

Project: Tower Restoration at Holy Trinity Church, Ash Priors

Project summary

Our village church, almost 700 years old, needs attention to the tower as the next phase of its guardianship. We have a development and delivery program for high level scaffold work by specialist masons to refit the parapet stones and gargoyles, repoint the entire tower and carry out associated works.

Address: Holy Trinity Church, Ash Priors, Taunton, Somerset TA4 3NF

Local Authority: Taunton Deane **Ordnance Survey grid reference:** ST 15171 29479

Details of main contact person

Name Mr John Bentley

Position Churchwarden

Address Southbrook, Ash Priors, Taunton, Somerset TA4 3NQ 01823 430729

Email address jdb4404@yahoo.co.uk

It is the parish church for the village of Ash Priors. It provides a public place of worship, as a faith based organisation. It is an excepted charity under the Charities Act 2011 ss.30-32.

The Parochial Church Council of Holy Trinity Church, Ash Priors has 9 members including; The Incumbent (Rector), Churchwardens, Secretary, Treasurer, Elected Members, Co-opted members

Our PCC members possess a mixed group of skills and knowledge including commercial, scientific, administrative, ecclesiastical and other experience.

Our organisational spend in the 2018 financial year: £8341

The level of our Fabric fund reserves: £13960

Charity recognised by HMRC: Reference Number XN53301 Not VAT registered

The current Balance Sheet and Statement of Financial Activities for 2018 are included in Appendix 3.

Why our heritage is considered to be at risk.

The building is not on the heritage at risk register but is at severe risk of damage in two aspects. The tower needs substantial safety work and complete repointing. The stone window frames with metal ferramenta are starting to fail.

A condition survey is undertaken every five years. The most recent quinquennial inspection of 2015 has urged us to undertake urgent repairs. Minor works have been completed, but the major work on the tower and windows will require grant support (See sections 33.6, 34.1, 34.2 and 34.4 of the quinquennial report summary in Appendix 1). The full quinquennial report can be made available on request. If the tower fails this risk of consequential damage to the roof is considerable. There will be public safety consequences if the tower falls (or sheds stone) in the other direction.

The heritage our project focuses on and its value are summarised in Appendix 2.

Why do we need Grant funding?

We no longer have the patronage of 1159 (church built), 1438 (tower built) and 1874 (church extended). In the past 20 years the village has raised and spent over £30,000 on the church but the sum for the tower is too large for our village of 155 (2011 census). We need urgently to seek more definitive means of support and would appreciate grant funding of any size.

We have the freehold of the building that our project focuses on. There are no legal conditions, restrictions or covenants associated with it which may affect our project. We do not have and do not plan to take out, a mortgage or other loans secured on the building or land, or to acquire further building or land.

Our project

We aim to preserve the ancient structure and ensure its survival for many more centuries. We aim to increase the understanding and appreciation of the village church among local people and beyond, and in the coming generations.

There are two main strands to the project.

Undertaking urgent repairs to

- (a) the tower mortar and masonry.
- (b) windows requiring corrosion, ferramenta, mortar and masonry attention, including those in the tower.

Works include stabilisation and repair to the parapets and gargoyles, gentle descaling of laminating stonework, repointing all tower walls and repairs to windows and ferramenta; also to making good damaged plaster.

All existing stone will be re-used and materials used will be acceptable to current conservation practice. Work to be done by suitably accredited masons.

We expect the remedial works identified above to cost in the region of £160,000 in total.

Project cost estimate:

Cost Heading	Description	Cost	VAT	Total
Repair and Conservation work	Main contracts for tower repairs (£115,000) and window repairs (£5000)	120000	24000	144000
Other costs	insurance	1000	200	1200
Professional fees	Architect, project manager, QS, inspection, insurance, legal fees	9000	1800	10800
Contingency	and inflation	1500	300	1800
	Total:	131500	26300	157800

Is it essential for the project to go ahead now?

Our most recent quinquennial inspection has highlighted significant problems with the tower. This has come as no surprise as our previous architect had noted the deterioration for years. After his retirement a fresh pair of eyes highlighted the decline in the state of the tower. We have addressed many of the minor items which were highlighted.

Over the past 50 years our agricultural community has patch pointed some low level areas using strong and long lasting materials available at the time. Conservation specialists may feel these repairs are no longer appropriate.

Over the past 5 years we have accumulated enough in the Church Fabric Fund to be able to 'pump prime' the work and pay our own share. The money has come from legacies, village functions (£5000), donations and prudent saving. We currently have a management team of sufficient experience, concern and enthusiasm.

What work and consultation have we undertaken to prepare for this project?

We have already committed around £4000 to commission reports from;
an architect with church experience,
a rope access surveyor for a full rope inspection of the tower to inform the specification
an ecclesiastical quantity surveyor.

The summary of the rope survey is given in Appendix 4. This and the other reports will be used as the basis for tender documents and can all be made available if required.

We have considered the result of the quinquennial report and discussed the matter within the wider congregation. It also appears in our annual report and accounts.

We have discussed the position as a village and will further consult the Village Meeting - we are one of two or three villages left in England that does not have a Parish Council but a Meeting for all residents. The issue has been discussed with the Diocese and gained the approbation of the Archdeacon. We gather there should be no problems with a Grant of Faculty for this project.

What need and opportunity will our project address?

The project will address all of the issues outlined in the quinquennial inspection report as they relate to the tower. Because the problems are located higher up the tower there is an obvious safety hazard from falling masonry; this will be addressed by these works.

It also addresses an issue of rural tourism which is linked to the use of the church. We do not need to create a second community centre in the village. The church and the village hall use each other's facilities interchangeably: PCC and benefice meetings in the hall; village concerts in the church; we do not charge each other for use and all social events share profits equally between church and hall. Indeed the two operated together until charity registration became obligatory. There is a finite need for community buildings in the village. Therefore we will continue to concentrate on tourism and visitor welcome and awareness. We are on a signposted Taunton Cycle Trail which was produced by Taunton Deane District Council.

How would we acknowledge grant contributions to our project?

Plaque in bell tower commemorating projects details people and organisations involved.
The Villager - the monthly online and printed village magazine of Ash Priors.
The Somerset County Gazette - the weekly county newspaper.
Benefice newsletter & Diocesan Magazines
www.achurchnearyou.com - the website of all churches in England & Wales. - extend the current entry and mention our gratitude to funders

Next phase of development

Work to be done during the continuing development phase of the project:

The necessary consents and produce appropriate documentation e.g. Bill of Works, CDM, QA standards will be obtained.
Issue and evaluate returned tenders.
Negotiate with stakeholders; neighbours, planning bodies and the Diocese.
Negotiate with Main Contractor with regard to project timing to mitigate weather related problems.

Development timescale:

Work on the windows requiring considerably less funding can commence as necessary.

Work on the tower would commence when sufficient funding to complete the task is available (from Month 0).

Development Task	Start Month	End Month	Task Leader
Funding secured	Month 0		Development team
Instruct Architect	Month 1	Month 1	PCC
Inspections, Evaluation & draft tenders	Month 2	Month 4	Architect, QS
Tender published	Month 4	Month 5	Architect
Tender evaluated	Month 5	Month 6	Architect, QS
Appoint contractor	Month 6	Month 6	PCC with advice
Scaffolding Erection	Month 7	Month 7	Scaffolder appointed with masonry team
Stone repair & safety modifications	Month 7	Month 11	Masonry contractor
Raking out and repointing	Month 7	Month 11	Masonry team
Scaffolding removal	Month 12	Month 12	Scaffolder
Reclaim VAT	Month 13	Month 13	Treasurer
Audit of Accounts	Month 13	Month 13	PCC Treasurer and outside Auditor

Project outcomes

What difference will our project make for heritage?

The building will be in far better condition than at present with an obvious safety hazard addressed. The building dates back to the 10th century and the tower to the 13th century. This work will ensure continuance for another 700 years. There will be an engaged population determined to continue the conservation of their heritage building. Details of the work are recorded in the church logbook and 'terrier' available to the churchwardens and bell captains of the future.

In the shorter term over the next few decades, there will be better protection for the internal refurbishments and decorations done over the past several decades.

What difference will our project make for people?

The project will;

- a. Remove a masonry hazard for people.
- b. Provide continuing leisure opportunities in the area. These are free to access and therefore no one will be debarred on grounds of cost; a benefit to walkers, cyclists, casual visitors and those consulting our past 400 years of graves records. These are listed in paper form and accessible to all visitors to the church. These are also located on a graveyard map - also accessible.
- c. Bell ringing engages a cohort of volunteers in a physical activity which is encouraged by many and various health professionals. In addition to the obvious cardio-vascular benefits this joint activity reduces the risk of isolation in the predominantly older people who will participate.

What difference will our project make for communities?

The largest building available in the community will remain available for use. In terms of church membership we are quite large for the size of the village. However, the building is used for weddings and christenings which, in addition to being family events, are also times of huge community celebration and for funerals which are major community events. The events then often continue in the village hall.

The village plan (c1983 and since) emphasises conservation, accessibility (both personal and geographical - toilets, ramps, car park) and the environment. There will be a wider range of people involved in village life including religious observance, public gardening and wall building.

We have support from the Diocese, the Benefice, our district and county councillors, the community through the Parish Meeting and the hall Management Committee.

What are the main groups of people that will benefit from our project?

Villagers - who have huge affection for the building and, in addition to formal worship, use the building as a space in which to pause and reflect. We offer unconditional access. The church is open dawn to dusk every day of the year.

Walkers - who already have access to our toilet building and access to the church.

Accommodation providers - who are always looking for additional things for their guests to enjoy when in the area. The more available the greater the likelihood of return visits. The church is visited by many walkers and cyclists also come through the village frequently. The disadvantage of a quiet country village is that it gets very busy.

Bell Ringers - we have an active peal of bells with a Benefice teams and several visiting teams each year. They will have a safer tower and belfry.

The local project team - who are not seeking recognition and public acclamation but are retired from professions where they have left a legacy of their work embedded in current practice. It would be nice to leave a physical legacy to the community in which we live.

It should be noted that the building is open, daily, on an unconditional basis. We have a team of volunteers who open and lock the building. It is unstaffed for almost all of the opening hours and we have no means of accurately counting visitors.

Who are the people responsible for the work during the development phase?

Rev Helene Stainer, Rector for 10 years and has developed experience of managing church affairs and estate, running committees, experience of smaller building projects etc. She has the care of three other churches.

Prior to ordination she was a teacher (and a nurse prior to that) so has exemplary skills in managing competing priorities, different learning speeds and communicating and communicating uncomfortable news.

John Bentley, Churchwarden, lives in the village. He was employed by Trans World Airlines for over 30 years finishing his career as Director of Sales responsible for a staff of 30 and 4 offices in the UK, Ireland, The Netherlands and South Africa. He is now retired and able to devote his strategy development and delivery experience to our project.

John Taylor, Churchwarden, lives in the village. Now retired, he worked in water supply quality for 20 years as a microbiologist and laboratory manager requiring an analytical mind, knowledge, accuracy and the ability to manage people to achieve time critical objectives as well as liaison with key individuals in other organisations. He was latterly a technical audit manager for water treatment plant tasked with identifying principal issues for action and demonstrating forensic attention to detail.

Simon Harrison has lived in the village for 40 years and has been the treasurer of Holy Trinity Church & Ash Priors Village Hall for the past 12 years. He was the local GP for 30 years and is still involved with running local companies. He has recently self-built a new house in the village. He is well used to managing the personal, financial, IT and logistical aspects of complex organisations. He has overseen several previous smaller projects on the church building.

There will be development support from the Diocese with many years' experience of combined heritage and asset based community project development.

The core team are all local and meet regularly. They intend regular but flexible meetings with open access to our project and financial management tools.

Appendix 1: Quinquennial Report – Recommendations

ASH PRIORS Holy Trinity
2015 QUINQUENNIAL REPORT

PART THREE

Recommendations in Order of Priority

32. Items for Immediate Attention	Approx Cost £	PCC/ De minimis/ DAC
32.1. Refix loose, slipped or replace missing slates. Check all roof slopes (7.3, 7.7 and 7.9).	£300	De minimis
32.2. Replace gutter gaskets and realign to seal leak at eaves of north aisle north roof slope (8.3).	Incl in 32.1	De minimis
32.3. Point open joints within west gables of north and south aisles (9.7) and in head of tower parapets (12.5).	TBD	De minimis
32.4. Commission a survey to assess need for lightning conductor (25.2). Advise on recommendations.	TBD	De minimis
33. Items for Attention within Eighteen Months		
33.1. Point open joints between brick lined gutters and church walls to prevent long term damp penetration (8.5 and 9.5).	£500	De minimis
33.2. Point up tabling and masonry to north aisle central respond (9.4).	£400	De minimis
33.3. Point open joints within the chancel east gable and south east buttress, vestry east wall and south aisle buttresses (9.6 and 10.6.1).	£1000	De minimis
33.4. Replace wire guard protection to window W6 (10.5.1).	£600	De minimis
33.5. Provide steeplejack access to vice turret roof and point up open joints to stone roof and crenellations (12.8).	£600	De minimis
33.6. The tower pointing and masonry is in poor condition with more advanced deterioration in the top third. Mortar is missing on all elevations and the tower is in decline. Extensive remedial works are now required as a priority (12.27, 12.29, 12.30, 12.35, 12.36, 12.37, 12.38).	£150,000	DAC
34. Items for Attention within the Quinquennium		
34.1. Redecorate external window ferramenta and treat embedded tips. Progress around church to complete work in current quinquennium. (10.2.2, 10.8.1, 10.9.1, 10.10.1, 10.12.1 and 10.13.1).	£500/ Window	De minimis
34.2. In parallel with 34.1 above carry out a programme of mortar and masonry repairs to window surrounds (10.4.1 et al).	Incl in 34.1	De minimi
34.3. Freshen up internal lime wash around base of tower (12.39)	£300	De minimis

	Approx Cost £	PCC/ De minimis/ DAC
34.4. Repair and redecorate (or replace) corroding internal iron saddle bars to windows (17.3).	£300/ Window	De minimis
34.5. Ease and overhaul vertical sliding sashes (17.5).	£100 Each	De minimis
35. Desirable Improvements		
35.1. Chamfer base or fit open shoes to downpipes on north side (8.4).	£100	De minimis
35.2. Add external wire guard protection to window W12 (10.11.1).	£600	De minimis
35.3. Extend electric lighting in vice turret staircase to roof level (12.11).	£300	De minimis?
35.4. Replace foam backed impervious carpets with natural hessian and breathable felt underlays (16.1 and 16.3).	TBD	DAC
35.5. Repair or replace (and extend) the hearing loop (27.5).	£500+	De minimis
36. Maintenance		
36.1. Replace missing mortar to flashing groove at base of south gable to chancel arch (7.5).	Incl in 32.1	De minimis
36.2. Clear valley gutters on a regular basis (7.8 and 8.1), as well as eaves gutters and downpipes (8.2).	£150/ Visit	PCC
36.3. Fix downpipe on southeast chancel buttress (8.6).	£50	PCC
36.4. Check and clear all ground gulleys (8.7).	Nil	PCC
36.5. Redecorate fascia and hopper box to southeast vestry eaves (8.7).	£200	PCC
36.6. Sweep down vice turret staircase (12.13)	Nil	PCC
36.7. Repair bird mesh protecting belfry openings (12.20) and clear up nest debris in belfry (12.21) and sound deadening chamber below (12.24). Wear corrective PPE.	£300	PCC
36.8. Cut back, leave to die and remove churchyard ivy (13.3, 13.4 et al).	Nil	PCC

Appendix 2: The heritage our project focuses on and its value



Holy Trinity Church is a Grade 2* listed building No. 1344823.

Our village has had a church for a century before 1159. The tower was built in 1438/9 (The year Edward III was crowned). The building had 'restruction' and extension in 1874 but no major work done on the tower.

The website "British Listed Buildings" describes our church as follows.

"Church. C15, South aisle 1833, restored 1874. Red sandstone random rubble masonry, slate roofs, C19 tiled chancel. Two bay aisled nave, North and South aisle chapels, latter containing organ and extended by one bay to contain heated vestry, West tower, North porch. Three stage crenellated tower with pyramid slate roof and weather vane, diagonal buttresses, square headed Tudor arch doorway with floral decoration in the spandrels early C19, 4-light cinquefoil perpendicular window, 2-light bell openings with Somerset tracery, higher crenellated square stair tower South-east corner. Porch, gabled late C19. Three light trefoil headed perpendicular windows. Interior: rendered. Standard perpendicular arcades, wagon roofs, ogee headed hagioscope. Floor tiles in chancel; polychrome marble 3-bay crocketed reredos with finials; handsome painted and gilded wooden altar rails; polychrome marble pulpit with cast iron and brass handrail; octagonal font; all part of 1874 reconstruction".

We suspect that "restruction" means "restoration". At that time the works did not involve significant work to the tower which has been left untouched for centuries.

Pevsner (2015) dates the tower, which is subject to this project, at 1438/39 as donations were made to enable construction at that time. Revd Baynham gives a good account of the church in his original and now reprinted 'Memorials of Ash Priors'

The church forms a major part of the village infrastructure. We are a small village with only the church and a hall as village facilities. In the past 17 years we have done major repairs to the roof and guttering, restored the interior of the building, built ramp access to both the church and hall and, (supported by The National Lottery) built a toilet facility in the Priests stable/coal shed.

Our church is a visitor attraction in the village. Six years ago the village created a 20 space car park for use by the village hall and church.

Appendix 3: Balance Sheet and Statement of Financial Activity 2018

Holy Trinity Church, Ash Priors, Parochial Church Council Balance Sheet - Detail As at December 31, 2018

Current Assets

Cash At Bank And In Hand	
CCLA Bell Deposit	2,098
CCLA Fabric Deposit	15,223
CCLA Treasurers Deposit	5,256
Lloyds Bank plc	2,542
Undeposited Funds	54

Net Assets	25,173
-------------------	---------------

Funds & Reserves

Retained Funds

TREASURER'S WORKING Fund	2,140
Bell Fund	2,087
Children's Fund	107
Fabric Fund	13,960
Fabric Working Fund	210
Treasurers Deposit Fund	5,230
Village Flower Fund	290
Revaluation Reserve	35
Accumulated Funds	1,114

Funds Provided	25,173
-----------------------	---------------

Holy Trinity Church, Ash Priors, Parochial Church Council
Statement of Financial Activities (Receipts & Payments)
January 1, 2018 to December 31, 2018

	Total TREASURER'S WORKING Fund (U)	Ash Priors Parish Meeting (R)	Bell Fund (R)	Children's Fund (R)	Fabric Fund (R)	Fabric Working Fund (R)	Treasurers Deposit Fund (U)	Village Flower Fund (R)
Receipts								
Income and Endowments								
Gift Aid Claimed	2,206	2,206						
Income from Charitable Activities	1,260				1,191			69
Income from Donations and Legacies	6,171	6,121						50
Interest & Investment Income	109		10		72			
Parish Meeting Funds administered	300	150						
Total Receipts	10,046	8,477	150	10	0	1,263	0	119
Payments								
Expenditure								
Church Activities	7,454	7,454						
Cost of Special Events	888	888						
Flower Fund Expenditure	150							150
Parish Meeting Expenditure	150		150					
Total Payments	8,642	8,341	150	0	0	0	0	150
Other Recognised Gains/(Losses)								
Other Charity share	-290	-290						
All Receipts	10,046	8,477	150	10	0	1,263	0	119
All Payments	8,642	8,341	150	0	0	0	0	150
Net Movement in Funds	1,114	-154	0	10	0	1,263	0	-32
Total Funds Brought Forward	24,024	2,140	0	2,087	107	13,960	210	290
Total Funds Carried Forward	25,138	1,986	0	2,098	107	15,223	210	259

Appendix 4: Summary of Tower condition from Rope Survey

*Our Ref: SD/LC25
Your Ref: Survey*

*All Correspondence:
The Stable, Wick Lane,
Hewish, North Somerset,
BS24 6RR*

Benjamin + Beauchamp Architects Ltd
The Borough Studios
The Borough
Wedmore
BS28 4EB

August 2nd 2017

Dear Michael

Holy Trinity Church Tower, Ash Priors

We have completed the survey of the stone work and mortar joints on the tower. Please find enclosed four USB memory sticks that show the condition as follows.

South East Gargoyle (Stair turret)

- Open joints around the top, side and bottom of the gargoyle
- There is a slight crack to stonework although nothing serious at the moment

South West Gargoyle (Stair turret)

- Open joints where it connects to string course

South West Gargoyle

- Small crack to joint above the gargoyle
- Mortar on top of the gargoyle has slight movement although nothing serious at the moment
- Small amount of flaking stone work around the gargoyle

North East Gargoyle

- Open joint to top and side of gargoyle

North West Gargoyle

- Open joints to top, side and base of gargoyle

East Elevation

- Flaking stonework & flaking joints in areas throughout the elevation
- Plastic hopper head and top of the pipe is not held to the wall properly
- Open joints around the belfry window and to the mullion
- Open joints to the top of the east side of the stair turret
- Open joints around the string course under the stair turret
- Open joints around the string course where the elevation connects to the church roof

South Elevation (stair turret)

- Inner stair turret there are joints open on all elevations.
- Inner stair turret the water does not run to the outlet
- Poor stonework at the top where a bush has pushed stone work out
- Open joints to string course
- Small number of open joints on this elevation
- One large open joint as the tower connects to the church
- lead above the window is loose as the joint has fallen away
- flaking stonework and joints in various areas to the lower section of the elevation

South Elevation

- Open joint to battlements & west side of stair turret
- Open joints to string course & a deep open joint above belfry window to base of the string course
- Open joints in various areas throughout this elevation & west side of the stair turret
- Belfry window has open joints & open joints to the mullion
- Buttress on east side has big open joints to the top
- Flaking stonework & flaking joints in areas throughout the elevation

North Elevation

- Open joints to battlements & string course
- Flaking stone work and joints in various areas throughout the elevation
- Open joints in various areas throughout the elevation
- Open joints to north east buttress & flaking stonework and joints

West Elevation

- Open joints to string course and battlements
- Open joints, flaking stonework & flaking joints in various areas throughout the elevation
- Flaking stone work, joints & open joints to north west buttress
- Open joints around belfry window & to the mullion

Lightning Conductor

There is no lightning conductor present on the church. If you would like a system installed please contact us.

Your Sincerely

DAWSON STEEPLEJACKS LTD



Sam Dawson
Engineer

