

Progress highlights since December

Appendix A: Worthenbury Fire Risk Assessment (for information)

a. Routine maintenance visits & reports

The autumn/winter maintenance visits were completed at all but four churches. The remaining four will be visited shortly. Progress was generally more sluggish compared to the spring visits. New contractor appointments at Caldecote, Corsley, East Hatley and Fordham worked well.

Work is in hand to plan the next batch of spring visits and churchyard maintenance.

The persistent wet weather has tested our roofs and rainwater disposal systems. Remedial works due to dislodged slates and/or leaks have been actioned at several churches.

We have had to urgently bring forward the chancel re-roofing project that was planned at Allington later this year due to storm damage. The north slope had started to slide and patch repairs were no longer viable. These capital project works are now underway on site (£35,330 + fees + VAT).

b. Small repairs & routine maintenance programme

2025/26 Combined budget (routine maintenance £150k + small repairs £150k)	Spend since April 2025	Forecast additional spend to 5 April 2026
£300k	£233k	£50k (works instructed) of which c. £30k is more realistically going to be spent*

* The weather has impacted the completion of some external works. All figures include VAT.

The planning of priority small repairs in the forthcoming financial year is underway. The draft programme currently includes 35 projects. Some further prioritisation will no doubt be required to fit available budgets.

Of the 35 projects, nine have already been instructed following approval of contractor costs (£61k). Inclusion of all the remaining 26 projects in the programme – plus the carry forward of incomplete repairs from 2025/26 (c. £20k) – is likely to produce a total for small repairs of around £275k. This is based on preliminary estimates. A separate allowance of £100k for routine maintenance would generate the £375k figure noted at the last meeting.

Examples of activities undertaken to inform potential works later this year include:

- > Wickham Bishops: a specialist decay survey of the roof timbers has been undertaken following an earlier structural engineer visit; initial contact has also been made with

three archaeological firms to seek examples of comparable work to evaluate complex historic building fabric.

- > Papworth St Agnes: a structural engineer's report on the summer movement has recommended monitoring. The local friends have pro-actively installed the monitoring to the engineer's specification and are taking monthly readings.
- > Coanwood: listed building consent has been obtained for repairing the stone window surrounds.
- > Bell inventory: I have compiled an inventory of all the bells & frames in our care so we can start to prioritise specialist inspections and maintenance checks.

c. Church-specific actions

The following works are planned for completion in March:

- > Llananno: digital recording of the screen as a tool for conservation management, emergency planning and public engagement. This will be undertaken at no cost by the Royal Commission in Wales and Manchester Metropolitan University (photogrammetry and 3D laser scanning). [Hugh Harrison](#) has been appointed to carry out a condition assessment later in the year.
- > Ynyscynhaearn: treatment of significant woodworm in the organ keys.
- > Corsley: a check of the ceilings following recent falls of plaster.
- > Milland: tree management works (pruning of oaks and height reduction of cypress). A second (more competitive) quotation has been obtained, together with Diocesan ('List B') approval.
- > Hutton Bonville: boiler room asbestos removal works (three quotations received).

Other notable actions include:

- > Tadlow: loose wall plaster has been removed and floor repairs undertaken to enable the church to be opened to visitors.
- > Matlock Bath: two signs warning visitors to keep away from the sheer drop at the churchyard edge have been installed.
- > Mundon: liaison is ongoing with the neighbouring landowner to arrange quotations for tree management works following our recent survey. A new local grass cutter has been found following retirement of the earlier appointee.
- > The 5-yearly electrical tests that are due this year have been instructed.

d. Fire safety management

13 written fire risk assessments (FRAs) have now been completed. All the recommended actions have been logged on the database so we can track their completion. Many of the actions have been dealt with or are in hand; the rest are awaiting the arrival of the new Volunteer Coordinator.

Common FRA recommendations include:

- > reducing the amount of stored materials to the lowest possible level, especially in vestries;
- > ensuring that escape doors are properly managed during events so the building can be safely evacuated in an emergency.

12 further FRA visits are planned between now and the end of March.

Trustees will recall that Karissa Thomas ([Aries Fire Safety](#)) and Simon Bromley ([volunteer](#)) are helping us with this work. I met Simon at Worthenbury to develop my awareness as the assessment was more complex given the building's size and layout. A copy of the Worthenbury FRA is attached in the appendix for those Trustees with an interest.

In those (limited) situations where the FRA recommends a fire extinguisher to manage identified risks (e.g. at Llanddoged where electrical mains equipment is positioned immediately alongside the primary escape door), I intend to investigate a (small) 'bulk purchase' of P50 water mist extinguishers. These extinguishers don't require an annual service or a discharge/refill after 5 years. They are also reported to have a total lifespan of 20 years.