

# PARISH CHURCH OF ST. MARY, SHORTLANDS

## ANNUAL REPORT ON THE FABRIC AND ORNAMENTS FOR 2017

### Introduction

This report is produced in accordance with the Care of Churches and Ecclesiastical Measure 1991.

Five significant items of work were undertaken this year – (i) de-rust and painting the nave roof purlins and rafters, (ii) replacement and re-pointing of nave roof tiles and repair of lead flashings, (iii) replacement of tiles and associated remedial work on Church House (CH) roof, (iv) preparation and re-painting of south aisle roof with solar reflecting paint, (v) repair of the Millennium Chapel east wall severely crumbled coping stones. In addition, a number of miscellaneous items of work were carried out by various contractors and volunteers.

The premises were inspected on behalf of the Churchwardens in February 2018 with the conclusion that a number of more minor items from the Quinquennial Report (Nov 16) remain to be completed, either within a 2 year or 5 year period from that date as noted in the report. In addition, a number of other tasks need to be addressed as listed below.

One point to note is that, although one ground floor window sill to the right of CH main door has been repaired and re-painted, the CH wooden windows in general are in poor condition and need replacement with UPVC.

The Fire Brigade visited the Church in April 2017 to advise on fire safety measures as a result of which the votive candle stand was re-sited and the boiler room steps cleared. Further clearing of unwanted materials should be carried out in the boiler room. A formal risk assessment for the premises is yet to be carried out but a test evacuation was conducted at the conclusion of a Sunday morning service in order to assess the ease and timing of clearing the Church in the event of a fire or other emergency.

The goods and ornaments were inspected by the Churchwardens during the year. There are separate statements on the contents of the Terrier and Log Book but key changes are highlighted below.

### Repair and other work carried out during the year

Treatment and monitoring of Japanese knotweed has continued; much of the original outbreak has responded to spray and injection but there are three areas under current observation. The drains have been cleared and this work will continue on an annual basis to ensure free running of storm and waste water. All gutters and downcomers have been checked and cleared where necessary. A mixer valve was added to the hot and cold supply to the Hall gents toilet hand basins to control excessive hot water. Two paving slabs on the steps leading from CH to the Hall were re-set with sand and cement. The nave roof work mentioned above (Introduction) has solved the leak of water into the Church by the pulpit.

During 2017 the fire extinguishers were serviced and the organ was both serviced and repaired. The 5 year electrical test of all church buildings incl. the Hall and Scout Hut was carried out in July and certification received to this effect. The lawns were regularly mowed and in December a strong group of guides and volunteers cleared leaves.

### Inspection of the fabric of the Church including the Millennium Chapel (MC) and curtilage

The inspection carried out on behalf of the Churchwardens showed the following main defects require attention. *[Actions suggested are indicated]:*

- Various coping stones have minor cracks, distorted lead flashing, missing mortar and stained brickwork underneath *[continue repairs 2018]*
- Complete repairs to coping stones over the MC east wall. *[95% complete, finish 2018]*
- The north aisle ceiling needs repainting and a repair strip on the east end of the roof has detached. *[re-paint and replace strip 2018]*
- The south porch doors and frame need preparation and re-coating. *[attend to in 2018]*
- Top fixing of lightning conductor at east end of south elevation is missing. *[Replace at next opportunity]*
- Several attempts have been made to investigate and repair the church bell so that it functions correctly and consistently but protracted discussions are ongoing with the manufacturer to identify and correct the problem. *[continue discussion with the manufacturer 2018]*
- The surface of the masonry strip at the east end of the north aisle roof is flaking. *[repair 2018]*

- Outer brickwork around the south porch coping stones and in the stonework around the windows on the west wall requires re-pointing. *[repair 2018]*
- An external crack in the north wall about a centimetre wide extends from the coping stones to the top of the second window from the west end. *[no change from Jan 2017 inspection, continue to monitor]*
- In addition, external cracks at the top of the west corner of the north wall extend from the coping stones both vertically down the line of the lightning conductor through 25 brick courses and also diagonally downwards, via a hole in the brickwork, to an area close to the NW corner itself. NB: the lightning conductor on this north wall is about 1m from the NW corner. *[continue to closely monitor]*
- There is also an external crack at the top of the north corner of the west wall, about 0.6m from the NW corner, extending down 25 brick courses from the coping stones. *[continue to closely monitor]*  
*This crack and the cracks mentioned in the previous bullet point are of concern because they indicate that about 25 courses of brickwork at the top of the NW corner of the Church, approx. 1m in each direction, are becoming detached. It would be sensible therefore to seek a professional opinion on the safety of this brickwork both from a structural point of view and because of the risk of falling masonry at some time in the future.*
- A small area of the inside surface of the west wall is becoming detached. *[monitor]*
- The south side rear choir stall and a number of pews are loose. *[replace screws and/or tighten 2018]*
- In the sacristy, no faults were found in the fabric of the leaded windows and surrounding stonework. *[continue to monitor staining on inside of stonework]*
- The MC has cracks between the walls and ceiling internally at both E and W ends. The whole roof area is dirty with cobwebs and staining above the wall-mounted lights. It is understood that the PCC is scheduled to contract cleaning and re-decoration of the chapel during 2018. *[Re-decoration contract to be let in 2018]*
- The perimeter dwarf wall needs repair/repointing in places and the gate posts need treating with preservative. *[attend to when time allows]*
- Tree branches overhang the vestry and scout hut roofs. These were partially lopped during 2017 but continued work needs to be carried out. *[lop at first opportunity]*
- Japanese knot weed is under observation in three areas : Vicarage back garden, near the Hall and adjacent to the Church north porch steps. *[continue monitoring and treatment]*
- The garden benches, apart from the new bench, are in poor condition and require restoration and treatment. *[review treatment 2018]*
- The side gate on the north side sticks and needs adjustment of hinges. *[modify to facilitate closing of gate in all seasons]*
- Paths and steps (from N porch) were largely cleared of moss/algae during December 2017 leaf clearing. Moss treatment, however, should be carried out to continue this work. *[Moss treatment during 2018]*

### **Inspection of the fabric of Church House, flat and curtilage**

The inspection carried out on behalf of the Churchwardens showed the following main defects required attention: *[Actions suggested are indicated.]*

- The wooden window frames are in poor condition and need replacement with UPVC, priority being the three windows above the main entrance, but also those at ground floor level and those at the rear of CH. *[replace upper front windows as soon as funds allow, repair/re-paint others in the next two years]*
- The hand rails on the steps between CH and the Hall need repainting *[attend to 2018]*
- The access hatch to the left of CH main door leading to the boiler room should be checked and repaired if necessary to prevent water ingress into the boiler room area beneath. *[attend to 2018]*
- The carpet in the choir vestry is worn and may require treatment. *[review 2018, replace if funds allow]*
- Some of the bricks of the retaining wall in the open area between CH and the Hall are displaced and are crumbling. *[repair when funds allow]*
- The corridor east face boards need repainting. *[attend to in 2018]*
- Tarmac paths around Church and CH have cracks and holes. *[repair if funds allow, review in next two years]*

### **Inspection of the fabric of the Hall and curtilage**

The inspection carried out on behalf of the Churchwardens showed the following main defects require attention: *[Actions suggested are indicated.]*

- The window frames and sills on the east wall need re-painting and there is one broken window (to the room below the stage) *[replace glass and re-paint windows 2018]*

- There is a crack in the external north wall of the corridor leading to the Hall about halfway along which extends over 26 brickwork courses. *[monitor]*
- The crack across the corridor floor adjacent to the cloakroom is about 1cm wide and there are cracks around the cloakroom door frame and adjacent rooms. *[seal 2018 and monitor]*
- The corridor stair lift was satisfactorily tested, but the last maintenance inspection was 26/03/12. *[check required inspection interval]*
- The Hall has a number of cracks in the wooden flooring. *[fill cracks 2018]*
- The Hall east and south walls and below stage corridor cracks have not worsened since the last crack inspection 16/02/17. *[seal 2018 and monitor]*
- Lower parts of walls by the under-stage store and numeracy room have suffered damp and plaster has come off the ceiling inside the end room door *[replace plaster with waterproof plaster when funds allow].*
- The under-stage toilet seat needs to be replaced and the window catch is insecure. *[attend to 2018]*
- Vegetation along the bottom of the south wall was largely cleared during 2017 but some remains and also along the east wall. *[continue root treatment and removal in 2018]*
- The gate at the back entrance to the Hall/Scout Hut needs preservative treatment. *[Treat 2018]*
- The picket fencing leading from this gate and along St. Mary's Ave. is in a poor state of repair. *[replace when funds allow]*

### **Changes to the inventory of Goods and Ornaments.**

Wardens to advise.

### **Insurances**

Insurances for all the buildings and contents were kept up to date (as were those for employee and public liability).

### **Acknowledgements**

The churchwardens would like to thank the staff of the parish office for looking after the goods and ornaments of the church and keeping the associated records. The churchwardens also recognise the sustained efforts of the paid cleaning staff and are very grateful for the hard work done by the stalwart group of volunteer church cleaners, flower arrangers, mowers, gardeners and maintenance workers.

**March 2018**

**Coreen Corbin**  
Churchwarden

**Adolph Williams**  
Churchwarden