

St Andrews Psalter Lane Church

Property and Finance Committee Annual Report 1st April 2024 – 31st March 2025

The P&F committee met 4 times during the period.

Property

Quinquennial Inspection: The next inspection is due in 2025, there are no urgent items outstanding from the last inspection, so we will just ensure continued maintenance and await the next inspection to give us guidance on priorities.

Inventory: Anna Harvey has completed the inventory of the contents of the Church and Shirley House. This is undergoing review after which it is proposed that it will be checked by the Wardens and Stewards.

Policies: The Procurement, Charity, Bookings, Fire actions Shirely House and Fire actions Church, Socially Responsible Investment Policy, Money Handling Policies were reviewed and where necessary updated.

Maintenance: Routine servicing, testing and maintenance actions were completed as per obligations and our policies. Various minor repairs were carried out to buildings and equipment.

Room hire rates, conditions and Fees: The rates were reviewed and increases made. The fees for audio visual services at weddings (etc) were clarified.

Shirley House

Leases: All offices are let.

Rent review – Room 9: The mid-term review was completed.

Energy Audit and Solar panels: We received funding for an energy audit from the Low Carbon Communities and Cultural Scheme which identified various ways of reducing energy consumption, including the installation of solar panels, secondary double glazing, draft proofing, increasing the central heating water pressure and improving insulation. The central heating water pressure was rectified and quotes were sought for secondary glazing, solar panels and insulation. Alastair Morris investigated solar panels and a battery and also applied for and obtained 50% funding for their installation under the scheme. The scheme received TMCP approval, planning permission and district network approval. The system was installed in November at a cost of £23,910 of which 50% was covered by the grant and the remainder from a donation of £30k.

We were informed by the insurance company for them to cover the building the battery must be housed in a fire proof room with a monitored alarm system. We investigated various ways of complying with this requirement. The solar installation panel installation company quoted £1850 +VAT for a 1.2m x 0.6m x 2m high fire proof enclosure with a cooling fan, flush door, intumescent air grilles, temperature sensor and ventilation fan to be constructed within the store room. Hollinsend is quoting for the monitored fire alarm system, also needed. We have asked the insurance company whether these proposals will be acceptable to them. This should leave about £15,825 from the £30k donation.

We should take further measures to reduce energy consumption in Shirely House, including draught proofing and double glazing.

Church:

Spire: Architect Tom Crooks Paul Durkin of Pinnacle carried out the one year inspection on Wednesday 8th and 9th January. An area of stained internal timber thought to be a wood preservative spill, should be monitored. Externally some cracking of the joints forming the crown and distortion of the lead below the louvred section and copper rolled joints on the south side lower skirt were noted. Pinnacle's metalwork subcontractor visited on Saturday 11th January and accessed the spire by external ladder.

Pinnacle need to make arrangements to repair joints and paint the woodwork. We are withholding 2.5% of the contract price until all is satisfactory.

The architect noted that there are wide open gaps in the parapet copings and some movement cracks in the parapets, meaning there are cracks running down 3 or 4 courses, allowing water into the wall core. Repointing will be required in the near future.

Energy audit: We were successful in applying to the Low Carbon Communities and Cultural Scheme for an energy audit with the aim of reducing our energy consumption and carbon footprint. Due to community uses of the Church we were eligible for funding of 100% for up to 3 measures costing up to £20k, but the project needed to be completed before 31st December 2024. The audit identified that savings from installing solar panels, secondary glazing to windows, fitting timers to water heaters, insulating valves on the heating system in the cellar, fitting insulation to the ceilings in the back rooms, draft proofing the main doors, replacing fluorescent lighting with LED lighting and replacing gas boilers with an air or ground source heat pump were feasible. Quotes were obtained for secondary glazing of 4 windows of the nave and for insulating the ceilings of flat roofs above the back rooms. Our application for Connexional Approval for the secondary glazing was turned down and the deadline conditions for the funding prevented the insulation of the flat roofs being funded so it was decided to replace fluorescent lighting with LED lighting and for timers to be fitted on the electric water heaters that supply the kitchen, back meeting room and rear toilets.

We need also to investigate upgrading the main entrance doors to make them draft proof and more accessible, while maintaining through visibility and with the possibility of automation that a donor has offered to assist with funding. We received £100 grant from Sheffield Diocese for the replacement of remaining filament bulbs with LED lamps.

Narthex toilets: A task group of Mary Mitchel, Marilyn Godber and JC is reviewing options. A quote has been obtained for changing the internal porch roof drains and replacing the flashings, which should cure the damp ceilings. The plan is to remove the panelling below the basins and behind toilets then install new sanitary ware, part tile the walls, paint the stained wooden partitioning and remaining walls and lay new floor covering. The boxing for the electrical installations in the western toilet will be tidied up and painted and larger mirrors fitted.

Connexion Conservation has advised that we need to apply for approval to change the roof drains, which will include forming chutes through the parapet and siting hoppers and downpipes on the outside of the porch. The Architect is advising on this and a specification for the works so that we can seek quotations and Connexion approval and apply for grants to do the upgrade.

Church Drains: The main drain from the rear of the Church has been cleared of tree roots and a fibreglass lining installed, which should prevent reoccurrence of the blockage problem. Fortunately cost of this work and replacement of the pressurisation pump that was damaged by the flooding was covered by our insurance.

Audio equipment: We purchased a digital stage box which will facilitate a more versatile arrangement of sound input and outputs to be controlled from the balcony. We also have a new tablet for controlling the sound mixer. We are still investigating a means of independently controlling the volume level in the crech room. Emma Handy has joined the livestreaming team.

We asked live stream viewers for feed-back.

Heating system: During the winter the boilers needed several repair actions.

Bank card reader: A reader for donations and payments has been installed in the Church.

Decorating: The Junior Church room has been redecorated. A damp patch has appeared. A new water heater was installed in the vestry

Kitchen. An additional electric circuit for the water heater and a coffee machine were installed.

Telephone: The telephone in the lobby to the stairs has been disconnected

St Andrews Hall:

The rent is up to date and there have been no issues.

Grounds:

Garden working parties: These were organised on the first Saturday of each month except January. Thanks are expressed for grass mowing, leaf sweeping, weeding, trimming, shredding and other tasks carried out by hard-working attendees.

Christmas tree: A decorated tree was erected outside between the main doors.

Car Park and Steps: The lines and step edges were re-painted.

Unauthorised use of grounds: Some antisocial behaviour, deposition of litter and accessing of the outer gate to the back door has occurred.

Staffing

Property Steward: JCC would like to retire from this role. We need someone to take up this responsibility or the role could be split between 2 people.

Director of Music: Liz Bentley was been appointed.

Health and Safety:

Health and safety officer: We need someone who will take responsibility for health and safety issues.

Knives: Large knives have been removed from accessible draws in the kitchens of the Church and Shirely House. If required they can be provided by the Caretaker.

Fire detection: A new monitoring system has been installed in the Church.

JCC 1st May 2025