



CHURCH RE-ORDER VISITS

Wednesday 16TH August 2023

THE FOLLOWING ARE BRIEF DESCRIPTIONS AND VISITORS COMMENTS ON THE CHURCHES VISITED

Introduction

The visits were carried out as part of the investigation process associated with the proposal to reorder the church.

The visits to churches that had been reordered to a greater or lesser degree were carried out by the Butlers Marston Re-ordering Working Group comprising Simon Corpe (Chair, BMPC), Dick Leaper (church warden and PCC member) and Rob Bowen (parishioner, retired architect).

The visits were carried out during one day, Wednesday, 16TH August 2023. They were carefully selected to represent various approaches taken to reordering.

Those selected for visits were deliberately chosen on the basis of experiencing those that had been reordered to a greater or lesser degree. We have

As a 'control' we have included our church, St Peter and St Paul's Butlers Marston as the first church so that the reader has an indication of how our church current fairs against those that have been reordered.

Key comments

Individual church descriptions and comments follow this section.

As an executive summary for those that don't wish to read the whole document, overarching comments received by the visiting group from those met were:

- Be sure to include everything you wish for by putting together a sound brief.
- Consult widely within and outside the parish.
- Make a strong case around the village need given:
 - o No village hall



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- No school
 - No public house
 - No shop/post office
- Apply for as many grants as possible and chase down grant applications.
 - Seek bequests/gifts.
 - Be aware of grant restrictions.
- Use as many fund-raising methods as you can think of from sponsored seats to
- Be aware of the influence of such as the Victorian Society and Historic England
- Don't try to rush the process.
- Show unity and strong leadership.
- Consider multi-functional uses for furniture with a modular approach, including a capacity to move items.
- Utilities supplies and drainage generally caused no problems where needed to be installed in faculty application. But, be aware of what can be significant costs associated (unseen items).
- Account for all items to be stored. Even the best churches' reordering visited had not allowed for sufficient storage space.
- If money is tight be sure to cost on a basis that provides chunks of work that may be carried out over sensible time periods.

Preamble to visited church descriptions

Information in the brief descriptions was gathered from websites: Our Warwickshire, A Church Near You, Warwickshire Churches, Time Trail Warwickshire County Council, Historic England. Onward references are on those web locations.

Churches visited:

- St. Mary the Virgin, Pillerton Hersey
- St. Mary Magdelene, Tanworth in Arden
- St. Lawrence, Bourton on the Hill
- St. Lawrence, Bourton on the Water
- St. Mary the Virgin, Kirtlington
- St. Peter and St. Paul's, Long Compton



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But, first, our own church:

St. Peter and St. Paul's, Butlers Marston

Grade II* listed.

There was a priest, implying a church, at Butlers Marston in 1086.

Originating in the Medieval period, this parish church underwent several alterations through to the 19th Century. The church is situated due south of the Manor House, Butlers Marston.



Chancel with S vestry and organ chamber; nave, S aisle with porch, and W tower. Nave probably marks the original 12th century or earlier nave.



The earliest apparent addition was a narrow S aisle of mid-late 12th century date of which the three-bay arcade survives.

Chancel seems to have been rebuilt or enlarged in the 13th or 14th century. S aisle widened in 14th century.



15th century W tower. 17th century nave roof; the others are 'modern'.

15th century font; pulpit of 1632.

The side walls of the chancel were refaced externally, if not mostly rebuilt, in the 18th century.

Drastic restoration in 1872, including the rebuilding of the nave N wall, renewal of the chancel arch etc.



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Comments:

- No significant reordering since the mid to late 19th Century.
- Works are required to stabilise the building shell both in terms of wall and roof repair to ensure sensible longevity.
- Existing silicone tube radiant heating systems outdated and ineffectual. An unused, non-functional and partially removed, holocaust heating system needs to be fully removed.
- Pew stalls and pews in poor state of repair in nave particularly. Being fixed they offer no capacity for flexible layouts.
- Being stooled up, on removal of pews significant areas of flooring will need to be laid as the raised timber floors to the pews sit above rubble, with only a stone walkway.
- Chancel little used due to choir pew layout, a 'new' altar set up in the nave underlines the issues.
- No kitchen facilities.
- External WC has been recently constructed.
- The bellringers use the ground floor of the tower. There is the potential for raising to a new floor and freeing up space beneath.
- No easily usable social space. As there is no village community hall, social events, such as monthly Marston Meet-up and Bank Holiday teas, make the best of the church space available but only through the ingenuity of the parishioners.





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St Mary the Virgin, Pillerton Hersey

Grade II* listed.

The church is recorded in the late 12th century.

Originally built during the Medieval period. Alterations have been made to the building in subsequent periods.

Uncommonly fine mid-13th century Chancel with small N vestry, nave, N and S aisles and W tower. It has a rough hammerbeam roof, probably 17th century.

Low-pitched Perp nave roof with many bosses. The nave was probably mid-13th century too, and the lower part of the tower was perhaps added a little later in the 13th century; it was altered and heightened in the 15th century.

S aisle probably of c1400, but N and S arcades of nave and the N aisle date from 1875, when much alteration was done.

Remains of floor support foundations under the floor boards around the altar in the Lady Chapel together with evidence of previous repair or construction work.

Modern vestry.

Recent reordering includes:

- Kitchen
- External WC

Learnings/comments of the BM reordering working group:

- A similar size to Butlers Marston and the reorder process has been carried out to add more facilities to the church rather than converting the space into a community space
- Kitchen was considered visually and was not intrusive in location and construction, being away from the entrance.





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- Fixed pews remain in place, although it is understood that some were removed to provide more space in front of and adjacent to the installation.
- Under pew heating
- The church floor, of one level but for the alter dais, is of stone carpeted for the main routes through the church.
- Smart LED spot lighting adds ambient, modern feel.
- A relatively large enough space at the back of the church to hold functions but the building and space is essentially unchanged and could not be utilised for any other larger activity.
- The lean-to WC is well constructed of t&g timber facing with lead flashings to the church walls. It is tucked around the corner to the north of the tower so not visual from the access route to the west entry door at the foot of the tower.



St Mary Magdalene, Tanworth in Arden

Grade I listed.

A period from the late 13th century to c1330-40 covers the whole of the architectural details of the building, apart from the modern work.

It has many large traceried windows typical of this date.

The most radical structural alteration was in 1790 when the nave arcade was demolished, leaving the volume of the nave and north aisle spanned by a single roof. The arcade was reinstated in the Victorian restoration in 1880.

The church contains ancient image





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brackets in the chancel, an interesting baroque monument to the Archer family, and a fine set of early 20th century windows.

Chancel, nave, wide N aisle, N and S porches and W tower with spire.

The recent reorder project focused mainly on the back of the church with a large open space, servicing area, toilets and flower arranging cupboard with sink. Initial glass Pod reorder area over the entrance was built in 1996 creating an entrance lobby and a separate meeting room initially for children's lessons but is now an office. The glass walls keep the space open and airy.



The recent project started in 2016 and finished in May 2022 and came in under budget although this was revised following Covid; circa £300k.

Communion Architects worked with the PCC to ensure all areas were considered working with specialists such as Split Lathes from Hay-on-Wye who hand crafted, including much special detail.



The back of the church was raised to hide the utilities. 5 pews were removed, which were from the 60's, to enable space for 40 stackable chairs increasing capacity and flexibility considerably.

Wheelchair spaces provided within the existing pews.

Overall reordering, using Communion Architects, provided:

- A balance of retained renewed/refurbished fixed pews and removal of pews to provide flexible space with loose chairs
- New movable font



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- Upper-level glaze fronted gallery used for meetings with wcs and storage under directly accessible from the entrance
- New raised wooden flooring mixed with steps and ramp down to existing tile and wooden floors divided by storage units with movable storage 'bins' all of oak.
- Partial underfloor heating with perimeter radiators.
- Glass draught screen entrance lobbying with back-to-back retained timber doors.
- Kitchen discretely designed with a fold out top potentially usable as an alter as well as a servery counter dependent on functional use of cleared space
- Suspended lighting/feature
- General clean-up
- Vestry under the tower with storage neatly built in.



Learnings/comments of the BM reordering working group:

- A larger church and community than Butlers Marston with approximately 2000 residents.
- Reordering very well considered, laid out, constructed and finished with great attention to detail and impact with existing church features.
- Advice for doing it again was to think big and go big from the start, really think about the storage and over-plan for what storage you need.



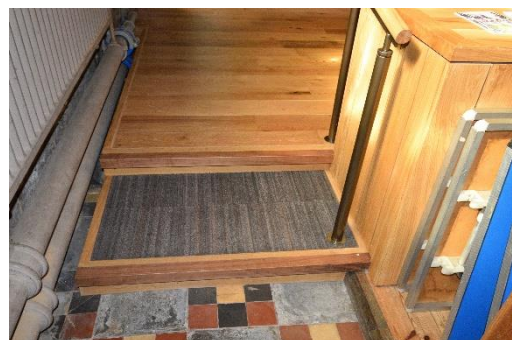


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- With the raised floor consider the trip hazards and make it clear through design where trip hazards are utilising different colours and rails to guide and protect.
- Victorian Society was troublesome but manageable.
- Funding was secured from a local farmer leaving a farm to the church, otherwise funding was raised through other means such as Ecclesiastical Insurance which gave £4,000. Greenwood's, their QS, tried for the grants but they didn't work.
- They suggested that once you have a concept and a ballpark figure start sourcing funding and applying for grant funding, don't wait for the contract or plans to be approved.
- The church has a simple QR code to scan to donate which would be easy to use.
- The whole reorder project opened up the rear nave area and made more of the existing features and memorials, bringing them to the forefront rather than them being hidden or forgotten.
- Space has been cleverly thought through with the movable font and space at the back of the pews for storage, including rolling draws and cupboards; providing maximum storage but not dominating the view or character of the church.
- Glass doors manifestation needs to be carefully considered as with too little in the wrong light the glass can be walked into.
- Servery was its own module. Did not look like a kitchen. It looked as an integral part of the church. Designed as a versatile item of furniture that can be used as an altar or a bar. This suggested that we could consider multi-functions for items introduced.
- It was extensively planned, made to look like an altar which unfolds so the oak is not damaged. The resultant kitchen has been laid out with everything needed such as dishwasher, cooker, hob, fridge and a separate coffee/tea area with





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separate sinks and hot water tap. The walls of the cupboard fold back into the walls.

- The glass doors to the church have an attractive manifestation to them that is in keeping with the reorder and a handle that also converts into a door stop.
- Overall, went for the quality option – showed that it is important not to stint on materials and finishes... art etc.
- Movable font beautifully considered. This showed that it is possible to relocate the font without losing the historic value of the space.
- Stacking lightweight comfortable wooden modern chairs (40 in a stack) – see picture.
- Raising of floor level useful for underfloor heating, electric/data distribution etc.
- Glass entrance door forming weather screen/lobby and were inviting entry/welcoming allowing vision into the church combined with lighting design approach. NB be aware of manifestation for safety.
- Removal of some pews provided additional worship seating capacity
- The removals and resiting of items in the church has given them and excellent flexible space whilst maintaining the spirituality of the church.
- Differentiate between materials used for ramps and those for steps – they had some issues with visual cues.





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St Lawrence, Bourton on the Hill

Grade I listed

... a building of stone, in the Norman and Perpendicular styles, consisting of chancel, clerestoried nave of three bays, aisles, north and south porches, and an embattled western tower containing a clock placed in 1904, at a cost of £110 and 6 bells...



Kelly's Directory (1923)

Dates from 1157, although little of the original church remains. It was originally dedicated to St Mary, but during the 15th century its dedication was changed to St Lawrence. Has an existing gallery likely carried out in the 1980s. Access to the church from the north has a lobbied draught entrance.



Pews have been retained and are of the same construction as in BM with timber raised stalls and a central stone walkway and a step to the chancel, step to the alter area and further step for the alter dais.



Re-ordering very 'light touch' .. quote from website: *"... changing our church building to make it more user friendly whilst retaining its historical character and integrity as a place of worship. We have had water pipes laid so we now have sinks at the back of church and in the vestry enabling us to serve refreshments and have tap water for washing up and cleaning. Our next aim is to provide toilet facilities as well."*



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Included:

- Kitchen
- Issues with bringing in utilities (cost and location)
- Some reworking of the vestry
- External WCs and store



A lot of focus on the churchyard with bees, and supporting biodiversity and encouraging wildlife, including restricting grass cutting.

Learnings/comments of the BM reordering working group:

- A similar size church to Butlers Marston however the village has a church hall so the need for an open community space is not required from the church building.
- The whole reorder process took a long time and needed to be handled carefully to bring everyone on board, very much a soft touch reorder rather than extensive redesign.
- The PCC did not have the money before the project and have gathered this over time fundraising and seeking grant funds for each micro project.
- The Victorian Society were not concerned with the pews being removed as they were from a catalogue rather than custom made pews.
- They used an Oxford firm to carry out the statement of the doors and pews which was really helpful with Victorian Society.
- The DAC were very supportive of the reorder and encouraged more pews to be removed to make the space at the back of the church usable.
- In essence the reorder was the removal of several rows of pews from the back of the church and the installation of some kitchen units and a sink at the back of the building.
- Suggestions to us were that we should look at the chandelier heating used in a church in Bristol which is cutting edge and very economical.
- The Benefactor Trust might be able to help with solar panels. The statement of need is what you want to do which is more important than the heritage.



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- Think about the ecology aspect too when ordering and what more the building and area can do.
- Their final advice is you can never have enough storage and it is essential to get everyone onboard and using surveys is a great way.
- This church received a Silver Eco Church Award in 2019 in recognition to the care for God's earth in the management of the building and land, worship and teaching, community and global engagement and lifestyle.
- The church has an induction loop system for hearing aids.
- Improving the storage in the vestry alongside a sink as well as a separate building outside for a disabled WC
- Underlined the issues of using poorly selected materials
- No attempt to hide taps, sink etc.
- Issues with storage
- Need to be sure that statement of need – presence of an existing village hall/communal space mitigated against their wider ambitions
- External wc being constructed away from the church wall to avoid touching existing masonry (NB Grade 1 listed). Drainage for this is to a trench arch drainage system installed as part of the project.





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St Lawrence, Bourton on Water

Grade II* listed

It is an interesting church of 3 periods, the C18 tower being particularly fine.

Tower 1784, nave mostly late C19, chancel C14 said to be 1328. The church was rebuilt except the chancel in 1784 by William Marshall, and the nave almost completely remodelled from Georgian back to Decorated by Sir T G Jackson, while retaining the tower and chancel. North aisle 1875, south porch 1890, nave 1891. Coursed rubble with Cotswold stone roof. Five bay nave with round piers and pointed arches and a king-post roof. The chancel has features of the C14 with a roof of 1890, painted by F Howard in 1928. Good late C19 and early C20 church fittings. Pulpit of 1888.



Three stage tower of ashlar, rusticated on ground stage and with giant Ionic pilaster quoins above. Balustrade, vase finials, lead covered dome. Lozenge shaped clock on south face dated 1785. Large round clock above.

Reordering architect: a member of the Giles-Scott family who sadly died prior to completion and another practice finalised the work.

- 8 month reordering project from Jan 2017
- The main entrance moved to the West door with glass doors providing a view through the South aisle to the high altar.
- Small meeting room created in the north-west corner and a staircase to the balcony above provides additional space & seating.
- kitchen & toilet facilities much improved





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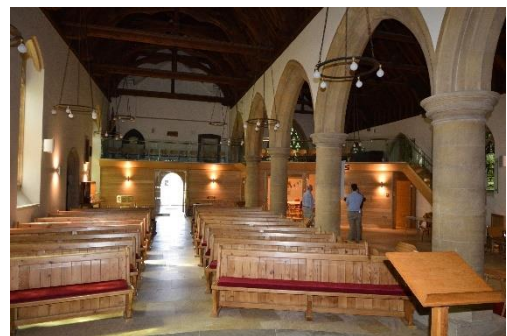
- New pale coloured Cotswold stone floor with underfloor heating
- Clean stonework lightening the whole space
- Pews removed from the North aisle for a flexible seating area with space for the toddler group, events, exhibitions and refreshments



Contractors were JND, Cirencester

Learnings/comments of the BM reordering working group:

- A slightly larger church than Butlers Marston with a larger entrance and overall wider north aisle.
- The project took three years of planning and consultation and from the outset they agreed not to rush the project to make sure it was right for the church and community.
- The reorder group kept an open mind throughout and used the SWOT analysis during the pre-planning process to ensure they had thought of as much as possible.
- The church was forced to move out for 8 months to allow the work to be completed.
- Reinforced how important it is to develop a comprehensive brief and drive for its execution
- The reorder was to create a large open plan space with two toilets, separate meeting room and an enclosed kitchen and serving hatch.
- Creating the extra rooms created a dead space above the new rooms and rather than leaving this as storage or a dumping area this space was turned into a glass





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edged balcony. This now gives the best view in the church and is an attraction for guests.

- Moving the entrance to the back gave more space and moving the front to a south window near the balcony makes this more of a feature.
- The project involved rewiring the building and introducing underfloor heating as well as cleaning all the stone inside.
- Thinking about technology throughout, they installed a permanent projector and screen that pulls into place, audio visual cupboard, CCTV, LED wall lighting/spots, wifi and a webcam to stream services.
- Not enough power sockets were considered and wiring for microphones was not thoroughly considered resulting in them having to purchase a licence for the wireless microphones.
- As the church was already used for plays and concerts it was decided to create a stage area at the front of the church with an accessibility ramp.
- They did not touch the Chancel which they regret as this space is cold and under used. Chancel retains the choir pews and work here has been quite light touch.
- The body of the old pews were kept as the congregation liked to be able to pull themselves up to stand but were stripped back and made free standing so they could be moved to open the space up.
- Purchased new pew cushions to make them more comfortable.
- Entire floor of nave and aisle was replaced with underfloor heating and Cotswold stone slab. This allows a level floor throughout the nave area and the capacity to rearrange furniture – both movable pews and loose, stackable chairs
- The special stackable chairs have arms on every other one to help people stand up.





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- Great example of how beneficial the inclusion of a gallery can be:
 - o Additional floor space
 - o Seating capacity increased
 - o Versatility in terms of uses ... exhibition space, children's Sunday school etc etc
 - o Space beneath gallery allowed better inclusion of meeting room, kitchen, wcs etc.
- Where windows crossed by the gallery laminated glass balcony screen used as protection from falling
- Suspended screen in the nave with discrete fixed projector position on nave external wall.
- Some issues with new lighting installation, particularly the column uplighters although the capacity to provide in-floor electrics and data most useful. Consider lighting carefully as the floor spots can blind people.
- Location of electrical floor boxes needs good consideration to be sure that trip hazards are avoided whilst using flexibility allowed by opening up areas by pew removal
- Over plan storage as there is never enough. Storage for such as loose chair stacks was rather open.
- Hatches from kitchen in to meeting room and to social area kept kitchen separate from the nave.
- Their suggestions to us were to keep the church as open as possible as you don't know when someone might need the space or for what.
- Consider that some parents with children might just need to get out of the house and need somewhere warm and dry for an hour which is why they have toys and a colouring table all year round.
- Consider the risks associated with any part of the building not reordered as this can become draughty and underused, including issues such as old external doors not considered.
- There was a lot of displayed information on the details of the church such as the history, reorder process, and the heraldic devices.





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- Also use CollectionTin.com

Consider a 'Friends of the Church' route to help financing.



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St Mary the Virgin, Kirtlington

Grade II* listed

Part of the Akeman Benefice

The Church of St Mary the Virgin, Kirtlington contains evidence of C12 origins and development through three subsequent centuries. The C12 central tower was rebuilt in 1853 by Benjamin Ferry in the Norman style and Sir George Gilbert Scott restored the Chancel.

In 2009 the Victorian pews and tiles in the nave were replaced with chairs and York paving, with underfloor heating. The Victorian font was moved, and modern plumbing, including a lavatory, was introduced.

There is seating available for 64 people in the green chairs, and extra 80 available on wooden chairs. Up to 16 spaces in the Choir area.

Reordering includes:

- a new stone floor with underfloor heating
- glass floor to the original decorative iron grills
- new accessible WC and flower arranging area to the North West corner of the North Aisle has pale turquoise screens of ceramic backed glass of a paler shade to the existing organ pipes.
- upholstered chairs in ash with a decorative flower motif from the Chancel screen.

Reordering architects: Acanthus Clews.





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Learnings/comments of the BM reordering working group:

- A slightly larger church than Butlers Marston in a classical Latin cross style with a north and south transept.
- The reordering was carried out 14 years ago and reflected the DAC guidance/views of the time (ie had 'new' upholstered chairs).
- The reorder project was started due to the need to replace the floor, pews and the heating.
- The reorder consists of an open plan nave with movable wooden seats and stackable chairs. Removed all the pews except for chancel choir stalls.
- New stone flooring throughout with underfloor heating. Issues reported with heating system although this seemed to relate to the boiler rather than the underfloor installation.
- A toilet and flower arranging area was created at the back of the north aisle initially.
- Kitchen on one side at the rear of the south aisle open to the nave with a display cabinet in one end extending to a serving area including a sink aisle installed more recently. The serving area is predominantly storage with a sink. No fridge, cooker or dishwasher installed. Quite discrete and nicely detailed. They commented that they had not given enough consideration to serving needs. A separate table was needed to serve as this had not been considered in the reorder. Having the kitchen near the entrance helps to catch non-regulars before they leave a service.
- Underfloor heating has been used under the pews with additional radiators to boost heating as well as spot lights throughout.
- They have tested the underfloor heating and found that if the heat is not lost to the roof void but kept at a comfortable height above the floor.



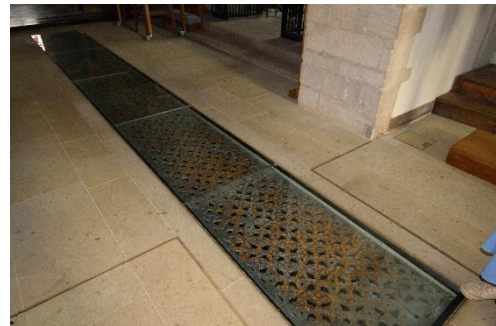


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- Raising the floor slightly avoided the potential disturbance of any burials. The whole church is now on one level, perfect for accessibility and to hold concerts and plays.
- The chairs were made by Irish Contract Seating and they took a detail from the church to use in all the chairs which is a nice touch.
- Each seat was sponsored for £200 and had a plaque to denote the sponsor which was a good fundraising idea.
- The whole process was carried out in stages and although they had an overall idea of what they wanted.
- It seemed unlikely a thorough plan was created from the outset.
- Those met, who were responsible for the reordering, underlined the need to aim high.
- New chorister pews to one side of the nave. Movable if required.
- Old cast iron grillage retained in the floor with glass cover has an issue with rusting of the retained grillage
- The use of chairs allows great flexibility for seating for worship, rearrangement for concerts and social occasions.
- The chairs were not as flexible as those at Tanworth (learning point: go for chairs that allow flexible connections for different layouts of seating).
- No weather lobby currently.
- Some open storage is unsightly.
- Bat licences are expensive and having bats needs to be incorporated into the design not just from a roosting point but the mess it causes in the space and keeping it clean.
 - o Issues with bat faeces in one corner
- Their suggestions to us were to come up with a plan and stick to it even if it means having to carry out bite-sized projects.
- Everyone will have a view on what should happen in the space and those who don't attend church might be the most vocal.



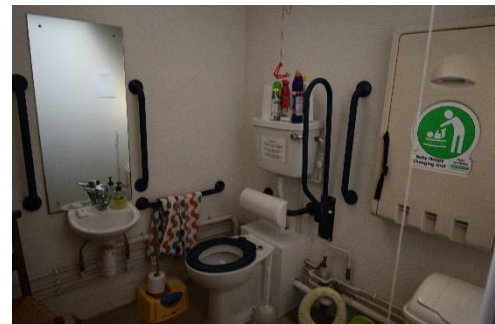


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- The Lottery was useful for funding and it was hoped this could be used for Solar panels, but to secure this funding you must prove the building is used for the community.
 - o This can be achieved with more guide books not just on the church but architecture, art and children.
- Storage of chairs and tables had not been planned and was hidden behind screens.
- The building had the best technology at the time but sadly this is now outdated and is difficult/expensive to replace so it's important to think about the future proofing of these elements. Such as lighting, heating and microphones.
- Have the main wooden church door on the outside of the building and a glass door on the inside as this makes it easier for people to join events quietly.
- Use CollectionTin.com
- Consider sponsorship as a means of fund raising e.g.
 - o Selling the chairs etc.
 - o Had had some issues with underfloor heating which need some consideration as to method if to be used (options should be considered in the round using a specialist sustainability focused mechanical engineer)





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St Peter & St Paul's, Long Compton

Grade I listed

Early C13, with late C13 or early C14, late C14 and C15 alterations and additions. The church was restored 1862-3 by Woodyer, and again early C20.

Chancel with S chantry-chapel (now the vestry), nave, N aisle, S porch, and W tower.

Of 13th century date, the nave probably early and the W tower later.

N aisle added very early in 14th century, and new windows like those of the aisle inserted in the nave S wall. Chancel may also have been rebuilt and enlarged at this time. S porch probably late 14th century. Clerestory windows and new roof provided in first half of the 15th century. Interesting carved corbels. Later in the 15th century the tower was heightened by another stage and the tiny chantry or sacristy S of the chapel was built.

Several modern restorations; in 1862-3 the chancel was very drastically restored and the roofs repaired or reconstructed. Further repairs 1900 and 1930. Font and other furniture are modern.

The west of the church was altered in 2004 to provide two glass-fronted meeting rooms and a balcony, as well as kitchen facilities. This means that the church can be used more flexibly: for children's groups during





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some services, for meetings and break-out groups, and as a venue for concerts and other community events.

No information on architects or contractors.

Comments of the BM reordering working group:

- Highlighted all the previously mentioned benefits of a gallery. Specifically how raising the ringing chamber floor can provide additional floors space/flexibility of use.
- Shielding of window concerns were well dealt with (as, in a more current way, in Bourton-on-the Water)
- Another earlier design and was visually not as light as, say, Bourton-on-the-Water or Tanworth.

