

## CHURCH INSPECTION REPORT

### RINGMORE, ALL HALLOWS

Rural Deanery:	Woodleigh
Archdeaconry:	Totnes
Diocese:	Exeter
Ordnance Survey Ref:	SX652460
Date of Inspection:	6th September 1995

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QUINQUENNIAL INSPECTION OF RINGMORE, ALL HALLOWS  
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(a) REPAIR WORKS CARRIED OUT SINCE LAST INSPECTION.

Overhaul of rainwater system.

Roof covering repairs and improvements to stop water ingress at chancel arch

Provision of new heating system.

(b) GENERAL CONDITION OF THE FABRIC.

The church has been well maintained and is substantially sound and weathertight. Apart from the flue terminal, the new heating system is unobtrusive and will, I hope, prove beneficial in use. Overhaul of guttering and roofs has substantially cured water ingress problems.

Perhaps in the near future it will be possible to consider improvements to internal decorations.

(c) DETAILED CONDITION OF THE SEVERAL PARTS OF THE FABRIC.

(Numbers in the margin refer to the summary, section (d). Bracketed letters in the margin refer to sections (e) & (f) below).

1. Structural walls, piers, buttresses etc. (including notes on stability, damp etc.)

No current signs of movement were apparent in the area of the cracks over the south chancel window and in the tower stair five years ago and there are no signs of movement at present. These areas may be considered stable and the cracks should be raked out and pointed in.

2. External wall surfaces

The walls are generally constructed of small slate rubble and would originally have been rendered, like the tower.

Now exposed to the weather, the slate is laminating and crumbling. The original mortar is beginning to perish, leaving small holes (and some larger holes) everywhere.

East elevation:

A large hole needs to be filled.

The buttresses have been reasonably well pointed in the past.

The gable parapet has no coping but mortar joints and stones are reasonably firm.



South elevation:

The buttresses and one or two small areas are reasonably well-pointed. The mortar joints in the wall face generally are deteriorating slowly.

At the west end, beyond the tower, mortar joints are firmer.

West elevation:

The gable was repointed some years ago and is at present sound.

North elevation including north transept:

All the walls on this side of the church are well pointed apart from a few gaps in the transept plinth where ivy is again growing up.

3. Roof coverings

All slated roofs are reasonably sound. There are some individual slates on tingles but no immediate repairs are needed.

The slates on the chancel aisle roof are torched in mortar. They have not deteriorated noticeably in the past five years and I do not think they will need attention for some time yet.

There is some water ingress at the west end of the valley gutter behind the tower. I was not able to get into this valley to determine the problem, which is most likely to be a split in the lead.

(f)

Other leadwork appears to be in reasonable order.

4. Rainwater disposal system

The metal gutters and downpipes have been thoroughly overhauled and are sound and well-painted.

Soakaway drainage appears to be satisfactory.

5. Door and window masonry

(windows are numbered clockwise on each elevation)

E: Bathstone - There are open joints in the hood mould but the stone is generally sound.

3

S1: Bathstone - sound.

D1: Bathstone - sound.

S2: Bathstone - sound.

S3: Bathstone - sound.

D2: (south door) - Polyphant stone - there is some general erosion in lower jambs. A large piece has broken away due to expansion of a rusting door pintle. Repairs are in hand.

1

D3: (Porch) - Slate arch - sound.

S4: (Tower E) - Polyphant - sound.

S5: (Tower S) - Polyphant - sound.

- S6: (Tower W) - Polyphant stone - a jamb and a head piece have broken away. 3
- S7: Bathstone - there is light erosion and some open joints. 3
- W: Bathstone - sound.
- N1: Bathstone - sound.
- N2: Bathstone - some general erosion and open joints in head and cill. 3
- N3)-
- N4) Single light in slate opening - sound.
- N5)
- N6)
- N7: Polyphant (single light) - sound.
6. External iron and wood, including condition of paintwork.
- The porch doors and main south door (D2 and D3) are sound and well painted.
- The south priest's door (D1) is suffering from softening of the timber due to wet rot and the lower hinge has broken away. 2
- External wood replaced. Frames in good condition. Repainted 5-6 June 1996 £85.05.
7. Tower, spire, including bells and frames
- External: The slate masonry is in much the same condition as the church. The south face still retains patches of the original render, which gives some protection, although this is slowly disappearing.
- North and west faces have been pointed with a cement mortar which is cracking and breaking away, leaving many small gaps in the joints. The east face is pointed in firmer mortar and, though not attractive, it is sound.
- Spire: The stone and mortar pointing remain reasonably sound. The restoration of the weathercock is in hand.
- Parapet: The lead gutter is sound.
- There is one missing piece of flashing on the west face of the spire and one cracked length of the north side of the parapet. 1
- The door remains permanently open at the moment, until a suitable new door can be constructed around the heater flue (see para 16).
- Bell Chamber: Louvres on the north side were removed to position the flue (since moved) and they await replacement. Meanwhile birds are getting in and creating a mess. 1
- Preb. John Scott has inspected the bells and provided recommendations which are receiving attention.
- Deadening (heating) chamber:
- Nothing to report.

8. Roof structures and ceilings

The ancient oak timbers of the nave and transept roofs are badly decayed at the feet through wet rot and death watch beetle attack. However, there is still sufficient strength and this need cause no immediate concern. One day, perhaps, the original design of plaster barrel ceiling can be replaced and, at that time, timbers may be strengthened.

The boarded ceiling panels have given rise to some concern and two have fallen out recently. To prevent any further trouble battens have been screwed up to retain the boards.

The nineteenth century roof and boarded ceiling in the chancel is sound.

9. Internal partitions and doors

The vestry screen has moved and the latch does not engage. 4

10. Internal plaster

The roughcast plaster in the nave and south transept remains sound. The chancel has no plaster.

11. Internal decorations

The pink plaster is not ideal and perhaps it will be possible to redecorate in the near future.

Research continues in the history of the wall painting on the chancel arch. This has not deteriorated since the rainwater system was overhauled.

12. Glazing and ventilation

E The leading is old but still firm.  
The stoneguard beginning to rust. 3

S1 The leading is old but still firm.  
The stoneguard beginning to rust. 3

S2 The leading is old but still firm.

S3 The leading is old but still firm.  
The stoneguard beginning to rust. 3

S4) (tower E) The glass is buckled but firm.  
S5)

? S6 The leaded glass is poor but is to be replace with louveres to provide air to the heater. ? This was N5.

S7 The leading is old but still firm.  
The stoneguard is beginning to rust. 3

W: A small rose window - The glass is weak and buckled but is double-glazed, externally, with plain glass. The wire guard is reasonable.



N1: The leading is old but reasonably firm. The guard spoils the window as it covers the stone. It seems to have been taken from another window.

4

N2: The leading is becoming weak.

N3) The glazing is sound.

N4) The guard is beginning to rust.

N5: The plain glass light is badly cracked.  
The guard is beginning to rust.

*N.S.  
A parishioner is considering  
presenting the window in memory  
of her husband. (See "Hagel's  
Window file - Archdeacon appears  
to have no objections in principle.)*

3

N6: The glazing is reasonably firm.  
The guard is beginning to rust.

N7: Sound.

13. Floors and galleries

Slate and tile floors are sound.

Boarded floors under the pews are also sound.

Vinyl tiles in the vestry are worn but serviceable.

14. Furniture, fittings, organ, clock etc.

A new lectern has been provided.

15. Monuments

Nothing to report.

16. Heating system

A pressurised warm air heating system has been installed and, after initial teething problems, mainly concerning noise, this now appears to be working well.

Certain details remain to be completed, including the oil line, removal of the old oil tank and provision of suitable door panels around the flue to maintain access to the tower parapet.

17. Electrical systems

The installation appears to be satisfactory.

18. Lightning conductors

None.

19. Sanitary facilities

None.

20. Fire precautions

Nothing to report.

21. Security

Nothing to report.

22. Churchyard (including boundary walls and gates, paths etc.)

Nothing to report.

23. Movable articles of value

No articles in this category have been identified to me nor inspected.

(d) WORKS OF REPAIR IN ORDER OF PRIORITY

1. Of utmost urgency.

- 1.01 Remove ivy from n. transept walls. (c)2  
1.02 Repairs to south door jamb: Contact Mr Venner of Western Steeplejacks who has some polyphant stone and may be able to supply a suitable piece. (Telephone 01822 841181)  
1.03 Repair lead flashings in tower parapet. (c)7  
1.04 A new door to the tower roof and louvres in the bell chamber are needed to prevent birds entering the tower. (c)7

2. Essential within the next eighteen months.

- 2.01 Repair and decorate door D1. Done (c)6

3. Essential within the quinquennium.

- 3.01 Rake out and point cracks over window S1 and in tower stair. (c)1  
3.02 Fill hole in masonry of east elevation. (c)2  
3.03 Repair broken stone in window S6. (c)5  
3.04 Point open joints in masonry of windows S7 & N2. (c)5  
3.05 Treat rusting stoneguards to windows with Galvafruid. (c)12  
3.06 Reglaze window N5. see R.N5 above. (c)12

4. Desirable.

- 4.01 Overhaul latch to vestry door. (c)9  
4.02 Provide suitable guard to window N1. (c)12

(e) RECOMMENDATIONS ON MAINTENANCE AND THE CARE OF THE BUILDING AND ITS CONTENTS

1. Gutters

All gutters and other means of rainwater disposal need to be cleared regularly especially where trees are nearby causing particular problems.

2. Electrical Installation

The electrical installation should be tested at a maximum of 5 year intervals by a qualified electrician who should submit a report on the standard NICEIC format. Any recommended repairs should be carried out promptly.

3. Lightning conductor

N/A!  
A new code of practice for Lightning Protection (BS6651) was published in 1985. Its recommendations are far-reaching and any reference to 'satisfactory' installation in paragraph (c)18 does not mean that the installation complies with BS6651. I can give more advice on this subject if you wish.

The conductor should be tested regularly (preferably annually) to ensure that earth resistance is adequate.

4. Heating Installation

This should be serviced before each heating season.

5. Bells

All moving parts, including ropes and wheels, need regular checks for wear and lubrication where appropriate. The frame and its fixings also need checking for wear and deterioration and for tightness. Detailed information is available from the Central Council of Church Bellringers.

The installation should be thoroughly overhauled by a specialist every 15 years at least.

6. Ventilation

Ventilation of the interior of the church is most important to prevent staining and damage to finishes caused by condensation.

7. Infestation by Wood-Boring Insects

Specific recommendations may not be included in section (d) since it is not always possible to tell if infested areas have been treated recently. Any infested timber should be treated at a maximum of 15 year intervals.

8. Fire extinguishers

Extinguishers should be checked annually by the manufacturer to confirm that they are in satisfactory working order.

9. Handbook

I recommend an excellent handbook on general maintenance, published by the Council for the care of Churches "How to look after your church".

9. Logbook

You are required by Canon F13 to keep a record of alterations, repairs etc to the church. A logbook for this purpose is also obtainable from the Council for the care of Churches.

(f) RECOMMENDATIONS ON FURTHER DETAILED INVESTIGATIONS.

1. Examine valley between tower and south roof to discover cause of leak.

*Alan couldn't find any reason... ?*

(c)3

(g) ESSENTIAL INFORMATION.

1. Scope of Report

The inspection of the church has been made visually, and such as could be made from ground level, ladders and any readily accessible roofs etc. Only selected areas have been examined in detail. Woodwork and other parts of the structure which are inaccessible or hidden have not been opened up unless specifically mentioned and I cannot report that such areas are free from defect.

2. Repair work

This report is not a specification to enable a builder to estimate and undertake repairs and must not be used for that purpose. Except where repairs are of a very simple nature, it is recommended that a detailed specification should be prepared and suitably qualified builders invited to tender. I shall be happy to give you any further help you may require.



3. Materials

It is vital for the well-being of the fabric that the right materials should be used and many modern materials are inappropriate. Masonry repair and pointing in particular should only be entrusted to a skilled mason. If in doubt, do ask for advice.

4. Grants

Various grants may be available for the repair of historic churches. I can give you further advice in this respect, if you wish.

5. Approvals

Before any repair or improvement work is put in hand, unless it falls within the 'de minimis' category, you must ensure that you have a Faculty. Other statutory approvals may be needed in some cases.

6. Insurance

Insurance cover for the building and its contents should be kept up to date. Your insurance cover may already be index linked, but if not the cover provided should be checked annually.

Edward Barnaby Dip Arch RIBA  
Architect

27th September 1995

# The Church Log Book

An up-to-date record of all alterations, additions, removals or repairs to the fabric, fixtures and fittings of the church and curtilage or churchyard, during five quinquennial periods

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