

## **West end of Nave - pew reordering**

### **Background**

*The Inspection of Churches Measure 1955* requires that each church should be inspected by an architect once every five years - the Quinquennial.

Quinquennial of 2001 states that *3.6 (c) Northwest pew base requires repair for safety. Reordering should be considered to extend the brick floor to overcome future rot problems which will continue with a timber floor.* This is again reiterated in the 2006 Quinquennial and point 3.6 (b) of the latest (2011) Quinquennial which has listed this as priority A (within 12 months).

### **Detail**

A Vision for the Parish was produced in 2006, and a parish survey in 2010 supported the decision to take a vote during PCC meeting on the removal of the pews at the north end of the nave. This vote was taken on 27th June 2011 and was passed.

October 2011 PCC - James Judge co-opted to PCC to work on Quinquennial recommendations and faculties. Urgent safety work to be carried out before major building work (e.g. tower stairs, trees etc).

March 2012 PCC - ongoing work towards tower stairs and trees.

April 2012 PCC - meeting due in May with DAC (Diocesan Advisory Committee) re tower stairs, will seek advice on pew reordering.

July 2012 PCC - DAC report of 10 May 2012 suggests retaining as many benches as possible yet moving them into a horseshoe position. Possible to introduce new storage by creating cupboards or shelves. PCC felt that open U shape would not be large enough to leave sufficient room for chairs/tables.

November 2012 PCC - proceeding with quotes/drawings for pew reordering. RS to enquire re borrowing chairs.

6 March 2013 - meeting with architect (JJ, DF, MC) to arrange commission, to include repair to choir pew floor. RS obtained permission from Somersham Village Hall who have agreed for loan of their chairs.

March 2013 PCC - Options presented to the PCC for decision on layout of community space based on architect recommendations. Heating addressed. Decision made for Option 3. Shelves/ cupboards both sides at back, shelf on back of existing north east pews. Enclosed bookcases/ cupboards.

April 2013 PCC - nil to add

July 2013 PCC - Awaiting return of tender documents from contractors. Second hand bricks will need to be sourced for floor.

November 2013 PCC - Faculty been applied for including statements of need and significance. Tender from RG Carter agreed, would hold price until February 2014.

December 2013 - DAC decided to recommend the works according to the specifications in the faculty application. Public notices x 2 displayed with layout (option 3) on Church noticeboard and Village noticeboard 16th December 2013 - 14th January 2014 as required.

20 January 2014 - JJ advised by James Hall (DAC) that it "would not be straightforward" due to (a) an objection being received; (b) the Chancellor requesting a full report on the pews (completed by David Hawkins on 14 Feb 2014) and a report from the Victorian Society (completed 10 Feb 2014); and (c) he wished to have a sketch of the 'moveable pew plan' that the DAC suggested in 2012. This was provided, and included the opinion of the PCC that the usable space would be greatly reduced.

Victorian Society: suggested retaining the existing west pew ends and incorporating them into east pews. They also suggested retaining the ornate west pews and losing the plainer east ones but this is not possible as the dimensions are different.

Now (29 April 2013) - All papers, including objection letter is with the Chancellor for his decision.

Plans if approved - we will need to retender and recost as the delays have meant that the quote period has expired. Likely increase in cost.

More carpentry than previously required. Possibly need to find new carpenter as previous successful tender application is not currently working due to ill health.