

Fabric Report for 2025. All Saints with St. John's Hall.

The church and hall buildings are the responsibility of the PCC who work with the Diocese to maintain them.

2025 saw us able to overcome our heating problem in the church, and as the year began, we were still hoping to solve it by repairing the boiler controls. We had one working gas boiler that sometimes failed, leaving concerts, rehearsals, meetings, and services in the cold. Thanks to a legacy and the general dissatisfaction, especially that of our new vicar we resolved to find a better way forward.

Research began that meant much studying by PCC of various ways of making our church reliably warm for its many users. A site meeting in the church with Diocesan representatives agreed that for the time being gas condensing boilers were the most efficient method of heating for us; the proviso being that in the next 5 years we actively explore other methods of heating and generating electricity not reliant on fossil fuels, and that we create a heating fund to enable this, and it is being put in place. The installation of the new boilers involved removing asbestos from the storeroom and boiler room and removing the old boilers, installing the new, draining and rehydrating the heating system, testing, and hiccups. A special mention to Simon for being determined to have a new heating system; to Colin Bird who says he is not an expert on boilers but probably is by now and Richard Toyn who has sorted out the many hiccups. At last, as cold days were coming again, we had new boilers-(more eco-friendly, gas condensing boilers), and heat in all parts of the church.

The PCC after much discussion made the decision to part company with our architect Francesca Whelan and we sincerely thanked her for many years of service to us. A roofing expert was brought in to try and find the source of the leaks in the South Aisle roof related to the expansion of nail holes in the lead over time. The solution presented was to have the roof re-leaded. The PCC decided not to be rushed into re-leading but to explore other alternatives to lead, as well as other technological advances in the installation of Solar Panels. The PCC are actively seeking a new architect, and several practices have been approached.

Faculties are sought by the PCC to allow certain repairs or changes and examples of this work from 2025 were the Bromley memorial plaque beside the organ, the new Blair memorial in the churchyard, repairs to the Pearson one thanks to the care given to the churchyard by the Town Council, and the re-worked pedestrian gate on Hagsdell Road. (a project driven by Reg Harman).

The Father Willis organ has regular maintenance as well as tuning and vacuuming of stone dust, and this year saw the Fanfare Trumpet pipes being removed for minor repairs and voicing while the supporting frame was redesigned.

The upcoming event “ Dark Skies” enabled the PCC to discuss the safety and lighting on the churchyard paths. When the row of “streetlights” was vandalised, leaving only our vestry and other security lights to support pedestrians we were concerned about safety and asked Simon Thorpe (lighting consultant and founder of Dark Skies) to suggest how All Saints could make its own outdoor lighting more eco-friendly.

PCC regularly discusses our carpark which is for church users. In 2025, following complaints from hirers etc about casual parking (even overnight), we decided that we must act to protect our space for events at All Saints, and for visitors to the graves in the churchyard.

PCC has been aware of the need to make investments in St John’s Hall. A new water heater was installed, but repairs were often done by our Work Party. At the end of 2025 we organised PCC “visits” to take place in the new year when the hall would be available/free to amass some information before embarking on a programme of improvements.

The Tower ringing chamber suffered from pigeon debris and in Dec 2025 the Bell Tower was out of action because of Health and Safety reasons while professionals were sought to repair leaks and holes and clean the space.

Last but by no means least, a huge “Thankyou” to David Dean and the skilled maintenance team (Work Party) who do such sterling work from small to large jobs that enable the church to run smoothly.

Verity Tranter Churchwarden

