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Summary of the Condition of the Organ Chamber and Tower Roofs at St. Peter & St. Paul's Church, Wincanton

The following is a summary of an inspection of the tower and organ chamber roof at St. Peter & St. Paul's church, Wincanton undertaken on 3rd October 2019.

1. ORGAN CHAMBER

1.1 The organ chamber roof is formed of a pitched lead roof falling from a ridge to both the north and south. To the north it discharges into a lead parapet gutter and to the south into a lead gutter between the organ chamber and chancel slate roof.

1.2 On the south slope there are numerous splits and patches to the leadwork. Several patches have split suggesting this is an ongoing problem. The bay sizes are too large for the code of lead which results in thermal movement within the lead causing the splits and damage. The patches are a mixture of welded lead repairs and bituminous patches.

1.3 On the north slope the western bay lead has slipped down the roof slope.

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1.4 The northern parapet gutter is formed in one long bay of lead which has split and been patched in three locations. Again this is due to oversizing of the lead bays.

1.5 From the north gutter there is a lead chute outlet through the parapet wall. The lead has split and been patched with a modern coating.

1.6 Between the eaves of the southern roof slope and the lead gutter on the chancel roof is vertical lead sheet cladding. Fixings to several of these lead sheets have failed causing the sheets to drop and sag.

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1.7 The lead gutter between the chancel and organ chamber is formed in two bays, the westernmost of which is extremely long for the code of lead. There are three patched splits on this bay.

1.8 A number of slates have been damaged or come loose on the chancel at the junction with the gutter. Patching of the slates appears to have averted water penetration but several require refixing.

1.9 Flashings between the lead roof and parapets on the organ chamber roof have very poor upstands. The pierced decorative stone parapets severely restrict the available upstand. In several areas the pointing has failed and the flashings have become loose. The parapet gutter flashing has split in several places.

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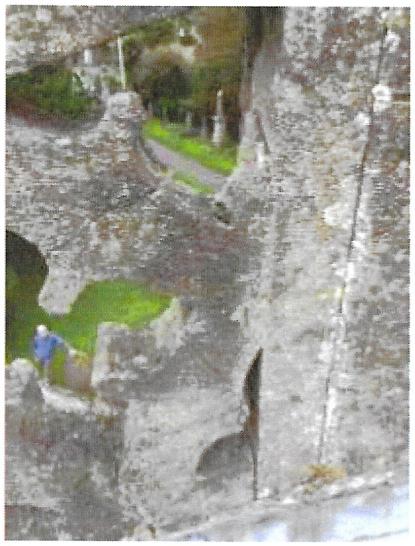
1.10 Whilst the parapet walls generally appear reasonably sound there are a number of areas of eroded or damaged stone.



1.11 In the north-east corner of the parapet gutter there is an upstand to a redundant chimney stack with a lead cover. It may be possible to remove part of the chimney to below the roof line which will improve the detailing in this area.

Organ Chamber Summary / Recommendations

1.12 The lead bays on the organ chamber roof and the adjoining gutters are oversized for the code of lead and this has resulted in thermal movement causing damaged and splitting to leadwork. In addition fixings to at least one lead bay on the north slope and the vertical lead bays into the southern gutter are failing resulting in the leadwork moving and laps between the lead bays becoming insufficient.

1.13 Regular patching of the leadwork appears to have prevented significant damage but the fact that several of the repairs have failed shows that the problem is ongoing and continued regular maintenance would be required.

1.14 The upstand between the roof and the parapets is limited by the pierced decoration of the stonework and this has resulted in insufficient upstands and flashings in several areas. In addition several of the flashings have come loose in a number of locations and continued maintenance would again be required to ensure these junctions stay weathertight.

1.15 The parapet stonework is generally sound but the carved decorative nature results in some elements being vulnerable. Some cracking and minor damage is visible and repairs are advisable to reduce the risk of loss.

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1.16 There currently appear to be two options for repairing and maintaining the roof. Whichever option is chosen some repair to the parapet stonework would be advisable in the next five years or so.

a) The first option would be to continue patching the roof on a regular basis and ensuring that regular inspections are undertaken to identify any splits or damage as swiftly as possible. Some initial repair work would be required to refix slipped bays. This approach would require regular and ongoing maintenance, probably on an annual basis.

b) The second option would be to strip and recover the lead roof with new lead. This option would be more expensive and careful consideration of details such as flashings, parapet gutter depths and bay sizes would be required. However, if correctly done it would reduce any long term maintenance significantly. If the roof is being replaced, it would seem sensible to renew the lead gutter between the organ chamber and chancel and the vertical lead sheeting into this gutter at the same time.

1.17 It would also be economical to undertake conservation repairs to the parapet stonework and remove the redundant chimney to below the roof covering line whilst access for the roofing work is in place.

1.18 Considering the condition of the roof coverings and the fact that the organ is situated below this roof, increasing the risks and possible expense of any leaks, I would recommend that the organ chamber roof is recovered along with works to the parapet stonework, removal of the chimney and replacement of the southern gutter.

2. TOWER ROOF

2.1 The tower roof is formed of two bays of lead falling to the north into a lead parapet gutter. The lead sheets have welted joints.

2.2 As with the organ chamber roof the leadwork to the tower roof has a number of splits that have been repaired and several sheets have slipped down the slope. Although the lead sheets are smaller than on the organ chamber they are still relatively large for their thickness and are of a reasonable age.

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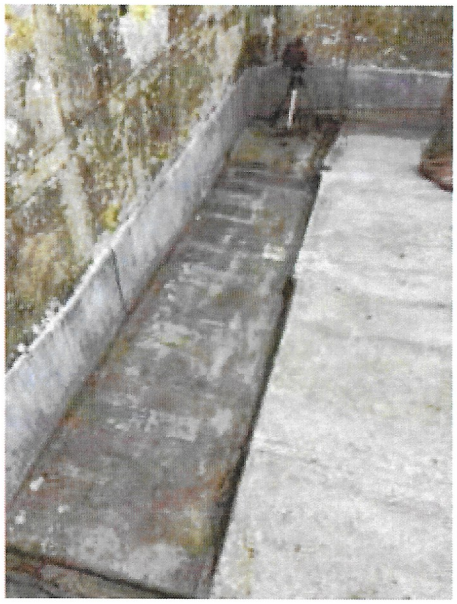
2.3 The lead flashings into the parapet wall are loose in several areas and mortar pointing has failed.

2.4 The lead parapet gutter to the north is in one long bay and has numerous splits and creases across the lead from thermal movement. The splits have been patched but due to the length of the lead bays it is likely that this problem will continue.



2.5 At the west end of the parapet gutter is a raised section that has a lead covering from a former flue outlet. The flue is now redundant and the liner/lead could be removed to below the roof line to improve/simplify the detailing in this corner..

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Tower Summary/Recommendations

2.6 The leadwork on the roof is in fairly poor condition and elements of the detailing are poor.

2.7 While the lead could be repaired and patched this would be a relatively expensive exercise and is unlikely to add significant life to the coverings without regular maintenance.

2.8 Renewal of the lead coverings would allow improvement of detailing and save on long term maintenance. The height of the tower would make any works, repair or renewal, relatively expensive.

2.9 Therefore I would recommend that, subject to available funding, the tower roof should be recovered.