# St Mary's Church
# Westonzoyland

# Reordering, 2015 to 2016

*Roof repair in progress mid February 2016*

heritage lottery fund
LOTTERY FUNDED

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## The Past …

The Church as we see it today owes most of its features to the rebuilding carried out by the Abbot of Glastonbury, Richard Bere, in the late 15th and early 16th century. His initials can be found in five places in the Church structure, the most easily spotted being in one of the bench ends in the nave aisle.

Other repairs were carried out in later years, particularly after the damage caused by violent winds in November 1703 and the lightning strike in 1811. There is documentation available detailing much of these works from the Church Registers of the time.
The Church's involvement in the events surrounding the Battle of Sedgemoor, 6th July 1685, are also well documented elsewhere.

By 1930 the Church had deteriorated into a poor state and a fund for "The Great Restoration" was opened. This work began in 1933 and was completed by the opening service on October 6th 1936. This major work included repairs to the roofs, the tower pinnacles were renewed, the bells rehung lower in the tower, clock repaired, tracery inserted in the upper tower windows. The paving throughout the Church was re-laid and the walls, plaster and glazing were repaired. A heating system was installed. The organ was enlarged, fitted with a new case, repaired, and moved to the position below the tower.

Major stonework repairs were carried out on the Tower in 1999.

However, time was again to take its toll…..

## Project Conception.

By the early 21st century, leaks in the main nave roof were becoming a major problem. Not only did buckets have to be strategically placed to catch drips but also the wonderful carved roof was in danger of being damaged. Some funding had been awarded to repair the lead on the north and south aisle roofs, but the main nave roof repair seemed to be a funding target too far. Other deterioration was self-evident with plaster falling from the walls and electrics working to their capacity.

In 2009, the current vicar, Revd Chris Keys, with his PCC, decided that something had to be done. The novel approach which sowed the seed for the later re-ordering, was to set up a group to promote the Battle of Sedgemoor history and to set up a visitors' centre. It was envisaged that this group would then lead to a way of generating funds to help repair the roof and maintain the building for the community. The group was formed with the title Zoyland Heritage Fund and became a registered charity later that year.

The Trustees set up a basic visitors' centre, with the aid of grants from Sedgemoor District Council and the Levels and Moors Local Action Group. Councilor Gill Slocombe, Chairman of Sedgemoor District Council, opened this officially on 4th April 2012.

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Over the next few years the centre brought in many visitors from all over the world and donations were gratefully received, but the rain still kept dripping in.

Time for a change of gear.
The PCC had decided on the main outline of a scheme to repair the roof sometime towards the end of 2013 and an application had been made to the Heritage Lottery Fund for a grant. Andrew Rainsford, the Diocesan Stewardship Advisor, got enthusiastically involved in this as he has family connections in the village.
At this point the scope of the scheme was increased to renewing the nave roof and internal plaster, moving the font, moving the organ, removing some pews, forming a cafe area, installing a servery, installing toilets, updating the Battle of Sedgemoor Visitors' Centre, lighting replacement, heating replacement and electrical rewiring.

HLF awarded us the maximum grant and the first task was to appoint architects and a professional team. Rick Nightingale volunteered and was appointed as Project Co-coordinator. A Design Team was formed consisting of Chris Keys, Brian Wylde, Ann Philcox and Rick Nightingale with the aim of finalising thoughts so that the architects could be given a full brief. The Project Coordinator produced an outline Cost Plan and it was obvious that we needed to raise a serious amount of money. Andrew offered to lead a separate fund raising subcommittee and with Ann's assistance, the applications were made. The HLF require that all their grants support further interest in the heritage. Obviously with the connection with Sedgemoor we were in a good position and the business plan showed the church running at a "profit" if sufficient visitors could be attracted. Andrew's contacts with the travel industry indicated that the re-ordered church would fit in well with their requirements – something interesting to see (the Exhibition) and comfort facilities (cafe and toilets)

Benjamin Beauchamp Architects were appointed in April 2014 with a target of tendering by the end of the year with a main contractor appointed and work to start in late Spring 2015.

The Church and Visitors' Centre were closed on 1st September 2015. The reason for the delay was solely due to bats – we had to apply for a licence and work on the roof could not start until bat roosting ended – generally taken as the end of September. The main work was complete in time for the official reopening on 17th July 2016, although some parts of the project remained to be funded and completed.

We are hugely grateful to all the charitable bodies and donors who have supported this project with cash, and to all those involved in making this project successful.
Our charitable funding donors are listed later in this document.

The following illustrates the projects' progress with pictures taken at the time.

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## The Nave Roof

The nave roof, shown here in December 2015, was mainly funded by The Heritage Lottery Fund. The work was carried out by contractor Ellis & co.

This picture shows the Nave roof complete in April 2016, but work underway on the Chancel roof.

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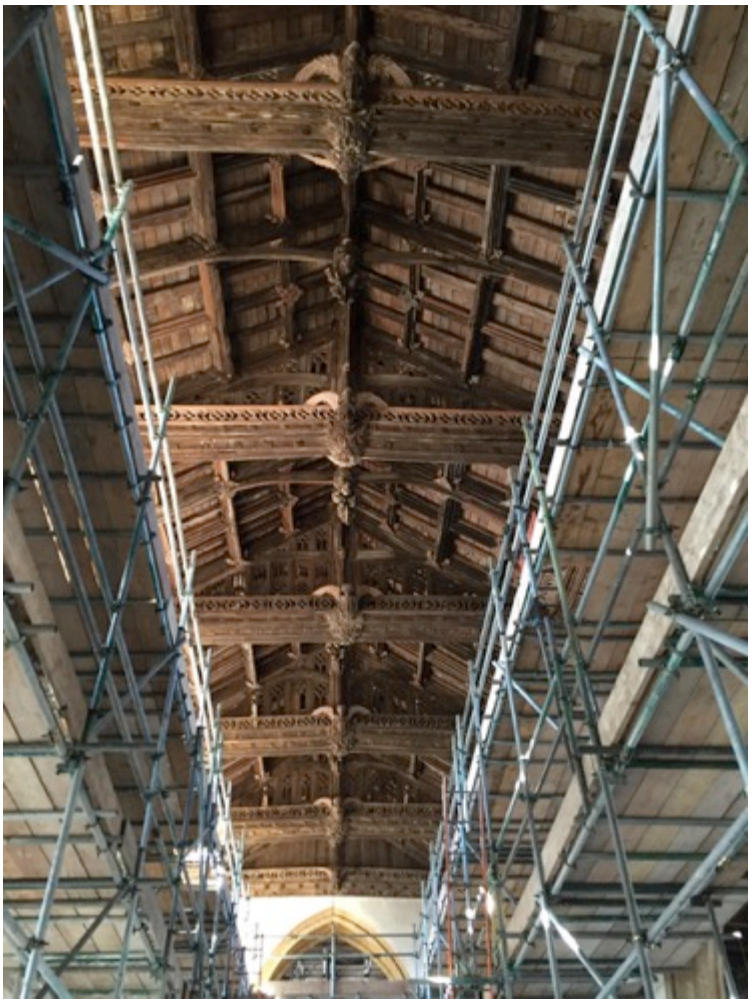

No work was carried out on the internal carved roof, but whilst the internal scaffold was in place opportunity was taken to inspect it.
This picture showing the scaffold was taken mid February 2016.

The good news is that the roof is in fine condition now and has been preserved for future generations.

Below: looking down through the nave roof from the internal scaffold.

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Some internal roof detail close up.

The carved initials RB 1524, highlighted, can be seen in the top right quarter of this picture.

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**The Chancel Roof**

The Chancel roof was not part of the main project as this is the responsibility of the Church Commissioners. However, as this roof was also in a poor state the opportunity was taken to re-roof it whist the Church was closed.
The Church Commissioners footed the majority of the bill. The work was carried out by West Country Tiling Ltd.

Work underway on the Chancel roof March and April 2016

The Chancel roof completed in May 2016

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**Internal Walls:**

The internal walls were suffering badly. The lower 1m or so was completely removed (contained asbestos so was actually carried out be a specialist subcontractor). New lime based plaster was applied and the whole interior decorated in Earthbourne Clay paint (an expensive type of emulsion especially made for painting lime render and old emulsion paintwork).

Internal scaffold was installed to reach the upper walls and Clerestory windows.

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Internal water dams were fitted to the windows on the south elevation only.

Plastering and repainting has brightened the interior of the Church.

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**Font re-siting:**

The font was carefully removed from just inside the main south door and re-sited at the front of the Church.

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**Seating alterations:**

The pews at the rear of the Church were removed to make way for the new tables and chairs. The floor, having been excavated to lay services, was re-paved.

The tables and chairs are from the Theo range produced by Chorus Church Furniture Ltd. This range is popular with many churches and cathedrals, light and easy to move and stack and can be fixed in rows when needed to augment the church seating.

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**Servery installed.**

The northwest area of the Church was renovated and services installed.

The Servery area near completion. This was a bespoke build by the main contractor Ellis & Co. The doors are oak finished in Rustin's Danish oil. There is a built in dishwasher and refrigerator, surface mounted water boiler and under counter water heater serving the washbowl. The opportunity was taken to encase all the electrical switchgear in matching finishes.

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## Toilets installed

Once the organ had been removed the area was prepared for the installation of toilet facilities.

The new facility includes two toilets, one for disabled persons fitted with appropriate aids to meet current Building Regulations. Both have independent heated hand washers and low-level heaters as frost protection

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## Organ re-sited

The organ was removed from under the tower and refurbished by TW Fearn, Organ Builders. It has been repositioned at the front, near where it was before the 1930's restoration.

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## Battle of Sedgemoor Visitors' Centre

The 2012 Visitors' Centre was removed in preparation for the Church Re-ordering.

The new Visitor Centre was completed in March 2017 and opened by the Leader of Somerset County Council, John Osman, on 18th March 2017.

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**Heating**

The heating was installed during autumn 2017 with a hand over mid November 2017.

The oil-fired system feeds hot water radiators within the Church. The oil tank and pair of boilers are sited outside on the north side.

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**Lighting**
Seeking grants.

**Electrical Infrastructure**
Some improvements done, but seeking grants for a new ring main.

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## Our Funding Partners

We are extremely grateful to our funding partners who have made this all possible.

| They are: | Contribution |
|---|---|
| Heritage Lottery Fund | 69.5% of everything. |
| Fund for Church Growth | Servery units |
| Somerset Churches Trust | Asbestos removal |
| National Churches Trust Partnership | Asbestos removal. |
| Clarkes Foundation | General grant |
| Sedgemoor District Council | Organ re-siting |
| Garfield Weston | General funding |
| Alan Evans Memorial Trust | General funding |
| All Churches Trust | General funding |
| Idlewild Trust | General funding |
| Leonard Laity Stoate Charitable Trust | General funding |
| Rank Foundation | General funding |
| The Beatrice Laing Trust | General funding |
| Awards for All | Servery tables and chairs. |
| Fairfield Trust | S. elevation clerestory window repairs |
| Somerset County Council Rural Dev. Grant | Battle of Sedgemoor Visitor Centre |
| The Battlefield Trust | Towards display items. |
| Viridor Credits (Landfill Communities Fund) | Heating |

Just over 13% was raised from gifts and donations from parishioners

**The Project Team:**
Benjamin Beauchamp (Architects) Ltd of Wedmore led the design and contracting.
Ellis and Co were the Main Contractor
King Cathery Ltd, were Mechanical and Heating Consultants, Clevedon
Stenning & Co, provided Quantity Surveying services
Keith Faxon, Archaeology Survey.
Rick Nightingale was Project Coordinator.
Andrew Rainsford gave funding support on behalf of Bath & Wells Diocese.
Revd. Chris Keys and the PCC owned the project.
Zoyland Heritage Fund led the Visitors' Centre update.

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