

## Church of St Dunstan, Monks Risborough

### Quinquennial Inspection

May 2022



**QUINQUENNIAL INSPECTION: May 2022**

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## **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

### **Using this Document**

- Photographs are dispersed throughout the document for ease of reference.
- \* indicates reference to Section 12 Recommendations and Priorities – for example 6.5\*.

### **Scope of Inspection**

An inspection was made of all accessible internal spaces at ground level. Certain voids and spaces were not inspected as they were not accessible, as well as areas behind significant furniture and under floor coverings. It cannot, therefore, be ascertained with certainty that these areas are free from defect, though there appears to be no evidence to the contrary.

This report does not constitute a specification and should not be used as such. The inspecting Architect should always be consulted if major, or specialist items of repair are undertaken. Repair or alteration work may require either a Faculty or Archdeacon's Certificate.

### **Weather Conditions During the Inspection**

The inspection was carried out on the 23 May 2022, the temperature was 16°C and cloudy with sunny spells.

### **Access**

The church is always open, however, access to the tower requires a key.

### **Additional Information**

The last Quinquennial Inspection was carried out by James Cox Associates in March 2017, and was available for viewing.

### **Personnel**

The inspection was carried out by Christian Randall Dip Arch, AABC and RIBA Specialist Conservation Architect, of Conservation Architects LLP.

### **Status and Occupancy**

The building is currently used as a place of worship and supported by its congregation.

## **Maintenance Standard**

The building and surrounding churchyard are maintained, however, there are some areas that require repair and improvement which are described within the main body of the report.

## **Summary of the General State of the Building and its Setting**

The Condition Category of the building is good. The property is not considered as being at risk. It is very well looked after with only a few signs of deterioration.

## **Executive summary of the findings and recommendations of the report:**

- A The general soundness of the building: Good.
- B The degree of deterioration of the building in relation to its age: Little.
- C The appropriateness of use and intensity of occupation: Appropriate.
- D Adequacy of maintenance and general care of the building and its setting: Well cared for.
- E Major problems and structural defects: Generally well-maintained, however, section F below describes areas in need of attention.
- F Major recommendations for maintenance, repair and improvement: The church is generally in good, well-maintained condition with little major work required. Areas that could do with attention are the redecoration of the rainwater goods, but this is not that urgent.
- G Areas not examined and why: Floor voids, the internal roof structure was only viewed from ground level, but a high-level inspection is not required.

## 2.0 BUILDING HISTORY AND SIGNIFICANCE

### Listed Building Description

Church of St Dunstan

National Grid Reference: SP 81267 04419

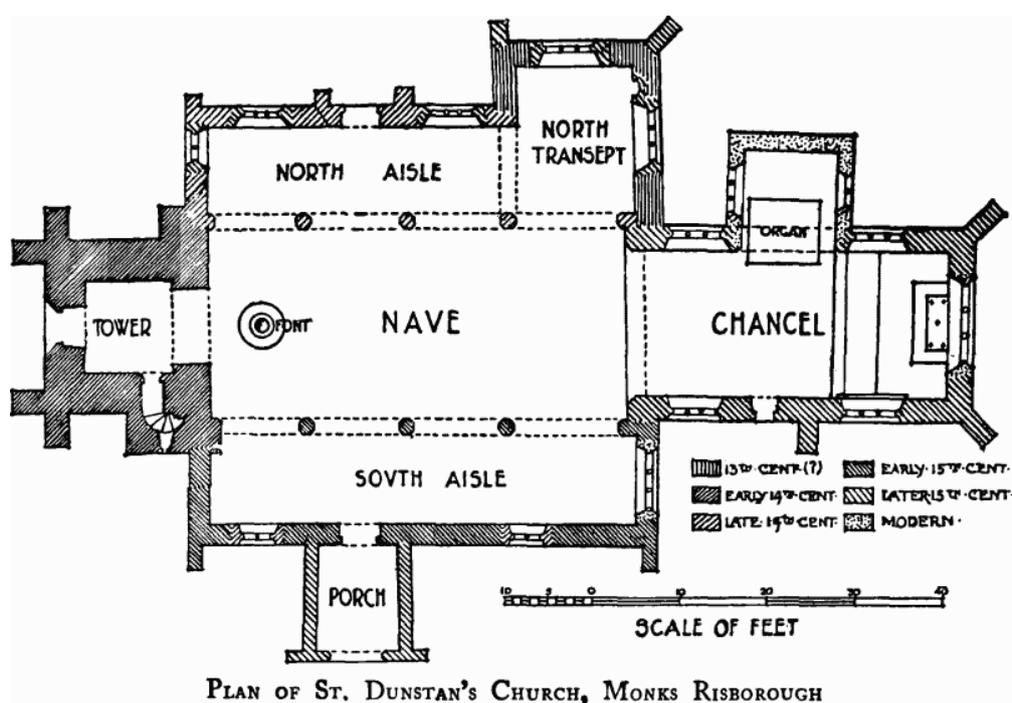
Listing: Grade I

*Parish church. Early C14 W. tower, remainder late C14-C15 with C19 vestry/ organ chamber to N. of chancel. Restored 1863. Flint with stone dressings, tiled chancel and S. porch, lead roofs to nave, aisles, tower and N. transept. W. tower of 3 stages has moulded plinth and strings, angle buttresses, and parapet with carved head corbel table. 2-light traceried openings to bell-chamber, lancets below to N. and S., 2-light traceried window and moulded doorway to W., the doorway with carved head stops to hoodmould. Square projecting stair turret at S.E. corner. Nave has late C15 clerestory, with 4 bays of 3-light cusped windows and restored battlemented parapet. N. aisle has small C20 2-light cusped window at W. end, C20 3-light cusped window to right, 3-light Perpendicular window to left, and moulded doorway. S. aisle has chamfered plinth, dripmould, and 2 2-light traceried windows, the right with moulded surround and carved head stops. Internally this window has moulded arches and inner arch on slender shafts with moulded capitals. C19 3-light window to E. Moulded S. doorway with stoup to right. C15 gabled porch has restored arch with moulded chalk spandrels, cusped blind window above, and single cusped lights to sides. N. transept has restored 3-light Perpendicular windows with carved head hoodmould stops to N. and E. Similar windows to N. and S. of chancel, the S. side also with small door, completely C19, the E. end with C19 3-light traceried window. Interior: triple chamfered arch to tower with small arched opening to chamber above. Nave has clunch arcades with 4 bays of double hollow chamfered arches, broach stopped, on octagonal piers with moulded capitals, the N.E. arch to transept which has similar arch to N. aisle. Central spandrel of N. arcade has cusped niche. Nave, aisles and transept have good C15 roofs with moulded beams and traceried spandrels, the transept and N. side of nave with carved head stone corbels. Arched openings to rood loft stairs at N.E. corner of nave. Stone bracket carved with foliage behind pulpit, another stone bracket with carved head in N. transept. Transept also has clunch niche with remains of gabled canopy and finials. Wide chancel arch with double hollow chamfer. Remainder of chancel totally restored. S. porch has C15 roof with moulded beams, queen strut trusses and tracery panels to tie beams, one with a carved head. Fittings: C12 font with fluted basin and carved frieze; restored C15 screen with 5 moulded arches and restored painted figures in lower traceried panels; 4 C15 bench ends in nave, the poppyheads with carved figures and faces; medieval S. door; medieval floor tiles at E. end of nave and in transept; other fittings*

C19. C18 marble wall tablets, C15 brasses with half-figures of man and wife in S. aisle. RCHM I p. 257-9.<sup>1</sup>

## British History Online

The church of ST. DUNSTAN consists of a chancel 36 ft. 6 in. by 16 ft. 6 in. with a modern organ chamber on the north; a nave 47 ft. 7 in. by 21 ft. 8 in.; a north transept 16 ft. 8 in. by 13 ft. 3 in.; north and south aisles respectively 9 ft. 10 in. and 10 ft. 2 in. wide; a south porch and a western tower 10 ft. by 10 ft. 8 in., all measurements being internal. Owing to extensive rebuilding in the late 14th and in the 15th centuries the early history of the church is somewhat obscure, but the tower is of fairly early 14th-century date, and at the time of its building the church consisted of a nave of the same plan as the present one, roofed with a high-pitched roof, the traces of which are clearly visible on the east wall of the tower, and presumably a chancel within the lines of the present chancel. There is nothing to show whether the nave had aisles at this time, but the north transept evidently existed before the present north arcade was built, and is possibly of 13th-century date. Towards the end of the 14th century a period of rebuilding and addition was entered on which lasted well into the 15th century. The first work taken in hand was the north aisle with its arcade, the eastern bay of which is wider than the other three, in order to suit the plan of the north transept. At the beginning of the 15th century the south aisle was built, and a little later on the chancel was rebuilt and the chancel arch inserted. At the same time, or a little later, the south porch was built, while the last work undertaken was the clearstory and present nave roof. In modern times the north organ chamber was added and a certain amount of restoration carried out, including the re-roofing of the chancel.



<sup>1</sup> Historic England List Entry Number: 1125811. <https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1125811?section=official-list-entry> [accessed 24 May 2022].

*The east window of the chancel is quite modern and of three trefoiled lights with tracery of early 14th-century detail. In the north and south walls of the chancel are two 15th-century windows of three cinquefoiled lights with tracery over, with four-centred arches. Between the pair on the north is the modern opening to the organ chamber, and between the south windows is a small modern priest's door. The sill of the south-east window is carried down to serve as a seat. The wide chancel arch is of two hollow-chamfered orders which are continuous, being stopped on a large broach stop about 4 ft. above the floor.*

*The north arcade of the nave is of four bays. The arches are of two chamfered orders, the inner of which is stopped with a cone-shaped stop, the outer with a broach stop. The columns are octagonal with moulded capitals and bases. There is no west respond, but in its place a half-capital upon a corbel. At the east end is the upper door to the rood-loft, which was originally entered from the transept. The south arcade, of the same number of bays as the north, has arches identical with those on the north, but the detail of the capitals and bases is somewhat later in character. The east bay, as in the north arcade, is wider than the rest; perhaps in this case in order to correspond to the north arcade. In both cases it appears that the walls above the arcades were rebuilt. The clearstory has four 15th-century windows a side, each of three cinquefoiled lights under square heads, with deep hollowmoulded external reveals. The north transept has a very good 15th-century east window of three cinquefoiled lights with tracery under a four-centred head. In the north wall is a similar window. To the south of the east window is an image bracket of 15th-century date with a carved head corbel, and on the north a mutilated niche, also of 15th-century date, with shafted jambs, a foliated projecting bracket, and the remains of a crocketed canopy. The arch to the north aisle is of the same detail as the north arcade, and rests on the south upon the first pier of the latter and on the north on a corbelled half-capital.*

*The north aisle has two windows to the north, the first of three cinquefoiled lights, like the windows of the transept but of later detail and date, and with a straight-sided four-centred head. Following on this is the north door of the same date as the aisle, with an external label and continuously moulded jambs. West of the door is a 15th-century window of three cinquefoiled lights under a square head. The west window of the same date, or slightly later, is small, placed high in the wall and of two trefoiled lights under a square head.*

*The south aisle has a modern east window of three cinquefoiled lights with uncusped spandrels, of early 14th-century detail. In the south wall are two twolight windows. The first of these is of early 14th-century detail, and having been apparently reset, is probably one of the old nave windows moved out when the aisle was built. The internal jambs are doubly shafted and have circular capitals and bases, while the rear arch is elaborately moulded. There are both internal and external labels, and the latter is finished with mask drips just above a string-course in which are worked two grotesque heads forming secondary drips. The second window, also presumably re-used, is of later 14th-century date*

*and much restored; it is of two trefoiled lights with two trefoils and a quatrefoil over. The south door, between these windows, is of early 15th-century date, continuously moulded in two double-ogee orders with a hollow between.*

*The south porch has in its north-east angle a mutilated holy-water stone, with a rounded bowl upon a short square stem. There are small cinquefoiled lights in the east and west walls, and the outer archway is of two hollow-chamfered orders with sunk spandrels and an image niche over.*

*The tower is of three stages, with a plain parapet and a large square south-east staircase turret. The tower arch is of three continuous chamfered orders, with an internal label which is continued as a string to the north and south nave walls. The external string between the first and second stages is carried round the east wall of the turret, which now forms part of the west wall of the south aisle, showing that the turret stood free at this height in the first instance. The belfry openings are of two cinquefoiled lights with sharp two-centred heads. Below the parapet is a corbel table, which is carried round the stair turret which rises some feet above the tower. The west door, of 14th-century date, has a two-centred head of two richly-moulded orders, the inner of which is continuous, while the mouldings of the outer die out at the springing. The west window has modern tracery of the same detail as the south-west window of the south aisle.*

*The font is of the local 12th-century type, with a circular scalloped bowl, moulded stem, and square base, ornamented with conventional foliage.*

*The chancel has a modern high-pitched tiled roof, while those of the aisles, transept, and nave are of low pitch and leaded. The last is of 15th-century date with moulded principals, purlins, ridges, and wallbrackets with cusped spandrel tracery, resting in some cases upon grotesque stone corbels. The transept roof is similar but perhaps earlier. The porch roof is also of early 15th-century date, but is of steep pitch, and a good deal of 15th-century work is incorporated in the aisle roofs. There is a much-restored roodscreen in position, and on the jambs of the chancel arch are faint traces of the coved soffit of the roodloft. The screen itself is of 15th-century date with five wide arched bays, from the heads of which the wooden vaulting has been removed, the spandrels being filled in with modern tracery. The lower panels are solid, and painted with figures of bearded saints wearing ermine-trimmed hats and tippets; the drawing and colour can only be called barbarous, and they appear to be 18th-century repaintings of earlier work. It is quite impossible to identify any of the figures. There is a considerable quantity of 15th-century work incorporated in the seating of the church, four bench-ends in particular having well-designed finials carved with figures standing or kneeling upon two faces, back to back, or in one case upon two pelicans. The oldest monument is the brass figure of Robert Blundele, priest, 1431, in mass vestments, and there is another brass of a civilian and his wife, c. 1460, with two sons and five daughters. The children, however, do not belong to the same monument as the two larger figures. In the eastern window of the south aisle are some fragments of 14th and 15th-century glass, the*

*most perfect piece being a small figure of our Lady and Child. There is also some 15th-century glass in its original position in the upper lights of one of the north windows of the chancel.*

*The tower contains six bells, the treble cast by Warner & Sons in 1885, the second and fourth dated 1637, the third, fifth, and tenor dated 1636. They are all by Ellis Knight of Reading.*

*The church plate consists of a modern jewelled chalice of mediaeval design, hall-marked for 1877; a chalice inscribed as the gift of William Quarles in 1726, hall-marked for 1710, and a salver, standing paten and flagon similarly inscribed, the first hall-marked for 1697, the second with no date-letter, and the third with the date-letter for 1725.*

*The first book of the registers contains all entries from 1587 to 1802, except in the case of marriages, which cease at 1754. There is also a recent and beautifully-made copy of this book. Baptisms and burials are continued in another book from 1803 to 1812, and marriages, after a gap, in a third from 1778 to 1812.*

### **Advowson**

*The church of Monks Risborough was one of the two benefices belonging to the deanery of Risborough, within the exempt jurisdiction of the Archbishop of Canterbury. [\(fn. 72\)](#) The deanery was abolished in 1841 at the renewal of the rural deaneries, and the church of Monks Risborough was assigned to Wendover (first division). [\(fn. 73\)](#) In 1865, however, it was again transferred, and now belongs to the rural deanery of Aylesbury. [\(fn. 74\)](#) The church does not seem to have been assigned with the manor to the monastery of Christchurch, Canterbury, when the division of estates between the archbishop and the monks took place. [\(fn. 75\)](#) No vicarage was ordained, and the rectory was not amongst the possessions of the monastery at its dissolution. [\(fn. 76\)](#) The archbishop collated to the living, since during the vacancy caused by Archbishop Morton's death, the Crown instituted a new rector in 1500. [\(fn. 77\)](#) His successors [\(fn. 78\)](#) collated to it until 1837, when with the rest of Buckinghamshire, the ecclesiastical parish of Monks Risborough was transferred to the diocese of Oxford, and the Bishop of Oxford became patron of the living. [\(fn. 79\)](#)<sup>2</sup>*

### **Historic England Photo Archive**

Below is a selection of historic photographs held in the Historic England photo archive.

Photographs are for reference only and should not be reproduced without permission.

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<sup>2</sup> 'Parishes: Monks Risborough', in *A History of the County of Buckingham: Volume 2*, ed. William Page (London, 1908), pp. 256-260. *British History Online* <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/vch/bucks/vol2/pp256-260> [accessed 24 May 2022].



1904 – Dovecote with St Dunstan's in the background, found at <https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/photos/results/?searchType=HE+Archive+New&search=Monks+Risborough&page=6> [accessed 24 May 2022]



1904 – St Dunstan's, found at <https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/photos/results/?searchType=HE+Archive+New&search=Monks+Risborough&page=6> [accessed 24 May 2022]



1900 – St Dunstan's, found at <https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/photos/results/?searchType=HE+Archive+New&search=Monks+Risborough&page=7> [accessed 24 May 2022]



1860-1922 – St Dunstan's, found at <https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/photos/results/?searchType=HE+Archive+New&search=Monks+Risborough&page=7> [accessed 24 May 2022]



1880-1920 – St Dunstan's, found at <https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/photos/results/?searchType=HE+Archive+New&search=Monks+Risborough&page=7> [accessed 24 May 2022]

### 3.0 WORK CARRIED OUT SINCE THE LAST INSPECTION

Below is a summary of work known to have been completed since the last Quinquennial Inspection:

<b>Item</b>	<b>Date</b>
General maintenance	Ongoing
Internal redecoration	01/2019
Window cleaning	01/2019
Masonry repairs	02/2019
Pulpit restoration	08/2019
Electrical inspection (church)	06/10/21
Electrical appliance testing (church)	09/21
Fire extinguisher inspection	08/21
Refurbishment of louvres	Ongoing
Electrical inspection (hall)	10/21
Tree inspection	04/22

## 4.0 CHURCH ROOF COVERINGS

### 4.1 General

The roofs were viewed from the ground and from the tower. The tower has a lead roof with stone parapet, the nave, north and south aisles, and north transept have copper roofs, and the chancel, vestry and porch have clay tiles. The church hall has a clay tile roof.

### 4.2 Tower

4.2.1 The tower roof is easily accessed by way of a spiral staircase. The lead roof was renewed in 1976 and appears to be in good condition with no work required at this time.

4.2.2\* There is some vegetation on the tower roof that should be removed. The flag pole has a plant growing around the base, and the asphalt roof to the stair turret also has some vegetation growing around the edges that also needs removing (figure 1). Stonework damage can be caused by root systems and increased moisture build-up, so it is important not to allow plants to grow in masonry. **2**



Figure 1 – Tower roof – vegetation growth – remove.

### 4.3 Nave, North Aisle, South Aisle and North Transept

The copper roofs were viewed from the top of the tower and all appear to be in good condition (figure 2).



Figure 2 – Copper roofs in good condition.

#### **4.4 Chancel and Vestry**

The clay tile roofs of the chancel and vestry appear to be in good condition. There is some moss build up on the north side of the chancel and the vestry roof. This should be reassessed at the next inspection.

#### **4.5\* Porch**

The porch roof has some uneven courses in the clay tiles and some indication that it could be nearing the end of its life. The roof should be monitored and reassessed at the next inspection. If water ingress begins to occur, it may need to be renewed.

#### **4.6 Church Hall**

The clay tile roof of the church hall is in good condition. Moss build-up, especially on the east side where it is overshadowed by a nearby tree, should be casually monitored and reassessed at the next inspection (figure 3).



Figure 3 – Church hall – monitor moss build-up.

## 5.0 RAINWATER GOODS

### 5.1 General

The gutters and downpipes are powder coated (enamelled?) and galvanised steel. They could generally do with some redecoration. They outlet into gullies, presumably linked to soakaways.

*Note: All gutters, downpipes and gullies should be periodically checked and cleared of plant growth, moss build-up and other loose debris. Soakaways should be rodded through to prevent blockages.*

*Note: The recommended treatment for dealing with rusty, but reusable, rainwater goods:*

- *Carefully remove rust using a small angle grinder with a wire brush attachment.*
- *Clean metal surfaces with white spirits and allow to dry.*
- *Apply Bilt Hamber Hydrate 80 rust neutraliser followed by Weathershield metal primer, and satin colour topcoat (or similar good quality oil-based metal paint).*

### 5.2 Gutters and Downpipes

5.2.1\* All the gutters and downpipes could do with some redecoration as they are showing signs of rust and flaking paint. The paint is probably flaking as it did not adhere to the original finish. Powder coating or enamel will need an etch primer in order to provide a good key for the final coat (ideally a good external metal paint such as Weathershield satin).

5.2.2\* There is a downpipe on the north elevation of the north aisle (next to the door) that has had a flashband repair where it meets the gutter. This is fine as a temporary fix, but does require a proper repair and redecoration with the rest of the rainwater goods.

5.2.3 The plastic gutters and downpipes of the church hall should be regularly checked and cleared, especially on the east side where it is close to an overhanging tree.

### 5.3 Other Rainwater Goods

Gullies appeared to be accessible with no excessive build up of debris. These should be regularly inspected and cleared. It is assumed that the gullies lead to soakaways to carry the water away from the building – these should be periodically checked and rodded through to ensure they don't become blocked. There are no internal damp issues and so it would appear that there is no excessive water build up around the perimeter of the building.

## 6.0 EXTERNAL WALLS

### 6.1 General

The external walls are a mixture of flint and random and coursed rubble with ashlar dressings. A number of stonework repairs were carried out in 2019 and the walls are generally in good condition. There are areas of weathering, expected of a building of this type, but nothing that requires immediate attention. The church hall is clad in timber weatherboarding that appears to be in sound condition.

*Note: All repointing and mortar work should be carried out using lime mortar, and should not contain any cement, to help prevent future masonry damage. Strap pointing should be avoided.*

### 6.2 Tower

- 6.2.1\* The inner edge of the tower parapet requires some minor repointing where there are some open joints and cracking in the render (figure 4).



Figure 4 – Tower parapet – minor cracks in render – repoint in lime.

- 6.2.2\* The south and west sides of the tower stair turret walls have some vegetation growing out of them at high level. This should, ideally, be removed.
- 6.2.3 The louvres in the tower openings are in need of renewing, this work is currently being carried out by a local contractor.

## 6.3 Nave

- 6.3.1 The external walls of the nave are flint and stone with dressed window reveals, quoins and crenellations above. The walls to the south and north are clerestory, with the east end wall gabled, with continued crenellations linking the south and north sides together. The walls were viewed from ground level.
- 6.3.2\* Overall, the external walls of the nave appear to be in good order with no major work required. There is some weathering to the string course below the crenellations, but this appears to be minor and there is nothing too concerning – reassess at the next inspection (figure 5).



Figure 5 - Nave, north side clerestory – weathering to the string course below the crenellations.

## 6.4 South Aisle and Porch

Similar to the other external walls in construction. There are no major items outstanding as all major stonework repairs were carried out in 2019. Cement has been used to repoint some areas of stonework, which is not recommended as it can cause accelerated deterioration of the surrounding stone rather than being a sacrificial layer (as lime would be due to its breathability). In this case there does not seem to be any resulting issues with the use of cement, so no action is recommended, as it would probably do more harm to the surrounding stone to remove it. Any future repointing should be done using lime mortar.

## 6.5 North Aisle and North Transept

The north transept and north aisle are in good condition, with no major stone weathering.

## 6.6 Chancel and Vestry

Generally, the walls of the chancel and vestry are in good condition. There is minor misalignment of the top apex copings, but no action required (figure 6).



Figure 6 - Chancel, east end apex copings – minor misalignment of the top copings.

## 6.7 Church Hall

- 6.7.1 The church hall was built in 2004 and is a weatherboard clad structure on a brick plinth. The external walls are in good condition with no work required.
- 6.7.2\* There is mildew to the underside of the overhanging roof, above the south entrance. It should easily wipe off when wet, but it won't cure the problem, especially in a location where there is no sunlight. It may be worth considering repainting the ply with a product such as Glixtone Fungi-Shield Anti-Mould & Black Spot Paint.

## 7.0 WINDOWS

### 7.1 General

Most of the windows are in good, clean condition with no major work required. There are some cracked panes in the stair turret windows, and a few of the double-glazed units have blown in the church hall.

*Note: Historic stained glass windows can be extremely fragile and expensive to repair. As a general rule, some dos and don'ts are:*

- *Do seek the advice of an expert before deciding to clean a window. It is always worth getting good advice at the start – once damage is done it cannot be undone. For churches, the local diocese can often help by recommending an advisor who specialises in stained glass. Icon, the Institute of Conservation, has a searchable online register of accredited conservators ([www.conservationregister.com](http://www.conservationregister.com)).*
- *Do provide safe access. Church windows tend to be tall and are often at great height. Safe access is important; it's not worth risking injury or worse for a clean window.*
- *Don't use harsh abrasive pads or household cleaners and never use acids or wire wool. Even the removal of cobwebs should only be done extremely carefully and the duster should never touch a window that contains painted stained glass.*
- *Don't attempt to clean medieval stained glass if you are not a trained and experienced stained glass conservator.*
- *And finally: if in doubt, don't clean.<sup>3</sup>*

*Note: The recommended treatment for metal window fixings is:*

- *Carefully wire brush metal to remove rust.*
- *Clean metal surface with white spirits and allow to dry.*
- *Apply Bilt Hamber Hydrate 80 rust neutraliser followed by Weathershield metal satin black topcoat (or similar good quality oil-based metal paint). Take care not to paint the glazing or lead.*

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<sup>3</sup> Seliger, L (2019). *Cleaning Historic Stained Glass Windows*. Found at <https://www.buildingconservation.com/articles/cleaning-stained-glass/cleaning-stained-glass.htm>.

## 7.2 Tower

7.2.1\* The glass has broken in the stair turret windows. This is typical of glass inserted directly into stonework as there is no room for expansion. The glass panels should be replaced with allowance made for movement.

7.2.2 The bell ringing chamber has a glass infill panel between the tower and the nave. The two, curved, side panels have been removed (figure 7). The reason for their removal is unclear.



Figure 7 – Bell ringing chamber – glass panels removed.

## 7.3\* Church Hall

Some of the double-glazed units in the church hall have blown – one in the main meeting room, two in the lobby and one in the toilet. The blown units should be replaced.

## 8.0 DOORS

### 8.1 General

Most of the doors appear to be in good condition with no work required. The tower parapet door could do with some attention, and there is some cosmetic damage to the main church hall door.

*Note: The recommended treatment for door ironmongery is:*

- *Carefully wire brush metal to remove rust.*
- *Clean metal surface with white spirits and allow to dry.*
- *Apply Bilt Hamber Hydrate 80 rust neutraliser followed by Weathershield metal satin black topcoat (or similar good quality oil-based metal paint).*

### 8.2 Tower

8.2.1 The lower tower has an external door at the west end, and an internal door between the tower and nave. The tower stairwell is also accessed through a door from the lower tower. They are all in good condition and no work is required.

8.2.2\* The tower parapet door is looking a little dry and could do with treating with Danish oil (figure 8).



Figure 8 – Tower parapet door – treat with Danish oil.

### 8.3 North Aisle and Chancel

8.3.1 The north aisle door is in good condition and is regularly used to provide level access into the building.

8.3.2\* The door in the south wall of the chancel is not used and has a fixed iron gate across the outside (figure 9). It is beginning to rust and could do with some redecoration. The mesh is showing signs of wear and is beginning to oxidise, causing some staining to the stonework at the bottom. It would be good to replace the mesh with stainless steel, painted black to prevent further discoloration of the stonework.



Figure 9 – Chancel, south – door protection showing wear – refurbish.

### 8.4\* Porch

Both main doors into the church appear to be in good condition. There is a closer on the inside of the external door that is currently working, but is about to fail as the closer and attachment

are at different angles, causing the mechanism to break at the centre point. A more suitable long-term solution needs to be found to overcome this issue.

### 8.3\* Church Hall

The main entrance door into the church hall has some cosmetic damage where the lock has been removed (figure 10). This should be repaired and redecorated.



Figure 10 – Church hall – cosmetic damage to door – repair.

## 9.0 CHURCHYARD AND EXTERNAL SPACES

### 9.1 General

The churchyard is well maintained, cared for and full of interest. It is a large space, maintained by the church. An archaeological dig took place in 2013 with a view to extending the burial area.

*Note: The recommended treatment for rusty but re-usable external metalwork is:*

- *Carefully wire brush metal to remove rust.*
- *Clean metal surface with white spirits and allow to dry.*
- *Apply Bilt Hamber Hydrate 80 rust neutraliser followed by Weathershield metal satin black topcoat (or similar good quality oil-based metal paint).*

*Note: All repointing and mortar work should be carried out using lime mortar, and should not contain any cement, to help prevent future masonry damage. Strap pointing should be avoided.*

*Note: All headstones, memorials and monuments should be cleared of plant growth and checked for stability. Any loose stones should be laid flat with a plan to have them re-set as soon as possible.*

### 9.2 Headstones, Memorials and Monuments

9.2.1 There are no listed monuments or tombs in the churchyard. There are a few leaning headstones, as expected, but on the whole, headstones and memorials are all in good condition.

9.2.2\* There is what appears to be fenced tomb, close to the south boundary, that is very overgrown (figure 11). It would be good to clear this at some point and refurbish the metal fencing.



Figure 11 – Churchyard – possible overgrown tomb – clear.

### 9.3 Boundaries

9.3.1 The boundaries are generally good with no major issues observed.

9.3.2\* The main south entrance gates to the churchyard require rebuilding (figure 12).



Figure 12 – Churchyard, south entrance gates – re-build.

9.3.3\* The gates at the southeast corner of the churchyard are serviceable but may require some attention in the near future (figure 12). If work is being carried out to the main south entrance gates, it might be good to have these gates looked at, otherwise they should be monitored and reassessed at the next inspection.



Figure 12 – Churchyard, southeast corner – gates starting to show signs of deterioration – monitor and reassess.

9.3.4\* The east boundary brick wall is leaning where it runs close to a tree, and some cracks are showing in the brickwork (figure 13). Buttresses have been built to

help stabilise the wall. The ivy growth should be cleared to prevent further deterioration of the brickwork.



Figure 13 – Churchyard, east boundary wall – remove ivy growth.

#### **9.4\* Trees and Vegetation**

A tree survey was carried out in April 2022 with no issues highlighted. As mentioned in 4.2.2 and 6.2.2, there is some plant growth around the tower roof that needs to be removed.

#### **9.5\* Boiler Room Entrance**

The metal railings around the boiler room entrance require redecorating (figure 14).



Figure 14 – Boiler room entrance – redecorate railings.

## 10.0 INTERIOR

### 10.1 General

The interior of the church is well cared for and in good condition.

*Note: All repointing and plaster work should be carried out using lime, and should not contain any cement, to help prevent future masonry damage. Strap pointing should be avoided. Any re-painting should be carried out using a breathable paint such as Earthborn Clay Paint.*

*Note: Use of ladders for access for inspection should comply with the Work at Height Regulations 2005. Guidance for this is published by the HSE and includes Safe Use of Ladders and Stepladders and Working at Height: A Brief Guide. This applies not only for the Quinquennial Inspection but also for routine maintenance.*

*Note: For further advice regarding the safety of those involved in routine maintenance of churches, refer to the ChurchCare section of the Church of England website.*

*Selected key points are included here as follows:*

- *It is strongly recommended that nobody - this includes your professional adviser and church wardens - should climb vertical ladders over 3m in height.*
- *All ladders must be sound safe and securely fixed. 'Footing' of ladders by a second person is considered a last resort.*
- *Hatches should have counterweights.*
- *There should be ladder extensions of about 1m or handholds beyond the plane of the hatch to assist in getting on and off the ladder.<sup>4</sup>*

### 10.2\* Lower Tower

The lower tower area is generally in good condition, though slightly cluttered as it is a bit of a multi-use area, and access is required to the bell ringing chamber, tower stairwell, and west end door. Some of the shelving could be improved as it is bowing (figure 15). It could be worth thinking about re-ordering this area to make more efficient use of space.

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<sup>4</sup> ChurchCare, Guidance Note: Commissioning Quinquennial Inspection Reports, Appendix 4. Found online at: [https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2020-11/Quinquennial\\_Inspection\\_CBC\\_guidance\\_2020.pdf](https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2020-11/Quinquennial_Inspection_CBC_guidance_2020.pdf) (accessed 13 January 2022).

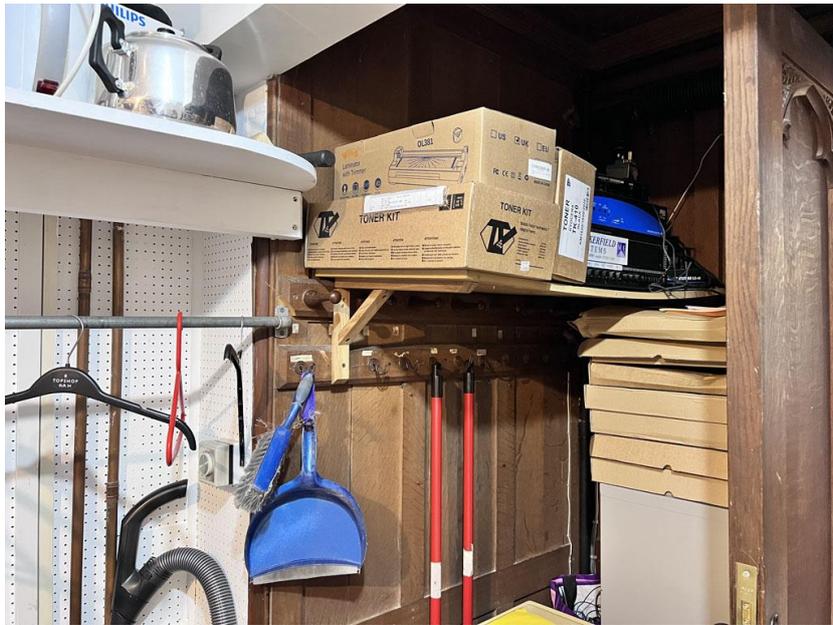


Figure 15 – Lower tower – improve shelving.

### **10.3\* Bell Ringing Chamber**

The bell ringing chamber is accessed via a wide, fixed wooden ladder. The area is generally in good condition with no major work required. The carpet is a little dirty and could maybe do with cleaning or replacing at some point.

### **10.4\* Bell Chambers**

The church has two bell chambers, one above the other, that are accessed from the spiral staircase that leads up to the roof. Both areas appear to be in good condition, as do the bells and bell frames. There is little dust and debris on the floor that it would be good to clear.

### **10.5 Nave, North Aisle and South Aisle**

10.5.1 The nave and aisles are in good decorative condition with no major work required.

10.5.2\* There are a few loose tiles here and there that could do with re-setting (figure 16). There is one triangle edge tile loose in the northwest corner, and a few just inside the north aisle external door. There are also a few loose and broken towards the east end of the nave/north aisle along the edge of the metal grating.



Figure 16 – Nave/north aisle – loose and broken tiles – re-set.

10.5.3 There is some undulation in the central aisle but the tiles feel solid.

10.5.4 The wooden pew platforms appear to be sound. There are signs of historic woodworm in places but none that appears to be active.

## 10.6 Chancel

10.6.1\* The step from the nave into the chancel is quite worn. This should be casually monitored and reassessed at the next inspection.

10.6.2\* The high end of the chancel is fully carpeted, and is generally in good condition. There is a patch of wear to the carpet on the south side (figure 17). This should be reassessed at the next inspection.



Figure 17 – Chancel – worn patch on carpet.

10.6.3\* The edges of the carpet have been stuck down with tape. It looks a little unsightly and a more aesthetically-pleasing solution should be sought long term (figure 18).

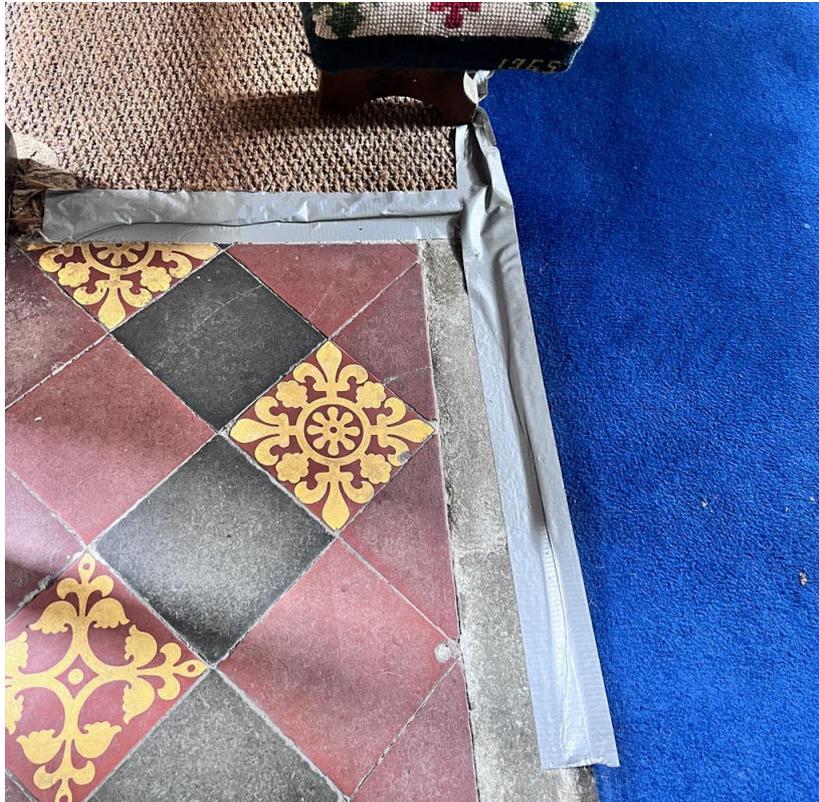


Figure 18 Chancel – carpet edge stuck down with tape – replace with something less unsightly.

### **10.7 Vestry**

The vestry is in good condition with no major work required.

### **10.8\* Porch**

There is a missing section of ceiling in the porch that should be repaired. The ceiling should be casually monitored for any signs of water ingress from the roof.

### **10.9 Furniture and Joinery**

All furniture and joinery appears to be in good condition. The altar rail feels solid, the pews all look good, and the rood screen with its painted panels is in good condition.

### **10.10 Church Hall**

The church hall is generally in good condition and fit for purpose. There is a little cosmetic wear and tear that you would expect from a building of this type.

## **11.0 MECHANICAL AND ELECTRICAL SERVICES**

### **11.1 General**

Electrics and heating are generally good with no known issues.

*Note: Electrics, and all electric appliances, should be regularly tested and certified by a qualified electrician. Boilers should be annually checked and serviced by a qualified heating engineer. Fire extinguishers in a public building should also have an annual check carried out by a trained professional service engineer.*

### **11.2 Electrics**

11.2.1 The church electrics were last tested on 6/10/21, and plugs and appliances have also been checked.

11.2.2 The church hall electrics were last tested in October 2021.

11.2.3\* All lights in the church and the church hall appeared to be working. The covers of the strip lights in the church hall could, ideally, do with the debris removing. The church hall kitchen light is a bit twisted, but it doesn't affect the use of it.

### **11.3 Heating**

11.3.1 The church is heated with radiators that all appear to be in good condition. The boiler was renewed in recent years. There is an electric heated air curtain in front of the west door in the lower tower.

11.3.2\* There appears to be a leak from the boiler overflow that has left a pool of water on the boiler room floor. The cause of this needs to be established and the leak cured.

### **11.4 Other Services**

11.4.1 Fire extinguishers were checked in August 2021.

11.4.2 The lower tower area has a sink with a cold tap and electric water heater to provide hot water.

11.4.3\* The church obtained planning permission and faculty to extend the church hall to provide additional toilet facilities (figure 19). Planning permission will expire in September 2022. It may be worth considering ‘starting the development’ so that the permission stays in place indefinitely.

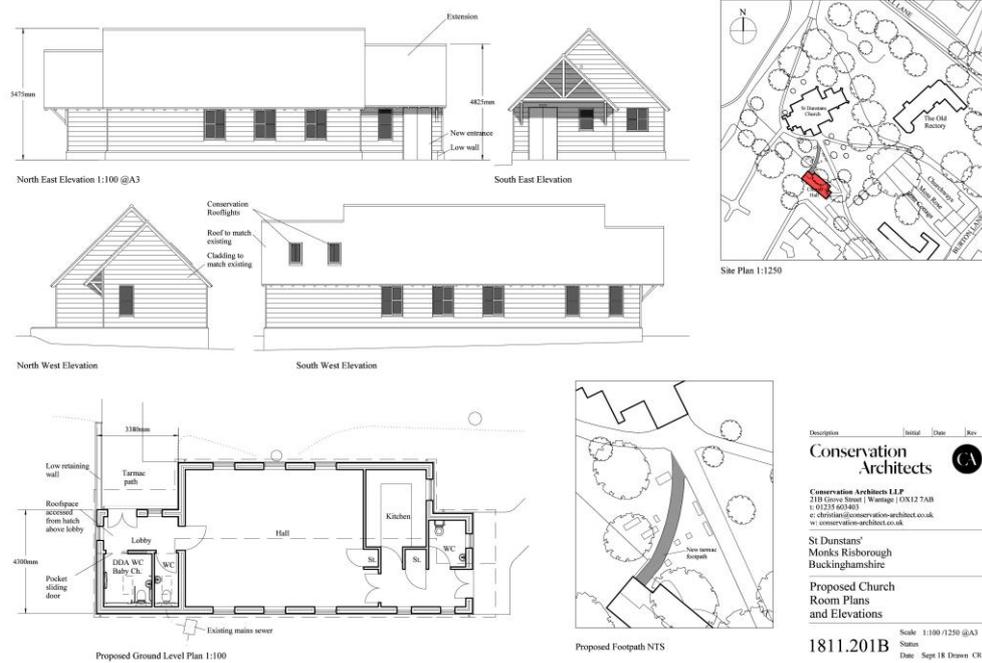


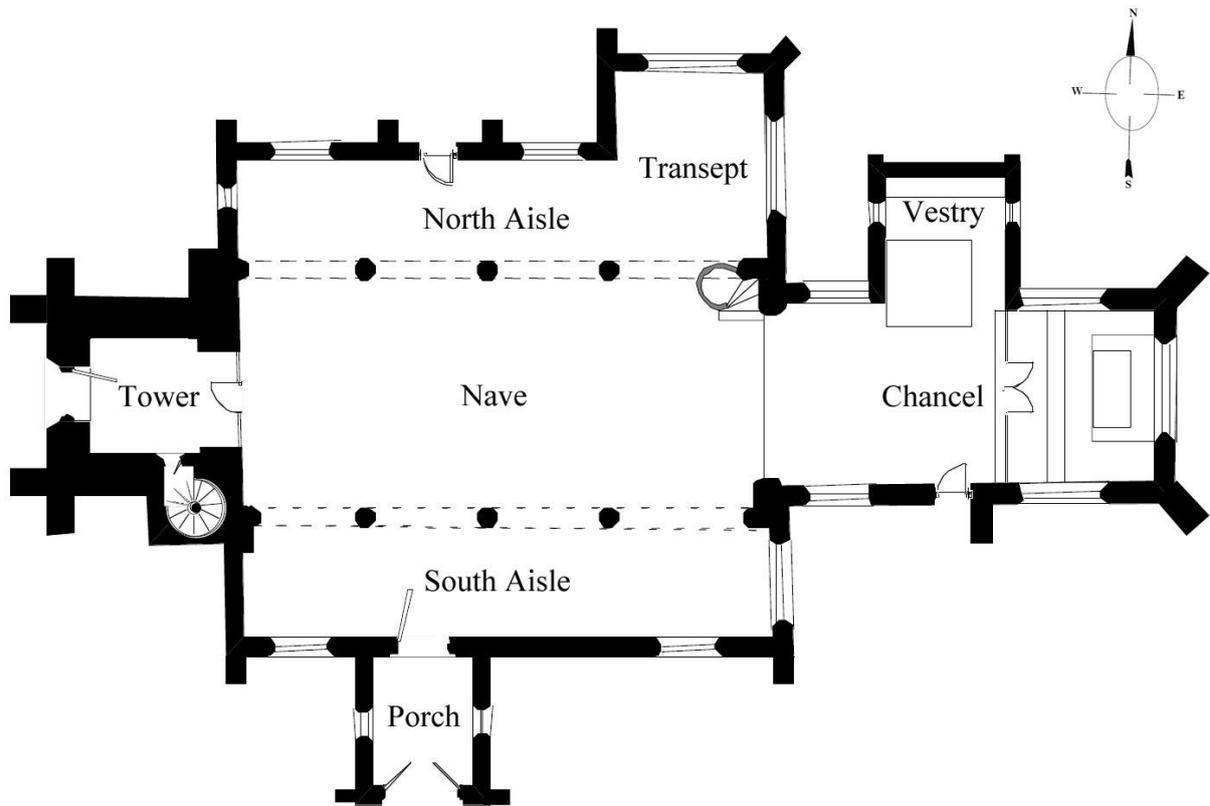
Figure 19 – Proposed plan and sketch of the extension of the church hall.

## 12.0 RECOMMENDATIONS AND PRIORITIES

<p>Urgent, requires immediate attention</p>	<p>11.3.2 Boiler room – investigate cause of leak. 11.4.3 Church hall extension – ‘start development’ to retain planning permission.</p>
<p>Requires attention within 12 months</p>	<p>4.2.2 Tower roof – clear vegetation. 5.2.1 Gutters and downpipes – redecorate. 5.2.2 North aisle, north side – downpipe fixed with flashband – repair, redecorate. 6.2.2 Tower, stair turret walls – remove high-level vegetation. 7.3 Church hall – blown glazing units – replace. 8.4 Porch door – replace closer. 9.3.4 Boundary wall – clear ivy. 11.2.3 Church hall lights – remove debris from covers.</p>
<p>Requires attention within 12-24 months</p>	<p>6.7.2 Church hall – mildew under roof overhang – remove and treat. 8.2.2 Tower, parapet door – treat with Danish oil. 8.3 Church hall, main door – repair cosmetic damage, redecorate. 9.3.2/9.3.3 Churchyard – rebuild entrance gates. 9.5 Boiler room entrance – redecorate railings.</p>
<p>Requires attention within quinquennial period</p>	<p>6.2.1 Tower parapet – minor cracks in render – repoint in lime. 8.3.2 Chancel, south door – refurbish door protection. 9.2.2 Churchyard – overgrown tomb – clear, refurbish fencing. 10.5.2 Nave/north aisle – re-set loose and broken tiles. 10.6.2 Chancel – carpet secured with tape – replace with a better solution. 10.8 Porch – reinstate missing ceiling section.</p>
<p>Desirable improvement with no timescale (as agreed with PCC)</p>	<p>4.5/10.8 Porch roof – monitor, reassess at next inspection. 4.6 Church hall roof – moss build up – monitor, reassess at next inspection. 6.3.2 Nave – weathering to string course – reassess at next inspection. 7.2.1 Stair turret – replace glass in windows, allow for movement. 10.2 Lower tower – improve shelving, consider reordering. 10.3 Bell ringing chamber – clean or replace carpet. 10.4 Bell chambers – clear dust and debris from the floor. 10.6.1 Nave/chancel – step worn – monitor, reassess at next inspection. 10.6.2 Chancel – worn carpet – reassess at next inspection.</p>

**\*Note: All repointing and mortar repairs should be carried out using lime mortar, and should not contain any cement, to help prevent future masonry damage. Strap pointing should be avoided.**

13.0 CHURCH PLANS



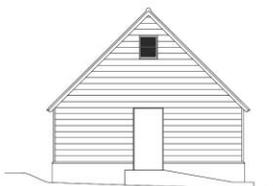
Church Plan



North East Elevation 1:100 @A3



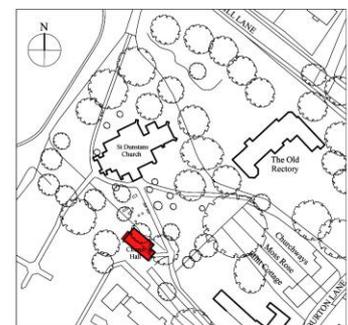
South East Elevation



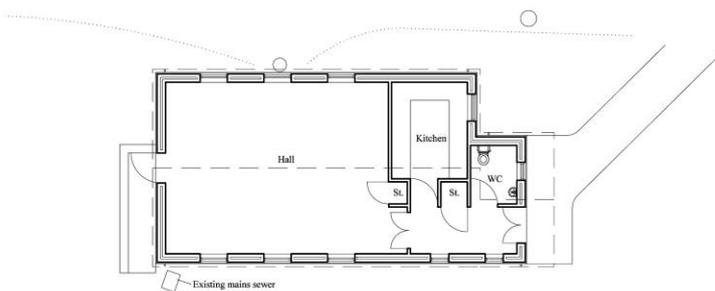
North West Elevation



South West Elevation



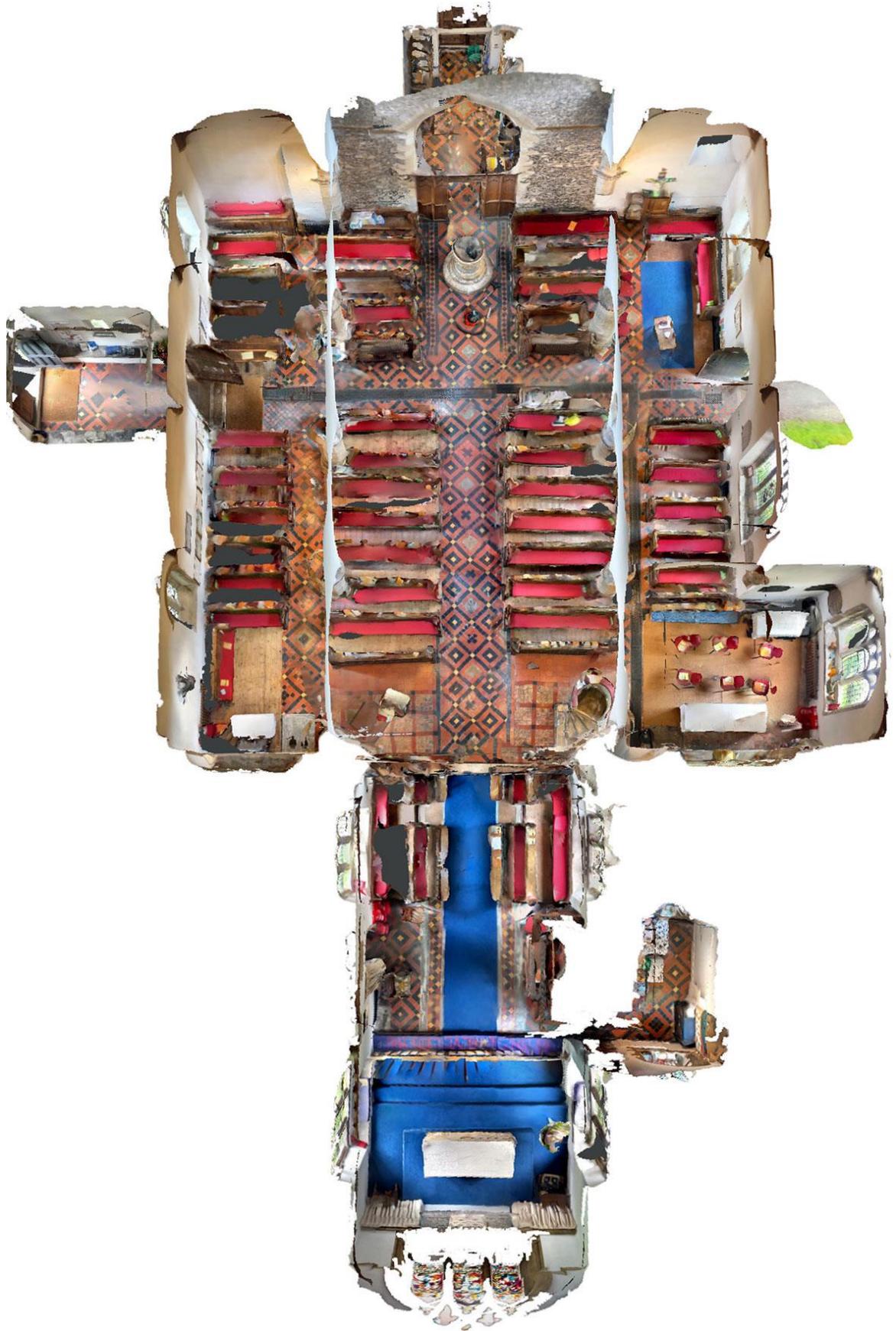
Site Plan 1:1250



Ground Level Plan 1:100

Church Hall Plan and Elevation

Description	Initial	Date	Rev
<b>Conservation Architects</b>			
Conservation Architects LLP 218 Grove Street   Wantage   OX12 7AB t: 01235 662403 e: christian@conservation-architect.co.uk w: conservation-architect.co.uk			
St Dunstons' Monks Risborough Buckinghamshire			
Existing Church Room Plans and Elevations			
1811.101	Scale	1:100/1250 @A3	
	Status		
	Date	Sept 18	Drawn: CR



LiDAR Scan