

ALL SAINTS PARISH – CHURCH WARDENS’ REPORT TO THE APCM

8 May 2022, ON THE STATUS OF THE FABRIC, GOODS AND ORNAMENTS OF THE CHURCHES

AS AT 31 DECEMBER 2021

All Saints Church

Silver: the church silver is in good order.

Renovation Project: After much delay as a result of COVID, the All Saints Renovation Project concluded early 2022 with the reinstatement of the Memorial Plaques and on completion, the last tranche of retention monies was released.

At the Sussex Heritage Trust Awards ceremony, All Saints was presented with the 2021 award in the Ecclesiastical category in recognition of the outstanding work undertaken by Contractor, Architect and the All Saints team. <https://www.sussexheritagetrust.org.uk/2021-awards-ecclesiastical>

This project has rewritten the previously known history of All Saints, our Architect now dating it as pre-Domesday, making All Saints possibly the oldest surviving Saxon Church in Brighton.

Bespoke folding display screens were purchased, which can be used to display the project.

A cover was purchased to protect and secure the sound-desk in order that the church can be opened outside the hours of worship and there is still some final work to be completed on this.

Organ: The organ was tuned before church reopened for worship.

Projector repair and Lighting etc.: Following completion of the internal renovation, one of the projector screens was found to be faulty and was replaced, and the Main Aisle projector was also faulty and was repaired. Further work was carried out to adjust the lighting to accommodate the differing nature and style of the wall finishes, which included realignment of lighting to the Doom painting and also work to ensure the correct level of earth protection.

Porch, minor works: A new notice board/cabinet has been installed in the Porch along with a matching mirror. The ceiling and the electric cabling have been tidied up together with the refurbishment of the front doors.

Tower Slates: In the summer following high winds the tower lost a number of slates. Fortunately this was covered under the church Ecclesiastical Insurance and only cost us the excess (£500). It is worth noting that the repairs seem to have ensured that following the more powerful recent storms, no damage has been incurred to the tower roof.

On a more long term note, the slates are currently holding up well however there will come a time when serious consideration will need to be given to their full restoration.

Vicarage Car Park: There was a trip hazard identified in the car park near the ground floor entrance to the Church Centre due to the growing tree roots, which have been repaired. The tall conifer tree adjacent to the steps down to the Vicarage car park was showing signs of age and was randomly losing boughs. As a matter of Health and Safety the Diocese sent their tree surgeons in to cut it down. There are no plans to replace it.

Boundary Wall Footpath Fencing: The City Council without full authority or agreement from the Diocese have replaced the fencing along the footpath. In doing so their Contractor demolished part of the heritage flint wall and replaced it in timber. The Council has agreed in principle to prepare a scheme for its proper reinstatement taking due account of the lost flint wall. This will need Diocesan faculty approval before it can go ahead. We await the City Council’s proposals for reinstatement.

Churchyard Notice boards: Two wooden noticeboards were replaced with 2 new aluminium church signs funded by the Friends of All Saints.

Maintenance of the churchyard: A team from Community payback have continued to work to clear excess vegetation.

Barn Loft: An inspection of the Barn Loft showed signs of vermin infestation. Regrettably most of the items in storage were fabric and likely to have formed some sort of bedding, thus had to be professionally disposed of. Some of the plastic ducting to the toilets below had been chewed through which suggested that this might have been a point of access from the roof. The loft has been cleared and cleaned and the ducting repaired. Fortunately after a thorough inspection of the lower levels there was no sign of any further infestation.

Barn External Drainage: The existing soakaway was no longer performing and the pipe work was regularly blocked. A new purpose designed soakaway has been constructed along with a new dwarf wall to hold back overspill of soil and debris from the foot path bank.

Church Centre: Repairs to the electrics took place.

Ascension Church Westdene

Silver: All in good order

West Entrance Screen and Fascia: For some years now the oak glazed entrance screen at high level have been showing signs of deterioration and some were rotten and needed replacing, along with the beads holding the glazing in place. An additional long term problem was signs of water penetration (into the building) at the lower extremities of the high level screen.

Over the summer the glass was removed and the sills replaced, whilst doing so it was found the mullions were also rotten and so additional sections of mullion were scarfed in. The original glazing was undersized and barely held in place. As the original glass has been retained, extra timber (oak) was inserted at the head and sides to ensure the glazing rebates were properly effective. The oak timberwork was replaced on a like for like basis.

In addition to the Screen we also undertook the replacement, in white plastic, of fascias and soffits to the west and north elevations. These were showing signs of severe decay. Whilst the scaffolding was in place we took the opportunity to redecorate externally the north elevation windows of the Church.

The work was undertaken by Newbarn Construction of Saltdean and thanks should be given to Steve Ashby and his team for their first class workmanship.

Roof tiles: Some tiles that had slipped on the church centre roof were repaired.

Electric Installation: Work has been carried out to bring the supplies into line with current regulations. The work is now satisfactory and certificates issued.

Other Church Properties

Fairview Rise: No substantial work was undertaken in 2021. It is planned to replace the gas boiler in 2022.

Grangeways: an electrical inspection revealed the need for remedial work, which has been carried out.

Mackie Avenue: Garage door was replaced. Both properties continue to be let through our letting agent and no other substantial work was undertaken in 2021.

Jody Sharp and Olive Ridge, Churchwardens

27 April 2022