

St Mark's buildings

The church



The church is a Grade II* listed building and a fine example of Victorian architecture, designed to seat 400 people comfortably. The church fabric committee oversees the ongoing maintenance of the church buildings and a regular maintenance programme is in place. The last quinquennial inspection was in 2020, with no urgent major issues reported. The east window has no external guarding in place, which will need to be resolved soon, and some work to the brickwork is required.

Work has been done in recent years to improve the space, including moving the rood screen to the back of the nave to create less of a barrier at the front of the church, and in transforming the chancel platform to be suitable for music groups, nativity plays, prayer stations, school services and concerts.

A new sound system was fitted in 2013, including a large mixing desk, fold back monitors, and fixed and roving microphones. The church is also equipped with two fixed high-level LCD projectors with electrically operated screens. Words for most services are projected with Easy Worship software and two video cameras capture the action. Two projection screens are used, assisting those sitting in the side aisles or near the back. A loop system is provided for those who use compatible hearing aids.

Developing an online presence during the pandemic and afterwards has involved investment in technology. This has included upgrading the cameras and investing in laptops and streaming technology. We have a YouTube channel which carries live services and the annual APCM.

The organ was designed for the church on its consecration and is a fine example of a painted case instrument. The control mechanisms have been brought up to date and the instrument is a worthy asset for the church. It is not inexpensive to maintain, however.

The church has a tower housing four bells, hung for chiming not ringing.

An efficient but noisy underfloor blown hot air system, powered by two gas boilers in the cellar, heats the church. A recent report has suggested that this is the most pragmatic solution which is viable in the space. A small kitchen at the back of the church allows for the serving of refreshments after services or other events. Toilets are provided at the back of the church.

Steep ramped access is provided at the south door, and ramps are available between the church and the hall complex. The doors are all manual.

The hall complex



We have an adjoining hall complex that was opened in 1985 and is in extensive daily use by both church and local groups. This provides an income and also a direct link to the residents of the parish and beyond.

On the ground floor we have the parish office, a large lounge, small meeting room, the main hall, a catering kitchen, and toilets. The main hall has a small PA system capable of supporting a small band, both static and roving microphones, and a high-level LCD projector with electrically operated screen. There is also a high-level projector and screen in the lounge. Both the hall and lounge are used for our Sunday evening service, depending on numbers and heating costs.

A large upper room with small kitchen, sofas, and games area is used by our youth groups, and the Children and Families Work Coordinator.

Although a number of volunteers have made DIY repairs to the facilities including painting and decorating, changing light fittings, and fixing plumbing, the complex needs some updating work. An architectural firm was employed around ten years ago to draw up proposals for a new complex and reordering of the building, but a full consultation was never carried out.

Outside space



Flower borders, a small car park, and a large lawn surround the church and hall and are maintained by volunteers. We do not have a burial ground.