

Report on the Fabric, Goods and Ornaments of the Parish Church

Fulford: St Oswald

2022

Once again - for a *third* consecutive year (due to either Coronavirus or our own building development programme) - January began with both our **Church** building and **Church Hall largely closed to the public** except when specifically in use for Sunday and Wednesday morning worship services, occasional weddings and funerals or for a handful of private Church Hall hires.

THE CHURCH BUILDING

Pinnacle Conservation's programme of **repairs to the roof and rainwater goods** (Faculty 2019-043435) had overrun into 2022 resulting in external scaffolding, protective sheeting over the Organ and a building materials and equipment compound in the Church Car Park remaining in place until late May/early June when the major part of their work was completed and these areas cleared out and cleaned down in time for our late June Heritage Weekend events (celebrating our successful completion of the earlier Rose Window restoration work (Faculty 2018-024751) and fulfilling the educational conditions of the HLF grant.) Pinnacle returned later in the year to carry out some further cosmetic and compensatory work (predominantly painting of exterior wood and metal work on both Church and Hall) with just some minor items and final snagging work remaining to be completed, ideally, before expiry of the defects liability period.

Our Architect's on-site **Quinquennial** (5 yearly) **Inspection** was carried out in stages during the summer months but - seemingly due to staffing capacity and workload issues - we have yet to receive a written copy of **Ferrey & Mennim's 2022 Quinquennial Inspection Report**. However, we have been advised by our architect that as a result of the inspections further radiator leaks, together with unacceptable rainwater goods overshoots and blockages, have been identified and remedial action requested from the contractors.

Whilst the perimeter heating has proved to be a beneficial source of background heating - helping to protect the fabric of the building - it is not as effective in 'heating people'. Options for **replacement of the defunct overhead gas heating** with an alternative main system, raised initially with the Interim Diocesan Heating Advisor during the spring, are still being sought and considered but, in view of both net zero emissions targets and current funding commitments, this remains in abeyance along with the earlier **proposals for the provision of new chairs** (to replace the pews removed from the side aisles).

At the request of Our Insurers EIG (**Ecclesiastical Insurance Group**) a satisfactory lightning conductor survey (maintenance and testing, due every two to three years) was carried out in December by Stone Technical Services Group Ltd.

THE CHURCH GROUNDS AND CURTILAGE

A number of matters relating to trees in the Church grounds led to the establishment of a small sub-group (Caring for God's Green Acre) to look at bringing these issues together in a cohesive and informed Church Grounds Plan and Garden Space 'Green' Strategy to assist the PCC with future grounds maintenance and development planning. These include:

- preparation of a comprehensive **Site Plan** and rolling **Grounds Maintenance Programme**
- action on outstanding items from Arboriculturalist Mark Feather's **St Oswald's Church Tree Inspection Report 2021** ~ mainly minor pruning, to be attended to by local tree surgeon Stuart Bolton
- **planting a mixed hedgerow of native saplings** to provide a green corridor (and additional site security) behind the church hall as the result of a successful application to the Woodland Trust under the Platinum Jubilee Queen's Green Canopy initiative which - to be planted by volunteers in the spring of 2023 - will complement our Forest Church activities.
- The possible **provision of a 'green' roof to the Organ blower house** to both hide and protect the structure
- **replacement of a memorial plaque**, beneath a tree dedicated to Clifford Fowler, in the Church grounds.

Also under review, as a result of a Church Risk Assessment carried out by our Insurers (EIG) during the summer, are their requests for:

1. The **application of SmartWater** (and display of signage) to all exterior metals on the Church building
2. Establishment and maintenance of a **key holders register** for both the Church and the Hall
3. Locating previous **asbestos reports** and maintaining an **active asbestos management policy**
4. A **strong recommendation that plastic wheelie bins are not kept against external church walls but stored (ideally) at least 10 metres from an insured building.**

And, still to address, **damage caused to the boundary wall and railing** (following the Turkey Oak bough drop); reported to our insurers (EIG claim no. 420894) but on hold pending full architect inspection and cost assessment.

CHURCH HALL

Resident Handymen Keith Hood and Roger Ogram carried out repainting to the toilet areas in the entrance corridor and Keith has continued to deal with other minor maintenance and repair jobs as they have arisen.

An overall **Church Hall Maintenance and Development Plan** is under consideration with input being sought from our Architect.

Accreditation of the Church Hall as a 'Good Place, Warm Place' venue under a City of York Council winter initiative has allowed us - with funding support from the Council - to expand our mid-week outreach activities (Community Cafe, St Oswald's Tots and Time Out) and introduce a 'stop gap' Community Drop In event during the School holidays when our usual activities take a break. The Council also used the Hall as the venue for a Family Activity Event in the first half of the School Christmas holidays.

There had been **no major accidents or incidents** reported to the PCC **requiring physical or structural changes to our buildings or property.**

Only one FACULTY was applied for and approved during the year:

2022-073774 for the Chancellor's permission to proceed with the **Processional Cross repair and restoration** which remained in the care of the restorers (Barbara Cattle Ltd, Receipt ref E 6201) awaiting remedial attention.

Having now been provided copies of practical completion certificates by our Architects, earlier Faculty approvals still outstanding in the Diocesan Advisory Committee's records can now be closed off, these are:

2020-053043 Perimeter heating, pew removal and temporary floor works.

2019-043435 Repairs to Roof and Rainwater goods.

INTERNALLY the good working order of the Church clock has been maintained (with regular - weekly - winding by a team of volunteers and annual servicing - in July - by Potts of Derby). Fire extinguisher servicing carried out annually by Advance Fire Services Ltd was completed in March. For its protection our Organ had remained sheathed in polythene until completion of the roof works when York Pipe Organs carried out the recommissioning - assisted by electricians from H. Todd & Son after a fault developed in the Organ blower house electrical contactor which had to be replaced - while Geoffrey Coffin re-tuned the instrument prior to our Heritage Weekend returning in November to carry out a winter re-set.

GOODS & ORNAMENTS

Unfortunately, during the year, the **Church Electronic Keyboard** developed a series of recurring faults which, due to age and obsolescence, could no longer be repaired; consequently, due to the generosity of an anonymous donor, the Church has acquired a new **Yamaha Clavinova Digital Piano** in replacement and which came into use at our Christingle Services.

Regrettably, following a spate of minor thefts since the summer, the year ended with the Church building *once again locked and the doors closed to the public* except at Service times. Losses - reported to North Yorkshire Police for the registration of Incident numbers - include:

NYP-20122022-0292 two Lady Chapel brass candlesticks found to be missing around the time of our Heritage Weekend, Saturday 25/Sunday 26 June 2022.

NYP-20122022-0296 six (Sennheiser E835 dynamic vocal un-switched) microphones which disappeared between 18 and 28 October 2022.

NYP-20122022-0303 three (2 AKG C1000s MkIV condenser and 1 wireless hand-held) microphones together with a silver coloured auxiliary pedal and associated cable (for use with the new Yamaha Clavinova CLP735) which went missing after morning service on Sunday 18 December 2022.

A subsequent on site security review carried out a **NYP Officer**, with both Vicar and Churchwarden present, concluded with the **strong recommendation to install some form of (well publicised and signposted) Cctv or online monitoring** as a potential deterrent ~ a path which the PCC is currently pursuing.

Otherwise the usual plate, chalices, burse and veils, altar frontals and pulpit drops continue in use at services along with our precautionary carbon dioxide air particle monitors and free-standing foot pedal operated hand sanitiser stations. The electronic digital hymnal has provided invaluable back up for Services, including occasional offices (funerals and weddings), when either an organist or pianist has not been available

As always, thanks are due to our Flower Arrangers, Brass and Church Cleaners - whose ongoing efforts help preserve, protect and enhance our fabric and adornments. Our CHURCHYARD grass is cut commercially (by Greenfingers Garden Services), and the borders maintained by our team of garden volunteers - thank you all too.