

ST SWITHUN'S REPAIR AND RENEWAL

For over two years we have been thinking about how to mark the 200th birthday of this church building in 2027. Our aim is to make it more accessible for our local community and more helpful for our congregation to approach God.

What have we achieved?

In 2024 we started on both the inside and outside of the building. **Inside** we took out some choir pews below the altar to trial the use of a horseshoe of chairs. The aim was to emphasise how we gather around the altar to share in the Eucharist and to create a more flexible space for community use in the form of choirs and orchestras and, excitingly, for our Wild and Messy church. We were gifted a lovely grand piano which is open for community use on a regular basis and we have regular recitals on our organ.

Outside we have completed the re-rendering and redecoration of the north elevation of the church, repairing the guttering and replacing some inappropriate render material. We have learnt a lot! Together with the other three elevations (to be undertaken in 2025) this forms **Phase 1** of our repair programme.

What is planned for 2025?

Inside we are applying for a Faculty to make the trial layout permanent and we shall be buying some new strong but lightweight chairs. We shall be planning the interior decoration and reordering of the church (**Phase 2**) that will take place in 2026 and will include a change of heating system. The current gas system will be replaced by an electric one thus helping us move towards the Church of England's carbon zero target.

Outside, learning from the work on the north elevation, we will tackle the other walls and this should make the building free from water ingress. We are also hoping to put solar panels on the south facing roof slope and improve the exterior lighting.

How is this to be paid for?

Phases 1 and 2 (Interior) together will cost about £1 million pounds. There are two further phases adding another £700 000 but Phases 1 & 2 are the priority. Before we started the project we allocated £300 000 from our reserves that had been built up by the generosity of a faithful congregation over many years. Since then a small volunteer fundraising team have added £270 000 so we are over half way to our objective. If you would like to help us by donating money or your time and skills please be in touch with the project leader by email: chair@stswithunsrandr.org We would be very grateful for any help you can give.

What more can you do?

Most of all, please pray for us and for the future of this church as it seeks to serve God and our neighbour.

January 2025