

## Old Church Renovations, 2010

Since July, and ending in the first week of November, renovations have been going on in and outside the Old Church. What was the problem? There were several. The gutters and downspouts, or rainwater goods as they are known, were failing. Their main function is to carry water from the roof safely to the drains. Instead, they were depositing water directly on to the building which created a very damp wall which meant that the plaster started to bubble and damp walls are not what we want. So the external mortar has been replaced in the affected areas using the right materials. The pointing is clearly visible in the photograph. In addition, there were broken tiles, lead flashing in need of repair and quite a large amount of stone to be replaced at various places.

The work was carried out by an excellent firm called Carreck of Wells. Kevin and John spent the best part of three months working with us. They were interesting men and it was always good to share time with them and chat about the church as well as do a bit of putting the world to rights!



Here you see a large stone which had fallen off with the replacement in place and nicely bedded in with mortar. The new appearance will quickly disappear as the stone starts to blend in to the colour of the older stone.



Here you can see the plaster on the interior and the same section of wall from the outside. The plaster hasn't been painted yet because we are waiting for it to fully dry out. It might take quite some time, but the contractor is checking regularly and will bring the painters in when the wall is fully ready for it. The work of pointing the exterior walls looked painful and detailed as the workers spent hours kneeling or bending to use their tools.





This is another example of the inside and outside of the same wall. The downspout on the left has been pouring water on to the wall, which had greenery flourishing out of the mortar before the work was done. The rainwater goods were all taken down and conserved as much as possible and new gutters purchased if necessary, using the same materials. John and Kevin spent a lot of time painting the gutters.



Here, just alongside Edward Betham's grave, you can see the new mortar in place and a long stretch of new work

The foot scraper on the left had side of the porch came away recent due to the stone breaking up. A new stone now holds it in place and the gutters, although a bit wavy, are working very well for us.



The Old Church looked like an old lady wearing hessian skirts at times. This was to provide the newly laid mortar with protection for the frost which the architect, Ian Angus, had predicted. He was right!

All in all, this was a good experience with a knowledgeable architect and workforce making a huge difference to the church, preserving it for many years to come.

Oh, but there was bad news! The architect has advised us early that the Old Church will probably need a new roof in the next 5-10 years.

Holy Cross fund-raising Committee? Can you help us?

Neil Richardson