOR

Roofs

12. Welsh blue/grey slates, red clay ridges, lead valley gutters, generally sound. About a third of the Nave S side is covered with photovoltaic panels on horizontal bearers bracketed through the slates to the thick sarking boards.

13. A timber framed octagonal ridge vent turret has mitred corner slates. One slate at its S eave missing. Lead cover over the base and surrounding slates appears sound.

14. The painted lead cladding over the S side of the Chancel arch upstand appears sound.
The N side has been replaced in Ubiflex after theft of the most accessible lead.

15. Baptistery slate sound. At both slopes a lead cover flashing is dressed partly over and pointed down into the stone watertable because the stone is not high enough for flashings under the watertables.
Damp plaster visible again at the Baptistery top NW corner despite past resealing of the NW flashing to the stone (para 59). There is no other visible defect so (unless the apparent damp is really condensation and can be washed off) resealing the NE lead to the watertables may be worth trying.

16. The Organ roof has a lead clad cheek over the Vestry slope, disguised with paint. A thick mortar fillet under its gable watertable is cracked but seems to cause no trouble.

17. The flat stepped tapered lead valley between Baptistery and Organ is proper length and appears sound. Its outlet lead chute is sound. The sloping valleys remain lead, painted at the Baptistery E side.

18. The Extension has matching welsh slate, red ridges, lead valleys, verges and velux windows. At the W gable upstand long lead cover flashings chased into the masonry. Good.

Rainwater System, Drainage

19. At Church cast iron half round gutters on drive brackets into walls with hooks over the Nave gutters, hoppers at N side and round pipes with shoes over gullies. The iron seems sound and well painted except

- top length of pipes from Baptistery hopper and Vestry are cracked nearly full height but still almost watertight so perhaps thorough preparation and painting will seal the cracks for a while, prolonging the life of the pipes. Or bandage or replace pipes.
- seedlings grow in a blocked gully W of the Church Centre with no grating.

20. Hopper at N valley gutter cleaned out at inspection and should be cleared once a year.


Hopper at N valley gutter before clearance at the inspection para 21

21. The extension has black aluminium on fascias, to gullies.
Plastic low level hopper at a former water butt at S side cleared at inspection.
A black plastic waste from first floor is unsupported and sags severely.

22. Foul and surface drainage for the whole building to sewer was laid when the extension was built, plastic gullies and cast iron covers on inspection chambers, not opened.

Turret, Bell

23. Originally a single bell hung from timbers projecting from the W gable peak under a small hipped continuation of the Church roof. Bell said to have been cracked and taken down in about 1984 when the bracket was found to be broken. The rest was removed at the building of the Extension.

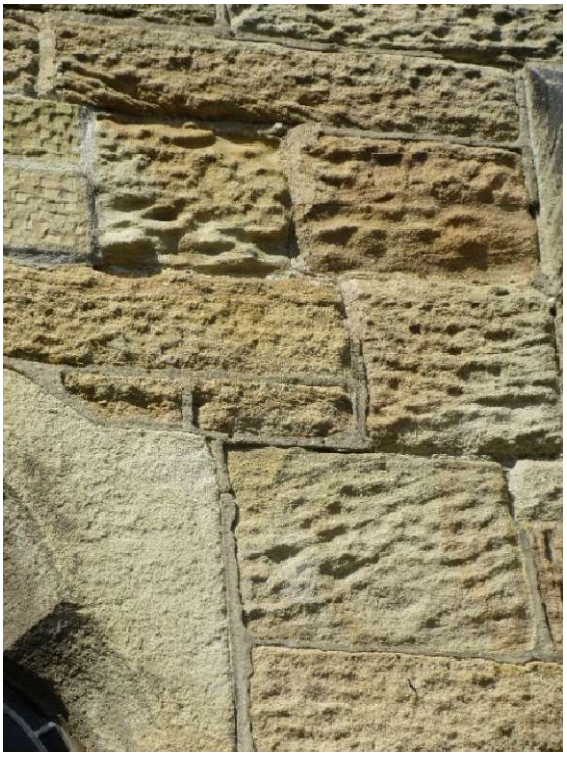
24. Reported advice some 25 years ago that the ridge turret is not suitable for mounting the bell appears correct. The relatively light unbraced structure is unlikely to be stiff enough nor accessible for a chiming rope.

Walls, Buttresses, Chimney

25. Squared random rubble sandstone in good condition apart from slight surface erosion and local decay. Most pointing is good lime mortar, now recessing naturally. Minor open joints over E window. Patches of later hard cement mortar promote slow surface decay of the stones because it makes rain evaporate through the stone more than the joints. The cement pointing is shallow. Some is falling off and more will follow. When repointed the joints must be well raked and filled with soft lime mortar. Better to avoid the spread over stones seen at the recent patches of S side pointing.

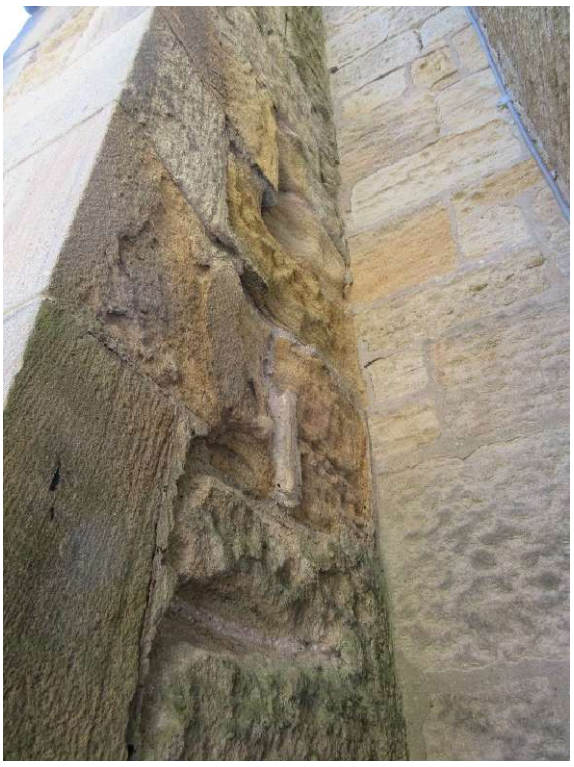
26. Slight stone decay at

Baptistery gable	2 stones
Organ gable	6 stones
Vestry N wall	1 stone
S Chancel	patch of surface decay in top W corner (by Chancel arch)
S Nave	some erosion in buttresses and E of the E window

Slight stone decay above R side of E window in the S Nave

R of the E window in the S Nave



Hidden side of the Nave SE buttress

27. Cracks which appeared over and under the Chancel SE window some 25 years ago now show outside only as sound wide pointing. Very minor hairline plaster cracks inside are unchanged.

28. Structural investigations in 2001 arose from movement of the Chancel and Nave SE corner. The movement was caused by trees before their removal.

29. Minor open joints at the retaining wall at the cellar steps with some plant growth.

30. A tall single flue octagonal stone chimney on the N side of the Chancel arch from the former basement boiler room is now disused. Visible parts of the stone and pointing appear sound.

31. Its aluminium gas terminal has now fallen into valley gutter. If the chimney is metal lined the fall may not expose the flue to the weather but in the long term the top of the chimney needs protection.

32. Extension has cavity walls with Bradstone outer with wide cement mortar joints. Minor external shrinkage cracks
- diagonally under Kitchen W window and
- under, over and up the right hand sides of the two storey cast stone framed N and W windows
are unchanged and not a concern.

Window and Door Openings

33. Dressed stone, generally in very good condition.
Chancel E cill cracked and tracery joints opened and pointed long ago due to spread. One tracery joint open.

34. S Chancel windows stone good but open crack in E cill and displaced arch and tracery joints show past movement.

35. Nave lancets are simple plate tracery, good. N gable lancets and quatrefoil good. Vestry triple lights good.

36. At Extension sound cast stone surrounds and mullions.

External Iron and Wood, upvc

37. At turret cast iron finial on lead cap appears sound. Turret timbers weathered but appear sound. Slight traces of paint remain.

38. Main entry doors glazed framed softwood well stained and sound.

39. The well painted Baptistery and Vestry passage doors have weathermoulds.
Draught strips at the arched Vestry passage door.

40. The Extension S escape door is flush ply out opening, exposed and stained, fair.

41. A large amount of stained softwood at the Extension – N porch, structural posts, shiplap boarding, doors and N and W window frames. Two windows (N first floor and W ground floor) show rot in their bottom beads, needing either careful jojnery replacement (stained hardwood) and staining or general replacement of the whole remaining timber windows in upvc.
    Otherwise the stain is fair and will need restaining to the original recommended cycle or at least every 7 years (bottom beads and cills more frequent) in the existing colours.

Ground floor W window

Ground floor W

First floor N

42. At the S gable and returns sound silicon seals between the sides of the structural posts and the new upvc ribbon window frames (which sit on long lead drips).

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE INTERIOR

Roof timbers

43. At Chancel two curved brace trusses and single massive purlins for the long spans. Exposed rafters and horizontal sarking. All timber dark varnished softwood with no visible defect.

44. At Nave four scissor trusses propped on corbels, three purlins and thick vertical sarking now lined underneath with insulated plasterboard.

45. In Vestry painted sarking boards and rafters on two purlins on a monopitch truss between the Vestry and Organ chamber. Truss infilling forms part of the room partition.

46. Organ and Baptistery have sarking and rafters on N-S purlins spanning to the gables. Rafters now concealed in Baptistery. No visible defect.

47. In Extension a glulam beam supports six scissor trusses, purlins and rafters, all exposed in the upper Meeting Room. Other parts of the roofs concealed except small void over Office boarded, without apparent insulation.


over Office

Ceilings

48. Nave painted sloping and flat plaster sound.

49. In the Extension painted plasterboard, mainly sound. In the Office minor shrinkage at top of pitched part. Hatch to small void, part boarded for storage. No ceiling insulation at accessible parts.

50. At upper Meeting Room sloping plaster some joints taped.

Chancel Arch and Baptistery Arcade

51. Sound stone. At the arcade caps traces of a former screen.

Partitions, Doors, Panelling, Screens

52. At the Nave W end the original masonry arch is filled with a two storey aluminium framed screen with double glazed and solid panel infilling, oak veneered at low level, plastic faced at high level. Oak veneered solid core glazed doors. Faced on the Nave side by the resited oak chancel screen (Thwaites memorial 1934 by Thompson). A harmonious whole.

53. In Nave and Baptistery sound softwood matchboard panelling painted with walls. Very slight soiling over radiators may be washable with care after a trial.

54. In Church sound framed batten doors. The Baptistery/Passage door needs decoration.
The panelled Passage/Vestry door has inserted ply panels.

55. In Extension emulsioned plasterboard stud walls upstairs, solid downstairs with hardwood veneered solid core fire doors, stained softwood frames, architraves and skirts. Sound resisting double glazed storey height screens with internal venetian blinds in metal frames including metal door frames.

Plaster, Decoration

56. Church plaster filled and decorated 2007 after most movement stopped but before the large ash tree SE of the church was felled January 2012.

57. In the SE of the Nave hairline plaster cracks remain visible but appear unchanged:
Present hairline cracks:
- between five stones of the Chancel arch S side facing the Nave and the adjacent plaster
- horizontal crack between 1st and 2nd windows from SE corner at level of arch peaks

58. A new defect is a small patch of bursting plaster and paint at the far E end of the Nave S wall behind the present screen fixed to the wall at window arch spring level. Such damage usually shows very local damp penetration. There is no obvious defect outside. Surface decay in two stones at the right level does not appear sufficient cause. It would be wise to check in rain that the gutter over is not leaking or choked.


Nave SE corner


Baptistery NW corner


Outside of Baptistery NW corner

59. At the Baptistery the top NE and NW corners were replastered and repainted where damaged by damp, after pointing of the watertable and drying over many months. Marks appear again:
- The top NE corner is slightly watermarked without visible damage. No visible cause except blockage of the hopper outside (para 20).
- The top NW corner has a larger watermark and small points of plaster and paint damage, suggesting some continuing leakage. No clear cause outside. May be condensation – try careful washing (para 15).

60. Cobwebs in places.

61. Extension in fair condition. The main entry lobby is worn and needs paint.
The framed outside wall of the stair is covered in heavy paper and painted.

Ventilation

62. Grills below plinths for subfloor ventilation of low voids under the Nave, Baptistery, Organ chamber and Vestry (visible from cellar). In 2007 minor rot was repaired in the NW corner of the Baptistery floor joists and wall plate. To improve ventilation, grills though the Baptistery gable were cleared of loose sand fallen from the wall core and refixed with clay sleeves.

63. Small subfloor vents N of Organ chamber and E of Vestry and one added 2003 in NW corner of Vestry after rot outbreak.

64. Small wall extract fans in both wcs and ground floor store linked to lights without overrun timers except at the downstairs wc. External louvres are missing.
Two large fans in the Kitchen and one in Vestry.

Glazing, Protection

65. Most glass in Church is cast white quarries with coloured borders – yellow in Vestry, purple in Nave, pale blue in Baptistery. Quarries are well supported by bars and sound. Some cobwebs but otherwise mostly clean except at Baptistery and Vestry.

66. E Chancel triple Crucifixion on the World, Stanley Scott 1961, internal saddle bars, in good condition, some dirt.
S Chancel four matching stained glass Saints 1930-44, very lively colour, good condition. L light slightly pulled apart at leads by the past wall movement and letting in draughts.

67. At Baptistery cast glass with hopper in lancets and quatrefoil a little dirty and two cracked borders. Two R lancets have stained in reamy white with blue/purple borders by Stanley Scott 1970, sound.

68. At Extension narrow space double glazing is bedded in putty which tends to crack.
S side all replaced with wide gap double glazing in upvc, sound.
At upper room three large veluxes, former blinds have been removed

69. Polycarbonate protection on ventilating clips at E and S of Chancel, the two stained Baptistery windows and at Vestry. Replaced 2021 in modern UV resistant polycarbonate.

70. At Vestry original internal security bars. No protection at Nave windows, two plain Baptistery lights and two quatrefoils.

Floors, Rails, Stair

72. In 2007 an unstable stone tiled Sanctuary floor was removed, lowered and remade in reinforced concrete at the level of the retained Choir central grano. The Choir bench platforms were also lowered and remade in concrete, retaining the sandstone Chancel steps. To avoid increasing rising damp in the walls and in the suspended floor under the Organ no damp proof membrane was used in the Choir concrete. New carpet on underlay covers the whole flattened Chancel floor.

73. Suspended softwood boards at Nave, Nave platform and Baptistery with fitted carpet and underlay except under remaining pews. Limited subfloor ventilation so at times ground moisture may need to evaporate through the floor to prevent rot.

74. In the Vestry, Passage and Organ chamber suspended boards. Rot in the Vestry SE corner was repaired some years ago. Vestry carpeted, vinyl sheet in the Passage.

75. To minimise the remaining damp risks, carpet and underlay should be kept vapour permeable.

76. Demountable oak and iron communion rails, at the Nave platform.

77. At Extension solid ground floors and suspended first floor with timber stair. Cord carpets except vinyl sheet in Kitchen and wcs. Clean off carpet at bottom of escape stair. Recent carpet at stair and landing. Softwood handrails at stair. All sound.

Monuments, Brasses, Furnishings, Organ

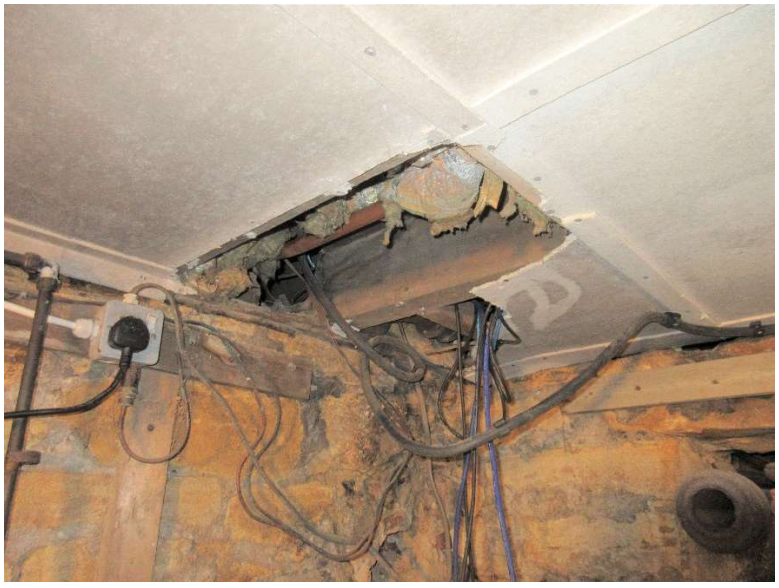
78. No monuments or brasses. Modern oak furniture for the reordered Chancel includes a colourful glass font bowl. Silver candlesticks.
Painted audio visual desk enclosure. Most oak pews remain, supplemented by new chairs.

79. Pipe organ maintained by Harrison & Harrison, said to be in good condition and in regular use.

Former Basement Boiler Room

80. A lockable hinged grill over the external stone steps. A square stone chamber with working wall light, concrete floor, sump and pump. Ventilation through the door.
Some water leaks through the old coal chute cover. Otherwise dry at inspection.

81. Timber E-W joists over on timber wall plates on a bitumen damp course level with the bottom of the outside stone plinths. Ceiling appears to be fire resisting boards with cover strips at the joints. The asbestos survey did not identify the boards as containing asbestos but said there is hazard from loose fibres on the floor (para 2).



82. Holes in two corners of the ceiling show unlagged copper heating pipes in the floor space, one with insulation hanging loose. The pipes are wastefully exposed to the unheated cellar.

Dampness in NW rooms

83. There has been a history of damp in the Vestry and Passage which have modern airbricks through their N walls to dissipate damp because there is no damp proof course. After reduction of ground level to N the Vestry now seems dry enough.

84. The Vestry gutter and gully need to be kept in good order, the ground level no higher than the floor, the wall vents clear and the room ventilated.

Heating

85. Church changed from oil to gas and new system 1995. Panel radiators throughout except N passage. Separate timers and thermostats in a) Nave b) Chancel and Vestry. Pump replaced 1998.

86. Church now heated by boiler in an internal chamber included a balanced flue through a former overhead horizontal air intake through the passage wall. Heating said to be effective with reasonable two hour heat up. No lagging on circuit pipes in ground level boiler space, wasting energy.

87. The tall stone chimney and liner are now redundant. Its aluminium terminal has fallen into the valley gutter.

88. Extension heated by wall mounted combi boiler in eaves roof space off upper room. 7 day 2 period timer. Frostat under stair. Radiators and floor air vents in lobby.

89. Both boilers serviced annually.

Electrical

90. Church except Vestry and cellar rewired 2007 in copper sheathed MICC cable with metal surface switches and sockets. Audio-visual installation. Some pvc/pvc surface cables to Vestry water heater.
System test October 2020 'satisfactory'. New test due 2025. See Addendum.

91. Nave and Baptistery lit by 18 low energy wall uplights. In Chancel 10 spots on tracks. In Vestry a suspended track and four LED spots. Low energy light in Passage. External bulkheads at the main W entry, Baptistery, Vestry Passage and W escape doors with PIR detectors at Entry and Vestry.

92. Induction loop and amplifier.

93. In Extension a distribution board in a store by the escape door, mixed wall lights, uplights, ceiling 2D fittings, downlights and low voltage downlights. Fluorescent tubes in Office and high Meeting room. Recessed plastic 13A sockets. Some lights dirty. Light in storage void over Office. One upper Meeting Room uplight not working.

94. In the cellar cables hang where the ceiling is missing, one with a taped connection which is poor practice if cables live. Fixed wiring is intact MICC but a metal surface switch rusts.
A working wall light from a plastic socket.
A backlit wooden cross has been added outside the N gable. Oddly off centre.

95. Emergency lights and fire alarm including smoke detectors at the stairwell and break glasses at both Extension exits and the Baptistery door. Intruder alarm detectors in Extension in stairwell and lobby.

Lightning Conductor

96. Air rods at turret, chimney and Nave cross. Cables clamped to ridges and gutters with six earth points. A security cover has been added over the cable at the Extension SW corner. Last 5 yearly test to BS in 2020 satisfactory. See Addendum.

Fire Precautions

97. Extinguishers, all annually serviced May 2021:

Upper meeting room	6 litre foam
Office	2kg CO_2
Kitchen	2kg CO_2, fire blanket
Lobby	6 litre foam
Baptistery	2kg CO_2 and 6 litre foam
Vestry	2kg CO_2

In case of proposal to change note than the insurer EIG advises dry powder extinguishers should be confined to boiler rooms and Kitchens because discharge (including accidental and malicious) in church risks serious damage to organs and delicate surfaces due to the powder being corrosive.

Water and Sanitary facilities

98. In Kitchen a stainless sink and hand wash basin with hot and cold and a plumbed-in water boiler for drinks. WCs and basins at each Extension level. The Kitchen hot supply is remote from the upstairs combi so slow and wasteful of fuel. Change to a local instantaneous heater might be considered.

99. Vestry basin with cold and hot from an instantaneous heater over. The incoming main rises next to the basin.

Access and use by people with disabilities

100. At main entrance choice of steps or short ramp with a handrail at the ramp.
Low step at Vestry entry then a step to either Chancel or Baptistery.
A present proposal to ramp the single step outside the N escape door (after its use in a general one-way circulation during the pandemic).

101. In Church short handrails at one side of the Nave platform and Chancel arch have improved access to the levelled Chancel. Induction loop.

102. At Extension good access in ground floor but steps down to S escape door.
WC is fitted for wheelchair use (though no alarm which is now standard at new WCs). Baby change shelf.
Handrails both sides of stair make reasonable access for the infirm to the upper room.

Security

103. Deadlocks at Passage, Vestry and Extension. Huge shootbolts at Baptistery door. Safe in Vestry
Intruder alarm with PIR detectors at the Extension.

104. A determined intruder would break a Church window but the grounds are overlooked and used as a public shortcut which is a good deterrent.

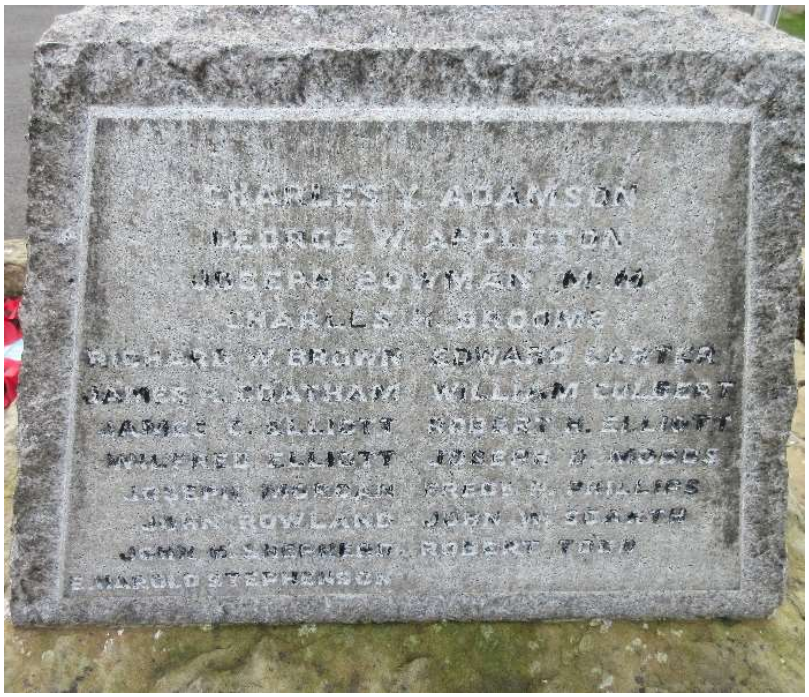
Grounds, boundaries, signs, paths, trees

105. An irregular site with a separate scout hut on a long S arm.
Used as shortcuts between a public footpath and a bus stop around both ends of the Church.

106. Mixed boundaries. Slight inward lean of the low N boundary wall made of granite setts not a matter of concern. The NW fence between Church and flats has a long gap after collapse. May be the other site's responsibility.

107. Slate waste margins, lawn and small beech trees to N. Ash tree removed from S side January 2012 and remaining small trees well laid as a hedge between Church grounds and footpath.

108. A granite cross war memorial with flag surround, two kerbs in different materials which tend to spread, and very different plain stainless steel bollards. The names are cut into the granite and painted. Although the lettering in very durable granite remains intact most paint is lost, making it almost illegible.
A small trial of careful do-it-yourself repainting with enamel paint may be worthwhile.



109. Bound gravel and concrete flag paths. Ground levels must be kept from rising to minimise damp in the walls.

110. One good recent printed sign at N. Two rusting steel posts for a former sign appear disused but are used on occasion for temporary banners

Archaeology

111. Consultation with the local authority indicates that the locality may be of archaeological importance and they should be consulted if significant works are being considered.

General comments

112. The Church has been improved and continues to be well maintained.

PART THREE

RECOMMENDATIONS in order of priority

For immediate action

Replace missing slate at turret S side	13
Try washing possible condensation (?) from Baptistery NW corner	15, 59
Clip sagging waste pipe S of Extension	21
Check Upper Room uplight	93

For completion within 18 months

Redecorate or bandage and paint or replace cast iron rainwater pipes at Baptistery hopper and Vestry	19
Decide and act on rot in Extension window beads	41, 68

For completion within five years

Fit a metal cowl to protect the top of the chimney	31, 87
Obtain Periodic Electrical System Test in 2025	90 and Addendum
Obtain lightning conductor test in 2025	96 and Addendum

Desirable improvements

Prepare and paint main Entry Lobby and door Baptistery/passage	54, 61
Lag copper pipes exposed in cellar and present boiler space	82, 86
Try method of making war memorial lettering legible	108

Recommendations on Maintenance and Care

Clear hoppers and gullies at least once a year	19, 20, 21, 59
Try washing matchboard panelling in Nave	53
Observe possible causes of plaster damage in Nave SE corner	58
Clear cobwebs	60, 65
Any replacement Chancel carpet & underlay must remain breathable	72, 75

ADDENDUM to the SURVEY REPORT
Required under the Care of Churches and Ecclesiastical Jurisdiction Measure 1991

PURPOSE OF REPORT This is a general report only, as is required by the Measure. It is **not** a specification for execution of repairs and must not be used as such. The parish is reminded that it will be necessary to obtain either the Archdeacon's permission or a Faculty if it is intended to make repairs for which an architect's specification should be sought. The PCC minutes must record that an application is being made for permission or faculty and a copy of that minute must accompany the application together with a full specification, drawing where appropriate and an estimate of the cost of the work. In any application for grant aid a full specification is always required.

LOGBOOK The parish has a duty under Canon F13(4) to keep a Log Book recording all work carried out on the building. I commend this practice to the PCC. Not only does it help the inspecting architect but it can prove a valuable aid to the parish.

MAINTENANCE Continual vigilance to guard against blockages in gutters and the rainwater system as a whole is needed. Every parish must find for itself a reliable procedure to ensure that gutters, ground gutters, gullies and drains are kept clean. It might be:
maintenance under contract by a local builder or handyman or
maintenance by church working party
Whatever system is adopted the problem remains to remember when to organise the work. Gutters and pipes should be checked at least twice a year. If the Log Book is used as a check list of action every year and kept as an up to date record this will itself act as a reminder.

HEATING INSTALLATION A proper examination and test should be made by a qualified engineer annually **and a written report obtained for the log book**

ELECTRICAL The installation should be tested every five years and immediately if not done within the last five years by a competent electrical engineer, that is a certificate holder of the National Inspection Council of Electrical Installation Contracting (NICEIC) or a member of the Electrical Contractors Association (ECA) and a resistance and earth continuity test should be obtained on all circuits. **The test report should be kept with the Log Book**. The present report is based on a visual inspection of the main switchboard and certain random sections of the wiring without the use of instruments.
To check registration with NICEIC and ECA see www.electricalsafetyregister.com

LIGHTNING CONDUCTOR Any lightning conductor should be tested by a competent electrical engineer every five years (in addition to any recommendation in this report) in accordance with the British Standard Code of Practice. Records of the results and condition should be kept with the Log Book. Note that there is no general requirement for a Lightning Conductor.

CHURCH WARDENS' INSPECTION Although the Measure requires the church to be inspected every five years serious trouble may develop in between these surveys if minor defects are left unattended. It is recommended that the wardens should make or have made a careful inspection of the fabric at least once a year and arrange immediate attention to such matters as displaced slates and leaking pipes.

PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES 'One of the striking characteristics of the Gospel narratives is Jesus' concern for people with disabilities but sadly the Church has, in the past, given little attention to their needs. The design of our buildings has often proved a barrier to those who attend church services' (Chairman of the Church Buildings Council). The PCC are reminded that the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 places a duty on churches to review all practices and facilities and to take all reasonable steps to avoid discrimination against people with disabilities caused by physical features, bearing in mind the limitations often found in historic buildings
Useful advice and audit sheets are to be found in 'Widening the Eye of the Needle' published by the Church Buildings Council 1999 £10.95.

INSURANCE The PCC is advised that insurance cover should be reviewed annually to take account of any rise in the cost of rebuilding.