



St Lawrence Church

LECHLADE-ON-THAMES



Lechlade St Lawrence PCC

Version 19

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Additional Annexes to the Statement of Need Version 17 in separate document.

Annex 1: Worship and Mission in 2022 - Supporting document to the Statement of Need

Annex 2: Floor Design - Supporting document to the Statement of Need in response to the DAC Report dated 31st March 2022

Annex 3: Choir screen - Supporting document to the Statement of Need in response to the DAC Report dated 31st March 2022

Annex 4: Use of the church - Supporting document to the faculty submission in response to the DAC request dated 31st March 2022

Annex 5: Towards Net Carbon - Supporting document to the faculty submission to explain how the reordering proposals comply with the Faculty Jurisdiction (amendment) Rules 2022



View from the chancel into the south aisle post 1882 reordering but before the screen was installed

Summary

The Need

We have a strong and lively church which is well supported across the community. We hold three well-attended services every Sunday and more during the week. We have a range of popular study groups which complement the services. There are other strong Christian groups from Mothers Union and Men Aloud Out to youth groups and the 'little lights' toddlers' group. Our close links with the St Lawrence Church of England Primary School enables a strong Christian ethos to be promoted there. We are a teaching ministry giving young clergy the experience to build their calling. A successful Mission took place in September 2022 to promote the Christian message to the wider community.

There is a strong need to build on our current worship and mission activities, so we have the building and facilities to maintain and grow our church community particularly for younger families and youth. These are the people who will sustain our church community and building into the future.

This Statement of Need sets out the strong need or public benefit for the proposals through:

*liturgical freedom, pastoral wellbeing, opportunities for mission and putting the church to viable uses that are consistent with its role as a place of worship and mission.*¹

This document

The document has been updated with additional information and in response to comments from statutory consultees and the 2021 public consultation. The document:

- (i) Sets out changes we have made to the reordering proposals;
- (ii) Provides further justification of the need for some of the proposals; and
- (iii) Includes further explanation in response to comments raised.

We have also summarised the outcome of the 2021 consultation which shows substantial support, over 88% of regular church attendees, for the proposals. We received 155 completed questionnaires, online and paper submissions accompanied by many supportive comments and a few not fully supportive. The results are summarised in Section 12.

We have added three Annexes as separate documents. Annex 1 explains the worship and mission of St Lawrence in 2022 including the temporary removal of the pews to allow these activities to take place. Annex 2 responds to the DAC feedback on the design of the new floor. Annex 3 responds to the DAC feedback on the proposed removal of the central choir screen.

The proposals have been based on professional advice from our highly experienced architect, archaeologist, structural engineer, electrical and mechanical engineers and other specialists.

Our objectives

Our objectives are unchanged from previous versions of the Need Statement. These are:

An open and welcoming space for adaptable worship and community use: this is achieved through use of unupholstered chairs which will replace the pews, relocation of the choir screen to provide greater depth and remove the foreshortening of the church and build a lighter floor. The large windows enhance the welcoming space with excellent light to the nave and aisles.

¹ Re St Alkmund Duffield, Arches Court of Canterbury, 2012

A level access for all abilities from the reopened north porch to the communion rail: we strongly believe that all in our church community of all ages and abilities should be welcome.

‘A Church without disabled people is a disabled Church.’²

We are proposing to remove barriers to access at the chancel steps and access from the north porch and south door and install an accessible toilet within the church and adaptable seating so those in wheelchairs can sit with their family rather than in the aisle adjacent to a pew. Not all disability is visible, so we are providing enhanced hearing loop systems and mobile screens for ease of viewing. There are also barriers to access the first-floor level of the cottage so we shall use ground-floor Sunday school rooms in the church for mid-week church groups and make the parish office accessible by relocating it in the vestry, to be reached by a new level access. The lack of baby changing facilities discourages those caring for young children from attending a service. These are all essential needs to make our church open for all abilities.

Shared spaces to make optimal use of the whole church building: as we bring all the activities and facilities within the church, all who use the building need to be aware of other users and share their space. The 2018 and 2021 consultations showed the strong need to bring Sunday School teaching within the church and close to parents. This is why we propose to include Sunday school rooms at the west end of the church with sharing space such as in the secure ringing chamber when not used for ringing.

Efficient energy use towards the Church of England (CoE) ‘net zero’ carbon reduction target by 2030: this need is driven by the CoE target and the strong feedback from parishioners to provide comfortable and effective heating during services and events. A cold church is unlikely to attract and retain new people. We have spent much time investigating feasible options to meet this need, consulting with the DAC heating advisor and engaging specialist mechanical consultants. The proposal for a hybrid solution is based on professional advice and maintains flexibility of heating systems.

Heritage conserved by careful design of internal changes: the reordering proposals we set out in this document will result in benefits in terms of liturgical freedom, pastoral well-being, opportunities for mission and putting the church to viable uses that are consistent with the church’s role as a place of worship and mission. The impact of the reordering is set out in the Statement of Significance.

The church was built in the 15th Century and the fine perpendicular building structure has been largely unchanged over centuries. The Grade 1 listing is mainly focused on the original perpendicular church design. The internal arrangements have been changed to reflect the liturgical practices over time. We have taken care not to impact on the building structure and the proposals are mainly reversible. Where there is a strong and multiple need for change, examples are raising of the floor level and removing the pews, then we show that this outweighs the harm to a moderately significant floor or pew. Conversely, we have yet to demonstrate sufficient need to outweigh replacement of the choir pews so we are not proposing these changes at this time and limiting the extent of reordering of the south chapel.

² Equal Access to Church Buildings, Church Buildings Council, 2021

The main changes to the September 2021 proposals

The lobby: we are removing the proposed glass lobby to the north porch and keeping all ground floor facilities within the line of the gallery. The existing war memorial will therefore remain in its current location. The removal of the lobby emphasises the need to provide outer doors to the north porch for shelter and weather proofing and to minimise heat loss from the church.

The chancel and choir stalls: we are minded to accept the comment from the Church Building Council to defer any decision on the chancel and choir stalls until the reordering in the nave has been completed and its impact assessed.

The Blaise chapel: the chapel will be retained in a simple layout for use in small services and for private prayer.

These changes will retain the liturgical focus of the east end and should address the comments from statutory consultees on retaining elements of the F. S. Waller and Son reordering. We detail these changes in [Section 7](#).

Further justification for the need for some of the proposals

We have expanded this document to include separate sections to address the significant issues identified by some of the statutory consultees.

The choir screen: We believe there are valid and convincing liturgical, architectural and practical needs to relocate the screen which outweigh the historical significance of its current location. These are to:

- (i) Enable liturgical freedom from the division of clergy and congregation;
- (ii) Provide greater flexibility to the church that are consistent with its role as a place of worship and mission;
- (iii) Make the whole church accessible for all, promoting pastoral well-being and making the building more inviting for new worshippers;
- (iv) Better reflect the significance of the original perpendicular design and shape of the church through an uninterrupted view of the altar from the nave, enabling the chancel to be re-united to the rest of the church; and
- (v) ensure a clear view of the wonderful east window of the church with images of the Patron Saint being clearly visible.

Detailed justification is provided in [Section 7](#) and in Annex 3

In mitigation and to recognise its example of 19th century workmanship, we had proposed to retain the central screen and relocate this to the rear of the gallery at the west end. This was where the original organ was located. We believe this is an appropriate solution although, having considered the view of the DAC, we have looked at alternative options to relocate the choir screen and we explain these in the Annex 3 document.

The floor: We explain in [Section 8](#) the need for and technical reasons why we have proposed to raise the floor to (i) meet accessibility needs, (ii) enable an underfloor heating system to be installed without harm to the existing floor or impact on the open area with large radiators and (iii) avoid harm to the existing lime concrete floor and both north and south walls. Improving the heating, lighting and audio-visual systems to meet current and future requirements needs a myriad of pipes, cables and fittings, much more so than previous requirements. To minimise the harm to the fabric, our proposal is to route this equipment through ducts under the new floor. We note that both the Church Building Council and Ancient Buildings and Places accepted

the need for raising the floor, Historic England asked for clear and convincing justification, which we provide in Section 8, and the Society for the preservation of Ancient Buildings (SPAB) asked for further consideration of alternatives.

The pews: We also explain in [Section 8](#) the need for replacing the pews to provide a more flexible, open and accessible nave to meet the needs of our continuing worship and mission. We also explain why some of the suggestions from statutory consultees are wholly impractical. Both the Church Building Council and the Ancient Buildings and Places accepted the need for removing the pews although the latter thought we should retain some. We refer to the Consistory Court judgement on St Nicolas Great Buckham (Guildford) where the Chancellor decided that a mixture of modern chairs and 19th century pews would look incongruous and not serve the ambitions of the church to engage with the community:

In seeking to serve two masters, present needs and past aesthetics, there is a risk that it properly serves neither.

The Gallery: We mention above that the proposed glass lobby will be removed. The gallery is generally on the same line as the 1829 gallery. There are no changes to the other proposals for the west gallery which we set out in [Section 9](#).

Heating and power: We asked our electrical and mechanical consultants to report on feasible options to provide comfortable and even heating across the church. The option we are proposing has least harm to the fabric as we explain in [Section 10](#). Explanations are provided in response to comments from statutory consultees.

Church Cottage: We propose to sell Church Cottage and apply the proceeds towards funding the reordering work in the church. The Sunday School, office and facilities will be relocated within the church.

Ledgerstones: We carried out an archaeological investigation to assess the feasibility of moving the three large ledgerstones and consulted the conservation team at the Church Buildings Council (CBC) and our experienced stonemason. The CBC agreed that these ledgerstones could be re-located in an area with low footfall. We comment in [Section 7](#).

Further explanation in response to comments raised

These are included in Sections 7 to 11 and cross referenced in the comments log lodged with the DAC'

Support for the proposals

We carried out a public consultation in 2021 which showed that 88% of regular church attendees supported the updated proposals. We include [in Section 12](#) a summary of the consultation report. The full report³ is available as a separate document submitted to the DAC.

Our commitment

Our care for and commitment to the church fabric over the last three decades includes major repairs to nearly all the windows, replacement of stonework and other essential work on the fabric. Our congregation has raised and expended over £600,000 for this work. This clearly demonstrates our commitment to future restoration and reordering work into the future.

³ Report on the 2021 Public Consultation, Lechlade St Lawrence PCC, 2021



*View from the west end into the chancel post 1882 reordering but before the screen was installed
(note the George IV Coat of Arms is not in position above the chancel arch)*

Preamble

Church buildings are more than just visible symbols of Christianity in our towns and villages. They provide the physical, material context for local groups of Christians to come together to worship God. As worship changes over time, so too the church building changes. The people influence the building, just as the building influences the people. St. Lawrence, Lechlade is a church building that shows evidence of many changes in official religious policy.

There has been a church in Lechlade since the 13th Century. The existing perpendicular church was built of Taynton limestone and completed in 1476. The external structure is a fine example of a Grade 1 Cotswold wool church and has been relatively unchanged over the last six centuries.

The internal layout has changed significantly during the same period, reflecting the liturgical needs of the church. In 1476 St. Lawrence was part of a wider Roman Catholic Europe where the Latin mass was the central act of worship. The momentous religious changes of the reformation in the second decade of the 16th Century stripped the church and damaged artefacts. The physical building of St. Lawrence reflected these changes in theology and liturgical practice - pews were places for people to sit and primarily listen, empty niches were devoid of images and rood stairs leading nowhere reflect previous practices. For more than three hundred years there was no screen separating the chancel and the nave.

The Oxford Movement felt the Reformation had gone too far, Protestant theology was damaging, and the 'beauty of holiness' had to be restored in public worship. This meant substantial changes to the liturgical space of parish churches reflected in the 1882 reordering. Communion tables were turned back to altars again (and raised and railed off), vestments and hangings were re-introduced, as were new choir screens. The balance now swung back to sacramental worship, away from the preaching of God's Word. The ritual of the Mass/Holy Communion was made more elaborate and focussed on what the priest did in the newly separated chancel area. The whole focus of the congregation was drawn to the raised altar at the east end. The Reformation was now partially reversed.

A parish church building today needs to be adaptable to differing forms of worship for different members of the church family - from a more contemporary worship style, utilising advances in digital technology in the main body of the church, to a more traditional Book of Common Prayer service. Flexible seating arrangements will allow the building to be used for a variety of different styles of worship and wider community events. Toilet and kitchen facilities, as well as meeting rooms, will enhance appeal to all ages. A warm, well-lit and welcoming worship space, retaining the natural beauty of the medieval structure, but without unnatural barriers between people, will greatly help in encouraging more people to attend (who might have been discouraged by the existing format of the building), and reaching the local community with the love of God in Jesus Christ.

Rev Dr Andrew Cinnamond
Vicar of St. Lawrence

A comment from our independent reviewer

To note in which century the church has been built is important. Although it has many additions from the late Georgian and Victorian age, it is not a Victorian Church building.

Indeed, if anyone is keen to keep its past heritage, it would be better to return it to its original setting, a building for the use of the whole parish, without either chairs or pews. As this is not feasible for today's use, having chairs rather than pews (installed in the Victorian era) would accomplish much better its usefulness for the whole parish. The pews are a late addition by people who lived in the Victorian era. They have no long-standing historical significance. The same can be said of other features, which do more to obscure the beauty of the building, such as the rood screen. It is a late nineteenth century addition to the church, which conceals the East end of the church, particularly the attractive East window.

People should not forget that quite recently the glass put into the windows on either side of the nave by the 19th century re-ordering have been replaced by much clearer glass, in order to promote the idea that, as Archbishop William Temple once said: "The Church is the only society that exists for the benefit of those who are not its members," i.e. to show that the church is concerned not to be opaque to the general populace!

I think that the regular congregation overwhelmingly agrees that, to echo Jesus teaching that "the sabbath was made for humankind, and not humankind for the sabbath", the church building was built for people and not people created for the church building.

Those opposed to change within the building could be accused of worshipping the building not the one and only God.

I think the question of harm is somewhat fallacious, for four main reasons. Firstly, who could possibly have the authority to lay down that harm (which is a non-material, highly subjective reality) has been caused to the church's true God-ordained mission and ministry. What justifiable criteria could be set down with any possibility of being objectively substantiated.

Secondly, the very fact that there were two fairly major alterations to the original church building (after roughly 370 years, in one case, and 420 in the other), which presumably were not considered harmful, would be against the presumption that the fact of alterations could adversely affect the special character of a listed building.

Thirdly, the fact that permission has been given recently for the extensive reordering of many churches with grade 1 listed status would also militate against this kind of subjective assessment. After all, as the catchphrase puts it, "beauty is in the eye of the beholder". In the case of the present plans for St Lawrence, the beholders, being mainly regular church-goers, believe that the character of the building will be considerably enhanced by the reordering scheme.

Fourthly, the phrase "the significance of the church as a building of special architectural or historic interest" actually pails into insignificance beside "the significance of the church as a building best fitted for the advancement of "God's kingdom here on earth, as it is in heaven", as we pray every Sunday. It is a magnificent edifice, rightly preserved and cherished for well over 500 years. However, what is far more important is its suitability for carrying out God's mission in present times.

Rev. Dr. Andrew Kirk

Former Director of the School of Mission and World Christianity, University of Birmingham.



View looking east from the chancel, circa 1882; this was post reordering and before the screen was installed. Note the clear and unobscured view to the altar and east window

1. Introduction

This Statement of Need has been prepared following the Diocesan Advisory Committee (DAC) Guidance⁴ and after discussion with the DAC officers. It represents the unanimous view of the PCC following initial consultation with the parishioners in October 2018. In September 2021 and then again in March 2023. We established a working group to manage the project. We have sought professional advice and carried out several investigations. We appointed an experienced conservation architect to carry out a feasibility study and design work. We have developed the project with the active assistance of the DAC and its officers; we are grateful for their support.

This document sets out the Need for the project as it linked to our Mission and Objectives which have overwhelming support from the parishioners. We have a strong, large and growing church community and offer a range of services on Sundays and during the week. The church is also well used by the community, the Sunday school (currently meeting in the church cottage), toddler groups, the St Lawrence Church of England Primary School and for concerts attracting attendance from a wide geographical area. To provide better facilities for these and new activities we need to be more adaptable with our available spaces, make improvements where this is feasible and provide enhanced facilities such as integral toilets and a larger kitchen.

Our objectives are to restore the building for the long term, addressing deficiencies in the fabric and meeting the requirements for a growing church. It has been nearly 140 years since the last reordering. This means that we need to address challenges of the floor, heating, lighting and associated facilities in a way that maintains the architectural heritage of a 15th Century church. We are not necessarily driven by the Victorian reordering and wish to restore some of the earlier Georgian features such as the gallery and stone flooring. This is to provide an open and welcoming space for worship and community use.

In looking ahead for a further 100 years we recognise that technology will change significantly as it has in our lifetime. If the Victorians had the technology that we have now, they would have used it. We need to build in sufficient facilities to support new technology, for example the use of modern Audio-visual (AV) systems and WIFI enablers. We also need to address access for all abilities, and wellbeing concerns not envisaged in earlier designs.

The initial consultation with the church community in the autumn of 2018 gave overwhelming support for creating open and welcoming spaces, providing access for all abilities, supporting worship and mission, and making adaptable use of the building for all services, meetings and events. There was clear support for replacing pews with more comfortable seating, providing toilets for all abilities, and including a larger kitchen. The poor condition of our heating and lighting systems and the need for more effective audio-visual technology were identified as major drivers to equip the church building to new and evolving technologies to support worship and events.

Our Mission Statement and Objectives are set out in Section 2; our Vision is set out in Section 3. We have a busy and vibrant church which we describe in Section 4. The needs for restoration and reordering are included in Sections 5 and 6. We explain how we have evaluated and selected our preferred design options in Sections 7 to 10. In Section 12 we summarise our evidence of support.

⁴ <https://www.gloucester.anglican.org/content/pages/documents/1353070506.pdf>

2. Mission Statement and Objectives

Our mission statement:

Approaching the use, upkeep and future of our church building in bold and creative ways

In 2018, we identified four objectives: conserving our heritage; making bold improvements; creating welcoming spaces; and reducing our carbon footprint.

We have taken five years and 55 meetings of our project group to develop these objectives for the restoration and reordering of St. Lawrence Church, based on consultations with the DAC, discussions within our working group, professional advice from our architect, archaeologist and building services consultants, and consultation with the parishioners. The outcome is five key drivers which form the basis of our project:

- (i) an open and welcoming space for adaptable worship and community use;
- (ii) level access for all abilities from the re-opened north porch to the communion rail;
- (iii) shared spaces to make optimal use of the whole church building;
- (iv) efficient energy use towards the Church of England ‘net-zero’ carbon reduction target by 2030; and
- (v) heritage conserved by careful design of internal changes.

In our initial consultation with parishioners in 2018, there was overwhelming support (108/119 or 91%) for these objectives; there were some concerns expressed by a few others. The 2021 consultation showed that 88% of regular churchgoers supported the proposals. The results of the consultation are presented in a report⁵ submitted to the DAC in December 2021. We received a range of comments to which we have responded; these are also set out in the report. The results of the 2021 consultation are set out in [Section 12](#).

We see this as fulfilling the diocesan LIFE vision, especially where it calls us to ‘nurture everyday disciples’ and ‘excite young people to explore and grow in faith.’⁶ To continue doing this, we need a building that supports our current activities and gives greater scope for new ones.

Again, with reference to the LIFE vision, we cannot ‘encourage new and courageous ways of worshipping...which connect with more people’ without a building that is fit for doing things in new ways.⁷ A building without proper heating, toilets, accessibility, lighting, or audio-visual facilities cannot ‘connect with more people’ in the mid-twenty-first century or beyond.

⁵ P122 Report on the 2021 public consultation v6, Lechlade St Lawrence PCC

⁶ Diocese of Gloucester, ‘Life Together’ vision, <https://gloucester.anglican.org/about-us/our-vision/#:~:text=five%20spotlight%20commitments-.With%20the%20spotlight%20now%20shining%20on%20these%20five%20LIFE%20vision,which%20connect%20with%20more%20people> accessed 23/05/23.

⁷ ‘Life Together’ vision.

3. Our Vision

Our church

As the current worshipping community at St Lawrence, we recognise that we stand in a long line of Christians who have called this building their spiritual home. This heritage is dear to us, and we take our place in that tradition of Christian life and witness joyfully and very seriously. As we meet Sunday by Sunday, we are surrounded by a cloud of witnesses in the stones, windows and fittings around us, put here by different generations who came in centuries past to pray, praise, and meet with God here, in word and sacrament.

The men and women who watched the stone walls of this church rise in the late fifteenth century saw in them an expression of their own faith in the terms of their own time, its high arches and window tracery as modern and contemporary to them as box pews were to our Georgian predecessors, and the tiling in the chancel was to the Victorian Christians who first walked over it. We seek to be responsible in taking our place in the story of this place of Christian worship.

We consider that doing so does not mean slavishly preserving everything that has gone before, any more than the Victorians or Georgians did, or those first builders did in 1476 as they raised a new building in a modern style, to replace a church that stood on this site earlier.

Rather, being responsible inheritors of this place of worship means to ensure that it continues to be somewhere where the faith of our spiritual ancestors in Lechlade is still prayed and preached, lived and shared to succeeding generations. It means gratefully preserving what they have bequeathed to aid and inspire the worship of those who came after them, but also finding, within the competing views and theologies that have left their different marks on the space within the church, our own authentic expression of faith in how the space is arranged and used. In doing so, we add our own voice to the conversation, our own song to the hymn of praise that this building sings to God.

In making the proposed changes, we take responsibility as custodians of the heritage of a continually evolving expression of Christian faith in this place. We do so not only to allow present generations to worship and build each other up in Christian life, in the ways most appropriate to our time, but also in order that we may pass on to those who will come after us a building which is fit for purpose – warm, welcoming, in good condition, and ready to adapt to the changing needs of a world to whom we are called to witness to the hope of Christ.

As we have benefitted from the building and reordering undertaken in the past to keep this place of faith alive, so we feel it incumbent upon us to act now so that future generations will have a church building that will enable and support their own lives of faith, in whatever forms that may take, as they follow us, the Victorians, the Georgians, and all those who have sought to live out the ongoing mission of the people of God in this place.

Our Needs

One way to establish the needs of a 550-year-old church like St. Lawrence church is to envisage what would be required if it was built from scratch to satisfy the current and future needs of its parish community for the next 100 years. The requirements would include:

<p>A large open space with a 'comfortable' seating capacity for 200 and the ability to increase this to 250 or more for special occasions flexible to the demands of a wide range of formal services;</p> <p>fitted with flexible modern audio-visual communication equipment, essential to the main purpose of the building and should be well and efficiently heated and lit to modern standards</p>	<p>Occasions requiring adaptive use of the building:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > A wide range of regular services <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Parish Communion - Evensong - Informal Sunday worship - Midweek BCP communion > Family and special event services <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Weddings, Funerals, Baptisms - Christmas, Easter week, Harvest - Remembrance Sunday and other Remembrance services > Lunches / meals <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Men's / Women's breakfasts - Harvest, Lent, Patronal lunches > Larger events <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Children's holiday club - Events for young people - Concerts and other musical events - community celebrations (e.g., annual pancake day quiz with the twining society) > other events <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - fundraising activities to support the maintenance of the building - courses and workshops
<p>All these facilities to be easily accessible for less able persons including those in wheelchairs</p>	<p>> To provide level access across the church</p>
<p>A number of multi-functional areas accessible from within the main building for a variety of purposes Several multi-functional areas, flexible to the needs of specific groups</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > The care of small children during services > Sunday schools and after-school groups > Prayer and study groups > Choir vestments and robing; music storage > Routine administrative meetings > Ad hoc meetings and activities
<p>A food/drink preparation and serving area with easy access</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > For the provision of refreshments before/after services and other events: key to a welcoming and sociable environment > For the provision of hot and cold food for meal-based events
<p>Toilets</p>	<p>> for women, men, less able persons and for baby-changing</p>
<p>A secure room/vestry for presiding clergy and for the storage of valuable items</p>	
<p>A Parish Office as a workstation for the Administrator and for the storage of documents, stationery, books etc: with access for all abilities and ages</p>	<p>> With access for all abilities</p>
<p>A bell tower to house a set of traditional church bells</p>	<p>> Used to call to worship and to celebrate special occasions</p>

Comparing this with the current buildings of St. Lawrence Church and the Church Cottage reveals where the shortfalls lie. These shortfalls are described in more detail in the subsequent sections.

The church:

- has effectively fixed seating with a capacity of 200 and limited facility to increase when required. This arrangement is very difficult to adapt to different requirements;
- has a floor with raised areas not accessible to disabled people;
- has no toilets and a minimal catering facility suitable only for limited provision of refreshments;
- has no rooms other than a small vestry;
- has poor audio-visual communication facilities not sufficient for today's needs let alone the future;
- has an electrical system which is more than 50 years old, fails inspection checks and has visible cabling which is damaging the fabric; and
- has an old, inefficient, and malfunctioning heating system.

The Church Cottage (a Grade II listed building)

- not linked to the church;
- desperately needs modernising;
- has toilets to the rear of the main cottage;
- has a minimal kitchen;
- has an attic room accessible only by a precarious stairway; and
- has a parish office on the first floor with access up an uneven and narrow staircase.

In Section 4 we describe our church and the wide range of activities which take place. We set out restoration needs in Section 5 and Reordering needs in Section 6.

Sections 7 to 10 set out how we have applied our vision to the development of a preferred option and describe the key components.

4. Our Church

4.1. Character of the parish

Lechlade on Thames is a small market town at the southern edge of the Cotswolds in Gloucestershire. It borders two other counties: Oxfordshire to the east and north, with Wiltshire to the south. It is the highest navigable point of the river Thames, although there is a right of navigation that continues south west into Cricklade in Wiltshire. The town is named after the River Leach that joins the Thames near The Trout Inn on the Faringdon road.

The town is a popular venue for tourism and river-based activities. There are several hotels, pubs, restaurants, some antique shops, an array of quality food shops including a baker and butcher, a garden centre and a Christmas shop. The 15th Century Church of England parish church of St Lawrence is in the centre of the town, adjacent to the market place, a large open space which is currently a short stay car park. The main roads through the town are busy, as the town is at the crossroads of the A417 and A361. Where the A361 enters the town from the south it crosses the river Thames on Halfpenny Bridge. Another tributary of the Thames, the River Coln, joins the Thames at the Inglesham Round House.

The 2011 census gave the population as 2,850 and since then approximately 100 new homes have been built with an average of 3.2 persons per household, thus the current population is circa 3,200. There is little local employment and many residents commute to Swindon, Cirencester or further afield to work.

St Lawrence Church of England Primary School is located east of the church. We describe the close links with the church in Section 4.5 below.

The Methodist church in the town closed some five years or so ago and there remains a small Baptist chapel in the town. The nearest Roman Catholic church is in Fairford some five miles to the west.

4.2. Services and attendance

St. Lawrence parishioners benefit from a selection of services and meetings which cater for all types of Christian worship. The text below relates to pre-COVID times; in 2022, the full range of live services was restored and attendance is back to pre-covid levels.

On **Sundays** we normally offer three services, all including Bible-based teaching, worship and fellowship. These are central to the life of our church, and range in style from traditional liturgy with choir and organ to more informal services with a music group. On Sundays we run **groups catering for children and young people, ages 3-16, which meet during our 10am services in the Church Cottage next door to the church, except during all age services and school holidays.** Refreshments are served after the 10am, Little Lights services and sometimes after the 5pm service. Baptisms are usually included in our Sunday 10am service. Youth groups tend to meet in the vicarage due to lack of suitable space in the Church Cottage.

A comment from our independent reviewer

The Church of England's final authority in all matters of doctrine and moral behaviour has been the Bible of the Old and New Testaments, ever since the restoration of the apostolic teaching contained in the NT canon took place at the time of the Reformation. This teaching is fully present in all its liturgies and should never be deviated from.

St Lawrence, therefore, seeks to be faithful to the C of E's one overriding, official rule of life.

We have a strong and active church choir, some 30 of all ages, which sing at formal services, weddings, funerals, concerts and other events. We also have a team of bell-ringers who ring in advance of the 10am service and at special occasions.

The normal range of services comprise:

- **8am** Book of common prayer (BCP) including Holy Communion.
- **10am** 1st, and 5th Sundays Holy Communion: a Common Worship service, often accompanied by our choir
 - 2nd Sunday Together @Ten: this is an all-age family service with music provided by our music group;
 - 3rd and 4th Sunday Inspire. Here the service is less formal but also with our music group.
- **5pm** This service is always formal and is either a Holy Communion service or Evensong. On the fifth Sunday in a month the service is given over to a quiet prayer service.

On a **Thursday at 10am** we offer a tradition BCP Holy Communion service.

Table 4-1 shows average weekly attendance over the last three years pre-covid for each of the 8.00am, 10.00am and when we had evensong at 6.00pm services.

Table 4-1 Average weekly attendance 2016 to 2018

Sunday service	8.00am	10.00am	6.00pm
Average weekly attendance	13	108	35
Maximum weekly attendance (rounded)	20	250	80
Upper (90 th percentile) range of distribution ¹		200	

1 – deleting the highest 5% (8) of attendance figures

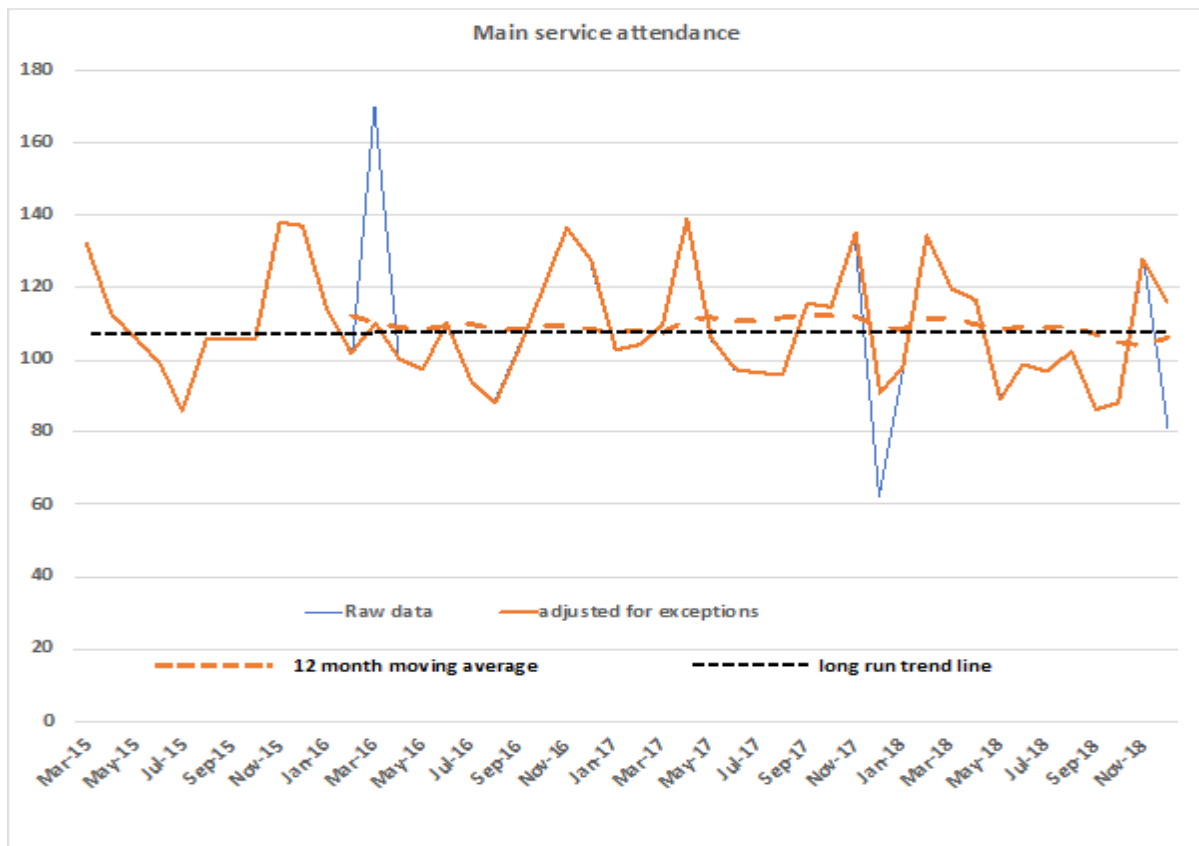


Above: Pre-covid 10am service

We have reviewed the weekly data for the 10am service, excluding exceptions, which is shown in Figure 4-1. The analysis shows a consistently high attendance over the three years from 2016 to 2018 (a pre-COVID period) shown by the dashed trend line. The 12-month moving average is stable at 108. This consistent high attendance is shown to demonstrate the need for facilities.

Currently the attendance at our services is returning to pre-COVID numbers. Updated figures are included in Annex 1

Figure 4-1 Weekly attendance July 2016 to December 2018
 (Adults)



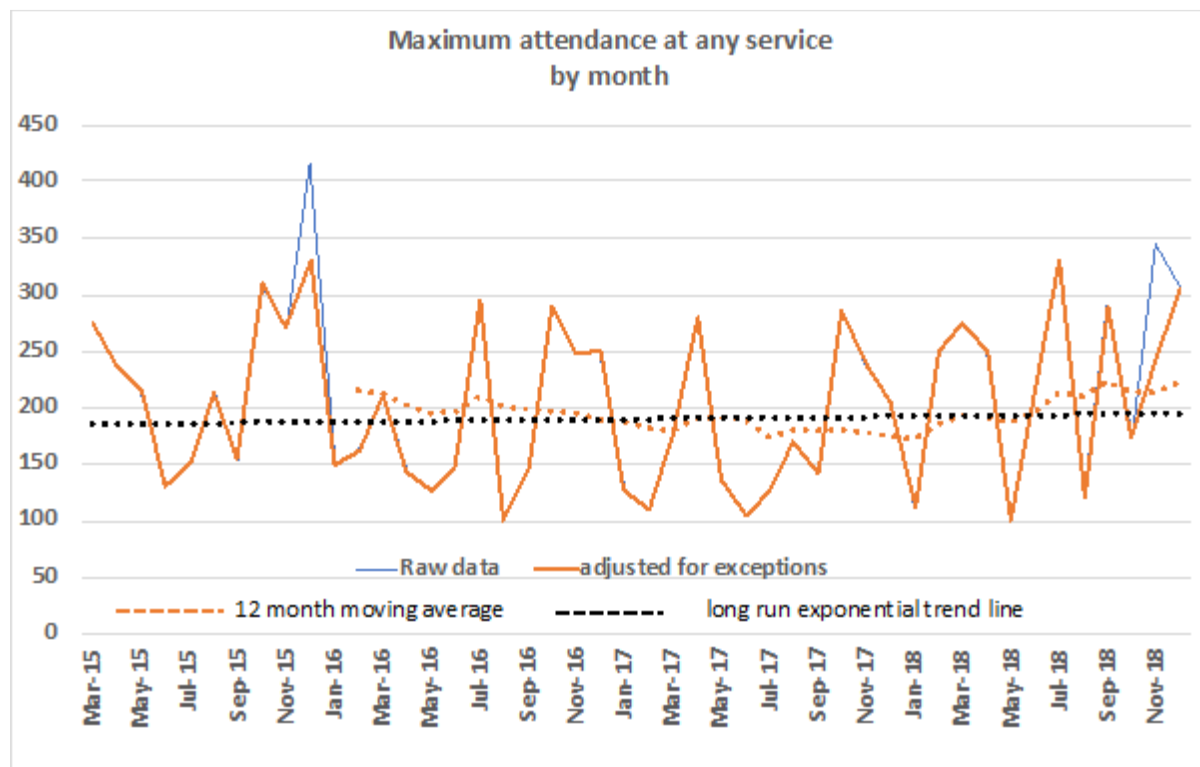
The maximum attendance at any service is more relevant to planning capacity. We have also looked at peak attendance at services and events over the pre-covid period 2016 to 2018. Figure 4-2 shows the peak attendance in each month has been changing. Although the long-term trend is slightly up just over 1% per annum, the moving average has grown significantly since the data in the chart with the pre-covid average more than 10% above the long-term trend line.



Left: Remembrance Sunday service with an overflowing church

The number of services where attendance has exceeded the seating capacity is also growing from an average of 7 per year to 10 in 2018. A conservative projection 10 years ahead would see the average maximum attendance in any month rising to 250.

Figure 4-2 Peak attendance by month July 2016 to December 2018



Over this period, we had 12 services and special events with a congregation equal to or exceeding 250, five greater than 200, five greater than 150 and 44 greater than 100. These included Remembrance Sunday and some Christmas services, school services, weddings and funerals.

This evidence confirms the need to provide sufficient capacity to meet current and future services and events. We are planning to accommodate 200 in ‘comfort’ and 250 at ‘a squeeze’. The 200 is the 95th percentile of the attendance data and the 250 is the maximum. Additional capacity could be provided for the infrequent occasions when this occurs. These values are rounded.

4.3. Church Cottage

Church Cottage is separate from and to the north of the church with an entrance from the Market Place and a side entrance down an external step to the back yard off a public footpath. This footpath crosses the churchyard from the Market Place in the west to the St Lawrence Church of England Primary School and open fields to the east. The path, known as ‘Shelley’s Walk’, cuts between the church to the south and the cottage to the north. The cottage is a Grade II listed building with two floors, an attic room, kitchen area and toilets to the rear. The backyard is used to store maintenance equipment for the churchyard. The old bathroom was converted to two standard toilets circa year 2000. The cottage is used for Sunday school groups and meetings and houses the parish office; the two small toilets are open before, during and after services although access is difficult across the uneven cobbled footpath and down two separate steps into the backyard.

The cottage was designed for residential use and has not been properly modified to meet its current use. The first-floor rooms are used as a Sunday school room and parish office. These are reached by

an uneven and narrow domestic staircase with a 180° turn. The attic room is used as a Sunday school room which is reached by a ‘half step’ staircase from the first floor. The ground floor meeting room and other rooms are normally accessed through the front door. This front door leads directly onto a pavement and the Market Place with passing cars and buses. The initial consultation identified this as a hazard; the consultation also showed that parents preferred that their young children should be close to them when Sunday school takes place during a morning service.

We explain in [Section 11](#) the advice from Cotswold District Council (CDC) and our professional conservation planner that an option for developing the Grade II residential cottage is most unlikely to receive building consent because the extent of changes needed to make it suitable for a public building would cause harm to the listed cottage and surrounding churchyard which would far outweigh the public benefits.

4.4. Use of space

We show in Table 4-1 how the church and cottage are used in a typical week (pre-COVID).

Table 4-1 Typical utilisation of the church and cottage

	Church	Cottage	Average attendance
Sunday	8.00am Holy Communion		13
	Bell ringing prior to the 10am service	Choir vestry	
	10am Worship (Holy Communion (or informal))	Sunday school (3 rooms)	108
	5pm Evensong/Holy Communion	Choir vestry	35
Monday	Open to visitors	Office	
Tuesday	Open to visitors	Office	
Wednesday	1.30 pm Little Lights (infants/ toddlers)		20
	9am informal prayer Open to visitors	Office	
Thursday	10.00am Holy Communion Open to visitors	Office	
Friday	Choir practice Bell ringing practice Open to visitors	Office	
Saturday	Open to visitors		
Regular activities	Weddings		7 in 2018
	Funerals		18 in 2018
	School services		Up to 300 attending
	Concerts		Up to 150 attending
		PCC and committee meetings	
		Youth activities	

Some groups such as Mothers' Union and World Church meet in the town's Memorial Hall because the facilities in the church are currently insufficient. The Restoration and Maintenance Appeal Committee is not able to serve afternoon teas because of insufficient space and facilities.

The 10am service uses both the main altar and the Blaise chapel for communion services. The Blaise altar, the Blaise Chapel, in the south aisle is used for 8.00am Holy Communion and the Thursday service. The west end is open with a children's corner in the south west and a small catering area for tea and coffee with washing up facilities. in the north west. Access and egress are normally through the west door. There is a bell ringing chamber in the west tower accessed through a narrow helical stone stairway. The vestry leads off the north side of the chancel.

With the open configuration of the church, it is not possible to have separate meeting rooms for Sunday school. The bell ringing chamber in the tower is a good space for multi-use although currently access is not satisfactory, and we would need to have closing doors to insulate any noise. The catering area is open and any noise from refreshment preparation impacts on worship.

4.5. Children and youth activities

St. Lawrence is blessed with so many services and activities offered to children and younger people. Little Lights is a short, informal service for babies and pre-school children and their families or carers. Run by the Mothers' Union, the service includes songs, a story and prayers all suitable for children between 0-4 years old. It is followed by refreshments, toys and chat. Held in St. Lawrence Church on Wednesdays fortnightly during school terms.



Right: Little Lights activities in the church

Sundays: On Sunday mornings children of school age have the opportunity to explore and develop their faith during the Sunday 10am morning service (except during the Together@10 service) at Sunday clubs Stars (3-6s) and Planets (7-10s), where they learn about Jesus through fun activities, discussions, games, music and crafts. Groups meet in Church Cottage next door to the church. Young people in Year 6 join in with the secondary school children at the Grid; they do not have a suitable venue available on the church or cottage site. New children and visiting children are always welcome. We love to have families as part of our church. We have a monthly all age Together@10 service (usually second Sunday), which is a short, lively service with a children's talk and opportunities for children to participate, particularly aimed at pre-school and primary age children.

Midweek

Explorers after-school club (of pupils at St Lawrence Church of England Primary School) takes place from 3.15-4pm on Thursdays at St. Lawrence C of E School, run in partnership with Lechlade Baptist Church and South Cotswold Team Ministry (SCTM) youth leaders.

A comment from our independent reviewer

As would be expected, young children will absorb much more about the Christian faith if they are able to listen to and interact with the stories about Jesus, what he did and what he taught. This does not rule out important aspects of the history of Israel, such as the story of creation, the life of Abraham, the Exodus, the life of David, the events leading up to the Exile to Babylon and the story of the expansion of the new Christian community as told by Luke in the Acts of the Apostles.

Summer holiday clubs and Special events



St. Lawrence, working together with Lechlade Baptist Church, organises an annual Holiday Bible Club for 5-11s for a week during August: 63 children attended in 2018. As well as this we run events like a Light Party and Summer Picnic during the year.

Left: Summer Holiday Club activities in the church. Note that pews have been removed in a hired van and stored in the school to create an open space for activities

On Sunday mornings our young people aged 10-16 alternate between attending our more informal 10am services, and meeting as a group at the Grid, where they have opportunities for fellowship and exploring and developing their faith. On the first Sunday of the month, the Grid takes place at the Vicarage, Sherborne Street for the Big Breakfast – a cooked breakfast and topic-based Bible Study. On other Sundays, at 10am they stand in the Church Cottage kitchen for tea and toast, then head upstairs to the attic room (through the room being used by the Stars group) for discussion and Bible study. Young people from the Grid actively share in church life through playing in music groups, operating the projector, serving on the coffee team, and joining teams for our holiday Bible clubs and Explorers after-school club.

A comment from our independent reviewer

It is obvious that the presentation of the Gospel of Jesus to children is of high importance for any church, not principally because they will constitute the future membership of the Christian community, but because Jesus demands this of his disciples. The early church was adamant that the most applicable audience for the gospel were whole households (parents, other relatives, servants and, of course, children). This is born out in a number of occasions during the spread of the Gospel as recorded in the Book of Acts.

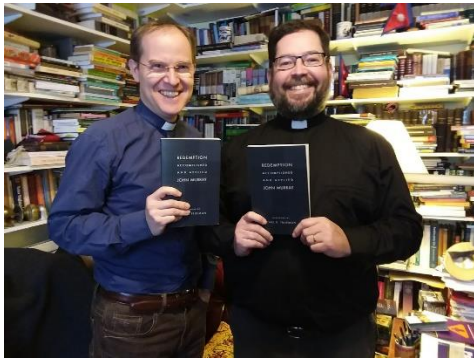
St Lawrence Church needs much more adequate spaces, where young people can meet together for their learning activities. The existence of much better facilities within the church and the permanent removal of the pews will help to drive forward the work among young people of all ages.

4.6. A teaching parish

St. Lawrence has an important role in training future leaders of the church. The Vicar is a designated Training Incumbent in the Diocese of Gloucester and is presently training his second curate. The parish provides many opportunities for ministerial development and reflection, as it has a wide variety of different worship styles, links to the community and is also part of the wider South Cotswolds Team Ministry. The diocese has also purchased a house in Lechlade for the use of a curate. The parish is aware of the responsibility and blessing of having a curate and provides a warm and supportive environment for a curate and any spouse or family.



Right: Rev Andrew Cinnamond with our curate Rev Gareth Griffiths, 2021



Left: Rev Andrew Cinnamond with our previous curate Rev Jonathan Clark, 2018

As well as providing training for ordained clergy, the parish also offers the diocesan Lay Worship Leaders Course. This equips and encourages local lay people to lead Services of the Word in their local churches including nearby St. Andrews church, Eastleach and St. Peter's church at Southrop. This is hugely important at a time when there is a serious reduction in clergy numbers and new and innovative patterns of ministry need to be explored. Lechlade also provides both ordained and lay leaders for services in Eastleach and Southrop churches.

4.7. Meetings and concerts

St. Lawrence is not only a congregation which gather on Sundays, but a church family which is encouraged to meet together during the week at a variety of groups and events. This helps us to grow both in our faith and our relationships with one another. Examples of our worship and Bible study groups are set out below.

Small groups

We believe every Christian will benefit greatly from being in a group for study, prayer and fellowship as we seek to build up and encourage one another in our faith. Each small group will be slightly different depending on the leaders, time available and material studied, but every group will have a time of Bible study, prayer and sharing together. They will never be forced to pray or read out loud. Groups meet throughout the year, with a break for Lent and most also break during August.

- Ladies' Breakfasts, quarterly;
- Men's Group: meets fortnightly;
- Bible Studies: several groups meet weekly or fortnightly for Bible studies, Julian meetings and fellowship;
- Lent Course: these are ecumenical small groups, joining with other Christians in Lechlade, with several groups meeting weekly for the five weeks before Easter.



Left: preparations for a Ladies' Breakfast. Note the need to turn some pews around to make space for tables

Other groups

There are a variety of other groups and courses at St. Lawrence that meet for fellowship including:

- Mothers' Union: Members of St. Lawrence are very active within Lechlade;
- Men Aloud Out: casual monthly discussion group for men at The Trout Inn;
- Christianity Explored / Life Explored: we regularly run these courses.

Right: Maundy Thursday Agape supper. Note the need to rearrange the pews to place tables and seating along the nave



Concerts



Our Restoration and Maintenance Appeal Committee regularly hosts lunchtime and evening concerts. These concerts have been running for more than twenty years and their main objective is to raise money for the fabric and maintenance of St. Lawrence. Sometimes admission is by paid ticket but more than often monies are raised by way of a retiring collection.

Left: Lunchtime concert with Guy Fishman, cello soloist from the USA

Our lunchtime Serenade and Sandwiches concerts are always very well received and allow people to enjoy first class music, usually played by professional musicians, followed by a glass of wine and sandwiches. This working group also arrange events outside of St. Lawrence in order to continue their goal of raising monies. We also host some religious-themed musicals and plays during the year.

Every Christmas we hold a concert with invited soloists and expanded choir. This is a popular and well-supported event as part of our activities running up to Christmas.

Right: Christmas concert, note the extended choir in front of and behind the choir screen



4.8. St. Lawrence Church of England primary school

The links St. Lawrence Church shares with the St. Lawrence Church of England Primary School extend much deeper than their names. The school Governing Body is made up with a majority of Foundation Governors, each of whom is linked to the church and is recommended by our PCC. The school caters for 210 children.

We share values and vision for the school and work together for the shared good of our community. Our Vicar, Rev Andrew Cinnamond, and members of the church community are regular visitors to the school and are involved in many aspects of their day-to-day life from collective worship to forest schools, help with lunchtime and after-school clubs, and lead Open the Book sessions which aim to teach children the stories of the Bible through dramatised readings.

The school makes regular use of the church for term services, children's Christian music performances and special services at Easter, Harvest and Christmas. These services often cannot accommodate all the children, their parents and grandparents, so the services are split into two or more sessions.

4.9. Choir



The choir at St. Lawrence is a mixed four-part choir which, accompanied by the organ, sing at Sunday morning communion services and choral evensong, as well as some special services through the year. The choir also occasionally supports the South Cotswolds Team Ministry in special services across the team parishes. The choir is augmented by many other singers for special occasions.

4.10. Bell-ringers

There has been a long tradition of bellringing in Lechlade and many people look forward to hearing the church bells calling people to worship in the parish church. St. Lawrence Church has a ring of 6 bells, 13¼cwt tenor, and in addition there is a small Sanctus bell which hangs at the base of the spire. The complete ring was re-hung in 1966 by John Taylor & Co of Loughborough and a rededication of the bells was carried out by the Bishop of Gloucester at a service of thanksgiving on 2nd October 1966.



Right: Bells removed during re-hanging, 1966



There is a committed and enthusiastic team of bellringers, which often welcomes visiting ringers, and enjoys training up young people to ring. The tower is popular on Open Days and other community events. Ringing practice takes place 7.45-9pm on Friday evenings.

St. Lawrence Church is a member of The Gloucester & Bristol Diocesan Association of Church Bell-ringers.

Left: Bell ringing chamber looking east

4.11. Visitors

Lechlade on Thames, as the name implies, lies on the northern bank of the river Thames and only the garden of Church House and a small pasture separate the two. Because of the location, Lechlade receives a constant flow of tourists throughout the year and walkers on the Thames Path, naturally this being far greater during the summer months. Lechlade is close to a number of National Trust properties and pieces of land, so this entices people to view its beauty on their visit.

Our archived Visitor Books go back many years and these entries compliment St. Lawrence Church and its churchyard, especially as we remain open every day of the year through daylight hours. The beautiful churchyard setting inspired the poet Shelley to write his famous 'A summer evening churchyard, Lechlade' in 1815, while staying at the New Inn, in the Market Place.

Shelley's Walk, named after the poet, is a stone cobbled public right of way although still owned by the church, leading from the town's Market Place alongside the northern edge of the church to Wharf Lane, close to the Church of England Primary School. This public footpath continues alongside the boundary of the school to St. Johns Bridge, which is the first lock on the river Thames.

Visitors come from all parts of the United Kingdom and many, many places overseas. This is evident from the many entries that tourists make in our Visitors Book as well as those who do not sign. We

operate a Church Watch scheme to welcome visitors in the summer months; we estimate we receive some 3,500 visitors per year with around 25% from overseas.

We have, on occasions, provided afternoon teas in the church for visitors from Worcestershire and other counties as they visited churches in the Cotswolds. While space is currently difficult to use for serving tea, we consider there is potential to extend this service when there is a more adaptable space.

4.12. Eco church

An active Eco church group has been established for over five years. We have achieved a silver award, including a gold standard for worship and teaching.

We have encouraged the 'greening' of parts of the churchyard with a wildflower area, bulb planting and erecting bird boxes to attract wildlife. We have held several open mornings to encourage young people to explore the churchyard. We actively promote eco tips regularly in the church bulletin.

5. Restoration Needs

5.1. Floor

The Victorian tiled floor in the nave and north and south aisles comprises 100mm x 100mm plain red quarry tiles with black and brown tiles demarcating the aisles. There is a long history of tiles becoming loose in several places with some lifting and cracking. Remedial works have been carried out over many years, but the problem continues and there is a risk of tripping over the loose or worn tiles.

The tiles are laid on a 125 to 150mm thickness of lime concrete which is well constructed and hard; this was confirmed by recent cores bored through the floor.

The ability to move existing pews to meet a range of activities is limited partly because of the risk of damage to the tiles in the floor. The other reason is that the pews are very heavy; this makes them difficult to lift and to find sufficient able-bodied volunteers to assist. In addition, the floor can be easily damaged from the load of a cherry-picker (an inspection platform used for the QI inspections, access to the clearstory windows and to change light bulbs high up in the nave) although the floor is covered with boards to distribute loads more evenly.

The Victorian tiling in the chancel is highly decorative and we plan to retain this with some remedial work to tiles which have become loose or damaged.

5.2. Heating

The church is currently heated with radiators and blowers located around the inside perimeter of the building. There are two gas-fired boilers in the cellar which were replaced about ten years ago. There is no effective temperature control. the heating is switched either 'on' or 'off' using a pre-set program; this is web-based.

The heating system is ineffective in that it does not always maintain a reasonable temperature through the building during winter services. Heating in the central aisle is particularly ineffective. The initial consultation identified heating as a priority concern.

The floor comprises clay tiles on a lime concrete floor and there is no insulation. In addition, the south door has significant gaps where cold air blows in. We need to restore this fine old door in any event, and this will reduce draughts. Similarly, there are significant draughts under the west door which need to be sealed.

5.3. Power and Lighting

The power supply is from the grid and enters the church at the west end of the building where there are the necessary isolating switches and meters. There is an enclosed cupboard for the circuit breakers and switches. There is a separate cupboard for the electricity distribution to the heating system. The electrical distribution system was installed in the 1960's.

There are separate circuits for lighting and power with most cabling exposed and routed along the skirting of the north and south walls; some lighting circuits are in the clerestory. Some of the cables are MIC (mineral insulated copper clad cable) where the copper sheath has reacted with lime causing much flaking and degradation of the rendering. This makes the walls unsightly, and corrosion of the copper sheath is evident in several places. There have been several failures of the lighting cables which has required new cabling. There have also been failures of cabling to the heating system in the cellar.

The number of socket outlets located on the north and south walls is limited and quite frequently extension cables are used to power various devices. This limits flexibility and presents a trip risk. Additional power outlets are needed to meet increasing use of equipment and to reduce long lengths of over-floor cabling.

The lighting units are being changed to LED but there will still be the need to change bulbs in fittings located high above the clerestory; this is currently most difficult or expensive to access in safety. The lighting coverage is poor in places and initial consultation identified the need to improve lighting to meet the varying uses of the building as a high priority.

Old and superseded cabling is present in several areas which is unsightly, detracts from appearance of the church.

A fixed wiring inspection was carried out in August 2017. The electricians were reported as being unsatisfactory with five C2 failures and three C3. While these have been resolved, the project provides the opportunity to upgrade to current standards.

5.4. Porch and Doors

The north porch is only used occasionally when there are large congregations and for an emergency exit. One reason for not using this more frequently is the uneven stone cobbled footpath from the porch to the Market Place. The porch has an open external entrance with a low palisade gate; as such it is open to the weather.

We wish to make best use of the north porch to provide a welcoming and weather-proof experience. This would require a strong external door, suitably designed, which would replace the low timber palisade gate at the external entrance to the porch.

The north door into the church is in good condition. We plan to retain this.

The door to the south entrance was sealed many years ago although gaps give rise to significant draughts. The door is a significant feature. The door was recently unsealed and found to be in good condition although some remedial work will be required. The ironwork was also in good condition and the door was opened on its original hinges. We plan to restore and seal draughts the door. With a large congregation and use of the balcony there is need for an exit during any emergency.

The external and internal doors to the west porch let in draughts; some members of the congregation have commented that the internal doors are heavy to open by the elderly.

5.5. Walls and Decoration

The internal walls are looking tired and faded with loss of paint in several areas. The lime render along the base of the walls has fallen off mainly because of the effect of the copper MIC cabling reacting with the lime. The hygroscopic action causes the plaster to break off in any case, so the cabling adds to the problem. This has resulted in the lime mortar spalling for a height of up to 300mm above the floor and along most of the south aisle and some of the north aisle. The extent of exposed cabling and pipework along the base of the wall hinders any remedial work; the sight of the cabling and pipework harms the appearance of the walls. It may be necessary to cut back some of the rendering up to a height of one metre and replace with an approved lime mortar. Repainting once all other work has been completed will lighten and freshen the church. Decoration would be applied to all internal walls including the chancel. The need for decoration was identified in our initial consultation.⁸

⁸ Restoration and Reordering Project, Findings from the Initial Consultation

5.6. Roof structure

We have suffered from minor water entry through parts of the roof after heavy rain. It is likely that some remedial works will be required although we have yet to scope this out. The timbers inside require redecoration.

5.7. Energy efficiency

We aspire to be a strong Eco-church, yet we are not very energy efficient. There are significant draughts through the south and west doors which need to be sealed. There is no insulation under the floor. The heating system is inefficient. In our long-term vision for the next 100 years, we should be moving away from fossil fuels and incorporate renewable energy sources where we can. The existing gas fired heating system is not effective and does not meet the Church of England target to achieve a 'net zero' by 2030. A new heating system is needed which would allow us to achieve this target and improve the efficiency of the system to provide a warm and comfortable church.

One possible enhancement is the provision of photovoltaic (PV) cells on the south and central roof. We have looked at the feasibility of installing PV cells, but these are not likely to be feasible because of the low power use in the summer (when the sun is shining) and export to the grid is not cost effective.

5.8. Cellar

The cellar housing the boilers is under the floor adjacent to and under the south door. The existing floor spans the room with stone laid on steel flats spanning the cellar walls; the steel is heavily rusted. The cellar was possibly the entrance to a vault on the south side, which was subsequently infilled, probably as part of the 1882 works.

Access to the cellar is down a narrow steep flight of uneven stone steps outside the south wall, which is difficult to use, particularly in wet weather. The cellar may be considered as a 'confined space' and additional ventilation may be required if the space is retained.⁹ The cellar walls are formed with random layers of stone and brick; uncemented in places. However, the cellar is dry, apart from some infiltration from ground level, and the walls appear to be sound.

There is a need to retain the cellar for pipework and ancillaries for an externally located air source heat pump and retaining the existing gas boilers in the short run. Remedial work to the walls and strengthening of the south aisle floor will be needed.

5.9. Churchyard

A public footpath runs from the Market Place in the west through the churchyard to the primary school in the east. This is a Gloucestershire County Council (GCC)-maintained footpath passing over land owned by the church. There is an agreement for GCC to maintain this path. Currently the length of footpath from the Market Place to the north porch, known as Shelley's Walk, is an uneven stone cobbled path which is very difficult to walk on; those in mobility vehicles and with pushchairs find difficulty in navigating the length of path. The path is heavily trafficked with access to the school and the mobile home site further east of the town.

⁹ A confined space is defined by the HSE as one in which is both enclosed. Or largely enclosed, which also has a reasonable and foreseeable risk to workers of fire, explosion, loss of consciousness or asphyxiation.

The footpath has a high footfall and used for access from the Market Place to and egress from the St Lawrence Church of England Primary School. This includes a high number of children, some on scooters, and infants in pushchairs. carried out over four weekdays at peak times when the school was open, yielded the following results:

- 08.30am to 9.00am: 157 plus 12 pushchairs per day.
- 2.45pm to 3.15pm: 181 plus 12 pushchairs per day.
- This count excludes the elderly, several in mobility scooters or wheelchairs, who are regular users of the path during the day.

The footpath is frequently used by the elderly either walking or in mobility scooters to travel to and from the town from the St John's Priory Park. These mobility scooters generally use the side gravel at the Market Place end to avoid the path but then have great difficulty in navigating the broken stone edging and the undulating and irregular stone footpath. Using this footpath avoids the heavily trafficked St. John's Street which has narrow uneven pavements, often obstructed by parked cars, and close to passing heavy lorries.

The path is also used regularly by visitors to Lechlade walking a 'circuit' to the Trout public house and back along the river as featured in the Lechlade Walks publication.¹⁰ It is also used by walkers as a north bank alternative on the Thames Path.

A faculty has been granted for relaying the footpath in recovered natural stone which will provide an even surface for users. The improvement work is to be carried out in April 2023.

We need to relocate our maintenance store and equipment in the churchyard to replace the facilities in the back yard of the cottage which is proposed to be sold.

¹⁰ Lechlade and Fairford walks

6. Reordering needs

6.1. Use of spaces

Whatever space you have is never enough!

When St. Lawrence was completed in 1476, the population of Lechlade was circa 800 people but the proportion of the population that were regular Christian worshippers was more than it is today. Since then, the town's population has grown to circa 3,200 but nationally the number of regular worshippers to church has fallen.

However, **the numbers of worshippers in Lechlade is increasing**. We have estimated the amount of space we have inside our church building to accommodate this extra need.

The current capacity and related areas of the church and the adjacent church cottage is shown in Table 6-1 below.

Table 6-1 Capacity and effective area of the church and cottage

Location	Capacity	Effective area (m ²)	Comments
Church nave and side aisles	200	120	Includes central, north and south aisles Excludes choir stalls
Children's corner		10	Open area at the west end
Total church capacity (in comfort)	200		Temporary seating with stored or borrowed chairs can be provided to meet peak attendance although 'at a squash'.
Cottage ground floor(front)	12	10	Meetings and Sunday school
Cottage ground floor		9	Choir vestry
Cottage upper floor	12	10	Meetings and Sunday school
Cottage – office in upper floor		9	Office
Cottage attic	8	9	Sunday school – limited access
Total Cottage capacity	32		

Note that effective areas are approximate and rounded

We comment in Section 3 on the frequency of use of the existing facilities.

A plan of St. Lawrence church is shown in Appendix B.

6.2. Access

One of the objectives for the project strongly supported by the consultation is to improve access for all abilities – a level access for all abilities from the re-opened north porch to the communion rail. This is a great opportunity to making headway meeting modern standards and expectation for accessibility; this is a growing need both in the church and across society.

‘A Church without disabled people is a disabled Church.’¹¹

Currently access is through the west door, approached by a concrete flagged path which is prone to flood in heavy rain.

The original nave floor was reduced by about 150mm in the 1882 reordering. Currently there are two steps rising from the existing nave floor to the chancel and altar rail; the chancel was raised as part of the 1882 reordering as evidenced from the two steps down to the vestry on the north side of the sanctuary. It is not possible for anyone in a wheelchair to access the communion rail. The north porch is currently used occasionally and as an emergency exit but there is a steep temporary ramp from the existing floor level up to the door sill, some 250mm. The south door sill is a similar height above the existing floor with no ramp.

Access to the existing small toilets in the back of the cottage involves crossing a rough cobbled path, down steps to the cottage backyard, and finally up again into the rear of the cottage.

In summary, there are significant barriers to access within the church and to the Church Cottage. There are no accessible toilet facilities which dissuade those with access difficulties from attending worship.

6.3. Seating

Very heavy Victorian deal (pine) benches of three different sizes provide our current seating. We have four benches 67.5” (1.7m) long, 6 benches 90” (2.3m) long and 34 benches 98” (2.5m) long. These machined pews were installed as part of the 1882 reordering when the previous box pews were removed.

The weight of all these benches gives us a manual handling problem when moving them. To reduce the risk of any injury, we have invested in two low load trolleys, although the pews still have to be lifted. Additional basic chairs are brought into the church for busy services and concerts. Occasionally, for Remembrance Sunday and similar services, we have to limit the additional chairs and ask worshippers to stand, thus allowing more space for them to participate in the service. In 2018 (the centenary of the end of the Great War) people were partaking in the Remembrance Sunday service by standing in the porch and outside the west door!

We have described in Section 4 the various church groups who need a more adaptable seating layout. Sometimes this seating also has to accommodate tables; for example, the Saturday morning Ladies’ Breakfast meetings often have nearly 100 ladies attend. We also have occasional church suppers such as Agape, Harvest Supper and similar. These events require the heavy pews to be moved to make room for tables. Some groups would use the church if the space was more adaptable, for example, World Church events and summer teas by the Restoration and Maintenance Appeal Committee.

In August each year we run a children’s Holiday Bible Club with some sixty plus children and thirty plus helpers. The church is transformed into a large meeting area, sub sectioned off into small groups. To make this happen, we have to move all the central pews to the school; this requires a significant effort

¹¹ Equal Access to Church Buildings, Church Buildings Council, 2021

including lifting pews into and out of a hired van which makes repeated trips to the school. The cost of the van hire was £180 for each event. We describe in Annex 1 the temporary removal of all the pews, by a contractor, to provide a clear area for the Holiday Bible Club and Parish Mission. This, and the supply of chairs, cost £5000 provided by a very kind benefactor.

Our objective of an opening and welcome space for adaptable worship and community use is constrained by the heavy pews. Our initial consultation found that many people in the congregation found the pews to be uncomfortable. We concluded that the pews should be replaced with more adaptable and lighter seating.

6.4. Toilets

St. Lawrence currently has no toilets in the church. Two toilets are available in Church Cottage, which is situated north of a public footpath known as Shelley's Walk. Current access to these toilets is by walking from the west door of the church for some twenty metres; you then have to negotiate two separate steps. Neither toilet is suited for people with a disability. There are also no facilities for baby changing.

From the initial consultation, our congregation has asked us to provide toilets they can use without walking outdoors, particularly in adverse weather. They preferred the toilets not to be inside the church; this was because of a likely reluctance of people to use the facilities while seen by others and the noise and potential odours that may arise. This has been resolved by the proposed layout at the west end of the church allowing discrete use of the facilities without disturbing any church service. Ventilation is proposed as part of the building services improvements. The absence of an accessible toilet does not meet the needs of the congregation; particularly the elderly, disabled and for younger children. The lack of baby changing facilities discourages those caring for young children from attending a service.

6.5. Kitchen

The kitchen area is a great focus for the congregation to meet and enjoy a cup of coffee or tea after the Sunday morning service; it is an important time for people to meet each other. Having the kitchen area in the church encourages people to stay. We comment in Section 3 that St. Lawrence is used not just on Sundays but very frequently most days of the week. The kitchen is used for Ladies' Breakfasts, other light meals, to serve sandwiches and wine for concerts and weekly tea and coffee at services.

Our current kitchen which has only been in use for some fifteen years does not provide sufficient working space for preparation, serving and washing up. The existing facilities are quite limited for the current numbers of teas and coffees served after the Sunday services. The sink is too small and whilst washing the cups after use, the small sink cannot be used to access water, empty the coffee urns etc; it is the only sink to be able to wash your hands; there is not enough draining space for the cups once washed; the water heater takes at least half an hour to re-heat and if more hot drinks are needed a wait is incurred whilst kettles are boiled - the kettles use all the work space and the steam from them makes the internal oak cupboards drip condensation (a hot water tap would eliminate this problem).

The current sink is set into an oak work top and whilst it is in keeping with the church it is showing signs of wear and water damage; the surfaces are susceptible to condensation damage or heat damage if hot items are placed on them. The movable oak cupboards create a flexible serving space but the flaps on the sides have oak pull out arms that are showing signs of age and will need replacement, the hinged flaps are a hygiene hazard as food debris gets trapped in there.

The existing cupboards enable space for 60 mugs, tea, coffee and small supplies for refreshments. To enable serving for other occasions other equipment is stored under church pews or in the cottage and carried across or people bring their own from home or it is hired. There is no drawer or tray to keep cutlery. In the new kitchen the extra storage space will enable all equipment to be on hand.

It is not possible to heat food; for example, for the Shrove Tuesday Pancake Day quiz held annually we have to borrow equipment. For Ladies' Breakfasts, hot food cannot be served; mulled wine and mince pies for Carol Services etc have to be warmed up elsewhere. The lack of an oven does not allow the serving of warm refreshments.

There is no refrigerator and for food hygiene we need to keep milk cool - the food served at concerts also needs to be kept chilled. Other events where we are limited by the current facilities include: Little Lights, Annual Church Cycle Ride, World Women's Day of Prayer, World Church committee, Harvest Supper, gatherings of family and friends after a funeral. These groups hire the Memorial Hall but would prefer to use the church if facilities were available. We would like to make the church, a central location in the town, more welcoming for visitors. We need to be able to enhance visitor facilities through provision of refreshments possibly serving cream teas in the summer and hot soup in the winter. We have provided teas to groups of visitors to the church, prior to the COVID restrictions, and plan to repeat when this is possible.

There is a kitchen area in the cottage limited to tea and coffee and toast-making facilities. This is used mainly for teas and coffees served in the meeting rooms.

6.6. Meeting rooms

Currently St. Lawrence church has the benefit of three separate meeting rooms, situated in the Church Cottage to the north of the church. The cottage is a Grade II listed building. The ground floor meeting room has a floor area of 10m² and the first-floor meeting room also has a floor area of 10m².

The cottage was designed for residential use and only small modifications have been made to meet its current purpose. The first-floor rooms are used as a Sunday school room and office. These are reached by an uneven and narrow domestic staircase with a 180° turn. The attic room, which is used as a Sunday school room, is reached by a 'half step' staircase from the first floor: this unsuitable for the very young, elderly or less able people.

The ground floor meeting room and other rooms are normally accessed through the front door. This front door leads directly onto a narrow pavement and the Market Place with passing cars and buses. The initial consultation identified this as a hazard; the consultation also showed that parents preferred that their young children should be close to them when Sunday school takes place during a morning service.

From the initial consultation, there is a preference to include Sunday school rooms within the church to encourage children to attend. This would be dependent on adequate sound insulation to limit any noise affecting worship.

There is a need to provide meeting rooms to accommodate groups of up to twenty people, whether this is by way of a single room or two connecting rooms. We have called these multi-functional areas to reflect their flexibility of use.

6.7. Parish Office

Currently the Parish office is located on the first floor of Church Cottage with a 180° turn in the uneven and narrow staircase. This means it is only accessible to able-bodied people. The parish benefits from

having a parish administrator who also looks after the affairs of Eastleach and Southrop parishes. An administrator has been in post since 2017 and is essential for meeting the increasing demands of all the parishes as well as introducing new technology essential for the efficient administration of the parish.

The administrator is employed by Lechlade PCC on a salaried basis and working hours are flexible to accommodate the workload. The office produces the majority of parish papers, weekly bulletins, deals with weddings, bookings and other arrangements for both the church and the cottage. There is limited room here for printing and collation and the volunteers who produce this comment on dampness in the winter which affects the print paper.

We consider the administrator post to be a very important role within the parish; step-free access would allow all parishioners to visit. Access up the windy stairs presents difficulties to visitors; the room is limiting in the extent of equipment we can accommodate.

6.8. Systems and services

There is increasing demand for using new audio and visual technologies at our informal services, for youth services and children's and school services. We need to move away from our temporary projector and screen arrangement to one built on our WIFI network. We think this is essential for worship as we seek to communicate clearly to all and use more audio-visual presentations in our services. We think this will help to build our younger congregations and encourage them to attend informal services using hardware and software systems to which they are accustomed.

The CCTV system is essential for security and is a large part of the reason that we are able to keep the church building open to all every day. It was recently installed with internal and external cameras monitored remotely. We need to re-route cables from wall fitting to underfloor ducts where appropriate to reduce the intrusion of the cabling.

The existing water supply system runs externally from the highway along the north of the church, into the vestry and to the kitchen along the wall skirting. There is a need to rationalise and avoid visual intrusion along the north wall.

6.9. Initial options considered

Our initial approach for deriving the preferred scheme was to start with a wide range of possible options. Some of these were not progressed for the reasons set out below. For the initial consultation in October 2018, we identified four possible options for addressing the restoration and reordering needs set out in Sections 5 and 6 respectively.

The options considered in the initial consultation comprised:

Option 1: Focus on renovation;

Option 2: as Option 1 with re-ordering within the church;

Option 3: As Option 2 with toilets located externally in building adjacent to the north porch;
and

Option 4: As Option 3 with building along the north side of the church

Options 1 to 3 included the use of the Church Cottage, provided that improvements could be made to Church Cottage.

Following the initial consultation with the church community in October 2018, we tested the cost and feasibility of these four options through meetings with the diocesan church officers, initial cost

estimates and discussion within the project group. We also sought advice from Cotswold District Council (CDC) Conservation Officer on the potential to develop the Grade II Church Cottage to meet our long-term needs.

The challenge from the diocesan officers was for us to accommodate the facilities in options 3 and 4 within the church. The brief to our architect was to test the feasibility of including all our restoration work and reordering needs within the church - as option 2 plus facilities of options 3 and 4 within the church. The architect completed his feasibility study and reported that the needs and facilities can be included within the church.¹²

This preferred option 2 plus is detailed in Sections 7 to 10 below.

We concluded that Option 1 - restoration only – did not provide the enhanced facilities which the church community recognised as important to support worship and related activities into the future.

Advice from both the CDC Conservation Officer and the diocesan Senior Churches Officer was that development of the Church Cottage to meet the long-term needs of the church would be virtually impossible to meet without significant harm to the listed cottage. Listed building consent was therefore most unlikely; so, we discounted any option which includes improvements to the cottage. We then decided to sell the cottage to raise funds for the reordering work. We explain the reasons for this decision in Section 11.

We also concluded, following advice from the Senior Churches Officer, that Option 4 with a new extension along the north wall of the church should not be progressed as we would be unlikely to gain approval from the DAC, CDC and Historic England. Pursuing such an option would bring risks in terms of approvals, costs and the time and resources when there is little chance of success. This option was therefore not progressed.

The preferred solution includes elements of restoration and reordering as detailed in the subsequent Sections 7 to 10. The proposals meet the needs set out in Sections 2, 3 and 4. The layout and design of the proposals has been prepared by Chedburn Codd, conservation architects.

Other options discounted:

We considered several options that were not progressed:

- (i) A new building with office and Sunday school rooms on the south side of the church linking to the south door: This area contains six listed chest tombs and at least 25 burials with headstones. We considered the need to trace where possible the descendants of the interred, to remove the chest tombs to a suitable location and restore where damaged, to remove and re-inter other burials with headstones or not. We concluded that there was no room in the churchyard for reburials and the town cemetery would not have sufficient capacity. The uncertain practicalities, the length of time needed and the risk to increasing costs made this option impractical.
- (ii) Some respondents to the initial consultation asked why greater use could not be made of the new town Memorial Hall, recently rebuilt after a fire, for Sunday school and meetings. We concluded that the Hall was over 500m away from the church and it would be impractical to do so because of the distance involved. The focus is to include all facilities within the church;
- (iii) Alternative locations for toilets: we looked at four options for the location of the toilets and sought informal views of the DAC. Our architect has now included two toilets, one accessible, within the church; and

¹² Project Inspire Feasibility Study, Chedburn Codd March 2020

- (iv) Greater use of the Church Cottage: the decision to sell the cottage is explained in Section 11.

6.10. Seating arrangements

The preferred option enables seating capacity in the church and multi-use area as shown in Table 8-1.

Table 8-1 Church and cottage seating capacity

	Location	Area (m ²)	'Comfortable' seating	'Maximum' Seating
Church	Church nave - Includes central. north and south aisles	190	200 plus choir	220 plus choir
	West end multi-use area	25	Not used for service	15
	Gallery	45	40	45
	Church capacity for services	260	240	280
Multi-use areas	West porch multi-use area	15	8 for children 6 for adults	10 for children 8 for adults
	Bell ringing gallery/ multi-use area	15	8 for children 6 for adults	8 for children 6 for adults
	Central east multi-use area	25	10 for children 12 for adults	16 for children 15 for adults

Source: Chedburn Codd Conservation Architects alternative seating layouts

Numbers are rounded

When we match peak monthly attendances with available capacity a clear constraint is set. All the available space to the east of the north and south doors is required for seating. We also need to respect and conserve the area around the war memorial. There is therefore a constraint that no space is available for any meeting rooms or facilities east of the north and south entrances.

Alternative seating arrangements have been considered with a west-east or north south arrangement as shown on the Chedburn Codd feasibility study drawings.¹³

Our desire to make the church even more welcoming will be complimented by changing our pews for individual seats as these will enable a variety of configurations to be provided for various services and other events.

The standard layout is likely to be rows in the nave and aisles plus some existing stalls for the choir in the chancel. At other times, the focus may be on, say, the south side or on a central performance area for a concert; in these instances, the chairs can easily be moved to provide more advantageous

¹³ Project Inspire Feasibility study report and drawings, Chedburn Codd February 2020

seating. Small numbers of chairs can also be placed in the south chapel and chancel for occasions such as prayer groups, the 8am service or gatherings with a handful of worshippers.

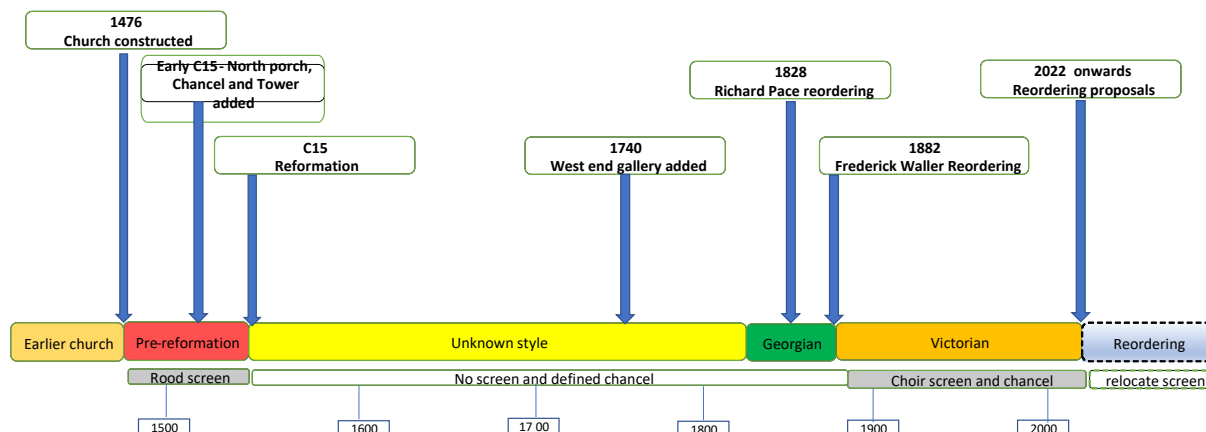
A selection of chairs has been provided for the September 2021 consultation period to allow consultees the opportunity to examine them and express a preference. Choices include all-wooden chairs (with variations available with arm rests and book holders), and lighter chrome frame/wooden seat versions. No upholstery is being offered in order to overcome challenges of wear and tear; individual chairs and no upholstery also future-proof furniture should a pandemic recur. Chairs will also be linked not only to enable compliance with fire safety guidance but also to maintain presentation.

Various tables for events such as Harvest Supper and Ladies' Breakfasts have also been examined to supplement our existing lightweight rectangular tables. We plan to buy 5' round tables that can be stored on a trolley for ease of movement and handling. This size also enables ease of conversation across tables at social events and fits well in the space we have available.

7. The choir screen and chancel

7.1. The choir screen

For the three centuries between the Reformation in the 16th Century and the 1882 reordering, the space between the nave and chancel was clear with an unobstructed view of the altar, the officiating priest and the east window. A timeline is shown in the Figure below. We explain below the valid and convincing reasons why we propose to relocate the choir screen.



Liturgy and history

The internal layout of the church has changed significantly on more than one occasion during the last five hundred and fifty years, reflecting the changing liturgical needs of the church. In 1476 St. Lawrence was part of a wider Roman Catholic Europe where the Latin mass was the central act of worship. It is highly likely that a very substantial rood screen existed in the church prior to the reformation. This would have been highly decorated with saints and biblical figures. The top of the screen would have held the cross/ rood itself. Evidence for this comes from the steps in the alcove in the north east area of the church adjacent to the current organ, which would have led up to the screen.

The momentous religious changes of the Reformation in the 16th Century meant that the focus moved away from a more sacramental form of worship centring on the Mass, to a focus on hearing the Word of God preached and taught. The physical building of St. Lawrence reflected these changes in theology and liturgical practice - pews were places for people to sit and primarily listen, empty niches were devoid of images and rood stairs leading nowhere reflect previous practices.

The Georgian style reordering in 1828 installed box pews with doors throughout the church; most belonged to families with a few designated as ‘free’ pews¹⁴. The three-decker pulpit was placed part way along the aisle. The parish clerk would occupy one of the lower levels helping with some of the liturgical responses in the Book of Common Prayer, whilst the vicar would preach from the upper parts, with a sounding board helping to amplify his words so the whole congregation could hear properly. A sermon in accessible vernacular English replaced the pre-Reformation Latin Mass, which was unintelligible to the vast majority of the congregation. As the Reformation principles became embedded in Protestant England, the words of Cranmer’s Prayer Book and the language of the King James Bible of 1611 seeped into the hearts and minds of English men and women. The church building became a place for the worshipping community to gather and listen, but also to respond via the liturgical responses in the Prayer Book, the Psalms and canticles, and through the relatively recent innovation of English congregational hymns often set to well-known popular tunes. The emphasis was less on mystery, but more on audibility and understanding.

¹⁴ Plan of church 1828, Gloucestershire Archives D2593

The Oxford Movement in the 19th Century felt the Reformation had gone too far, Protestant theology was damaging and the 'beauty of holiness' had to be restored in public worship. This meant substantial changes to the liturgical space of parish churches, reflected in the 1882 reordering. Communion tables were turned back to altars again (and raised and railed off), vestments and hangings were re-introduced, as were new choir screens. The balance now swung back to sacramental worship, away from the preaching of God's Word. The ritual of the Mass/Holy Communion was made more elaborate and focussed on what the priest (together with servers and acolytes) did in the newly separated chancel area. The east end of the building was now 'a holy place', set aside for a special few to enter and 'out of bounds' for most of the congregation. This also reflects a radically different concept of the parish minister- less a preacher and teacher communicating the revealed Word of God, and more of a sacerdotal priest dispensing the sacraments of the Holy Church. The whole focus of the congregation was drawn to the raised altar at the east end. The Reformation was now partially reversed.

Present needs

A parish church building today needs to be adaptable to differing forms of worship for different members of the church family - from a more contemporary worship style, utilising advances in digital technology in the main body of the church, to a more traditional Book of Common Prayer service, often with a robed choir. These different styles of worship and wider community events can only be achieved through a more adaptable seating arrangement. This needs a warm, well-lit and welcoming worship space, retaining the natural beauty of the medieval structure, but without unnatural barriers between people. This will greatly help in encouraging more people to attend (who might have been discouraged by the existing format of the building) and reaching the local community with the love of God in Jesus Christ.

Holy Communion in our main services is now usually celebrated in the nave using a small wooden table, lending a sense of accessibility and immediacy to the congregation, which is now much closer than when the sacrament was celebrated at the far east end of the church. It is now more of a shared family meal than some remote and distant event taking place far away, orchestrated by an elite group of separated people. The prevailing view of the present worshipping community is that we should seek to remove barriers between the clergy and congregation, as we are all the People of God. Holy Communion is open to all as a sign of God's grace and welcome. This stance differs from a more sacramental Anglo-Catholic ecclesiology of Victorian times which sought to emphasise the distancing between laity and clergy.

We live in a much more democratised society, where many old social barriers are broken down and the local parish church needs to reflect that loosening of restraints. The choir screen was intentionally erected by the Anglo-Catholic movement to separate the people and divide the church space. It is no longer appropriate to the needs of the present church community and does not represent the thinking and theology of the vast majority of those who attend public worship. The relocation of the choir screen acknowledges the past history of the church, but at the same time frees up the church building to better reflect the faith of the present-day worshipping community. We do not believe that the needs of the present church community are best met by retaining choir screens which prioritise the Victorian phase of the building over and against enhancing the original medieval simplicity and the mission imperative of the congregation.

Architecture

The perpendicular design of the church is unchanged from its original structure with large, magnificent windows to the east end and north and south aisles. This creates an open aspect to the building. The effect of the rising sun through the east windows at early communion services enhances the ambiance of the architecture and the wonder of God's creation. This view has been present for over three centuries before the erection of the choir screen.

The photographs below reflect the evolution of the east end from the 1828 reordering to the present day.

The 1828 reordering

The open east aspect of the sanctuary windows was in place post-reformation and unchanged in the 1828 reordering.

Right: view looking east to the chancel, circa 1830; note that no screen was in place in the Georgian reordering with a clear view to the east window.



The 1882 reordering

The 1882 reordering increased the floor level of the chancel and choir pews were installed. The reordering with the new choir pews retained an open aspect to the east end as shown on the photographs. Note the lighter aspect of the east end with a clear view of the east window emphasizing the perpendicular architecture.

Right: view looking east to the chancel, circa 1882; this was post reordering and before the screen was installed



Left: view looking south west from the chancel, circa 1882; this was post reordering and before the screen was installed. Note the open aspect of the chancel with light streaming in from the windows.

Right view looking east from the nave, circa 1882; this was post reordering and before the screen was installed. Note the full aspect through the nave and chancel to the east window.



The 1887 screen

The original F S Waller and Son reordering in 1882 did not include a choir screen and there was an open aspect to the east window. The screen was added in about 1887 as a memorial to W.A. Robbins, a former resident, by his widow. This had the impact of significantly foreshortening the west-east aspect of the church; the unobstructed length of the church was reduced from 30m to 19m, some 37%. With a 14m width of church, this gives a nearly square nave and aisles. The screen was designed by F S Waller and Son with a design which reflected the tracery of the windows. Two parclose screens were added to north and south at the same time to fully enclose the chancel.

The photographs show how the chancel has been separated as a usable space from the nave by the partitioning.

Right view looking east from the nave, circa 1912; this was post reordering with the screen installed.



Right: recent view looking east from the nave. Note the foreshortening of the aspect from the nave to the east end compared with the pre-1887 view when the screen was not in place.



The relocation of the screen would restore the original architectural features and dimensions of an uninterrupted nave continuing into the chancel and sanctuary. Simon Jenkins in his book on England's Thousand Best Churches comments that '*a heavy Victorian screen shields the chancel and thus obstructs the view of the East window*'.¹⁵ There was strong support from the initial consultation for relocating the screen which would provide a clear aspect to the chancel and sanctuary.

Reordering proposals

We originally proposed to keep the screen within the church and relocate it to the rear of the proposed gallery where the original organ used to be. We did not believe that this relocation of the Victorian choir screen would harm the historical and architectural significance of the church building; indeed, we believed that the relocation would enhance the architecture, as shown at St Michael's church in adjacent Highworth. It would emphasise and enhance the original intentions of the medieval design, with its fine perpendicular stonework, symmetry and airy lightness. Without the choir screen, the 1830 and 1882 photographs above clearly reveal the magnificent east window.

Our re-ordering plans are an integrated whole. Because of the introduction of a new gallery at the west end containing the necessary toilet and kitchen facilities, the resulting fore-shortening means that we need to make the east end of the church and the chancel area as adaptable and open as possible. The retention of the choir screen would make the whole building feel cramped and confined. Removing the screens would allow uninterrupted views of the east window and the levelled floor would give a sense of space of openness and welcome. It also means we have greater flexibility for different types of worship service, from traditional to informal, from small-scale to large annual events such as Remembrance Sunday or our nativity play on Christmas Eve.

In discussions with the DAC, it did not favour the relocation of the choir screen to the rear of the gallery because it was out of context. In Annex 3 we discuss other possible alternatives to locate the screen although, unless the screen is removed completely, then we still consider siting the screen to the rear of the balcony to be a feasible option.

¹⁵ England's Thousand Best Churches, Simon Jenkins 1999

Practical issues

Acoustics: Our Director of Music commented that the choir screen constrains the full sound of the choir to be projected into the main body of the church.

Audio visual: the church makes increasing use of a screen and projector to show visual presentations during worship, illustrate talks and sermons, and to use video to highlight special projects, updates from mission partners and similar events. We see this growing use of multimedia as an important part of our mission to a society which is much more image than text focussed. Relocating the present choir screen to a new gallery at the west end will greatly help in the installation of a new AV system, including a retractable projection screen coming down from the hidden side of the chancel arch.

A comment from our independent reviewer

It is hard to know what motivated the people who placed a screen, where one had never been before. It might be justified to suppose that the theological/liturgical influence of the 'High-Church' Oxford Movement, which had already been seen in the neighbouring Parish of Fairford and other surrounding Parishes also arrived at Lechlade.

For the Oxford Movement the most sacred part of the church was undoubtedly the sanctuary, where, according to high church doctrine, the sacrifice of the mass was offered up to God on behalf of the congregation.

At the time of the Reformation, the English reformers, according to their own doctrinal interpretation of the Lord's Supper, removed all the altars and substituted in their place, wooden tables. This was to signify that the minister was not a priest ordained to offer a sacrifice (connected to an altar), but a presiding presbyter who led the people in the communion meal which followed Jesus' last meal with his disciples before his crucifixion. In other words, the emphasis was on Jesus' gracious gift in inviting and hosting (through the minister) his people to enjoy the gift of life, represented by the bread, and the benefits of his shed blood. That is why in recent years Holy Communion has been, almost universally in the C of E, celebrated from behind the table, with the celebrant facing the people of God, rather than from in-front with the back to the rest of the communicants.

In this sense there was no part of the church building that could be deemed more holy than any other. The choir screen partitioned off one part of the church as though it were a place of more veneration than any other.

If this hypothesis has any merit, then it would be interesting to know whether the place of administering the sacrament, before the screen was erected, was a wooden table or a stone altar. I am not sure whether any existing photo of that time could answer that question.¹⁶

Summary

We believe there are valid and convincing reasons to relocate the screen which outweigh the historical significance of the screen. These are to:

- (i) Enable liturgical freedom from the division of clergy and congregation;
Provide greater accessibility and flexibility to the church consistent with its role as a place of worship and mission, and, promoting pastoral well-being and making the building more inviting for new worshippers;
- (ii) Providing a clear line of sight from west to east and avoid foreshortening of the east-west aspect;

¹⁶ Rev Dr Andrew Kirk

- (iii) Better reflect the significance of the original perpendicular design and shape of the church through an uninterrupted view of the altar from the nave, enabling the chancel to be re-united to the rest of the church; and
- (iv) Ensure a clear view of the wonderful east window of the church with images of the Patron Saint being clearly visible.

In mitigation and to recognise it as an example of 19th century workmanship, we propose to retain the central screen and relocate this to the rear of the gallery at the west end. This was where the original organ was located. This option was not supported by the DAC. In Annex 3 we provide further justification for its relocation. We would prefer to relocate the screen here rather than removal.

There was significant support from the 2018 consultation for the removal of the screen. This was replicated in the response to the 2021 consultation¹⁷ where 86% of regular church attendees supported the relocation. A few others wished to retain the screen as it reflected the historic significance of the Victorian reordering; this is addressed by its relocation.

7.2. The chancel

The changing forms of worship and events are driving a more adaptable arrangement of choir stalls. We proposed an arrangement which would allow east facings stalls for small communion services, west facing to allow the choir to engage more closely with the congregation or for a large choral concert, or the current north/south alignment. This would require the choir furniture to be more adaptable than in the current arrangement.

The presumption of changes has to be emphasised, because not to change them would greatly interfere with the integrity of one overall plan. To leave them as they would spoil the overall, present vision for one blended whole.

However, we are mindful, on advice from the Church Building Council, to defer any proposed changes to the choir stalls in the chancel until the reordering work in the nave has been completed and its impact assessed. This will enable us to set out the need for changes to the chancel in greater detail.

7.3. The Blaise chapel and ledgerstones

The chapel originated in 1476 although the chantry was dissolved at the reformation. The current Blaise chapel was consecrated in 1953. Prior to this date, bench pews from the 1882 reordering were placed here facing north and earlier box pews had been installed in 1828. The chapel is used regularly for Holy Communion services and quiet prayer.

Right: The Lazarus window lights this area, particularly in the early morning sun

We are mindful, on advice from the Church Building Council, to maintain the liturgical focus of the chapel and defer any significant changes to a later date. We shall retain the altar table, piscina and communion rail and move the brass ledgerstones to this area where the footfall will be lower than



¹⁷ PI22 Lechlade St Lawrence, Report on the 2021 Consultation, December 2021

the nave. This requires some reordering with the removal of the current 1954 reredos. The reredos is of an unexceptional and standard mid-20th Century design.

Storage, apart from choir books and music, will be provided at the west end and along the north wall of the nave. The new raised floor level will continue into this area.



Following investigations by our archaeologist¹⁸ and subsequent advice from the church buildings conservator,¹⁹ the two large ledgerstones with brasses, currently at the east end of the nave (and not in their original location), will be moved to the new floor in this Blaise chapel area. The lower footfall in this area will help to conserve the brasses.

Left: Townsend ledgerstone

We have consulted with our highly experienced stonemason, who has carried out previous restoration work at the church, and who advised that the ledgerstones can be safely moved.

The Bathurst ledgerstone is located in the north east corner of the church, where a disabled toilet is proposed. The ledgerstone is not its original location. We have discussed with the descendants of Sir Edward Bathurst its relocation in a quiet area of the nave near to the war memorial. They are supportive of the relocation subject to placing it in an area of low footfall.



Right: Sir Edward Bathurst ledgerstone

¹⁸ An archaeological watching brief report, Chiz Harward. Urban Archaeology, April 2020
¹⁹ Email from Tracey Manning, Conservator, Church Buildings Council, April 2020

8. The nave

8.1. Pews

Our objective is to provide an open and welcoming space to provide flexibility for worship, mission and community events. The 2018 initial consultation found that many people found the pews to be uncomfortable. They strongly supported pew removal. More adaptable seating was identified as the greatest need for improvement. We concluded that the pews should be replaced with more adaptable and lighter seating to meet our objective. The 2021 consultation confirmed this approach with 86% of regular church attendees supporting the replacement of the pews with chairs.

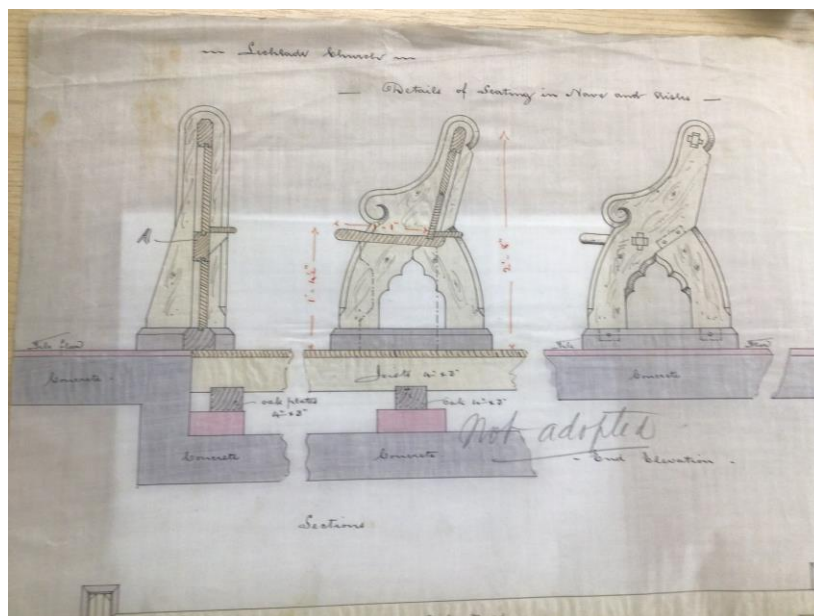
The pews are very heavy to move and take much time to do so. This is particularly difficult with our more elderly helpers and a significant constraint on the ability to provide adaptable space for current and future activities.

History of the pews and floor levels

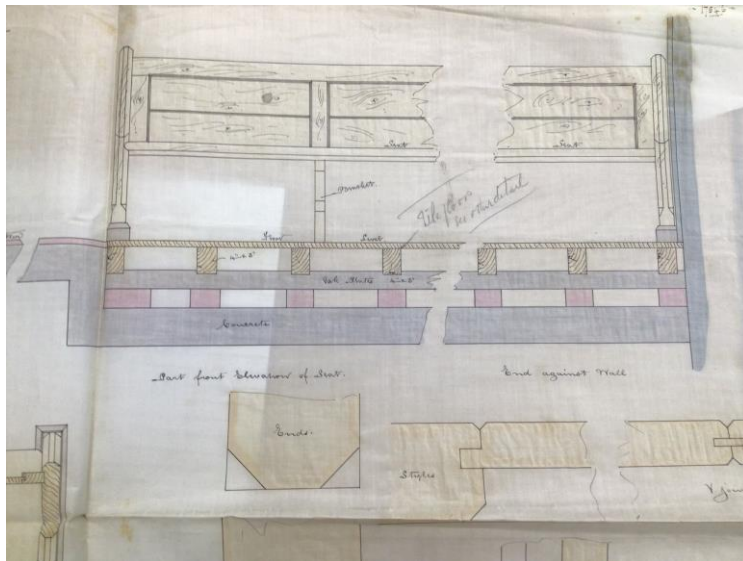
The pews were installed as part of the 1882 reordering by F. S. Waller and Son. The original design was to fix the pews on a timber floor supported by oak plates and joists, raising the timber floor level by 9 inches above the concrete floor. The F S Waller and Son design is shown in the picture overleaf²⁰. This shows the aisle level to be flush with the timber floor and some 9 inches above the pew area floor level. During the reordering work, the 'vestry' decided to change the design to remove the oak timber floor and supports and lay quarry tiles in their place. This is confirmed in correspondence and a note on the drawing states 'not adopted'. The correspondence suggested that the change was due to the cost of the oak timbers and limited funds. The resulted in a floor level 9 inches below the original finished level. This is confirmed by the exposed and rough finished column bases and both the north and south door sills being higher than the completed floor level.

It is likely that the pews were designed to be fixed on the timber floor and not to be moved.

Right: drawing showing original floor design proposals with a note 'not adopted'



²⁰ GCC archives D2593



Left: section across aisle pews showing the original design of timber base plates, joists and floor. Note the aisle level to the left showing the level some 9 inches above the concrete floor.

The pews

The original 1882 design showed about 64 timber pews which extended the full length of the nave and the aisles, including the Blaise chapel. The current layout allows for 42 pews with lengths of 2.4m and 2.7m, with a few of smaller lengths. The longer pews weigh 80kg; the recommended safe lifting weight for a man is 15kg. The original pew design suggests that they would be fixed. The heavy pews cannot be stacked.

Each pew occupies an area of about 1.5m². Even if the pews could be moved, there is insufficient space to store them in the church and provide a clear open area for church events. We would need an area of 60m² which would take a significant area of the nave and aisles out of use. This defeats the objective of an open, welcoming and adaptable space. When the pews have been moved for any event, many have had to be taken out of the church altogether. This involves each 80kg pew being loaded onto a lorry, taken to the adjacent primary school, unloaded and stored. This is an extremely time-consuming and inefficient procedure, and only possible at those points in the year when the school can lend us the storage space.

Pews on castors

Each deal pew weights about 80kg; with people sitting in the pews, the total weight increases to about 400kg. The pew bases are substantial with timbers 0.5m long and 100mm wide at each end; some pews have an intermediate support and base. A full pew, with the weight evenly distributed to the floor, results in a loading of about 600kg/m². There has been damage to the clay tile floor when these pews have been moved.

It has been suggested by some of the statutory consultees that the pews could be placed on castors to enable them to more easily moved. We have considered the feasibility of castors. While heavy duty castors are available for this weight, these would raise height of the pew by 120mm and thus would adversely affect the ergonomics. The castor design would result in point loads of up to 95kg (about 150tonnes/m²) at the small base of the castor which is likely to result in damage to a tiled or limestone floor, particularly if there is any unevenness, however small, on the floor. There is a high risk of damage to both clay tile and limestone floors. There are also difficulties in retrofitting pews with castors and risks of movement if the pews are not securely braked.

We conclude that the proposal to mount the pews on castors is impractical with high risk of damage to floors; the increase in seat height would not be acceptable for the comfort of church attendees; and there is a risk of hazardous movement if a pew is not fully braked.

Need and Significance

The need is to provide a clear, open and adaptable space for worship, mission and community events is demonstrated in Section 2 – Mission and Objectives.

The Church Building Council accepted the need to remove the pews and replace with unupholstered chairs; the Historic Buildings and Places asked us to consider retaining some pews and placing them on castors. Historic England and SPAB suggested that castors could be placed on the pews. We comment above that this proposal is not practical and does not meet the need for an open and adaptable space.

Chairs

In the 2021 consultation, we provided a sample of six different designs of unupholstered chairs for people to see and test. There was significant support for the Theo chair.

8.2. Floor

Existing construction

The current floor across the nave and north and south aisles was constructed as part of the 1882 re-ordering by F S Waller and Son. The architect's specification²¹ is confirmed by the recent core-sampling of the floor. The specification required graves to be exhumed and infilled, suggesting that some, if not all, of the internal burials were removed in 1882: *'all human remains as may be interfered with ... shall be reverently and carefully removed'* and *'all open graves found under the church or those from which bodies have been removed shall be filled with soil and well rammed'*.

The 2018 GPR survey²² supports this suggestion, although it is likely that some internal burials will remain, along with some tombs, vaults and other structures, although these may have been filled in.

The floor replaced an earlier stone floor from the 1830 reordering by Pace, confirmed by photographs of this period. It is unclear whether the stone extended under the box pews or just along the aisles.

In replacing the 1830 floor and box pews, F S Waller and Son reduced the level of the floor; this is not unexpected if they were removing interments and earth. The lower floor level is evidenced by the unfinished stone bases to the columns and the cill heights of the north and south doors. Drawings from the F S Waller and Son designs, in Section 8.1, show that he had originally planned to place the new pews on a timber floor supported by transverse and longitudinal oak timbers to a height of about 9 inches. This design was superseded with the pews sitting on tiles at a lower height.

Given that the floor was reduced by about 9 inches in 1882 to accommodate the new limecrete floor, it is presumed that most of the earlier floor levels and sub floors will have been removed at this point, whether the original floor levels were retained or not.

Recent coring of the floor confirmed the lime concrete floor was hard to drill through and a depth of 5 to 6 inches. Compacted earth was found below this and easy to penetrate.

The nave and aisles have a floor of plain red earthenware tiles, with diaper pattern detailing in dark brown and black tiles between the blocks of pews. There is a frequent mention in the parish records

²¹ Architect's Specification 1882, F. S. Waller and Son, Gloucestershire Archives, document D2593

²² St Lawrence Church - A Report on a Ground Penetrating Radar Survey, Archaeological Surveys Ltd, September 2018

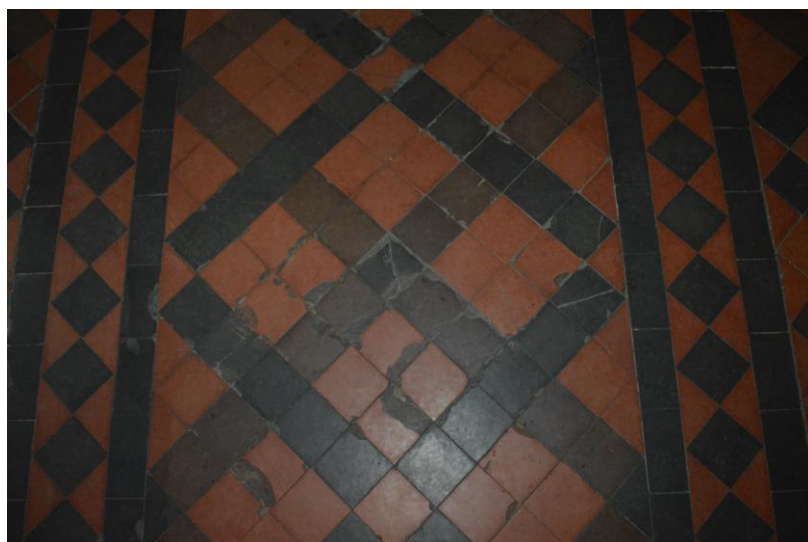
of repairs to the tiles, many replaced with modern quarry tiles. There is also visual evidence of damage to the tiles. The choir and chancel have a floor detailed in decorated encaustic tiles, probably by Godwin or Minton.

Ducts in the nave and aisle floors for heating pipes are covered by metal gratings. Further heating is provided by radiators set around the perimeter walls.

With the hard lime concrete floor in place, we concluded that this should not be disturbed, and any floor re-construction should be above this. Any excavation in the floor for pipes or cabling will weaken the structure and likely lead to local failures.

Floor tiles

The Victorian tiled floor in the Nave and north and south aisles comprises 100mm x 100mm plain clay red tiles with black tiles demarcating the aisles. The tiles were laid as part of the 1882 reordering.

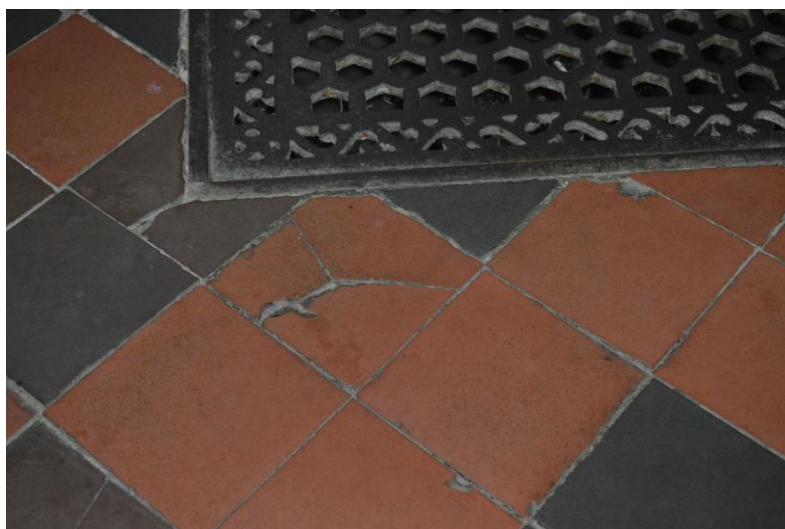


There is a long history of tiles becoming loose in several places with some lifting and cracking.²³ Remedial works have been carried out over many years, but the problem continues and there is a risk of tripping over the loose or worn tiles.

Left: typical damage to aisle tiles

Many of the tiles are damaged by point loading (see right) or by a lack of adhesion to the limecrete floor.

Right: typical damage to clay tile from point loading failure



We concluded that the clay tile floor finish is not appropriate for an open and adaptable area where nave furniture is regularly moved. The DAC asked us to consider using some of the existing tiles in the

²³ Parish records

new floor. We set out in Annex 2 why use of the existing tiles would be impractical and not meet the objectives of a clear open space, with no demarcation, for flexible use.

Need

The need for raising the floor comes from the following three considerations:

- (i) The need to provide level access for all abilities from the church entrances to the communion rail.
- (ii) The need to provide insulation and underfloor heating to give an even heat across the nave and aisles while providing a clear and adaptable floor area for worship, mission and community events. This avoids harm to the existing limecrete floor and risk of any excavations in or under the floor.
- (iii) The need to route extensive power, lighting, AV cabling, water and wastewater without harm to the existing floor and further damage to the walls; and
The floor finish needs to be hard wearing with high strength, a design life of at least 100 years, easily cleaned, of light colour and no demarcations to be compatible with the flexible use of the space.

We expand on the need for (ii) and (iii) in Section 10.

Access

At present access into the main church is step free via the west door and through into the nave, aisles and the Blaise Chapel. However, there are two steps up into the choir and chancel which present a barrier to accessing the communion rail. This presents a difficulty for older people, particularly when descending. There is a step down from the north porch into the north aisle where there is currently a steep temporary ramp to assist access. There is also step up from the south aisle to the threshold of the south door.

A key objective is to allow for level access from the restored north porch to the communion rail. This will also allow the south door to be used without steps. The option to have a slope from the nave to the chancel was considered but found not to be feasible and would cause a greater impact. By raising the floor and protecting the tiles beneath, the impact is minimised for maximum benefit.

The Church Building Council document ‘Easy Access to Church Buildings’ states that²⁴

We cannot say ‘All Welcome’ and leave some people to find that they can’t access our building or our activities. We shouldn’t use the language of being inclusive, welcoming and accessible if that ignores the limitations of that inclusion, accessibility, or welcome. To do otherwise leaves us open to challenges of dishonesty and hypocrisy’ and

‘A Church without disabled people is a disabled Church’.

The Historic England publication ‘Easy Access to Buildings’ stated that²⁵

‘Where changes are proposed to a listed church there should be a clear need for the works which is sufficient to outweigh the normal assumption against alteration. Improvements to access [as proposed here] should be considered in this context, in the light of what is reasonable’.

This is a great opportunity here to make significant headway in meeting modern standards and expectation for accessibility; this is a growing need both in the church and across society.

²⁴ Easy Access to Church Buildings, Church Buildings Council 2021

²⁵ Page 8, Easy Access to Buildings, Historic England, June 2015

The components of access improvements include:

- Raising the floor to provide level access from the north porch to the communion rail, discussed here.
- Provision of a disabled toilet within the church, discussed in section 9.
- Improving the footpath known as Shelley's Walk outside the north porch; this forms a separate Faculty; and
- Moving the church office from upstairs in the cottage into the vestry with step free access to the vestry door.

Locating the disabled toilet in the church provides a significant improvement to people of all ages who suffer from one or more disabilities. The disabled toilet provides level access to this facility without disturbing the main congregation on the nave. Currently two small standard toilets are available in the adjacent church cottage with difficult access over several steps.

The west door sill would be raised; the external concrete-flagged path will also be raised and graded to meet the Market Place pavement, with the benefit of eliminating flooding after heavy rain.

Access using ramps.

Historic England and SPAB commented that the access by the less able from the nave to the chancel and north porch could be achieved with ramps. The Building Regulations state that a 250mm difference in level would require a ramp 4m long, a minimum slope of 1 in 14, and a minimum 1,2m wide.²⁶

For access to the chancel, a side ramp and landing at chancel level would require an area of some 8m² where the space is used for worship. We had looked at a ramp at an early stage of the project but discounted this option because the area is used for worship. It would also impact on the design of underfloor heating.

For access from the north porch a similar ramp would take much of the entrance area and impact on access to the facilities at the west end. The comment applies similarly to the south door.

We concluded that access ramps to the existing floor level would not be feasible.

²⁶ Building Regulations, Access to and use of buildings part M, HM Government 2010

Power cables

Power socket outlets are fixed to the north and south walls. There is a need to provide power to the electronic card reader, the projector location in the pews and for Christmas events for example lighting the tree. Similarly temporary cabling is required for microphones located on the lectern at the east end of the nave. All this equipment requires over-floor cabling with flexible covering and hazard tape which causes harm to the appearance of the church. This also presents a small barrier to access.

Right: over-floor power cable for projector



There is a need to provide power points in the floor or adjacent columns to meet the above and other power requirements such as mobile screens. We are reluctant to propose cabling trenches in the existing floor as this is likely to affect the structural integrity of the floor, causing harm. This is a further reason to provide a new floor at a higher level. We provide further details in Section 10.2.

Left: over-floor power cable for electronic collection pad

Floor material

In selecting a floor finish for a life of over 100 years, we are looking for a hard wearing, durable, attractive stone floor. We have looked at new floors in a several churches and seen alternative sources of stone and designs. The floor needs to take the weight of a mobile inspection platform. We have discussed the floor design with a well-known stone supplier who built the floor at St. Lawrence Church, Bourton-on-the-Water; we favour the use of a hard-wearing Purbeck stone. We invited comments on the floor finish at the 2021 consultation. The floor construction would be built up from existing with a suitable geotextile, a thick layer of rigid insulation, and bedding for Purbeck limestone paving.

The floor will include insulation of up to 150mm thick to an approved specification. This will help in reducing heat loss and minimise power requirements. Our mechanical engineer has proposed two alternative floor designs in his proposals.²⁷

8.3. Walls

The lime-based plaster to the internal north and south walls has the badly degraded mainly as a result of the MIC copper sheathed cabling. Removal of cabling and pipework from the walls will allow access to carry out remedial works to the walls.

We carried out a survey of the lime plastered walls. There are likely voids behind several areas of the plaster. Advice from our architect was to leave these areas untouched unless they failed. It does suggest that any fixing of cabling or pipework should be avoided.

The internal walls are rendered with lime-based plaster painted white. However, the colour has faded and needs some refreshing to match the new additions to the building.

8.4. Memorials

There are a wealth of monuments located within the church which we have recorded.²⁸ The reordering proposals impact on only two large memorials on the south side of the internal west wall for Bowles 1814. These can be relocated above the adjacent and similar Bowles 1804 memorial.

Smaller plaques and fittings may need to be relocated within the church. We will prepare a detailed plan regarding this at a suitable, later stage in the process.

8.5. North porch

The return of the north porch as the main church entrance will provide a welcome, light, weatherproof entrance to the church. The porch was probably added to the church in the Elizabethan era and served as the main entrance to the church until Waller's re-ordering of 1882.

Currently, the north porch is locked and only used for access for large services such as Remembrance Day. We have a problem with pigeons who regularly nest in a corner of the porch as the porch is open above the existing palisade gates.



With the completion of Shelley's Walk, there will be a new level flagstone footpath leading into the porch as shown left.

Left: north porch entrance with the recently completed Shelley's walk

Traditional solid timber external doors will safeguard the porch internals from the weather and allow the porch and contents to be secure, weather-proofed, pigeon-proof and allow the space to be more effectively used. We propose to install an electronic noticeboard with rolling notices to minimise the space taken up by paper notices. We also envisage a 'welcome' electronic notice board with details of services and daily activities. The church is open every day and will continue to be so after the reordering. Thus while we provide an open and welcoming

²⁷ [add reference to EEP floor design.

²⁸ Inventory of Monuments, Memorials and Plaques, St Lawrence PCC, 2021

experience during the day, it is important to have a secure door to lock closed at night. Previously we have had thefts from the church and we need to safeguard against this.

The deletion of the internal lobby emphasises the need for the external door and internal glass door for draught exclusion and loss of heat; a recommendation from the CoE environment programme. The provision of a level access from Shelley’s Walk through the north porch and into the nave will allow unimpeded access for all abilities.

The original wooden door from the porch into the north aisle, which has a moderate significance, will be retained and held permanently open. Light glass doors will allow normal access from the porch into the main church.



Left: Architect's view of the north porch with external door



Right: north porch with doors open

The existing palisade gates are assessed as low to moderate significance in the Statement of Significance. The sharp iron spikes on the non-original timber gates to the north porch imply a 'keep out' to the community and most unwelcoming when we are looking to attract new and potential members of the congregation.

Parish records show that while the original design might date back to the 1930's, the gates have been replaced in recent decades. They are currently in poor condition.



Right: north porch entrance gates

The 4 inch (100mm) pointed iron spikes present a hazard to any unauthorised person trying to get in. If someone got impaled on the spikes, even if unauthorised, then they could be seriously injured.

The replacement doors are carefully designed to blend into the conservation area, particularly adjacent to the recently completed footpath.

Right: a closer view of the iron spikes on the north porch entrance gates



In addition, there is a problem with pigeons nesting in the porch which the new doors will prevent. The alternative method to exclude pigeons uses wire mesh would be unsightly and not being in keeping with the church building.

8.6. South door

The door to the south entrance was sealed many years ago, although gaps give rise to significant draughts. The door is a significant feature. We have re-opened the door after many decades of it being sealed up. On initial inspection, the door is in reasonable condition and the iron hinges still operate after many years; we plan to restore the door and ensure there are no draughts. The entrance will be available for use as an emergency exit or when a large congregation is departing.

8.7. West door and meeting room

Currently the west porch, a raised timber floor will be constructed consistent with the level in the nave. This will enable services to be laid, including a new 3-phase electricity supply and water connection without disturbing the ledgerstones re-located in the 1882 reordering. This arrangement will allow an unimpeded floor and walls, allowing major services to be routed without disturbing the ledgerstone floor. The floor can be lifted for inspection.

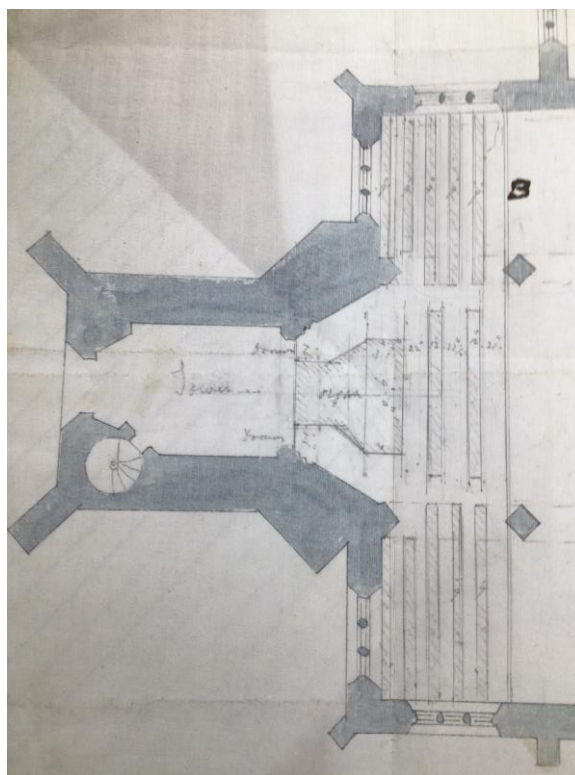
This arrangement will require removal of some 250mm of the existing west door and raising the external path. These changes will not be visible on completion of the works.

9. The west gallery

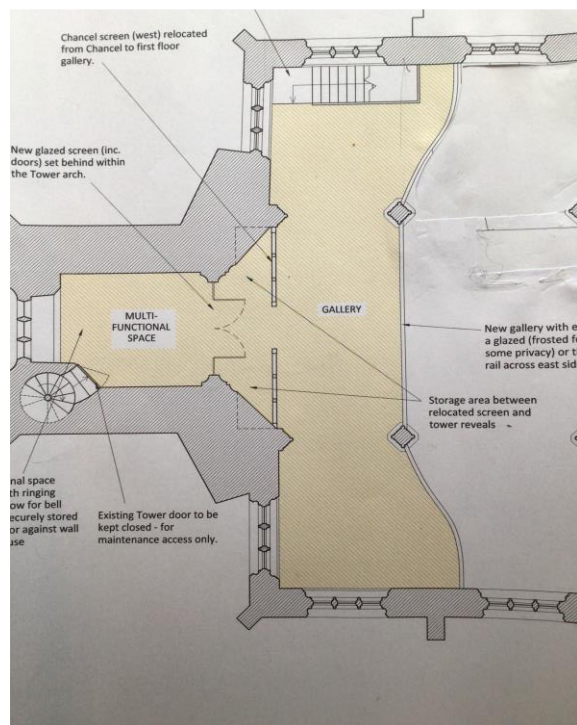
9.1. The gallery

There are records of a west singing gallery from 1740 with up to nine male singers employed to sing at divine services.²⁹ The singers appear to have been licensed by the bishop. In 1828 architect Richard Pace carried out a reordering including the provision of two new side galleries to the west end and north side of the church,³⁰ one of the defining features of that time. The plans show an organ and 'organ loft' at the rear of the gallery. Both the west and north galleries were dismantled as part of the 1882 reordering. The organ was moved to the north-east chapel around the same time.

The west end balcony was constructed within the western arch of the nave; access steps are shown on the drawings at the far west end. These galleries were removed in the 1882 reordering.



Right: Plan of the 1828 balcony by Pace; note the line of the gallery was across the full width of the nave and aisles



The west gallery will be reinstated on generally on a similar alignment as the previous gallery. This will have a floor at the same level as the existing bell ringing chamber providing an area for choir robing and additional seating. Beneath the gallery two toilets are proposed in the north-west corner, one for disabled use. The kitchen proposed for beneath the south-west corner of the gallery replaces smaller units recently installed in the north-west corner of the north aisle.

Left: Plan of the new gallery on the same line as previously with aisle sections widening to north and south walls

We have noted comments from some of the statutory consultees and the public consultation about the impact of the glass lobby and have removed this from our proposals. The line of the gallery broadly follows that of the original and the

²⁹ Hockaday Abs. cclvij, 1741

³⁰ Gloucestershire Archives. R.O., P 197/CW 3/2

floor level fixtures are within this line. We have widened the upper area across the aisles to accommodate the kitchen, toilet and lobby areas and provide additional space at gallery level.

The appearance of the gallery including the glass parapet is subject to detailed design. We envisage a high quality design and workmanship similar to that seen at St Lawrence church, Bourton-on-the Water.

The area below the gallery includes a central meeting room with sliding doors into the nave. This allows this space to be a room for discreet meetings or to be part of the nave seating. Entry to the meeting room will normally be through the north porch. Continuing to the south, a door opens into the kitchen, fully equipped for serving refreshments and light meals.

The gallery will provide seating for 40 to 50 people, replacing the 30 seats lost at the ground floor west end, and increasing total capacity by 10 to 20.

The Harker window in the south west corner of the church and partly obstructed by the proposed gallery will be exchanged with a plain window along the south aisle. This will allow the full window to be seen from the nave.

9.2. The font

The font will be re-located to a more visible location at the eastern end of the church. This is consistent with the current Church of England view of baptism.

9.3. Kitchen

We have prepared the needs for a kitchen with enhanced facilities after a detailed review of facilities by a group of volunteers who work for various events in the church. The group defined the catering needs for the current and future groups who use or plan to use the church. In addition to supporting the weekly services and activities, a larger kitchen than current is needed to support events through the year including concerts, Ladies' Breakfasts, Easter week events, Women's World Day of Prayer, World Church committee, Harvest Supper, Advent and Christmas events. In addition, there will be gatherings of family and friends after a christening, funeral or other special events. Other events, where we are limited by the current facilities, use the Memorial Hall rather than the church. One of our objectives is to make the church, a central location in the town, more welcoming for visitors. These enhanced facilities will allow us to use the church to welcome visitors possibly serving teas in the summer, hot soup in the winter and catering for groups of visitors we have previously hosted.

The scope of food and beverages will include tea and coffee for up to 200, light lunch and wine for up to 100, light meals (hot and cold breakfast, lunch or supper) for afternoon teas for up to 100. Capacity and speed of service are essential elements in the sizing of equipment and storage of crockery. The equipment needs to be reliable and efficient to meet the capacity, speed of service and clearing up in a reasonable time. Our initial assessment of needs includes:

- a water boiler 17 litre capacity.
- a coffee boiler.
- a domestic oven with two rings.
- cutlery drawers and cupboards.
- floor to ceiling cupboards on wall space where there is no work surface.
- a commercial refrigerator.
- double sinks and double draining board.
- catering dishwasher.
- handbasin.
- catering standard non-slip floor; and

- all work surfaces, sinks, hand basin and floating island to be made of stainless steel.

We have received proposals from a commercial kitchen designer which confirms that we can include all the kitchen requirements within the southwest area of the church as defined by the architect. We have also consulted with our building services consultant on the need for ventilation, water supply and wastewater disposal.

The location of the kitchen is ideal, in as much as there is access to services in that area of the church and no further openings would need to be made in the walls, except for ventilation.

Having the kitchen segregated with permanent walls, with an access door(s) and a serving hatch will reduce noise during worship and allow greater safety for both those in the kitchen and those being served.

9.4. Accessible toilets

Currently it is impossible to access the toilets in the adjacent cottage without going out of the church into the front of the cottage and through to the back; the alternative is a step from the door into the cottage yard. However, the toilets are too small for accessible use.

Our objectives set out in Section 2 are to create all weather access for all abilities and enhance facilities including the provision of toilets. To meet the disability access requirements, we shall need level access and at least one suitably designed disabled toilet with all-weather access. Our current arrangements do not meet these objectives. There was strong support from the initial consultation for the provision of toilets, the second priority after improved seating.

9.5. Meeting rooms

With opening of the north porch for regular use, the west door and porch will be only used for special services and events such as funerals and weddings. This will enable the porch to be used as one of the multi-functional rooms, mainly for Sunday school. In addition, a larger room can be made at the central west end for Sunday School during services and for other church group meetings during the week. The room can be opened up when the west entrance is used for special occasions.

The first-floor balcony will link into the existing bell ringing chamber which can be used as a third multi-functional room when not used for ringing. A glass door would open from the chamber onto the balcony with appropriate ventilation and sound insulation. Improved access using the balcony stairs would replace use of the existing narrow helical steps.

The proposals will provide a space of c25m² at the west end of the centre aisle. The west porch would provide a further 15m² with a similar area for the first-floor space above.

9.6. The bell ringing chamber

9.6.1. The need

The reordering proposals support our future worship and mission for St Lawrence for the next 100 years where ringing of bells will continue as an integral future use of the church, working together to make best use of all available space within the church. We are grateful to have a dedicated and committed band of bellringers and we know that the bells bring much joy to local people, whether they are churchgoers or not.

Following the initial consultation with the church community in 2018, there was a firm direction from the DAC in 2019 to test the feasibility of including all the facilities required for future worship within the church. Any proposed new build for these facilities outside the current footprint of the grade 1 church would be difficult and most unlikely to be approved.

We commissioned Chedburn Codd in September 2019 to carry out a feasibility study for including all facilities, currently in the church and the adjacent cottage, within the church. Chedburn Codd produced a report and drawings in February 2020 with detailed proposals to include all facilities within the church footprint³¹. They concluded that this can be achieved, provided that groups share spaces to enable optimal use of the building, for example in the chancel area, the vestry and the bell ringing chamber.

The room is full of light, and a large window provides a view to the Market Place and east into the church. It is used for bell ringing on a Sunday just before the 10.00am service, for special services and weddings, by visiting ringers and for a practice session on a Friday evening. We propose use of the room for Sunday school during the morning service and occasional use as required, when not used for bell ringing.

9.6.2. The proposals

The proposals include sharing the bell ringing chamber with church groups to provide a second meeting room. The third meeting room is proposed in the base of the tower. The architect concluded that there was sufficient space in the tower and bell ringing chamber for small meetings. He had recently modified a tower room of similar size, but not used for bell ringing, at Holy Trinity Church, Bradford on Avon for small meetings.

The architect concluded that this would be feasible provided that security measures are in place and protocols are agreed between users; for example, bell ropes and equipment will be made secure. Our architect has developed a solution to make the bell ropes secure. This solution has been supported by John Taylor & Co of Loughborough, the bells specialist who demonstrated that the ropes can be lifted to provide a clearance of 2.4m above the floor. The rope supporting the spider can be securely locked.³²

It is proposed to enclose the ringing chamber with glass within the tower arch with doors to access from the balcony. This will allow the ringers to function without and detraction of noise. For example, from any music preparation for a service.

9.6.3. The bell-ringers

An initial meeting was held with representatives of the bell-ringers on 14th February 2020. It was not possible to arrange a further meeting until May 2021 because of the COVID-19 restrictions. The meeting focused on detailed arrangement for the security of facilities and how shared use of the area can work³³. Following the meeting, the representative advised us that she had stood back from representing the bell-ringers.

The Gloucester and Bristol Diocesan Association of Church bell-ringers (GBDACBR) wrote in August 2021 to express its concern about the proposals. At that time, the proposals were still being finalised

³¹ Feasibility Study Report and Drawings, Chedburn Codd, February 2020

³² Note of meeting (and video) with Taylor & Son 1 Sep 21

³³ Notes of meeting with the bell-ringers, 28 May 2021

in advance of the launch in September 2021. The concern was raised before the proposals had been placed in the public domain and were known to them. We responded in writing to their comments.³⁴

A further meeting took place with all the bell-ringers on 1st October 2021. A significant number of them expressed concern about the security of bell ringing equipment should the room be used by other church groups. We had provided detailed arrangements and a draft protocol for sharing the room with church users.³⁵ We offered further discussion with them on these proposals but, to date, they have declined to meet us. We are willing to meet representatives from the bell ringers to explain these proposals.

We consider the solution proposed by John Taylor & Co who are specialists in this area will provide a high level of security for the bell ringing equipment and allow the room to be used for church groups, subject to the protocol that we have proposed.

The DAC advised us that³⁶

Having consulted with the DAC bells adviser the DAC Chair and Secretary understood that relevant health and safety concerns relevant to having different parties using the ringing room can be addressed. The DAC delegation accepted that the parish wishes to concentrate activities at the west end of the church, including meetings and activities which need separate rooms; importantly the Sunday School which operates as several groups of children.

And that

The DAC delegation did not feel the Committee would wish to comment any further on this aspect of the scheme but urged the incumbent to write to the ringers to bring them up to speed with the recent developments relevant to the project planning and suggest a meeting to try iron out any remaining concerns.

We have written to the bell ringers with a proposed protocol and offered to meet with them.

³⁴ Project Inspire Response to Comments log – bellringers_v1,

³⁵ PI19 Use of the Bell Ringing Chamber, Project Inspire, September 2021

³⁶ Lechlade Reordering Summary Report, February 2022, DAC

10. Building services

10.1. Heating

Heating our lofty church building is a challenge, though the proposal to create enclosed areas at the west end will reduce draughts and provide more effective heating.

The church is currently heated from two gas-fed conventional boilers circulating hot water to radiators fixed along the north and south walls, and convector blowers located around the perimeter of the church. The system was installed in the 1960's, originally with an oil-fed boiler. The gas boilers were most recently replaced in 2014.

The initial consultation in 2018 identified the lack of effective heating as a major concern of parishioners. Heat is not well distributed to the nave where people have complained about the cold in winter months. The current position is not consistent with our vision of an open and welcoming church for all ages and abilities.

The Church of England target to achieve net zero operational carbon emissions by 2030 has focused us to examine a range of heating options.

We discussed possible options with the DAC heating advisor. We then engaged Martin Thomas Associates (MTA), a mechanical and electrical consultancy with significant experience of church buildings, to undertake a feasibility study and advise on options for heating, power and lighting. MTA undertook a detailed evaluation³⁷ and concluded under the following headings that:

Use of building: With the fairly regular and varied use of the building, a 'whole building' approach to heating is appropriate, compared with 'local heating' which takes the form of under-pew heating or high-level radiant heaters.

Heat source: the Church of England net zero target constrains the choice of heat source to heat pumps, biomass or electricity. Biomass is not a practical solution for a volunteer-managed organization. Heat pumps are more cost-efficient than direct electricity use. The land requirements for a ground source heat pumps are constrained by the churchyard and lack of available land. The air source heat pump (ASHP) is the preferred source. This does not stop us using the existing gas boilers in winter periods while they still have a remaining life.

Use of photovoltaic cells: this option to place PV cells on the top of the south roof, not seen from ground level, was considered by MTA but discounted because the power generated would only meet 20% of total demand; peak power demand is in the winter when PV output is low; use of batteries would provide only limited storage. Electricity demand in the summer is very low. Installing PV to export to the grid is not economic. This option was therefore not progressed.

Heat distribution: MTA looked at options for new radiators and fan convector system, underfloor heating, perimeter trench heating and central radiators. With an ASHP source, the temperature of the circulating water is lower than gas boilers and will require larger radiators to compensate. This then takes up more space in the nave and limits its flexibility. An underfloor heating system is more efficiently balanced with an ASHP output.

³⁷ Mechanical and Electrical Services Feasibility Report, Martin Thomas Associates Ltd, September 2020

We concluded that a hybrid heating system is appropriate enabling continuing ‘slow’ heat with a boost from ‘fast’ heat to increase temperatures in advance of main events in the church:

- (i) ‘slow’ heat from an ASHP powering the water-based underfloor heating system;
- (ii) ‘fast’ heat from the existing boilers with distribution in trench heating. When the gas boilers reach the end of their life, they will be replaced with small electric boilers, mainly to meet the peak heating demand in the winter months.

We subsequently engaged Environmental Engineering Partnership (EEP) to undertake detailed design of the heating and lighting systems. EEP provided a Design Stage 3 Report³⁸. EEP confirmed the hybrid heating system proposals and, working with our architect, developed the detailed design and drawings.

Heat distribution will be more effective using underfloor heating and discrete column convectors. A higher floor level provides the opportunity to include effective insulation and install underfloor heating without disturbing the existing lime concrete floor and at reasonable cost.

In discussions with EEP we are proposing two ASHPs with the equivalent output of the original single unit to provide resilience of supply.

An air source heat pump (ASHP) needs to be located close to the building it supplies to limit heat loss. The unit is about 1.5m square and emits a low noise.

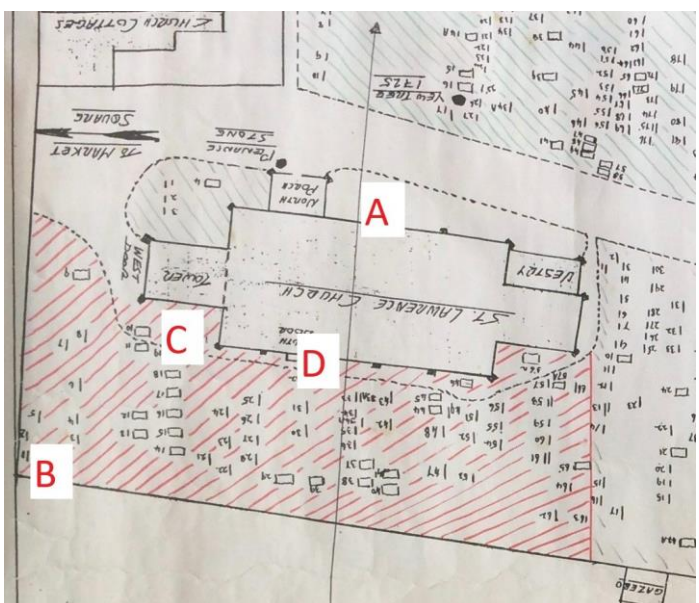


We considered alternative sites within the churchyard for the ASHP within the churchyard within a reasonable distance so as not to reduce the efficiency of the unit.

Location of an ASHP: The churchyard both north and south of the church include many listed chest tombs and burials tombs which limit potential sites.

Right: Plan of part of the churchyard showing existing chest tombs and graves and location of possible sites for an ASHP

The criteria for a suitable location are that (a) it should be close to the church, to avoid lengthy pipework through the churchyard with the risk of disturbing archaeological remains and to minimize heat loss along the pipework; (b) it should not be close to adjacent houses



³⁸ Project Inspire Stage 3 Report Engineering Services Installations, EEP, October 2022

as the ASHP emits a continuous but low noise; (c) it should cause minimum harm to the heritage of the area - all these possible sites are within the Lechlade conservation area.

- (i) Location A: north of the church – this site is adjacent to the north wall and just south of Shelley’s Walk, in an area lowered at the time of the 1882 reordering. While the location would minimize pipe runs, the site would be visible from the heavily used footpath and would cause harm to the aspect of the church.
- (ii) Location B: this is in the recently cleared south west corner of the churchyard where the oil tank used to stand. It is adjacent to Shelley’s Close and directly opposite a cottage. The long length of pipework would have to pass around listed chest tombs. The ASHP can be landscaped with bushes to hide the equipment, but noise may impact on the cottage opposite.
- (iii) Location C: this site is adjacent to the south wall of the tower and away from listed tombs although there could be artefacts below ground. It is further away from Shelley’s Close although noise might still be noticeable in the opposite cottage. The length of pipework to the church is shorter than Location B although there is still a risk of damage to artefacts when excavating.
- (iv) Location D is adjacent to and just east of the south door, on the site of the existing stone steps into the lower boiler room. The existing steps are steep and slippery in wet weather and a new access is proposed. The southern churchyard is rarely viewed as there is no path through this area. The site provides the shortest distance of pipework and there would be no disturbance to the churchyard. The nearest property is behind the substantial south wall of the churchyard with a southern aspect. The site would be landscaped with bushes.

Our architect and EEP evaluated these options³⁹ and concluded that the ASHP would be best located at location C adjacent to the south wall of the tower.

Right: Proposed location C for the ASHP.



We concluded that there is a need for an ASHP unit which must be located outside the church; we have selected a site which causes least harm to heritage, but which allows an effective location for the heating system.

³⁹ Response to observations from Historic England with regard to proposals for a replacement heating system, EEP, May 2023

10.2. Power

The current power supply is by overhead line from the adjacent cottage wall to the north west corner of the church where the meter, switches and control board are located. The electrical distribution system was installed in the 1960's with cables generally running along the base of the north and south walls with switched socket outlets fitted to the walls. Some cabling is in MIC which has caused a reaction with the lime-based plaster resulting in serious deterioration of the plaster along the base of the walls. The system has been regularly tested with the most recent tests identifying failures which have since been rectified. Nevertheless, the system is old and susceptible to failure, particularly the power supply to lighting.

The system was designed when there was little need for power outlets within the church. There are few socket outlets in the side aisles and none in the nave. Those in the aisles are surface mounted. The current arrangements require temporary over-floor cabling. See Section 8.2 for photographs.

With current and future demand for power outlets for a wide range of devices there is a need for an effective network of power cables within the nave, aisles, and the rooms at the west end of the nave. We need to cater for future technology when the congregation may all have laptops with Orders of Service and Bible extracts on their phone or laptop! To avoid unsightly cable runs along the base of the north and south walls and provide power outlets in the nave, we propose that cabling is routed in ducts under the new floor with new socket outlets flush with the floor. Similarly, cabling to floor lighting can be routed this way.

This design minimizes harm to the existing lime mortar walls after they have been restored. If the original floor level was maintained, as suggested by some statutory consultees, any underfloor cabling would not be feasible because of the need to maintain the structural integrity of the floor; socket outlets would not be possible in the nave, and we would be left with unsightly cabling and surface mounted socket outlets on the walls.

It is likely that the external power connection will need to be upgraded to a 3-phase supply, mainly for the ASHP. This will be routed into the west porch where switching and metering will be installed. Routing through the north porch was considered although found to be more difficult when the improvements to Shelley's Walk are complete.

10.3. Lighting

The installation of new lighting not only offers an opportunity to reconfigure it for the various uses of the church but also enables low energy systems to be adopted. The much longer life of LED type lamps reduces our maintenance burden too. New lighting will provide a softer, white light that is brighter (more lux) yet uses less energy and thus contributes to the national goal of reducing our impact on the environment.

All power and signal cables will be laid in ducts within the new floor, so there will be no unsightly cabling along the internal walls with socket outlets set into the floor to avoid overground cabling.

10.4. Audio visual

The church is increasingly using a screen and projector to show words of hymns during worship, illustrate talks and sermons, and to use video to highlight special projects, updates from mission

partners and similar events. We see this growing use of multimedia as an important part of our mission to a society which is much more image focussed than text focussed.

An effective AV system is essential to support future worship and mission and project our services to those who may not be able to attend in person. Technology is changing rapidly and the systems we put in place need to recognise this, so that we not only meet our current needs but pass on a robust, flexible set up for future congregations. The AV system we install needs to be flexible to accommodate new technologies as these become available. We have explored with a wide range of suppliers to identify suitable systems currently available and recognise that technology is changing quickly in this area. The main components would be a visual system, audio/ sound system and streaming camera.

The importance of streaming services has emerged as the project has progressed and has become a much greater need than when we set out. Certainly all the streaming aspects have come to the fore in the last few months.

- Visual System
 - A long throw projector located on the gallery;
 - A 2.4m wide electrically operated screen located on the rear side of the chancel arch. The screen would not be visible from the nave when not in use;
 - A remote-control system for sound and vision set up on a laptop. We are advised that HDMI cabling systems provide a more reliable and an improved quality signal than Wi-Fi. The laptop would be plugged into a socket outlet mounted flush with the floor.
 - Signal cabling located within ducts within the floor from computer inputs and projector and monitor outlets;
 - TV monitor screens located on trolleys for the south and north aisles and wall mounted for the chancel, meeting rooms and north porch.
- Audio/Sound System
 - Microphones – handheld, lapel, altar and pulpit;
 - Induction hearing loop system;
 - Wall mounted speakers;
 - Bluetooth;
 - Small cabinet to house equipment at balcony level.
- Streaming Camera
 - To allow streaming to YouTube or Zoom;
 - USB camera located at the west end;
 - Joystick controller; and
 - Associated software and equipment.

These proposals are subject to detailed design. While the principal requirements will remain unchanged, new technology coming into the market may result in improved systems by the time these need to be ordered.

Consistent with the adaptable layout of the nave, we envisage a Wi-Fi-based with system with mobile monitors powered from and receiving signals from socket outlets in the floor. We propose a flexible system that can be used in all parts of the church and in the meeting rooms. Signal cabling can be accommodated in ducts, separate from power circuits, within the floor.

11. External Works

The external works in the churchyard and external to the church building are detailed in the ‘Design and Access Statement’⁴⁰ prepared by Chedburn Codd, conservation architects. The application reference is 23/01355. The following text has been extracted from this document.

11.1. Planning, design and access statement

Proposed External Works: (for which planning permission is now being sought) to the church building.

- the addition of 2 no. rooflights over the Vestry (to have shared use as the Church Office);
- the replacement of the north porch gates with doors and glazed fanlight over, as this will become the new principal entrance to the church as a result of the internal works;
- adjustment to west tower doors to suit raised ground/floor levels (removal of bottom edge of doors only to suit);
- relocation of plain leaded light and stained-glass windows in south elevation – swapping them around so that the stained-glass window can remain on full view and not otherwise be partially obscured by the reinstated internal gallery feature;
- discrete addition of extract vents/SVP to suit new internal kitchen and WC facilities, so fully compliant with current Building Regulations; and within the churchyard
- the addition of 2 no. Air Source Heat Pumps [ASHP's] within an acoustic enclosure (to south side of tower) – to assist with the proposed heating provision for the church and help towards the Church of England “Carbon ‘Net Zero’” targets,
- provision of storage sheds and bin storage (to the north of church), to provide replacement facilities that are otherwise contained within the adjacent Church Cottage site (which will be sold to others, to assist with the funding of ‘Project Inspire’); and
- provision of improved paved access to the Vestry to make this space, which is to also function as the new church office, more readily accessible to all.

11.2. Design considerations

The proposed works as shown on the accompanying drawings and outlined above have positively and sympathetically evolved over the last 4-5 years as the PCC and their ‘Project Inspire’ team have developed the brief and options from Feasibility Stage through to their preferred scheme which now seeks to achieve the necessary planning and ecclesiastical permissions.

The external works to the church building itself, acknowledge and respect the Grade I listed status of the church – such works have also been kept the minimum degree of practical and appropriate intervention which do not detract from the building or its setting (with the vestry rooflights also being in such a position that they are not readily visible from the ground or other nearby vantage points due to the parapet wall enclosing this roof slope). Furthermore, the sympathetic and considered use of traditional, natural and/or appropriate materials for the new works, all of which reflect those traditionally used elsewhere on other listed buildings as well as in the Conservation Area itself, so continue to enhance and positively contribute to these buildings and their setting.

⁴⁰ Planning, Design and Access Statement for the proposed external alterations, Chedburn Codd, April 2023

The additional external works being proposed again acknowledge and respect the Grade I listed status of the church building, its local surroundings, and the Lechlade Conservation Area as a whole. Whilst some of these works look to merely yet sympathetically improve access for all into and around the building, either by re-using existing materials or providing new materials which match those that already exist, the other more notable proposals of the storage sheds and ASHP's (with acoustic enclosure) have still been considered and are being proposed in such a way that remains sympathetic to both the historic built environment and natural environment.

For example the storage sheds and associated fencing will be of traditional timber in appearance which is appropriate to its location and whilst the ASHP's may be seen as a 'modern intervention' much consideration is given to their visual and acoustic impact, with the proposed use of green hedge screening of the acoustic louvred fencing (which itself would be coloured to achieve an appropriate tonal blend with the natural stone of the church – final colour to be agreed as a condition of the permission) – furthermore the location of the ASHP's follows consideration of various locations, however these were further away from the building which meant that not only were they then more on public display within the churchyard but being further away from the building and their required heating output, their efficiency consequently reduces.

Scale

We have considered very carefully the massing and volume of the proposals at the Church of St. Lawrence in order to strike an acceptable balance between additional facilities desired by the applicants, and the setting/impact within this location so that they remain sympathetic and appropriate development for this site and the wider context of the churchyard and Conservation Area.

External works have been kept to a minimum to achieve the main aims and objectives of the applicants. For record purposes, during the feasibility stage of the project's development, potential extensions to the building were considered as a possible means of providing additional floor area for the church (in lieu of the loss of the space/facilities provided in Church Cottage). However, these were quickly ruled out due to their negative impact in terms of the appearance and setting of the listed building as well as potential planning policy concerns.

The proposed storage sheds to the north side of the church, are such that they sit comfortably adjacent to the stone boundary wall and neighbouring properties, with low-pitched roofs (15°) which consequently do not detrimentally impact on the setting and massing of these surrounding structures.

The ASHP's and its associated acoustic enclosure are the minimum to ensure appropriate functioning and operation of the equipment, as well as adequate access for future maintenance, whilst ensuring that its overall scale does not negatively impact on the scale of the building or its setting within the site as a whole as a result of being positioned to the 'rear' of the church in terms of general access to the site and church. (Refer to Appendix C of the Design and Access Statement for further technical details in relation to both the ASHPs and acoustic louvre fencing enclosure).

Appearance

The proposals directly affecting the external fabric of the building envelope are such that they sympathetically and harmoniously integrate with the historic fabric – i.e., pierced natural stone for the external vent outlets and powder coated metal SVP outlet which reflects the natural stone of the existing building fabric and metal rainwater goods. The proposed external doors to the north porch will be of a traditional oak and their design style reflects that seen with the existing window tracery – so ensuring that they are sympathetic and appropriate to their context. The proposed rooflights over

the Vestry are such that they are predominantly obscured from general public view by the stone parapet to this single storey aspect of the building so having no negative impact in terms of the appearance of the building as a whole.

The new paving is again minimal and whilst providing safe and ‘level’ access to the Vestry/Church Office this again reflects the style and paving materials which already exists in this area of the site, so again ensuring a sympathetic and harmonious blend in the context of this particular location and the churchyard site as a whole.

With respect to the proposed storage sheds and associated bin-store enclosure, as previously noted, their design and appearance is simple yet traditional and also relatively low-key so that as well as ensuring that they are appropriate to their proposed location and setting in terms of the church and churchyard, they are also such that they do not compete or detrimentally impact upon their historic setting. Following careful consideration, the proposed location of the ASHP’s and their associated acoustic enclosure and screening was selected to minimise any potential impact of its appearance both from general public view but also in terms of the principal views of the heritage asset (i.e., its northwest, north and eastern aspects) – whilst balancing practical requirements of output efficiency in terms of its practical operation etc. Furthermore, consideration has been given to potential noise output created by equipment, with the proposed use of acoustic louvre fencing to address this – and consideration then consequently given to its colour (so as to tonally blend with the stonework of the church) in addition to the natural ‘green’ screen (evergreen foliage) to further soften its visual impact and so assist with visually integrating its appearance with the ‘green’ context of the churchyard.

Layout

The provision of external additional facilities desired by the applicants have been located in relatively discrete and sympathetic, yet practical and appropriate locations. Which, in combination and as referred to above, through considered design etc. remain sympathetic to both their local and the wider context of the grade I listed building and the designated heritage asset.

Landscaping

No major landscaping works are proposed other than localised regrading of the west path (to become the secondary entrance to the church) and the creation of a small ‘level’ access path to the Vestry to provide ‘access for all’ to this area which will become the new location for the Church Office. As noted previously, these works are such that where applicable they will either re-use existing materials or new proposed materials will match existing so that they again are sympathetic to their particular setting and wider context.

For information purposes – works to the west end of Shelley’s Walk are being addressed and improved separately by Gloucester County Council.

Access

As noted previously, the access to and around the church has been a key aspect for consideration of these works as whole – internally and externally. Externally, to the west the localised regrading of the existing path to the west door (to become the secondary entrance to the church) and the creation of a small ‘level’ access path to the Vestry will help to provide ‘access for all’ to these areas of the church (where internally, floor levels are to be raised in the main body of the church to also ensure ‘access for all’ internally at ground floor level.

For information purposes – access to the north porch, which is proposed to become the principal entrance to the church, is being facilitated through improvements to the Public Right of Way by Gloucester County Council.

11.3. Conclusions

In conclusion, the PCC of the Church of St. Lawrence, along with its parishioners, are keen to enhance the church building and its environs, in terms of the site itself and its wider context in the town and the designated Lechlade Conservation Area, by making best use of its historical features and enhancing its use, access and improving its function in terms of long-term sustainability and reaching towards ‘Carbon ‘net zero’ targets as laid down by the Church of England, by improving the overall arrangements and facilities to support current and future generations.

Following much refinement and consideration of the proposals through its feasibility stages and project development over the last few years, we are confident that the proposals now being put forward for consideration in terms of planning permission will not cause harm to the overall character of the area nor that of the grade I listed church building. In fact, these carefully designed proposals should be seen to enrich the future and longevity of the building so ensuring it remains vibrant in the streetscape and the wider Conservation Area as a whole, so allowing current and future parishioners as well as the wider community are able to continue to enjoy this historic building and area for many more years to come. As such we consider that these proposals are in accordance with the national and local planning policy guidance and requirements.

11.4. Drawings

The following drawings are provided as part of the application submission and can be found on the faculty portal.:

- 1922/001 Location & Block Plans – As Existing AS @ A3
- 1922/002/B Ground Floor Plan – As Existing 1:50 @ A1
- 1922/003/A South & West Elevations – As Existing 1:100 @ A1
- 1922/004 North & East Elevations – As Existing 1:100 @ A1
- 1922/008/A Site Plan – As Existing 1:100 @ A1
- 1922/009 Roof Plan – As Existing 1:50 @ A1
- 1922/041 Site Plan – As Proposed 1:100 @ A1
- 1922/042 Ground Floor Plan – As Proposed 1:50 @ A3
- 1922/043 Roof Plan – As Proposed 1:50 @ A3
- 1922/044 Path to Vestry – As Proposed 1:50 @ A1
- 1922/045 Storage Sheds – As Proposed AS @ A1
- 1922/046 ASHPs & Enclosure – As Proposed – Sheet 1 of 2 AS @ A3
- 1922/047 ASHPs & Enclosure – As Proposed – Sheet 2 of 2 AS @ A3
- 1922/048 North Porch Doors – As Proposed 1:50 @ A3
- 1922/049 South Elevation– As Proposed 1:50 @ A1
- 1922/050 East Elevation– As Proposed 1:50 @ A1
- 1922/051 North Elevation– As Proposed 1:50 @ A1
- 1922/052 West Elevation– As Proposed 1:50 @ A1

11.5. Churchyard maintenance

We have a group of volunteers who maintain the churchyard to a high standard and make the area attractive to visitors and passers-by. We also have an active Eco Church group (with a silver award) which is working to enhance the sustainability, flora and fauna of the area.

There is a need for mowers and other equipment for the maintenance of the churchyard. We also store road cones, recycling bins and associated items for the general maintenance and servicing of the church. Currently, maintenance equipment and other items are stored in the back yard of the cottage, either in an aluminium shed or outside. The only access is through the side door to the yard and on to Shelley's Walk. The location of the existing shed is shown on the plan below. We explain in Section 11 that the cottage is not required in future plans and will be sold. The proposals above thus include for churchyard maintenance buildings.

11.6. Church cottage

The property known as Church Cottage is located on the north side of the church. The church bought the cottage in 1992 and subsequently added a kitchen and two small toilets in the back yard.

The Church Cottage is separate from and to the north of the church and churchyard with an entrance from the Market Place and a side entrance to the back yard off a footpath. This footpath crosses the churchyard from the Market Place in the west to the Church of England Primary School and open fields to the east. The path, known as 'Shelley's Walk', cuts between the church to the south and the cottage to the north.

Following a detailed evaluation which we set out in V14 of the Statement of Need, we have decided to sell the Church Cottage and use the proceeds to fund the reordering work in the church. The Sunday School, office and facilities will be relocated within the church.

12. Public consultations

12.1. Initial consultation in 2018

We carried out an initial consultation with parishioners in October 2018. Four presentation meetings were held in the church on 3rd, 7th, 11th and 14th October 2018. At each meeting a PowerPoint presentation was shown, and the attendees were given the opportunity to ask questions. The drawings of the proposed options were placed in the church for each meeting. Questionnaires were handed out to all the attendees and made available to those who were not able to attend. The questionnaire comprised four sections: Preferences; Objectives; Options; and Additional Comments.

We received 119 completed questionnaires. There were 161 people on the electoral roll in 2018. We made the same presentation at each meeting;⁴¹ there was constructive engagement with the parishioners with many questions asked. We analysed the results and presented our findings in a report.⁴² The key findings are set out below.

Objectives: There was overwhelming support (91%) for the objectives set out in Section 2; there were several concerns raised by some respondents which we address in the report; there were also several helpful comments on what we should include which are also addressed.

Preferences:

- (i) Parishioners were asked which three features they liked about the church. The response identified the main features were architectural features, windows, the central location and history;
- (ii) They were then asked to identify the three main features that they found difficult. The response identified the main features as ineffective heating, the hard pews and the lack of toilets. Other factors identified included the choir screen, the west end internal door, lighting, the kitchen facilities, the AV system, floor and lack of facilities; and
- (iii) Parishioners were then asked to identify their top three ideas for improving the church building. The response included seating, the provision of toilets and improved heating. These were followed by lighting, moving the choir (rood) screen, kitchen, the floor, meeting rooms, audio visual systems and decoration.

12.2. The 2021 consultation

The questionnaire was designed by a very senior market research professional with over 30 years' experience (Dr David Turtle, ex-Chairman of The Focus Group, now part of Ipsos S.A. one of the world's largest market research companies), specifically to test the response of the community to the design proposals. He also analysed the results and attests to their fair representation of the consultation.

Extract from the 2021 consultation report⁴³

Over the last three years we have issued occasional newsletters to keep parishioners informed. However, we launched a further consultation in September 2021 to seek the views of the church family and the wider community on the designs prepared by our restoration architects, Chedburn Codd. The designs are based on an Option 2a which is a variation on Option 2 to include all the facilities in Option 4 within the church.

⁴¹ R&R Consultation Presentation, 3 October 2018

⁴² St Lawrence Church Restoration and Reordering Project, Summary Findings from Initial Consultation, RRPB January 2019

⁴³ PI22 Report on the 2021 public consultation v6, Lechlade St Lawrence PCC

This was the largest consultation carried out by St Lawrence Church Parochial Church Council (PCC) and for all those who took the time to visit the presentation, read the information provided and complete the questionnaire, we sincerely thank you.

Background

The initial consultation for the restoration and reordering of St Lawrence Church, Lechlade, carried out in October 2018, resulted in 119 completed questionnaires providing overwhelming support for the project objectives – restore the building for the next 120 years, support worship and wellbeing of the church, enable flexible use of the building for all services and events, create access for all abilities and provide enhanced facilities including toilets, enhanced kitchen and an improved audio-visual system. This initial consultation was carried out over four weeks.

To achieve these objectives, the Project Inspire team together with its conservation architects, and with support from the Diocesan Advisory Committee (DAC), has developed a design which encapsulates all the objectives within the existing church.

Objective

The 2021 consultation was carried out to seek views from the church community and the wider population on whether the presentation of the design met the above objectives supported in the 2018 consultation.

We received a range of suggestions and professional advice which were used in the development of the proposals. The presentation in the church represented the outcome of this process which has the support of the PCC and the DAC.

Consultation process

We informed the community in advance of the presentation in the church through communications delivered across the town, using the church website, a display in the library window and posters on noticeboards and in shops. We invited visitors in small groups to view a specially prepared video, to see the presentation on various boards around the church and to test a sample of church chairs.

This report summarises the results of the responses to the questionnaire, focusing on the six main outcomes and 15 specific questions. Our analysis presents results from the whole community, from those who regularly attend church services in Lechlade and others who either do not attend church or did not provide this data. We also report on chair selection where there was much interest and significant support for one particular design.

The 2021 consultation

This presentation, including a video, display boards and sample chairs was widely advertised within the church and across the town. It was open for all to view over the period 14th September to 30th October.

Questionnaires submitted

We received 155 responses, half from on-line responses and the other half from paper submissions. The number of questionnaires returned represents 7.1% of the Lechlade population over 18; the population over 18 in Lechlade was 2176 in 2020.⁴⁴ For those who regularly attend St Lawrence church, the response represents 74% of those on the electoral roll.

⁴⁴ Office of National Statistics

Figure 12.1- Distribution of responses by regular church attendance

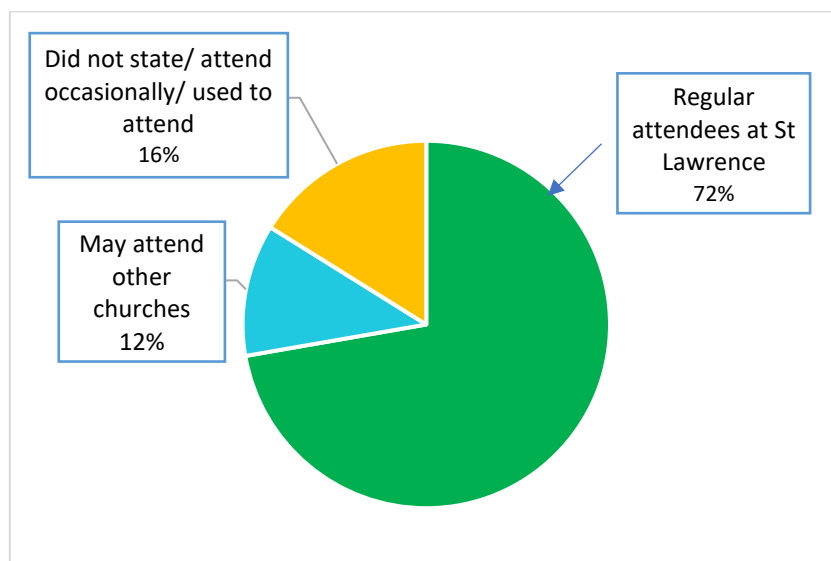
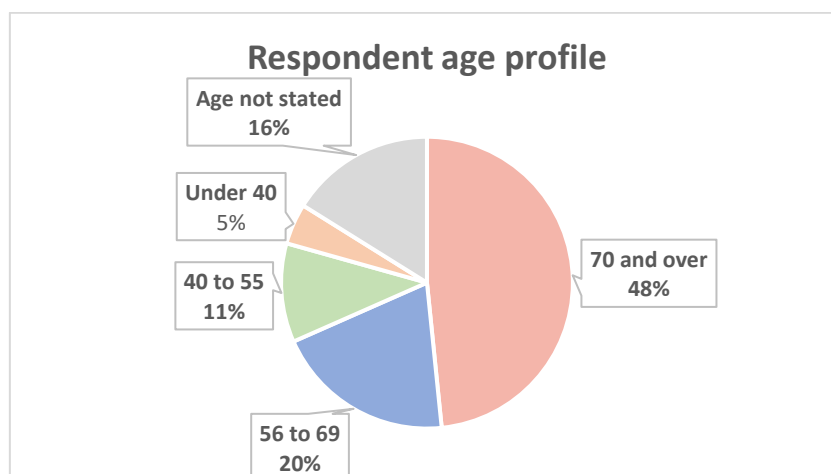


Figure 12.2 - Distribution of responses by age group



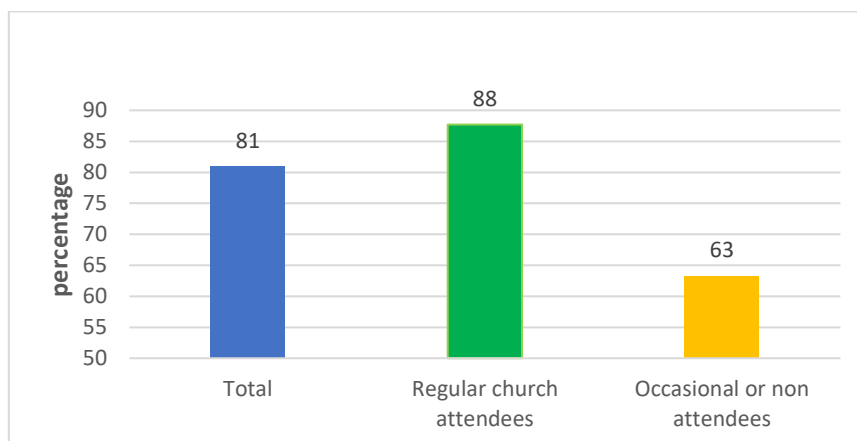
Overall findings

From an aggregation of responses to the 15 individual questions:

- (i) 81% of respondents supported the proposals with a range of 79% to 86.5%;
- (ii) 88% of respondents who attend church regularly supported the proposals with a range of 75% to 92%;
- (iii) 63% of respondents who attend church regularly supported the proposals with a range of 58% to 72%.

Figure S3 shows the **average** level of agreement from all respondees, regular church attendees and occasional or non-attendees for all 15 questions about the project components.

Figure 12.3 - Aggregate support for the proposals (%)



Findings by outcomes

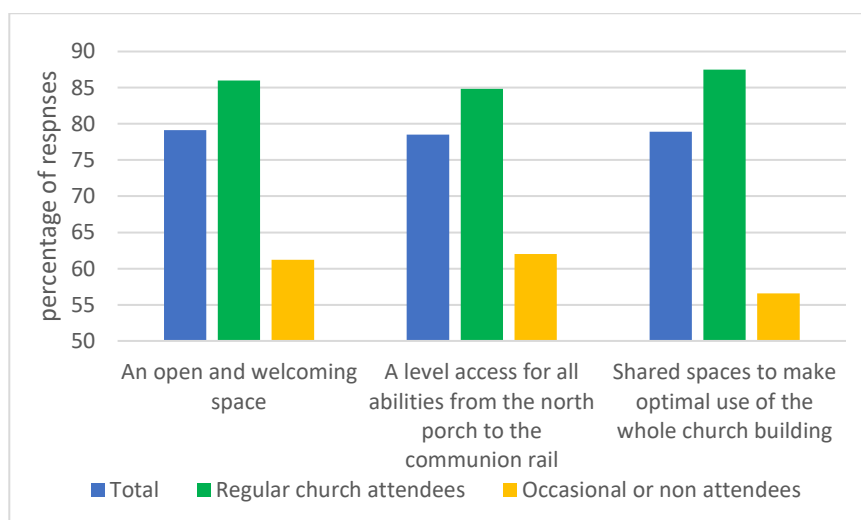
An open and welcoming space included a lighter floor finish in Purbeck limestone, new chairs to replace the existing heavy pews and relocation of the choir screen to the west gallery. This outcome was supported by 79% of all respondents and 86% of regular church attendees.

Level access to all from the north porch to the communion rail included opening the north porch a raised floor to provide level access and accessible toilets under the proposed gallery. This outcome was supported by 79% of all respondents and 85% of regular church attendees.

Shared space to make optimal use of the whole church building included the chancel, the ringing chamber, multi-use areas at the west end and combined vestry and parish office. This outcome was supported by 79% of all respondents and 88% of regular church attendees.

The response from all respondees, regular church attendees and occasional or non-attendees to these three outcomes is shown in Figure 12.4.

Figure 12.4 - Support for specific outcomes (%)



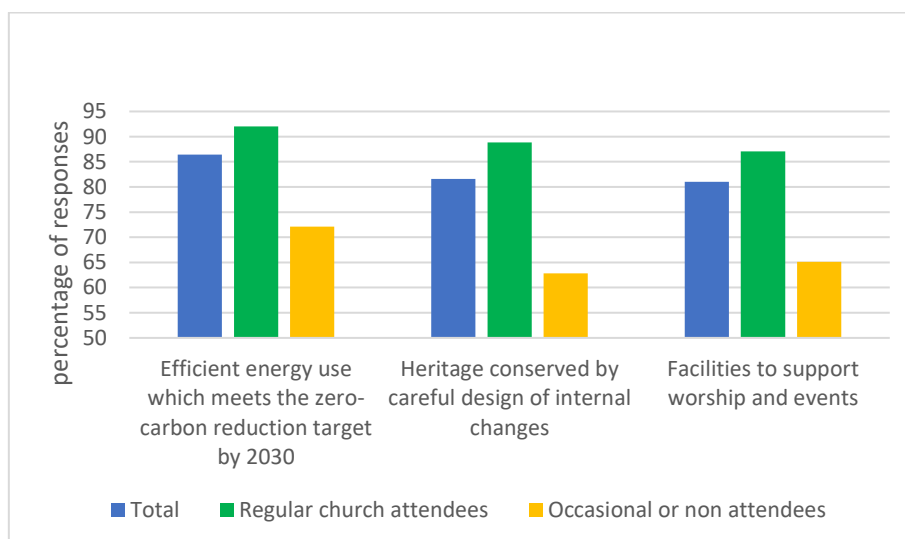
Efficient energy use which meets the carbon reduction target included an air source heat pump, underfloor heating and new and improved lighting. This outcome was supported by 86% of all respondents and 92% of regular church attendees.

Heritage conserved by careful design of internal changes included reinstatement of the west balcony, reordering of the south chapel area and restoring the south door. This outcome was supported by 82% of all respondents and 89% of regular church attendees.

Facilities to support worship and events included provision of enhanced audio-visual systems and a larger kitchen for light meals. This outcome was supported by 81% of all respondents and 87% of regular church attendees.

The response from all respondents, regular church attendees and occasional or non-attendees to these three outcomes is shown in Figure 12.5.

Figure 12.5 - Support for specific outcomes (%)



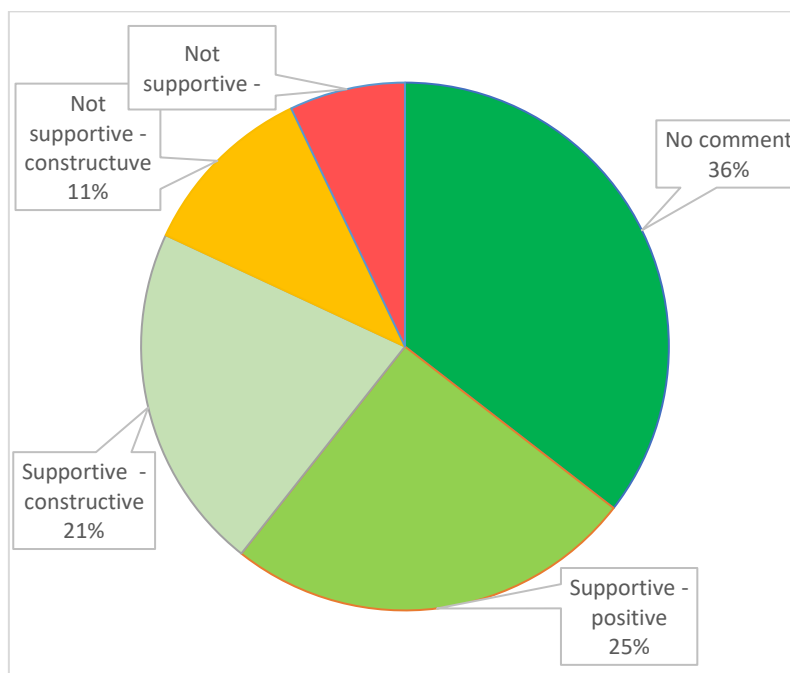
Comments

We received 100 written comments in the on-line and paper questionnaires. Figure S6 below shows the analysis of these comments by content:

- (i) Supportive - positive;
- (ii) Supportive - constructive;
- (iii) Not supportive - constructive;
- (iv) Not supportive - negative.

The extent of 'no comment' responses, predominantly positive, is also included in the analysis.

Figure 12.6 - Distribution of comments by category



We tested the relationship between the classification of comments and the response to the summary comments. While we noted some inconsistencies, the outcome showed support for the proposals is broadly in line with the 80% from the average individual scores.

There were further written submissions outside the questionnaires. We have taken these comments into account in our review of submissions, but these are not included in the questionnaire analysis.

There was no one topic which was significant in relation to the total responses to the survey.

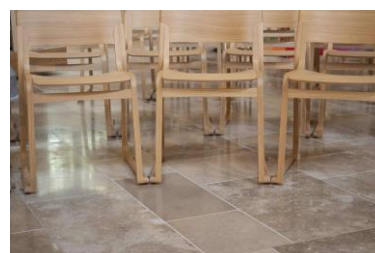
Some of the comments related to more than one topic. These ranged from chairs and pews, the north porch, screens, audio visual, heating, gallery, meeting rooms, access and the Blaise chapel, use of the Church Cottage and costs. We have noted all comment on each of these topics. These will be taken into account as the project develops.

Next steps

The result of the consultation shows significant support to the reordering proposals which we shall report to the DAC. A minority of responses did raise some questions which we shall consider as we refine these proposals.

Chairs

A sample of six chairs was made available from suppliers during the presentation period. There was overwhelming support for the Theo chair, shown right.



12.3. The 2023 consultation

The design stage 3 proposals were presented by the architect and project team to the church community on Thursday February 16th, 2023. The community received a powerpoint presentation⁴⁵ and brochure which explained the proposals in detail.

Drawings and sketches of the proposals were displayed for inspection. The changes from the 2021 consultation were explained. The presentations were recorded, and a transcript⁴⁶ of the question-and-answer session was made.

A comprehensive brochure was prepared which detailed the proposals and invited the church community to think about and make financial pledges for the building work.



There was overwhelming support for the proposals, with one dissenting voice. The questions were mainly matters of detail.

⁴⁵ Project Inspire, Presentation of the Restoration and Reordering Proposals, 16 Feb 2023
⁴⁶ Project Inspire Transcript of Q&A session at the church community meeting 16 Feb 2023

Appendix A – Project management

The Project Inspire working group

The Project Inspire Working Group (Formerly the Restoration and Reordering Project Group) report to the Parochial Church Council (PCC). The Group has responsibility for managing all aspects of the project and comprises the vicar, curate, churchwardens, members of the PCC including the treasurer and members of the church community. We have held monthly meetings of the working group since inception of the project in 2018. Up to December 2021 we have held 41 meetings. The Working Group is chaired by Nigel Jones BSc. FICE, FCIWEM.

Meetings with the DAC

We held an initial meeting in April 2018 with the Archdeacon, several members of the DAC and the Churches Buildings Officer. Our broad proposals developed at that stage were presented for discussion and helpful feedback was provided. The meeting also gave the several members of the DAC an opportunity to see the church for the first time.

We held further discussions with the Archdeacon and Church Building Officers in December 2018. We held a further meeting in April 2019. Both officers have visited the church during 2019 to discuss options for restoration and reordering.

We made an informal submission to the DAC in February 2020 and received general support for the reordering proposals and several questions were raised. The timeline was disrupted by the COVID-19 restrictions, and it was not until April 2021 that members of the DAC were able to visit Lechlade and discuss the proposals with the Project Inspire team. We are most grateful for the advice and support given by the DAC and its officers during the project preparation process. They have been really helpful in guiding us through the processes.

We held a further meeting with DAC representatives in February 2022.

Meeting with statutory consultees

Representatives from the Church Buildings Council, Historic England and Historic Buildings and Spaces visited St Lawrence on 22nd October 2021.

Appointment of an architect

Following the process set out by the Diocese we appointed conservation architects Chedburn Codd to carry out a feasibility study based on a brief discussed and agreed with the DAC. Richard Codd BA(Hons) Dip Arch PGDipAP MScHistCons RIBA IHBC AABC led the feasibility study. We held several meetings with Richard to develop options and agree a preferred option. A report, plans and drawings based on Option 7 were prepared and agreed with the PCC. They were subsequently submitted to the DAC for review and comment. Following further iterations of the design, the Option 8 plans were placed on the on-line Faculty System.

Further iteration of the plans was carried out following comments from the DAC and the Project Inspire Group. The plans and details in Option 8 form the basis of the current proposals.

We then appointed Chedburn Codd to carry out detailed design work in July 2022. The design stage 3 drawings approved by the PCC in December 2022 form the basis of the faculty submission.

Appointment of an archaeologist

We appointed Chiz Harward BA MCifA of Urban Archaeology to advise us of archaeological aspects of the project. He was the author of the Statement of Significance Part 2 and undertook an investigation of the ledgerstones. He continues to provide advice.

Appointment of an electrical and mechanical consultant

Following competitive bids, we appointed MTA consultants to prepare a feasibility study and advice on the selection of heating and lighting proposals. A report and drawings are available.

We then engaged Environmental Engineering Partnership (EEP) led by David Gadsdon MIMechE, MCIBSE to carry out detailed design. Their design stage 3 report and drawings form the basis of the faculty submission.

Appointment of a structural engineer

We engaged Andrew Turner of Andrew Turner engineering as a structural engineer for the design stage 3 work. He worked with our architect in support of the design proposals. His report and drawings form part of the faculty submission.

Market research

We engaged Dr David Turtle, a senior market research professional with over 30 years' experience who was Chairman of The Focus Group, now part of Ipsos S.A. one of the world's largest market research companies. He tested the response of the community to the design proposals. He also analysed the results and attests to their fair representation of the consultation.

Surveys

We undertook several surveys to seek a greater understanding of the building to mitigate future risks related to scope of work and costs.

Quinquennial survey

A Quinquennial survey was carried out by Richard Codd in October 2020. His report is available within the documents submitted to the faculty application.

Coring of the floor

We wanted to confirm the construction of the floor was consistent with the 1882 works. In May 2018 we removed some tiles and carried out four core holes through the lime concrete floor. We found that the concrete was some 125 to 150mm thick and hard to drill through. Below the floor was loosely compacted earth fill which was dry. We found consistency across all the holes. This provided comfort that we have a good concrete base on which to construct a new floor.

Geophysical survey

We commissioned a geophysical survey in August 2018 to identify any particular structures under the floor which may affect the design and cost of our proposals. We contracted Archaeological Surveys Ltd to carry out the survey in August 2018 when most of the pews had been removed from the church for the children's holiday club. A report was prepared on the findings⁴⁷.

The survey showed that there were some possible vaults or graves in the north and south aisles; it is likely that these voids were backfilled with rubble and soil. There are three ledgerstones although these have probably been moved and do not represent burials beneath.

Investigation of the Ledgerstones

The three ledgerstones are laid in the existing floor. We carried out investigations in February 2020 to determine the thickness of the stones and type of bedding to consider the feasibility of relocating

⁴⁷ A report on a ground penetration radar survey, Archaeological Surveys Ltd, 2018

the ledgerstones or other options. We consulted with the Church Buildings Council conservation team.

South Door

The south door has been sealed for several decades. This has been opened by a specialist joiner agreed with the DAC. The purpose is to assess the condition of the door, the requirements for restoration and likely costs. We plan to undertake dendrochronology survey to estimate its age.

Electrical Inspection

A fixed wiring inspection was carried out in August 2017. The electricians were reported as being unsatisfactory with five C2 failures and three C3; these have been resolved. There is an opportunity with the reordering to bring all electrical installations up to current standards. A further inspection was carried out in 2002.

Quinquennial Inspection

The QI inspection has been carried out by Richard Codd, our architect, in 2021. His report forms part of the faculty submission.

Measurement Survey

A measurement survey was carried out by Chedburn Codd as part of its feasibility study.

Other advice

Parishioners

We are receiving volunteer support from parishioners who have professional experience across the needs of the project.

Bells

We sought advice from John Taylor and Co of Loughborough, a church bell specialist which maintains our bells.

Quantity surveyor

We sought advice and assistance from a chartered quantity surveyor.

Commercial advice

We have held meetings and sought advice from a wide range of consultants and companies covering heating, lighting and audio-visual aspects of the project.

We also used commercial designers for the design of our promotional material including brochures.

Cotswold TV were commissioned to make two videos as part of the promotion for the 2021 consultation.

Visits to other churches

We visited several churches in Gloucestershire and surrounding counties to see the scope of restoration and reordering work, the extent to which changes have been sympathetically carried out in listed buildings and the quality of the finished works. Churches visited include:

- St. Lawrence Bourton on-the-Water.
- St Phillip and St James, Leckhampton,
- St Mary's Wotton-under-edge,
- Holy Trinity, Bradford on Avon,
- Holy Trinity, Minchinhampton,
- St. Mary Magdalene, Hullavington,

- St. Mary's, Charlbury,
- St. Michael's, Highworth (recently reordered).
- St Mary's Wheatley;
- St John the Baptist;
- St Mary's Purton;
- St. Nicholas, Chadlington; and
- St. Thomas of Canterbury, Goring-on-Thames.

We met the churchwardens at many these churches and obtained much helpful information on the way that their restoration projects had been progressed, the difficulties and how these were overcome. The visits by members of the project group provided a sound basis for what we could do in St Lawrence Lechlade.

Appendix B – Plan of the Church showing reordering proposals

The latest version of the ground floor plan can be seen in the Brochure document on the faculty portal.