

Burpham Church Fabric Report 2023

2023 saw use of our buildings pretty well back to normal at the Church of the Holy Spirit (CHS), but very limited use of St. Luke's, mainly on Remembrance Sunday and for the Christmas Carol Service, but also for Burpham Primary School carol services. We continue to have relatively few significant problems arise in our buildings, although we still have the serious long term issues, reconfirmed in the Quinquennial Inspection in May 2022, arising principally from their age. We have dealt with the urgent matters raised in that inspection but more needs to be done, hopefully linked to a project which not only addresses defects in the buildings, but also enhances them to meet our future needs in terms of our ministry and mission in Burpham. As previously reported it was felt best not to start such a project until we had our new vicar on board to lead us in setting the right vision to guide the design.

CHS

As indicated in last year's fabric report the Quinquennial Inspection (QI) raised many points in relation to the hall and the parts of the building adjacent to it, particularly the part on the road side of the site. It recognised that we hope to do major work in these areas and frequently included phrases such as "It is not worth spending huge amounts of money on this until the Parish have decided what to do with the whole complex". Most of the work to the front part of the site, short term and just to enable it to hopefully last for a few more years, was done in 2022 by a working party. The work to the hall and the areas between there and the church, needed for the longer term, was carried out in the spring of 2023.

We reported last year that the PCC had been considering the possible need to resurface the car park, having been doing regular patch repairs for many years to maintain accessibility. It was felt the major project which it had been intended it be part of, or follow immediately after, was now likely to be a few years off, and the state was such that we should delay no longer. It was therefore resurfaced during the summer of 2023. Proper Sheffield bicycle hoops were set in by the main entrance to the church, with an additional one at the rear, as part of the works.

The resurfaced car park at CHS



Working parties mainly were focused on the external areas at CHS, but there was also a significant amount of work following floods which occurred due to plumbing problems.

St. Luke's

As reported last year the QI of 2022 reconfirmed that the church needs completely re-roofing (and a lot of work to be done on the rainwater goods), but the report mentioned that "re-roofing has been recommended in some form since 1990" which although making it overdue shows it has not deteriorated very rapidly.



The focus in 2023 was therefore on dealing with the items identified as high priority much of it to prevent pigeons nesting within the structure but also concerning the bellcote at the west end at high level. There was concern "about the degree of movement on the north-west corner of the turret" with a suggestion it be "inspected in the near future to ascertain whether emergency works are needed". A project under the leadership of the Inspecting Architect was arranged, initially providing scaffold access to the bellcote for closer inspection, but this showed that there had been significant deterioration in the stonework to the bellcote. This was corrected by stonemasons while the scaffolding was in place followed by the necessary works to prevent access by pigeons.



Before



The Bellcote

After

The work to keep out pigeons is perhaps more obvious in these photos, but a substantial amount was needed on the stonework.

Working parties have helped cut back foliage and particularly removed dead trees some of which were close to the boundary with the school next door.

Although it has withstood the test of time remarkably well, substantial work is needed to St Luke's in the longer term, but this needs to be considered as part of our longer terms plans for ministry and links with the community in the parish.