Inkpen Downie Architecture & Design Ltd
2 Balkerne House, Balkerne Passage
Colchester, Essex, CO1 1PA
01206 577244
arch@inkpendownie.co.uk

St Catherine's Church

East and West Tilbury and Linford,

Essex. RM18 8PB

Deanery of Thurrock,
Archdeaconry of Southend,
Diocese of Chelmsford

Report of Quinquennial Inspection 2025

carried out by:

Ben Downie B Arch Hons, MSc, RIBA, AABC

1.0 INTRODUCTION

GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF THE CHURCH

The historic church consists of nave and chancel on an east-west alignment, north aisle, and north porch. At the south west corner of the nave is the first two storeys of a tower and this accommodates the vestries. The remainder of the tower was never completed.

In 2015 an extension was added to the west end of the building to provide kitchen and toilet accommodation. The church is entered by the north porch.

The walls of the church are built in a mixture of knapped flint, Reigate stone, ragstone and limestone rubble as well as some very large flints. A small amount of Roman tile is also incorporated into the walls.The rubble is uncoursed. The principal facing material is flint, but the proportion of flint to other materials varies considerably around the building. Some areas have been covered with a cementitious render. The quoins to the buttresses and walls, weatherings and window reveals are formed in dressed stone. The majority of the dressings appear to be of Reigate or Ragstone. The roofs of the nave, chancel and porch are covered with hand-made red clay tiles.

The extension is of insulated cavity walls with a natural oak cladding to the outside. There is a simple lean-to roof onto the west gable that is finished with clay interlocking pantiles.

The church stands at the southern end of the historic village which is itself detached from the main developed area which consists of the early 20th century Bata factory and associated workers housing, shops and other amenities including a railway station.

The church occupies the last high ground close to a steep slope down to the flood plain of the River Thames, the last building in the village before Coalhouse Fort, a large and well preserved 19th Century artillery platform. The two buildings share an association with the intervening open space which is a public park. The militarily strategic location of the site on a bend in the river means that the church has shared the situation with military installations since the development of artillery in the Tudor era.

Legal Constraints:

The building is listed Grade I
List entry Number: 1337129
Date first listed: 08-Feb-1960

List Description:

5221 *Princess Margaret Road*
East Tilbury Church of St Katherine
TQ 67 NE 11/23 *8.2.60*
5221 Princess Margaret Road East Tilbury Church of St Katherine TQ 67 11/23 8.2.60 I 2.

C12 with C13 and C17 alterations. Flint, and rubble with some Roman and medieval brickwork, and Reigate dressings. Roofs tiled. Nave has late C12 north arcade, with 2 centred arches, of one plain order. One blocked early C12 window. South wall has remains of early C14 south arcade, with 2 centred arches. Two, C14 windows one two, and one three lights, trefolied ogees with tracery and four centred heads. C14 west tower arch, 2 centred 3 chamfered orders. C13 lancet in west wall with west doorway of same date. Late C12 north aisle has C15 window in east wall. North wall has an C16 window with wood ogee trefoiled lights, a late C12 window with C13 head, and a C19 window. North doorway is C14 with moulded jambs, and 2 centred arch. West wall has C16 window of one 4 centred light. Early C13 chancel, has original lancets in east wall. One similar window in north wall, the other is early C14, of 2 cinquefoiled lights in a 2 centred head. South wall has four windows, 3 of which are C13 lancets, one partly blocked by C15 light inserted, and one early C16 window, of 2 four centred lights. C18 north porch, largely rebuilt late C19. West tower started in 1917 never completed. Roofs mainly C19, but 4 tie beams remain in chancel. C14 north door with later rear frame. C16 pulpit. (RCHM 2).

Listing NGR: TQ8336299386

The church is not within a conservation area.

Description of churchyard:

The church is free-standing toward the west end and in the middle of the churchyard, with the west elevation facing Princess Margaret Road. The church yard is rectangular, with the northern boundary defined by the side boundary of the last house in Princess Road. The east boundary is formed by hedge-row and gives onto countryside. The south boundary follows the top of the gradient down to adjoining public open space and consists of grown out hedgerow and trees.

The west boundary is formed by a retaining wall, the general level of the churchyard being higher than Princess Margaret Road with the difference increasing as the road drops down from north to south. Excavations in the road for services have discovered burials suggesting that the road has encroached on the church yard which at some point would have extended further west.

There are access points to the churchyard at the south east and west sides. The south east entrance is a narrow pedestrian gate giving access to a public footpath. The principal access to the churchyard is on the west side from the village street. The opening is barely wide enough for a small vehicle.

A tarmac path slopes up from the gateway giving access to the new extension service door and also to the north porch. After the porch the tarmac peters out but there is a footpath that connects round the east end of the church to the gate in the south boundary.

The church yard has a number of graves and memorials and there are one or two mature trees, though none in close proximity to the building.

There is a small layby alongside the west churchyard wall with parking for three cars.

Outline history

The site at Tilbury is thought to be the location of an early church founded by St Cedd when evangelising amongst the East Saxons in the early 7th century. It does lie at a crossing point of the Thames that was important on the pilgrimage route into Kent from Essex.

"An Inventory of the Historical Monuments in Essex" published by HMSO in 1916 describes St Catherines as follows:

"The Parish Church of St Margaret, now St Katherine's, stands at the south end of the village. The walls are of flint and ragstone rubble with some Roman and later bricks; dressings are mostly of Reigate stone; the roofs are tiled. The nave was built early in the 12th century and late in the same century the north arcade was built and the north aisle added. The chancel was rebuilt and probably enlarged in the first half of the 13th century. In the 14th century the south arcade was built and the south aisle and tower were added; the chancel arch was also rebuilt and widened. The south aisle and tower are said to have been destroyed by the Dutch fleet in 1667 and the south arcade was then blocked. A north porch was added in 1704. The church has been restored in modern times when the north porch was rebuilt. A new west tower has been begun and not completed."

The tower commenced in 1917 was undertaken by the garrison of nearby Coalhouse Fort, it seems to share materials with the fort being in a heavily rusticated stone. It was stopped just short of the eaves of the nave, giving an awkward appearance. The remnants of the original tower can be seen in the form of an irregular butress that projects west from the south-west corner of the nave.

An 18th century print inside the church shows a timber belfry and spire sitting astride the ridge of the western-most bay of the nave roof, an arrangement that is common in Essex. Today there is no trace of the necessary support for such a structure surviving in the roof structure which indicates that this feature was removed as part of the 19th century rebuild. After removal of the belfry photographs show the single bell hung in a timber structure within the re-entrant of the southwest butress and the west wall of the nave. This itself has now disappeared and the bell is preserved within the church on the floor of the nave.

There are three known crypts, one just to the west of the altar containing burials from the 18th and 19th centuries commemorated by tablets on the nearby walls, one under the north aisle and one on the south side of the chancel south of the priests door, the contents of these last two are unknown.

The west door was bricked up from an unknown date until the erection of the modern extension in 2015, when it was opened up and the archway repaired to allow access from the nave to the new kitchen and toilets.

2.0 QUINQUENNIAL INSPECTION

The previous Quinquennial Inspection was carried out in November 2020 by Ben Downie RIBA AABC of Inkpen Downie Architecture and Design Ltd

This current inspection of the church was undertaken on 16th October 2025 at 9.00am when the weather was cloudy.

Scope of the inspection:
This report has been prepared in accordance with the provisions of the Inspection of Churches Measure and amendments. It is based on a visual inspection made from the ground or other easily accessible positions and is restricted to the general condition of the building and its contents. At the inspection I had access to the nave, chancel. I also had access to the two levels of the tower and the new extension..

I have not inspected woodwork or other parts of the structure which are covered up, unexposed or inaccessible and I am therefore unable to report that any such part of the building is free from defect.

Further action

This is a summary report only; it is not a specification for the execution of the work. I am willing to assist the PCC in implementing the recommendations and will, if requested, prepare a specification, obtain tenders and oversee the repairs.

Most work to a church building or its contents will require authorisation by faculty the exception being where it appears on the national 'A List' of works that can be carried out on your church without a Faculty. The A List can be found in Schedule I, Table 1 of the Faculty Jurisdiction Rules 2015

There is a national 'B List' of works that can be carried out once the written permission of the Archdeacon has been obtained. Most of these will be repairs and routine maintenance or small works identified in the QI report. The B List can be found in Schedule I, Table 2 of the Faculty Jurisdiction Rules 2015.

Maintenance between inspections

Although the Measure requires the church to be inspected every five years, serious damage to the building fabric may develop in between these surveys if minor defects are left unattended. Because of this Churchwardens are required to make an annual inspection of the fabric and furnishings of the church and to prepare a report for consideration of the PCC before the Annual Parochial Church Meeting. This report must then be presented to the APCM, with any amendments made by the PCC.

Building Insurance

The PCC should maintain buildings insurance cover that is index-linked so that adequate cover is maintained against inflation of building costs. It is, of course, important to ensure that the basic sum is adequate at inception of index-linking, as this will only deal with future inflation.

Trees in Churchyards

The PCC is reminded of its responsibility to arrange an inspection and obtain a report on any tree subject to a tree preservation order and on all other trees in the churchyard in accordance with the guidance notes circulated by the Diocesan Chancellor.

Regular maintenance to gutters and rainwater goods

Arrangements should be made for immediate attention to such minor matters as displaced roofing, defective rainwater goods and leaking pipes and the PCC are recommended to enter into an annual contract with a builder for the cleaning out of gutters, hopper-heads, downpipes and gullies twice a year in spring and autumn. Guidance may be had from notes published by the DAC and obtainable from the Diocese website .

3.0 WORK DONE DURING THE LAST QUINQUENNIUM

a) There was no work reported additional to routine maintenance in the last quinquenium

4.0 GENERAL CONDITION OF FABRIC

Generally structure appears to be in fair condition.

There is differential movement between the porch and the north aisle, the one dates from the 18th and the other from the 12th century, the two phases are not tied together and seem able to stand independently with the gap between the two opening up despite being filled at regular intervals. At present this does not seem to compromise the porch structure, but this should be monitored.

Plaster repairs and redecoration was carried out in the chancel in 2015 during which cracking in the chancel was filled and painted. This has since opened up indicating movement in the north east corner. This should be monitored with a view to seeking advice from a structural engineer if the movement becomes significant.

There are patches of damp in the lower parts of the walls . This is endemic in this form of construction, and particularly where there are high ground levels and missing pointing and stone detailing externally combined with impermeable modern finishes internally, as is the case in the main part of the nave.

The work carried out around 2015 has done a lot to mitigate the damp by restoring breathability to the fabric in the chancel, and by installing an effective heating system. This should be matched by a programme of work externally including reduction of external levels where possible and ensuring effective drainage. At the same time reduction of penetration of driving rain by reinstating external pointing where it is missing and repairing stonework details.

There have been two unsuccessful lottery applications in an attempt to raise funding for external repairs. The building stands on a very exposed site, is constructed of not very durable materials, and has experienced considerable, sometimes traumatic change so the challenge now is to stop the processes of decay to the exterior. The continuation erosion to stone details and pointing to the exterior masonry particularly on the south side of the building should be of growing concern.

RECOMMENDATIONS

This report contains recommendations for works required to be done and these are categorised in order of priority as follows:

1. Urgent works requiring immediate attention
2. Works recommended to be carried out during the next 12 months
3. Works recommended to be carried out during the next 2 years
4. Works recommended to be carried out during the next 5 years
5. Works recommended to be carried out beyond the next 5 years
6. Works requiring specialist advice

M Maintenance – Elements of fabric requiring particular attention

EXTERNAL INSPECTION

5.0 TOWER AND ROOF COVERINGS

Category

A The tower was constructed in 1917 on a square plan offset to the south of the west elevation. It was stopped while still incomplete and just below eaves level of the nave.

B The roof is a flat roof covered with a high performance felt finished with a parapet round three sides and the nave wall on the fourth. The felt roof was insulated and relaid in 2016, it is in good condition. The felt is dressed up at the abutment with the parapets and capped with lead flashing.

C The roof has a single outlet located at the south east corner. The outlet is in good condition. The parapets of the tower are finished with Portland stone copings which are in good condition.

D The nave, chancel and north porch roofs are steep pitched duo pitched roofs covered with hand made red clay tiles. The north aisle is an extension of the north slope of the nave roof.

E The chancel roof is separated from the nave roof by a rendered gable, with a lead cover flashing and soakers. All the roofs have conventional eaves with a considerable overhang which helps protect the wall surfaces. There appears to be a slight curve or distortion to the fascia at each end of the south slope.

F Verges generally are pointed in lime mortar with a matching tile under-cloak.

G The extension roof is a monopitch lean-to finished with clay, interlocking pantiles. There is a mortar bedded tile fillet at the abutment to the west wall concealing a lead cover flashing. There is metal "conservation" roof window in this slope.

H All of the tiled roofs are in good condition having been new or replaced in 2015. The porch nave and aisle roof in new hand made clay tiles, the chancel with tiles selected from the used tiles removed when the roof was stripped.

6.0 RAINWATER GOODS AND DISPOSAL SYSTEMS

A With the exception of the tower roof and the extension (which have cast iron downpipes) all rainwater goods around the church are made of cast aluminium. The installation was overhauled and tested in conjunction with the reroofing works and is in good condition.

7.0 BELOW GROUND SURFACE WATER DRAINAGE

A The rainwater pipes discharge into concrete channels laid around the south and north walls of the church. Most channel sections discharge into underground drains via gullies and these need to be cleared of weeds. M

B The exact route of these drains is not known, those serving the south side or part of the nave and tower appears to discharge above ground level in Princess Margaret Road just south of the church. Those serving the north side are not known as to where they discharge. The drains taking rainwater from the extension discharge into a new soakaway on the south side of the church.

C The rainwater pipes serving the chancel discharge onto the ground at the north east and south east corners of the chancel. There is a concrete lined channel around the chancel to carry the rainwater, this is in reasonable condition although it is becoming overgrown with weeds and needs to be cleared.

M

D	It is thought that the channels serving the nave and chancel are below floor level and the channel to the north aisle is at floor level. In view of the damp issues inside the church this needs to be checked.	
E	Vegetation and debris that has accumulated should be cleared, and the condition of the channel checked and repaired as necessary.	M
F	Gulley gratings should be removed and pipework cleared as far as it is accessible, gullies should be tested by topping up with a hose and ensuring that they run free.	M

8.0 PARAPETS AND UPSTAND WALLS

A	The east gable of the chancel which has a slight up-stand to the top of the wall unusually finished with clay plain angled ridge tiles by way of a coping laid over a lead cover flashing and soakers.	
B	This gable has a finial at the ridge and at north and south corners presumably of stone although this is not possible to determine because they are completely rendered with a cement render.	

9.0 WALLING

The south elevation

A	The south elevation walls are faced with a mixture of flint, limestone and ragstone rubble. It is apparent that this wall where it is in the nave originally formed the south arcade and it was subsequently blocked up leaving the arcade dressings in place. The condition of the south facing walls generally remains the same as at the previous report but with a noticeable worsening to the erosion of stone dressings and washing out of pointing. The loss of pointing in areas of flint in places threatens the loss of the flint face itself.	
B	On the south elevation of the nave, generally the facework is in serviceable condition but in areas erosion is significant generated by individual soft Reigate stones that are eroding back from the mean face of the wall. In some areas the face of the stones has decayed by up to 50mm from the general face of the wall. The defective stones will need repair to prevent water penetration into the wall and in order to protect adjoining stonework.	2
C	There is a dressed stone string course which is showing erosion to individual stones resulting in the arises of stones being rounded off and joints opening. The whole needs raking out and repointing with the worst stones being replaced.	2
D	There are three buttresses to the south elevation of the nave with stone quoins and weatherings, all showing erosion that requires a careful inspection to decide which stones may be replaced in situ and which require complete replacement.	2
E	The south elevation of the chancel is of similar construction to the nave. Weathering of the pointing in this area is becoming uneven and re-pointing is required to protect the flint facing, which is now becoming loose.	2
F	There are a few isolated areas of severe erosion on this face, notably adjacent the upper part of the central downpipe, to the head of the easternmost window and to the west of the second window (numbered from the west), in these areas repointing is required to fill up the pockets in the wall.	2

G There is severe deterioration of the stone dressings to the windows and door openings on this elevation of the chancel. The stone is not very durable and is deteriorating rapidly. Much of the moulding detail has already been lost. Decay is most advanced on the east jamb of the priest's door, the arch of the blocked door opening, the mullion of window no 4 and the reveals of window no 2. Some of the stones are so deteriorated that consolidation would not be effective and replacement of stone is needed. 3

The east elevation

H The east elevation is rendered with what appears to be a cementitious render. The coating extends over the north east and south east buttresses and their dressings and stone detail, where the render is missing these appear to be brick.

Mostly the render appears sound and should be left in place.

K There is a crack in the render to the north east buttress and a crack above the northern most lancet window, cracking was noted at previous inspections this repeats internally to new lime plaster which would indicate that there is some continuing movement in this area.

The cracks should be raked out, loose render cut back and filled with a lime mortar, so that movement can be monitored. 2

The north elevation

L The west end of the chancel north elevation is faced with knapped flint with random stone inserts. Generally the flintwork is in fair condition but the stone is deteriorating and has eroded up to 50mm back from the flint face. Generally the pointing to the flintwork is heavily eroded (up to 30mm from the face) and much of the galleting has fallen away. This area needs replacement of isolated stones and then fully repointing. 2

M The eastern part of the chancel north elevation is in better condition but where the western part abuts the more random rubble of the eastern panel there is an area of rubble where the face has deteriorated considerably and the mean face of the wall is up to 60mm back from the flint facing. Some flints have fallen away. At the top of this panel there are some large pockets in the walls. The lower areas need pointing . This area requires a detail assessment , replacement of isolated stones and some flint facing prior to repointing. 2

N There is a deep fissure along the splayed joint of the wall to the north-east buttress this should be raked out and pointed. 2

O The north aisle wall east of the porch has extensive loss of pointing and requires repointing, some individual stone replacement is required. 2

P West of the porch decay of the mortar is more advanced and in some places it has eroded up to 100mm back from the face of the flint. Individual flints are becoming loose and falling out. This wall requires re-pointing. 2

Q The porch walls are faced with knapped flint together with some random Reigate and other stone inserts. The pointing to the walls is weathering evenly and generally the stonework is in fair condition.

R There has been movement between the porch and the north aisle opening up a significant gap between the two structures, this was filled with mortar and small stones in 2016 and repointed. By 2020 there was a crack of 2-3mm and that appears to have increased again with continued movement. The two structures are of different dates and are not tied together so this may not be a concern structurally at the moment, but needs to be monitored. Consideration should be given to getting structural engineers advice on this also the cracking around the 2/M

northeast corner of the chancel.

The west Gable

S Most of the rubble facing to the west elevation is concealed by early 20th century render, and this in turn is now concealed and sheltered by the new extension.

T The rubble facing is in fair condition and the render is weathering evenly.

U There is a large buttress at the south west corner of the nave, remnants of the original tower. The top of this has never had a proper weathering but is of exposed rubble as a result it is deteriorating and, lower down , individual quoins are decaying. The stones forming the weatherings as the buttress steps in are in poor condition.

V There is vegetation growing out of the masonry in places and this needs to be removed. 2

A proper weathering should be formed at the top of the buttress and individual quoins and weatherings should be repaired or replaced. 2

The tower walls

W All three exposed faces of the tower walls are faced with large blocks of rusticated ragstone ashlar. The string courses and weatherings are formed in York stone.

Generally the stonework is in good condition and the ragstone and pointing is weathering evenly and in fair condition.

The extension walls

X The extension walls are clad in oak weather boarding designed to weather off to a natural oak finish. These are in good condition.

10.0 EXTERNAL DOORS

A The priests door in the south elevation is a vertically boarded and battened door with two heavy iron strap hinges. The boarding of the door should be treated with a clear preservative, and the metal work de-rusted and painted. 3

B The door to the north porch is a painted heavy timber vertically boarded door studded with nail heads , two plain strap hinges.

C The door is in good condition. There is evidence of beetle infestation in the door but this does not appear to have been active for many years. The door straps show some signs of corrosion and would benefit from redecoration. 3

D The limestone gothic surround shows slight movement, probably associated to movement against the porch structure where there are gaps filled in 2016 but opening up again. This should be monitored. M

E The outside opening into the porch has a square headed opening with a stone lintel and quoins all in good condition. This opening is hung with a modern metal gate in good condition.

F The external door to the extension is a modern vertically boarded oak door, with a louvered fanlight with glazing behind. This is in good condition.

11.0 WINDOWS

A Windows generally are leaded lights in stone dressings from various periods and so varying in style and materials. Depending on the stone some surrounds are severely eroded to the point where all detail has been lost.

B This inspection report remains the same as that for 2015 and 2020 except that there is a noticeable deterioration in the condition of stonework just as a result of natural weathering in a marine environment. This is accelerated where stones develop fissures that can hold water and are susceptible to frost action.

C A survey of the windows should be carried out and a prioritised schedule of repairs prepared then the PCC can set about repairs as resources become available. 2

South elevation

D The windows to the south elevation of the nave have limestone dressings and remain fairly sharp. None the less the stonework is deteriorating and some repair is required. Up to a dozen stones have deteriorated to a point where they need to be replaced. 3

E There are metal opening casements in both windows, these are corroded and require overhaul, redecoration, and left functioning. 2

F The westernmost window in the chancel is in two sections vertically and protected by polycarbonate sheet fixed to its limestone surround. There has been some previous stone replacement and now there are deep fissures in the reveals, the cill is seriously eroded requires replacement. 3

G Above the priests door is an early lancet window with severe erosion to all of the stone dressings. All detailing has been lost and consideration must be given to repairing or replacing all of the stones or at least those sections that are providing weathering to the wall below. 3

H There are metal opening casements in this window, that are corroded and require overhaul, redecoration, or possibly replacement, and to be left functioning. 2

I To the east of the priests door the window has recently replaced dressings, contains stained glass and is protected by a mesh grille. This is in fair condition.

J The easternmost window in the chancel is in two bays with a central mullion. There is erosion to the dressings and tracery including heavy delamination of the central mullion near its base that is threatening its structural integrity. Also decay to the cills is resulting in damaging run off to the wall below. This should be repaired as a matter of priority. 2

East elevation

K There are 3 lancet windows in the gable with stained glass.

L The original stone dressings are in a very poor state of repair such that cement mortar reveals have been formed within the line of the original dressings. The remains of the dressings are deteriorating.

M Because of the way previous repairs have been carried out it is likely that any repair to the glazing or the dressings will require entire replacement of the stone dressings. Repairs should go ahead as a matter of high priority. 2

The east windows are protected with perspex screens. The screens are in fair condition.

North elevation

N There are 2 windows in the north elevation of the chancel. The stone dressings, have been replaced with limestone. The dressings are in good condition.

O There is one window in the east elevation of the north aisle, containing stained glass and protected by a mesh screen. This is also in fair condition.

P There are 3 windows in the north elevation of the aisle.
The westernmost has brick reveals with a hardwood timber sub frame. This is in good condition..

Q The middle window of the north aisle is a small lancet window with stone reveals. The Reigate stones are deteriorating but in this sheltered position the rate of decay is slow and repair is not a priority at present. 3

R The third window has an oak frame with tracery. The window is in fair condition, however there is a metal opening casement in this window which is corroded and requires overhaul, redecoration, and left functioning. 3

The West Gable

S The stonework to the upper window of the gable is in reasonable condition. The stonework to the window in the west end of the aisle is in fair condition but the reveal stones need consolidating and some replacement to slow down the rate of decay. 3

The extension

T The extensions windows are oak double glazed casements some fitted with external louvers. These are in good condition.

INTERNAL INSPECTION

12.0 TOWER

The First Floor

A The first floor room is used as vestry and for general storage, with stacks of storage boxes and shelving.

B The roof of the tower is supported on four large beams visible within the first floor room. They appear to be formed of steel with a softwood outer casing. The roof deck is softwood tongue and grooved boards on timber joists and appears to be in generally good condition but has suffered extensive water penetration in the past. This should have ceased with insulation and renewal of the roof finish in 2016.

C Following repairs to the roof, redecoration of the ceiling boarding is now required. 3

D The walls of the tower are finished in a rough cast plaster which has been decorated with masonry paint. This has been damaged by past roof problems and in a number of places the top coat plaster has fallen away to expose the backing. These areas should be hacked back to sound material, replaced and the whole redecorated. 3

E The wall has a number of stone coffins and lids built in and there are piscinas built into the SW and NW corners possibly found during excavations for the foundations of the 1917 tower.

F The space contains two windows. The windows have varnished wooden sub frames within the masonry recess. The windows are glazed with non-figurative

G coloured glass in leaded lights. These are in good condition although there is a crack over one and this should be monitored. M

H The floor is covered with a fitted carpet and it was not possible to inspect the floor boarding. The floor does bounce a little indicating that it is under-structured and would benefit from the insertion of some stiffening timbers. 3

I The room is approached by a concrete flight of steps that are in fair condition. The steps should be fitted with a nosing in contrasting colour to reduce the trip
J hazard. 2

K The north wall of the space is the former south wall of the nave, the surface has not been plastered and the ashlar and flint work remain exposed. Some of the dressed stonework in this wall is in a very delicate condition, however deterioration is unlikely to worsen because of the sheltered interior location.

L **Ground floor tower room**
The ground floor tower room is used as the priest's vestry. It is a half storey below ground and has limited headroom.

M The supporting structure of the floor above is exposed and consists of two large softwood beams spanning east-west. The ceiling lining is formed of painted hardboard. The walls of the room are un-plastered, the wall surfaces have been painted with masonry paint.

N The floor is formed of concrete and has been overlaid with carpet tiles. The floor is firm and even.

O There are built in storage cupboards in the north west corner of the room, faced with painted hardboard. The cupboards are basic but in fair condition.

P Generally the room is in good condition. However, the low ceiling (less than 2m to the ceiling, less than 1.8m to the underside of the structural beams) and limited ventilation make this room unsatisfactory for current use.

Q The PCC have improved this room as far as is practical without major structural intervention. One option may be to swap uses with the first floor room which has proper windows and good headroom and at present is used as a store.

R At ground floor level there are two openings, a former coal chute and a combustion air vent from the days of a boiler in this location, both are in poor condition and could be improved by fitting with proper windows. 4

S Access to the space is provided by a panelled door and a screen set in the south wall of the nave in what was once part of the south aisle arcade. The door and screen are in reasonable condition. 3

T The staircase approach to the vestry is formed of York stone, which needs some pointing near the top. This flight would benefit from contrasting colour nosings to the steps, to make them easier to use by people with poor eyesight. 2

13.0 ROOF STRUCTURES AND CEILING VOIDS

The nave

A The nave roof is supported on 5 softwood kingpost trusses. The roof dates from the mid 19th century. The trusses support purlins and the remainder of the roof structure is concealed behind softwood tongue and grooved boarding. Above this are softwood rafters, a breathable membrane, tiling battens and tiles.

The Chancel

C The chancel roof has a segmental vault formed with softwood tongued and grooved boarding fixed to the roof structure members. Below the lining there are 3 large tie beams.

D The central tie beam of the roof has been supplemented with 2 large iron tension rods installed to prevent the walls spreading at the centre of the chancel.

The North aisle

E The north aisle roof is a simple lean-to structure with a single purlin supported on 3 inclined beams resting on the nave arcade wall. The ceiling is lined with tongued and grooved boarding. There is white staining, evidence of a minor roof leak at purlin level, this predates the roof repairs and is no longer a problem. Generally the roof structure and lining appear in good condition.

The porch

F The ceiling of the porch is lined with wood tongued and grooved boards. The roof structure of the porch is not visible. The ceiling lining is in good condition.

14.0 PARTITIONS, PANELLING, DOORS AND DOOR FURNITURE

A At the entrance to church from the north door there is a draft lobby and doors in painted softwood, these are reflected in the detailing of the screen giving access to the vestries and also that giving access to the new extension. All are in good condition.

15.0 GROUND FLOOR STRUCTURE, TIMBER PLATFORMS

The Nave and North Aisle

A The nave and north aisle have a concrete floor slab that is sound but irregular. It is finished with a new breathable fitted carpet and underlay.

The Chancel

B The chancel is finished with clay pamments laid on a breathable limecrete background and incorporating a number of ledger stones in their original positions.

This floor is new and in good condition.

The porch

C The floor is finished in stone flags, the floor surface is slightly uneven, due probably to the movement in this part of the building, but in fair condition. The floor should be monitored for level periodically to ensure that no trip hazard evolves. M

The extension

D The extension has non slip vinyl flooring on a sand cement screed. This is new and in good condition.

16.0 INTERNAL WALL SURFACES AND WINDOWS

The Nave

A The walls of the nave have a plastered finish and are in fair condition. There is an area below window level on the south wall where the plaster has been removed and the stonework pointed, this is also in fair condition.

B Exposed stonework to the north aisle arcade, the tower arch and the south windows are in reasonable condition.

C Historically there has been some cracking in the walls around the chancel arch at the north east and south east corners consisting of hairline cracks to the plaster. This appears to be related to the spreading of the arch following settlement of the south east response of the chancel arch. From previous quinquennial reports and anecdotal evidence it appears that there has been negligable new movement in the past 20 years.

D The movement should continue to be monitored on an annual basis and the situation reviewed at the next quinquennial inspection. M

E The two windows in the south side of the nave are glazed with leaded lights using coloured glass , the west window has badly bowing lead but appears to be weathertight and both are in fair condition. There is an untidy but sound cement repair to the tracery.

F Each window has a metal opening casement that needs overhauling, at present these windows are inoperable and require removal of rust, making good paintwork, replacement of operating chord. 3

The Chancel

G The walls of the chancel were redecorated in 2015. Preparation work included the removal of impermeable paint finishes and removal of paint from stone dressings. Loose plaster was removed and made good with lime plaster. All plasterwork in the chancel was redecorated with limewash.

H At low level there is still some evidence of damp, but generally there has been some drying out. Externally soil levels are higher than floor level in this area, and reduction may assist further drying.

I There are 2 windows in the north wall of the chancel, each glazed with coloured glass in leaded lights. The glazing is generally in reasonable condition. The easternmost has a crack towards the floor from below the cill. This crack post dates redecoration in 2015 and was present in 2020 and should be monitored. M

J The east gable of the chancel has 3 windows containing stained glass dated 1905. Generally this glazing is in reasonable condition. There is a crack below the northern window extending down from the cill but running out before the floor. This post dates redecoration in 2015 and should be monitored. Note that these cracks coincide with external cracking in the north east corner of the chancel. M

K There are 4 windows in the south wall of the chancel all containing coloured glass with the exception of one to the east of the priests door contains figurative glass dated 1918 and the easternmost window that is glazed in clear glass quarries.

L The chancel windows contain two casements capable of being opened, although neither is currently operable. Each window has a metal opening casement that needs replacement or overhauling including removal of rust , making good paintwork, replacement of operating chord. 3

The north aisle

M The wall surfaces are plastered with a painted finish. Generally the wall surfaces are in fair condition they were redecorated in 2015.

There remains an area of hollow plaster below the window in the east wall.

N The west gable window is glazed with coloured glass mounted in leaded lights. This window is in reasonable condition.

P The east gable window contains stained glass dated 1995. The window is in good condition.

Q There are 3 windows in the north elevation of the aisle.The westernmost contains stained glass dated 1997; the glazing is in good condition.

R The other two contain coloured glass mounted in leaded lights and are in fair condition.

The porch

S The walls are faced with unplastered masonry, the wall surface is in good condition. There is a crack where each wall joins to the aisle masonry and also at ceiling level . These should be monitored M

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The extension

T The extension has plastered and painted walls that are in good condition.

17.0 FITTINGS, FURNITURE AND MOVEABLE ARTICLES

A There is a 16th century stone font with a Victorian wooden cover. The font is in good condition.

The Font appears to have been designed to drain away into a soakaway below. However the soakaway no longer works and this has been remedied by insertion of stainless steel bowl inside the Font to enable the water to be removed after the ceremony.

B The pulpit is of 16th century work and is in reasonable condition, although the mouldings have numerous blemishes and some of the planted decorative features have been lost.

C The brass eagle lectern dates from 1906. It is in good condition.

D There is a communion rail situated below the chancel arch. This is painted steel with an oak top rail, and is located by sockets in the floor so that it can be removed. This arrangement was installed in 2015 and is in good condition.

The porch

E There are wooden benches in alcoves the east and west sides of the porch, both benches show evidence of beetle infestation, this appears to be dormant but should be checked regularly. M

18.0 TOILETS, KITCHENS, VESTRIES, ETC

A Kitchen and toilet facilities are located in the new extension completed in 2015 and are in good condition.

B The vestries are located in the tower. Decorations are in poor condition and these areas should be redecorated 3

19.0 ORGAN

A The organ console is located in the south west corner of the nave, the organ is electric and the speakers are mounted on the ceiling of the draught lobby to the porch. The casing is in reasonable condition. M

20.0 MONUMENTS, TOMBS, PLAQUES, ETC

The nave

A There are 6 mounted memorials in the nave which are in good condition.

B Above the chancel arch is an early painted royal coat of arms which is either dirty or in poor condition. The work is said to be 16th century, and it is hard to determine its condition viewed from the nave floor. This should be examined when access is available with a view to restoration. 6

The north aisle

C There are 2 wall mounted memorials in the aisle. Both are Royal Coats of Arms in honour of George III. I understand one panel comes from West Tilbury Church. Both panels appear to have their structural integrity but are badly smoke blackened and should be cleaned when the resources are available to do them. 6

21.0 SERVICE INSTALLATIONS GENERALLY

None of the service installations were tested and any comments given below are based upon a purely visual inspection. Each system should be regularly tested and inspected by a suitably qualified specialist.

A FOUL DRAINAGE

The foul drainage installation is a new installation from 2015 consisting of a drain running below the pathway from the extension through the gate and connecting to the main sewer in Princes Margaret Road.

The system is running satisfactorily, it was not checked at this inspection.

B ELECTRICAL INSTALLATION

The electrical installation should be tested on a quinquennial basis by an electrical engineer registered with the National Inspection Council for Electrical Installation and Contracting (NICEIC), and a resistance and earth continuity test should be obtained on all circuits. The engineer's test report should be kept with the church log book. At the time of inspection the certificate was not available for inspection, and should be checked and updated if required. 1/M

Lighting of the chancel is provided by discharge flood lamps mounted on the tie beams. The system was upgraded about 20 years ago. In the north aisle the lighting is a combination of track mounted flood lights and converted oil lamps. In the nave, lighting is provided by converted oil lamps supplemented by track mounted discharge lamps. The lamps are mounted on the tie beams.

The installation provides adequate levels of light, but the light sources may be a little out of date and should be reviewed to see if plans could be made for a change in lamp specification in order to achieve lower running costs.

There is a manual fire alarm to the new kitchen and WC area, and emergency lighting to the kitchen, WC area and nave. These should be tested regularly by the PCC and BS 5839-1:2017, suggests that the fire alarm system should be inspected by a "competent person" at least every 6 months. Arrangements for this should be put in hand. 1M

C HEATING INSTALLATION

The heating installation was put in as part of the extension works in 2015.

Heat for the heating installation is supplied by a wall hung gas fired condensing boiler located in a cupboard in the new kitchen area. This is serviced annually in November. M

The kitchen and WC areas are heated by hot water underfloor heating laid in the floor screed.

The nave, north aisle and chancel are heated by fan convector heaters supplied from the central heating boiler via copper pies laid in floor ducts. There are de-stratification fans installed at high level over the nave and chancel in the roof apex.

The tower vestries are heated with portable electric heaters. Pipework was installed in 2015 to allow the extension of the new heating system into these areas at a later date. This would make these spaces much more useable. 3

D HOT WATER INSTALLATION

Hot water to the kitchen and WC facilities is provided by electric point heaters located in the kitchen cupboards.

E FIRE PROTECTION

Legislation requires that the PCC should appoint a responsible person, carry out risk assessments, put in place fire precautions and have a fire exit strategy. This should be recorded in a fire plan to be reviewed regularly and kept for inspection with the church log book. I understand that the preparation of a fire planis in hand.

Guidance is published by the government and is available on line or from the Stationary office.

I understand that preparation of a plan is in hand, this should be brought to a conclusion. 1/M

F LIGHTNING CONDUCTOR

There is no lightning conductor.

22.0 SOUND REINFORCEMENT

A The church has a PA system though is was not tested at this inspection. M

There is no hearing loop and this should be put in hand unless the PA system offers an alternative. 2

23.0 ASBESTOS

A An asbestos register for the church was prepared in connection with the extension work. The register should be made available to all contractors working on the building so that they can take appropriate measures to avoid risk to health from asbestos fibres if necessary.

The PCC should check the asbestos register for any areas excluded from it's scope to ensure that further investigation of inaccessible areas is not required before any particular item of work goes ahead. M

24.0 THE EQUALITY ACT: DISABLED PROVISION AND ACCESS

A The provisions of the Equality Act require that service providers including churches provide equal access for their services.

To meet the requirements of the act it is necessary to carry out an Access Appraisal and from this produce an Access Plan for the building. Guidance on this is given in Guidance Note "Accessibility and Disabled People" published by ChurchCare.

B I did not see an access appraisal at the inspection If this exercise has not been carried out then it should be put in hand. 1/6

C In general terms the building appears to have a few shortcomings in terms of accessibility and possible improvements may include:

D Limited parking is available at the entrance gate which is situated about 18m from the main door. The tarmac surface to the entrance path is traversable in a wheelchair, but it is at steep gradient that would be improved by a handrail. 2

E There is level access from outside via the extension to all areas of the church except the vestries and the altar itself.

F There is a raised threshold at the main door (for which a portable wooden ramp has been provided).

25.0 SAFETY

A The PCC are responsible for assessing and regulating safety hazards to the building users based on a hazard identification and risk assessment exercise. This should be incorporated into a safety plan to be reviewed and updated regularly.

I did not see a safety audit at the inspection but I understand that one exists and this should be kept available with the building log book. 1/6

26.0 BATS

A There was no report of bat activity at the inspection.

If the PCC undertake any work to roof finishes or roof voids in particular then they are advised to carry out an inspection for bats beforehand as to disturb bats can be a criminal offence, and their discovery can delay building work.

It may be committing a criminal offence to:

- Deliberately take , injure or kill a wild bat.
- Intentionally or recklessly disturb a bat in its roost or deliberately disturb a group of bats.
- Damage or destroy a place used by bats for breeding or resting (roosts) (even if bats are not occupying the roost at the time)
- Possess or advertise/sell/exchange a bat of a species found in the wild in the EU (dead or alive) or any part of a bat.
- Intentionally or recklessly obstruct access to a bat roost

27.0 CURTILAGE

The Churchyard

A The north boundary is formed by the fences of neighbouring properties. East and south boundaries of the churchyard are formed by hedges. The west boundary is formed by a stone retaining wall.

The hedges are growing out in places, and would benefit from management including cutting back to a regular height. M

28.0 MONUMENTS, TOMBS

A There are a number of grave markers and monuments and the condition of these should be monitored to ensure that they do not become unstable and potentially dangerous. M

29.0 BOUNDARY WALLS, LYCHGATES AND FENCING

A The churchyard gates are in wrought iron and in fair condition but due for painting. 3

B The west boundary wall is in fair condition but overgrown in places. The vegetation growth is threatening to lever individual stones out of the wall, particularly at coping level. The vegetation should be treated with a selective weed killer and allowed to die before removal. 2

Some selective rebedding and repointing of the stonework should be undertaken after plant growth is removed. 3

30.0 TREES AND SHRUBS

A There are a number of mature trees on land adjacent to the boundaries, and within the churchyard there are a few large trees but the majority are well away from the church. These should be checked on an annual basis by the PCC as advised by diocesan guidance. M

31.0 HARDSTANDING AREAS

A The Tarmac footpaths to the main door and the new extension are in good condition having been resurfaced as part of the extension work.

32.0 NET ZERO CARBON

A The Church of England's General Synod has recognised the climate emergency and called on all parts of the Church to become net zero carbon by 2030.

B This commitment requires us all to take action to reduce our carbon footprint. This will involve making material changes to buildings and adopting new behaviours that both reduce our energy use and switch usage to renewable sources.

C Improvements to St Catherines will be restricted by the buildings listed status, which requires that material alterations to the historic building may only be carried out where the appropriate consents have been granted.

D Guidance on a practical path to net zero carbon is given on the Church Buildings Council's web-site, and I recommend that this is consulted to identify proportionate and sustainable measures for consideration by the PCC. M

33.0 MISCELLANEOUS

A

34.0 LOG BOOK

A The log book was not available at the inspection.

35.0 SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

Report ref	PRIORITY OF REPAIRS	Cost band
	Category 1: urgent works requiring immediate attention	
	Category 2: recommended to be carried out within 12 months	
9.0A-G	Stonework repairs and repointing to south elevation	5
9.H-K	Stonework repairs east elevation	2
9.L-X	Stonework repairs and repointing to north elevation	5
11.A-C	Survey and schedule repairs required to window dressings	5
11.E	Overhaul opening lights to nave.	3
11.H	Overhaul opening lights to chancel	2
11.J	Repair window to chancel	2
11.M	Repair window to chancel	2
12.T	Coloured nosing to stair treads	1
22.A	Fit hearing loop	1
24.D	Hand rail to entrance path	2
29.B	Remove vegetation from west boundary wall	1
	Category 3: works recommended to be carried out during the next two years	
10.0A	Preservative coating to priests door	1
10.0B	Painting ironwork to north door	1
various	Scheduled tracery repairs to windows generally	3
12.C-D	Redecorate vestry	2
12.H	Stiffening timbers to upper vestry floor	2
16.F	Repairs to metal opening lights generally	3
21.0C	Extend heating system into vestries	1
29A	Paint churchyard gates	1
29.B	Stone repairs to churchyard wall	2
	Category 4: works recommended to be carried out during the next five years	
12.R	Replace windows to lower vestry	2
	Category 5: works recommended to be carried out beyond the next five years	
	Category 6: Works requiring specialist advice	
20.0B-C	Restoration work to Royal Coats of Arms	
	Category M: Maintenance elements of fabric requiring particular	

	attention (also refer to log book)	
	Monitor cracks and movement noted in quinquennial report (annually)	
	Check for beetle activity where evidence of previous attack (annually)	
	Check for broken and missing tiles (twice yearly and after extreme weather)	
	Check/ lubricate opening windows.(twice yearly)	
	Inspect and clear gutters and rainwater goods. (twice yearly)	
	Inspect and clear rainwater gulleys and channels.(twice yearly)	
	Regular testing of fixed electrical installation. (five yearly)	
	Regular testing of electrical portable appliances.	
	Regular inspection and servicing of heating installation.(once yearly)	
	Regular testing of emergency lighting. (monthly / six monthly)	
	Regular testing of fire alarm (monthly / six monthly)	
	Regular testing adapted WC alarm.(monthly / six monthly)	
	Regular inspection of fire fighting equipment. (once yearly)	
	Review and update fire safety plan. (once yearly)	
	Review and update accessibility audit . (once yearly)	
	Check tombs and monuments. (once yearly)	
	Check trees in graveyard for condition and encroaching on building. (once yearly)	
	Review Net Zero target plan for 2030 and take action where possible.	

This report is neither a specification for works nor a costing, the cost bands represent an estimate of likely costs within broad bands for planning purposes. These are as shown below, and in line with the recommendations of the Church Buildings Council. The bands are:
Cost Band 1 – £0-1,999;
Cost Band 2 – £2,000-9,999;
Cost Band 3 – £10-29,999;
Cost Band 4 – £30,000-£49,999;
Cost Band 5 – £50,000-249,999;
Cost Band 6 - £250,000 or more than this.
For accurate costings the PCC would be advised to seek budget estimates from local contractors for smaller items, or from a qualified quantity surveyor for larger items.

APPENDIX A

FLOOR PLAN

St Catherine's Church, East Tilbury: Quinquennial inspection 2025 contd…….