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The Effectiveness of the Church of England Guidance for Assessing Significance

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**THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND
GUIDANCE FOR ASSESSING SIGNIFICANCE**



By

BRIDGET GILLARD

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**THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE CHURCH OF
ENGLAND GUIDANCE FOR ASSESSING
SIGNIFICANCE**

By

BRIDGET GILLARD

A thesis submitted to Plymouth University
in partial fulfillment for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

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Bridget Gillard

The Effectiveness of the Church of England Guidance for Assessing Significance

The thesis aims to determine the effectiveness of the Church of England's (C. of E.) guidance for writing statements of significance. It examines the adoption of 'significance' as a system for deciding what elements of the historic environment should be conserved and in what way. The growing influence of significance-theory will be examined along with the emerging practice of defining significance through the identification of multiple values. The question of who should be involved in the process of identifying significance will also be discussed in the context of the increasing importance of public engagement both politically in the U.K. and in the international conservation world.

The issues which make the C. of E. a separate case from the secular system of conservation will be examined including its separate system of building consent, different conservation principles, the particular issues surrounding historic buildings which remain in their original use and the C. of E.'s emphasis on voluntary, public involvement.

The thesis uses St. John the Baptist, Plymtree a parish church in East Devon as a case study in order to test the effectiveness of the C. of E.'s current methodology for determining significance. Before this examination takes place the historic development of Plymtree church is examined in the context of the regional and national background. In addition to assessing the significance of Plymtree church according to the C. of E. methodology the church will also be appraised using three other methodologies for assessing significance; two secular methods and the Churches Conservation Trust methodology. The results of these four appraisals will then be analysed for their strengths and weaknesses and a new methodology created which reflects these results.

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List of abbreviations

A.o.S.	Assessment of Significance
A.H.D.	Authorised Heritage Discourse
C.B.C.	Church Buildings Council
C.C.T.	Churches Conservation Trust
C.C.T. A.o.S.	Churches Conservation Trust Assessment of Significance
C. of E.	Church of England
C. of E. S. of S.	Church of England Statement of Significance
D.A.C.	Diocesan Advisory Committee
D.C.M.S.	Department for Culture, Media and Sport
D.o.E.	Department of the Environment
E.H.	English Heritage

E.H. C.A.	English Heritage Conservation Appraisal
G.C.I.	Getty Conservation Institute
H.E.R.	Historic Environment Record
H.L.F.	Heritage Lottery Fund
H.S.	Historic Scotland
I.C.O.M.O.S.	International Council on Monuments and Sites
N.A.D.F.A.S.	National Association of Decorative and Fine Art Societies
N.H.P.P.	National Heritage Protection Plan
N.P.P.F.	National Planning Policy Framework
N.T.	National Trust
P.C.C.	Parochial Church Council
P.P.S.5	Planning Policy Statement 5: Planning for the Historic Environment
R.I.B.A.	Royal Institute of British Architects
S.P.A.B.	Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings
U.N.E.S.C.O.	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
V.D.S.	Village Design Statement
W. and B.	Derek Worthing and Stephen Bond (authors of <i>Managing Built Heritage</i>)

List of Illustrations and Tables

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AUTHOR'S DECLARATION

At no time during the registration for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy has the author been registered for any other University award without prior agreement of the Graduate Committee.

Work submitted for this research degree at the Plymouth University has not formed part of any other degree either at Plymouth University or at another establishment

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Date

Preface

The idea for my PhD came from a number of different areas in my life both personal and professional. The main influence was my work as an historic urban surveyor and subsequently as a conservation officer in Cornwall using the technique of characterisation to appraise historic settlements. I worked on two pioneering characterisation projects the Cornwall Industrial Settlements Initiative and the Cornwall and Scilly Urban Survey which used the identification of historic character to: raise awareness of formerly under-valued historic areas in the first project, and to inform sustainable regeneration in the second. I then continued to use characterisation as a methodology for writing conservation area appraisals. Through these disparate projects I became aware of the effectiveness of the approach for not just revealing historic character, but for directing current management and informing future change.

Church buildings are usually only considered when writing a conservation area appraisal for their townscape value, influence on settlement plan, role in views and vistas and impact on the surrounding streetscape. As the church in many settlements is the most significant building both historically and architecturally I began to feel a sense of frustration at this necessary lacuna in the research, not least as I had specialised in Gothic architecture as part of my first degree.

I was aware historic churches faced significant conservation issues surrounding their adaptation for changing liturgical and secular practices based on my experience as a church grants officer for English Heritage, through my M.A. dissertation on 'Re-ordering and internal alterations in historic churches' and through the work of my father who was an Archdeacon in the Church of England.

A combination of the above factors led me to the hypothesis that a secular characterisation approach might provide some useful strategies for the maintenance and management of future change for historic churches. This was the starting point for my PhD.

Chapter 1.0

Introduction

The aim of this thesis is to critically assess the Church of England's (C. of E.) 2011 guidance for assessing the significance of their historic churches, to identify areas of strength and weakness and to use this information to compile a new methodology. In order to achieve this aim the thesis will:

- examine the evolution and role of assessments of significance in the conservation world in general to establish the normative approach to assessing significance
- describe the growing democratisation of the heritage process through the influence of government policy and to mitigate against the effects of the Authorised Heritage Discourse, identified by academia
- describe the C. of E.'s adoption of statements of significance and how their approach differs from the secular conservation community in the U.K.
- describe the unique role of public participation in the preparation of C. of E. statements of significance
- use the C. of E.'s guidance and three other methodologies used for assessing significance to write four separate statements of significance for a single church (full copies of these assessments can be found in appendices 6 – 9)
- critically assess each methodology to determine strengths and weaknesses both in determining significance and in promoting public engagement
- compare the four methodologies using six research questions based on the C. of E.'s own requirements for its statements of significance and a final question addressing the success or otherwise of the methodologies regarding public engagement

- use the results of the critical assessment and the research questions to formulate a new methodology which allows the significance of historic churches to be assessed by the general public.

The aim of this new methodology will be to produce a clear and accessible approach that avoids ambiguous language, gives clear guidance, offers a framework for forming future decisions on management and change and acknowledges the importance of full public engagement.

For the purposes of this thesis the terms ‘significance’ and ‘value’ unless otherwise stated follow the definition used by English Heritage in their 2008 publication *Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance* respectively: ‘Significance [of a place]. The sum of the cultural and natural heritage values of a place, often set out in a statement of significance’ and ‘Value. An aspect of worth or importance, here attached by people to qualities of places’.¹

The use of the word church and church building refers to C. of E. churches, ‘congregation’ refers to the group of people who use the building for worship, ‘parish’ describes the geographical area in which the church is situated and ‘benefice’ refers to the group of parishes ministered to by a single minister or priest. The thesis uses the term ‘effectiveness’ as a gauge for the success of the C. of E. and the three other methodologies in identifying the significance of historic churches and their success in involving the general public in that process.

Whilst the C. of E. refer to ‘the parish’ in their guidelines for writing statements of

¹ English Heritage. ‘Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance for the Sustainable Management of the Historic Environment’ [Online] <http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/publications/conservation-principles-sustainable-management-historic-environment/conservationprinciplespoliciesguidanceapr08web.pdf> [10th October 2013] p. 73

significance² as the users of the document, they hope for the participation of the wider community.³ Likewise the thesis will refer to the ‘congregation’ (as defined above) and the ‘parish’, but also the wider ‘community’ and the ‘general public’. All these terms refer to those who are stakeholders in the church and its churchyard either as practicing Christians, though personal or historical association, through geographic proximity or any other connection, such as organists, choir, campanologists, genealogists, flower arrangers, naturalists etc.

The key issues and themes that will be investigated in this study include: the question of how significance should be determined and whether the identification of values is an essential part of this process; to what degree the public should be involved in assessing significance and the implications of that involvement; the importance of taking the use of a building into consideration when determining significance; the potential conflict between the religious significance and historic value of church buildings; and the C. of E.’s continuing philosophical and statutory independence from the secular conservation world

The thesis begins with examining how the assessment of significance came to be the normative approach of the secular conservation world for deciding what elements of the historic environment should be conserved and in what way. The history of the adoption of this system will be explained through an analysis of the evolving perception of what constitutes the historic environment, the growing awareness of its subjective nature, the adoption of the identification of values for revealing its significance, the substitution of the philosophy of preservation for that of conservation and the concept of managing for change. This exploration will include an analysis of the almost universal adoption of the

² Churchcare. ‘Statements of Significance and Need’ [Online] <http://www.churchcare.co.uk/churches/guidance-advice/statements-of-significance-need> [11th February, 2014] p. 2.

³ Elders, J. and Johncock, J. (Church Buildings Council) Personal Interview. 19th November, 2013, see Appendix 11, p. 173.

tenets of the Burra Charter⁴ produced by the International Council on Monuments and Sites (I.C.O.M.O.S.) (an independent professional organization of heritage professionals and academics which offers advice to U.N.E.S.C.O. [United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation] on World Heritage Sites and advice to national governments and international organizations on ‘philosophy, terminology and methodology for conservation and management practices in a range of policy contexts’⁵) including its influence on the conservation philosophy of the Government’s advisor on the historic environment English Heritage (E.H.). The subsequent influence of E.H. on the wider conservation community in the United Kingdom through its publications *Informed Conservation*⁶ and *Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance*⁷ and its adoption of Characterisation as a conservation tool will then be shown. This chapter outlining the evolution of modern conservation theory in the secular conservation world ends by demonstrating how the assessment of significance through the identification of values has become almost universally adopted in the U.K.

In parallel with explaining the role of statements of significance in the evolving system of modern conservation, the question of who should be involved in making the assessments will also be discussed. This analysis will acknowledge the influence of Government policy, identify the increasing requirement for transparency on the part of conservation bodies through public consultation and, where appropriate, public participation and consider the relevance of the identification by academics of an Authorised Heritage Discourse, where an educated heritage elite use their authority to regulate heritage practice and control heritage

⁴ Australia ICOMOS. ‘Guidelines to the Burra Charter: Cultural Significance’, 1988 [Online] http://australia.icomos.org/wp-content/uploads/Guidelines-to-the-Burra-Charter_-_Cultural-Significance.pdf [4th September, 2013]

⁵ Waterton, E., Smith, L. & Campbell, G., ‘The Utility of Discourse Analysis to Heritage Studies: The Burra Charter and Social Inclusion,’ *International Journal of Heritage Studies*, Vol. 12, No.4, July 2006, p. 341.

⁶ Clark, K. *Informed Conservation, Understanding historic buildings and their landscapes for conservation*, London: English Heritage, 2001.

⁷ E.H., *Conservation Principles*.

participation.⁸

The thesis will then examine how the C. of E. came to adopt the assessment of significance as part of their system for the conservation of historic churches. In explaining the adoption of this process, the disparities with the secular experience will be raised including: the C. of E.'s separate system for the control of building works; the unique issues surrounding historic buildings which remain in their original use; the different conservation principles which underlie the C. of E.'s philosophical approach to conservation; and the extent to which the public participate in the care and maintenance of church buildings. This chapter will conclude that, despite being a catalyst for the formation of the conservation movement and an early adopter of assessments of significance, the contemporary C. of E. guidance for writing statements of significance, underpinned by their independent conservation principles, represents a positivist epistemological approach at variance with the values-based system of the secular conservation world in the U.K.

The method for testing the effectiveness of the Church of England's methodology will then be explained. This includes a justification for using a comparative method based on the analysis of one church building using the C. of E. methodology and three other methodologies and an explanation of how the three methodologies and the study church were chosen. The different procedures for interrogating the methodologies will be described and their inclusion justified by reference to current conservation practice and philosophy. The resultant method will include a combination of critical narrative and performance assessment based on both the C. of E.'s and E.H.'s criteria for assessing and identifying significance.

⁸ Pendlebury, J. 'Conservation values, the authorised heritage discourse and the conservation-planning assemblage,' *International Journal of Heritage Studies*, Vol. 19, No.7, November 2013, p. 716.

The historic development of the study church will then be considered with reference to general trends of development nationally and regionally to give historic context and provide a corpus of reference material to inform the following comparison between the methodologies. This chapter identifies the various phases of building work of the study church whilst indicating which elements are typical and atypical of its period and locality.

The four methodologies will then be assessed separately to determine what aspects of the study church they identified additional to the information provided by the historic development. Following a description of their strengths, the methodologies will then be critically assessed to identify whether they hold any potential issues regarding interpretation and delivery. This initial assessment will also include a discussion on the general problems which can be encountered when researching the historic development of a church and whether these issues might also apply to any of the four methodologies. These issues will be returned to later in the thesis when the question of public involvement in writing statements of significance is discussed. In addition to revealing many additional aspects of the study church's significance not covered by the historic development this chapter also suggests a number of areas in which the C. of E. methodology could be expanded.

Following the initial analysis to determine strengths and weaknesses the four methodologies will then be interrogated to discover which: represents the broadest approach; best summarises the historic development; most effectively discusses the church's use and potential for future use; provides the best information for planning purposes; and engages most successfully with the public. Through this analysis those areas where the C. of E. methodology does not address certain issues will emerge along with solutions to meet these deficiencies suggested by the other methodologies. These findings will then be summarised and a new methodology for assessing the significance of church buildings will be compiled which rectifies the weaknesses in the current C. of E.

methodology and incorporates the identified strengths from the others.

In January 2014 the C. of E. produced a revised version of their guidance for writing statements of significance, much shorter in length and narrower in intention than their 2011 guidance.⁹ Due to the late appearance of this new guidance in the development of the thesis the majority of the critical analysis using the 2011 version had already taken place. As the revised guidance represented a condensed version of the 2011 document and did not include any new elements it was felt that the issues identified by the critical analysis of the 2011 version remained unresolved. Furthermore a version of the 2011 guidance continues to be recommended by the C. of E. for its larger and more complex churches.¹⁰ As a consequence, the decision was made to retain the analysis and the new methodology based on the 2011 guidance, as the findings remain relevant. However, the thesis will make reference to the 2014 guidance throughout where it differs from the 2011 version, and will outline the differences between to the two versions.

⁹ Churchcare. 'Statements of Significance and Need'.

¹⁰ Ibid.

Chapter 2.0

The adoption of significance-led conservation by the secular world

2.1 Introduction

This chapter will examine how the identification of ‘significance’ as a system for deciding what elements of the historic environment should be conserved emerged and how it came to be adopted by the secular conservation world. This will provide a context for the subsequent analysis of the adoption of assessments of significance by the C. of E. as part of their conservation process.

The story of the evolution of significance follows the continuing questioning amongst members of the conservation community of *what should we conserve?* and *how should we conserve it?* The chapter will demonstrate how, in trying to answer these questions, the concept of what constitutes the historic environment and how it should be managed, changed and developed. It will reveal how conservation as both a practical and philosophical discipline has developed through an iterative process; with practice informing legislation and policy, and theory altering practice. In addition it will look at how in trying to answer the questions *what* and *how* the understanding of what constitutes the historic environment developed and broadened, which in turn resulted in new approaches to its management. Finally a third question *who should conserve the historic environment?* will be addressed with reference to government policy, the response to this policy by the professional conservation community and the questioning of an Authorised Heritage Discourse and its consequences by academia.

The evolution of significance through these questions will be traced through a history of the conservation movement which will show how attitudes have developed from the veneration of art works which were believed to be of intrinsic worth, to the concept of a

broad historic environment whose value lies in its relationship with the people who interact with it. In addition the history of the conservation movement will include an exploration of the increasing importance of public engagement in determining what should be conserved and how.

2.2 The Burra Charter and the emergence of significance

At the turn of the twenty-first century the term ‘significance’ was increasingly employed in the field of building conservation as a means of gauging a building or place’s conservation needs. This evolution in taxonomy was emblematic of a paradigm shift within the discipline which witnessed a reappraisal of many of conservation’s old tenets. In Britain, the practice of focused building conservation, which had been evolving since the mid 19th century underwent a questioning of its own aims and intentions influenced by international developments and a shifting domestic political agenda.¹¹

Muñoz Viñas has suggested the reappraisal began on an international level in the 1980s¹² with the publication of the *Guidelines to the Burra Charter*,¹³ written by the Australia International Council on Monuments and Sites (I.C.O.M.O.S). Australia I.C.O.M.O.S. wanted to produce guidance applicable to a heritage which included nature and oral traditions in addition to historic fabric. The Guidelines referred to ‘cultural significance’, not a new term in the field of conservation as it was included in the 1964 *Venice Charter*¹⁴

¹¹ Pendlebury, J. *Conservation in the Age of Consensus*, London: Routledge, 2009, pp. 187-188.

¹² Muñoz Viñas, S. *Contemporary Theory of Conservation*, Abingdon: Routledge, 2005, p. xii.

¹³ Australia ICOMOS. ‘Guidelines to the Burra Charter: Cultural Significance’, 1988 [Online] http://australia.icomos.org/wp-content/uploads/Guidelines-to-the-Burra-Charter_-_Cultural-Significance.pdf [4th September, 2013]

¹⁴ ICOMOS. ‘International Charter for the Conservation and Restoration of Monuments and Sites (The Venice Charter, 1964)’ [Online] http://www.international.icomos.org/charters/venice_e.pdf [5th September, 2013]

and in the first version of the *Burra Charter* published in 1979,¹⁵ but here the meaning of the term was clearly defined for the first time:

‘Cultural significance means aesthetic, historic, scientific, social or spiritual value for past, present or future generations. Cultural significance is embodied in the place itself, its fabric, setting, use, associations, meanings, records, related places and related objects. Places may have a range of values for different individuals or groups’.¹⁶

In addition guidance was given on how the ‘cultural significance’ of a place could be determined¹⁷ and the unequivocal statement was made that ‘cultural significance’ should be an ‘essential prerequisite to making decisions about the future of a place’.¹⁸

In the twenty-four years between the Venice Charter and the 1988 Burra Charter Guidelines the meaning of cultural significance shifted from a term used to identify those heritage assets, which in the past might not have been deemed worthy of conservation to describe an essential process for determining how heritage assets should be conserved.

This new ‘contemporary theory of conservation’ as identified by Muñoz Viñas represented a shift from the ‘classical conservation theories’ developed from the early 19th century¹⁹ to a new way of thinking about the historic environment. The ontological position of many involved in the conservation of historic buildings developed from a positivist approach which considered buildings of the past to have an innate significance, to an approach closer to critical theory whereby the significance of the historic building was determined by the values which can be attached to it.²⁰

Before examining the contemporary theory of ‘significance’ it is important to understand

¹⁵ Australia ICOMOS. ‘The Australia ICOMOS Guidelines for the Conservation of Places of Cultural Significance (“Burra Charter”), 1979’ [Online] http://australia.icomos.org/wp-content/uploads/Burra-Charter_1979.pdf [29th August, 2013]

¹⁶ Burra Charter, 1988, p. 2.

¹⁷ Ibid., p. 2-3.

¹⁸ Ibid., p. 1.

¹⁹ Muñoz Viñas, 2005, p.91.

²⁰ Ibid., p. 91.

the preceding theories to appreciate how and why the new philosophy developed.

2.3 Traditional theories of conservation – material truth, stylistic restoration and the formation of the S.P.A.B.

Traditional conservation theories were based on the assumption that objects worthy of conservation had a ‘true nature’ or ‘true condition’ the revelation or preservation of which was the ‘goal of conservation’.²¹ In Britain one of the most influential early figures in the field of building conservation was the architectural theorist John Ruskin. His philosophy was based on the concept that historic buildings or monuments as he referred to them should be considered ‘as jewels of a crown’ to be cared for ‘tenderly, and reverently, and continually’.²² Ruskin rejected the contemporary mid-19th century reductionist view of medieval buildings as illustrations of a ‘grammar of form’, rather believing them to possess an innate character which emitted a ‘psychic charge generated by the brute antiquity of things’.²³ Ruskin wrote a number of works expounding his theory, but it was in *The Seven Lamps of Architecture* written in 1849 that he stated most clearly his belief in the material truth of historic architecture.²⁴

This concept of the ‘true nature’ of an object, which relies mainly upon its material constituents has been described as ‘material fetishism’ or the ‘material theory of conservation’.²⁵ For Ruskin not only was a building’s material nature of fundamental importance, but also the effect of time on this materiality: ‘that the value of a historic building lies in its sheer age, the continuity of its material over time’.²⁶ This stance distinguished Ruskin and his later followers from another mid 19th century school of

²¹ Ibid., p. 91.

²² John Ruskin ‘*The Lamp of Memory*,’ chap. 6 in *The Seven Lamps of Architecture* (London, 1849), nos. 18-20, cited in Stanley Price, N., Kirby Talley, M. and Melucco Vaccaro, A. (eds.) *Historical and Philosophical Issues in the Conservation of Cultural Heritage*, Los Angeles: The Getty Conservation Institute, 1996, p. 323.

²³ Miele, C. ‘Morris and Conservation’ in Miele, C. (ed.), *From William Morris – Building Conservation and the Arts and Crafts Cult of Authenticity, 1877-1939*, London: PM Yale, 2005, pp. 35-36.

²⁴ Jokilehto, J. *A History of Architectural Conservation*, Oxford: Elsevier, 2008, p. 175.

²⁵ Muñoz Viñas, 2005, p. 90.

²⁶ Miele, 2005, p. 34.

thought that believed in stylistic restoration.

Stylistic restoration was also based on the belief that buildings were objects with ‘true natures’, but did not subscribe to the concept of the inviolability of the historic fabric. Indeed practitioners of the stylistic restoration movement, which began in France and was led by the architect, archaeologist, medieval scholar and architectural theorist Eugène-Emanuel Viollet-le-Duc, believed old buildings should be restored to an ideal former state. In doing this they believed the ‘true nature’ of the building could be revealed. Viollet-le-Duc described how:

‘To restore an edifice means neither to maintain it, nor to repair it, nor to rebuild it: it means to establish it in a finished state, which may in fact never have actually existed at any given time.’²⁷

This statement appeared in his *Dictionnaire raisonné de l'architecture française du XIe au XVIe siècle* published in 1854 and is directly opposed to Ruskin’s passionate criticism of restoration which appeared five years earlier in the *The Seven Lamps*:

‘Do not let us talk then of restoration. The thing is a Lie from beginning to end.....We have no right whatever to touch [the buildings of past times]....What we have ourselves built, we are at liberty to throw down; but what other men gave their strength, and wealth, and life to accomplish, their right over does not pass away with their death.’²⁸

Consequently this mid 19th century positivist approach to building conservation philosophy based on innate value or true meaning spawned a dichotomy of approach which some believe has still to be entirely resolved.²⁹ However material truth was to emerge as the dominant philosophy championed by the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings (S.P.A.B.), the world’s first national body formed solely for the repair of historic buildings.

²⁷ Eugène-Emanuel Viollet-le-Duc *Restoration in The Foundations of Architecture: Selections from the Dictionnaire Raisonné*, trans. K D Whitehead (New York,1990) p. 195, cited in Stanley Price, N., Kirby Talley, M. and Melucco Vaccaro, A. (eds.) *Historical and Philosophical Issues in the Conservation of Cultural Heritage*, Los Angeles: The Getty Conservation Institute, 1996, p. 314.

²⁸ John Ruskin, 1996, pp. 322-323.

²⁹ Earl, J. *Building Conservation Philosophy, Third Edition*, Shaftesbury: Donhead, 2006.

The formation of the S.P.A.B. followed increasing militancy within the architectural community in response to the needless destruction of so much historic fabric. As early as 1855 Ruskin proposed to the Society of Antiquaries that a committee be formed for the preservation of ancient monuments, and in 1865 the Royal Institute of British Architects (R.I.B.A.) entered the debate of conservation versus restoration by publishing the *Conservation of Ancient Monuments and Remains*. However, whilst this document accorded with Ruskinian conservation principles insofar as recommending fragments should be restored in situ and forbidding the removal of ancient plaster, it also allowed for the ‘clearance of obstructions’ such as eighteenth century galleries and pews.³⁰

The numbers involved in the restoration/conservation debate continued to grow with Sidney Colvin, the Slade Professor of Fine Arts at Cambridge writing *Restoration and Anti-Restoration* in 1877 in which he examined the organic nature of buildings and the value of the different periods of their development.³¹ The Scottish architect, John James Stevenson held similar views as did the designer and artist William Morris who famously published a letter in *The Athenaeum* on 5 March 1877 calling for an organisation ‘for the purpose of watching over and protecting these relics, which, scanty as they are now become, are still wonderful treasures’.³²

As a result the Society for the Preservation of Ancient Buildings (S.P.A.B.) was founded on 22 March 1877 with a manifesto anti-conjectural restoration and pro-maintenance and conservation. The 1891 S.P.A.B. Annual Report stated:

‘If people really saw the true worth of our medieval churches they would realise how dangerous it is to introduce new work into old buildings. It is like putting new wine into old bottles, for both are destroyed’.³³

³⁰ Jokilehto, 2008, p. 182.

³¹ Ibid., p. 182.

³² Ibid., p.184.

³³ Fawcett, E, J. (ed.) *The Future of the Past. Attitudes to conservation 1174-1974*, London: Thames and Hudson, 1976, p. 108.

The S.P.A.B. manifesto written by Morris appeared in the periodical *Builder* in August 1877 with a clear statement of the desired level of intervention:

‘to stave off decay by daily care, to prop a perilous wall or mend a leaky roof by such means as are obviously meant for support or covering, and show no pretence of other art, and otherwise to resist all tampering with either the fabric or ornament of the building as it stands.....to treat our ancient buildings as monuments of a bygone art, created by bygone manners, that modern art cannot meddle with without destroying’.³⁴

In addition to its clear statement on how buildings should be conserved the S.P.A.B. manifesto was also highly influential for stating what types of structures should be considered worthy of conservation, ‘anything which can be looked on as artistic, picturesque, historical, antique, or substantial: any work in short, over which educated, artistic people would think it worthwhile to argue at all’.³⁵

The question of what should be conserved has proved to be equally as contentious as the issue of how to conserve. However the S.P.A.B. approach set out in its manifesto proved to be highly influential throughout Britain, the British Empire and Europe, and remained the principal reference for policies of maintenance and conservative repair until the late 20th century.³⁶

2.4 The 20th century quest to answer the three questions: *what should we conserve?*, *how should we do it?* and *who should do it?*

Over the years subsequent legislation, national policies and international charters continued to use similar terminology to the Manifesto regarding the definition of what should be conserved - continuing the concept of the historic building as art object. The first piece of historic building legislation in Britain the British Ancient Monuments Act of 1882 was

³⁴ William Morris *The Principles of the Society [for the Protection of Ancient Buildings] As Set Forth upon its Foundation* (*Builder* 35, 25 August 1877), cited in Stanley Price, N., Kirby Talley, M. and Melucco Vaccaro, A. (eds.) *Historical and Philosophical Issues in the Conservation of Cultural Heritage*, Los Angeles: The Getty Conservation Institute, 1996, p. 321.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 321.

³⁶ Jokilehto, 2008, p. 174.

designed for only 68 named monuments.³⁷ Its limited interpretation of the historic environment was pointed out by the Chairman of the Executive Committee of the National Trust (N.T.) in a lecture delivered at the University of Manchester in 1907 where he noted ‘The Act of 1882 applied only to ancient earth-works and megalithic remains, dolmens, stone-circles (of which Stonehenge is the best known example), stone avenues, tumuli and similar works’.³⁸ By the 1900 Ancient Monuments Protection Act monuments were defined more broadly as ‘any structure, erection, or monument of historic or architectural interest, or any remains thereof’.³⁹

At the beginning of the twentieth century it appeared that the whole philosophy of what constitutes an historic building and how it should be treated was under review. This has been identified as a shift away from the ‘absolute divine’ to ‘relative cultural values’, which occurred following the publication of Friedrich Wilhelm Nietzsche’s *Die fröhliche Wissenschaft* (*The Gay Science*) in 1882.⁴⁰ Here Nietzsche identified the need for creating new values following the elimination of higher values or ‘The death of God’.⁴¹ This new philosophy was applied to the field of building conservation by the General Conservator of the Central Commission of Austria, Alois Riegl in his 1903 essay *Der moderne Denkmalkultus, sein Wesen, seine Entstehung* (*The modern cult of monuments: its character and its origin*).⁴² In the document Riegl identifies two different types of monument: ‘deliberate’ monuments and the ‘unintentional’ or ‘artistic and historical monuments’.⁴³ He suggests a subjective approach to the consideration of the ‘unintentional monuments’, ‘We modern viewers,

³⁷ Earl, 2006, p. 150.

³⁸ Hunter, R. ‘The Preservation of Places of Beauty, 1907, [Online] http://en.wikisource.org/wiki/The_Preservation_of_Places_of_Interest_or_Beauty/Appendix_A [11th September 2013]

³⁹ Hunter, R. ‘The Preservation of Places of Beauty, Appendix A, 1907, [Online] http://en.wikisource.org/wiki/The_Preservation_of_Places_of_Interest_or_Beauty/Appendix_A [11th September 2013]

⁴⁰ Jokilehto, 2008, p. 213.

⁴¹ Ibid., p. 213.

⁴² Alois Riegl ‘Der moderne Denkmalkultus, sein Wesen, seine Entstehung’ [Vienna: W. Braumuller, 1903, cited in Stanley Price, N., Kirby Talley, M. and Melucco Vaccaro, A. (eds.) *Historical and Philosophical Issues in the Conservation of Cultural Heritage*, Los Angeles: The Getty Conservation Institute, 1996, pp. 69-83.

⁴³ Ibid., p. 69.

rather than the works themselves by virtue of their original purpose, assign meaning and significance to a monument.⁴⁴

These different meanings and significance he refers to as ‘values’, which can have conflicting requirements for the future care of the monument. For instance ‘Age Value’ (an appreciation of the patina of age) would allow for a monument to gently decay, which directly opposes ‘Use Value’ which requires that ‘an old building still in use must be maintained in good enough condition to accommodate people without endangering their lives or their health’.⁴⁵ Similarly ‘Age Value’ which reflects the philosophy of the S.P.A.B. could be in conflict with ‘Historical Value’ based on ‘the very specific yet individual stage the monument represents....(whose) value increases the more it remains uncorrupted and reveals its original state of creation’,⁴⁶ a position closely allied to the philosophy of the stylistic restoration architects such as Viollet-le-Duc.

Thus at the very beginning of the 20th century the idea had been formulated that for the vast majority of historic buildings (those which were not deliberate monuments) ‘there is no such thing as eternal artistic value, but only a relative modern one’.⁴⁷ Riegl proposed the 19th century attitude towards the care of buildings, whereby the building as an art object had an inherent truth which could be revealed, should be replaced by a system of subjective values which would suggest how the building should be treated. This theory of conservation (and the acknowledgement of the conflict within the system) was extraordinarily prescient, but had limited impact at the time with Riegl remaining an isolated exception.⁴⁸

⁴⁴ Ibid., p.72.

⁴⁵ Ibid., p. 79.

⁴⁶ Ibid., p. 75.

⁴⁷ Ibid., p. 71.

⁴⁸ Muñoz Viñas, 2005, p. 37.

The year following the publication of Riegl's *Der moderne Denkmalkultus* the International Congress of Architects met in Madrid and the findings of the conference reflect in part Riegl's approach to conserving buildings according to their values, albeit according to far more simplified and prescriptive criteria. A distinction is made between 'dead' monuments: 'i.e. those belonging to a past civilisation or serving obsolete purposes', and 'living' monuments, 'i.e. those which continue to serve the purposes for which they were originally intended'.⁴⁹ 'Living' monuments 'ought to be *restored* so that they may continue to be of use, for in architecture utility is one of the bases of beauty' whereas 'dead' monuments 'should be preserved only by such strengthening as is indispensable in order to prevent their falling into ruin; for the importance of such a monument consists in its historical and technical value, which disappears with the monument itself'.⁵⁰

In general, however, the S.P.A.B. idea that historic buildings should be treated as immutable and inviolable 'monuments of a bygone art', which should be preserved and not restored, persisted in the U.K. and was reflected in legislation. The 1913 Ancient Monuments Consolidation and Amendment Act made provision for the listing of monuments,⁵¹ and allowed for preservation orders to protect a monument or building of sufficient 'historic, architectural, traditional, artistic, or archaeological interest'⁵² deemed to be at risk of demolition by its owner. Whilst the intention of the Act, that of preservation, can be seen as a continuum of the S.P.A.B. philosophy the terminology used introduces the idea that monuments or buildings can have a variety of 'interests' and it is the impact of these interests on the subject (the viewer) that is the reason for their preservation.

⁴⁹ The Getty Conservation Institute. 'Cultural Heritage Policy Documents Recommendations of the Madrid Conference (1904)', [Online] http://www.getty.edu/conservation/publications_resources/research_resources/charters/charter01.html [11th September, 2013]

⁵⁰ Ibid.

⁵¹ Earl, 2006, p. 151.

⁵² English Heritage. 'The 1913 Ancient Monuments Act' [Online] <http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/caring/heritage-centenary/1913-ancient-monuments-act/> [11th September 2013]

The word value is used in the second resolution of the Athens Charter of 1931 adopted by the first International Congress of Architects and Technicians of Historic Monuments: 'Proposed Restoration projects are to be subjected to knowledgeable criticism to prevent mistakes which will cause loss of character and historical values to the structures'.⁵³ However these values refer to the 19th century idea of innate 'historical and aesthetic' value,⁵⁴ and the sentimental or emotional impact of the building on the observer does not form part of the advice.⁵⁵ Historic buildings continued to be primarily considered as objects with inherent worth rather than holders of meaning for the viewer/user.

The idea of values was raised again in the immediate aftermath of the Second World War by the architectural historian Sir John Summerson in his consideration of which buildings might deserve protection.⁵⁶ He suggested five separate categories each with a number of values, which could be grouped under the headings 'aesthetic' and 'literary'. His fourth category 'The building which has been the scene of great events or the labours of great men',⁵⁷ introduces the idea of places holding value through association, although Summerson insists the associative value should be directly linked to the fabric: 'the best reason for preserving the house of a great man is when the house has itself been an object of the man's creative work'.⁵⁸ He was less inclined to attach value to a building which had little architectural merit, but was the home of a significant person. Thus although Summerson appeared to be very forward thinking regarding the reasons for preservation, his ultimate justification was closer to the accepted wisdom of the time.

On the international stage post the Second World War there was a growing hope that

⁵³ I.C.O.M.O.S. 'The Athens Charter for the Restoration of Historic Monuments- 1931' [Online] <http://www.international.icomos.org/en/charters-and-texts/179-articles-en-francais/ressources/charters-and-standards/167-the-athens-charter-for-the-restoration-of-historic-monuments> [11th September 2013]

⁵⁴ Bell, D. 'The Historic Scotland Guide to International Charters' [Online] <http://conservation.historic-scotland.gov.uk/publication-detail.htm?pubid=8539> [20th September 2013], p. 8

⁵⁵ Ibid., p. 8

⁵⁶ Summerson, J. *Heavenly Mansions*, London: Cresset Press, 1949, p. 221.

⁵⁷ Ibid., p. 221.

⁵⁸ Ibid., p. 226.

historic buildings could form part of the reconciliation of nations.⁵⁹ Following the 1956 General Conference in New Delhi the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (U.N.E.S.C.O.) passed the ‘Recommendation on International Principles Applicable to Archaeological Excavations’ whose first two resolutions state ‘the surest guarantee for the preservation of monuments and works of the past rests in the respect and affection felt for them by the peoples themselves’ and ‘the feelings aroused by the contemplation and study of works of the past do much to foster mutual understanding between nations’.⁶⁰ This philosophy fed into the emerging concept of considering historic buildings in terms of the response they engendered from the observer. However such was the scale of post-war material loss this emergent concept was overshadowed by the necessity for the swift rebuilding of towns and cities.

The next major step in the redefinition of what to conserve occurred in 1964 with the adoption of the I.C.O.M.O.S. ‘Venice Charter’. In the Charter the definition of what constitutes an historic monument was broadened to include the setting of buildings and ‘more modest works of the past’.⁶¹ The Charter was less forward-thinking in its attitude to how buildings should be conserved with the stated intention to ‘safeguard them no less as works of art than as historical evidence’.⁶² No reference is made to historic buildings having multiple values, which could inform the conservation approach, and the use of the term ‘work of art’ could be seen as a retrogressive step back to the 19th century idea of the masterpiece with intrinsic value which possesses its own authenticity. In recent years it has been criticised for its ‘privileging of authenticity, and fetishism of the tangible and monumental’.⁶³ The Charter provided an effective framework for conserving the historic

⁵⁹ Bell, *Historic Scotland Charters.*, p. 8

⁶⁰ United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (U.N.E.S.C.O.) ‘Recommendation on International Principles Applicable to Archaeological Excavations, 1956’ [Online]

http://portal.unesco.org/en/ev.php-URL_ID=13062&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html [20th September 2013]

⁶¹ The Venice Charter, p. 1.

⁶² *Ibid.*, p. 2.

⁶³ Waterton, E., Smith, L. & Campbell, G., ‘The Utility of Discourse Analysis to Heritage Studies: The Burra

and aesthetic value of buildings, but the idea of considering emotional and social values was not explored for another ten years.⁶⁴

In 1973 the Department of the Environment (D.o.E.) circular Conservation and Preservation suggested a still broader approach to the Venice Charter, by suggesting the conservation of the character of whole cities 'should be the starting point for thought about the extent of redevelopment needs; and conservation of the character of cities should be the framework for planning both the scale and pace of urban change'.⁶⁵ This intention pre-empted the character-based conservation projects championed by English Heritage (E.H.) and other bodies (see below) by almost 30 years, but proved to be a false-dawn as subsequent legislation, The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, separated conservation and planning, and saw a return to more piecemeal consideration of the historic environment.

In 1975 the range of buildings considered to form part of the architectural heritage widened from the Venice Charter definition following the publication of the 'European Charter of the Architectural Heritage' adopted by the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe following the Congress on the European Architectural Heritage held in Amsterdam. Under the first principle of the Charter the scope of architectural heritage was widened to include 'groups of lesser buildings in our old towns and characteristic villages in their natural or manmade settings'.⁶⁶ The rationale for widening further the definition being 'The architectural heritage is an expression of history and helps us to understand the relevance of the past to contemporary life...this forms an essential part of the memory of

Charter and Social Inclusion,' *International Journal of Heritage Studies*, Vol. 12, No.4, July 2006, p. 341.

⁶⁴ Bell, *International Charters*, p.9

⁶⁵ Johns, C. 'Conservation legislation: a brief history' in Forsyth, M. (ed.) *Understanding Historic Building Conservation*, Oxford: Blackwell, 2007, p. 137.

⁶⁶ The Council of Europe, 'The European Charter of the Architectural Heritage, (Amsterdam)1975' [Online] <http://www.icomos.org/en/charters-and-texts/179-articles-en-francais/ressources/charters-and-standards/170-european-charter-of-the-architectural-heritage> [20th September 2013]

the human race. Otherwise, part of man's awareness of his own continuity will be destroyed'.⁶⁷The Charter saw a return to the emergent idea of historic buildings as communicators of meaning beyond the purely aesthetic and historical first mooted at the 1956 U.N.E.S.C.O. New Delhi Conference. Ironically the New Delhi Recommendations promoted an appreciation of a shared common interest in the historic environment whereas the intention behind the Amsterdam Charter was to arrest the spread of the 'International' movement in architecture which threatened to obliterate cultural differences.⁶⁸

The Amsterdam Charter was of note not only for broadening the concept of the historic environment, but also for suggesting architectural heritage could possess a number of meanings described as 'capital of irreplaceable spiritual, cultural, social and economic value'. Furthermore these values were not seen as fixed as 'each generation places a different interpretation on the past and derives new inspiration from it'.⁶⁹However, despite suggesting historic buildings might hold a number of different values the Charter recommendations of the Declaration of Amsterdam, which followed the Charter in 1975 for a new 'integrated conservation', still employed a materials-based approach to conservation, rather than using the identification of these values to inform their management. The Declaration recommends 'Every rehabilitation scheme should be studied thoroughly before it is carried out. Comprehensive documentation should be assembled about materials and techniques'⁷⁰ with no mention made of assessing the spiritual, cultural social or economic values to see how an understanding of these could inform the conservation process.

⁶⁷ Ibid.

⁶⁸ Bell, *International Charters*, p. 11.

⁶⁹ Amsterdam Charter.

⁷⁰ The Council of Europe, 'The Declaration of Amsterdam, 1975' [Online] <http://www.international.icomos.org/en/charters-and-texts/179-articles-en-francais/ressources/charters-and-standards/169-the-declaration-of-amsterdam> [20th September 2013]

Until the 1970s the third question of ‘who should conserve’ historic buildings had not arisen as it was assumed that only experts: those educated in the fields of architecture, archaeology and architectural history were qualified to carry out the task. However the broadening of the definition of what should be conserved which had led to the beginnings of a broadening of how this should be achieved in turn affected the understanding of who should be involved. As Pendlebury observed in *Conservation in the Age of Consensus*:

‘when conservation is translated from being applied to monuments to the urban scale...the importance of engaging with the wider constituency of people, who live in, and use, historic places is acknowledged’.⁷¹

A growing recognition of an inter-relationship between the historic environment and its inhabitants can be found in the ‘Recommendation concerning the Safeguarding and Contemporary Role of Historic Areas’ made following the 1976 U.N.E.S.C.O. General Conference in Nairobi. The General Principles of the Recommendations included the statement:

‘Every historic area and its surroundings should be considered in their totality as a coherent whole whose balance and specific nature depend on the fusion of the parts of which it is composed and which include human activities as much as the buildings, the spatial organization and the surroundings. All valid elements, including human activities, however modest, thus have a significance in relation to the whole which must not be disregarded’.⁷²

Where historic areas were to be protected, in addition to traditional information gathering in the form of ‘archaeological, historical, architectural, technical and economic data’ the report recommended ‘Studies should include, if possible, demographic data and an analysis of economic, social and cultural activities, ways of life and social relationships’ and stressed the importance of public involvement.⁷³ Thus the U.N.E.S.C.O. 1976 Recommendations move closer to the modern approach to determining significance by insisting the multiple values of a place should be systematically identified before historic areas were designated

⁷¹ Pendlebury, 2009, p. 187.

⁷² United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (U.N.E.S.C.O.) ‘Recommendation concerning the Safeguarding and Contemporary Role of Historic Areas, 1976’ [Online] http://portal.unesco.org/en/ev.php-URL_ID=13133&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html [23rd September 2013]

⁷³ Ibid.

and safeguarded. Whilst the Amsterdam Charter made reference to the ‘social and economic value’, which were part of the capital of architectural heritage, the 1976 U.N.E.S.C.O. Recommendations for the first time since Riegl return to the concept of ‘use’ being a significant factor in the identity of historic buildings.

It was against this background of a wider concept of what constitutes the historic environment, the growing desire for public involvement and the recognition that buildings could have multiple values that the 1979 Burra Charter Guidelines were written. The Burra Charter was devised to provide a standard of best practice for managing Australia’s cultural heritage places.⁷⁴ In addition to defining the term: ‘Cultural significance means aesthetic, historic, scientific or social value for past, present or future generations’, the Charter stated that ‘Conservation is the general term for the process of looking after a place so as to retain its culturally significant qualities’. It recommended that all aspects of cultural significance should be taken into account ‘without unwarranted emphasis on any one at the expense of others’ and the conservation options of a place should be ‘determined by an understanding of its cultural significance’.⁷⁵ The Charter clearly advocated a significance-led approach to conservation, but with the focus still on the material reflecting the continuing belief that significance is inherent in the fabric alone.⁷⁶

New philosophical approaches recommended by international charters and recommendations were not always universally adopted. The international statements formulated for best professional practice reflected an attitude ‘still concerned primarily with monuments whose exceptional significance was evident at national, and often

⁷⁴ Australia I.C.O.M.O.S. ‘Charters’ [Online] <http://australia.icomos.org/publications/charters/> [4th December 2014]

⁷⁵ Burra Charter Guidelines, 1979.

⁷⁶ Smith, L. *Uses of Heritage*, London: Routledge, 2006, p. 23.

international, level and where ongoing use was desirable, but not essential, to survival'.⁷⁷ Consequently conservation practice frequently still focused on the Ruskinian/Morris ideal of minimum intervention without concerning itself with the conflicting requirements of the historic with new uses. This issue was addressed at the Convention for the Protection of the Architectural Heritage of Europe, held in Granada in 1985, whose article 11 stated due regard should be given to fostering 'the use of protected properties in the light of the needs of contemporary life' and 'the adaptation when appropriate of old buildings for new uses'.⁷⁸ The Granada Convention witnessed a further move away from the philosophy of historic buildings as unassailable art objects towards their consideration as receptacles for use.

Despite the Recommendations of the U.N.E.S.C.O. Nairobi Conference in 1976 it took until 1987 for I.C.O.M.O.S. to produce the Washington Charter, designed to extend the scope of the Venice Charter from the individual monument to historic towns. Its second principle stated that 'Qualities to be preserved include the historic character of the town or urban area and all those material and spiritual elements that express this character'.⁷⁹ The reference to 'spiritual' elements appears to indicate a major advance in the concept of what should be conserved, but the definition of what is meant by these qualities is prosaic and materials-based. When suggesting what aspects of the town a conservation plan should address no reference is made to determining the 'spiritual elements', rather only the 'sociology and economics'.⁸⁰

The importance of identifying the social values of the historic environment highlighted by the Burra Charter was reflected in the field of archaeological conservation in 1990 through

⁷⁷ Drury, P. 'Conservation An Evolving Concept' [Online]

<http://www.buildingconservation.com/articles/conservation/conservation.htm> [1st October 2013]

⁷⁸ The Council of Europe, 'Convention for the Protection of the Architectural Heritage of Europe, Granada, 1985 [Online] <http://conventions.coe.int/Treaty/EN/Treaties/Html/121.htm> [1st October 2013]

⁷⁹ I.C.O.M.O.S. 'The Charter for the Conservation of Historic Towns and Urban (Washington Charter, 1987) [Online] http://www.international.icomos.org/charters/towns_e.pdf [24th September 2013]

⁸⁰ Ibid.

the I.C.O.M.O.S. 'Charter for the Protection and Management of the Archaeological Heritage' ('Lausanne Charter'). The Lausanne Charter included the statements 'It is widely recognised that a knowledge and understanding of the origins and development of human societies is of fundamental importance to humanity in identifying its cultural and social roots' and 'The archaeological heritage constitutes the basic record of past human activities'.⁸¹

Although some of the more human, user-led values of the historic environment were now widespread currency in the conservation community they were still not being used to inform conservation actions. In Britain practical advice on building conservation remained firmly within the materials-based approach of the Venice Charter. In 1991 E.H. published *The Repair of Historic Buildings* whose aim was to achieve 'a consistency of approach in historic building repairs'.⁸² Of the ten 'Principles of Repair' all were concerned with technical, materials-based issues. Even 2.4 'Analysing historic development', which might have required some identification of the values inherent in historic buildings, was firmly related to the physical structure; 'This may involve archaeological and architectural investigation, documentary research, recording and interpretation of the particular structure, and its assessment in a wider historic context'.⁸³

The ever-broadening definition of the historic environment continued to impact on the approach taken to its conservation. The 'Nara Document on Authenticity' produced by I.C.O.M.O.S. in 1994 sought to extend the scope of the Venice Charter to include 'The diversity of cultures and heritage in our world'.⁸⁴ The extended range of buildings required new methods for defining their significance leading to a 'growing acknowledgement of a

⁸¹ I.C.O.M.O.S. 'Charter for the Protection and Management of the Archaeological Heritage' ('Lausanne Charter, 1990') [Online] http://www.international.icomos.org/charters/arch_e.pdf [28th September 2013]

⁸² Brereton, C. *The Repair of Historic Buildings*, London: English Heritage, 1991, p. 7.

⁸³ Ibid., p. 8.

⁸⁴ I.C.O.M.O.S. 'Nara Document on Authenticity, 1994' [Online] <http://www.international.icomos.org/charters/nara-e.pdf> [28th September 2013]

range of values associated with the built cultural heritage'.⁸⁵ Some of these values were related to the continuity of traditions⁸⁶ with point 7 of the Nara Document stating 'All cultures and societies are rooted in the particular forms and means of tangible and intangible expression which constitute their heritage, and these should be respected'.⁸⁷ In widening the concerns of the heritage agenda to include the importance of local tradition, the human or social significance of the heritage object or landscape was further emphasised.

2.5 The immediate impact of Burra

In 1999 Australia I.C.O.M.O.S. produced a further revision of The Burra Charter which had great significance in the U.K. and arguably more impact on conservation practice than the Venice Charter, the Amsterdam Declaration and the Washington Charter put together.⁸⁸ The Charter formulated a systematic approach to identifying cultural significance through research and analysis, which could then be used to develop policy to inform the management and conservation of cultural sites.⁸⁹ In addition to producing a codified approach, the Charter raised the question of how conservation knowledge should be defined. Emphasis was placed on understanding the cultural significance of a place through 'familiar elements such as the fabric and its setting and use' in addition to 'people's memory and association with place'.⁹⁰

Whilst undoubtedly representing a significant break with the traditional theories of conservation, the Burra Charter has been criticised for its conservative approach towards the question of public involvement. Pendlebury in *Conservation in the Age of Consensus* raises

⁸⁵ Worthing, D. and Bond, S. *Managing Built Heritage – The Role of Cultural Significance*, Oxford: Blackwell, 2008, p.56.

⁸⁶ Jokilehto, 2008, p. 281.

⁸⁷ I.C.O.M.O.S., Nara Document.

⁸⁸ Pendlebury, 2009, p. 187.

⁸⁹ I.C.O.M.O.S. 'The Australia ICOMOS Charter for Places of Cultural Significance, 1999 (Burra Charter) [Online] http://australia.icomos.org/wp-content/uploads/BURRA_CHARTER.pdf [30th September 2013]

⁹⁰ Pendlebury, 2009, p.188.

the criticism that cultural significance in the Burra Charter is still ‘closely linked to the physical fabric of buildings and places’ and this remains the preserve of the conservation expert ‘while allowing for some more pluralistic interpretation of the social meaning such fabric might have’.⁹¹ This criticism is shared by L. Smith in *Uses of Heritage*, who argues that although the 1999 revision of the Charter was intended to promote greater community participation in identifying values this objective was compromised by the continued insistence on ‘the dominant sense of the trusteeship of expert authority over the material fabric’ and that ‘experts are perceived as having not only the ability, but also the *responsibility* for identifying the value and meanings that are still perceived to be locked within the fabric of a place.’⁹²

Its limitations in advancing the scope of public engagement notwithstanding, the Burra Charter was of far reaching influence for placing the evaluation of significance at the heart of the conservation process (it is the third step in the Burra Charter Process).⁹³ It has been described as the best known and most widely used of the doctrinal texts adopted by the national committees of I.C.O.M.O.S.,⁹⁴ and credited with introducing the idea of ‘conservation planning’: the concept whereby ‘The heritage values of places were seen as often both multiple and mutable. Heritage practitioners therefore needed to become advocates and enablers as well as conservators’.⁹⁵ In this respect the Burra Charter finally officially advocated the character-led conservation first mooted in the 1973 D.o.E. Circular.

The Burra hypothesis of historic buildings as communicators of meaning reflected a general trend in the evaluation of historic objects. In the field of museology Alonso

⁹¹ Ibid., p. 188.

⁹² Smith, 2006, p. 24.

⁹³ Burra Charter, 1999, p. 10.

⁹⁴ Whitbourn, P. ‘International standards and charters’ in Forsyth, M. (ed.) *Understanding Historic Building Conservation*, Oxford: Blackwell, 2007, p. 129.

⁹⁵ Drury, ‘Conservation An Evolving Concept’.

Fernández' in *Introducción a la nueva museología* observed 'We do not have museums because of the objects they contain, but because of the notions and ideas that these objects can convey'.⁹⁶ Muñoz Viñas refers to this theory as the 'communicative turn' which had a significant effect on the philosophy of conservation: 'In contemporary conservation theory the primary interest is therefore no longer on the objects, but rather on the subjects. Objectivism in conservation is thus replaced by certain forms of subjectivism'.⁹⁷

This shift in emphasis from the viewed to the viewer reflected the increasing importance of the question of public participation. On the domestic front, the U.K. government's aspiration to pursue a policy of social integration had brought the question of public engagement with the historic environment into the foreground of conservation policy. In 2000 in response to a request by the government, the U.K. heritage sector, coordinated by E.H., carried out a wide-ranging consultation survey including 180 experts and 600 organisations to examine the current and future state of the historic environment system.⁹⁸ E.H. described the significance of this initiative in the March 2000 edition of their *Conservation Bulletin*, 'For the first time we are embarking upon a wide exploration of what we value, why, and how'.⁹⁹ The resulting document *Power of Place* reflected the new climate created by the Burra Charter. *Power of Place* used similar terminology to Burra, specifically the word 'place', which Smith suggests 'incorporates a sense that heritage has direct linkages to the construction of identity in a way that "site" with its often implied preceding "archaeological" or "architectural" descriptor, does not'.¹⁰⁰

The word 'place' reinforces the idea of a social construct rather than a physical phenomena and the desire that the historic environment should be defined by all those who use it, not

⁹⁶ Muñoz Viñas, 2005, p. 44.

⁹⁷ Ibid., p. 147.

⁹⁸ Cherry, M. 'Architectural history and conservation', in Forsyth, M. (ed.) *Understanding Historic Building Conservation*, Oxford: Blackwell, 2007, p. 20.

⁹⁹ Morris, R. 'On the Heritage Strategy Review', *Conservation Bulletin*, Issue 37, March 2000, p. 2.

¹⁰⁰ Smith, 2006, p 76.

just by a small number of informed experts. In the *Power of Place* foreword written by Sir Neil Cossons (the then Chairman of E.H.) he stated the document's intention to empower the 'many people' who 'feel powerless and excluded'¹⁰¹ and exhorts the heritage sector to 'find out what people value about their historic environment and why, and take this into account in assessing significance'.¹⁰² The effect of *Power of Place* was considerable and it has been argued that following its publication, 'The primacy of expert opinion was toppled'.¹⁰³

The message of *Power of Place* was that it was no longer justifiable to define the significance of the historic environment solely from a professional point of view. All value judgments made about the future of the historic environment should be 'consistent, transparent and never arbitrary. They need to be widely accepted. This means they need to be understood. They must be made openly, tested and refined by continuing debate. This debate must not be exclusive; everyone should be able to participate easily.'¹⁰⁴ This spirit of greater inclusivity was further supported by the Labour government's statement *The Historic Environment: A Force for Our Future*, published in 2001.¹⁰⁵ However in this document inclusivity took the form of increased education and social access to the historic environment, rather than a democratisation of the process of its conservation.

Post Burra, values-led conservation was increasingly adopted worldwide by the conservation community. The preface of the research report *Values and Heritage Conservation* published by the Getty Conservation Institute (G.C.I.) in 2000¹⁰⁶ states:

'In the field of cultural heritage conservation, values are critical to deciding what to conserve - what material goods will represent us and our past to future generations

¹⁰¹ English Heritage, *Power of Place: The Future of the Historic Environment*, London: English Heritage, 2000, p. 1.

¹⁰² Ibid., p. 1.

¹⁰³ Cherry, 2007, p. 21.

¹⁰⁴ E.H., *Power of Place*, p. 3.

¹⁰⁵ Department for Culture, Media and Sport and Department of Transport Local Government and the Regions. *The Historic Environment: A Force for Our Future*, London: DCMS, 2001.

¹⁰⁶ Avrami, E., Mason R., and de la Torre, M., (eds.) 'Values and Heritage Conservation, Research Report' [Online] http://www.getty.edu/conservation/publications_resources/pdf_publications/pdf/assessing.pdf [4th October 2013]

– as well as to determining how to conserve’.¹⁰⁷

By this statement the G.C.I. subscribed to the growing consensus that the primary interest of the heritage asset lies in the message it communicates and any future strategies for the asset’s conservation should be based around the retention of those values, which allow the messages to be communicated.

The increased importance of values-led conservation was at the heart of *Informed Conservation, Understanding historic buildings and their landscapes for conservation*, published by E.H. in 2001 and widely distributed to members of the conservation community throughout the U.K. in the form of complimentary editions.¹⁰⁸ In the preface Sir Neil Cossons stated E.H.’s current philosophy towards conservation:

‘Caring for the historic environment is a dynamic process which involves managing change in order to allow future generations to understand what we value and something of their origins. This does not mean keeping everything from the past but it does involve making careful judgments about value and significance. Such judgments lie behind every conservation decision.’¹⁰⁹

Again the concept of valuing heritage for the messages it conveys is reiterated along with the importance of using values and significance as management tools. The publication continues to define significance, ‘What distinguishes that which might be conserved from that which will not is value or significance’ and to stress its key role, ‘Unless we understand why a place is worthy of conservation, the whole business of conservation makes very little sense’.¹¹⁰ A review of *Informed Conservation* in the E.H. *Conservation Bulletin* highlighted how this approach avoided decisions being made ‘based upon the status of what is affected rather than an adequately shared understanding of its significance’.¹¹¹

¹⁰⁷ Ibid., p. 1.

¹⁰⁸ Clark, K. *Informed Conservation, Understanding historic buildings and their landscapes for conservation*, London: English Heritage, 2001.

¹⁰⁹ Ibid., p. 7.

¹¹⁰ Ibid., p.12.

¹¹¹ Baker, D. ‘Informed Conservation, What matters and why,’ *Conservation Bulletin*, Issue 41, March 2001, p. 64.

However despite E.H.'s determination to embrace the identification of significance and to recognise 'heritage assets may be significant for other reasons – for example they may be locally significant, or significant to a particular community group,' *Informed Conservation* was limited in its attitude towards inclusivity assuming it was the role of 'the responsible conservation adviser' to identify local values.¹¹²

2.6 Legacy of *Informed Conservation*: 1. Characterisation

One of E.H.'s initiatives following the publication of *Informed Conservation* was the adoption of the practice of characterisation as a means of identifying what should be conserved and how this should be achieved. E.H. described characterisation as 'recognising the various personal and communal values and aspirations that have been inspired by England's historic environment' in order to 'capture our overall feeling for the totality of a place'.¹¹³ A wide cross section of projects using this method was undertaken ranging enormously in scale from a study to assess the impact of urban expansion on the surrounding historic landscape of Milton Keynes¹¹⁴ to a strategy for maintaining the site and significance of Bletchley Park.¹¹⁵

The characterisation process was similar to that of assessing significance; just as significance explored the many values a heritage asset might possess, so characterisation researched 'the complex and intertwining roads of past decisions, actions and inactions that have led to the present day's historic environment'¹¹⁶ or the 'time depth' that gives character and sense of place to an area or landscape.¹¹⁷ Furthermore the characterisation process in common with significance was intended to form part of the process for managing change as promoted by *Power of Place, Force for the Future and Informed Conservation*. In the introduction

¹¹² Clark, 2001, p. 26.

¹¹³ Grenville, J. 'Characterisation Introduction,' *Conservation Bulletin*, Issue 47, January 2005, p. 2.

¹¹⁴ Ibid., p. 6.

¹¹⁵ Ibid., p. 25.

¹¹⁶ Ibid., p. 3.

¹¹⁷ Worthing and Bond, 2008, p. 191.

to the Cornwall and Scilly Urban Survey, one of the E.H. jointly sponsored characterisation projects, the dual intentions of the report were stated:

‘Characterisation provides a means of understanding the diverse range of factors which combine to create “distinctiveness” and “sense of place”.....Characterisation is also a means whereby the historic environment can itself provide an inspirational matrix for regeneration. It emphasises the historic continuum which provides the context for current change and into which the regeneration measures of the present must fit if the distinctive and special qualities of each historic town are to be maintained and enhanced’.¹¹⁸

Worthing and Bond in *Managing Built Heritage* have observed this two stage process resulted in ‘greater emphasis on consideration of the future as an integral component’ in contrast to most conservation plans which typically consist of four stages with future management frequently ‘bolted on as an afterthought’.¹¹⁹

However, the method was not without its critics; Pendlebury criticised E.H.’s characterisation work as being ‘often reductive in nature and varies wildly in methodology’ and he condemned their continued avoidance of the issue of how decisions are made.¹²⁰ The limited approach to public engagement was illustrated by the ‘Characterisation’ edition of the E.H. *Conservation Bulletin* where all the schemes described were carried out by heritage professionals with only the Village Design Statements described by the York Archaeological Trust carried out by local communities.¹²¹

2.7 Legacy of *Informed Conservation*: 2. E.H.’s Conservation Principles

By the middle of the first decade of the twenty-first century, a new conservation consensus in the UK had emerged based around the recognition of a broad historic environment with many values, the recognition and understanding of which would allow inevitable change to be managed effectively. This ideology received ratification in the July 2005 edition of the

¹¹⁸ Herring, P, and Gillard, B. ‘Cornwall and Scilly Urban Survey, Launceston’ [Online] http://www.historic-cornwall.org.uk/csus/towns/launceston/csus_launceston_report_2005R051.pdf [8th October 2013] pp. 7-8.

¹¹⁹ Worthing and Bond, 2008, p. 191.

¹²⁰ Pendlebury, 2009, p. 219.

¹²¹ English Heritage, *Conservation Bulletin* 47, p. 23.

E.H. *Conservation Bulletin*, a retrospective of 25 years of its existence in which Oliver Pearcey, Special Project Director, contrasted the paternalistic aims of the organisation at its inception in 1983 ‘to manage, maintain and present in a lively and imaginative way the monuments in the care of the Secretary of State’ with its current goals:

‘a new holistic approach that values the historic environment not just for its historic or architectural significance, but also for its wider contribution to a sense of place and to social and economic regeneration. There is also a new acceptance of the need to manage change rather than oppose it, and to recognise the right of participants to appropriate treatment and levels of service’.¹²²

In 2006 E.H. announced a three pronged initiative entitled ‘constructive conservation’ which consisted of ‘the establishment with government of heritage protection reforms fit for the 21st century’, ‘building capacity and competency across the heritage sector’ and a consultation document entitled *Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance*.¹²³ All three of the initiatives reflected the desire for greater transparency and inclusivity expressed by E.H. in *Power of Place* and to counter criticisms of inconsistent and byzantine practices. Research had already begun on the *Conservation Principles* in 2004, with the aim to:

‘spell out in one place, in a comprehensive fashion, the fundamental beliefs and policies that should underpin our (EH) own standards of practice in the broad field of conservation...to exert leadership and provide consistency and transparency in all we do’.¹²⁴

The final document was produced in 2008 following two lengthy public consultations (including the Church Buildings Council of the Church of England).¹²⁵

There is much in the *Conservation Principles* that draws on the legacy of the Burra Charter. The term ‘place’ is adopted for all aspects of the historic environment and significance is at the heart of the document with conservation defined as ‘the process of managing change to a significant place in its setting in ways that will best sustain its heritage values, while recognising opportunities to reveal or reinforce those values for present and future

¹²² Pearcey, O. ‘The View from English Heritage, Where have we made a difference?’ *Conservation Bulletin*, Issue 49, July 2005, p. 22.

¹²³ Embree, S. ‘English Heritage’s Conservation Principles,’ *Conservation Bulletin*, Issue 52, July 2006, p. 39.

¹²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 39.

¹²⁵ Evans, D. (English Heritage) Personal Interview. 18th November, 2013, see Appendix 1, pp. 1-2.

generations'.¹²⁶ Of the six stated 'Conservation Principles', whose intention was to provide a 'framework for the sustainable management of the historic environment', the third asserts 'Understanding the significance of places is vital' and the fourth 'Significant places should be managed to sustain their value'.¹²⁷ The determination of the 'Conservation Principles' to be as clear and consistent as possible can be seen in the step-by-step explanation of how the significance of a place should be identified:

'it is necessary first to understand its fabric, and how and why it has changed over time; and then to consider: who values the place, and why they do so; how those values relate to its fabric ; their relative importance; whether associated objects contribute to them; the contribution made by the setting and context of the place; how the place compares with others sharing similar values.'

In addition the range of values that might be attached to a place were described under four headings 'evidential', 'historical', 'aesthetic' and 'communal'.¹²⁸ These values were similar to those used to define cultural significance in the Burra Charter: 'aesthetic, historic, scientific, social or spiritual'.¹²⁹ Under the E.H. typology scientific value was included as part of the illustrative nature of 'historical' value¹³⁰ and spiritual value as part of the 'communal' values a place can inspire.¹³¹

With the publication of *Conservation Principles* the government's advisor on the historic environment ratified the practice of using values to assess the significance of historic structures, and then in turn basing decisions on their future conservation and management to best maintain that significance. As a consequence the Burra-inspired methodology became the official approach for conservation in England, and significance-led conservation became the normative method for managing the historic environment.

¹²⁶ English Heritage. 'Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance for the Sustainable Management of the Historic Environment' [Online] <http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/publications/conservation-principles-sustainable-management-historic-environment/conservationprinciplespoliciesguidanceapr08web.pdf> [10th October 2013] p.7.

¹²⁷ Ibid., pp. 22-23.

¹²⁸ Ibid., p.7.

¹²⁹ Burra Charter, 1999, p. 2.

¹³⁰ E.H., Conservation Principles, p. 29.

¹³¹ Ibid., p. 32.

The approach to two of the fundamental questions in building conservation ‘what’ and ‘how’ had been given definitive methods of enquiry, if not definitive answers. As one of the authors of *Conservation Principles* observed ‘This document attempted to domesticate the concepts of conservation planning and a values-based system of assessment, promoting an integrated approach to managing any and all valued elements of the historic environment’.¹³²

Another important aspect of the *Conservation Principles* was its contribution to the debate on who should be involved in conservation. There was a clear emphasis on community engagement with Principles 1 and 2 stating respectively ‘The historic environment is a shared resource’ and ‘Everyone should be able to participate in sustaining the historic environment’.¹³³ Again in spirit the *Conservation Principles* echo the intention of the Burra Charter in recognizing the importance of peoples’ associations with places and the need for them to be involved where appropriate.¹³⁴ However Pendlebury and Smith’s criticism of the Burra Charter, that it was primarily aimed at conservation professionals as the experts and guardians of the historic environment with only a controlled amount of participation from the general public, could equally be applied to the *Conservation Principles*.

The document was not intended for a general readership, the introduction stating:

‘The *Policies and Guidance* will specifically guide our staff in applying the *Principles* to English Heritage’s role in the development process, and in managing the historic sites in our care. We hope, of course, that, like all our guidance, the *Principles* will also be read and used by local authorities, property owners, developers, and their advisers’.¹³⁵

This focus on a limited audience is reinforced by an article in the March 2009 edition of *Conservation Bulletin* introducing the *Conservation Principles* which stated:

‘We came to the conclusion that trying to meet all interests just wasn’t practical, and that we should concentrate on what we felt the primary purpose should be.

¹³² Drury, ‘Conservation An Evolving Concept’.

¹³³ E.H., *Conservation Principles*, p. 7.

¹³⁴ Burra Charter, 1999, p. 8.

¹³⁵ E.H., *Conservation Principles*, p. 13.

This took us back to the need for English Heritage to provide credible expert advice to those responsible for making or authorising changes to historic places'.¹³⁶

The effect of the *Conservation Principles* was not the introduction of a new philosophy or code of practice, as E.H. themselves observed 'Our *Conservation Principles* are not revolutionary, or even particularly evolutionary,'¹³⁷ but it did represent a very clear codification of their working practice which gave clarity to their actions and a possible template for others. So whilst they were still not asked to join in the process, the general public had a better idea of what the process involved.

A slight impediment in the whole-hearted adoption of significance-based conservation in England has been the failure of government to take forward the first prong of E.H.'s 'constructive conservation': 'the establishment with government of heritage protection reforms fit for the 21st century'. The draft Heritage Protection Bill, also produced in 2008, was not adopted by the government, leaving the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 as the primary legislation for the historic environment. Consequently the *Conservation Principles* were not endorsed by complementary primary legislation. Paul Drury one of the authors of *Conservation Principles* has suggested how the concept of significance can be applied post hoc to the existing Act:

' "Significance" can be considered as broadly equating, in terms of the *Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990*, with "interest", as in "special architectural or historic interest"..... Works of alteration or extension for which listed building consent is required are those "which would affect its character as a building of special architectural or historic interest". In this context, "character" (meaning "distinctive nature, distinguishing quality or qualities") might be considered as the attributes that carry or express that special interest or significance'.¹³⁸

¹³⁶ Bee, S. 'Codifying Conservation,' *Conservation Bulletin*, Issue 60, March 2009, p. 3.

¹³⁷ Ibid., p. 4.

¹³⁸ Drury, 'Conservation An Evolving Concept'.

2.8 Significance-led conservation – government policy

Despite lacking the endorsement of primary legislation the identification of significance has become central to modern conservation practice in England. The most recent Government planning guidance: ‘Planning Policy Statement 5: Planning for the Historic Environment’ (P.P.S.5) published in March 2010 and its replacement document the National Planning Policy Framework (N.P.P.F.) published in March 2012, both have significance as a key consideration. The Practice Guide for P.P.S.5, which remains valid and a Government endorsed document, makes the statement ‘The difference between a heritage asset and other components of the environment is that a heritage asset holds meaning for society over and above its functional utility. It is this heritage significance that justifies a degree of protection in planning decisions’.¹³⁹ The guidance continues by stating ‘Significance is a key term within the PPS policies...It is used as a catch-all term to sum-up the qualities that make an otherwise ordinary place a heritage asset’.¹⁴⁰ P.P.S.5 not only refers to significance as a method for defining heritage assets, but also as means for managing change and informing development:

‘Being able to properly assess the nature, extent and importance of the significance of a heritage asset and the contribution of its setting is very important to an applicant in order to conceive of and design a successful development and to the local planning authority in order to make decisions’.¹⁴¹

The guidance then includes step by step guidance on how an assessment of significance should be carried out with the proviso it should be sufficient ‘to understand the potential impact (positive or negative) of the proposal and to a level of thoroughness proportionate to the relative importance of the asset’, and with the requirement that local planning

¹³⁹ Department for Communities and Local Government, Department for Culture Media and Sport and English Heritage, ‘ PPS5: Planning for the Historic Environment: Historic Environment Planning Practice Guide’ [Online] <http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/publications/pps-practice-guide/pps5practiceguide.pdf> [12th October 2013] p.7.

¹⁴⁰ Ibid., p. 8.

¹⁴¹ Ibid., p. 19.

authorities ‘only ask the applicant for what is genuinely needed to satisfy the policy requirement’.¹⁴²

There is a clear relationship between P.P.S.5 and E.H.’s *Conservation Principles*, including the definition of significance: in P.P.S.5 ‘the value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest’¹⁴³ and the E.H. definition ‘the sum of the cultural and natural heritage values of a place’.¹⁴⁴ Both methods of guidance use values as a means of defining the historic environment, but due to the continued existence of the 1990 legislation there is some discrepancy between the values identified: in P.P.S.5 the values are described as ‘archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic’,¹⁴⁵ rather than E.H.’s ‘evidential’, ‘historical’, ‘aesthetic’ and ‘communal’.¹⁴⁶ However parallels with E.H. *Conservation Principles* could still be drawn: with ‘archaeological’ relating to ‘evidential’ and ‘architectural’ and ‘artistic’ referring to ‘aesthetic’. P.P.S.5 makes no direct reference to communal values, but it has been argued they could be understood as a ‘subset of historical values’.¹⁴⁷

Like P.P.S.5, N.P.P.F. continued to use ‘significance’ as a means for identifying heritage assets and informing their conservation management. The P.P.S.5 definition of significance was repeated and extended ‘Significance derives not only from a heritage asset’s physical presence, but also from its setting’.¹⁴⁸ Significance-led conservation was endorsed in the introduction to Chapter 12 ‘Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment’ which stated local planning authorities should ‘recognise that heritage assets are an irreplaceable

¹⁴² Ibid., p. 20.

¹⁴³ Department for Communities and Local Government, ‘Planning Policy Statement 5: Planning for the Historic Environment’ [Online] <http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20120919132719/www.communities.gov.uk/documents/planningandbuilding/pdf/1514132.pdf> [30 December 2013] p. 14.

¹⁴⁴ E.H., *Conservation Principles*, p. 72.

¹⁴⁵ D.C.L.G., PPS5, p. 14.

¹⁴⁶ E.H., *Conservation Principles*, p 4.

¹⁴⁷ Drury, ‘Conservation An Evolving Concept’.

¹⁴⁸ Department for Communities and Local Government, ‘National Planning Policy Framework’ [Online] https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/6077/2116950.pdf [23rd October 2013] p. 56.

resource and conserve them in a manner appropriate to their significance.¹⁴⁹N.P.P.F. continued the requirement first stated in P.P.S.5 that statements of significance be produced prior to development or demolition:

‘In determining applications, local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets’ importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance’.¹⁵⁰

In this respect both P.P.S.5 and N.P.P.F. adopt step four of the Burra Charter Process whereby significance is identified before policy is developed and change occurs.¹⁵¹

2.9 Significance-led conservation – conservation organisations

Other organisations involved in conserving the historic environment have followed E.H.’s lead and adopted similar significance-led strategies to inform conservation management. The National Trust (N.T.), who collaborated in the formulation of E.H.’s *Conservation Principles*, developed their own set of six principles. These were formulated by their Conservation Directorate in 2003 and were based on the stated understanding of conservation as ‘the careful management of change. It is about revealing and sharing the significance of places and ensuring that their special qualities are protected, enhanced, enjoyed and understood by present and future generations’.¹⁵² The N.T.’s Principle 1 is ‘Significance’, which is accompanied by the statement ‘We will ensure that all decisions are informed by an appropriate level of understanding of the significance and “Spirit of Place” of each of our properties, and why we and others value them’.¹⁵³ This approach includes the addition of ‘the revelation of meaning’, the importance of identifying context and the acknowledgement that ‘significance may change as society changes’ to the N.T.’s former

¹⁴⁹ Ibid., p. 30.

¹⁵⁰ Ibid., p. 30.

¹⁵¹ Burra Charter, 1999, p. 10.

¹⁵² National Trust, ‘Conservation Principles’ [Online] <http://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/article-1356394365704/> [25th October 2013] p.1.

¹⁵³ Ibid., p. 3.

materials-based approach to conservation management.¹⁵⁴

The remit of the Heritage Lottery Fund (H.L.F.) since its formation in 1994 has been wider than many of the other organisations in the heritage sector as it defines heritage as ‘anything we have inherited, value and want to pass on to future generations’.¹⁵⁵ The H.L.F.’s strategy for 2008-13 describes their view of heritage as ‘broad, progressive and inclusive...grounded in what people value’.¹⁵⁶ The H.L.F.’s broad definition of heritage is mirrored in their attitude towards values, which they refuse to define, relying instead on the public ‘to identify what it cherishes and how it should be looked after’.¹⁵⁷ The H.L.F. describe their approach as broadly consistent with E.H.’s *Conservation Principles* as both ‘demonstrate how early consideration of all heritage values can help unravel their relative importance to one another, identify their sensitivity to change, and ultimately indicate how those values can be nurtured or enhanced’.¹⁵⁸ However the H.L.F. differs from E.H. in its insistence that ‘values are not hierarchical; one person’s opinion is not necessarily more valid than another’s’.¹⁵⁹ A very significant funder of projects (the H.L.F. has over ten times the financial resources of E.H.), the organisation encourages public involvement in grant aided projects through training.

A significance-led approach is followed by a large number of local authority conservation officers and conservation consultants writing conservation area appraisals.¹⁶⁰ Many follow the E.H. guidance whose ‘objective is to understand and articulate exactly why the area is

¹⁵⁴ Lithgow, K. and Thackray, D. ‘The National Trust’s approach to conservation,’ *Conservation Bulletin*, Issue 60, March 2009, p. 17.

¹⁵⁵ Morrison, I. ‘The public value of conservation: the view from the Heritage Lottery Fund’, *Conservation Bulletin*, Issue 60, March 2009, p. 19.

¹⁵⁶ Heritage Lottery Fund, ‘Valuing our heritage Investing in our future Our Strategy 2008 – 2013’ [Online] http://www.hlf.org.uk/aboutus/howwework/strategy/Documents/HLF_SP3_LOW2.pdf [25th October 2013] p. 3.

¹⁵⁷ Morrison, *Conservation Bulletin* 60, p. 19.

¹⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 21.

¹⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 19.

¹⁶⁰ English Heritage. ‘Understanding Place: Conservation Area Appraisal, Designation and Management’ [Online] <http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/publications/understanding-place-conservation-area/understanding-place-ca-designation-appraisal-management.pdf> [11th November 2013]

special and what elements within the area contribute to this special quality and which do not'.¹⁶¹ Whilst this methodology is essentially a form of characterisation based on the identification of all the elements of the conservation area which contribute to its 'special architectural or historic interest',¹⁶² it also includes a significance-based summary of special interest. This summary moves away from the traditional approach of simply listing the different physical elements of the historic environment which contribute to its character by requiring the urban surveyor to summarise the conservation area's different values. These values include the tangible such as architectural styles, plan forms which illustrate historic development, local distinctiveness, structures which commemorate historic events and associations and the less tangible such as 'how the places within it are experienced by the people who live and work there and visitors to the area'.¹⁶³ This 'definition or summary of special interest'¹⁶⁴ uses values to confirm why the area has been designated a conservation area and how it should be managed to retain the significance identified.

In addition to incorporating the identification of significance into its methodology, the E.H. guidance for conservation area appraisals also supports community involvement. The guidance recognises the increased public involvement in defining conservation area boundaries and undertaking initial survey work and acknowledges this can 'add depth and a new perspective to the local authority view'.¹⁶⁵ It also recommends greater public participation citing Oxford City Council's 'Character Assessment Toolkit' which enables members of the public to make their own character assessments.¹⁶⁶

One of the conservation organisations to most closely follow E.H.'s *Conservation Principles* in the management of their historic assets is the Churches Conservation Trust (C.C.T.), the

¹⁶¹ Ibid., p. 8.

¹⁶² Ibid., p. 4.

¹⁶³ Ibid., p. 10.

¹⁶⁴ Ibid., p. 9.

¹⁶⁵ Ibid., p. 5.

¹⁶⁶ Oxford City Council. 'Character Assessment Toolkit' [Online] <http://www.oxford.gov.uk/PageRender/decP/CharacterAppraisalToolkit.htm> [7th January 2014]

body which cares for churches whose congregations can no longer afford to maintain their buildings. In July 2010 the C.C.T. produced a brief for its conservation team intended to allow them to increase their understanding of their buildings and to ‘highlight areas where more research may be required’.¹⁶⁷ Their methodology for undertaking ‘Assessments of Significance’ is based on E.H.’s *Conservation Principles* using the identification of the four values evidential, historical, aesthetic and communal in order to gauge a church’s heritage significance.

The C.C.T. method makes provision for public involvement using questionnaires completed by those who use the church or live in its vicinity to determine the building’s communal value. The communal values identified by the public are then incorporated into the assessment of the heritage significance and heritage sensitivity of the church.¹⁶⁸

2.10 Significance-led conservation – national organisations

Wales and Scotland have their own historic environment services separate to England, and their own conservation principles and guidance. However both countries have adopted policies which reflect a Burra-influenced approach to significance. The experience in Wales is close to that in England as both countries share the same primary legislation and have environment services which are non-departmental public bodies. Cadw, the Welsh historic environment service, published its *Conservation Principles* in March 2011 and its philosophy and approach is very similar to that of E.H. They have the same six conservation principles, but Cadw has ‘Historic assets will be managed to sustain their values’ and ‘Understanding the significance of historic assets is vital’¹⁶⁹ as principles 1 and 2 respectively giving the principles greater prominence than E.H. who place them at 4 and 3.

¹⁶⁷ The Churches Conservation Trust. *St Andrew’s Old Church, Kingsbury, London Borough of Brent Assessment of Significance*, Unpublished: C.C.T., May 2009, Appendix 2.

¹⁶⁸ Ibid.

¹⁶⁹ Cadw. ‘Conservation Principles’ [Online] http://cadw.wales.gov.uk/docs/cadw/publications/Conservation_Principles_EN.pdf [4th January 2014], p. 4.

Cadw also use the same four values to E.H. for identifying significance: ‘evidential’, ‘historical’, ‘aesthetic’ and ‘communal’.¹⁷⁰

In Scotland the situation is slightly different as the historic environment has been a devolved matter since 1998 and Historic Scotland (H.S.) is an executive agency of the Scottish Government whose policy is decided by Scottish Ministers.¹⁷¹In 2011 H.S. published *Scottish Historic Environment Policy*, which included the policy behind designation and consents as well as stating the agency’s approach to the conservation of the historic environment. Whilst the identification of significance was not included as a numerated conservation principle, two of the stated key principles of the policy document were that the conservation of any part of Scotland’s historic environment should ‘be founded on full awareness and consideration of its cultural significance and all phases of its development’ and ‘be carried out in accordance with a conservation plan, which brings together all of the information and research necessary to guide the proposed action’,¹⁷² reflecting the Burra Charter Process.¹⁷³

2.11 Significance-led conservation – international organisations

Significance-led conservation began on the international stage with the publishing of the Burra Charter and continues to be a fundamental part of modern international conservation. As Jukka Jokilehto observed ‘Conservation of cultural heritage is the basic reference and the line of conduct for international charters and recommendations’.¹⁷⁴ U.N.E.S.C.O. was one of the first organisations to use values as a means for defining heritage when it adopted the World Heritage Convention in 1972 to protect places of

¹⁷⁰ Ibid., p. 10.

¹⁷¹ Barclay, G.J. ‘“...they do things differently there”: Scotland’s approach to policy and principles’, *Conservation Bulletin*, Issue 60, March 2009, p. 15.

¹⁷² Historic Scotland. ‘Scottish Historic Environment Policy’ [Online] <http://www.historic-scotland.gov.uk/shep-dec2011.pdf> [4th January 2014] p.8.

¹⁷³ Burra Charter, 1999, p. 10.

¹⁷⁴ Jokilehto, 2008, p. 304.

‘outstanding universal value’.¹⁷⁵ Values-based criteria remained an important element of their decision-making process, with today the second of the ten selection criteria for inclusion on the World Heritage Site list being ‘to exhibit an important interchange of human values, over a span of time or within a cultural area of the world, on developments in architecture or technology, monumental arts, town-planning or landscape design’.¹⁷⁶ Furthermore U.N.E.S.C.O require the outstanding universal value of each World Heritage Site to be defined as a means to understanding what should be protected and to inform future management.¹⁷⁷

2.12 Significance and contemporary conservation

As has been illustrated above significance as a means of identifying the historic environment and informing decisions on its future management is now widely employed by the conservation community in England, Great Britain and the international community. E.H. recently published the National Heritage Protection Plan (N.H.P.P.), a framework which has been described as a business plan identifying what matters and how its should be protected.¹⁷⁸ The N.H.P.P. framework contains eight measures and includes as measure 4 ‘Assessment of Character and Significance’ and measure 5 ‘Protection of Significance’.

E.H. also now include an identification of special interest as part of the listed building descriptions with recent descriptions including ‘a summary of the assessment of special interest in the building at the time of designation’ and those compiled or amended after 26th June 2013 sometimes describing parts or features of the building which are *not* of

¹⁷⁵ Young, C. ‘The international context’, *Conservation Bulletin*, Issue 60, March 2009, p. 25.

¹⁷⁶ U.N.E.S.C.O. ‘The World Heritage List, The criteria for selection’ [Online] <http://whc.unesco.org/en/criteria/> [8th November 2013]

¹⁷⁷ Young, Conservation Bulletin, 60, p. 26.

¹⁷⁸ English Heritage, ‘The National Heritage Protection Plan Framework’ [Online] <http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/publications/nhpp-plan-framework/> [6th January 2014]

special architectural or historic interest.¹⁷⁹ In this way E.H. are acknowledging that not all aspects of the building's significance can be summed up in a description of its physical features, whilst at the same time recognising that not all of its features contribute to its special interest and consequently could be altered or adapted without the special interest being harmed or compromised. In the recent listing of Brixton Market and the T.S. Eliot shelter in Margate, the artistic and cultural values of the structures were decisive factors, although both buildings were also of significant architectural value. The most striking example of E.H. basing a listing decision on cultural value has been the listing of the Abbey Road zebra crossing, where all the significance rests on historical and cultural values.¹⁸⁰

In the last few years a large number of books has been published on the theory and practice of conservation which include the assessment of significance and the ascribing of values as an established part of the conservation process. Beginning with Jukka Jokilehto's definition of modern conservation as 'a critical process for the definition of what is to be conserved and how',¹⁸¹ the subjective nature of the historic environment, the recognition of its socially constructed nature and the identification of this nature through the ascribing of values is now widespread. In *Understanding Historic Building Conservation* the chapter on preparing a conservation plan includes as its third stage assessing significance through the identification of values, with nine values suggested in addition to the values by which a site may be designated.¹⁸²

A values-based approach for determining significance is recommended in *Architectural Conservation* with nineteen values suggested as a starting point.¹⁸³ Worthing and Bond devote a whole book *Managing Built Heritage* to the role of cultural significance and include

¹⁷⁹ English Heritage, 'Listed Buildings' [Online] <http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/professional/advice/hpg/has/listedbuildings/> [6th January 2014]

¹⁸⁰ Clegg, D. 'Designation and assessing significance', *Context*, no. 126, September, 2012, p. 19.

¹⁸¹ Jokilehto, 2008, p. 303.

¹⁸² Maitland Gard'ner, J. 'Preparing the conservation plan' in Forsyth, M. (ed.), *Understanding Historic Building Conservation*, Oxford: Wiley Blackwell, 2007, p. 159.

¹⁸³ Orbaşlı, A. *Architectural Conservation*, Oxford: Blackwell, 2008, pp. 40-46.

seventeen values by which it can be assessed based on their experience of writing conservation plans.¹⁸⁴ The value typologies employed by E.H. and these publications is included below in Table 1.

English Heritage's Conservation Principles	Understanding Historic Building Conservation	Architectural Conservation	Managing Built Heritage
Evidential Value	Architectural, aesthetic or natural beauty	Age and rarity value	Aesthetic value
Historical Value	Archaeological importance	Architectural value	Scenic and panoramic value
Aesthetic Value	Historic importance	Artistic value	Architectural/ Technological value
Communal Value	Scientific values	Associative value	Historical value
	Use (historic or current)	Cultural value	Associational value
	Community or social values	Economic value	Archaeological value
	Artistic or literary associations	Educational value	Economic value
	Public amenity values	Emotional value	Educational value
	Educational value	Historic value	Recreational value
		Landscape value	Artistic value
		Local distinctiveness	Social value
		Political value	Commemorative values
		Public value	Symbolic/iconic value
		Religious and spiritual values	Spiritual and religious value
		Scientific, research and knowledge value	Inspirational value
		Social value	Ecological value
		Symbolic value	Environmental value
		Technical value	
		Townscape value	

Table 1 Cultural value typologies

It should be noted, however, that the adoption of significance-based conservation has not been universal. The S.P.A.B. still maintain the materials-based approach to conservation of its founding fathers. Whilst the organisation is not 'anti-significance' it believes any assessment of value and significance has to be based on the primacy of the fabric, with fabric offering primary evidence and cultural or other significance offering only secondary evidence. The S.P.A.B. still maintains its role should be that of custodian passing on historic fabric to future generations. As a consequence it rejects the idea that significance can be enhanced; believing it can only be revealed or explained.¹⁸⁵

¹⁸⁴ Worthing and Bond, 2008, pp. 62-69.

¹⁸⁵ Dodgeon, C. 'Significance and the S.P.A.B. perspective', *Context*, no. 126, September, 2012, p. 21.

2.13 The Authorised Heritage Discourse and the issue of public participation

Over the last ten years the discussion of who should be involved in the conservation process has become increasingly central to the conservation agenda, particularly amongst academics in the discipline of heritage studies, where the practise of Critical Discourse Analysis has been used to question who defines and controls heritage.¹⁸⁶ A perceived Authorised Heritage Discourse (A.H.D.) has been identified, characterised in part as ‘a professional discourse that validates and defines what is or is not heritage and frames and constrains heritage practices’¹⁸⁷ One of the perceived outcomes of A.H.D. being that ‘communities of expertise have been placed in a position that regulates and assesses the relative worth of other communities of interest’.¹⁸⁸ This control then impacts on the identification of what constitutes heritage, and also on who should be involved in its management. In response to this identified phenomenon on 8th June 2012 the Association of Critical Heritage Studies was launched with a remit to:

‘question the received wisdom of what heritage is, energise heritage studies by drawing on wider intellectual sources, vigorously question the conservative cultural and economic power relations that outdated understandings of heritage seem to underpin and invite the active participation of people and communities who to date have been marginalised in the creation and management of “heritage”’.¹⁸⁹

The relevance of this discussion surrounding A.H.D. to the development of significance as a conservation tool relates to the question of should be involved in the identification of values. As has been discussed above, the secular conservation world increasingly invites public participation, but within the constraints of a wider, professionally-managed framework.

¹⁸⁶ Pendlebury, J. ‘Conservation values, the authorised heritage discourse and the conservation-planning assemblage,’ *International Journal of Heritage Studies*, Vol. 19, No.7, November 2013, p. 716

¹⁸⁷ Waterton, E. & Smith, L. ‘The recognition and misrecognition of community heritage,’ *International Journal of Heritage Studies*, Vol. 16, No.1, February 2010, p. 12

¹⁸⁸ Ibid., p. 13

¹⁸⁹ Smith, L. ‘Editorial,’ *International Journal of Heritage Studies*, Vol. 18, No.6, November 2012, p. 534

2.14 Conclusion

This chapter has shown how the assessment of significance has become a key component in modern conservation. Although there is not total consensus regarding significance-based conservation, for the majority in the contemporary field the assessment of significance through the identification of values provides a framework for answering the questions *what to conserve?* and *how?*.

The third question of *who* should be involved in deciding what and how the historic environment should be conserved remains a matter of greater debate. There has been a general acknowledgement that the public should have a greater say in deciding what merits conserving, with local authorities regularly consulting on where conservation area boundaries should be drawn and the H.L.F. relying on the general public to nominate projects for grant aid. There are also signs of the public being encouraged to take part in the conservation process itself with community groups carrying out research for conservation and character appraisals. Furthermore the importance of community involvement was given official endorsement by the inclusion of ‘communal value’ as one of E.H.’s range of heritage values, a value which cannot be successfully determined without the involvement of the public. However, many believe the process has not gone nearly far enough and the current movement of Critical Heritage Studies will continue to keep the debate alive.

This chapter has explored how the assessment of significance and the increasing role of the general public have become key features of modern conservation and indicative of normative practice. By providing this context it is possible to see how the approach of the C. of E., explored in the next chapter, both accords with and diverges from the secular experience in both philosophy and practice. In addition it will explore how the C. of E.’s

unique approach to public participation is of particular relevance to the current heritage debate.

Chapter 3.0

The particular case of the Church of England in the adoption of significance-led conservation

3.1 Introduction

In this chapter the circumstances surrounding the C. of E.'s decision to incorporate the writing of statements of significance as part of their conservation of historic churches will be analysed. There are a number of reasons for looking at the experience of the C. of E. separately from that of the secular community: the C. of E. sits outside the secular planning system and has developed its own procedures for building control and as a consequence its own philosophies towards building conservation; church buildings continue to be used for the purpose for which they were built which presents particular issues surrounding their conservation, including the requirements of changes in liturgy; the distinction which exists between religious significance and historic value; churches have an unparalleled role in the public consciousness, which again impacts on the question of how they should be conserved; the number of different interest groups who have a concern with church buildings, and the unprecedented role of public participation in the care and maintenance of church buildings, which is of particular relevance given the current debate around A.H.D.

Once these particular issues have been examined the contemporary C. of E. attitude towards conservation will be discussed; how this impacts on their guidance for the identification of significance and how this relates to the practice in the secular world will be explored.

The chapter will begin with the historic context examining how historic churches acted as a catalyst for the formation of the conservation movement.

3.2 The role of historic churches in the formation of the conservation movement

Until the 18th century the question of how churches should be conserved or preserved did not arise as there was no concept of valuing buildings for their age rather than their religious or artistic significance. However during the 18th century the growing development of historicism in Western philosophy and the debate between the rationalism of the Enlightenment and Romanticism led to an increasing awareness of church buildings as spiritual repositories of moral and historical meanings, rather than simply objects with the physical requirements of repair and or liturgical/stylistic alteration.¹⁹⁰ This change in attitude is illustrated by the types of alterations which took place between the 17th and early 18th century and the late 18th and early 19th century. During the earlier period, Classical-style elements were added to many church interiors in the form of pews, panelling, pulpits and memorials. These changes were prompted by liturgical requirements: the emphasis on the spoken word rather than the sacrament of communion. The new fittings simply accorded to the dominant style of the period and the style of the new work held no moral or philosophical significance. By the late 18th century, however, some of the great Gothic and Romanesque cathedrals including Salisbury, Durham and Lichfield, underwent major programmes of work aimed to make their interiors and exteriors more Classical in style. These programmes of work reflected a new philosophical agenda which considered the ‘beautiful simplicity’ and symmetry of Classicism morally superior to the clutter of the former Gothic style with its internal divisions and screens, considered to have unfortunate Roman-Catholic associations.¹⁹¹ The adoption of Classicism was by no means universal; for some architects the new moral agenda and desire for ‘beautiful simplicity’ was achieved not by adding Classical elements, but by restoring churches to one single period in their Gothic history.

¹⁹⁰ Jokilehto, J. *A History of Architectural Conservation*, Oxford: Elsevier, 2008, p. vii.

¹⁹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 102.

Whether the restoration resulted in a Gothic building tamed to reflect Classical sensibilities or a text-book essay in one-period Gothic both methods resulted in the removal of huge amounts of historic material, ranging from the removal of screens, and fonts internally to the complete rebuilding of the west front at Hereford cathedral by the architect James Wyatt.¹⁹² Both the scale of the work carried out on individual buildings and the influence of the cathedrals acted as stylistic catalysts for many smaller churches resulting in widespread losses. In direct response to this destruction, and in conjunction with the emerging practice of antiquarianism, the advocacy of the historic fabric of church buildings began. The value of historic fabric was most eloquently championed by the architect and member of the Society of Antiquaries, John Carter. He wrote a series of articles for *The Gentleman's Magazine* entitled 'Pursuits of Architectural Innovation' criticising alterations which caused loss of historic fabric and repairs and that led to poor imitations and damage¹⁹³. His greatest criticism however was reserved for the practice of restoration, which he saw as having 'very little or no connection, resemblance or proportion to the old works of art'.¹⁹⁴ In particular Carter singled out the work of James Wyatt whose restoration work at Salisbury, Lichfield and Hereford cathedrals he criticised with a 'Consistently malignant tone, but keeping just outside the risk of libel'.¹⁹⁵

Carter wrote his last article in 1817, at which point the controversy surrounding the alteration of ecclesiastical buildings was still largely confined to cathedrals. However, a growing population, increased prosperity and an escalating number of dilapidated medieval churches resulted in numerous church repair and restoration projects being undertaken in the 1820s and 1830s.¹⁹⁶ The high profile nature of the cathedral alterations and the sheer

¹⁹² Ibid., p. 104

¹⁹³ Ibid., p. 102.

¹⁹⁴ Ibid., p. 108.

¹⁹⁵ Briggs, M. S. *Goths and Vandals A Study of the Destruction, Neglect and Preservation of Historical Buildings in England*, London: Constable, 1952, p. 138.

¹⁹⁶ Jokilehto, 2008, p. 109.

scale of new work in historic churches all fed the growing national debate over the merits or evils of restoration.

A further element in the controversy appeared in the 1830s in the theoretical writings of the architect, Augustus Welby Northmore Pugin. Pugin added great weight to the cause of the Gothic restorers as he believed Gothic architecture the only morally acceptable style for Christian buildings as Classical architecture had its roots in the 'heathen' societies of Ancient Greece and Rome. He wrote widely on the subject between 1836 and 1843 publishing *Contrasts, The True Principles of Pointed or Christian Architecture* and *An Apology for the Revival of Christian Architecture* in which he expanded on this theory and attacked the recent Classical-influenced restorations.¹⁹⁷ Like Carter before, Pugin shared a disgust of the wholesale restoration of Wyatt. On visiting Hereford Cathedral he exclaimed 'horror! dismay! the villain Wyatt had been there the west end was his'.¹⁹⁸

Pugin was not an advocate of the preservation of original historic material, seeking rather a form, which reflected the church's original Catholic roots.¹⁹⁹ His doctrinal agenda was informed by his Roman Catholic faith, but was shared by the highly influential Anglican university-based movement the Cambridge-Camden Society. The Society, which originated in 1839 and re-formed in 1845 as the Ecclesiological Society, promoted the idea of a pure architectural style resulting from the restoration of churches to their original period of construction removing all subsequent modifications. These principles were disseminated in their periodical *The Ecclesiologist* which stated in 1845 'We must, whether from existing evidence or from supposition, recover the original scheme of the edifice as conceived by the first builder, or as begun by him and developed by his immediate successors'.²⁰⁰ These restorations often included elements which had never previously existed, similar to Viollet-

¹⁹⁷ Ibid., p. 111.

¹⁹⁸ Ibid., p. 111.

¹⁹⁹ Ibid., p. 112.

²⁰⁰ Ibid., p. 157.

le-Duc's philosophy of an ideal former state 'which may in fact never have actually existed at any given time.'²⁰¹

The Ecclesiologists' championing of one-period Gothic was highly influential with many of the principal architects of the period engaged in both the restoration of existing buildings and the design of new ones.²⁰² As a consequence, the vast majority of historic churches at this time underwent stylistic restoration work of some kind. Intervention ranged from very accurate reproductions, such as the work of John Loughborough Pearson who numbered the original stones incorporated in rebuilt elements, to the wholesale rebuildings of Anthony Salvin.²⁰³

One of the most prolific and well-known practitioners of church restoration in the second half of the 19th century was George Gilbert Scott. Gilbert Scott, a member of the Cambridge Camden Society, was also a devotee of John Carter and criticised the work of Salvin as not having 'a single point of interest'.²⁰⁴ In his book *A Plea for the faithful Restoration of our Ancient Churches* he criticised 'the torrent of destructiveness' of contemporary restoration stating 'It is a most lamentable fact, that there has been far more done to obliterate genuine examples of pointed architecture by the tampering caprices of well-meant restoration than.... by centuries of mutilation and neglect'.²⁰⁵ In print Gilbert Scott appears to be an heir to the antiquary tradition, but in practice, (represented by over 800 buildings) his approach to restoration had more in common with that of Viollet le Duc.²⁰⁶

²⁰¹ Eugène-Emmanuel Viollet-le-Duc *Restoration in The Foundations of Architecture: Selections from the Dictionnaire Raisoné*, trans. K D Whitehead (New York, 1990) p. 195, cited in Stanley Price, N., Kirby Talley, M. and Melucco Vaccaro, A. (eds.) *Historical and Philosophical Issues in the Conservation of Cultural Heritage*, Los Angeles: The Getty Conservation Institute, 1996, p. 314.

²⁰² Binney, B. and Burman, P. (eds.) *Change and Decay The Future of Our Churches*, London: Studio Vista, 1977, p. 25.

²⁰³ Jokilehto, 2008, p. 158.

²⁰⁴ Ibid., p. 157.

²⁰⁵ Fawcett, J. (ed.) *The Future of the Past*, London: Thames and Hudson, 1976, p. 46

²⁰⁶ Jokilehto, 2008, p. 159.

Just as opposition to Wyatt had galvanised the late 18th century antiquarians so Gilbert Scott provoked a new generation to take up the cause of historic church fabric at risk of destruction. William Morris in March 1877 was moved to write a letter of protest to the *Athenaeum* beginning with the inflammatory statement ‘Sir, My eye just now caught the word ‘restoration’ in the morning paper, and on looking closer, I saw that this time it is nothing less than the minster of Tewkesbury that is to be destroyed by Sir Gilbert Scott’.²⁰⁷ The letter continues to call for ‘an association....to keep watch on old monuments, to protest against all ‘restoration’ that means more than keeping out wind and weather’ and acted as a rallying cry for all those who deplored the loss of fabric to over zealous restoration projects, resulting in the formation of the S.P.A.B.

Thus from the late 18th century churches were central to the emerging philosophy of the age value of buildings as embodied in their historic fabric, and from this point onwards they were no longer universally regarded as open to demolition or alteration with impunity.

3.3 The separate system for consent

Although church buildings acted as a catalyst for the formation of the conservation movement, their subsequent treatment in England throughout the 20th century and into the 21st stands apart from the general conservation experience. The reason for this divergence stems from the unique position (one which it has come to share with other denominations in recent years) that the C. of E. holds regarding planning and historic building law.

From the outset, the C. of E. authorities opposed the inclusion of churches in historic building legislation. Consequently the initial schedule of 68 monuments worthy of preservation included in the 1882 Ancient Monuments Act were of non-Christian

²⁰⁷ Fawcett, 1976, p. 50.

origin.²⁰⁸ By the drafting of the 1913 Ancient Monuments Consolidation and Amendment Act, the C. of E. were under pressure to bring their buildings within the scope of the legislation.²⁰⁹ There was a general feeling amongst the growing conservation community, led by the S.P.A.B., that historic churches were generally in a poor state of repair,²¹⁰ over-restored or being denuded of their most precious treasures.²¹¹ The then Archbishop of Canterbury, Randall Davidson, successfully argued that the C. of E., through its Consistory Court, already had its own system of control: the faculty jurisdiction system,²¹² and as a consequence section 22 of the 1913 Act stated that ‘any ecclesiastical building for the time being used for ecclesiastical purposes’ be exempt from secular control.²¹³

The faculty jurisdiction system to which Archbishop Davidson referred dated from the Church Courts created by William I in England in 1072, when the Church controlled the majority of property and family law. Evidence of bishops using their power to control the fabric of church buildings dates to 1237 when Otho, the representative of the Pope in England, made the statement ‘We strictly forbid ...rectors of churches to pull down ancient consecrated churches without the consent and licence of the bishop of the diocese, under pretence of raising a more ample and fair fabric.’²¹⁴ The Pope held ultimate authority until the Reformation, with responsibility then passing to the Archbishop of Canterbury and the newly formed Court of Faculties.²¹⁵ Each diocese had its own consistory court

²⁰⁸ Johns, C. ‘Conservation legislation: a brief history’ in Forsyth, M. (ed.) *Understanding Historic Building Conservation*, Oxford: Blackwell, 2007, p. 132.

²⁰⁹ Boulting, N. ‘The law’s delays: conservationist legislation in the British Isles’ in Fawcett, J. (ed.) *The Future of the Past*, London: Thames and Hudson, 1976, p. 20.

²¹⁰ Andrew, D. ‘The Ecclesiastical Exemption’ [Online] http://www.ihbc.org.uk/context_archive/36/ecclesiastical.htm [29th November 2013]

²¹¹ Binney, M. and Burman, P. *Chapels and Churches: Who Cares*, London: British Tourist Authority, 1977, p. 61.

²¹² Suddards, R. W. and Hargreaves, J.M. *Listed Buildings: The Law and Practice of Historic Buildings, Ancient Monuments, and Conservation Areas*, Third Edition, London: Sweet and Maxwell Ltd., 1996, p. 355.

²¹³ Andrew, Ecclesiastical Exemption.

²¹⁴ Moore, P.R (ed.) *Ecclesiastical Law – Reprinted from Halsbury’s Laws of England Fourth Edition*, London: Butterworths, 1975, p. 724.

²¹⁵ Bridge, T. ‘Diocesan Advisory Committees’ in Binney, M. and Burman, P. (eds.) *Change and Decay The Future of Our Churches*, London: Macmillan, 1977, p. 146.

presided over by a Chancellor (a notary and principal record keeper of the diocese), appointed by the Bishop.²¹⁶

During the medieval period and beyond, most issues concerning the fabric appear to have been dealt with during the triannual bishop's visitation, with the faculty proceedings of the consistory court mainly concerned with rights and privileges.²¹⁷ By the 18th century commissioners were appointed who visited churches where major works were proposed.²¹⁸ This situation continued until the 1830s and 1840s when the deteriorating condition of many churches and cathedrals led to suggestions for state intervention along the lines of a National Monuments Commission similar to the body which existed in France. However, contemporary attitudes in favour of limiting the powers of the state ensured such a course was not pursued.²¹⁹

The overall scope of the Church's jurisdiction was severely curtailed in 1857 when the majority of its former responsibilities were transferred to the secular courts, but the consistory courts retained control over church buildings.²²⁰ Permission for any changes or alterations to churches remained, therefore, the responsibility of the Bishop through his Chancellor, but in reality very few ever intervened.²²¹ However as the century progressed the growing number of church alterations and increasing numbers of controversial internal ornamentation schemes resulted in the faculty system becoming more active²²² with a steady stream of applications received in most dioceses.²²³ In several dioceses architectural associations were formed to encourage high standards where new work was proposed in historic churches and the Committee of the Ecclesiological Society advised on designs

²¹⁶ Ibid., p. 146.

²¹⁷ Moore, 1975, p. 724.

²¹⁸ Binney and Burman, *Change and Decay*, 1977, p. 62.

²¹⁹ Cooper, N. 'Church and State' in Binney, M. and Burman, P. (eds.) *Change and Decay The Future of Our Churches*, London: Macmillan, 1977, p. 157.

²²⁰ Suddards and Hargreaves, 1996, p. 360.

²²¹ Binney and Burman, *Change and Decay*, 1977, p. 146.

²²² Moore, 1975, p. 724.

²²³ Binney and Burman, *Chapels and Churches*, 1977, p. 62.

submitted by its members.²²⁴ It was in the light of these developments that Archbishop Davidson felt able in 1913 to state ‘I would be the last to deny that on occasions in the past ecclesiastical property has not always been protected as it ought to have been, but the utmost care is taken now to prevent a repetition of anything of the kind’.²²⁵

Following its exemption from the 1913 Act, the C. of E. undertook the establishment of a more effective and formal system for protecting the historic fabric of church buildings. Diocesan Advisory Committees (D.A.C.) were formed, initially on a voluntary basis,²²⁶ to give expert aesthetic and historic advice to the Chancellor, and were composed of specialists with a range of relevant expert knowledge encompassing bells, organs, stained glass, metalwork and wall paintings.²²⁷ Following the Great War the perceived need for official intervention increased in response to the high demand for memorials, an influx of imported marble, the widespread availability of mass-produced materials such as polished granite, cheap stained glass and inferior church furnishings.²²⁸ By 1923 all the dioceses had a D.A.C. and in the same year the Central Council for the Diocesan Advisory Committees was formed to co-ordinate their work.²²⁹ The requirement for each diocese to maintain a D.A.C. became statutory following the passing of the Faculty Jurisdiction Measure in 1938.²³⁰

So by the early 1920s the Church of England had established a system for the protection of their historic churches, which predated listed building control by almost 50 years. Not only did the C. of E. precede the secular world in terms of timing, it also offered provision for control broader in scope than the later secular model. Listed building consent when it was finally implemented required approval for ‘all works of demolition, alteration or extension

²²⁴ Ibid., p. 62.

²²⁵ Fawcett, 1976, p. 20.

²²⁶ Suddards and Hargreaves, 1996, p. 361.

²²⁷ Binney and Burman, *Change and Decay*, 1977, p. 146.

²²⁸ Ibid., p. 146.

²²⁹ Binney and Burman, *Chapels and Churches*, 1977, p. 63.

²³⁰ Andrew, *Ecclesiastical Exemption*.

to a listed building that affect its character as a building of special architectural or historic interest,²³¹ whereas a faculty was required for all works of repair, rebuilding and replacement and for the introduction, removal or re-positioning of any furnishings.²³² Furthermore the faculty system considered the church and churchyard as an entity prefiguring by 90 years the holistic designation of church and churchyard proposed as part of the reformed heritage protection programme²³³ and the asset management plans proposed by English Heritage as part of their National Heritage Plan Protection Framework in 2011.²³⁴

In 1955 the C. of E. further strengthened its commitment to conserving the historic fabric of its buildings through its Inspection of Churches Measure. The Measure was passed in response to repairs still outstanding from World War Two damage and required an architect, approved by the D.A.C. to carry out a survey of necessary repairs every five years. The resulting report then formed the basis for a programme of work to be carried out before the next inspection, a copy of which was then passed to the Archdeacon.²³⁵ If the most pressing recommendations were not met, the Archdeacon could then require the Parochial Church Council (P.C.C.) to carry out the necessary works.²³⁶

The effectiveness of the Faculty system for the protection and conservation of historic churches was widely acknowledged by the conservation community and consequently when in 1968 the Town and Country Planning Act introduced the requirement for listed

²³¹ English Heritage. 'Listed Building Consent' [Online] <http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/professional/advice/hpg/consentandplanningpermission/lbc/> [3rd December 2013]

²³² Binney and Burman, *Chapels and Churches*, 1977, p. 64.

²³³ Beacham, 'The Future of the Ecclesiastical Exemption A Way Forward' public, *Conservation Bulletin*, Issue 46, Autumn 2004, p. 5.

²³⁴ English Heritage. 'National Heritage Protection Plan Framework' [Online] <http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/publications/nhpp-plan-framework/nhpp-plan-framework.pdf> [10th December 2013], p. 20.

²³⁵ Burman, P. 'Churches restored' in Binney, M. and Burman, P. (eds.) *Change and Decay The Future of Our Churches*, London: Macmillan, 1977, p. 174.

²³⁶ Dale, W. *The Law of the Parish Church*, London: Butterworths, 1975, p.82.

building consent, the C. of E.'s listed buildings received exemption.²³⁷ During the 1980s the question of ecclesiastical exemption was re-examined following the introduction of state aid for church repairs. This prompted both the C. of E. and the Department of the Environment to produce documents, which resulted in the Care of Churches and Ecclesiastical Jurisdiction Measure in 1991.²³⁸ Under the Measure the membership of the D.A.C.s was prescribed to include representatives of the local planning authorities, amenity societies and E.H. as well as of the diocesan synod. The range of persons allowed to lodge an official objection to a Faculty was widened to include local planning authorities and the amenity societies.²³⁹ E.H. on average receive 792 consultations for ecclesiastical exemption cases for the C. of E. each year.²⁴⁰

In 1997 concern amongst the conservation community over procedural differences between the secular planning and the Faculty systems led the Secretary of State for Culture Media and Sport to commission the Newman Report, 'A Review of the Ecclesiastical Exemption from Listed Building Control'. In response to this report the C. of E. issued the Faculty Jurisdiction Rules in 2000 which addressed a number of the concerns raised including the use of specialist advice and consultation with local planning authorities. The 2000 Rules also incorporated the requirement of a justification for proposed works by Statements of Significance and Need, recommended by Newman.²⁴¹ Consequently the C. of E. included the identification of significance as part of its system for consent nine years before P.P.S.5 required the assessment of significance as part of the listed building consent process.

²³⁷ Andrew, Ecclesiastical Exemption.

²³⁸ Ibid.

²³⁹ Ibid.

²⁴⁰ Evans, D. (English Heritage) Personal Interview. 18th November, 2013, see Appendix 1, p. 11.

²⁴¹ Fairclough, A. 'Ecclesiastical Law and the Church of England' [Online] <http://www.buildingconservation.com/articles/ecclesiasticallaw/ecclesiasticallaw.htm> [14th December 2013]

The contemporary situation sees C. of E. churches sitting outside secular listed building consent although not outside planning law (planning permission is required for operational development or change of use).²⁴² The relationship with the secular conservation community has been strengthened over the years through the re-drafting of Ecclesiastical Exemption legislation and the requirements for consultation. However, as a result of its years of independent policing of its own buildings in matters of conservation the C. of E. has developed its own conservation body the Churches Buildings Council (C.B.C) which advises the D.A.C.s and writes policy and guidance. Whilst in some respects the guidance and advice of the C.B.C. mirrors that of the government's advisor on the historic environment, E.H., in others it reflects its autonomy, as will be further discussed below.

3.4 The issues surrounding church buildings still in use

Whilst the C. of E. have demonstrated an historic and continuing responsibility towards the historic fabric of their buildings they have neither the funds nor the inclination to follow William Morris' advice in the S.P.A.B. Manifesto to 'treat our ancient buildings as monuments of a bygone art' and to 'raise another building rather than alter or enlarge the old one'.²⁴³ As Dr. Simon Thurley, Chairman of English Heritage, observed in his speech to the annual conference of Diocesan Advisory Committees in 2003, 'They are buildings put up over the last thousand years still broadly used for the same purpose; there are few structures that can claim to have had such continual use'.²⁴⁴ As the C. of E. wish to continue to use the majority of their historic churches for their original purpose inevitably, in buildings which can be up to 1,000 years old, this can create tensions between their historic value and their use value.

²⁴² Ibid.

²⁴³ Getty, 1996, p. 321.

²⁴⁴ Cooper, T. *How do we keep our Parish Churches?*, London: The Ecclesiological Society, 2004. p. 9.

The issues surrounding this potential conflict of interest is further muddled by the fact their longevity of uninterrupted use makes the use value itself part of its historic value. As has been shown above, the history of churches in England has been one of alteration and adaptation with very few historic churches built before the Victorian period representative of a single style of architecture. As previously discussed, before the 18th century and the emergence of historicism, change in churches was prompted by the requirements of liturgy and style, ‘changes to medieval buildings were generally made in the manner of the day; churches could be provided with additions in baroque or neo-classical form, or could be entirely redesigned to meet the current fashion’,²⁴⁵ and later by a new historically conscious and moral agenda. The general trends in church building and alteration are summarised below – see Table 2.

Period	General trends in fabric alteration
Romanesque – 10 th -12 th century	Rebuild in stone on site of former wooden churches
Gothic – c. 1170 – c. 1520	Total rebuild of earlier Romanesque building sometimes incorporating wall footings or decorative features. Subsequent stylistic alterations as Gothic style develops from Early English to Decorated to Perpendicular
Reformation – 17 th century	Loss of statues, wall paintings, stained glass, rood screens, chantry chapels and stone altars. Alterations in own style.
Georgian – 18 th century	Alterations in own style
Late 18 th century	Beginning of historical consciousness but also concept of style as independent from object. Initially resulting in classical symmetry and uncluttered interiors imposed on Gothic cathedrals
Early – mid 19 th century	Gothic revival and stylistic restorations
Mid – late 19 th century	Continuation of stylistic restoration and reaction - the beginning of the conservation movement
20 th century	Conservation
Late 20 th century	Conservation and the management of change through the identification of significance

Table 2 The changing attitude towards the fabric of church buildings

Part of the reason for so much alteration and adaption can be explained, despite the religious nature of the buildings, by the absence of a tradition of what Viñas described as

²⁴⁵ Jokilehto, 2008, p. 101.

material fetishism.²⁴⁶ The church building is consecrated, or blessed by an act of ceremony carried out by the bishop,²⁴⁷ but can be deconsecrated if the church is made redundant. Special provision is only made for the font, communion table and the plate used for Holy Communion, which are considered to have sacred properties and must be transferred to another church in the area if the building is made redundant.²⁴⁸ The font and the communion table are the church fittings used for the holy acts or sacraments of Baptism and Holy Communion and consequently have a significance not held by the fabric of the rest of the building. This significance could account for the high number of Norman fonts which survive in later medieval buildings, but as far as the rest of the fabric is concerned, there is no religious requirement for its preservation. This attitude towards the fabric accounts not only for the alterations to the fabric mentioned above but also for the removal of interesting panelling and artefacts to many rectories during the Victorian period and in the recent past the selling of pews, lecterns, prayer desks and candlesticks to raise funds.²⁴⁹

Therefore for a C. of E. church to remain of religious significance there is no requirement for the fabric itself to be conserved; its primary importance lies in its use. This fact was emphasised by Archbishop Davidson during the debate over the exclusion of ecclesiastical buildings from the 1913 Ancient Monuments Act when he insisted churches were for worship and not for antiquarians.²⁵⁰ This emphasis on the primacy of ‘use’ value inevitably results in a tension with its historic value. A tension first identified by Riegl:

‘Depending on the nature of the particular present-day value considered, symptoms of natural decay may well be tolerated; sooner or later, however, a limit will be reached beyond which present-day value would become impossible and would strive to prevail over age value’.²⁵¹

²⁴⁶ Muñoz Viñas, 2005, p. 85.

²⁴⁷ Moore, 1976, p. 570.

²⁴⁸ Ibid., p. 608.

²⁴⁹ Anecdotal evidence

²⁵⁰ Binney and Burman, *Change and Decay*, 1977, p. 158.

²⁵¹ Getty, 1996, p. 78.

The tension between use and historic value is consequently one of the major conservation questions facing the C. of E. in regard to historic churches; how to reconcile the social and liturgical requirements of the 21st century, such as corporate worship with an altar close to the congregation in the nave, or the desire for a venue for religious dance, with a structure which may have been built up to a 1,000 years earlier, which includes a medieval screen and fixed seating. This tension is recognised by the C. of E. in their current guidance on the conservation of historic churches in their first conservation principle ‘Conservation as responsible management of change’ which is explained in the following terms ‘Our approach to conservation attempts to reconcile the needs of congregations, worship and mission with the requirements for the long-term preservation of historic buildings, their contents and artworks’.²⁵²

3.5 The issues surrounding the public perception of historic churches and its impact on their significance

Whilst the major issue facing the guardians of C. of E. churches is the reconciliation of their historic and use values as outlined above, another consideration to impact on decisions regarding their alteration and adaptation is their iconic status at the heart of English culture and the concept of Englishness. This status has resulted in church buildings holding great significance for a far wider audience than their habitual users. The parish church has been used by poets, artists and writers as a shorthand for the time-honoured and traditional, whilst at the same time being respected as a place apart. The intangible numinous quality of the church is described by Philip Larkin:

‘A serious house on serious earth it is,
In whose blent air all our compulsions meet,²⁵³

²⁵² Churchcare. ‘Conservation Principles’ [Online] <http://www.churchcare.co.uk/churches/art-artefacts-conservation/conservation-principles> [30th October 2013]

²⁵³ Larkin, P. *The Less Deceived*, London: The Marvell Press, 1977. p. 29.

and by T. S Eliot recalling a place 'where prayer has been valid'²⁵⁴. The artist Samuel Palmer in the 1820s and 1830s included a church with a prominent spire in a number of his paintings and drawings such as 'Coming from Evening Church', 'A Hilly Scene' and 'Evening: A Church among Trees', to equate the pastoral scene with a vision of paradise. Like the artist William Blake before him Palmer wanted to produce 'visions of little dells, and nooks, and corners of Paradise; models of the exquisite pitch of intense poetry',²⁵⁵ and used the church building as a device to intensify the mystical feel of the landscape.

The unique atmosphere of historic church buildings stems from their continuity of use: for the devout this lends an atmosphere of enduring prayer; whilst for others its potency lies in the continuing ceremonial marking of births, marriages and deaths. The Rt. Hon. and Rt. Revd. Richard Chartres, Bishop of London, recognised the importance of both these experiences: 'Tradition is a living stream which animates church buildings and gives them a different quality from the deserted shrines of dead religions'.²⁵⁶ This ambience particular to church buildings, holders of the tradition referred to by Bishop Chartres, is an important aspect of the buildings' significance. It is linked to the buildings' use which could be described as its spiritual value, but also embraces other universal values such as emotional, associative, commemorative and symbolic. It should be noted, however, that in some churches the liturgy (the way the church is used for worship) is in tune with the architecture, whilst in others it clashes, as will be illustrated in chapter 8.

The other intangible quality which lends church buildings a unique place in the public consciousness is their connection with the concept of Englishness. The poet Rupert Brooke, feeling melancholic whilst staying in Germany for his health, evokes a perfect

²⁵⁴ Elliot, T.S. *The Complete Poems and Plays of T. S Elliot*, 6th Edition, London: Faber and Faber, 1982. p. 192.

²⁵⁵ Tate. 'Artworks/Palmer/Coming from Evening Church' [Online] <http://www.tate.org.uk/art/artworks/palmer-coming-from-evening-church-n03697/text-summary> [23rd January 2014]

²⁵⁶ Cooper, T. *How do we keep our Parish Churches?* London: The Ecclesiological Society, 2004, p. 5.

Spring day at home and finishes his poem with a reference to both the church and afternoon tea as the quintessence of the English life he is missing:

‘Stands the Church clock at ten to three?
And is there honey still for tea?’²⁵⁷

This idea of the historic church as representative of English identity was illustrated by John Piper’s depictions of bomb-damaged churches including St Mary le Port Bristol and All Saints Chapel, Bath which became iconic images of the destructive nature of the Second World War. T.S. Elliot’s *Little Gidding* published during the same period of national unrest identifies in the church building that:

‘Here, the intersection of the timeless moment
Is England and nowhere. Never and always’.²⁵⁸

When John Betjeman wrote the *Collins Guide to English Parish Churches*, which the dust jacket describes as ‘the first selective guide to English parish churches, judging the buildings not only from the architectural point of view, but by their atmosphere and aesthetic merit’,²⁵⁹ he characterised old churches with a mixture of elegy and nationalism:

‘still they stand, the churches of England, their towers grey above billowy globes of elm trees, the red cross of St. George flying over their battlements’. Sixteen years later when he made the documentary *A Passion for Churches* for the BBC Betjeman again stressed the importance of church buildings in the English landscape:

‘What would you be, you wide East Anglian sky,
Without church towers to recognise you by?’²⁶⁰

There are no particular features of the church building which can be singled out as quintessentially iconic, although the silhouette of a tower or steeple could be considered particularly evocative. Like the numinous atmosphere described above the Englishness of

²⁵⁷ Larkin, P. (ed.) *The Oxford Book of Twentieth Century English Verse*, 7th Edition, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1984, p. 212.

²⁵⁸ Elliot, T.S. *The Complete Poems and Plays of T. S. Elliot*, 6th Edition, London: Faber and Faber, 1982, p. 192.

²⁵⁹ Betjeman, J. (ed.) *Collins Guide to English Parish Churches*, London: Collins, 1958.

²⁶⁰ *A Passion for Churches*. Television. Dir. Edward Mirzoeff. Presented and written by John Betjeman. BBC General Features, 1974.

C. of E. churches relies on an awareness of the intangible as well as the material. Although hard to define, when trying to answer the question of how historic churches should be conserved, perhaps more than any other building type in England, the intangible values of the buildings need to be considered.

3.6 The involvement of multiple interest groups in the use of churches

In addition to the challenge of managing historic buildings which hold such a unique place in the public consciousness, another issue facing the guardians of church buildings is the number of disparate groups of people whose interests are based in the church and the churchyard. These users fall into two categories, those whose interests are directly allied to the Christian worship use of the building and those whose are not. The former group includes bell-ringers, organists, choir members, tapisers (all of whom may or may not be practising Christians) and the latter tourists, genealogists, historians, botanists, naturalists amongst others (a group which also may or may not also have a religious connection with the building). All these groups have a specific interest in the building and its environs ranging from the acoustics of the church to the potential for biodiversity within the churchyard, and as a consequence all have different priorities for the church and churchyard's management.

In some cases these priorities can be in conflict, for example: a genealogist might wish the grass in a churchyard to be frequently mown in order that gravestone inscriptions can be easily read, whereas a botanist might wish to see the habitat of an unusual wildflower left as undisturbed as possible; the church architect would rather bats were not allowed to roost in the belfry as their droppings and urine could have a detrimental effect on the fabric, however as a protected species their roosts cannot be disturbed and the conflict between

these two interests has led to much published advice on the subject;^{261 262} bell ringers might consider the base of the tower to be their domain whereas mothers of young children might consider it the perfect space for a Sunday school. In addition to the conflicting interests of associated users, are the different requirements of the liturgical users of the church. For example, for some worshippers the original medieval plan of the church with high altar, chancel screen and fixed pews might entirely suit the style of service they wish to attend, whereas for others this plan would prevent the practice of modern worship with its use of sacred dance and drama requiring flexible open spaces.²⁶³

Many of the different users of the church have concerns with the fabric of the building or the physical components of the churchyard, whereas for others, for example the church musicians and worshippers, their concerns can also include the less tangible, such as atmosphere and smell (for High church worshippers incense is an important aspect of the liturgy). Appreciating this multiplicity of use and its attendant concerns both tangible and intangible is of particular importance if the significance of a church is to be successfully identified.

3.7 The role of the public in the conservation of church buildings

The previous chapter described how in recent years the public have played an increasing role in the conservation of the historic environment in the secular world. In contrast the C. of E. has a long-standing history of public involvement in the care and maintenance of their church buildings. This tradition singles them out not only from the secular experience in England but also from the experience of conserving church buildings in Europe.

²⁶¹ English Heritage. 'Living with bats' [Online] <https://www.english-heritage.org.uk/professional/advice/advice-by-topic/places-of-worship/bats/batsliving> [17th December 2014]

²⁶² Bat Conservation Trust. 'Bats in churches' [Online] http://www.bats.org.uk/pages/bats_and_churches.html [17th December 2014]

²⁶³ Church of England. 'New patterns for worship' [Online] <https://www.churchofengland.org/prayer-worship/worship/texts/newpatterns/introduction.aspx> [17th December 2014]

From the time of the earliest church buildings in England the local community have played a role in their upkeep. Although the first churches belonged to religious communities connected to the estates of Saxon lords (as described in the following chapter) their running costs and alterations were paid for by the local people from the church taxation system or tithe.²⁶⁴ The tithe, the equivalent of one tenth of the produce of each parishioner (inhabitant of the parish), was paid to the parish church: of this sum two thirds were spent on the payment of the clergy and the relief of the poor, with the final third used for the maintenance of the church building.²⁶⁵

From c. 1200 the church building (excluding the chancel which was in the charge of the rector) was deemed the responsibility of the parish, with the funds administered by the churchwardens, the key lay officials.²⁶⁶ By the late Medieval period, in addition to the tithe, churchwardens were collecting money from land rents, charges for pews and burial, profits from church ales (community festivals for raising funds) and from community sports,²⁶⁷ which they spent on a variety of building and maintenance costs.²⁶⁸ In 1640 the duties of the churchwarden were described by the poet and priest Christopher Harvey:

‘The Church's Guardian takes care to keep/Her buildings alwaies in repaire;/ Unwilling that any decay should creep/On them before he is aware:/Nothing defac'd,/Nothing displac'd/He likes; but most doth long and love to see/The living stones order'd as they should be'.²⁶⁹

After the Tithe Commutation Act of 1836 tithes were transferred to rents payable to the state rather than the church or landowners and church buildings were financed from within

²⁶⁴ Hutton, G. and Cook, O. (2001) *English Parish Churches*, London: Thames and Hudson. p. 15.

²⁶⁵ Tinti, F. ‘Section 2: Anglo Saxon England (c.600-1066) Dues and Tithes’ [DVD-ROM] York: Christianity and Culture, 2010.

²⁶⁶ Kümin, B. ‘Section 3: Late Medieval England (c.1066-1534) Churchwardens’ [DVD-ROM] York: Christianity and Culture, 2010.

²⁶⁷ Betcher, G. and Phillips, H. ‘Section 3: Late Medieval England (c.106- 1534) Festivities and Social Activities’ [DVD-ROM] York: Christianity and Culture, 2010.

²⁶⁸ Kümin, B. ‘Section 3: Late Medieval England (c.1066-1534) Finance and Fundraising’ [DVD-ROM] York: Christianity and Culture, 2010.

²⁶⁹ Carlson, E.J. ‘Section 4: The Reformation and Beyond (c.1534-1689)’ [DVD-ROM] York: Christianity and Culture, 2010.

the parish by voluntary donations and fundraising. This system of financing continues to apply along with the medieval responsibility for the care and maintenance of the church resting with the churchwardens who give their services voluntarily. Their duties include the care of the church building and its contents, including an annual inspection to highlight any maintenance issues.²⁷⁰ The only professional input into the management of the church building comes in the form of the quinquennial inspection carried out every five years by an architect or chartered surveyor approved by the D.A.C. In a report published by the Ecclesiological Society in 2004 it was estimated that if the 32,000 churchwardens in England carried out on average an hour of work a week caring for their churches it would amount to 1.5 million hours per year. In addition to this impressive voluntary commitment the same report calculated the professional advice given by the D.A.C.s, if fees were charged rather than advice given voluntarily, could conservatively be estimated at £6 million per annum.²⁷¹

Just as the C. of E. is separated from the State in terms of its system for listed building consent, the same is true also of its financial status; the C. of E. is financed as a charity, largely from voluntary donations. Consequently, although the C. of E. can apply for public funding to repair its historic buildings, and receives a modest contribution from the church-state Churches Conservation Trust for its redundant churches,²⁷² the larger part of its repairs costs are raised from its own community and all maintenance costs have to be found by the parish. In 2007 £112 million was spent on repairs to parish churches of which only £40 million was funded by public grants and independent trusts.²⁷³ This situation contrasts with many parts of Europe where religious buildings receive funding from state administered church taxes in Austria, Croatia, Denmark, Finland, Germany, Iceland, Italy

²⁷⁰ Churchwardens.com. 'Responsibilities and duties of the churchwarden' [Online] <http://www.churchwardens.com/duties.html> [27th January 2014]

²⁷¹ Cooper, 2004, p. 17.

²⁷² Ibid., p. 7.

²⁷³ Chartres, R. 'Church Buildings and the Community', *Historic Churches*, Vol. 14, January, 2008, p. 2.

and Switzerland.²⁷⁴ In Germany, anyone who is officially registered as Catholic, Protestant or Jew pays a religious tax, worth an extra 8-9% of their income tax bill and in 2011, the Catholic Church received 5bn euros and the Protestant Church 4.5bn euros from taxpayers.²⁷⁵ In France, although the Church and State have been separate institutions since the French Revolution, all pre-1904 ecclesiastical buildings are maintained by central government or the municipal authorities.²⁷⁶ As a consequence Bishop Chartres has suggested 'the Church of England is in financial terms the most disestablished church in Western Europe'.²⁷⁷

The effect of this autonomy has had a direct impact on the conservation of C. of E. churches. Churches are community buildings with decisions regarding their maintenance, repair and alteration taken democratically by the P.C.C., not the incumbent or the church authorities. The historic responsibility of the care and maintenance of the church fabric lying in the hands of the churchwardens has its contemporary expression in the requirement for the parishes to write statements of significance, a role more frequently ascribed to a heritage professional in the secular world.

As the State does not contribute directly to the funding of parish churches still in use it has no concomitant influence on the conservation of the buildings. In the past E.H. were consulted on proposed works of alteration to buildings which had received grant aid, but this stipulation has been removed following E.H.'s inclusion through consultation in the faculty process, see above. The C. of E.'s financial independence, in conjunction with its exemption from listed building consent, has contributed to the formation of its own autonomous conservation body, the Church Buildings Council (C.B.C.) which in turn produces its own independent policy and advice.

²⁷⁴ 'Church Tax' [Online] http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Church_tax [31st January 2014]

²⁷⁵ 'Court Upholds German Catholic Church Membership Tax' [Online] <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-19737983> [31st October 2014]

²⁷⁶ Cooper, 2004, p. 6.

²⁷⁷ Ibid., p.6.

3.8 The traditional approach towards valuing churches and the adoption of significance by the C. of E.

Before examining how the C. of E. came to adopt significance as a means for informing decisions regarding change to historic churches, the methods traditionally used for assessing the value of church buildings will be examined.

Perhaps the two most well known sources of information on historic churches are the descriptions in Nikolaus Pevsner's *Buildings of Britain* series written between 1951-74, many of which have been updated in recent years, and the E.H. listing descriptions. Both resources provide information on the physical characteristics of the building and their date, but are limited to what John Betjeman referred to as 'the search for style'.²⁷⁸ Dr. Simon Thurley, the Chief Executive of English Heritage acknowledged the limitations of the list descriptions in his speech to the annual conference of D.A.C.s in 2003:

'the list description is pretty hopeless at telling the owner why it is listed and at that grade.....who has read a list description and understood from it the value and significance of the church it describes in such dry detail?'

Since Dr. Thurley made this speech E.H. have begun to include statements of special interest within the list descriptions of newly listed buildings (see previous chapter), but there are no plans at present to rewrite the existing descriptions, due to lack of funds.²⁷⁹

Frequently either the list description or Pevsner provide the basis for church building leaflets which can be found in the majority of churches and follow a similar format of listing and dating the architectural features and fittings. This has resulted in many users and visitors regarding historic churches as a collection of dated fixtures and features which are characteristic of certain periods in the history of architecture. Using the E.H. indicators

²⁷⁸ Betjeman, 1958, p. 13.

²⁷⁹ Evans, D. (English Heritage) Personal Interview. 18th November, 2013, see Appendix 1, p. 14.

for identifying significance this method would allow for the identification of historical and aesthetic value, but not evidential or communal value.

There are, however, sources of information available which provide insights into the communal and evidential value of church buildings. A number of detailed works explain the impact on the built fabric of changes in the liturgy such as G.W.O. Addleshaw and F. Etchell's *The Architectural Setting of Anglican Worship*²⁸⁰ and Allan Doig's *Liturgy and Architecture*.²⁸¹ G.W. O. Addleshaw was a canon residentiary of York Minster and Frederick Etchells an artist, architect and architectural theorist and their combination of artistic sensibility, knowledge of architectural theory and practice, and liturgical insight resulted in a book which systematically describes the alterations carried out to church interiors in England and Ireland from the Reformation to the time the book was published in 1947. Allan Doig's book concentrates on liturgical changes in the early church until the Middle Ages, but on an international scale. Both publications give an understanding of why church interiors are ordered in the way they are whilst also informing the viewer of what may have been lost, allowing for the identification of communal and evidential values respectively. In this way they add to understanding of the evolution of the church, telling the whole story of the building, not just the message of the surviving fabric.

Other studies seek to explain C. of E. churches in relation to their social, political and liturgical context including Graham Hutton and Olive Cook's *English Parish Church*²⁸² and Roy Strong's *A Little History of the English Country Church*.²⁸³ Strong's book returns to a subject he first explored in the 1977 exhibition 'Change and Decay: The Future of Our Churches'. In his preface to *A Little History* he quotes from the preface to the exhibition:

²⁸⁰ Addleshaw, G.W.O. and Etchells, F. *The Architectural Setting of Anglican Worship*, London: Faber and Faber Ltd, 1948.

²⁸¹ Doig, A. *Liturgy and Architecture*, Oxford: Ashgate, 2008.

²⁸² Hutton, G. and Cook, O. *English Parish Churches*, London, Thames and Hudson, 2001.

²⁸³ Strong, R. *A Little History of the English Country Church*, London: Jonathan Cape, 2007.

‘Seldom are we ever given a glimpse of the [church] building as the historic microcosm over the centuries of a community. Their very fabric tells us of prosperity and depression, of war and peace; extensions in size reflect rise in population; the names of the headstones reveal the families who for generations moulded the life pattern of the land around. We need to develop for a wider public our approach to churches as expressions of past human beings, everyone’s ancestors over the centuries, and shift from the crudity of categorising a building on its aesthetic merits alone, ignoring all else’.²⁸⁴

Other works such as Warwick Rodwell’s *The Archaeology of Churches*²⁸⁵ examine the archaeological potential of church buildings (the E.H. evidential value) and a number of studies focus on specific aspects of the church interior such as *Pews, Benches and Chairs* published by the Ecclesiological Society.²⁸⁶

In addition to the vast body of literature explaining all aspects of church buildings from a national perspective churches often form the focus of local history studies. Typical of such books is *The Book of Plymtree* by T. Eames,²⁸⁷ which includes a whole chapter on the church and traces the history of the building with many references to the people involved in its alterations and development. In addition to published material, local record offices hold historic press cuttings, parish magazines, churchwardens accounts, old faculty petitions and photographs all of which can provide information on alterations to the church fabric. All the above would assist in the identification of some of the communal values of the building.

Despite all this information about the nature and evolution of their buildings being available to local congregations, until 2000 there was no requirement for any research to be carried out before a parish applied for a faculty to alter their building. The faculty petition required detailed information on the proposed works including a schedule, design, plans and specification. It also required a number of questions to be answered, but the only ones

²⁸⁴ Ibid., p. 2.

²⁸⁵ Rodwell, W. *The Archaeology of Churches*, Stroud: Tempus, 2005.

²⁸⁶ Cooper, T. and Brown, S. (eds.) *Pews, Benches and Chairs*, London: The Ecclesiological Society, 2011.

²⁸⁷ Eames, T. (ed.) *The Book of Plymtree*, Tiverton: Halsgrave, 1999.

relevant to the fabric of the building were ‘what is the approximate age of the building?’ and ‘is the building listed?’²⁸⁸The emphasis was on the suitability of the new works, rather than the sensitivity of the existing fabric to change.

This situation changed following the publication of the Faculty Jurisdiction Rules 2000, which required applicants applying for a faculty for significant change to a listed church to provide the D.A.C. with a Statement of Significance and Statement of Need.²⁸⁹ The purpose of the Statement of Need was to justify the proposed alteration whilst the Statements of Significance was defined according to the 2000 Rules as ‘a document which summarises the historical development of the church and identifies the important features that make major contributions to the character of the church’.²⁹⁰ As a consequence of these Rules an historic and architectural assessment of the church was required before any alteration could be considered, acknowledging the importance of understanding the nature of the existing fabric as part of the process of change.

Although the guidance for writing statements of significance did not give a definition of ‘significance’ the guidance for writing conservation management plans (required for major and complex churches where a statement of significance was not considered sufficiently detailed) defined significance in the following way ‘Significance is the whole set of reasons why people value a major church, whether as a place for worship and mission, as an historic building that is part of the national heritage, as a focus for the local community, as a familiar landmark or for any other reasons.’²⁹¹ This definition suggests the C. of E. were aware their historic churches were valued for many reasons and these reasons needed to be identified before any changes could take place.

²⁸⁸ ‘The Faculty Jurisdiction (Amendment) Rules 1989’ [Online] <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/1989/1243/made> [6th February 2014]

²⁸⁹ Church of England. ‘The faculty Jurisdiction Rules 2000’ [Online] http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2000/2047/pdfs/ukxi_20002047_en.pdf [31st October 2013], p. 5.

²⁹⁰ Ibid., p. 4.

²⁹¹ Churchcare. ‘Guidance Note Conservation Management Plans’ [Online] <http://www.churchcare.co.uk/images/CMPs.pdf> [7th February 2014]

As noted above the C. of E. were early adopters of assessing significance, with the 2000 Faculty Jurisdiction Rules requirements predating E.H.'s *Conservation Principles* by eight years, and the necessity for providing assessments of significance under P.P.S.5 by nine.

3.9 The C. of E. approach to assessing significance

The C. of E.'s methodology for writing Statements of Significance was first compiled by the C.B.C. in October 2002, with revisions in March 2007, August 2010 and March 2011.

The 2011 version, although post-dating the publication of E.H.'s *Conservation Principles* does not adopt the values-based method E.H. recommended as a means for determining significance. The C. of E. approach to assessing significance, although it requires a wide-reaching analysis of all elements of the building, its setting and use, does not require the specific identification of values.

This approach continues in the 2014 C. of E. guidance for writing statements of significance, produced following the passing of the Faculty Jurisdiction Rules 2013 which described statements of significance as:

‘a document which describes the significance of the church building in terms of its special architectural and historic interest (including any contribution made by its setting) and any significant features of artistic or archaeological interest that the church or other building has so as to enable the potential impact of the proposals on its significance, and on any such features to be understood’.²⁹²

This definition represented an expansion of the 2000 version, but is still based on the identification of the physical qualities of the building. It does not require the identification of the ‘whole set of reasons why people value a major church’²⁹³ which the C. of E. previously suggested was necessary for understanding the significance of major churches.²⁹⁴

²⁹² Churchcare. ‘Statements of Significance and Need’ [Online] <http://www.churchcare.co.uk/churches/guidance-advice/statements-of-significance-need> [11th February 2014], p.1.

²⁹³ Churchcare. ‘Management Plans’.

²⁹⁴ Ibid.

This approach contrasts with the E.H. definition of a statement of significance from *Conservation Principles*: ‘should be a summary of the cultural and natural heritage values currently attached to it and how they inter-relate, which distils the particular character of the place.’²⁹⁵ The effect of concentrating on the material aspects of the building’s character rather than allowing for the identification of some of its more intangible values will be considered later as part of the analysis of the fieldwork.

The differing approach of the C. of E. to E.H. to the assessment of significance arises from their separate conservation principles. The C. of E. have seven conservation principles listed on the Churchcare website,²⁹⁶ whilst E.H. have six conservation principles and eight conservation policies and guidance, which form part of their 2008 *Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance*. By comparing the C. of E. principles not only with E.H.’s *Conservation Principles* 2008, but also with the principles stated by E.H. pre-Burra Charter in their 1991 publication *The Repair of Historic Buildings Advice on principles and methods*, a picture emerges of their conservative nature – see Table 3. (It should be noted that E.H.’s *The Repair of Historic Buildings*, was primarily a practical handbook, but it did include a list of stated principles.)

²⁹⁵ E.H., *Conservation Principles*, 2008, p. 40.

²⁹⁶ Churchcare. ‘Conservation Principles’.

C. of E. Conservation Principles	E.H. Conservation Principles (2008)	E.H. Conservation Policies and Guidance (2008)	E.H. Principles of Repair (1991)
1. Conservation as responsible management of change	1.The historic environment is a shared resource	1. Routine management and maintenance	1. The purpose of repair
2. Minimum intervention	2.Everyone should be able to participate in sustaining the historic environment	2. Periodic renewal	2. The need for repair
3. Maintenance	3. Understanding the significance of places is vital	3. Repair	3. Avoiding unnecessary damage
4. Preserve as found	4. Significant places should be managed to sustain their values	4.Intervention to increase knowledge of the past	4. Analysing historic development
5. Like for like repairs	5. Decisions about change must be reasonable, transparent and consistent	5. Restoration	5. Analysing the causes of defects
6. Reversibility	6. Documenting and learning from decisions is essential	6. New work and alteration	6. Adopting proven techniques
7. Recording		7. Integrating conservation with other public interests	7. Truth to materials
		8. Enabling development	8. Removal of damaging alterations
			9. Restoration of lost features
			10. Safeguarding the future

Table 3 Table showing the C. of E. conservation principles alongside recent and historic E.H. principles and guidance. The information is listed according to the hierarchy given by the two organisations.

The C. of E.'s first principle 'Conservation as responsible management of change' is in many respects their most forward-looking principle; one which acknowledges that church buildings are not simply works of art or museums, but buildings in use with specific needs

relating to that use, ‘Our approach to conservation attempts to reconcile the needs of congregations, worship and mission with the requirements for the long-term preservation of historic buildings, their contents and artworks.’²⁹⁷ This importance of use was acknowledged by E.H. in 1991 (principle No. 10), ‘Safeguarding the future - An historic building or monument should be regularly monitored and maintained and, wherever possible, provided with an appropriate and sympathetic use’²⁹⁸ and the issues surrounding use were explored in the explanation of the 2008 principle No. 5 ‘Potential conflict between sustaining heritage values of a place and other important public interests should be minimised by seeking the least harmful means of accommodating those interests’²⁹⁹ The C. of E. first principle also accords with the first part of E.H.’s definition of Conservation in *Conservation Principles*: ‘Conservation The process of managing change to a significant place in its setting in ways that will best sustain its heritage values, while recognising opportunities to reveal or reinforce those values for present and future generations’.³⁰⁰

Despite the first C. of E. principle acknowledging the importance of reconciling the requirements of use and change with those of historically sensitive buildings these intentions are not reflected in the other six C. of E. conservation principles. These consist of a mix of guidance for the practical carrying out of repairs and maintenance and two further principles, ‘minimum intervention’ and ‘preserve as found’ which could be described as antipathetic to the spirit of the first.

The practical guidance is given in the third, fifth, sixth and seventh principles. Of these the third principle ‘maintenance’ accords with advice in both the E.H. 1991³⁰¹ and 2008 guidance,³⁰² whilst the sixth and seventh C. of E. principles of ‘Reversibility’ and

²⁹⁷ Ibid.

²⁹⁸ Brereton, C. *The Repair of Historic Buildings*, London: English Heritage, 1991, p. 11.

²⁹⁹ E.H., *Conservation Principles*, 2008, p. 23.

³⁰⁰ Ibid., p. 71.

³⁰¹ Brereton, 1991, p. 11.

³⁰² E.H., *Conservation Principles*, 2008, p. 51.

'Recording' relate to advice in the E.H. 2008 guidance.³⁰³ The C. of E.'s fifth principle 'Like for like repairs' is similar to E.H.'s 1991 principle No.6 'Adopting proven techniques' which states 'repair techniques should match or be compatible with existing materials and methods of construction',³⁰⁴ but by their 2008 'Policy and Guidance' under the heading 'Repair' E.H. amend that advice to make the observation 'The use of original materials and techniques for repair can sometimes destroy more of the original fabric, and any decoration it carries, than the introduction of reinforcing or superficially protective modern materials'.³⁰⁵

The remaining two C. of E. principles relate directly to the philosophy of conservation. The first of these is 'minimum intervention' with the explanation 'An important objective of conservation is to preserve as much of the original material as possible'.³⁰⁶ The conservation philosophy of the C. of E. in this instance is more closely aligned with the S.P.A.B. whose original manifesto (to which the society still adheres) advocates 'to resist all tampering with either the fabric or ornament of the building as it stands'.³⁰⁷ Even in their earlier 1991 guidance E.H., whilst proposing that repair should not unnecessarily disturb or destroy historic fabric and should be kept to a minimum to stabilize and conserve the building,³⁰⁸ also support the removal of damaging alterations in certain circumstances³⁰⁹ and the non-speculative restoration of lost features.³¹⁰ By the arrival of the 2008 *Conservation Principles* E.H. advice reflects the widely held view of the secular conservation world that 'Significant places should be managed to sustain their values'.³¹¹ They propose that change is inevitable and the aim of conservation should be to manage that change to sustain

³⁰³ Ibid. p. 24.

³⁰⁴ Brereton, 1991, p. 9.

³⁰⁵ E.H., *Conservation Principles*, 2008, p. 53.

³⁰⁶ Churchcare. 'Conservation Principles'.

³⁰⁷ S.P.A.B. 'The Manifesto' [Online] <http://www.spab.org.uk/what-is-spab-/the-manifesto> [13th February 2014]

³⁰⁸ Brereton, 1991, p. 9.

³⁰⁹ Ibid. p. 10.

³¹⁰ Ibid. p. 11.

³¹¹ EH, *Conservation Principles*, 2008, p. 22.

heritage values rather than following a strict policy of preservation.³¹² This philosophy informs the E.H. 'Policy and Guidance' which: supports intervention to increase knowledge of the past;³¹³ restoration under very specific criteria including where the heritage values of the elements to be restored outweigh the values of those that would be lost;³¹⁴ and new work and alteration if 'The proposal would not materially harm the values of the place, which, where appropriate, would be reinforced or further revealed'.³¹⁵ In contrast, despite including as their first principle 'Conservation as the responsible management of change' the C. of E. appear to be severely curtailing this objective with the limitations of prescribed minimum intervention.

The fourth principle 'Preserve as found' again sees the C.of E. adopting the philosophy of the S.P.A.B. in contrast to the approach of E.H. As in the discussion concerning minimum intervention above, E.H. have been shown to be historically and currently open to the idea of altering the historic fabric if there is sufficient justification. The C. of E., however, in their explanation of the concept of 'Preserve as found' state 'Heritage professionals no longer strive to restore the original appearance of buildings and artworks but instead aim to respect the current state of objects'.³¹⁶ Whilst respecting the 'current state of objects' the C. of E. make no philosophical provision for their alteration or adaptation. Once again, as with the principle of minimum intervention, the C. of E. approach reflects the 19th century S.P.A.B. philosophy that inherited historic fabric has an inalienable worth that should be preserved as found rather than adapted, restored or altered. As discussed in the previous chapter, the S.P.A.B. philosophy was formulated in response to a specific threat: the wholesale stylistic restoration of large numbers of churches. This particular set of circumstances no longer applies but has been replaced by a new set of issues which, although recognised by the C. of E.: 'the needs of congregations, worship and mission'

³¹² Ibid. p. 22.

³¹³ Ibid. p. 54.

³¹⁴ Ibid. p. 55.

³¹⁵ Ibid., p. 58.

³¹⁶ Churchcare. 'Conservation Principles'.

which needs to be reconciled with ‘the requirements for the long-term preservation of historic buildings, their contents and artworks’,³¹⁷ is not directly addressed by their guidance.

In summary, although the C. of E., like E.H., define conservation as the management of change, their advice is primarily aimed towards the preservation of existing fabric. This philosophy embodied in their Conservation Principles is reflected in their guidance for writing statements of significance, whose stated aim is the identification of ‘special architectural and historic interest’ and ‘significant features of artistic or archaeological interest’.³¹⁸

3.10 Conclusion

Although historic churches were the catalyst for the formation of the conservation movement in England, their subsequent conservation has followed an entirely independent path from that of the secular world. The secular world, as discussed in the previous chapter, now almost universally follows an epistemological approach based on a belief in the subjective nature of the historic environment; their methodology for assessing significance requires the identification of values by people. In contrast the C. of E. adopt a more positivist epistemological approach, which has more in common with the early years

³¹⁷ Ibid.

³¹⁸ Churchcare. ‘Statements of Significance and Need’ 2014.

of the conservation movement; believing in the intrinsic value of historic buildings which can be revealed through investigation.

The secular world's adoption of the identification of values as a means for determining significance requires a level of specialist knowledge only available to the conservation professional. In contrast the C. of E. approach to determining significance is formulated for non-professionals, with the proviso that professional help could be sought if necessary. The C. of E. use the compiling of statements of significance to inform congregations of the nature of their buildings before any major alterations to the fabric take place, in order that the impact of the proposed work on its significance is understood.

A comparison between the C. of E.'s positivist approach and the more critical theoretical methodologies of the secular world which follows will suggest which methodology is most successful in informing the congregation of the significance of their building.

Chapter 4.0

A methodology for testing the effectiveness of the C. of E. guidance for assessing significance

4.1 Introduction

This chapter will describe how the methodology for testing the effectiveness of the positivist approach of the C. of E. to assessing significance was developed. For the purposes of this thesis 'effectiveness' refers to the degree to which the C. of E. guidance achieves the desired result of identifying the significance of a church. The chapter will:

- describe the methodology chosen
- describe the initial intention of the study
- examine the decision to use a single case study and the particular church chosen
- examine the potential for researcher bias and the steps taken to neutralise this potential
- discuss the use of community consultation and involvement in the research including the steps taken to address the ethical dimensions of the human-related research
- explain the decision to use a comparative study and why the three comparative methodologies were chosen
- describe how the comparison was made between the four methodologies
- discuss the effectiveness and limitations of the chosen methodology.

4.2 Outline of the methodology

The researcher wrote a statement of significance following the C. of E. methodology guidelines for a parish church in Devon, St. John the Baptist, Plymtree (Plymtree church).

To test the effectiveness of the C. of E. methodology the researcher then wrote three further assessments of significance for the same church using three other methodologies:

the Churches Conservation Trust's (C.C.T.) *Assessment of Significance*,³¹⁹ also used for historic churches; a methodology used in the secular world for assessing character, English Heritage's (E.H.) guidance for writing conservation area appraisals³²⁰ and a theoretical methodology which advocates the identification of values as means of assessing significance outlined in the book *Managing Built Heritage*³²¹ by Derek Worthing and Stephen Bond (W. and B.). Once the four separate assessments of significance were written they were compared using a mixed method approach to determine their strengths and weaknesses. The intention of the methodology was to highlight those areas in which the C. of E. approach successfully assessed significance and to identify any strategies from the other methodologies by which its effectiveness could be enhanced.

4.3 Original intention of the methodology

The original intention of the study was to compare the C. of E. guidance for writing statements of significance with the E.H. methodology for writing conservation area appraisals to discover which approach most effectively determined the significance of a number of different churches. As discussed in Chapter 2 assessments of significance are not theoretical exercises but practical frameworks designed to enable the owner/conservator/guardian of a building to form as complete a picture as possible of the character and worth of a structure in order to make informed decisions about its future care and management. It therefore seemed appropriate to the researcher to use a practical method of analysis to determine the effectiveness of the C. of E. methodology rather than a theoretical discussion of its contents. The decision was therefore made to determine how effective the C. of E. methodology was in practice by using its guidelines to write a number of statements of significance and the results of these studies then compared with another

³¹⁹ The Churches Conservation Trust. 'St. Andrew's Old Church, Kingsbury, London Borough of Brent Assessment of Significance', Unpublished, May 2009, Appendix 2.

³²⁰ English Heritage. 'Understanding Place: Conservation Area Designation, Appraisal and Management' [Online] <http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/content/publications/publicationsNew/guidelines-standards/understanding-place-conservation-area/understanding-place-ca-designation-appraisal-management.pdf> [24th November 2012]

³²¹ Worthing, D, and Bond, S. *Managing Built Heritage, The role of cultural significance*, Oxford: Blackwell, 2008.

approach (the E.H. conservation appraisal methodology) to gauge the effectiveness of the former.

The E.H. methodology was chosen for the comparative analysis as the researcher was familiar with its contents and had found it a successful format through her own experience writing fifteen conservation area appraisals. Consequently it was thought the E.H. approach could present an appropriate set of alternative strategies to the C. of E. approach.

In order to test the two methodologies the researcher identified fourteen churches to act as case studies, with the assistance of the Archdeacon of Barnstaple from within his Archdeaconry (which forms part of the northern reaches of the Diocese of Exeter). The churches were selected for their potential to present challenging conservation issues: they lay within a geographical area which was not approximate to any major towns or cities, tourist attractions or travel hubs. It was thought that these isolated churches would largely attract funding only from within their own congregations and lack the potential for viable secondary use, resulting in deteriorating fabric due to lack of financial capacity.

On reflection, it was concluded that whilst the fourteen churches identified could be very useful in determining the question of how funding impacts on issues of good maintenance and repair, the remoteness of the buildings did not present any particular relevance for determining the effectiveness of the two methodologies, as their similar geographic situations would not present any particular issues regarding the identification of significance. Furthermore their similar geographic location, demographic of their congregations and age of the buildings' fabric could potentially lead to findings unrepresentative of church buildings in general.

In order to find a suitable cross section of churches to form case studies the advice of the

Exeter Diocesan Advisory Committee Secretary was sought. The D.A.C. secretary suggested ten churches all of which were currently seeking faculty approval as they represented a random selection including: varying geographical locations, both urban and rural; differing administrations, including churches from all four of the Devon archdeaconries; varying ranges of listed status ranging from grade II to grade I and varying sizes of congregation.

At this point in the research process two further factors influenced the final format of the methodology: the researcher attended a lecture by Stephen Bond, based on his recently published book *Managing Built Heritage*, advocating the ascribing of values as a means of identifying significance and made contact with the Churches Conservation Trust, learning that they were using assessments of significance as part of the management of their historic churches. Having discovered that other organisations within the conservation community were writing assessments of significance and that published works were giving guidance on how statements of significance should be carried out the researcher decided a fuller comparison should be undertaken. These additional approaches to determining significance allowed the researcher to carry out two further surveys of the study churches which could then be compared with the completed surveys using the C. of E. and E.H. methodologies. The intention of the thesis changed from deciding which of two methodologies was the most successful, to analysing the data collected using four methodologies to discover the strengths and weaknesses of the different approaches and then using this information to create an entirely new methodology for determining the significance of historic churches.

4.4 The case study

The survey work began with the writing of a statement of significance for one of the churches suggested by the Exeter D.A.C. secretary using the C. of E. methodology. At this point it became apparent that the intention of using ten separate case studies would need to

be revised due to the time taken for research and the volume of information (Appendix 6 pp. 59-81). The case study, Plymtree church, had been randomly chosen from the ten churches selected by the Exeter D.A.C. secretary, and appeared to yield such comprehensive information that the decision was made to alter the research methodology to that of a single case study.

The question then needed to be asked, could the information provided by the study of Plymtree church alone provide enough general information to allow for a full comparison between the four methodologies? The research required for completing the statement of significance using the C. of E. guidelines revealed it to be a well-documented building of high historic and architectural importance, with a good survival of historic fabric (reflected in its listed status as grade I). Documents related to the church were available from a number of easily accessible sources including the West Country Studies Library and the Devon Record Office (now both combined in the Devon Heritage Centre), Exeter Cathedral Library and the University of Exeter Special Collections. Research was further assisted by the churchwardens at Plymtree, who provided good access to local archival information and were also very helpful in acting as conduits to other members of the congregation. The congregation through questionnaires responded in significant number and detail to questions regarding the social history of the church and its significance for mission. It was therefore concluded that, in terms of ease of information gathering, quality of information and the complexity of the structure itself, Plymtree church presented a case study which would provide enough data to make a thorough comparison of the four methodologies.

Whilst providing good baseline information the church and churchyard also presented a number of significant potential conservation issues which add to the richness of the building as a potential single case study. Initial research suggested both the church and

churtyard were of archaeological interest, with the potential to yield evidence of earlier churches in addition to work from a number of different phases in the development of the present building. In addition to the weight of information concerning the different phases of the church's development, Plymtree church also incorporated a high percentage of master craftsmanship, including the carved medieval screen and bench ends, whose sensitivity could potentially raise a number of conservation issues. Unlike many of the churches in the surrounding area, Plymtree church had not undergone a major restoration programme during the Victorian period and this unusual lack of intervention presented the potential for conflict if future intervention were proposed, again adding to the list of potential conservation issues attached to the building.

After carrying out the first assessment of the church using the C. of E. guidance, there were no obvious areas of the assessment for which the church could not provide illustrative information. Each of the seven separate sections suggested by the guidance and each of the subsections yielded significant data, both in terms of quantity and complexity (appendix 6 pp. 59-81). The only question which remained answered was due to the ambiguity of the question itself, rather than lack of information from the church building (this issue will be discussed in Chapter 6).

Despite the high architectural and historic interest³²² of the building, it still represented the type of church for which the C. of E. guidance for writing statements of significance was formulated, and was not of the type referred to by the C. of E. as 'larger and more complex churches' for which they recommended a professionally written Conservation Management Plan.³²³ In terms of depth and quantity of information, therefore, Plymtree church appeared to present a good single study candidate.

³²² English Heritage. 'List entry for Church of St. John the Baptist, Plymtree' [online] <http://list.english-heritage.org.uk/resultsingle.aspx?uid=1333727> [8th August 2012]

³²³ C.B.C., 'Guidance Note', p. 3.

The question then needed to be asked, whether the church was representative enough to allow for general points to be raised in comparison. Initial study showed Plymtree church to be a typical Devon parish church (Chapter 5) including: its plan; use of local materials; the nature of its features (type of arcade, screen and western tower) and the style of its decoration. In addition to this regional representativeness, Plymtree church did not present any elements of style or date, which would make it unrepresentative of churches in general or present a specific set of issues relevant to only a small number of churches. For example, a church designed and built in the Victorian period with internal furnishings by the same Victorian architect, which had never been adapted or altered, would have very specific but not necessarily representative issues regarding significance. Similarly a church bombed in the Second World War and rebuilt in the same style would potentially not present enough evidence to form a single case study.

In addition to the advantage of enabling a full comparison between the four methodologies to take place within the time available, the single case study also has the benefit of affording the researcher more time to study the building, its surroundings and social role. This allows for a depth of analysis not possible if a number of case studies were undertaken. For example the researcher would not have been able to consult the number of separate resources required to adequately research a number of churches. Similarly liaising with enough members of the congregations to form an adequate picture of the social or communal significance of a number of churches would have resulted in large amounts of information which would not have been possible to process within the time available. By concentrating on only one church, points of comparison between the four methodologies could be made without the confusion caused by differences in fabric which would inevitably have occurred across a range of church buildings.

The single case study approach was not however without its weaknesses. Having decided to study only one building the researcher was able to engage in a level of research which many members of a church congregation (those normally involved in the writing of C. of E. statements of significance, who would carry out the work voluntarily in their spare time) might not be able to undertake. The ten churches suggested by the Exeter D.A.C. secretary as case studies all had statements of significance written by their congregations which averaged three pages of A4 in length, compared with the 23 pages produced by the researcher following the C. of E. guidance. (Copies of these statements were made available to the examiners in a separate confidential appendix, with the permission of the D.A.C. Secretary, appendix A). Consequently the depth of information provided for the statement of significance by the researcher could be considered unrepresentational. However, for the purposes of the thesis it was concluded that the benefits to the comparison of the four methodologies in providing detailed information would outweigh the losses of its unrepresentational length. (The question of the strengths and weaknesses of the single, professionally-trained researcher in carrying out the study will be discussed in the next section.)

Another disadvantage of the single case study is the limiting of issues which could arise when looking at different buildings. Plymtree church, as discussed above, is fairly representational of Devon parish church buildings (albeit at the higher end of historic and architectural interest) and therefore did not present any problems when responding to the questions, which formed part of the C. of E. guidance. However, a church of a less representational type, for example a poorly documented building, largely dating from only one period, might have uncovered deficiencies in the C. of E. guidance and the three other methodologies, which the exemplary Plymtree church did not. Furthermore, despite the physical representativeness of Plymtree church, whilst researching its social and communal aspects it became apparent that the congregation of Plymtree church were unusually

committed to the upkeep and maintenance of the building and pursuing an on-going programme of repair and maintenance. For example during the period of time during which the thesis was written the church was entirely redecorated, new lighting installed and the medieval paintwork of an image niche was conserved – see Chapter 5. Such a level of care could not necessarily be regarded as representational, and may have mitigated against the identification of conservation issues apparent in less well-maintained churches.

Using a number of different churches as case studies would have added a breadth of experience to the depth of research provided by the single case study. However, due to the time and word count constraints of the research project this approach was not feasible. It could however represent an opportunity to expand on the findings of the thesis in a future project. It was therefore concluded that the strengths of the single case study method outweighed its weaknesses and the approach would allow for the effectiveness of the C. of E. to be successfully analysed in comparison with the three other methodologies.

4.5 The four methodologies for comparison

The selection of the three methodologies for comparison with the C. of E. methodology was explained above. In this section the four methodologies will be described and the justification for their inclusion.

The C. of E., as described in the previous chapter, has been formulating guidance for writing Statements of Significance since 2000 and it is the 2011 version of this guidance which was analysed in this study (as this guidance has been superseded and is no longer available online, a copy has been included as Appendix 3, pp 42-54). The previous chapter described how, following the Faculty Jurisdiction Rules 2000,³²⁴ applicants submitting a

³²⁴ Church of England. 'Faculty Jurisdiction Rules 2000' [Online] http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2000/2047/pdfs/uksi_20002047_en.pdf [22nd November 2012]

faculty petition where ‘significant changes to a listed church are proposed’³²⁵ were required to provide a Statement of Significance. The Jurisdiction Rules 2000 defined a Statement of Significance as ‘a document which summarises the historical development of the church and identifies the important features that make major contributions to the character of the church’.³²⁶

The guidance for writing statements of significance is divided into two parts Part I which should provide an ‘overview of the significance of the church’³²⁷ and Part II which should give a more detailed view of the part of the church for which faculty approval is being sought.³²⁸ For this study, Part I of the guidance was the text referred to as it concerns the whole church and is recommended for completion before any decisions are made concerning alterations to the building. In this respect, Part I relates more to the model used by the conservation community in general for determining significance.

Before Part I begins, the guidance requires a list of basic facts about the church building including any statutory designations such as whether the church is listed, an ancient monument or lies within a conservation area. Any information on statutory designations concerning the natural heritage and churchyard are also required.³²⁹ Part I then analyses the church and its churchyard under seven separate headings. It begins by considering the church in its wider context looking at its setting within the landscape or townscape³³⁰ and the nature of the churchyard in terms of both its built and natural heritage.³³¹ The next section requires the historic and present use of the church to be described including any significant historical associations.³³² It is only after the church has been fully contextualised in this way that the guidance requires the historic fabric of the building to be analysed. This

³²⁵ C of E, Faculty Jurisdiction, p.5.

³²⁶ *Ibid.*, p.5.

³²⁷ Church Buildings Council. ‘Statements of Significance and Need’, Appendix 3, p. 42.

³²⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 42.

³²⁹ *Ibid.*, p.44.

³³⁰ *Ibid.*, p.45.

³³¹ *Ibid.*, p. 46.

³³² *Ibid.*, p. 47.

begins with a description of the church to include its historic development and those associated with its creation.³³³ It then focuses on the fabric in more detail asking for the significance to be assessed of either each historical phase or each area of the church. This assessment requires the prescribing of rates of significance ranging from high to low.³³⁴ The guidance then requires the identification and rating of the individual components, which form the contents of the church, using the same range of values.³³⁵ Finally an assessment of the fitness for purpose of the building is required, described as ‘significance for mission’, including any possible areas suitable for adaptation where little or no change is involved.³³⁶

In terms of illustrative material the guidance requires a ground plan, a map of the local area, and at least two photographs showing the exterior and the interior.³³⁷

In general the C. of E. expects the statements to be written by the members of the church congregation or the Parochial Church Council (P.C.C.) - the elected executive body of the parish. The guidance recommends the P.C.C. should collaborate with their church architect or building surveyor (usually the person appointed to produce the quinquennial inspection) and with the D.A.C. The guidance only advises additional professional help is sought ‘in the case of large and complex churches’.³³⁸ The C. of E. guidance is, therefore, devised primarily for lay people with no professional background in the history of architecture or architectural conservation. The intention of the document is to provide a frame of reference for the D.A.C. for decisions concerning alterations to the fabric, whilst also providing an understanding of the significance of the church building and its contents for the church users and those responsible for the stewardship of the building.

The revised version of the C. of E. guidance published online in January 2014 has only two

³³³ Ibid., p. 48.

³³⁴ Ibid., p. 49.

³³⁵ Ibid., p. 48.

³³⁶ Ibid., p. 51.

³³⁷ Ibid., p. 53.

³³⁸ Ibid., p. 43.

sections,³³⁹ replacing the seven sections which constituted part 1 of the 2011 guidance used for this study (appendix 3). In the first section the revised guidance asks for a brief description of the church building, contents, churchyard and setting. The second section requires the significance of the church, contents and churchyard to be defined in terms of their special architectural and historical interest and any significant features of artistic or archaeological interest to be identified.³⁴⁰ The revised version is considerably abridged and far more limited in scope than the 2011 guidance. The natural heritage and landscape value of the church and its environs is now confined to a description of the churchyard and setting, whereas two separate sections were devoted to analysing the setting of the church and the living churchyard in the 2011 guidance. There is no longer any requirement to consider the social history of the church, in terms of its past and present use and association with significance events or personalities. Information is no longer required on the building's fitness for purpose or consideration given to potential for adaptation. In its revision, the new guidance has become a simple description intended to highlight those elements of the church and its setting which are of particular historic, architectural, artistic or archaeological interest. As a consequence, the 2011 version represents a far richer resource for making comparisons with the other methodologies and for suggesting data for a new methodology for assessing significance.

The C.C.T. methodology Assessments of Significance (A.o.S.) is a framework for assessing the significance of the churches held in their care. The C.C.T., originally known as the Redundant Churches Fund, was founded following the Pastoral Measure of 1968 to care for churches whose congregations could no longer afford to maintain their buildings. The C.C.T., as discussed in the previous chapter, receives core funding from the Church Commissioners (the department which manages the property assets of the C.of E.), from

³³⁹ Church Buildings Council. 'Statements of Significance and Statements of Need' [Online] http://www.churchcare.co.uk/images/Guidance_on_statements_of_significance_and_need.pdf [7th January 2015]

³⁴⁰ Ibid.

the Government's Department of Culture, Media and Sport (D.C.M.S.), and through other charitable donations and fund raising³⁴¹. All the C.C.T. churches are of great historic interest, mainly listed grade I and are considered 'worthy of preservation for a wide variety of reasons, all linked to their historic, architectural or cultural significance'.³⁴²

The remit of the C.C.T. is to keep their church buildings in a good state of repair and open to the public.³⁴³ Part of the C.C.T.'s stated conservation policy is a strategy for alteration, adaptation, additions and use as they believe an unused building deteriorates faster, is a waste of an historic asset and is vulnerable to vandalism³⁴⁴(although the churches have not been de-consecrated, their use for church services is limited). Consequently, it is now a strategic aim of the C.C.T. to encourage access and promote the greater use of their buildings; which in some instances requires alteration to the historic fabric. In these circumstances the C.C.T. produce an Assessment of Significance (A.o.S.) as the first stage in a consultation process to decide whether a church is suitable for adaptation; where a scheme would require alteration, removal or addition to the historic fabric.³⁴⁵ Once the A.o.S. has been written a statement of need, options appraisal, impact assessment and drawings of the proposed changes are produced³⁴⁶(a copy of a completed A.o.S. for St Andrew's Old Church, Kingsbury, London Borough of Brent, is included in Appendix 2, p.17).

The methodology for the C.C.T.'s A.o.S. closely follows E.H.'s 'Conservation Principles,

³⁴¹ The Churches Conservation Trust. 'Our History' [Online]
<http://www.visitchurches.org.uk/AboutCCT/Aboutus/Ourhistory/> [23rd November 2012]

³⁴² The Churches Conservation Trust. 'Conserving Historic Churches' [Online]
<http://www.visitchurches.org.uk/AboutCCT/Conservinghistoricchurches/> [23rd November 2012]

³⁴³ The Churches Conservation Trust. 'Adaptations and Alterations' [Online]
<http://www.visitchurches.org.uk/AboutCCT/Conservinghistoricchurches/Ourapproach/Adaptationalterations/> [23rd November 2012]

³⁴⁴ The Churches Conservation Trust. 'Conservation Policy, November 2005' [Online]
<http://www.visitchurches.org.uk/Assets/Conservationdocuments/Conservationpolicy.pdf?1296743285> [23rd November 2012] p. 9.

³⁴⁵ Neil Rushton (nrushton@tcct.org.uk) *Re: Assessments of Significance*. Email to Bridget Gillard (gillardbridget@btinternet.com), 8th November 2012, Appendix 4, p. 54.

³⁴⁶ C.C.T., Conservation Policy, pp.11-12.

Policies and Guidance’,³⁴⁷ and this parallel is explained in the introduction to the A.o.S. document, along with a summary of E.H.’s six conservation principles.³⁴⁸ The actual assessment of the building begins with a description of the church³⁴⁹ accompanied by location maps, historic maps, historic images and a photographic record of the exterior and interior of the building. The next section begins with a definition of heritage values based on E.H.’s *Conservation Principles*. The four E.H. heritage values: evidential, historical, aesthetic and communal are then used as subheadings for the analysis of the church; to determine to what aspects of the building these values can be ascribed.³⁵⁰ The information gathered under the four headings then feeds into two sections: the first concerns the evidential, historical and aesthetic values of the church and the second the communal values. The aim of this section it to assess the significance of the church by relating the identified heritage values to its fabric and evolution; by identifying who values the church and why and by considering its setting and context.³⁵¹ This is followed by a summary in which the different elements of the church and its setting identified as having heritage value are grouped according to the level of their significance: high, medium and low,³⁵² this information is then shown on a colour-coded plan.³⁵³ The potential for tension between the different values is then explored and elements which require further research.³⁵⁴ Finally the areas of heritage sensitivity in the church are listed under the headings high, medium and low:³⁵⁵ this information is also illustrated by a colour-coded plan.³⁵⁶

By adopting E.H.’s *Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance* as the basis for their A.o.S. the C.C.T. are using a format mainly intended for the use of conservation professionals: E.H.

³⁴⁷ English Heritage. ‘Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance for the Sustainable Management of the Historic Environment’ [Online] <http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/publications/conservation-principles-sustainable-management-historic-environment/conservationprinciplespoliciesguidanceapr08web.pdf> [10th October 2013]

³⁴⁸ C.C.T. A.o.S., pp. 18-20.

³⁴⁹ Ibid., pp. 20-23.

³⁵⁰ Ibid., pp. 23-32.

³⁵¹ Ibid., pp. 32-36.

³⁵² Ibid., p. 36.

³⁵³ Ibid., p. 39.

³⁵⁴ Ibid., pp. 36-37.

³⁵⁵ Ibid., pp. 37-38.

³⁵⁶ Ibid., p. 40.

staff, local authorities and professional advisers, as well as property owners and developers.³⁵⁷ In recognition of the professional level of guidance they have chosen, the C.C.T. use their conservation managers, advised by regional team members, to write the A.o.S. However, the section on communal values requires information from a range of people who have used and value the building. This is obtained through replies to interviewed questions, and then summarised in the text.³⁵⁸

The A.o.S. is intended for an in house audience, the C.C.T. Director of Conservation, who may in certain cases be advised by the Senior Management Team or the Conservation Working Group established by the Trustees for advice.³⁵⁹ The document is written for a specific purpose: to enable the C.C.T. to decide whether an historic church is suitable for alteration or adaptation.

The C.C.T. A.o.S. methodology was chosen as one of the alternative approaches to assessing significance as it is used for the same asset type (historic churches), but follows the E.H. values-based method for assessing significance. It, therefore, has the potential to suggest ways in which identifying values might assist in the effectiveness of assessing significance.

The methodology already familiar to the researcher was E.H.'s guidance for writing conservation area appraisals which forms part of their document *Understanding Place: Conservation Area Designation, Appraisal and Management*.³⁶⁰ Although conservation area designation and management outside London is the responsibility of local planning authorities, E.H. have chosen to produce a guide for writing appraisals to encourage best

³⁵⁷ E.H., *Conservation Principles*, 2008, p. 13.

³⁵⁸ C.C.T. A.o.S., pp. 30-33.

³⁵⁹ C.C.T., 'Conservation Policy', p. 12.

³⁶⁰ English Heritage. 'Understanding Place: Conservation Area Designation, Appraisal and Management' [Online] <http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/content/publications/publicationsNew/guidelines-standards/understanding-place-conservation-area/understanding-place-ca-designation-appraisal-management.pdf> [24th November 2012]

practice. Their current methodology is based on an earlier document *Guidance on conservation area appraisals* which they produced in 2005. E.H. intend to further adapt the current methodology to reflect the changes resulting from the N.P.P.F., Localism and other Government initiatives, and the reform of the Local Authority Planning system, but this has not yet been produced.³⁶¹ At present, however E.H. are satisfied that the document should stand as it provides useful advice.

Unlike the previous two methodologies the conservation area appraisal needs to assess not just one building and its setting, but a whole geographical area including buildings, open spaces and the public realm. Conservation areas are defined in legislation as ‘areas of special architectural or historic interest the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance’,³⁶² but there are no standard specifications for their designation other than a level of quality and historic interest.³⁶³ The purpose of the conservation area appraisal is to ‘define what contributes to the *special* character and sense of place’.³⁶⁴ In order to make this definition the E.H. guidance recommends beginning with a definition of the area’s special interest. This section is a summary of the values of the area: the relationship of the area with its setting; the still visible effects of its historic development; its communal value (how the area is experienced by people); its architectural quality and built form; its natural value in terms of open and green spaces; its historic value represented by designated assets and its local value or sense of place.³⁶⁵ Once these values have been summarised the rest of the document explains how they were identified. In addition to a factual description of the location and setting the guidance recommends the

³⁶¹ E.H., ‘Understanding Place’, p. 1.

³⁶² The National Archives. ‘Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990’ [Online] <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1990/9/part/II> [24th November 2012]

³⁶³ Cornwall Council. ‘Conservation Areas’ [Online] <http://www.cornwall.gov.uk/default.aspx?page=2439> [24th November, 2012]

³⁶⁴ Cornwall Council. ‘Conservation Area Appraisals and Management Plans’ [Online] <http://www.cornwall.gov.uk/default.aspx?page=17377> [24th November, 2012]

³⁶⁵ E.H. ‘Understanding, Place’, pp. 9-10.

mapping of vistas, views, and landmark buildings.³⁶⁶ Maps supported by text are also recommended for indicating historic survivals and archaeological potential as part of the historic development section.³⁶⁷ In addition to highlighting positive elements which contribute to the character of the conservation area such as the architectural quality, historic street patterns, open spaces, trees and greenery, locally distinctive features and styles³⁶⁸ the appraisal also seeks to identify elements that are detrimental. This includes identifying buildings in a poor state of repair, inappropriate development, unsympathetic alterations and generic issues such as pressure for change.³⁶⁹

Most conservation area appraisals are carried out by conservation officers or consultants commissioned by the local authority. The E.H. guidance, however, is directed at a wider audience 'local authorities, community groups, amenity societies, developers and their agents, consultants, and those who live in, work in, or own properties in conservation areas'.³⁷⁰ Once the appraisal has been written E.H. advises it should be placed in draft form on the local authorities' website in order to give the general public an opportunity to comment; many local authorities also hold a public exhibition or meeting to explain the appraisal in its draft form. The appraisal then has to be approved by the local authority planning advisory panel whose members are all elected local authority councilors. The appraisals are therefore usually prepared by conservation professionals but are amended and adapted following comments by the general public.

The E.H. methodology for writing conservation area appraisals was chosen as it is based on the method of characterisation to determine significance, and offers an alternative values-based approach to conservation. As the original guidance was written in 2005 it pre-

³⁶⁶ Ibid., p.10.

³⁶⁷ Ibid., p. 11.

³⁶⁸ Ibid., pp. 12-15.

³⁶⁹ Ibid., pp. 15-16.

³⁷⁰ Ibid., p. 3.

dates E.H.'s *Conservation Principles* and does not require the conservation area to be analysed according to the four values: evidential, historical, aesthetic and communal, with these values related back to the subject. Instead, the area is analysed according to its various physical elements and from this analysis its values both tangible and intangible emerge. In common with other characterisation methodologies, the conservation area appraisals provide a context for change in both identifying characteristics which should inform future work and highlighting areas currently detrimental to the character which offer opportunities for development and enhancement; the so-called 'consideration of the future as an integral component' praised by Worthing and Bond.³⁷¹ As the C. of E. currently require statements of significance to be written as part of their planning process, a methodology which has an in-built requirement for identifying existing problems and suggesting opportunities for change could usefully inform this process. In addition to these potential benefits, the broad approach of the E.H. methodology, formulated to include buildings and their landscape setting, could also be of relevance as few churches stand in isolation, rather forming part of a ceremonial landscape including external spaces, such as graveyards and gardens of remembrance, and associated structures.

For the final methodology a theoretical model was used based on the identification of a range of values³⁷² and a system for assessing significance³⁷³ suggested by Derek Worthing and Stephen Bond (W. and B.) in their book *Managing Built Heritage*. The authors write from a practical and academic background, and have formulated a theory of assessing significance based on their own experience of writing conservation plans, for which statements of cultural significance form a core component.³⁷⁴ Although the book was published in 2008, just before E.H. published their *Conservation Principles*, the authors were involved in the second stage consultation for the E.H. document and reference the four

³⁷¹ Worthing and Bond, 2008, p. 191.

³⁷² Ibid., pp. 62-69.

³⁷³ Ibid., p. 81.

³⁷⁴ Ibid., p. 62.

E.H. values in their work. In the consultation document E.H. stated that their four values were ‘not intended as the definitive checklist of heritage values but to prompt comprehensive thought about the values of a place’.³⁷⁵ It is in response to this challenge that W. and B. produced their list of seventeen values based on their own experience.³⁷⁶ Interestingly, by the time E.H. published *Conservation Principles* the suggestions of the four values not being a definitive checklist was removed and they were instead described as

‘intended to prompt comprehensive thought about the range of inter-related heritage values that may be attached to a place. The high level values range from evidential, which is dependent on the inherited fabric of the place, through historical and aesthetic, to communal values which derive from people’s identification with the place’;³⁷⁷

this new definition suggesting that all values fit within these four types. The E.H. definition also suggests a hierarchy of values, a view to which W. and B. do not subscribe stating, ‘all value categories should be considered to be of equal standing’.³⁷⁸

W. and B.’s methodology for assessing significance consists of four stages: identifying and assessing the values embodied in and represented by the site; assessing how valuable the site is compared to other sites; evaluating what aspects and elements of the site contribute to the overall significance of the place; evaluating the relative significance of the various aspects and elements of the place.³⁷⁹ In addition, the advice recommends the identification of sensitivity. There are no specific references to what types of illustrative material should be used to aid the presentation of the analysis.

The advice in the book is aimed at ‘specialists in built cultural heritage – conservation officers, built heritage managers, architects, planners and surveyors’;³⁸⁰ the people who would normally write conservation management plans, but recommends the involvement of the public in order to determine community value stating

³⁷⁵ Ibid., p. 62.

³⁷⁶ Ibid., pp. 62-68.

³⁷⁷ E.H. ‘Conservation Principles’, p. 27.

³⁷⁸ Worthing and Bond, 2008, p. 81.

³⁷⁹ Ibid., p. 81.

³⁸⁰ Ibid., back cover.

‘This is a particularly important aspect of establishing significance, not least because conservation activity is often actually justified on the basis that society chooses to value certain things, whereas in reality ‘experts’ – and often experts drawn from a certain strata in society- have decided what is valuable and why’.³⁸¹

As the W. and B. advice has been compiled for a book rather than guidance notes there is a less prescribed procedure than the other methodologies and more general comment. The notes on assessing value are very detailed whereas the three other steps for assessing significance are discussed in theory, but without specific guidance as to how they should be carried out. As a consequence the researcher looked to other sources to inform this part of the methodology: ‘Measuring Change in Conservation Areas’³⁸² produced for E.H. was used to assist in the assessment of the value of the site in relation to comparable sites; the C.C.T. guidance was referred to for evaluating the significance and sensitivity of the church.

In many respects the W. and B. methodology is similar to the E.H. guidance in *Conservation Principles* and its practical application in the C.C.T. methodology for their A.o.S. Both the W and B. and C.C.T. methodologies require values to be identified, applied to the site and then their relative significance to be evaluated. The W. and B. system for assessing significance does not include a statement of historic development as the assessment forms step 2 of their guidance for writing a conservation plan (step 1 of which requires a historic development).³⁸³ The two methodologies do however have their points of divergence, and it is for this reason that the W. and B. method was chosen. The extensive range of heritage values offered by the W. and B. methodology offers potential for a broadening of the understanding of significance. In addition, the methodology suggests comparison with other sites, an approach not currently included in the C. of E. or the C.C.T. guidance.

The four methodologies described above are not the only frameworks currently used for determining significance. As regards theoretical frameworks, a number of recently

³⁸¹ Ibid., p.131.

³⁸² Conservation Studio, *Measuring Change in Conservation Areas* [Online], <http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/publications/measuring-change-in-conservation-areas/> [1st November 2012]

³⁸³ Worthing and Bond, 2008, p. 111.

published books have included wide-ranging valuation typologies, as illustrated in Table 1. Furthermore Orbasli's *Architectural Conservation* and Forsyth's *Understanding Historic Building Conservation* both give some guidance on how to assess significance. However the W. and B. typology was chosen over the others as it was the only one which also offered a prescribed methodology for assessing significance from which points of comparison with the C. of E. methodology could be made.

English Heritage have produce a number of different formula for the determining of significance including Section 7.6 'Defining Significance' of *Informed Conservation*³⁸⁴, the chapter 'Assessing Heritage Significance' in *Conservation Principles, Policy and Guidance*³⁸⁵ and the 'Summary of Selection Criteria' from the *Places of Worship Selection Guide*³⁸⁶ - full copies of these texts can be found in Appendix 5, p. 56. All these methodologies could have been used as comparisons with the C. of E. methodology, but for the purposes of this study they were used instead to validate the relevance of the research questions. On reflection, the criteria for assessing heritage significance from *Conservation Principles* – see Table 6 p.119 would have presented a very appropriate methodology for comparison. However it does not include any elements which do not appear in any of the other four methodologies tested. The guidance elements in *Informed Conservation* – see Table 6, are less detailed, and again are covered by the four methodologies. The criteria from the *Places of Worship Selection Guide* are more materials-based and focused on gauging architectural and historical merit rather than indentifying significance.

Other approaches for defining character and significance were considered by the researcher including the guidance available from local authorities for writing Village Design Statements (V.D.S.) and the *Landscape Character Assessment Guidance* produced by Natural

³⁸⁴ Clark, K, *Informed Conservation*, London, English Heritage, 2001, pp. 96-97.

³⁸⁵ E.H., *Conservation Principles*, 2008, pp.35-40.

³⁸⁶ Heritage Protection Department *Places of Worship Selection Guide*, London English Heritage pp. 3-4.

England and Scottish Natural Heritage.³⁸⁷ A V.D.S. is intended to summarise the ‘unique visual character’ of a village in order that any future development respects this character.³⁸⁸ The V.D.S. has relevance for the consideration of how significance should be determined and has particular pertinence for the discussion regarding the extent of public involvement (as they are intended to be completed by members of the public). However, as there is no prescribed format for writing a V.D.S. it was not considered as a suitable option for a comparative methodology. The *Landscape Character Assessment Guidance* provides detailed advice on how to identify and express the different elements which ‘give a place its unique character’ and within this methodology building styles and historic artefacts are included.³⁸⁹ However, it was concluded that overall the format was too heavily weighted towards consideration of the natural history for the purposes of this study. Other approaches such as the Church of Scotland’s ‘ten guiding principles’ included in their information leaflet *Re-ordering Church Interiors*,³⁹⁰ the written account element of E.H.’s *Understanding Historic Buildings: A Guide to Good Recording Practice*³⁹¹ and the Methodist church’s *Historic Artefact Significance Assessment Grid*³⁹² were not used as comparative methodologies as the structure of their formats or their scope was less wide than the methodologies chosen.

4.6 Potential for researcher bias

As with any piece of research, an awareness of bias needs to be acknowledged and measures taken to counter any over-subjectivity. Acknowledgement of bias was particularly relevant to the thesis as the practice of identifying significance, particularly where multiple values are being assessed, is open to over-subjective conclusions. As an architectural

³⁸⁷ Natural England and Scottish Natural Heritage. ‘Landscape Character Assessment Guidance’ [Online] <http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/2671754?category=31019> [15th November, 2012]

³⁸⁸ Campaign to Protect Rural England. ‘Planning Help: Village Design Statements’ [Online] <http://www.planninghelp.org.uk/improve-where-you-live/shape-your-local-area/village-design-statements> [15th November, 2012]

³⁸⁹ Natural England and Scottish Natural Heritage. ‘Landscape Character,’ 2012.

³⁹⁰ Church of Scotland. ‘Re-ordering Church Interiors’ [Online] http://www.churchofscotland.org.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0007/3031/church_interiors.pdf [1st September 2014]

³⁹¹ English Heritage. ‘Understanding Historic Buildings: A guide to Good Recording Practice’ [Online] <https://www.english-heritage.org.uk/publications/understanding-historic-buildings/> [1st September, 2014]

³⁹² Methodist Heritage. ‘Draft Methodist Church Historic Artefact Significance Grid’ [Online] <http://www.methodistheritage.org.uk/artefacts-significance-assessment-grid-0814.pdf> [1st September, 2014]

historian with a training in the identification of historic styles, the researcher would identify and respond to issues of aesthetics and history above other aspects of the church's significance, such as those relating to its ecology, archaeology, structure, acoustics, associational history, campanology etc. As a consequence those aspects of the church which related to aesthetics and history were identified with a level of professionalism missing from the other aspects of its significance. Although reference was made throughout the research to alternative perspectives, its inevitable subjectivity could only be successfully counteracted by a collaborative approach, seeking the views of representatives of all users of the church and churchyard throughout the research process and incorporating their findings into the proposed new guidance for writing statements of significance. This approach was not feasible within the time constraints of the project, but other interested parties could follow the methodology suggested by the thesis as part of a further research project.

The architectural and historical bias of the researcher was lessened to some extent through her involvement with church buildings as a worshipper. This involvement gave some insight into the issues which concern the users of church buildings, but as the study church was not the researcher's parish church, this insight was limited to generic issues rather than issues specific to Plymtree church.

A further potential for bias related to the researchers' professional experience and training in building conservation: specifically working as an English Heritage casework officer; a local authority conservation officer and completion of an M.A. in architectural building conservation. This background could potentially result in greater weight given to the identification of the age-related values of the church over the other values, in particular communal value. In order to counteract this bias the researcher used questionnaires (which will be described in the next section) in order to canvas the opinion of the local community

and congregation regarding the communal value of Plymtree church. This attempt at redressing the balance of the research was inevitably limited as alternative viewpoints were only sort for specific issues: those relating to the church's communal value. In order to entirely redress the balance, the input of the local community and congregation would need to be sought when identifying all the values of the church.

Constraints of time, length of the research project and the researcher's lack of expertise in community consultation limited the involvement of the public. As a consequence the research is weighted towards the aesthetic and historic significance of the church and the issues surrounding the conservation of its built fabric. Attempts have been made to mitigate this bias by reference to other points of view and by suggesting a research methodology, which could be followed by anyone with an interest in the building (either through a specific interest in the church or churchyard, as a worshipper or member of the local community).

4.7 Community and professional liaison in the research process

This section will make reference to and provide evidence of those involved in the research. Professional conservation advice was provided by E.H.: Peter Beacham, Former Head of Designation at E.H. advised on the Heritage Protection Programme; Diana Evans, Head of Places of Worship Policy at E.H., gave detailed information on their conservation principles, involvement with historic churches and deployment of significance as a conservation tool (see appendix 1 for a transcript of the interview) and Dr. Roger Bowdler, Designation Director at E.H., gave advice on researching the history of E.H.'s adoption of significance. On a national level, Dr. Joseph Elders, Major Projects Officer, and Jude Johncock, Casework Officer, of the C. of E.'s Cathedrals and Church Buildings Division, provided information on the C. of E.'s adoption of statements of significance as a conservation strategy (they did not wish the transcript of their interview to be published,

but a summary of the meeting can be found in appendix 11). At a diocesan level Louise Bartlett, Senior Church Buildings Adviser and D.A.C. Secretary for the Diocese of Exeter advised on choosing a case study and answered questions on statements of significance in the Exeter Diocese and the faculty process and Dr. Stuart Blaylock, archaeologist and member of the Exeter D.A.C. advised on the faculty process. Further professional advice came from Dr. Neil Rushton, Conservation Projects Manager at the C.C.T., who discussed the C.C.T. approach to writing assessments of significance and two C. of E. archdeacons.

As described in the previous section, the public (in the form of members of Plymtree church congregation) were involved in identifying the communal values of the church and churchyard and in describing its former and present use, as part of the research process. As discussed in Chapter 3, an understanding of how a church was and continues to be used is of particular importance when assessing its significance. In order to obtain this information the researcher sent the churchwarden, who had agreed to act as a point of liaison with the congregation, a questionnaire (appendix 13). In accordance with the University of Plymouth's 'Ethical Principles for Research Involving Human Participants,' the questionnaire began with a statement of the research, its purpose and application.³⁹³ In order to obtain a full and detailed response, the churchwarden also included a covering letter again explaining the purposes of the research and a statement that the views given would be treated as confidential (appendix 14). Thirteen members of the congregation filled in the questionnaire, some in hard copy and others by email. As some respondents replied in handwriting and other signed their comments, in order to maintain the confidentiality promised by the churchwarden,³⁹⁴ the responses to the questionnaire were referred to throughout the thesis in summary form and were not quoted from directly, and copies were not included in the main appendix. However, with the agreement of the

³⁹³ University of Plymouth. 'Ethical Principles for Research Involving Human Participants,' *The Graduate School Research Degrees Handbook*, December 2012, p. 83.

³⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 84

churchwarden the responses were shown to the examiners in the form of a confidential appendix (appendix B).

4.8 Alternative methodologies to the comparative method chosen

Another approach to testing the effectiveness of the C. of E. methodology would have been a comparison of a number of C. of E. statements of significance completed by P.C.C.s, congregations and parish members. This approach would have been very effective in highlighting user –related problems in the existing guidance. However, as mentioned above, the ten lay-produced statements of significance provided by the Exeter D.A.C. secretary were quite short in length and not considered to contain enough data for a full analysis. Of the ten statements only one was divided into the seven sections recommended by the C. of E. guidance, with data for each section. Of the other nine statements: all provided information on the location of the church, and a description of its architecture and contents; none provided any information on the natural heritage of the site; three provided information on the social history of the church, and only one included information on the church’s significance for mission. The statements were not included as an appendix, as they were not given directly to the researcher by the authors. However they were made available with the permission of the Exeter D.A.C. secretary to the examiners in a confidential appendix (appendix A).

A comparison of a number of existing lay-produced statements of significance would not have allowed for the principles on which the methodology was formulated to be questioned nor its reliance on non-professionals to carry out the assessment. In addition, by introducing other methodologies as comparisons, alternative approaches and possible improvements could be suggested. Furthermore a study of this nature, i.e. comparing different lay-produced statements in order to suggest ways in which they could be improved, is currently being undertaken by the Christianity and Culture Centre at the

University of York.

The chosen method could have included a number of different churches as part of its methodology, but this approach was rejected in favour of a single case study, as discussed above.

4.9 The methodology in detail

4.9.1. Preliminary research

Before the methodologies were tested, some preliminary research took place. The object of this exercise was to replicate the level of knowledge an experienced conservation professional would already have before embarking on a project. None of the four methodologies suggest a general survey of church or historic buildings be carried out before assessments of significance take place. The explanation for this as far as the C.C.T., E.H. and W. and B. methodologies are concerned, relates to the assumption the assessment work would be carried out by an expert already in possession of this information. However, this is not the case with the C. of E. methodology, which is aimed at the church congregation who might have no prior knowledge of the history of church buildings nationally, regionally or locally (although this knowledge could be available if they sought the guidance of their church architect or building surveyor). Providing this background context as part of the study informs the debate later in the thesis concerning who should be involved in compiling and writing assessments of significance.

The background research took the form of a text-based survey of the general history of church buildings in England from the Anglo-Saxon period to the present day with reference to the particular circumstances of the development of church building in Devon. The survey was divided into periods with each including a summary of the Devon

experience, highlighting any divergence from the national norm. In addition to the national and regional context a historical development of Plymtree church was also included.

There were a number of reasons for carrying out this research prior to surveying the church using the four methodologies: it formed a reserve of data from which information was extracted for each survey; it provided a dataset which could potentially highlight omissions in the different methodologies and in its compilation it identified potential problems facing the researcher. The last point is particularly pertinent given the non-professional status of most people writing the C. of E. statements of significance.

All the above information was grouped together in Chapter 5 where the historic development of Plymtree church was explored in the context of the national and regional experience.

4.9.2 Initial analysis

Once the above context was provided Plymtree church was surveyed using the four different methodologies. Copies of these completed surveys can be found in the Appendices: C. of E. Statement of Significance, Appendix 6, pp. 59-81); C.C.T. Assessment of Significance, Appendix 7, pp. 82-102; E.H. Conservation Appraisal, Appendix 8, pp. 103-124; W. and B. Identification of Significance, Appendix 9, pp. 125-143).

To begin with an initial analysis of the nature of the four methodologies took place before they were interrogated by a number of research questions – see below. The initial analysis took the form of a narrative looking at each methodology in turn, section by section, to discover what data they provided additional to the baseline information contained in the

historic development. The narrative also included an analysis of the problems and difficulties encountered when completing each section of the four methodologies. This initial analysis provided a broad-brush picture of the methodologies' strengths and weaknesses before more specific analysis took place.

4.9.3 The Research Questions - background

Once the initial analysis took place the effectiveness of the C. of E. methodology in comparison with the others was tested using a mixed method approach which combined both quantitative and qualitative analysis. Given the nature of the material (mainly descriptive data regarding the age, materiality, style, use and associations of the building), a solely qualitative approach might be expected. However, in certain aspects of building conservation the adoption of quantitative analysis can be useful. For example, as part of the W. and B. methodology a quantitative approach was used for comparing Plymtree church with churches in the surrounding area – see Chapter 6. However the majority of material produced by the methodologies was qualitative in nature and consequently it was decided that for the majority of the comparison a qualitative approach should be adopted.

The quantitative method was used only for research question 1: 'Which methodology has the widest breadth of assessment?' This question aimed to discover which of the four methodologies collected information under the greatest number of themes, whilst at the same time highlighting those areas not addressed by the C. of E. methodology. To achieve this all the themes of research used in the four methodologies were combined in a table with similar themes grouped together and, in some instances, headings appearing more than once. For example, the themes 'The Church Building in General' (C. of E.), 'Description of the church' (C.C.T.), 'Historical Value' (C.C.T.), 'Historic Development' (E.H.) and 'Historical Value' (W. & B.) all appear in the same row as they all represent a similar requirement for defining significance. 'Communal Value' (C.C.T.) appears in two

rows as it contains elements relevant to social history and to how the church is used – see Table 4. Where a methodology provided information under a theme a tick was placed in the relevant column. Once all the information had been added the methodology with the greatest number of ticks and the areas under the C. of E. column where there were no ticks could be identified. The titles for the rows were as follows:

Setting of the church (C. of E.) Location and Setting (E.H.) Scenic and Panoramic (W. and B.)
The living Churchyard (C. of E.) Open Space, Parks and Gardens and Trees (E.H.) Environmental, Ecological (W. and B.)
Social History (C. of E.) Communal Value (C.C.T.) Associational, Social Value (W. and B.)
The church building in general (C. of E.) Description of the church (C.C.T.) Historical Value (C.C.T.) Historic Development (E.H.) Historical (W. and B.)
The church building in detail (C. of E.) Description of the Church (C.C.T.) Architectural Quality and Built Form, Character Zones (E.H.)
Contents of the church (C. of E.) Aesthetic Value (C.C.T.) An Audit of Heritage Assets (E.H.) Artistic (W. and B.)
Significance for Mission (C. of E.) Communal Value (C.C.T.) Positive Contributors (E.H.) Educational, Recreational, Social, Symbolic/iconic, Spiritual/religious, Inspirational (W. and B.)
Evidential Value (C.C.T.), Archaeological potential (E.H.), Archaeological, Commemorative (W. and B.)
Aesthetic Value (C.C.T.) Aesthetic (W. and B.)
Summary of Significance (C.C.T.) Definition (or Summary) of Special Interest (E.H.)
Heritage Sensitivity (C.C.T.) Sensitivity to change (W. and B.)
Assessment of Condition (E.H.)
Plan for Future Action (E.H.)
Architectural/Technological (W. and B.)
Environmental (W. and B.)
Economic (W. and B.)

Table 4 Themes for analysis question 1.

Once the scope of the different methodologies was determined through this quantitative approach the remainder of the analysis took a qualitative form. Five more questions were asked; four of which derived from the C. of E.'s own intentions for their statements of

significance. The questions ‘Does the methodology summarise the historical development of the church?’ and ‘Does the methodology identify the important features that make major contributions to the character of the church?’ were taken from the C. of E.’s definition of a statement of significance, ‘a document which summarises the historical development of the church and identifies the important features that make major contributions to the character of the church’, quoted from the church legislation under which they were first introduced.³⁹⁵ The questions ‘Does the methodology explore the strengths and potential the church holds for worship and mission?’ and ‘Would the methodology help those in the Faculty system to assess any plans for change?’ refer to the C. of E.’s stated purpose of a statement of significance included at the beginning of their guidance, ‘The purpose of the Statement of Significance is to help you, the parish, it should explore the strengths and potential that your church holds for worship and mission, and to help those in the Faculty system advise you and assess your plans for change.’³⁹⁶

In order to assess the effectiveness of the methodologies for assisting those in the Faculty system a current faculty issue facing Plymtree church was used. Plymtree P.C.C. entered into informal discussions with the Exeter D.A.C. in May 2012 concerning a number of medieval pews which had been removed without a faculty. The P.C.C. sought retrospective permission for their removal, but the D.A.C. required further information on the history of the seating. The four methodologies were consulted to see which would have provided sufficient information for the D.A.C. to make a decision.

In addition to assessing how effectively the methodologies met the C. of E. criteria, a further issue, that of community involvement, was addressed through the final question: ‘What is the nature of community involvement?’ As discussed in Chapter 2 public

³⁹⁵ Church of England. ‘Faculty Jurisdiction Rules 2000’ [Online] http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2000/2047/pdfs/uksi_20002047_en.pdf [22nd November 2012]

³⁹⁶ Church Buildings Council(C.B.C.). ‘Guidance Note’, p.2.

involvement in the historic environment has been an important part of the heritage agenda in the U.K. since the publication of *Power of Place* in February 2000³⁹⁷ with its message ‘everyone has a part to play in caring for the historic environment’,³⁹⁸ and the subsequent Government statement *The Historic Environment: A Force for Our Future*.³⁹⁹ The importance of public involvement continues to be promoted across the U.K. heritage sector with a conference in Manchester – ‘Your Place or Mine’ run by the N.T. and E. H. in 2007, two editions of E.H.’s professional magazine *Conservation Bulletin* devoted to the subject in Summer 2007⁴⁰⁰ and Spring 2010⁴⁰¹ and the Government’s recent *Statement on the Historic Environment for England 2010* where one of the stated strategic aims was to ‘promote opportunities to place people and communities at the centre of the designation and management of their local historic environment’.⁴⁰²

In addition to its current prominence in the heritage agenda, the question of who should be involved in the compilation and writing of assessments of significance is particularly relevant when considering the effectiveness of the C. of E. methodology, due to the C. of E.’s reliance on members of the public, as described in the previous chapter, to carry out this work.

In order to assess the level of community involvement the four methodologies were assessed according to the criteria used in Arnstein’s ‘Ladder of Citizen Participation’.⁴⁰³ This technique, developed by the social worker Sherry Arnstein in San Francisco in 1969, is

³⁹⁷ English Heritage, ‘Power of Place’ [Online] <http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/publications/power-of-place/> [26th November, 2012]

³⁹⁸ E.H., ‘Power of Place’, p.1.

³⁹⁹ The Department of Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS), ‘The Historic Environment: A Force for our Future’ [Online] <http://www.tourisminsights.info/ONLINEPUB/DCMS/DCMS%20PDFS/HISTORIC%20ENV%20FOR%20-%201.pdf> [26th November, 2012]

⁴⁰⁰ English Heritage, ‘Conservation Bulletin 55: Heritage: Broadening Access’ [Online] <http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/publications/conservation-bulletin-55/> [26th November, 2012]

⁴⁰¹ English Heritage, ‘Conservation Bulletin 63: People Engaging with Places’ [Online] <http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/publications/conservation-bulletin-63/> [26th November, 2012]

⁴⁰² D.C.M.S., ‘Statement on the Historic Environment for England 2010’ [Online] http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/+http://www.culture.gov.uk/images/publications/Acc_HeritageVision_Part1.pdf [26th November, 2012]

⁴⁰³ Lithgow, D, ‘A Ladder of Citizen Participation – Sherry R Arnstein’ [Online] <http://lithgow-schmidt.dk/sherry-arnstein/ladder-of-citizen-participation.html> [31st, July, 2013]

widely used to gauge the involvement of the general public including the Scottish government's 'Better Community Engagement Programme'⁴⁰⁴ and the European Council for the Village and Small Town project 'Landscape Identification: A guide to good practice'.⁴⁰⁵

4.9.4 The six research questions

The six research questions for interrogating the data compiled using the four methodologies therefore were:

- Question 1, 'Which methodology has the widest breadth of assessment?'
- Question 2, 'Does the methodology summarise the historical development of the church?'
- Question 3, 'Does the methodology identify the important features that make major contributions to the character of the church?'
- Question 4, 'Does the methodology explore the strengths and potential the church holds for worship and mission?'
- Question 5, 'Would the methodology help those in the Faculty system to assess any plans for change?'
- 'Question 6 What is the nature of community involvement?'

4.9.5 Justification of the research questions

As described above the research questions were formulated mainly to test how effective the C. of E. methodology was in meeting its own criteria for assessing significance. The methodology could have been tested by choosing research questions based on other criteria for determining significance. Examples of other criteria used for defining

⁴⁰⁴ Scottish Government, 'Better Community Engagement Programme', [Online] <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Resource/Doc/49303/0122794.pdf> [4th April, 2014]

⁴⁰⁵ Ecovast, 'Landscape Identification: A guide to good practice, 2000' [Online] http://www.ecovast.org/english/publications_e.htm [4th April, 2014]

significance can be found in three different E.H. publications: Section 7.6 ‘Defining Significance’ of *Informed Conservation*⁴⁰⁶, the chapter ‘Assessing Heritage Significance’ in *Conservation Principles, Policy and Guidance*⁴⁰⁷ and the ‘Summary of Selection Criteria’ from the *Places of Worship Selection Guide*⁴⁰⁸ - full copies of these texts can be found in Appendix 5, pp 56-66. The criteria used in the first two E.H. methodologies reflect their values-based approach to defining significance, whilst the third methodology, used for deciding which places of worship should be listed, represents a more traditional materials-based approach to defining the significance of an historic asset. The criteria for assessing significance from these three publications were listed and compared with the six research questions to see whether any of the E.H. criteria were not being met – see Table 6. The criteria from the three publications were colour coded to facilitate their identification when they were referred to at a later stage in the analysis.

The E.H. criteria for assessing significance were chosen above other secular methodologies for validating the research questions as E.H. are the Government’s advisor on the historic environment, and can therefore be considered to represent the official approach to defining significance in England.

⁴⁰⁶ Clark, K, *Informed Conservation*, London, English Heritage, 2001, pp. 96-97.

⁴⁰⁷ E.H., *Conservation Principles*, 2008, pp.35-40.

⁴⁰⁸ Heritage Protection Department *Places of Worship Selection Guide*, London English Heritage pp. 3-4.

Informed Conservation Defining Significance (Appendix 5, p. 56)	Research Question
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> place the site in its wider academic or scientific context – whether historical, architectural, social, anthropological, ecological or technical context 	Question 1
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> assess its importance in local, regional and national terms 	Questions 1 and 5
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> assess the various phases of alteration to the site and their significance 	Questions 2, 3 and 5
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> identify any amenity or social values associated with the site, whether it be community, aesthetic, spiritual or created through public use or benefit 	Questions 1, 4, 5 and 6
Assessing Heritage Significance, Conservation Principles (Appendix 5, pp. 56-65)	Research Question
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understand the fabric and evolution of the place 	Questions 2, 3 and 5
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify who values the place, and why they do so 	Questions 1, 4 and 6
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Relate identified heritage values to the fabric of the place 	Questions 1,2,3,4 and 5
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider the relative importance of those identified values 	Questions 3, 4 and 5
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider the contribution of associated objects and collections 	Questions 2, 3 and 5
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider the contribution made by setting and context 	Question 1 and 5
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Compare the place with other places sharing similar values 	Question 1 and 5
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Articulate the significance of the place 	Questions 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5
Places of Worship Selection criteria (Appendix 5, p. 66)	Research Question
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Special interest in design and craftsmanship 	Question 3, 5
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> High quality of architectural or artistic embellishment 	Question 3, 5
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Association with a nationally significant architect, designer or artist 	Question 1 , 2, 3 and 5
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Completeness of an architectural/decorative ensemble 	Question 1, 3 and 5
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Association with a nationally significant patron, worshipper or cleric 	Question 2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Architectural expression of distinctive or innovative liturgy or worshipping practice 	Questions 2, 4 and 5
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Significant memorials 	Question 2, 3 and 5
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Uncommon building materials or innovative construction 	Question 2 and 5
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Early date 	Questions 2, 3 and 5

Table 5 Testing the relevance of the research questions against E.H.'s criteria for assessing significance. Colour codes – see next page

Blue – refers to E.H. ‘Assessing Heritage Significance’, *Conservation Principles Policy and Guidance*, (see appendix 5, pp. 56-66)

Red – refers to E.H. ‘Defining Significance’, *Informed Conservation*, (see appendix 5, p.56)

Purple – refers to E.H. ‘Summary of Selection Criteria’, *Places of Worship Selection Guide*, (see appendix 5, p.66)

As all of the above criteria formulated by E.H. were addressed by at least one of the research questions it was concluded that the questions represented a thorough and valid approach to analysing the data in order to determine how effectively it allowed for the assessing of significance.

Finally the four methodologies were interrogated again with the same research questions 2-6, but using a quantitative method. The E.H. assessment criteria, which were shown in Table 6 to relate to the research question were listed under the relevant question and a tick given whenever the methodologies answer the criteria – see Table 7 for an example.

Assessment criteria	C.of E.	C.C.T.	E.H.	W.&B.
Understand the fabric and evolution of the place				
Relate identified heritage values to the fabric of the place				
Assess the various phases of alteration to the site and their significance				
Consider the contribution of associated objects and collections				
Articulate the significance of the place				
Association with a nationally significant architect, designer or artist				
Association with a nationally significant patron, worshipper or cleric				
Architectural expression of distinctive or innovative liturgy or worshipping practice				
Significant memorials				
Uncommon building materials or innovative construction				
Early date				

Blue – refers to E.H. ‘Assessing Heritage Significance’, *Conservation Principles Policy and*

Guidance, (see appendix 5, pp. 56-66)

Red – refers to E.H. ‘Defining Significance’, *Informed Conservation*, (see appendix 5, p.56)

Purple – refers to E.H. ‘Summary of Selection Criteria’, *Places of Worship Selection Guide*, (see appendix 5, p.66)

Table 6 Table showing how the relevant E.H. assessment criteria for research question 2 "Does the methodology summarise the historical development of the church?" relates to the four methodologies.

This analysis added a further dimension to the interrogation of the C. of E. methodology by suggesting areas it could more effectively assess significance by adopting some of the secular criteria. For example, one of the methodologies might ask for a summary of the historic development of the church, but with no specific requirement to include reference to any architectural expressions of a distinctive or innovative liturgy or worshipping practice.

4.10 Limitations of the methodology

The methodology was developed for the use of the researcher who had a specific set of skills due to her background in architectural history and building conservation. The positive aspects of the researcher’s qualifications were that her academic and practical background placed her within the category of people who might be commissioned to write a statement of significance. In addition, she could fairly surmise that, if she with her professional training could not follow or understand certain aspects of the methodologies, then these might be even more problematic for a lay person. However, whilst the analysis of the methodologies by a single person with a very particular viewpoint conditioned by her training had its strengths, it also had its weaknesses. An architect, building surveyor, archaeologist or historian comparing the four methodologies might have responded to the methodologies very differently and reached alternative conclusions. For example, for the researcher a description of the architectural components of the building would include the style, detailing, dates and materials, whereas an architect might also include a description of the structural systems, use of space, effects of light, etc.

As discussed in section 4.6, input from those other than building professionals would have added to the richness of the research and given voice to those for whom the significance of the church and churchyard lay in elements other than its fabric. For example an ecologist would have provided more detailed information on the natural heritage of the site, an organist could have identified any acoustic issues and a mother of small children could suggest ways in which the church could be made more user-friendly for families attending worship. Consequently for the fullest possible analysis a multi-discipline approach would be more successful.

One of the aims of the methodology was to address the question of public participation. The researcher used questionnaires filled in by members of Plymtree church congregation to respond to those aspects of the methodologies which only users of the church could answer. In this instance public consultation and participation assisted the researcher with information gathering, but was not employed to give insight into the public's own experience of completing assessments of significance. As a consequence, the conclusions drawn from the comparison of the methodologies regarding public participation were limited. This was a deliberate decision, as the researcher had no formal training in assessing public engagement and did not feel she had the qualifications to determine its effectiveness. Furthermore, as mentioned above, a research project specifically addressing the question of the accessibility of C. of E. statements of significance for lay people is at present being undertaken by the Christianity and Culture centre at York University.

The methodology includes the C. of E.'s own criteria for their statements 'Does the methodology summarise the historic development of the church' as one of the research questions. In retrospect the researcher, whilst still believing the compilation of a detailed historic development to be an essential preliminary step, now questions whether it should

form part of the assessment of significance, or whether (as in the case of W. and B.'s methodology) it should be carried out prior to the assessment.

The form of the initial analysis, comparing the information collected through the historic development with the information delivered by the four methodologies, may again have placed too much emphasis on the role of historic development. The intention of the researcher had been to reveal the extent to which all the methodologies provided a far fuller picture of the nature and significance of the church than could be provided by an understanding of historic development alone. However, the continuing reference to historic development again may have placed too much emphasis on its role in the assessment of significance.

The decision to write four separate assessments of significance for the same case study church inevitably resulted in a certain amount of repetition. The researcher also faced the problem on occasion of giving generic answers, rather than considering superficially similar-seeming requirements with fresh eyes.

4.11 Conclusion

The methodology therefore required the C. of E. methodology for assessing significance and three other methodologies to be written for a single church which was deemed to be representative of the type of church for which the C. of E. methodology was created. The four assessments of significance were then compared using a mixed method approach: a narrative highlighting their strengths and weaknesses, both individually and in comparison; a testing of their performance in comparison with the other methodologies in meeting the C. of E.'s criteria for assessing significance and a consideration of their effectiveness in comparison with the others when tested against E.H.'s criteria for identifying significance.

Chapter 5.0

St John the Baptist, Plymtree: The historic context

5.1 Introduction

Despite the C. of E. and E.H. adopting differing epistemological positions regarding the conservation of historic buildings, both organisations believe the compiling of an historic development to be a key component in the assessment of significance. The first part of the 2000 Faculty Jurisdiction Rules defines statements of significance as ‘a document which summarises the historical development of the church’,⁴⁰⁹ whilst the E.H. guidance for assessing significance states ‘To identify the cultural and natural heritage values of a place, its history, fabric and character must first be understood.....The study of material remains alone will rarely provide sufficient understanding of a place’.⁴¹⁰ The tracing of historic development is particularly important for C. of E. churches as few buildings represent one homogenous building programme and the reasons for their alteration and adaption can include a diverse mix of local, liturgical and political requirements, all of which need to be known for the full significance of the building to be understood.

In this chapter the historic development of St. John the Baptist, Plymtree will be evaluated with reference to general historic developments in church architecture: nationally and regionally. The history of the church will be examined from its earliest structure to the present day against the national and regional background of development. An understanding of historic development is an essential first step in the assessment of the significance of a church. Tracing the development of historic fabric allows for the various

⁴⁰⁹ Church of England. ‘The faculty Jurisdiction Rules 2000’ [Online] http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2000/2047/pdfs/ukxi_20002047_en.pdf [31st October 2013]

⁴¹⁰ English Heritage. ‘Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance for the Sustainable Management of the Historic Environment’ [Online] <http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/publications/conservation-principles-sustainable-management-historic-environment/conservationprinciplespoliciesguidanceapr08web.pdf> [10th October 2013]

phases of building work to be identified such as: the re-use of an Anglo-Saxon site; the incorporation of Norman fabric; the different periods of Gothic architecture; fabric lost during the Reformation and the Civil War; interior re-orderings for the Puritan liturgy; restoration during the Gothic Revival and modern alterations. By placing the historic development within a national and regional context a more informed understanding of the fabric emerges. For example, a church predominantly built in the Early English period is relatively common in East Anglia and the South East, but in Devon it is a rarity. Similarly chancel arches and stone vaults are to be found in Gothic churches throughout the country, but are unusual features in Devon. Part of a good historic development includes information about patrons, benefactors, clergy, worshippers, craftsmen, builders and artists: information which is vital (particularly when it also includes national and regional context) in the identification of significance. For example, without associational information, the enrichment of the chancel at Plymtree church could appear to be the whim of an individual clergyman rather than the physical manifestation of the connection between a small country parish church with Oriel College, Oxford and the Oxford Movement.

A detailed understanding of historic context can allow for better informed management and future development of church buildings. For example where evidence exists of an earlier Anglo-Saxon church this could mitigate against future works involving excavation. An appreciation of the changing internal arrangements of churches can assist in future decisions concerning re-ordering. Where a medieval church has survived virtually unaltered proposed internal alteration may not be appropriate, whereas the removal of mass produced Victorian pitch pine pews in a medieval church could be considered.

In geographic areas where the historic development of a number of churches has been researched it is possible to develop an understanding of local materials, styles and features. Whilst the work of a local craftsmen in one church can be of note, it becomes even more significant if it features in a number of surrounding churches. Simple vernacular features

which may not have been recorded in list descriptions, such as decorative wrought iron boot-scrapers, could be a feature of the area, and thus of local value, and worthy of retention. The importance of national, regional and local context cannot be stressed too highly as it greatly adds to our understanding of the significance of different elements of the church. Simply knowing the date of the medieval screen at Plymtree accords the structure a great deal of historic significance. Researching the historic context however reveals additional information: it is a 'splendid example' and thus has great aesthetic value; it is typical of a type constructed in Devon at this time; its un-restored condition singles it out from other churches in the locality. In this way knowledge of its historic development has added layers of different value to the screen increasing its significance. A knowledge of national, regional and local context is something acquired by a conservation professional who has been in working in the field for a period of time. This background knowledge will not necessarily be held by members of a congregation (although they may well hold other pertinent information), and the implications of this will be discussed in later chapters.

The information gathered from this chapter will then form a body of material which will be later referred to when assessing the effectiveness of the different methodologies for determining significance. In addition the material will inform the debate in later chapters regarding the issue of public participation and who should be involved in the assessment of significance.

The narrative of the historic development of Plymtree church should be read with reference to the phasing diagram, Fig. 78, which appears in the following chapter.

5.2 The Early Church in England from the Anglo Saxon to the Norman period (c. 5th century – 1170)

The first Anglo Saxon worshippers met at open-air assemblies or in existing secular buildings⁴¹¹ and it was not until the 5th century that the first purpose-built churches were

⁴¹¹ Strong, R. *A Little History of the English Country Church*. London: Jonathan Cape, 2007, p. 14.

constructed.⁴¹² In terms of standing fabric little from the early part of this period survives as most churches were timber in construction. However, following the Norman invasion increasing numbers of churches were constructed from stone⁴¹³ and the degree of their survival is much higher. The plans of these early stone buildings incorporated elements from Celtic church design: single cells with small rectangular chambers or sanctuaries at one end, and Roman basilicas: two rows of columns along the nave flanked by aisles.⁴¹⁴ This plan form continued to inform later structures with church builders, either imitating the form of the previous church or building directly onto the older foundations.

During this period the administrative organisation of churches, which exists to this day, first developed. The modern parish system has its roots in the arrangement of minsters; a system of religious communities nearly always located on royal Saxon estates, which functioned as centres of conversion and administration.⁴¹⁵ Minsters served such vast territories that by the 9th century local Saxon lords began to build smaller churches within the area to serve their own estates.⁴¹⁶ By the 12th century these collections of church buildings, run by priests assisted by lay people and known as parishes, were grouped into areas or dioceses, which were presided over by a bishop.⁴¹⁷

Although the financial impetus for building churches came from the local lords, their running costs, and subsequent adornment, were paid for by the local community. Such was the extent of this commitment it has been suggested the Church absorbed half the economic resources and manpower of England from the beginning of the Anglo-Saxon period until the end of the 12th century.⁴¹⁸ Funds for church repairs and maintenance were collected as part of the tithe: a tax of a tenth of the annual produce of the land, stock or labour which could be paid in money or in kind,⁴¹⁹ and was universally applied.⁴²⁰

⁴¹² Hutton, G. and Cook, O. *English Parish Churches*, London: Thames and Hudson, 2001, p. 11.

⁴¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 11.

⁴¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 13.

⁴¹⁵ Friar, S. *The Local History Companion, 2nd Edition*, Stroud: Sutton, 2002, p.281.

⁴¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 309.

⁴¹⁷ Strong, 2007, p. 21.

⁴¹⁸ Hutton and Cook, 2001, p. 15.

⁴¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 15.

5.2.1 Devon (c.5th century – 1170)

There is evidence, in the form of eleven standing stones with Latin inscriptions, that Christianity may have existed in Devon as early as the Roman occupation⁴²¹ but there are no church structures surviving from this period. Christianity in the region strengthened during the 6th century with the influence of Celtic missionaries from Ireland, Wales and Brittany.⁴²² No physical remains of the Celtic churches survive, but a number of churches (particularly in the north of the county) are dedicated to Celtic saints suggesting the former presence of Celtic cults.⁴²³ Following the Saxon invasion of Devon in the 7th century minster churches were created and between the 6th and 11th centuries fourteen minsters were built in Devon (although this figure could be as high as twenty-two).⁴²⁴ By the 10th century other churches were built within the parishes of the minsters although there are few physical remains from this period as the buildings were probably constructed from cob or timber.⁴²⁵ A few remnants of Saxon work survive such as: decorated cross shafts; the remains of an apsidal 11th century minster church, which predated the cathedral, excavated in Exeter; stonework incorporated into later churches; the small tower at St. Olave's, Exeter which could be a survival from an eleventh century palace chapel⁴²⁶ and the crypt at Sidbury.⁴²⁷

Much evidence survives, however, of the considerable building programme which took place in Devon during the Norman period.⁴²⁸ By the twelfth century stone parish churches were widespread with the massive building programme reaching its height in the second

⁴²⁰ Friar, 2002, p.436.

⁴²¹ Ed. Orme, N. (ed.) *Unity and Variety A History of the Church in Devon and Cornwall*, Exeter: University of Exeter Press, 1991, p.2.

⁴²² Hoskins, W.G. *Devon*, London: Collins, 1954, p. 221.

⁴²³ Orme, 1991, p.5.

⁴²⁴ *Ibid.*, p.9.

⁴²⁵ *Ibid.*, p.15.

⁴²⁶ Cherry, B, and Pevsner, N. *The Buildings of England Devon – Second Edition*, London: Penguin, 1991, p.39.

⁴²⁷ Hoskins, 1954, p.222.

⁴²⁸ Orme, 1991, p.29.

half of the 12th century;⁴²⁹ as a consequence by 1220 ‘nearly every medieval parish church in the county existed.’⁴³⁰ A number of towers still survive from this period characterised by their slim width and unbuttressed walls.⁴³¹ Many churches were built in a cruciform plan, whilst others had simple one or two-cell plans (of nave and chancel) with aisles added at later dates.⁴³² The ornately carved Norman doorways (often positioned on the south side of the church) and fonts were frequently incorporated into later Gothic structures out of respect for their craftsmanship.⁴³³

5.2.2 St. John the Baptist, Plymtree (9th century – 1170)

Unlike most churches in the region, evidence exists at Plymtree of religious activity on the site of the present church as early as the 9th century in the form of a yew tree which stands in the churchyard to the south-east of the south aisle – see Fig. 1, identified as being 1100 years old by the national Yew Tree Campaign.⁴³⁴ Yew trees were associated with early Christian sites⁴³⁵ suggesting the tree was either planted adjacent to an early (possibly timber) church or was used itself as a place for religious ceremonies.



Figure 1 The 9th century yew tree standing to the south east of the church (photograph, author)

In common with many parish churches in Devon there are indications of a building on the site pre-dating the current Gothic structure. At Plymtree this earlier church is evidenced by an account in the parish magazine from the rector in 1910 where he described ‘a portion of

⁴²⁹ Hoskins, 1954, p.224.

⁴³⁰ Ibid., p.269.

⁴³¹ Cherry and Pevsner, 1991, p.39.

⁴³² Ibid., p.40.

⁴³³ Ibid., p.40.

⁴³⁴ Eames, T. (ed.) *The Book of Plymtree*, Tiverton: Halsgrave, 1999, p. 29.

⁴³⁵ Friar, 2002, p.81.

old wall with plaster face about a foot inside the present wall near the pulpit (likely to be the wall of an older building)' discovered during a scheme of restoration.⁴³⁶ The 1910 restoration works also uncovered a doorway on the north wall of the present church whose tall, thin arched profile appears to indicate an early Norman date – see figure 2.⁴³⁷ This doorway could have been re-sited from the early building whose wall remains were uncovered. Both the doorway and the section of wall suggest a Norman church on the site and records of the institution of John Walerande as rector in 1261 also indicate a building on the site before the present 14th century structure was built. The building is likely to have been of some significance as it was the mother church of a group of fourteen surrounding parishes, which formed the Deanery of Plymtree.⁴³⁸



Figure 2 Early doorway on the north wall – (photograph, author)

5.3 The Great Gothic Building Programme (1170- 1520)

Increasing prosperity throughout the country during this period led to large numbers of churches being rebuilt in the new style of Gothic architecture which had originated in France. From the late 12th century landowners benefitted from improved methods of

⁴³⁶ Plymtree Magazine, December 1910 (Bound copy held in the Cathedral Library)

⁴³⁷ Cresswell, B., *Notes on Devon Churches, Deanery of Ottery*, 1919 (unpublished, pages unnumbered), Devon Heritage Centre.

⁴³⁸ Eames, 1999, p. 29.

agricultural production and merchants prospered from their investments in shipping and trade. As the vast majority of people attended church and were in fear of their souls, large sums of this newly acquired wealth was donated for the building of new churches.⁴³⁹

The thick-walled Norman churches with round-headed arches were replaced by buildings with taller, slimmer walls and larger windows; all made possible by the innovations of the pointed arch and flying buttress.⁴⁴⁰ Other elements of the Gothic style included the use of decorative mouldings, clusters of shafts on piers and columns and elaborate window tracery. Even in the smallest and most remote communities churches were rebuilt or extended to include new aisles, side chapels and western towers.⁴⁴¹ Between the 14th and early 16th century an extensive programme of church building took place with between a third and a half of the c. 10,000 medieval churches still standing today wholly or partly rebuilt during these two and a half centuries.⁴⁴² Gothic architecture developed through three distinct styles: Early English (1170-1250) characterised by tall and narrow pointed arches and restrained ornament,⁴⁴³ Decorated (1250-1350) which included the development of elaborate window tracery and vaults⁴⁴⁴ and Perpendicular (1350-1520) characterised by very large windows with the emphasis on the vertical and timber roofs.⁴⁴⁵

Key figures in the maintenance and rebuilding of churches were the churchwardens, whose role was created by the Council of London in 1129.⁴⁴⁶ Two for each parish were appointed annually and kept accounts of the parish spending and activities. These accounts illustrate how involved the whole community was both financially and physically in the church rebuilding and enlargement projects.⁴⁴⁷ Sources of funding included money from local

⁴³⁹ Bettey, J.H. (1987) *Church and Parish*, London: Batsford, 1987, p.50.

⁴⁴⁰ Hutton and Cook, 2001, p.42.

⁴⁴¹ Bettey, 1987, p.50.

⁴⁴² Strong, 2007, p.36.

⁴⁴³ Hutton and Cook, 2001, p.71.

⁴⁴⁴ Ibid., p. 73.

⁴⁴⁵ Ibid., p. 119.

⁴⁴⁶ Ibid., p.58.

⁴⁴⁷ Bettey, 1987, p.55.

guilds, gifts and bequests, house-to-house collections, parish functions and payment in kind from local craftsmen.⁴⁴⁸

The newly constructed churches were not only centres for worship, but community buildings housing a range of activities including sales of food, ale (frequently brewed within the church itself), dancing, bowling, archery and schooling. Despite all this secular activity, throughout the day the mass would be said, attended by most members of the community. The churchyard, also the responsibility of the churchwardens, was the venue for markets, fairs, sports and games. Thus the church during this period was central to village life and part of most villagers' daily routine.⁴⁴⁹

By the 13th century the administrative mechanisms of the church had become established with each diocese headed by a bishop assisted by suffragan bishops. Archdeacons provided the next level of authority with rural deans giving leadership at a more local level. Visitations were carried out to ensure incumbents were fulfilling their duties and that the church buildings were kept in good repair and correctly furnished.⁴⁵⁰

Until the 15th century, the interiors of churches were mainly open plan with only the eastern end of the church screened off. Processions took place around the church on feast days and the only seating provided for the old and infirm was along the walls or at the base of the pillars.⁴⁵¹ Throughout the 15th century, pew benches were increasingly introduced into church interiors; many had intricately carved bench ends demonstrating the skills of local craftsmen. Although this fixed seating presumably limited some of the alternative secular uses of the nave, contemporary churchwardens' accounts reveal the pews were let providing a further source of revenue.⁴⁵²

5.3.1 Devon (1170-1520)

⁴⁴⁸ Ibid., p.55.

⁴⁴⁹ Ibid., p.60.

⁴⁵⁰ Ibid., P.60.

⁴⁵¹ Mattingley, J. 'The origins of Devon bench ends,' *Devon Buildings Group Newsletter*, No. 25, Summer 2007, p. 8.

⁴⁵² Hutton and Cook, 2001, p.120.

The rebuilding of parish churches in the Gothic style was as comprehensive in Devon as the rest of the country. However the success of the Norman building programme, with so many parishes having sturdy, relatively recently built stone churches, meant the widespread rebuilding in the Gothic style did not begin until the 14th century. Furthermore the practice of sheep farming on an extensive scale, which had generated so much wealth for church construction in East Anglia, central and southern England did not reach Devon until after the Black Death in the mid-14th century. As Pevsner observes ‘the Early English period of the early C13 is not well represented in Devon’, the most notable survivals of this period being the lower part of the Chapter House at Exeter Cathedral and the remains of Frithelstock monastic church.⁴⁵³

The historian W.G. Hoskins has identified ‘sufficient signs’ of widespread rebuilding in the 14th century, but much of the work from this period was destroyed during a comprehensive rebuilding in the 15th and early 16th centuries.⁴⁵⁴ Although extensive building works were carried out at Exeter Cathedral during this period (c.1275-mid 14th century) in the Decorated Style Pevsner observes that ‘the masons of the cathedral workshop seem to have had little immediate impact on the countryside’.⁴⁵⁵ Work carried out in Devon churches during the 14th century was conservative with arcades constructed using plain octagonal piers (rather than the elaborate moulded piers of the Decorated Style) and the traditional un-aisled cruciform plan continued to be used.⁴⁵⁶

In terms of administration, by the end of the twelfth century the archdeaconries of Exeter, Totnes and Barnstaple had been created and these areas divided into rural deaneries.⁴⁵⁷

The 15th and early 16th centuries saw an extensive programme of building work in Devon. According to Hoskins ‘Until the fifteenth century, the churches of Devon were, with very few exceptions, small and rather undistinguished buildings...It is in the last phase of

⁴⁵³ Cherry and Pevsner, 1991, p.41.

⁴⁵⁴ Hoskins, 1954, p.231.

⁴⁵⁵ Cherry and Pevsner, 1991, p. 41.

⁴⁵⁶ Ibid., p.41.

⁴⁵⁷ Orme, 1991, p.27.

Gothic architecture that south western England is so rich'.⁴⁵⁸ Around nine out of ten churches were altered or rebuilt during this period in Devon,⁴⁵⁹ with approximately 95 % of pre-Victorian churches dating predominantly from the Perpendicular Period'.⁴⁶⁰ In some cases the earlier churches were entirely dismantled, whilst others were adapted and extended. Whilst the scale of the building programme was considerable the diversity of design and plan was more limited. According to Pevsner 'This golden age of church building, which coincides with Devon's increasing wealth as a result of the cloth trade, is impressive in bulk, impressive in occasional architectural details, impressive often in its furnishings, but standardized in much of its detail'.⁴⁶¹ This county-wide consistency of design was also noted by Hoskins who identified 'a very characteristic local type: a continuous nave and chancel of five or six bays with north and south aisles running the full length of the building, a western tower, and a southern porch'.⁴⁶² Other elements of the 15th century Devon church typology included: projecting stair turrets on over half of the western towers, the larger part of which were either hexagonal or octagonal,⁴⁶³ eastern chapels formed at the ends of the long flanking aisles, sometimes used as chantry chapels by wealthy local families⁴⁶⁴ (where private masses could be said for the repose of their souls);⁴⁶⁵ the chancel arch which formerly divided the nave and chancel ⁴⁶⁶ replaced with a wooden screen 'the greatest glory of the Devon church',⁴⁶⁷ frequently ornately carved and coloured and surmounted by carved roods (wooden figures of the crucified Christ flanked by the Virgin Mary and St John);⁴⁶⁸ unbroken nave and chancel roofs, mainly semi-circular in section (known as wagon, cradle or barrel vaults), with the spaces in between the curved

⁴⁵⁸ Hoskins, 1954, p.270.

⁴⁵⁹ Ibid., p.271.

⁴⁶⁰ Cherry and Pevsner, 1991, p.42.

⁴⁶¹ Ibid., p. 43.

⁴⁶² Hoskins, 1954, p.271.

⁴⁶³ Slader, J.M. *The Churches of Devon*, Newton Abbot: David and Charles, 1968, p.57.

⁴⁶⁴ Cherry and Pevsner, 1991, p.43.

⁴⁶⁵ Friar, 2002, p.62.

⁴⁶⁶ Cherry and Pevsner, 1991, p.43.

⁴⁶⁷ Hoskins, 1954, p 271.

⁴⁶⁸ Friar, 2002, p.372.

wooden braces plastered or ceiled;⁴⁶⁹ elaborately carved and coloured roof bosses and wall-plates,⁴⁷⁰ and carved bench ends.⁴⁷¹

Most churches were constructed from local rubblestone with granite used in the interiors or softer, imported stone where refined details or carving was required.⁴⁷² On the exterior, walls were embattled (crenellations added) where funds were available and western towers constructed with corner pinnacles and, in some cases, spires; most of which do not survive.⁴⁷³

The period of rebuilding came to a halt in the 1540s, and little further work took place for the next hundred years.⁴⁷⁴

5.3.2 St. John the Baptist Plymtree (1170-1520)

The experience of Plymtree church during this period closely reflects that of the region as a whole; with the Norman church replaced in the 14th century and again largely rebuilt in the 15th century. Written evidence of the 14th century church can be found in the preface to the parish registers which states that some time during the 1300s the church was rebuilt.⁴⁷⁵ Funds for the 14th century rebuild probably came from the lords of the manor either Sir Thomas Courtney or Thomas and Margaret Peverell.⁴⁷⁶

Fabric evidence of the 14th century building includes some of the glass in the east window, which shows the arms of Thomas Peverell,⁴⁷⁷ who was patron of the church when Sir Thomas Tregenewil became incumbent in 1393 – see Fig. 3,⁴⁷⁸ and some decorative floor tiles in the south aisle – see Fig. 4.⁴⁷⁹ As the south aisle dates from the 15th century the tiles must have been re-sited from elsewhere, probably the chancel area as this was the only part

⁴⁶⁹ Cherry and Pevsner, 1991, p.45.

⁴⁷⁰ Hoskins, 1954, p.271.

⁴⁷¹ Ibid., p. 271.

⁴⁷² Cherry and Pevsner, 1991, p.45.

⁴⁷³ Ibid., p. 44.

⁴⁷⁴ Hoskins, 1954, p.272.

⁴⁷⁵ Carden, J.J. *The History of Plymtree*, (unpublished pamphlet with unnumbered pages) Exeter University Edmund Collection.

⁴⁷⁶ Eames, 1999, p.29.

⁴⁷⁷ Cresswell, 1919.

⁴⁷⁸ *Plymtree Church Guide*, Honiton: Dimond and Co., 1955, p.13.

⁴⁷⁹ Gray, T. *Devon's Fifty Best Churches*, Exeter: The Mint Press, 2011, p. 147.

of the church during this period likely to have a decorative floor, the rest of the church having simple unadorned floor surfaces.⁴⁸⁰

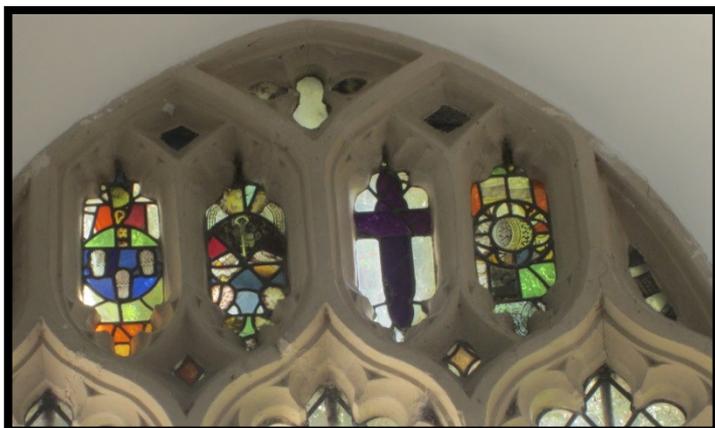


Figure 3 14th century glass in the east window including the arms of Thomas Peverell (photograph, author)



Figure 4 14th century decorative floor tiles (photograph, author)

The remaining fabric which might date from the 14th century remains a matter of conjecture. The local red sandstone and volcanic stone nave and chancel could date from this period and it seems likely some of the chancel arch may be 14th century. The reason for the possible earlier date of the arch is the siting of a niche on the northern, outer side of the arch, which has been partly obscured by the 15th century screen – see Fig. 5 and a further area of carving on the inner side – see Fig 6. An additional area of isolated decorative carving now partially obscured can be found at the junction of the wall between the chancel and the south aisle, which may also date from this period – see Fig. 7.

⁴⁸⁰ Rodwell, W. *The Archaeology of Churches*, Stroud: Tempus, 2005, p. 155.



Figure 5 Image niche on the northern, outer side of the chancel arch. The paint has been recently restored clearly indicating the former presence of a statue. (photograph, author)



Figure 6 Carving on the inner side of the chancel arch (photograph, author)



Figure 7 Isolated area of carving between the chancel and the south aisle (photograph, author)

Throughout the 15th century the church underwent several major programmes of work with additions and extensions typical of those occurring all over Devon at the time. The first addition to the 14th century church was the western tower, in place by 1432 as chancery proceedings from this date refer to a dispute over the cost of the bells.⁴⁸¹ The builders used local materials red sandstone and volcanic stone for the walls and the softer Beerstone for the window tracery and door surrounds – see Fig. 8. The design of the tower was typical of a Devon church of this period: three stages high with diagonal buttresses; an

⁴⁸¹ Eames, 1999, p. 29.

embattled parapet with crocketed corner pinnacles and a semi hexagonal stair turret – see Fig. 9 and Perpendicular style window tracery.⁴⁸²



Figure 8 The tall three stage church tower was built from local materials in the 15th century (photograph, author)



Figure 9 The hexagonal stair turret and corner pinnacles are typical Devon features (photograph, author)

The next phase of work at Plymtree was the building of a south aisle and porch. In common with Devon practices the aisle extends almost the full length of the nave and chancel – see Fig. 10. The work can be dated to between 1458-1464 as the arms of the then Bishop of Exeter, Bishop Neville, were carved on the capital of the western respond between the nave and the Forde aisle.⁴⁸³ The aisle was paid for by the local family, the Fordes of Fordmore and likenesses of the family formed the label stops to the hood moulds of the windows – see Fig. 11.⁴⁸⁴ The new aisle was separated from the nave by a five bay arcade constructed from Beerstone piers in a Perpendicular Gothic style described as 'Type B' by Pevsner: a column with four main shafts, with wave mouldings in the diagonals between, typical of Devon churches built in this period.⁴⁸⁵ The piers have carved

⁴⁸² English Heritage. 'List entry for Church of St John the Baptist, Plymtree' [online] <http://list.english-heritage.org.uk/resultsingle.aspx?uid=1333727> [8th August 2012]

⁴⁸³ Eames, 1999, p. 30.

⁴⁸⁴ Plymtree Church Guide, 1955, p. 8.

⁴⁸⁵ Cherry and Pevsner, 1991, p. 45.

foliage capitals and two have the remains of niches which originally would have held statues – see Figs. 12 and 13.⁴⁸⁶ The eastern end of the Forde aisle was separated from the chancel on its northern side by a parclose screen. This screen (which has not survived) was described in a paper read to the Exeter Diocesan Architectural Society in 1850 as carved with a single leaf door. It is possible that the space this screen enclosed was used by the Forde family as a private chapel.⁴⁸⁷



Figure 10 The Forde aisle extends almost to the end of the chancel (photograph, author)



Figure 11 Label stops showing likenesses of the Forde family (photograph, author)

⁴⁸⁶ E.H. List entry, Plymtree.

⁴⁸⁷ Plymtree Church Guide, 1955, p. 8.



Figures 12 Foliage capitals on the Beerstone arcade (photograph, author)



Figure 13 Empty niche on an arcade pier which would originally have held a statue (photograph, author)

The rector during the building of the Forde aisle was Sir Richard Smerte, described as the earliest recorded Devon musician; during his incumbency he wrote eleven carols.⁴⁸⁸

The south porch was built as part of the same programme of works again using the local materials of red sandstone and volcanic stone – see Fig. 14. Its decorative features include a parapet carved with quatrefoil panels – see Fig. 15 and a two-centred entrance arch were carved from local Beerstone, but over the years repairs have been carried out in Ham stone.⁴⁸⁹



Figure 14 The 15th century south porch built from local stone (photograph, author)



Figure 15 The south porch parapet with quatrefoils and shield and four leaf motifs (photograph, author)

⁴⁸⁸ Eames, 1999, p.34.

⁴⁸⁹ E.H. List entry, Plymtree.

Another major addition to the church in the 15th century was the construction of the wooden screen which separated the nave from the chancel and the south aisle from the Forde chapel. Wooden screens were constructed throughout Devon during this period, but the screen at Plymtree has been described by Pevsner as ‘most splendid’ and exceptionally well preserved.⁴⁹⁰ The screen is nine bays wide with panelled wainscoting divided into 34 panels painted with figures. Above the panels Perpendicular window tracery supports a carved frieze and the vault of the rood loft - see Figs. 16 and 17.⁴⁹¹ The painted figures have been dated to the early 16th century (see below).⁴⁹² Originally the screen would have been surmounted by a rood with wooden figures of Christ crucified flanked by the Virgin Mary and St. John. The figures no longer survive but the stair leading to the rood loft was uncovered during the 1910 restoration works – see Fig. 18.⁴⁹³



Figure 16 The 15th century Perpendicular style screen (photograph, author)



Figure 17 Detail of one of the bosses on the fan vault of the screen (photograph, author)

⁴⁹⁰ Cherry and Pevsner, 1991, p. 686.

⁴⁹¹ E.H. List entry, Plymtree.

⁴⁹² Eames, T. *The Parish Church of St. John the Baptist, Plymtree – A short history and guide*, (No date – current church guide 2013), p. 8.

⁴⁹³ Cresswell, 1919.



Figure 18 Entrance to the rood loft from the stone stairway on the north wall (photograph, author)

The screen was probably constructed in the late 15th century as it includes the Bouchier and Stafford knots carved on bosses in the fan-vaulting. Isabel Bouchier (formerly wife of Humphrey Stafford Earl of Devon who was beheaded in 1470) may have commissioned the screen in her first husband's memory.⁴⁹⁴ The east side of the screen, although unpainted, is unusually richly carved suggesting a generous patron – see Fig. 19.⁴⁹⁵



Figure 19 The richly carved eastern side of the chancel screen (photograph, author)

There has been some speculation that the screen was originally intended for another building: the southern end of the cornice projects into the window space –see Fig. 20 and the painted figure of St. John the Baptist, the patron saint of the church, holds an insignificant position on the wainscoting.⁴⁹⁶ However a conservation report written in 1986

⁴⁹⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁹⁵ Eames, undated, p. 10.

⁴⁹⁶ Plymtree Church Guide, 1955, p. 7.

suggests the structure of the screen fitted the church perfectly and the unfinished appearance of the southern bay could be attributed to decay from contact with the wall.⁴⁹⁷



Figure 20 The southern end of the chancel screen ends abruptly in the window embrasure (photograph, author)

In common with churches throughout the country the interior of Plymtree was transformed in the 15th century through the addition of oak benches. Stylistically they appear to date from the same period as the screen, and have survived as an almost complete set, apart from a couple of late 17th and one 19th century example.⁴⁹⁸ The bench ends are decorated with two tiers of blind Gothic tracery – see Fig. 21, a design which can be found in 25 of the 123 churches in Devon with surviving bench ends. Apart from Atherington all these churches are in the south of the county, suggesting a sub-regional trend.⁴⁹⁹ Most of the bench ends have no further adornment, but a few contain additional ornamentation including the heraldic device of bouche shields – see Fig. 22 (which can also be found in Devon at Feniton, Stockleigh Pomeroy and Braunton)⁵⁰⁰ and tools which could be a reference to the craftsmen or to the Passion of Christ – see Fig. 23. The pews themselves have substantial seats three inches thick with kneeling ledges.⁵⁰¹

⁴⁹⁷ Eames, undated, p. 9.

⁴⁹⁸ E.H. List entry, Plymtree.

⁴⁹⁹ Gray, T. *Devon's Ancient Bench Ends*, Exeter: The Mint Press, 2012, p. 121.

⁵⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 108.

⁵⁰¹ Plymtree Church Guide, 1955, p. 8.



Figure 21 Blind Gothic tracery on the 15th century bench ends (photograph, author)



Figure 22 Bouche shields - a heraldic device representing the the notch where a knight would place his lance the (photograph, author)



Figure 23 Devices of tools representing woodcarvers or possibly referencing crucifixion (photograph, author)

The chancel wagon roof is believed to date from the 15th century and is typical of the period in Devon – see Fig. 24, as are the carved roof bosses representing the Green Man – see Fig. 25. The paint scheme dates from a later period.⁵⁰²

⁵⁰² E.H. List entry, Plymtree.



Figure 24 The 15th century chancel wagon roof is typical of this period in Devon (photograph, author)



Figure 25 The carved roof boss represents the Green Man (photograph author)

The final surviving feature dating from the extensive 15th century rebuild is the Beerstone, octagonal font decorated in the Perpendicular style⁵⁰³ with panels of quatrefoil decoration – see Fig. 26, similar in style to other decorative work carried out during this period in the church including the porch parapet – see Fig. 15, the base of the screen – see Fig. 27 and the backs of the nave pews – see Fig 28.



Figure 26 The 15th century octagonal Beerstone font is decorated in the Perpendicular style – its cover dates from the 17th century (photograph, author)

⁵⁰³ Ibid.

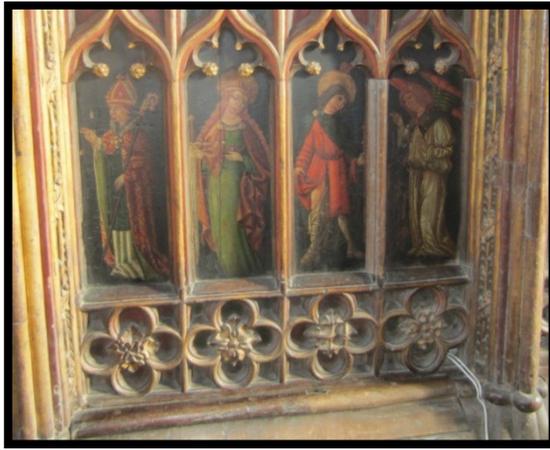


Figure 27 Quatrefoil decoration beneath the painted panels of the screen (photograph, author)



Figure 28 Quatrefoil carving on panels behind the nave pews (photograph, author)

At the very end of the period the rood screen was further enriched with the addition of a series of painted panels to the dado, which have been dated to the early 16th century.⁵⁰⁴ There are 34 panels depicting figures, mainly saints with some New Testament figures, a bishop and a royal scene – see Fig 29.⁵⁰⁵ The figure panels in the two northern bays are noticeably more rustic in style and were probably added at later date when this area of the church housed a small side altar probably for the use of the curate – see Fig. 30.⁵⁰⁶

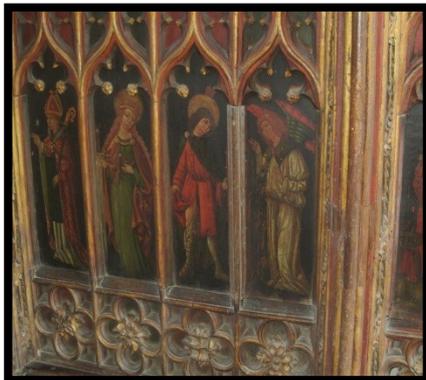


Figure 29 One of the painted dado panels of the northern screen depicting saints and a bishop noticeably (photograph, author) (photograph, author)



Figure 30 Painted panels from the bays of the screen displaying a cruder style of painting

⁵⁰⁴ Eames, undated, p. 8.

⁵⁰⁵ E.H. List entry, Plymtree.

⁵⁰⁶ Eames, undated, p. 9.

5.4 The Reformation (c.1540- early 17th century)

Henry VIII's break with the Church of Rome and the creation of an Established Church of England brought about not only a new system of church government and legislation, but a physical legacy which can still be seen in many parish churches; both in terms of the fixtures and fittings that were added, but also in the mutilation and destruction of so many decorative features.

Initially the Reformation had little impact on the existing fabric of church buildings, although many churches hung plaster Royal Arms on prominent walls.⁵⁰⁷ In fact independence signalled a period of stasis in the development of new church architecture partly explained by the reduction in funds available to parish churches following the Annates Act of 1534, which granted the Crown the first year's income from each benefice and a tenth of the income for succeeding years.⁵⁰⁸ It was following the accession of Edward VI in 1547 and the establishment of Protestantism that a radical programme of destruction took place of any physical elements seen as representative of the former Roman Catholic faith including statues, wall paintings, stained glass, rood screens, chantry chapels and altars (which were replaced by Holy Tables).⁵⁰⁹

The succession to the throne of Queen Mary in 1553 brought the reinstatement of the Roman Catholic religion and the partial restoration of altars, rood screens, chapels and all items necessary for the performance of the Mass.⁵¹⁰ However just five years later the whole process was reversed again when Elizabeth, a supporter of the Church of England, came to power.

Despite a concerted effort to undo the elements restored during the Marian revival with items destroyed and burnt in churchyards and on village greens⁵¹¹ some churches still kept their rood lofts and other features connected with Roman Catholic ritual. Although the

⁵⁰⁷ Hutton and Cook, 2000, p.123.

⁵⁰⁸ Bettey, 1987, p.30.

⁵⁰⁹ Strong, 2007, p.72.

⁵¹⁰ Ibid., p.78.

⁵¹¹ Ibid., p.92.

reforms under Elizabeth were far more gradual and less violent than during Edward's reign, a general sense of disruption coupled with the cessation of community events and activities taking place in the church buildings, resulted in a marked decline in giving. As a consequence the fabric of many churches suffered greatly, whilst at the same time the church building came to be regarded as a sacred space not to be corrupted by rowdy secular activities.⁵¹²

The split with Rome had a significant impact on the legal requirements for carrying out alterations to the church fabric. Previously dispensations, licences and faculties required for such works were granted by the Pope, but after the Reformation these rights passed to the Court of Faculties, who granted permissions on behalf of the Archbishop of Canterbury.⁵¹³

5.4.1 Devon (c. 1540 – early 17th century)

The experience of the church in Devon during this period mirrored that of the church throughout the rest of the country. Churchwardens' accounts show internal alterations carried out according to the requirements of the various monarchs, albeit some changes took a while to be implemented⁵¹⁴ and in some cases were not implemented at all; a notable number of medieval screens and pews with carved bench ends remained in situ.⁵¹⁵ In many churches the altar in the chancel was replaced by a communion table which was only used occasionally. The nave became the main centre of activity where the clergyman and clerk conducted the service from desks and the pulpit, and the aisles, transepts and side chapels became redundant. Whilst some were filled with pews and became extensions of the nave other spaces were converted to new uses such as schoolroom, aristocratic burial chapel or vestry.⁵¹⁶

⁵¹² Bettey, 1987, p.88.

⁵¹³ Binney, M. and Burman, P. *Change and Decay The Future of Our Churches*, London: Cassell and Collier, 1977, p. 146.

⁵¹⁴ Orme, 1991, p.72.

⁵¹⁵ Cherry and Pevsner, 1991, p.51.

⁵¹⁶ Orme, 1991, p 75.

The new emphasis on the sermon and readings saw wealthy families commissioning more ornate pews, and many pulpits replaced with larger more elaborate constructions.⁵¹⁷ Increasing numbers of monuments to prominent local families were erected ranging from freestanding tombs to more modest wall-mounted plaques.⁵¹⁸

The effects of the Annates Act, the decline in community fund raising and a tendency for wealthy patrons to subsidise works for their own benefit resulted in few new churches being built in Devon during this period.⁵¹⁹

5.4.2 St. John the Baptist, Plymtree (c. 1540 – early 17th century)

The experience of Plymtree church during the Reformation and the years following was in many ways similar to that in Devon and the rest of the country. Many decorative features and those associated with Roman Catholic ritual were lost including the rood figures, a confessional box (the site of which between the nave and the chancel was still discernible in the 18th century),⁵²⁰ the statues from the column niches – see Fig. 13 and the holy water stoop in the porch which was partially destroyed – see Fig 31.⁵²¹



Figure 31 The Holy water stoop in the south porch, was partially destroyed during the Reformation (photograph, author)

⁵¹⁷ Cherry and Pevsner, 1991, p.51.

⁵¹⁸ Ibid., p.51.

⁵¹⁹ Hoskins, 1954, p.272.

⁵²⁰ Polwhele, R. *The History of Devonshire* (1793-1806) (photocopy of extract from the Devon Record Office)

⁵²¹ Eames, 1999, p. 31.

The new emphasis in the liturgy on the importance of readings and prayer is reflected in the two nowy-headed prayer and commandment boards which now stand at the back of the nave – see Fig. 32.⁵²²



Figure 32 One of the 16th century Commandment boards (photograph, author)

The experience at Plymtree also reflected national trends in the removal of secular activities from the church building. In 1532 a deed was signed by the Earl of Huntingdon granting a hundred year lease for a church house which was built in the south east corner of the churchyard. The building consisted of a central hall, kitchen, buttery and vestry and would have been used for parish meetings and for raising funds for the church.⁵²³ Two other buildings were built in the south west of the churchyard to house the poor; the date of their construction is uncertain.

Atypical development for the 16th century included the installation of three tall, square headed windows each with differently shaped elliptical and Tudor arch heads on the north wall⁵²⁴ – see Fig. 33, the provision of a hagioscope with a Tudor-arch head on the pier between the nave and chancel – see Fig. 34, and the survival of the painted figures of the saints on the screen dado.

⁵²² E.H. List entry, Plymtree.

⁵²³ English Heritage, 'Pastscape' [online] http://www.pastscape.org.uk/hob.aspx?hob_id=188108 [24th January, 2013]

⁵²⁴ Eames, 1999, p. 30.

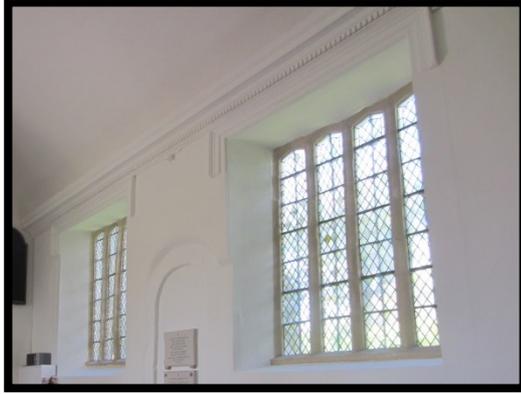


Figure 33 The nave north wall square headed windows hagioscope were inserted in the 16th century (photograph, author)

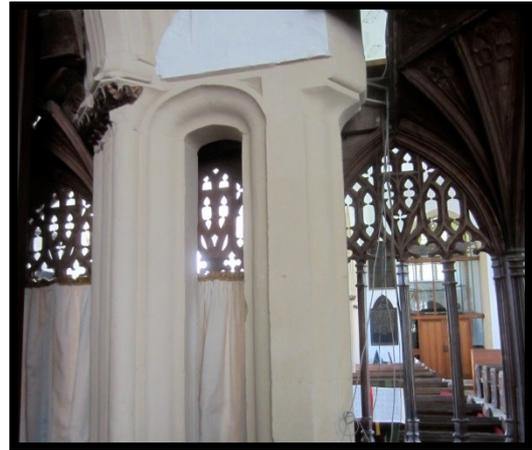


Figure 34 The Tudor arch headed (photograph, author)

5.5 Post-Reformation and the Civil War

During the 17th century, developments in liturgy and doctrine continued to impact on the interior arrangements and exterior decoration of many churches, the use of the church as a place of local secular congregation became increasingly limited and a system for monitoring the condition of church buildings was initiated.

The first significant influence on the internal arrangements of church buildings followed the installation of Archbishop William Laud in 1633. Laud believed church buildings should be treated with care and reverence and this reverence had been undermined by the repositioning of the altar in the heart of the church. He ordered it should return of to its original position against the east wall of the chancel with a rail in front to protect it. He also encouraged the decoration of the chancel with paintings and canopies, and elaborately patterned floors to emphasise its special character.⁵²⁵ However, the Laudian re-emphasis on the role of the altar did not discourage the continued reordering of church interiors to reflect the importance of the sermon. Many large, new pulpits were introduced to church interiors in the 17th century along with ever more elaborate pews and monuments.⁵²⁶

The second more major impact on church fabric followed the Civil War and the adoption of a more Puritanical form of worship. Even before the conflict started in 1641, Parliament

⁵²⁵ Strong, 2007 p.132.

⁵²⁶ Ibid., p.137.

had appointed commissioners to remove idolatrous images and the Laudian east end altars. Under this edict, many churches lost sculptures both interior and exterior and the majority their stained glass.⁵²⁷

Although the church building during the 17th century was no longer the venue for vibrant local feasts and sports, it still played an important role in the community as a place for sober meetings (including the manorial courts) and the election of churchwardens. Some churches were the repository for the parish accounts, parish armour, the local library, performed the tack of schoolroom and in some instances the prison. Fundraising activities still took place, including the brewing of church ale, but were confined to church houses: small structures within the boundary of the churchyard where church ale was brewed and feasts held.⁵²⁸

This period saw the beginning of the church authorities taking centralised responsibility for the upkeep of their buildings with Diocesan Commissions instigated in October 1629. These commissions ensured churches were kept in good repair and that the churchwardens and parishes were carrying out their duties of care and maintenance. Very few churches or chapels were built at this time.⁵²⁹

5.5.1. Devon, Post-Reformation and the Civil War

In many respects new work carried out in Devon churches during this period accorded with the national experience with pews, pulpits and especially memorials added to interiors during the 17th century.⁵³⁰ However there is some evidence that a considerable amount of reconstruction and even rebuilding took place including towers, arcades and windows. A number of galleries were added, albeit mainly in the towns, to cater for the growing population.⁵³¹

⁵²⁷ Ibid., p.153.

⁵²⁸ Bettey, 1987, p.95.

⁵²⁹ Strong, 2007, p.132.

⁵³⁰ Cherry and Pevsner, 1999, p. 51-52.

⁵³¹ Hoskins, 1954, p.273.

5.5.2 St. John the Baptist, Plymtree, Post-Reformation and the Civil War

The experience of Plymtree church in the 17th century reflected national trends insofar as it was affected by both the Laudian reforms and the Civil War iconoclasm. In line with the teachings of Archbishop Laud, a carved wooden altar rail was installed to separate the east end altar from the rest of the church and to emphasise its significance – see Fig. 35, and the stained glass windows were destroyed and replaced with clear glass – see Fig. 36.



Figure 35 The carved altar rail installed following the 17th century Laudian reforms (photograph, author)



Figure 36 Clear glass was installed in the windows after the removal of the stained glass (photograph, author)

A description from the early 19th century describes the sculpture of the Virgin and Child on the west front of the tower as having suffered from the iconoclasts:⁵³² the vandalized face of the Virgin and the missing head of the Child are typical of the type of destruction which occurred at the time – see Fig. 37. The date of the statue is unclear: it is described in the list description as 17th century,⁵³³ but would have been a very unusual addition for this period. Other 15th century church towers in the vicinity have niche statues of similar design which are described as contemporary, and this would suggest the statue was contemporaneous with the building of the tower in the early to mid 15th century.

⁵³² Cresswell, 1919.

⁵³³ E.H. List entry, Plymtree.



Figure 37 Niche statue of the Virgin and Child on the West face of the tower, possibly damaged during the Civil War. The Virgin's crown was discovered behind the figure and replaced during its recent restoration (photograph, author)

Plymtree church also reflected the regional trend in Devon during the 17th century for reconstruction with the alteration of the windows at the east and west ends of the south aisle. The windows whose original design probably matched that of the other windows in the south aisle: three lights with Perpendicular tracery, were narrowed to two lights and the resultant space in-filled with brick – see Figs. 38 and 39.⁵³⁴

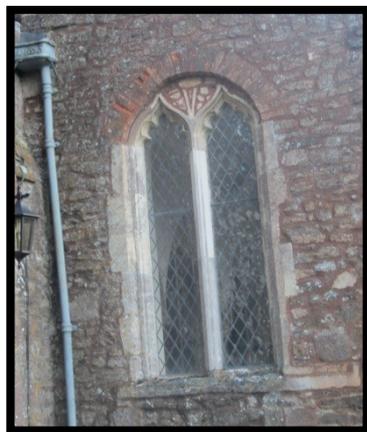


Figure 38 The western south aisle window 17th showing rubble in-fill between the mould reconfigured Perpendicular lights, the extent of the original window cill and the 17th century brick voussoir (photograph, author)



Figure 39 The eastern south aisle window with century brick in-fill above the hood (photograph, author)

⁵³⁴ Ibid.

Other new work at Plymtree during the period included the oak ogee profile font cover - see Fig. 40, two grave slabs on the floor of the south aisle – see Fig. 41 and the two replacement oak benches – see Fig. 42.⁵³⁵



Figure 40 Carved bird on the 17th century font cover (photograph, author)



Figure 41 Slate grave slab with Renaissance style decoration (photograph, author)



Figure 42 17th century bench end at the west end of the south aisle (photograph, author)

The associative history of Plymtree church in the 17th century has national significance. Nicholas Monk, the rector between 1646-1660 is reputed to have persuaded his brother General Monk, Duke of Albermarle and Governor of Scotland, to restore Charles II to the throne. Nicholas was consequently made Provost of Eton and Bishop of Hereford in 1660.⁵³⁶

⁵³⁵ Ibid.

⁵³⁶ Plymtree Church Guide, 1955, p. 17.

5.6 The 18th Century

This period has been popularly characterised in the history of the church as a time of neglect but contemporary records and the evidence of surviving fabric suggest that a period of mixed fortunes would be a more accurate description. For many communities the exodus of the rural population to the newly emerging industrial centres, the growth of Nonconformity and dissatisfaction with the rise in pew rents led to increasing numbers staying away from church and providing for its upkeep.⁵³⁷ In 1798, John Carter of the Society of Antiquaries wrote of churches ‘unaired, covered with dust and rubbish’ and monuments ‘defiled, mutilated, and used for ignoble purposes’.⁵³⁸ However, for those churches connected to a wealthy family the situation could be quite different, rising land values, the improvements in agricultural production and the higher prices attainable for farm produce led to an increase in the tithe donations. Many patrons of parishes which provided a good stipend, now considered the church a suitable profession for their sons and injected considerable sums of family money for the enhancement of the church building. Furthermore the majority of churchwardens’ accounts for the period generally show regular maintenance work being carried out.⁵³⁹

5.6.1 Devon, the 18th Century

Although very few churches were built in Devon in the period from the late 17th century to the mid 18th century,⁵⁴⁰ Hoskins observed ‘The Patent Books and Faculty Books in the Episcopal registry at Exeter show that much structural alteration and refurnishing was carried out in the 18th and early 19th centuries’. These works included new galleries, pews and pulpits. The continued decline in the importance and mystery of the Eucharist resulted in the further destruction of many medieval rood-screens and lofts, which had survived the

⁵³⁷ Hutton and Cook, 2000 p.169.

⁵³⁸ Fawcett, E, J. (ed.) *The Future of the Past. Attitudes to conservation 1174-1974*, London: Thames and Hudson, 1976, p. 40.

⁵³⁹ Betty, 1987, p.117.

⁵⁴⁰ Cherry and Pevsner, 1999, p.87.

Reformation and Civil War.⁵⁴¹In some churches the pulpit was symbolically sited in the position formerly occupied by the rood, requiring the congregation to walk under the pulpit before entering the chancel.⁵⁴²

The increased wealth of country landowners and squires was reflected in the number of ambitious funerary monuments erected to family members in rural churches. These additions were usually Classical in design; the chosen style for the majority of interior fittings installed during this period.⁵⁴³

5.6.2 St. John the Baptist, Plymtree, the 18th century

Plymtree church in the 18th century does not appear to be one of the ‘unaired, covered with dust and rubbish’ churches. It rather accords to the type identified by Hoskins where alterations and refurbishments took place. This work began at the start of the period in c. 1700 when the nave roof was raised: this involved the insertion of a higher set of roof timbers in an inverted V over the older barrel shaped timbers which remained in situ.⁵⁴⁴ Following the roof works the barrel vaulted ceilings of the nave and aisle were replaced.⁵⁴⁵ The new work was carried out in the Classical style with moulded cornices and the nave further enriched with a dentil frieze and octagonal panels – see Figs. 43 and 44.⁵⁴⁶



Figure 43 Moulded cornice with dentil frieze in the nave (photograph, author)



Figure 44 Octagonal plaster ceiling panels in the nave with rose bosses (photograph, author)

⁵⁴¹ Hoskins, 1954, p.273.

⁵⁴² Gray, 2011, p.25.

⁵⁴³ Cherry and Pevsner, 1999, p.87.

⁵⁴⁴ Plymtree Magazine, October 1951.

⁵⁴⁵ Ibid.

⁵⁴⁶ E.H. List entry, Plymtree.

It was during this period that internal reordering took place at Plymtree in response to changes in the liturgy from the Eucharist, to a service based around the sermon and readings. The timing of these alterations whilst late from a national perspective was not untypical for Devon. The alterations took the following form: two galleries, one for musicians and choir erected in 1719 at the west end of the church and another along the south wall to accommodate children;⁵⁴⁷ a larger Classical style pulpit;⁵⁴⁸ the addition of some box pews in the south aisle (no longer extant)⁵⁴⁹ and the adaptation of some of the existing pews to include doors – see Figs. 45 and 46. The cover of the *Plymtree Parish Magazine* from the late 19th century shows the original form of the pulpit;⁵⁵⁰ twice the height of the present truncated structure– see Figs. 47 and 48. The indentation in the cornice of the screen suggests the pulpit may have been sited close to the position of the former rood in common with the practice in other Devon churches see Fig. 49. The pulpit has been dated to the 17th century, but this is probably erroneously based on the survival of the earlier pulpit fall dated 1697 – see Fig. 50.⁵⁵¹



Figure 45 Former door latch bracket on a bench end against the north wall (photograph, author)



Figure 46 Hinges from a former door on a bench end in the south aisle (photograph, author)

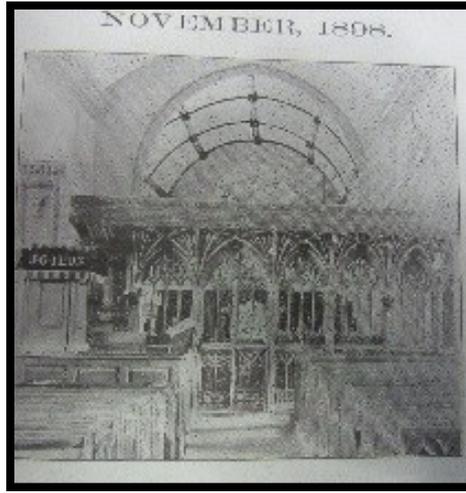
⁵⁴⁷ Eames, 1999, p. 31.

⁵⁴⁸ Cherry and Pevsner, 1999, p.686.

⁵⁴⁹ Eames, 1999, p. 32.

⁵⁵⁰ Plymtree Magazine, November, 1898.

⁵⁵¹ Cresswell, 1919.



Figures 47 and 48 The 18th century pulpit was originally considerably taller, as can be seen in the late 19th century drawing (photograph, author) (drawing, Plymtree Parish Magazine)



Figure 49 The indentation at the base of the screen cornice could mark the position of the sounding board of the 18th century pulpit (photograph, author)



Figure 50 The 17th century pulpit fall (photograph, author)

Other works dating from this period include a wooden paneled altar table;⁵⁵² the painted royal coat of arms of George II (originally hung behind the altar and now in the ringing chamber)⁵⁵³ and a belfry clock – see Figs. 51 and 52.⁵⁵⁴

⁵⁵² Cherry and Pevsner, 1999, p. 686.

⁵⁵³ Eames, 1999, p. 31.

⁵⁵⁴ Ibid., p. 45.



Figures 51 and 52 The late 18th century tower clock is a working example of a wrought iron, horizontal-framed 'birdcage' tower clock with stone weights (photographs, author)

The first references to the condition of the church date from the end of this period. Minutes from a Vestry Meeting held on 27th February 1793 records the necessity of repairing the church and tower which should be 'properly plastered and whitewashed as in their judgments shall seem requisite'.⁵⁵⁵ In the same year the topographical writer Richard Polwhele observed that 'the screen is very handsome and finely carved and gilded, but wants refreshing'.⁵⁵⁶

Oriel College by purchasing the advowson became the patrons of Plymtree in 1737 and from this date appointed the parish priest.⁵⁵⁷ This was to have a significant affect on the fabric of the church during the 19th century.

5.7 The 19th century and the Gothic Revival

Until the 19th century church buildings had been altered and adapted according to the requirements of the liturgy, the Crown, the Government and the desires of wealthy benefactors; these combined influences had precipitated many changes, but none impacted on the historic fabric on the scale of the stylistic restoration projects of the 19th century. The ubiquitous nature of the restoring architects was summarised by Hutton and Cook 'in an age when faith was steadily being eroded by scientific discovery almost every architect

⁵⁵⁵ From the notebooks of the Vestry and subsequently Parochial Church Council Meetings held by the Devon Record Office.

⁵⁵⁶ Polwhele, 1793-1806.

⁵⁵⁷ Plymtree Church Guide, 1955, p. 18.

of note was occupied to a considerable extent with work on churches'.⁵⁵⁸ By contrast the 19th century was also of great significance for the preservation of the historic fabric of churches as it heralded the birth of the conservation movement; a movement formed in response to the destructive nature of so many restoration schemes (see Chapters 2 and 3). Other influences on church interiors included new technical innovations in heating and lighting.

The first forty years of the nineteenth century began quietly for most C. of E. churches and can be seen as a continuum of the 18th century as regards the maintenance and development of their fabric. However, during this period increasing numbers of buildings were falling into a serious state of disrepair. Following the Reform Act of 1832 the Church could no longer raise taxes for church buildings and instead, in common with the Dissenters, had to rely on individual patrons and voluntary subscriptions. Church attendance was not high: the 1851 Census of Places of Religious Worship revealed only 21 per cent of the population attended a C. of E. church,⁵⁵⁹ and there was considerable financial hardship in the countryside even before the repeal of the Corn Laws in 1846. As a consequence of the above funds available for maintaining churches were in general depleted, leading to increased dilapidation.

Against this backdrop of neglect and decay that the wholesale restoration programmes promoted by the Ecclesiological Society (as described in the chapter 3) took place. Frequent articles in *The Ecclesiologist* described the terrible condition of church interiors, their decaying fabric and the loss of all sense of reverence due to neglect or to secular uses such as local schooling. A book entitled *The Churches of Cambridgeshire and the Isle of Ely* published by the Cambridge Camden Society in 1845 described the church in the village of Haslingfield: 'The church has suffered considerably from damp and neglect; the state of the floor at the west end of the north aisle is such as would certainly not be permitted in any

⁵⁵⁸ Hutton and Cook, 2000, p.214.

⁵⁵⁹ Betty, 1987, p.136.

gentleman's stable, nor, voluntarily, in the meanest cottage.⁵⁶⁰ The same book relates how in the church at Cherry Hinton 'the north aisle is blocked off, and irreverently used as a dust-hole and rubbish depository'.⁵⁶¹

Whilst it is undoubtedly true that the fabric of many churches at this time was in desperate need of attention, it is possible the Ecclesiologists sometimes exaggerated the situation in order to justify their own vision. Many patrons and parsons were seduced by the colourful Ecclesiological vision of the perfect English Gothic church; 13th century in style with a sanctuary, spacious chancel, stained glass windows, tapestries and wall paintings.⁵⁶² Symbolism was of great importance to them especially the pre-eminence of the altar as the focus of the church. Their writings were to prove highly influential and many contemporary architects followed their highly prescriptive vision leading to the destruction of many of the features of the Protestant liturgy including tall box pews, three-decker pulpits and galleries. Chancels were elongated and raised on steps, altars were raised even higher and surrounded by decorative features such as panelling, elaborate reredoses or altarpieces and candles. Lessons were read from lecterns in the form of eagles, and organs moved in or near to the newly lengthened chancel. Original medieval work which did not accord stylistically with the 13th century ideal was often destroyed, as was much 17th and 18th century material. Many restorers, misinterpreting Ruskin's writings in *The Lamp of Truth*, removed ancient plaster and left exposed the rubble masonry walls behind.⁵⁶³ There were a few restorers who kept the original medieval material whilst replacing missing elements with scholarly replicas, but more often intervention was extremely heavy handed and much historic fabric was lost, or covered by plasterwork.

As has been discussed in the previous chapters 2 and 4 the extensive stylistic restoration projects of the Gothic Revival were the catalyst for the formation of the S.P.A.B. and the

⁵⁶⁰ White, J.F, *The Cambridge Movement. The Ecclesiologists and the Gothic Revival*, Cambridge: C.U.P., 1962, p.3.

⁵⁶¹ *Ibid.*, p.4.

⁵⁶² *Ibid.*, p.19.

⁵⁶³ Briggs, M, S. (1952) *Goths and Vandals – A Study of Destruction, Neglect and Preservation of Historic Buildings in England*, London: Constable, 1952, p.202.

beginning of the building conservation movement in Britain. Although this new philosophy of conservation was to have a profound effect on church care and maintenance in the future, such was the ubiquity of church restoration in the preceding years that a large percentage of English parish churches were significantly altered. As Kenneth Clark observed 'It would be interesting to know if the Camden Society destroyed as much medieval architecture as Cromwell.'⁵⁶⁴

In addition to the extensive work carried out by the Victorian restorers further alterations to parish churches took place during this period in response to recent innovations in heating and lighting. By the mid 19th century churches were heated by large cast iron stoves many of which were connected to radiators and pipes, which passed under the seats of pews, and in some churches through ducts beneath the floor. Lighting was provided at first by oil lamps, then gas and electricity.⁵⁶⁵

5.7.1 Devon, the 19th century and the Gothic Revival

The circumstances which prompted church restoration nationally, the poor condition of the fabric and the widespread appeal of the Gothic Revival, were equally potent and widespread in Devon. The Bishop of Exeter, Henry Phillpotts whose episcopacy (1830-1869) coincided with the high water mark of the Gothic Revival was an enthusiastic supporter of church restoration,⁵⁶⁶ and the diocese as a whole was sympathetic to the High Church tradition. In 1841 the Exeter Diocesan Architectural Society was founded to promote the principles of the Camden Society and was the first organization to do so outside the universities.⁵⁶⁷

This enthusiastic embracing of the Gothic Revival movement is illustrated in the Exeter Diocesan Calendar of 1870 which records the achievements of Bishop Phillpotts, who had died the preceding year, listing 129 new churches and 27 rebuilt churches, but significantly not attempting to numerate the number of churches restored, as this would have included

⁵⁶⁴ Clark, K. *The Gothic Revival*, London: Murray, 1928, p.226.

⁵⁶⁵ Strong, 2007, p.212.

⁵⁶⁶ Orme, 1991, p.121.

⁵⁶⁷ Cherry and Pevsner, 1999, p.99.

almost every church in Devon.⁵⁶⁸ As Hoskins observed 'It remained for the Victorians to complete the work of destruction in the medieval and Georgian churches. The melancholy tale of their vandalism, their complete disregard for the artistic achievements of the past, can be told in nearly every parish in Devon'.⁵⁶⁹ He does, however, concede that many Victorian incumbents inherited churches which had been 'grossly neglected for the past hundred years, and there was not much they could do about it except to clear out a mass of mouldy worm-eaten wreckage and start refurnishing all over again'.⁵⁷⁰ The Dean of Exeter had decried the lack of respect for church buildings to the Exeter Diocesan Architectural Society in 1842 'we may now see in most of our rural Churches a rabble of boors and boys seated on the very steps and rails of the altar, and the altar itself used to place their hats on'.⁵⁷¹ It was clear that action was required, but unfortunately in many cases as Hoskins complains the work was 'heavy-handed and unsympathetic' and 'very rarely was a good architect called in'.⁵⁷²

Work carried out in the early years of the Revival mainly consisted of refitting or rebuilding chancels in the Decorated style, many of which were altered again in the late 19th century. By the 1860s the arrival of the railway brought increasing numbers of nationally eminent architects to Devon to build new churches, but also to supervise restoration schemes: George Gilbert Scott; G. E. Street; Arthur Blomfield; Butterfield and Pearson were all involved in projects in the county during this time.⁵⁷³ In addition to these national figures a number of local designers and craftsmen developed successful practices including the architects John Hayward and Edward Ashworth who were both members of the Exeter Diocesan Architectural Society. In north Devon the father and son team of R. D. Gould and J. F. Gould were involved in a number of significant church projects. Harry Hems a sculptor and carver set up 'one of the most prolific ecclesiastical workshops in Victorian

⁵⁶⁸ Orme, 1991, p.127.

⁵⁶⁹ Hoskins, 1954, p.274.

⁵⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, p.274.

⁵⁷¹ White, 1962, p.4.

⁵⁷² Hoskins, 1954, p.274.

⁵⁷³ Cherry and Pevsner, 1999, p.100.

England' in Exeter.⁵⁷⁴ Stained glass artists were much in demand as windows were increasingly chosen for memorials rather than tombs. In addition to the famous London stained glass manufacturers local firms included Beer and Drifffield, Frederick Drake and Fouracre and Watson.⁵⁷⁵

By the late 19th century new church buildings showed the influence of the Arts and Crafts movement, and increasingly restoration works were carried out with reference to the surviving fabric. In Devon this led to many schemes in the Perpendicular style displaying according to Pevsner 'a greater deference to the local Perpendicular tradition'.⁵⁷⁶ Important figures in the movement away from destructive restoration towards conservation included the Revd. Sabine Baring-Gould, vicar of Lewtrenchard, who salvaged early material at risk and Herbert Read who worked for Hems and Sons from 1874 and established his own business in Exeter in 1891 promoting conservative restoration.⁵⁷⁷

5.7.2 Plymtree, the 19th century and the Gothic Revival

The 19th century developments at Plymtree church are key in distinguishing it from many of the other churches in the area. The church was typical of many in the 19th century coming under the influence of a High Church rector and requiring a significant number of repairs, but where it differed from the majority was in the lack of restoration work that took place. At Plymtree the building was repaired, but not restored; probably because the costs of repairs precluded any further expenditure.

The first indications of the poor state of the church fabric date from the Vestry Minutes of 1827 which propose an 'experienced architect' should report on the 'dilapidated condition of the church'.⁵⁷⁸ The architect Samuel Henson was appointed and he recommended a significant programme of work including: the rebuilding of the columns, arches of the aisle and chancel arch; repairing the decorative ceiling of the nave, roof and the wall from the

⁵⁷⁴ Ibid., p.101.

⁵⁷⁵ Ibid., p.102.

⁵⁷⁶ Ibid., p.106.

⁵⁷⁷ Ibid., p. 107.

⁵⁷⁸ *Vestry Minutes for St. John the Baptist Plymtree*, 1827, unpublished, Devon Record Office.

east end of the south aisle to within two feet of the eastern side of the porch; replastering the inside and roughcasting the outer wall of the south aisle; replacing the south aisle roof; repairing the gable ends over the east and west windows of the south aisle; taking down the west window of the south aisle to cill level and repairs to the south porch. Between 1827 and 1828 further minutes record more minor works proposed by Henson, but do not record what work was actually carried out. Pevsner states that the nave vault along with parts of the walls and arcades were rebuilt by Samuel Henson,⁵⁷⁹ but subsequent documents (including architects' reports - see below) suggest the works to the vault and north wall were not carried out at this time.

In 1832 the High Churchman Joseph Dornford was appointed as parish priest for Plymtree. The church patron Oriel College, where Dornford had been a student, made the appointment. Oriel was the birthplace of the Oxford Movement: the theological movement which promoted traditional Catholic teachings and ceremonial for the C. of E., which had been influential in the formation of the Cambridge Camden Society.⁵⁸⁰ The Oxford Movement aimed to restore medieval and High Church practices both in liturgy and church furnishings, and appears to have influenced Dornford. During his incumbency Dornford re-ordered the area around the altar to emphasise the importance of the Eucharist or Holy Communion, he installed carved linenfold panelling around the chancel walls (saved from a house in the parish demolished c.1840 – see Fig. 53) and surmounted the panels with a carved 17th century wooden frieze of Classical style female figures from Belgium – see Fig. 54.⁵⁸¹ He then raised the foot of the east window⁵⁸² to allow for the installation of a 17th century Flemish alabaster panel as a reredos – see Fig. 55.⁵⁸³ Other Ecclesiologist influenced work carried out by Dornford included the reinstatement of fragments of medieval stained glass into the clear glass windows – see Fig. 3.

⁵⁷⁹ Cherry and Pevsner, 1999, p. 686.

⁵⁸⁰ Nickles, P. and Morris, J. 'Section 5: The Church in England (c.1689-c.1945) The Oxford Movement' [DVD-ROM] York: Christianity and Culture, 2010.

⁵⁸¹ Cresswell, 1919.

⁵⁸² Eames, 1999, p. 31.

⁵⁸³ Plymtree Church Guide, 1955, p. 9.



Figure 53 Linenfold panelling in the chancel



Figure 54 Carved 17th century frieze panels depicting Classical female figures (photograph, author)



Figure 55 Flemish alabaster panel of the Resurrection. Originally installed in the chancel, it was relocated in the early 20th century to the west wall of the south aisle (photograph, author)

A description of the church written by J Davidson in 1843 provides an account of its condition at this time; he notes the screen described in the 18th century by Polwhele 18th as requiring attention has been ‘recently restored’.⁵⁸⁴

By the 1890s the condition of the church had become a serious concern. A letter to the editor of the *Devon and Exeter Daily Gazette* dated 8th April 1892 from someone signing themselves ‘A Parish Priest’ complained ‘I was perfectly horrified with the tumble down state God’s House was in, more so with the filth and dirt, the accumulation I should say of

⁵⁸⁴ Davidson, J. *Church Notes East Devon*, 1843, unpublished, Devon Record Office.

ages'. The officiating minister J. Parry, replied in the 13th April 1892 edition explaining the parish were well aware the church needed restoring and had in the last twenty years raised funds for enclosing the churchyard, repairing the church and providing a new schoolroom and organ, all without financial assistance from their patrons Oriel College.⁵⁸⁵ The restoration works Parry referred to took place in 1883 and consisted of repairs to the roof.⁵⁸⁶

However, the majority of repairs first identified by Henson in the 1820s remained outstanding. The *Plymtree Magazine* records the annual visit of the Rural Dean on 29th March 1894 who noted 'The church still needs restoration. The Rood Screen especially seems to need securing. The upper part of the tower is badly cracked and should at once receive attention. The Belfry window has been repaired.'⁵⁸⁷ Concerned at the condition of the church the rector, the Revd. George Gutteres, consulted the architect George Fellowes Prynne, a prolific local architect who had carried out a number of restorations as well as designing many new church buildings.⁵⁸⁸ After surveying the building Fellowes Prynne recommended a substantial number of works: repairs to the floor as the flag stones were laid straight onto the soil and had sunk in many places; replacing the platforms under the pews which were rotten; realigning the north wall which was eight inches out of perpendicular; replacing the rotten porch roof; repairing the tower including the belfry stage and treating the pews and screen for woodworm.⁵⁸⁹

Of the recommended works only the tower repairs were immediately carried out as alarming cracks had developed on three of its four sides. In 1895 the walls were strengthened with cast-iron beams – see Fig. 56, four new pinnacles were re-carved – see Fig. 57 along with the stonework of the west window, the two internal rotten wooden

⁵⁸⁵ Newspaper cuttings from the *Devon and Exeter Daily Gazette*, Devon Record Office.

⁵⁸⁶ Eames, 1999, p. 32.

⁵⁸⁷ *Plymtree Magazine*, April 1894.

⁵⁸⁸ Cherry and Pevsner, 1999, p. 107.

⁵⁸⁹ Eames, 1999, p. 32.

stages were replaced as was the ancient tower door and a sixth bell was installed.⁵⁹⁰ The *Plymtree Magazine* recorded in March 1895 ‘As part of the restoration of the Church, the two galleries have been removed. The South, or children’s Gallery had been unsafe and unused for some years, and the main (West) one, erected in 1719, not used since the Plymtree Church Band, with its many instruments and singers, noted in the neighbourhood for its excellence, was broken up.’⁵⁹¹ At some point in the mid-nineteenth century an organ was installed, replacing the Plymtree Church band as an accompaniment to the hymns.



Figure 56 Cast-iron tie beam and brackets for internal west beams used to reinforce the tower in the late 19th century (photograph, author) (photograph, author)



Figure 57 The corner pinnacles on the tower were installed as part of century restoration

Postcards of the church dated 1895 give an insight into what work had been carried out and what still remained to be done:⁵⁹² the buttresses on the external north wall were in place – see Fig. 58; hanging oil lamps had been installed in the nave; the east wall of the chancel was cracked and the plaster stained; the doors to the south aisle pews were still in situ; the medieval pew ends appeared to be in a poor state of repair and despite the buttresses the north wall leant outwards.⁵⁹³

⁵⁹⁰ Ibid., p.40.

⁵⁹¹ Plymtree Magazine, March 1895.

⁵⁹² Eames, 1999, p. 32.

⁵⁹³ Ibid., p.32.



Figure 58 The north wall showing the two 19th century buttresses. The nearer projection with the small window is medieval and houses the steps to the former rood loft (photograph, author)

In 1898 the 15th century granite churchyard cross was restored and re-erected in memory of the Revd. Gutters who had only recently left the parish and died on holiday in Algiers. His family paid for the cross to be restored by the eminent Exeter workshop of Harry Hems and Sons – see Fig. 59.⁵⁹⁴



Figure 59 15th century cross restored by the Harry Hems workshop (photograph, author)

The century ended with the new rector Edgar Hay continuing the work of his predecessors of removing the Georgian alterations which had focused on the pulpit and reinstating the primacy of the chancel and the altar – see Fig. 60. The December 1898 edition of the

⁵⁹⁴ Plymtree Magazine, October 1898.

parish magazine records ‘The Rector has recently had the Choir Stalls altered, so that he may take the service in his proper place in the Chancel... This has allowed of the removal of the “Parson’s Box” in the north aisle’.⁵⁹⁵ A drawing of the interior of the church used for the cover of the parish magazine at this date shows the former ‘Parson’s Box’ – a fielded panel screen, taller than the pew benches and similar in style to the pulpit. It is three panels wide and stands in front of the pulpit to the same width as the pews on the north side of the aisle. It appears to return on its southern side to enclose the pulpit and a lectern – see Fig. 61. The same view taken in a photograph of 1905 shows the pulpit with the paneling removed and what appears to be one of the medieval benches reinstated to the east of the pulpit. It also shows the sounding board behind the pulpit removed, but the imposing height of the pulpit still remains – see Fig. 62.



Figure 60 The 19th century choir stalls in the chancel. The poppy head finials are not a traditional Devon feature. (photograph, author)

⁵⁹⁵ Plymtree Magazine, December 1898.

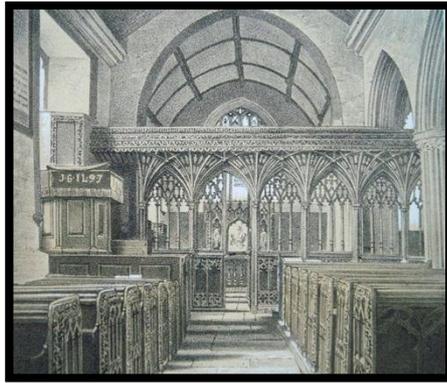


Figure 61 Pre-1898 drawing of the church showing interior showing the 'Parson's box' and pulpit 1898 and the sounding board still in situ (drawing, Plymtree Magazine, 1898)

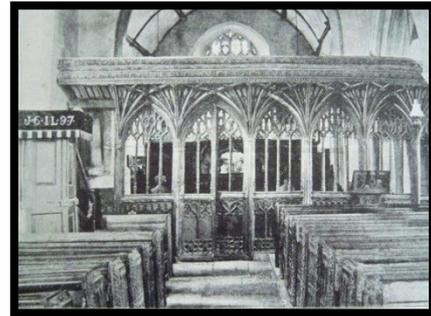


Figure 62 Photograph of the interior the new pew arrangement post removal of the pulpit sounding board (photograph, Plymtree Magazine, 1905)

Apart from the chancel alterations and the removal of the Georgian fittings the only other change which took place at Plymtree church in line with Ecclesiologist doctrine was the removal of plaster on the lower part of the south aisle wall. However, as the plaster had been described by the architect Henson in his 1827 report as requiring attention it is possible this work took place for practical rather than aesthetic reasons.

Although some repairs had taken place in conjunction with the limited re-ordering of the interior, a long list of outstanding repairs, some of which were detailed in the December 1898 parish magazine, remained outstanding; the parish magazines of the late 19th century refer frequently to a lack of funds as the explanation for this situation. As a consequence the majority of the medieval fabric in the church, in particular the screen, pews and windows remained un-restored, whilst many of the churches in the surrounding area underwent major programmes of restoration, which will be discussed in later chapters. In particular, the neighbouring church of Payhembury where Fellowes Prynne was also the architect underwent extensive restoration work from 1895-7 including the rebuilding of the walls, the reconstruction of the nave roof, repainting of the screen – see Fig. 63, new

lectern, font and prayer desk.⁵⁹⁶ Some of the medieval bench ends were kept, but heavily restored, and the majority were replaced— see Fig. 64.⁵⁹⁷



Figure 63 The medieval screen at Payhembury with 19th century paintwork by Fellowes Prynne (photograph, author)



Figure 64 The medieval style bench ends at Payhembury are largely 19th century (photograph, author)

Plymtree churchyard underwent a series of significant changes during the 19th century; as noted above, it was enclosed in the later part of the period with the volcanic and red sandstone wall restored and a new lych gate provided at the southern entrance. By the drawing of the Second Edition Ordnance Survey Map in 1889 the poor houses, clearly marked on the 1809 Old Series O.S. Map in the south west corner of the churchyard are no longer extant having been demolished some time during the 1880s to enlarge the churchyard and widen the road – see Figs. 65 and 66.⁵⁹⁸ The Church House in the south east corner survived only until 10th June 1895 when it was destroyed by fire.⁵⁹⁹

⁵⁹⁶ Cherry and Pevsner, 1999, p. 625.

⁵⁹⁷ English Heritage. 'List entry for Church of St. Mary, Payhembury' [online] <http://list.english-heritage.org.uk/resultsingle.aspx?uid=1333739> [7th May 2013]

⁵⁹⁸ Eames, 1999, p.12.

⁵⁹⁹ E.H., 'Pastscape'.



Figures 65 and 66 The Old Series and Second Edition Ordnance Survey maps of 1809 and 1889 showing the poor houses before and after their removal. The 1889 map also shows the raised pavement to the west of the churchyard (photographs of maps, Devon Record Office)

5.8 The 20th Century

In the 20th century church interiors continued to be adapted to suit changes in the liturgy, but a number of other factors were also to have a significant influence on the way churches were managed and maintained: this period saw the emergence of an organized system of planning permission for church buildings (the faculty system); regular condition surveys; the growth and influence of the conservation movement and government involvement in the funding of repairs.

The spread of the Liturgical Movement, which had begun in the Roman Catholic church, led to an emphasis on the corporate celebration of the church's sacraments and the resultant need for the altar to be more accessible at the head of the nave.⁶⁰⁰ Whilst in many churches the internal arrangements remained unaltered, others responded by placing temporary tables nearer the congregation, leaving the chancel as a separate east end chapel used for smaller services.

The conservation of the historic fabric of churches was strengthened during the 20th century by the control on new work through the faculty system (which became compulsory

⁶⁰⁰ Stancliffe, D. *Church Architecture*, Oxford: Lion Hudson, 2008, p.259.

after 1938) and the instigation in 1955 of regular condition surveys (both described in chapter 3). At around the same time the importance of regular repair and maintenance was recognized by the C. of E.'s governing authorities, the first financial assistance from outside the parish became available. In 1953 the Historic Churches Preservation Trust was established to raise funds for grant aiding the repair of 'important' historic churches.⁶⁰¹ For those churches without a regular congregation the 1969 Redundant Churches and Other Religious Buildings Act allowed for the foundation of the Redundant Churches Fund. This fund, financed by a partnership between the Church and the State, paid for the ongoing conservation of churches of 'historical and archaeological interest or architectural quality'.⁶⁰²

In 1977 the Government grants for places of worship were introduced⁶⁰³ a scheme subsequently administered by English Heritage (E.H.) after it was founded in 1983 following the National Heritage Act. Churches were granted between 40- 60% of the costs of eligible repairs on the condition the work was agreed and inspected by E.H. architects, the building was open regularly to the public and any subsequent works were approved by the organisation. In this way E.H. were able to ensure work was carried out according to their Principles of Repair. Two years after the Heritage Lottery Fund (H.L.F.) was established in 1994 it collaborated with E.H. on the Repair Grants for Places of Worship Scheme for urgent repairs to listed buildings.⁶⁰⁴

5.8.1 Devon, the 20th century

In the first half of the 20th century a small number of new churches were built in the county,⁶⁰⁵ but following the bomb damage of the Second World War more buildings needed to be replaced, particularly in Plymouth and Exeter. The gutted remains of St.

⁶⁰¹ Binney and Burman, 1976, p.171.

⁶⁰² Carr, J.L. *Churches in Retirement*, London: H.M.S.O., 1990, p.1.

⁶⁰³ Halsey, R. 'Historic Places of Worship', *Conservation Bulletin*, Issue 46, Autumn 2004, p.2.

⁶⁰⁴ Braithwaite, G. 'Maintaining the Legacy. The Repair Grants for Places of Worship in England scheme', *Conservation Bulletin*, Issue 61, Summer 2009, p.22.

⁶⁰⁵ Cherry and Pevsner, 1999, p.111.

Andrew, Plymouth were reconstructed, as were parts of Exeter Cathedral.⁶⁰⁶ Church fittings continued to be adapted including the provision of new altars in the nave, windows, partitions, toilet and kitchen facilities, organs and lecterns. In some cases, such as St Peter's, Wyndham Square, Plymouth whole interiors were re-ordered to allow for multi-purpose use. On church exteriors the requirements for disabled access, energy conservation and telephone masts required alterations and adaptations.

5.8.2 Plymtree, the 20th century to contemporary

The majority of work carried out at Plymtree church in the 20th century involved repairing the existing fabric and the addition of a few fixtures and fittings as a result of bequests. In December 1901 the parish magazine recorded the gift of a lamp from the Revd. Frodsham to stand by the churchyard steps.⁶⁰⁷ The iron lamp was made locally by Tom Bray at John Sanders' workshop at Normans Green – see Fig. 67.⁶⁰⁸ In 1905 a bequest from the Baxter family enabled the south porch to be repaired in memory of Henry Baxter who had lived at Greenend, Plymtree – see Fig. 68.⁶⁰⁹



Figure 67 The iron lamp was made locally in 1901 1905 and stands adjacent to the 19th century lych gate (photograph, (photograph, author)



Figure 68 The south porch was restored in and a timber ceiling installed (author)

In 1905 a pamphlet on the church was published from a series of articles which appeared in the Exeter Diocesan Gazette illustrated with photographs which give a record of its

⁶⁰⁶ Ibid., p.112.

⁶⁰⁷ Plymtree Magazine, December 1901.

⁶⁰⁸ Eames, 1999, p.33.

⁶⁰⁹ Ibid., p.33.

appearance at this time. A view of the exterior of the south aisle shows the walls covered in render; only the easternmost bay and the porch have bare stone walls. This would appear to show the 'roughcast' recommended by Samuel Henson in his 1827 report. The photograph also shows the monument to the west of the south aisle surrounded by railings and the headstones to the south of the church prior to their clearance. A note at the back of the pamphlet records the recent repairs carried out to the porch and requests money for the outstanding repairs to the rest of the church:⁶¹⁰ these constitute the bulk of the repair works first proposed by Fellowes Prynne.

In October 1905 William Weir of the S.P.A.B. was invited to inspect the church.⁶¹¹ Weir recommended: underpinning the walls, especially on the north side; relaying the floor and repairs to the screen.⁶¹² It would appear that funds were not readily available as it was not until November 1910 that the parish magazine notes a list of proposed repairs which includes: the general repair of the walls and underpinning, relaying floors and refixing of seats; repair of stonework and reglazing of windows; the repair of interior plaster; strengthening of the nave roof with oak tie beams and repairs to the rood screen.⁶¹³ Work began immediately and in the December edition of the magazine the rector recorded that 'three interesting features have been uncovered during the underpinning and repair of the North wall'. These included the Saxon/Norman doorway on the north wall and the evidence of the early wall near the pulpit (mentioned above) in addition to 'the stone top steps of the stairs leading to the rood-loft with a small window to light them'.⁶¹⁴

By the time of the Archdeacon's visitation in April 1911 he was able to report

'The church is under repair, and the work is being very thoroughly done on conservative lines, especial attention being paid to the structural safety and preservation of the building. The walls have been securely underpinned wherever needed, and an excellent drain at a level below the floors inside laid on a concrete base. Inside a good bed of concrete has been laid under the flooring and the flags.'⁶¹⁵

⁶¹⁰ *Plymtree in Devon: its parish, church, rood screen, manor and rectors*, 1905, pamphlet.

⁶¹¹ Plymtree Magazine, October 1905.

⁶¹² Ibid.

⁶¹³ Plymtree Magazine, November 1910.

⁶¹⁴ Plymtree Magazine, December 1910.

⁶¹⁵ Plymtree Magazine, April, 1911.

It would, appear, however, that funds ran out before all the proposed works took place; the May 1911 magazine reporting that the repairs to the screen, pews and the windows remained outstanding.⁶¹⁶ The works, which were the major structural repairs, which did take place were carried out in a sensitive, conservation-minded manner. Beatrix Cresswell who visited the church just after the repairs had taken place in 1911 observed they had been ‘judiciously carried out’ and that ‘no signs appear of that glaring renovation which so frequently mars the appearance of an ancient church’.⁶¹⁷ The successful outcome of the restoration is also noted in the list description: ‘the church of St John is a particularly good and well-preserved example; perhaps the paradigm of a rural church in Devon. It has escaped the worst excesses of C 19 renovation’.⁶¹⁸

For the next few years work on the church took place in a piecemeal fashion rather than following a prescribed programme of repair. In December 1915 the church stove, which dated from 1890, was replaced with a new ‘tortoise’ stove,⁶¹⁹ and the September 1927 magazine reported the unblocking of the chancel window and its restoration to its original proportions along with the re-leading of the windows.⁶²⁰ A framed photograph from 1927, now held in the church room, shows the newly restored chancel window, the pulpit at a reduced height, the Victorian oil lamps still in situ and the capitals to the arcade piers unpainted – see Fig 69.

⁶¹⁶ Plymtree Magazine, May 1911.

⁶¹⁷ Cresswell, 1919.

⁶¹⁸ E.H. List entry, Plymtree.

⁶¹⁹ Plymtree Magazine, December 1915.

⁶²⁰ Plymtree Magazine, September 1927.

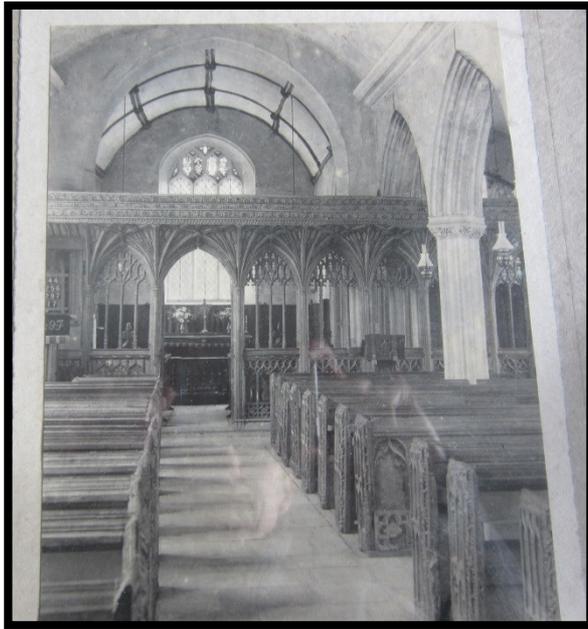


Figure 69 Interior of the church, 1927 (photograph, Plymtree parish)

In October 1932, there is the first record of Plymtree P.C.C. contacting the Exeter Diocesan Advisory Committee (D.A.C.) for advice on the decayed condition of the screen and woodwork. They were advised how to clean the screen by the vicar of Bradninch, whose church had a similar one dating from the medieval period.⁶²¹ However, they appear not to have carried out his advice as the D.A.C. minutes in 1951 record the conservation of the screen by Miss Webling, who cleaned, oiled and polished it, but did not repaint.⁶²²

In January 1951, a faculty was granted for heating and lighting, with the proviso the heaters were sited so as not to damage the ancient pews and window cills⁶²³ and in the same year repairs to the roof were carried out.⁶²⁴ The churchyard was extended to the east and consecrated on 2nd May 1957 by the Bishop of Crediton.⁶²⁵ In June 1960 the D.A.C. received an application to install a new pedal organ⁶²⁶ and the cross at the apex of the chancel roof was repaired in 1962 after it blew off and was smashed.⁶²⁷

⁶²¹ Notes from the Exeter Diocesan Advisory Committee, 1932-60, Devon Record Office.

⁶²² Ibid.

⁶²³ Ibid.

⁶²⁴ Plymtree Magazine, October 1951.

⁶²⁵ Plymtree Magazine, May 1957.

⁶²⁶ Exeter D.A.C. notes.

⁶²⁷ Plymtree Magazine, March 1962.

At some point after 1951 one of the Victorian poppy-headed bench ends in the choir was replaced with a medieval bench end; in a photograph from 1951 (which appears in an unpublished book entitled Plymtree Rectory Letters which is kept in the Church Room) the original poppy head finial is still clearly visible through the screen – see Figs. 70 and 71.



Figures 70 and 71 At some point after 1951 the poppy headed bench end on the front choir pew on the southern side of the chancel was removed and replaced with a medieval bench end (1951 photograph from Plymtree Rectory Letters), (modern photograph, author)

In 1985 a glazed screen with wooden doors separating the nave from the tower was erected in memory of two former churchwardens— see Fig 72, and in 1986 a report on the medieval screen was compiled by the expert conservator, Anna Hulbert, which now appears in the church guide.⁶²⁸



Figure 72 The glazed and wooden screen between the tower and nave dates from the 1980s (photograph, author)

In 1993 the statue on the west front of the tower was restored. The restoration included the Madonna's crown found behind the statue when it was removed.⁶²⁹In 2000 the three

⁶²⁸ Eames, undated, pp. 8-12.

⁶²⁹ Article from the Western Morning News, 26th June 1993, Devon Record Office.

front book rests, from the nave and south aisle, the choir book rests and a small pew by the pulpit were removed on a temporary basis. The small pew front from near the pulpit was placed by the altar – see Fig. 73, the small pew front in front of the pulpit was placed at the south end of the screen – see Fig. 74 and the other book rests from the nave, south aisle and chancel were placed in store.⁶³⁰



Figure 73 Pew front relocated from near the altar to the chancel (photograph, author)



Figure 74 Pew originally located adjacent to the pulpit (photograph, author)

The church was completely rewired and a new heating and lighting system installed in May 2010.⁶³¹ Between November 2010 and January 2011 the bells were repaired and rededicated, in 2011 the two small pews at the rear of the nave were removed during rewiring and placed in store – see Fig. 75 and in June 2012 the clock was repaired and automated.⁶³²

⁶³⁰ Information from current churchwardens.

⁶³¹ Record of maintenance in the Church Log Book.

⁶³² Ibid.



Figure 75 Location of the former pews at the rear of the nave (photograph, author)

Conservation work was carried out to the chancel arch niche in 2012 revealing the former paintwork which clearly indicates evidence of a former niche statue – see Figs. 76 and 77.⁶³³



Figures 76 and 77 The chancel arch niche before and after the conservation work of 2012 (photographs, author)

⁶³³ Luttman, B. 'Niche repairs at St. John the Baptist, Plymtree', *Devon Historic Churches Trust Newsletter*, January, 2013.

Apart from the modern heating and lighting systems the church as it stands today (2014), has not undergone any modern re-ordering works.

5.9 Conclusion

In this chapter the historic development of Plymtree church was explored and the representativeness of the work which took place, both regionally and nationally has been observed.

In the past when the significance of an historic building was believed to be inherent the compiling of an historic development that revealed historical facts and a description of physical appearance would have been sufficient. However, modern conservation now suggests an understanding of historic development, although extremely informative, can only provide a baseline of information from which some aspects of significance can be extrapolated. For other key areas such as communal value, intangible values and the contribution of the natural setting other methods of assessment are required. Methodologies for making these assessments will be assessed in the following chapters.

Chapter 6.0

Initial analysis of the four methodologies

6.1 Introduction

In this chapter the four methodologies will be assessed to determine their effectiveness in identifying those aspects of Plymtree church which did not emerge from the historic development analysis described in the previous chapter. Each methodology will be analysed in turn systematically looking at all the different sections involved in order to discover where additional aspects of the church's significance were discovered. Concurrent with this analysis highlighting the strengths of the methodologies an analysis of weaknesses will also take place. This will take the form of identifying potential issues with interpretation and delivery.

This chapter begins with a commentary on the problems encountered when researching the historic development of Plymtree church described in the previous chapter. The issues highlighted by this commentary also apply to those parts of the four methodologies which require similar research to be carried out. The findings from the commentary not only provide information for this analysis, but will also be referred to again when the issues surrounding who should write statements of significance is discussed in later chapters.

The assessments of significance completed by the researcher using the four methodologies can be referred to in the accompanying appendices: C. of E. Statement of Significance, Appendix 6, pp. 59-81; C.C.T. Assessment of Significance, Appendix 7, pp. 82-102; E.H. Conservation Appraisal, Appendix 8, pp. 103-124; W. and B. Identification of Significance, Appendix 9, pp. 125-143.

6.2 Commentary on the problems encountered researching Plymtree church

Most D.A.C.s provide parishes with advice on how to research the history of their building: resources such as local record offices and studies libraries are recommended along with other sources of information such as cathedral libraries, university collections and local historical associations. The main published works recommended are Pevsner's *Buildings of England* series and E.H.'s list descriptions, along with books and unpublished works on local churches. In addition the D.A.C.s also have a secretary and sometimes a historic buildings officer who can provide advice on where to obtain information. As a consequence problems encountered in researching a church are unlikely to lie in the locating of information; difficulties are more likely to arise when analysing and interpreting the research material gathered.

Contradictory evidence from published sources was one of the major issues encountered by the researcher during the research process. For example Pevsner dates the renovation of the church by the architect Fellowes Prynne to 1895⁶³⁴, whilst the list description dates the work to 1893.⁶³⁵ In the parish leaflet written in 1955 the early 20th century repairs are described as taking place in 1902⁶³⁶ whereas Beatrix Cresswell writing in 1919 cites 1911 as the date of repairs.⁶³⁷ In both these cases the problem of dating is solved by the existence of primary information in the form of the local parish magazine which describes the first restoration in its March 1895 issue and the second phase in December 1910. Had this information not been available however, the researcher would be left with the problem of which source to trust.

⁶³⁴ Cherry, B. and Pevsner, N. *The Buildings of England – Devon, Second Edition*, London: Penguin, 1999, p. 686.

⁶³⁵ The National Heritage List for England. 'List entry for Church of St. John the Baptist, Plymtree' [online] <http://list.english-heritage.org.uk/resultsingle.aspx?uid=1333727> [8th August 2012]

⁶³⁶ *Plymtree Church Guide*, Honiton: Dimond and Co., 1955, p. 9.

⁶³⁷ Cresswell, B., *Notes on Devon Churches, Deanery of Ottery*, 1919 (unpublished, pages unnumbered), West Country Studies Library.

Other conflicting information encountered included the dating of the nave ceiling: Pevsner describes the ceiling as 19th century, part of Samuel Henson's restoration in 1827-9⁶³⁸; the list description describes the ceiling as 17th or 18th century;⁶³⁹ vestry minutes from 1827 detail a large number of works recommended by the architect Samuel Henson including repairs to the nave ceiling,⁶⁴⁰ however these works were not carried out and when roof repairs took place in 1951 the repairing architect described the plaster ceiling as dating from c.1700.⁶⁴¹ Once again primary evidence, in the form of the parish magazine, solves the conflict of information, but not all churches have such good resources to call upon.

In addition to conflicting published information, there is also the problem of compounded false information with some writers repeating the errors of former authors, giving weight to assertions which can only be disproved if contrary primary evidence exists. Hearsay or folklore is sometimes based on fact, knowledge passed down by word of mouth from one generation to the next, but if there is no written, physical or illustrative evidence to support the assertion the researcher faces the problem of what to do with the information. Whilst researching Plymtree church additional information was provided by the congregation including the suggestion the font was no longer in its original position and that two Flemish alabaster panels were originally installed, whereas only one now survives. Whilst this information may well be true there is no known supporting evidence.

Another problem encountered was missing evidence; *The Book of Plymtree* refers to postcards from 1895 showing 'box pews in simple Georgian style' in the Forde aisle,⁶⁴² unfortunately the whereabouts of the 1895 postcards is unknown. As the pews currently in the Forde aisle do not answer this description this leaves the question were the pews in the

⁶³⁸ Cherry and Pevsner, 1999, p. 686.

⁶³⁹ E.H. List Entry, Plymtree.

⁶⁴⁰ *Vestry Minutes for St. John the Baptist Plymtree*, 1827, unpublished, Devon Record Office.

⁶⁴¹ Plymtree Parish Magazine, October 1951.

⁶⁴² Eames, T. (ed.) *The Book of Plymtree*, Tiverton: Halsgrave, 1999, p. 32.

postcards entirely Georgian and the medieval bench ends currently in the Forde aisle relocated from elsewhere? Or were Georgian doors inserted at the end of the medieval pews? Without the evidence of the postcards this is hard to determine.

Both the list descriptions and Pevsner sometimes refer to features by their styles such as ‘Perpendicular tracery’ and ‘Decorated parapet’ without mentioning their date. This can cause initial confusion if the researcher is not familiar with the dates of these styles, but this information can be easily obtained. However, these descriptions could refer to work carried out in the 19th century in the medieval style, which could cause confusion. Both sources can also simply describe features without referring to their style or date. In the entry for Plymtree church Pevsner describes the ‘Chancel arch with foliage ornament’⁶⁴³ without informing the reader whether the arch is part of the 14th or 15th century phase of building, or whether it was rebuilt in the 19th century. Only an expert in the field would be able to decide to which of the above phases of work this feature belongs. The list description begins by describing the church as ‘C15 in more than one phase, some late C17 modernisation, renovated in 1893’. Later on it describes the porch: ‘The outer arch is 2 centred with moulded surround including a band of 4-leaf motifs’.⁶⁴⁴ The porch is 15th century, but a researcher might well wonder whether it formed part of the ‘C17 modernisation’ or was part of the renovations in 1893.

Confusion can also arise from features or fittings which have been dated, but which may have been inserted during a different period to their manufacture. The entry for Plymtree church in Pevsner begins ‘Nave and chancel seem the oldest parts. Blocked Norman N door.’⁶⁴⁵ This leaves the researcher wondering if the nave and chancel are wholly or in part Norman or whether the door surround was inserted from an earlier building. Furthermore

⁶⁴³ Cherry and Pevsner, 1999, p. 686.

⁶⁴⁴ E.H. List Entry, Plymtree.

⁶⁴⁵ Cherry and Pevsner, 1999, p. 686.

Pevsner describes a 'door', when it is a door surround to which he refers. The sanctuary at Plymtree church according to the list description 'is lined with restored late C17 linenfold panelled wainscoting including a frieze of maybe Flemish carved classical female figures. Late C17 oak altar rail'.⁶⁴⁶ This gives the impression the sanctuary was entirely re-ordered in the 17th century whereas only the altar rail was added at this time and the panelling inserted during the 19th century from an earlier building.

Problems with interpreting the evidence are not confined to the dating of fabric; contextualising the data also presents a potential problem for the researcher. In the case of Plymtree, research revealed that from 1737 the patron of the living was Oriel, College Oxford,⁶⁴⁷ and that the rector from 1832 Revd. Dornford, was a High-Churchman who reordered the chancel.⁶⁴⁸ The two factors are connected as Oriel College, which presented candidates for the incumbency at Plymtree with many subsequent parish priests being former fellows of the college, was the birthplace of the Oxford Movement which promoted an Anglo-Catholic liturgy and a return to medieval-style church furnishings including highly decorated chancels. Although the Revd. Dornford is identified in some of the research material as a High-churchman there is no specific reference made to his Oriel College connection and his re-ordering (as discussed in the previous chapter) could be misinterpreted as an act of purely personal artistic preference.

Another difficulty in providing context is the identification of features which are of local significance. Pevsner and the list description comment on features which are regionally typical such as the arcade and features which are of particular historic and aesthetic importance such as the chancel screen, but no reference is made to elements of the church which are typical of the locale. Other published material identified typical materials, plans,

⁶⁴⁶ E.H. List Entry, Plymtree.

⁶⁴⁷ Plymtree Church Guide, 1955, p. 18.

⁶⁴⁸ Eames, 1999, p. 31.

forms and styles for the region but not for the local area. So in order to make this assessment the researcher would need to have analysed the surrounding churches.

For the four methodologies these issues would have arisen in the compiling of the following sections: C. of E. 1.4 'The church building in general', 1.5 'The church building in detail', 1.6 'Contents of the Church'; C.C.T. 3.0 'Description of the church', 5.0 'Heritage Significance'; E.H. 2.2.8 'Historic Development', 2.2.13 'Architectural Quality and Built Form'; W. and B. 1. 'The identification and assessment of the overall and particular values embodied in and represented by the site,' in particular the architectural, historical, associational and archaeological values.

6.3 Initial analysis of the four methodologies: strengths and weaknesses

6.3.1 The C. of E. Statement of Significance

6.3.1.1 Section 1.1 Setting of the Church

The C. of E. Statement of Significance (s. of s.), begins with section 1.1 'Setting of the Church' (appendix 3, p.46). The guidance for this first section asks the question 'How does the setting of the church contribute to its landscape/townscape value and to its significance?' In order to answer this question guidelines are included in the form of a series of further questions suggesting the type of information to be included. These questions are mainly of a factual nature: 'What is known of the landscape design and history of the churchyard, including extensions? Are there archaeological remains? Are adjacent buildings similar, complementary or contrasting in age, style, materials or age (sic)? How are the boundary and entrances marked?' However, two questions are more evaluative in nature, 'Are there distant or near views which are valued by the congregation/wider community/visitors/experts' and 'Are the monuments, war memorials significant' The first question personalises this aspect of the church's setting rather than asking the more objective question 'what are the main views to and from the church?' As a

consequence the methodology risks highly subjective opinions or simply the answer ‘no’ from less confident respondents. The second question requires an understanding of ‘significance’, but the term is not defined in the C. of E. methodology.

Returning to the initial question asked ‘How does the setting of the church contribute to its landscape/townscape value and to its significance?’, the C. of E. methodology makes the assumption this evaluative question is answered by the cumulative information provided by the guidance questions. However, apart from the two guidance questions concerning the views and memorials, the remaining information gathered is purely factual. As a consequence the respondents will potentially have collected information on the history of the churchyard development, the type of buildings surrounding the churchyard and the materials of the boundary walls, but no guidance is given on how this information can be applied to determining landscape/townscape value and significance: existence alone does not imply significance.

The detailed information required for the compilation of section 1.1 led to a fuller picture emerging of Plymtree church in regards to its setting than that provided by the historic development. In addition to the information on the development of the churchyard, the yew tree and the churchyard structures and boundaries additional information included: the nature of the views and vistas (appendix 6, p. 60); the gravestones and monuments (see appendix 6, pp. 62-63), the potential for archaeological remains (appendix 6, p. 61) and the relationship of the church to the surrounding built environment (appendix 6, p. 61).

6.3.1.2 Section 1.2 The Living Churchyard

Again in section 1.2 ‘The Living Churchyard’ an evaluative question is asked ‘What is the significance of the natural heritage of the site?’ with no guidance as to how this significance should be assessed (appendix 3, p.47). Instead a further series of factual questions are given

as guidance regarding the range and rarity of the flora and fauna: ‘Is the church or churchyard used by protected species or species with Biodiversity Action Plans? Are there any ancient, very prominent, rare or unusual trees? How good a habitat is the churchyard for fauna and flora?’ This section appears to be designed to discover whether there are any areas or aspects of the churchyard which need to be protected, or which could mitigate against any development. The initial question however suggests an evaluation of the merits of the natural heritage.

The only aspect of the natural heritage mentioned in the historic development was the yew tree. Consequently this section prompted additional research to be carried out which showed Plymtree churchyard to be of limited interest in regards to its flora and fauna (appendix 6, p.63). However, for some churches and churchyards this research could prove very significant if protected species of plant or animal life were present, which could then impact on decisions regarding any future work, as the natural history value of the churchyard would be considered high.

6.3.1.3 Section 1.3 Social History

Section 1.3 ‘Social History’ asked the question ‘What is the historic and present use of the church and churchyard by the congregation and the wider community? How does this contribute to its significance?’ (appendix 3, p. 48). This question focuses on how the church was used both in the past and in the present. Thinking about the church in this way could potentially illustrate how the building had adapted and any inherent flexibility in its design and plan. However, the guidance questions request the type of information other methodologies would include under the heading ‘associational’ rather than ‘use’ – ‘Are there any significant events or personalities associated with the church? Are there important memories associated with the church or churchyard? How has the community served by the church changed over time?’⁶⁴⁹ The initial question is a straightforward one for

⁶⁴⁹ Ibid., p. 47.

the congregation to answer, but again they are asked to evaluate this information to demonstrate how it contributes to the significance of the church and churchyard. No guidance is given as to how this factual information should be interpreted in terms of the building's significance. As a consequence the respondent could provide information on what events take place in the church, what well known people or events were associated with it and how the congregation has changed over the years without mentioning the significance of these facts for the development of the building and its setting.

Considering how the church is used can greatly add to an understanding of its significance (as discussed in Chapter 3). Furthermore the type of information gathered, apart from the associational data, is unlikely to have formed part of the historic development, meaning it reveals additional aspects of the church's character. This section reflects the strengths of the C. of E. approach in having members of the congregation complete the statements of significance, as they would be best placed to reflect on the current and recent use of the church. As this information was not available to the researcher twelve members of the congregation were asked to answer the questions from section 1.3 of the C. of E. methodology. The researcher's answers to the questions (appendix 6 pp. 63-65)⁶⁵⁰ and those of the congregation (appendix 6, pp. 78-79) were recorded separately, in order to differentiate between the information from the two sources.

By concentrating on the people and events associated with the church building, the researcher identified some additional information to that already collected for the historic development (appendix 6, p.65). However, a great deal more information was provided by the congregation on the current use of the church and its importance to the local community including: special and commemorative services; the church's role in the life of the village school; its use by bell ringers; the numbers and types of visitors, some of whom

⁶⁵⁰ S. of S., Plymtree, pp. 72-73.

were national and international; and the importance of the churchyard for visiting loved ones who were buried there. The significance of the building as a witness to the religious life of the community was mentioned and the fact that historically the church had been a community building at the centre of village life (appendix 6, pp. 78-79). These responses give an insight into the social value of the building and the churchyard, which could potentially impact on decisions concerning future change if that change were to compromise the use of the church by, for example, the school children or the bell ringers. The numbers of visitors, including those who travelled considerable distances, adds to the already high architectural and historical value of the building.

The responses from the congregation regarding the associational value of the church and churchyard mainly provided information already discovered by the historic development; however some new information emerged concerning former rectors: one had been a Japanese prisoner of war (Chrichton McDouall 1948) and another a prolific writer of crime fiction (Gilderoy Davison 1954). Other additional information concerned the parishioner John Land, a successful London businessman who left considerable wealth to numerous good causes, including the purchasing of the church communion plate, when he died in 1697, and a former Dean of Exeter who was commemorated by a wall memorial.

The final guidance question 'How has the community served by the church changed over time?' prompted additional research, as this issue was not covered in the historic development. Research showed an increase in the population and dramatic changes in the working practices of the population (appendix 6, p. 65), which was echoed in the response to the question by the congregation, who also noted a decline in church attendance (appendix 6, p.79). Information on the settlement of which the church forms a part, helps in the assessment of the church's use value.

6.3.1.4 Section 1.4 The church building in general

Section 1.4 'The church building in general', begins with a straightforward requirement 'Provide a description of the church' (see Appendix 3, p.49). This question appears to refer to the nature of the surviving fabric, but the guidance questions require information on the historic development as well as the nature of extant fabric: 'What is the history of the church; when was a church first established on the site and how has it changed over time; who are the architects, artists and other craftsmen who have been involved; have there been any significant benefactors and has this affected the choice of architect/artist or the incorporation of any monuments in the church? No differentiation is required between historic fabric which has subsequently been lost and surviving material. The guidance notes then ask the question 'How does work carried out on the church link to international, national, regional or local architectural and artistic movements?' Published material such as Pevsner and the list description will often note whether features are typical of a style or region, but provide no information on local schools and practices. The guidance does not suggest how local significance should be determined.

Under the same heading the physical characteristics of the church are requested 'What is its plan form, spatial quality, building materials used, how is it lit and heated?' Much of this information is factual and available in the church's quinquennial inspection report. However 'spatial quality' is an evaluative question which requires further guidance, both as to what is meant by the term and how it should be assessed. Information on the plan form would be most usefully conveyed through a drawing, which could also be coloured to show the dates of the surviving form.

Finally the guidance asks the question 'What is the theological 'message' communicated by the exterior and interior of the church?' No explanation is given as to what 'theological message' means or how it relates to the fabric of the building.

Information on the history, alterations, architects, artists, craftsmen and benefactors, along with the church's links to international, national and regional architectural and artistic movements were all covered in the historic development. As there was no published information on local architectural and artistic movements and no guidance on how to discover this information that part of the question was left unanswered.

Whilst the nature of the church's materials were discussed as part of the historic development, none of the other physical properties of the church had been included. Consequently the C. of E. methodology prompted an assessment of the plan and the heating and lighting arrangements, previously not considered (appendix 6, p. 72). As no guidance was given on how to assess spatial quality this part of the question was not answered. Similarly no guidance was given concerning what the 'theological message' was and how it should be determined, so this guidance question also remained unanswered.

6.3.1.5 Section 1.5 The church building in detail

Section 1.5 'The church building in detail' appears to refer to the surviving historic fabric of the church with the guidance 'Assess the significance of either each historical phase of the building or of each area within it' (appendix 3, p.50). The requirement is slightly misleading as 'assess the significance of ...each historical phase' could include fabric which no longer survives. The guidance suggests the information is recorded in a table with either the phases or area of the church in one column and the significance of the phase or area in another. Again there is no guidance as to how significance should be assessed. The guidance notes include a list of 'customary terminology' to assist in the rating of significance: high - important at national to international levels; moderate-high – important at regional or sometimes higher; moderate – usually of local value but of regional significance for group or other value (e.g. vernacular architecture); low- Moderate – of local value; low – adds little or nothing to the value of a site or detracts from it. These definitions are not particularly clear and relate to styles and features rather than age. For

example, the chancel arch at Plymtree is typical of many Devon churches and could therefore be said to be of moderate significance. However, its 15th date would suggest its significance is high. Making assessments concerning international, national and regional importance can be facilitated by consulting Pevsner and the list description. However, as discussed above, information on local significance is not so easily available. The definitions also use the word 'value' without clarifying what is meant by this term.

This section was filled out twice: under the first format analysing the church according to historical phase and under the second format according to area (appendix 6, pp. 72-73). As no guidance was given as to how to assess 'significance' in terms of phase, the first table was rated low to high according to the amount of material surviving from that period. As a result the pre-Medieval and 14th century work were rated as of moderate significance in contrast to the 19th century work, which was rated as high. However the pre-Medieval and 14th century work when considered under all the subsequent methodologies used for defining significance was rated as high (see below). Furthermore according to the context for the historic development in the previous chapter the survival of pre-Medieval and 14th century work in Devon is unusual, again suggesting they should be rated as of high significance.

Under the second method assessing each area of the building again, as no guidance was given, each was rated according to the age and completeness of the surviving fabric. These results were more in line with other methodologies.

The historic development, whilst making some comment on the quality of work such as the 'most splendid' chancel screen, made no systematic comment on the quality of the various elements of the building. In this respect the C. of E. methodology adds to the understanding of the building by suggesting a framework for comparison. The first format

assessing significance according to historic phase (appendix 6, p. 72) provided less of an opportunity for detailed analysis than the second format assessing each area of the building (appendix 6, p. 73).

6.3.1.6 Section 1.6 Contents of the Church

In section 1.6 'Contents of the Church' an evaluation of the contents of the church is required with the guidance 'Provide a description of its contents and their significance' (appendix 3, p. 51). The guidance suggests contents can be grouped if they are part of a contemporary scheme as this could add to their significance. There is therefore some indication that a designed scheme could merit a higher significance rating, but again no further advice on how the various elements of the interior should be rated. Further guidance questions are provided 'Do the contents relate to any particular historical changes to the church and do they contribute to the significance of those changes? Are any of the artists or craftsmen of international, national, regional or local importance?' But no indication is given as to how these factors should affect the rating. The emphasis of the guidance questions is again towards artistic merit rather than age and no indication is given that a very old feature could have a higher significance than later replacements.

The guidance suggests pews should be considered under this section, whereas the screen should be assessed as part of 1.5. This distinction could appear strange if both features were erected in the same period by the same craftsmen.

In determining significance, judgements again have to be made concerning quality with no guidance given on how this should be done. However, in this case the rating system High to Low as described in the C. of E. guidance (appendix 3, p. 43) is tailored more to contents, and consequently easier to apply, than it was to the fabric in the previous section. In its systematic approach this section was very successful for ensuring all aspects of the interior fixtures, fittings and furnishings were assessed. The historic development

concentrated on the larger and more precious features, whereas this method ensured even the less noteworthy features were assessed. As a consequence this aspect of the methodology presents features of low significance which could present an opportunity for change, for example the mid-to late 19th century organ at Plymtree church, which is of no particular musical or artistic merit (appendix 6, p. 75), whilst at the same time highlighting elements which should remain unaltered such as the altar rail (appendix 6, p. 74).

6.3.1.7 Section 1.7 Significance for mission

In the final section of the C. of E. methodology 1.7 'Significance for mission' (see appendix 3, p.52) the guidance is divided into two parts. The first question 'What are the strengths of the building as it is for worship and mission?' is easily answerable by the congregation. The second question 'What potential for adapted and new uses does the church and its setting already have with little or no change' requires more explanation. No guidance is given as to what type of adapted or new uses could be considered. The term 'little or no change' presumably refers to physical intervention, but could be clearer. The concept of little or no change is also very restrictive, and would not encourage the congregation to think creatively about adaptation and alteration. For the first time the methodology introduces the concept of change, but this could have formed part of the two earlier sections with the identification of low significance associated with possible areas for adaptation and alteration. The C. of E. methodology guidance, however, does not suggest referring back to the earlier evaluations as a means for identifying areas for potential change and new use.

The significance of the church and its setting for mission was not covered by the historic development. This section like 1.3 refers to the use value of the building, which as discussed above, is of great importance for the understanding of the significance of the church. This section, like 1.3, also illustrates the strengths of the methodology in having the users of the building writing the statements of significance. As the researcher was not

qualified to complete this section an extract was taken from a pre-existing Statement of Significance, written in April 2012 (appendix 6, pp. 76-77) and the congregation were asked the questions as part of the questionnaire referred to in 1.3 (appendix 6, pp. 79-80). The vast majority of those questioned did not want any change to take place. This could reflect the precious nature of the church fabric, but it could illustrate the difficulty of making suggestions for change without enough clear guidance.

The illustrative material required by the C. of E. is very limited, presumably influenced by their reliance on voluntary participation and not wanting to involve the parish in too much expense. The methodology requires a ground plan, which most parishes would already have as part of the quinquennial inspection report, a map of the area and at least two photographs, one of the church interior and one of the exterior (appendix 3, p. 43). There are no suggestion for the ground plan to be annotated to assist in the understanding of the historic development of the church as described in section 1.4 – see Fig. 79 (example from the E.H. methodology – see below), or for the map of the area to contain information about the nature of the churchyard, the views and the surrounding buildings described in section 1.1. By requiring a minimum of only two photographs the methodology is inevitably allowing for significant features of the church to remain unexposed.

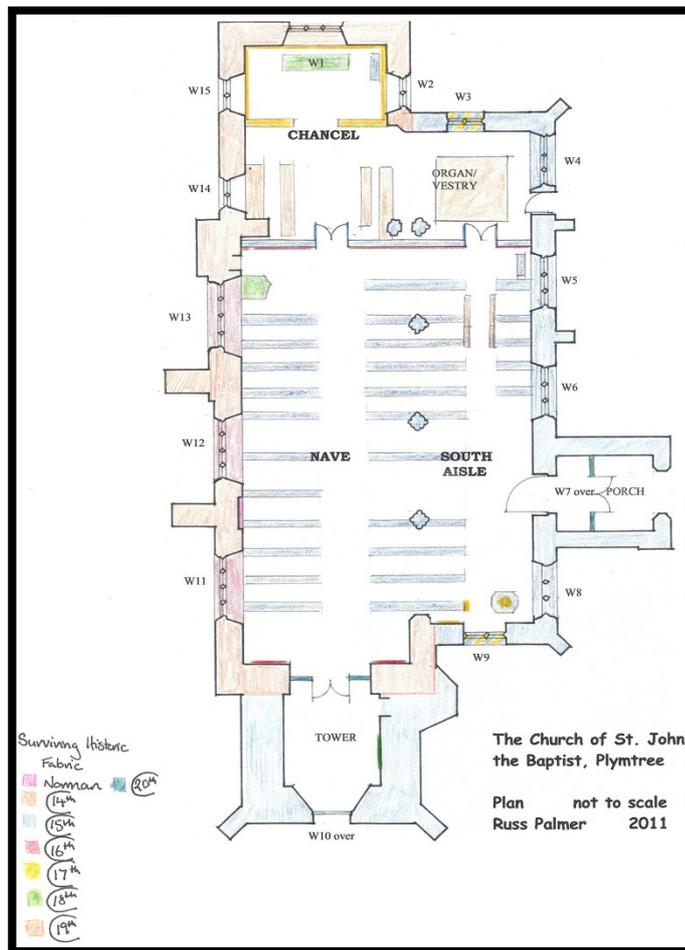


Figure 78 Plan of the church from the quinquennial inspection adapted to create a phasing diagram showing the date of the surviving historic fabric of the church – taken from the E.H. methodology (plan reproduced by kind permission of the architect, with additions by the author)

6.3.2 The C.C.T. Assessment of Significance

For the C.C.T. methodology the researcher used the A.o.S. for St. Andrew’s Old Church, Kingsbury as a template (appendix 2, pp. 17-41) and referred to E.H.’s *Conservation, Principles, Policies and Guidance* for additional guidance.⁶⁵¹ The first two sections of the C.C.T. methodology consisted of background information and did not require any input from the researcher (appendix 2, pp. 19-21). The first section 1.0 ‘Introduction’, explained how the document was based on the guidelines and policies contained in E.H.’s *Conservation Principles*⁶⁵² and the second section 2.0 ‘Conservation Principles’, summarised the six E.H. conservation principles.

⁶⁵¹ English Heritage. ‘Conservation Principles Policy and Guidance’ [Online] <http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/conservationprinciples> [31st October 2012]

⁶⁵² E.H., *Conservation Principles*, 2008.

6.3.2.1 Section 3.0 – Description of the church

The first section of the methodology to be completed by the respondent was 3.0 ‘Description of the church’ (appendix 2, p. 21). The C.C.T. guidance recommended this section should be accompanied by maps and a detailed photographic record of the surviving fabric and churchyard. It is clear through the use of the word ‘description’ this section refers to the church as standing unlike the C. of E. methodology where the section requiring a description of the church could require the inclusion of historic features no longer extant.

Completing this section did not require any further research beyond that already carried out for the historic development. However, the requirement to describe all aspects of the building as standing ensured the full nature of the asset was understood before any evaluation took place (appendix 7, pp. 84-88). The photographic recording of all aspects of the church exterior and interior strengthened the description of the church. The maps provided both a geographic context and an understanding of the physical development of the land surrounding the church and churchyard.

6.3.2.2 Section 4.0 Heritage Values

Having described the church and its setting in depth, evaluation of the building began under the next section 4.0 Heritage Values (appendix 2, pp.24-33). This section began with a description taken from E.H.’s *Conservation Principles* explaining the different ways in which people value places. It then required an analysis of the church to identify what values it holds in terms of the four inter-related heritage values: evidential, historical, aesthetic and communal. E.H. suggest a hierarchy for these values ‘the high level values range from evidential, which is dependent on the inherited fabric of the place, through historical and aesthetic, to communal values’,⁶⁵³ and consequently the evaluation of the building was

⁶⁵³ E.H., *Conservation Principles*, 2008, p. 27.

prescribed by four specific criteria which are themselves prescribed by their hierarchy of value.

Evidential value

The first value of the church to be assessed was 4.4 'Evidential value' and the C.C.T. guidance began with an extract from E.H. *Conservation principles* intended to clarify what is meant by the term: 'Evidential value derives from the potential of a place to yield evidence about past human activity' (appendix 2, p. 24). By this definition all the fabric of the church and churchyard could be said to hold evidential value. Therefore in this instance, it would make sense if 'evidence' referred to indicators of what has been lost. Thus the outline of the tall doorway on the north wall is evidential value of an Anglo-Saxon/Norman building on the site (appendix 7, pp. 89) and so has evidential value. The screen, however, although over 500 years old does not have evidential value as it is experienced in more or less the same form in which it was first installed (not taking into account the removal of the rood figures) and still fulfills its original purpose. Consequently, it does not hold the power to tell a story about the form of the building or the way it was used which has been subsequently lost or obscured. Further clarification of the term 'evidential' could help with making this distinction.

The above comparison calls into question E.H.'s hierarchy of values. Should the doorway have a higher value because it has archaeological potential rather than the screen which undoubtedly holds great historical and aesthetic value but no evidential value?

The E.H. guidance recommends the Historic Environment Record (H.E.R.) as a resource for researching historic buildings,⁶⁵⁴ and it would be an obvious starting point for discovering evidential value. However, the Devon H.E.R. record had no mention of the early doorway at Plymtree or the archaeological works discovered during the early 20th

⁶⁵⁴ Ibid., p. 35.

century. More specific guidance for this section is required such as the consideration of those areas of the church where it is known losses have taken place. In the case of Plymtree, there could be archaeological potential for buried remains such as statuary and stained glass removed in the Reformation, which may be buried in close proximity to the church. This information could be more clearly conveyed on an annotated plan, such as that used as part of the E.H. conservation area appraisal methodology – see Fig. 81.

In this section the evidence of an earlier church on the site: the yew tree, doorway and buried wall were considered (appendix 7, pp.88-89). All these elements had previously been mentioned in the historic development, but by thinking of them in terms of their evidential value, their ability to describe the nature of an earlier structure, was emphasized rather than just considering them as features of the present building and churchyard.

Historical value

The next value suggested by the C.C.T. methodology for analysing the church was 4.5 ‘Historical Value’. Traditionally the historical value of a building might have been considered in terms of its stylistic content as illustrated by the list description⁶⁵⁵ and the entry in Pevsner.⁶⁵⁶ The C.C.T. A.o.S. guidance however, requires the fabric to be considered not as an illustration of a series of periods in architectural history, but as illustrating ‘the ways in which past people, events and aspects of life can be connected through a place to the present’ (appendix 2, p. 27). Consequently, the building needed to be interpreted in a different way to most of the published material.

Once again, the significance of the building according to this value was related to its function as an historical resource, which could potentially lessen the impact of its architectural/ historical significance as a work of art. This was covered by the next value (aesthetic), but as noted above aesthetic value is ranked lower than historic value.

⁶⁵⁵ E.H., List Entry, Plymtree.

⁶⁵⁶ Cherry and Pevsner, 1991, p. 686.

The historic development catalogued the evolution of the church architecturally, revealing different phases of work. By interrogating the building under the C.C.T. criteria, in addition to an understanding of what the fabric looked like and what period it represents, is added an understanding of why it looks the way it does. As a consequence a deeper understanding of the nature of the building and its historic development emerged (appendix 7, pp. 89-92). This approach also allowed for the historic use value of the building to be considered, which could in turn provide valuable insights into the appropriate future use of the building and its setting.

Aesthetic value

The methodology then required the consideration of 4.6 'Aesthetic Value' of the church. The C.C.T. definition, taken from E.H.'s *Conservation Principles* stated 'aesthetic value derives from the ways in which people draw sensory and intellectual stimulation from a place'.⁶⁵⁷ Within these parameters the innate craftsmanship, architectural, spatial characteristics, lighting and artistic merit of the building itself and its setting were considered. It also allowed for consideration of the aesthetic effects of ageing (appendix 7 pp. 92-93). The methodology did not however suggest referring back to the historic development in order to consider the artistic merits of the building within the canon of English ecclesiastical architecture.

By evaluating the church in this way the researcher is encouraged to consider the visual impact of the church rather than simply describing and dating the various features. For example, the reference to the north aisle windows in the historic development is as follows 'Atypical development for the 16th century included the installation of three tall, square headed windows each with differently shaped elliptical and Tudor arch heads on the north wall'. Whereas in the A.o.S., they were considered for their light giving capacity: 'The

⁶⁵⁷ E.H., *Conservation Principles*, 2008, p. 31.

addition of large windows on the north wall in the 16th century has increased the aesthetic value by flooding the interior with light⁶⁵⁸ and the variety and detail of their appearance ‘Although all square headed each has a slightly different shaped head either elliptical or Tudor arched, clear glass leaded panes and some patterned yellow grisaille glass’ (appendix 7, p. 92). This approach emphasised the continuum of artistic endeavour and encouraged consideration of the enhancing effects of time. It enabled the churchyard to be valued as an aesthetic entity in its own right, not just as the setting for an historic building: ‘The setting of St John’s within the leafy churchyard is also of high aesthetic value. The elevated site, prominent in the village presents a green backdrop to the medieval church punctuated by historic graves and mature trees including the venerable yew’ (appendix 7, p. 93).

Communal value

The final value to be considered as part of the C.C.T. methodology was 4.7 ‘Communal Value’. In *Conservation Principles* E.H. define communal value in the following terms: ‘Communal value derives from the meanings of a place for the people who relate to it, or for whom it figures in their collective experience or memory’.⁶⁵⁹ Identifying communal value should reveal how the building is viewed both by those who use it or those for whom it forms part of their local landscape. The researcher alone cannot complete this section, and consequently the C.C.T. methodology advises asking ‘a range of people who have used and value the church’ a series of interviewed questions (appendix 2, p.31). The questions asked by the C.C.T. mainly related to gauging public reaction to change (appendix 7, p. 94): ‘Are there any changes that you think would make the building better used?’ ‘What do you think other locals would like to see?’ and ‘Are there any specific parts of the building that you would like to see protected from change or that you feel are especially sensitive?’ Only one of the questions ‘In your opinion what makes the building special?’ allowed for the ‘meaning of the place’ to be discussed. This emphasis towards considering change of use by the C.C.T. methodology reflects the particular issue of churches which have been

⁶⁵⁸ A.o.S., Plymtree, p. 100.

⁶⁵⁹ E.H., *Conservation Principles*, p. 31.

deemed redundant.

Exploring communal value provided a new dimension to the understanding of the building. In addition to values one might have anticipated, such as the central role of the building in religious life and its historic significance, the community feedback also revealed how Plymtree church connected with the personal histories of both current and former residents ‘a venue for landmark events in the lives of most of the villagers: specifically baptisms, weddings and funerals’, its importance as ‘an historic monument which bears witness to the village’s past’ and its symbolic value as a physical landmark and as ‘a symbol of God’s presence in the village’ (appendix 7, p. 94).

6.3.2.3 Section 5.0 Heritage Significance

The intention of section 5.0 ‘Heritage Significance’ of the C.C.T. methodology was to relate the values identified in the previous sections directly to the fabric of the church including its fixtures and fittings. The guidance suggested this be carried out in two parts: ‘assessing first the heritage significance based on evidential, historical and aesthetic values and secondly by assessing the heritage significance based on communal values’ (see appendix 2, p. 33). At this point the researcher was asked to rate the various elements of the building from high to low with no recommendations as to how this evaluation should be made. The A.o.S. introduction states ‘This methodology is prescribed to enable comparisons between historic churches’ (see appendix 2, p. 19), but without clear guidelines on how ratings should be ascribed the consistency of approach required is compromised.

Due to the lack of guidance the researcher, now in the position of making value judgments, could tend towards awarding higher ratings than might be warranted. For example the yew tree, Anglo-Saxon doorway and buried wall-remains at Plymtree were all identified as being

of evidential value (see appendix 7, p. 95), all three have the potential to yield information about an earlier church and are of a very early date. As differentiating between the three in terms of their significance would be very difficult for anyone without any archaeological background they were all three were deemed of high significance. The guidance required the areas of significance, once identified, to be 'illustrated in a plan' (see appendix 2, p.33). The Areas of Significance plan for Plymtree church showed a very high proportion of material rated as having high significance, confirming the problem of giving ratings when unsure of the method of evaluation – see Fig. 79.

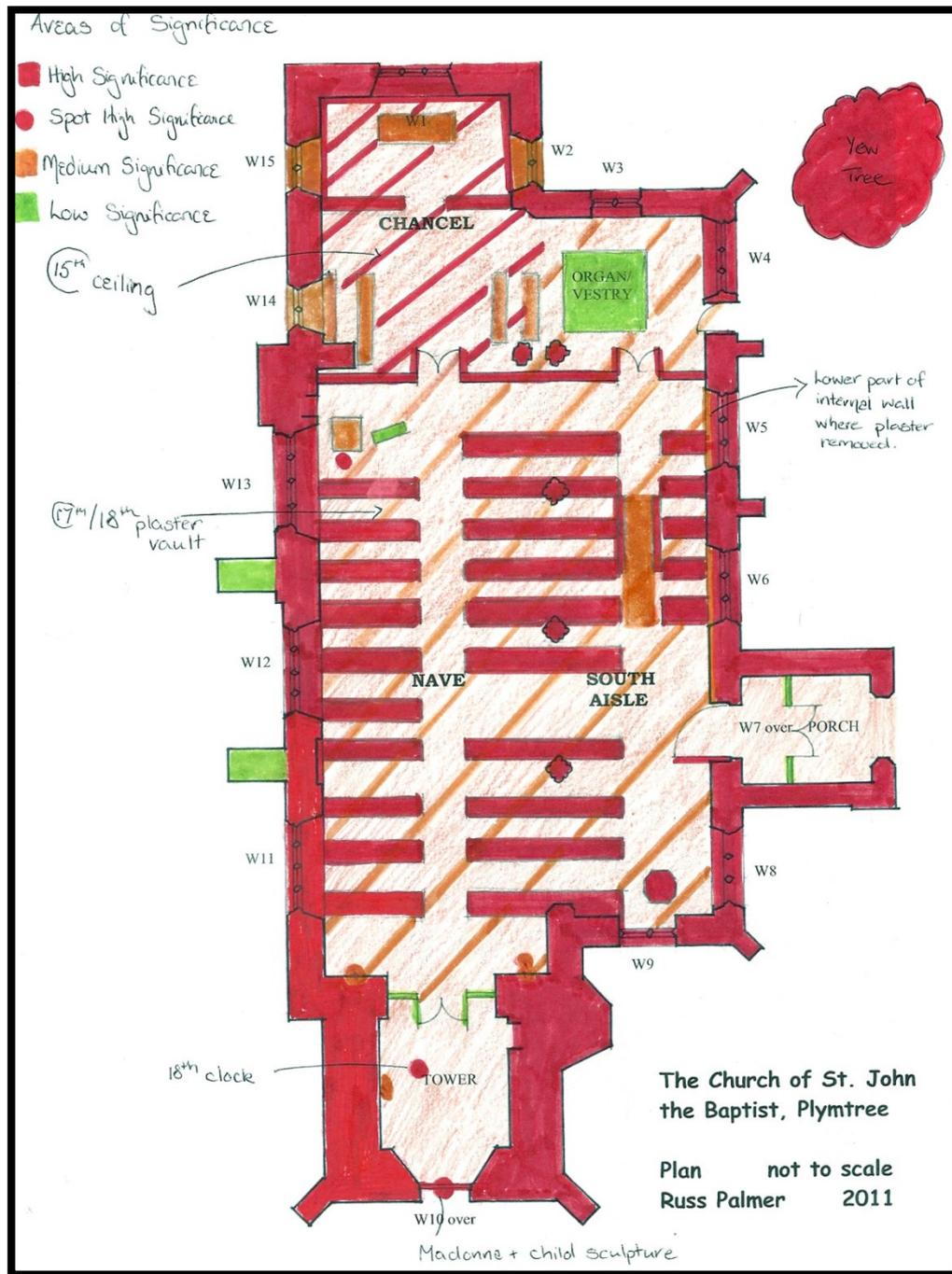


Figure 79 Plan of Plymtree church showing areas of high, medium and low significance following the C.C.T. methodology

Plans can be a highly effective way of imparting information, but are not always suitable for conveying all data. In the case of illustrating significance, the plan cannot identify some of the more intangible communal values, such as the building's role as a repository for personal memories (appendix 7, p. 94). It is also difficult to convey information relating to

the elevations, ceilings, roofs, sections and significant spaces.

Finally, this section required a summary of significance, which grouped together under the headings 'high significance', 'medium significance' and 'low significance' the elements identified above along with an indicator of the 'potential for tensions' between certain values' (appendix 2, pp. 37-38). This recognized the possible existence of contentious issues, but did not suggest how these conflicts of interest/perception should be resolved.

In section 5.0 'Heritage Significance', the researcher gained a new understanding of the relative value of the various elements of the building and its setting. For example, the research up until this point had provided an understanding of the significance of the screen in Plymtree church in terms of its age, craftsmanship, purpose and use, but following the assessment of its heritage significance it could be understood as having a higher level of significance than some of the other elements of the building, such as the pulpit (appendix 7, p. 95), which was rated as having medium value, as it had been clumsily adapted and shortened from its original form. This knowledge would be particularly important when considering any future alterations to the building.

6.3.2.4 Section 6.0 Heritage Sensitivity

The final part of the C.C.T. methodology 6.0 Heritage Sensitivity represented a break with the E.H. approach. Up until this point the methodology rigorously followed the E.H. definition of how to articulate the significance of a place included in *Conservation Principles*

'A statement of significance of a place should be a summary of the cultural and natural heritage values currently attached to it and how they inter-relate, which distils the particular character of the place. It should explain the relative importance of the heritage values of the place (where appropriate, by reference to criteria for statutory designation), how they relate to its physical fabric, the extent of any uncertainty about its values (particularly in relation to potential for hidden or buried elements), and identifying any tensions between potentially conflicting values'.⁶⁶⁰

The C.C.T. methodology then required a further level of analysis to take place; establishing the heritage sensitivity of the building by ascribing values ranging from high to low and

⁶⁶⁰ E.H., *Conservation Principles*, p. 40.

indicating this information on a colour-coded plan (appendix 2, pp.38-39). This concept of sensitivity is not covered by the E.H. document and is aimed at establishing areas of the building which have more or less potential for change.

This type of assessment is very difficult to make, and as the methodology is intended for a C.C.T. professional, no guidelines were given, leading to the potential for wrongly ascribing sensitivity. For example, the walls at Plymtree church are probably 14th or 15th century, but are of solid construction and on the interior have probably been covered in modern plaster. These solid unadorned surfaces could be considered of high sensitivity due to their early date or low sensitivity due to their plain, robust and probably altered nature. At the very least a professional analysis of the plaster would need to take place before any accurate measure of sensitivity could be made. If analysis showed medieval plaster surviving under the modern finish this would be difficult to indicate on a plan where the exterior wall was considered of low sensitivity.

This section was particularly useful for informing ways of thinking about the building in terms of its suitability for change. Ascribing significance partly informs this process by highlighting areas of low significance where alterations, adaptation or even the removal of fixtures and fittings might be considered. The identification of sensitivity, however, can potentially increase these areas of possible change by adding features, fixtures and fittings which, although of medium or even high significance, would not have that significance appreciably compromised by some forms of adaption or alteration. A comparison between Fig. 79, the diagram showing areas of significance, with Fig. 80, which shows areas of sensitivity, illustrates this point.

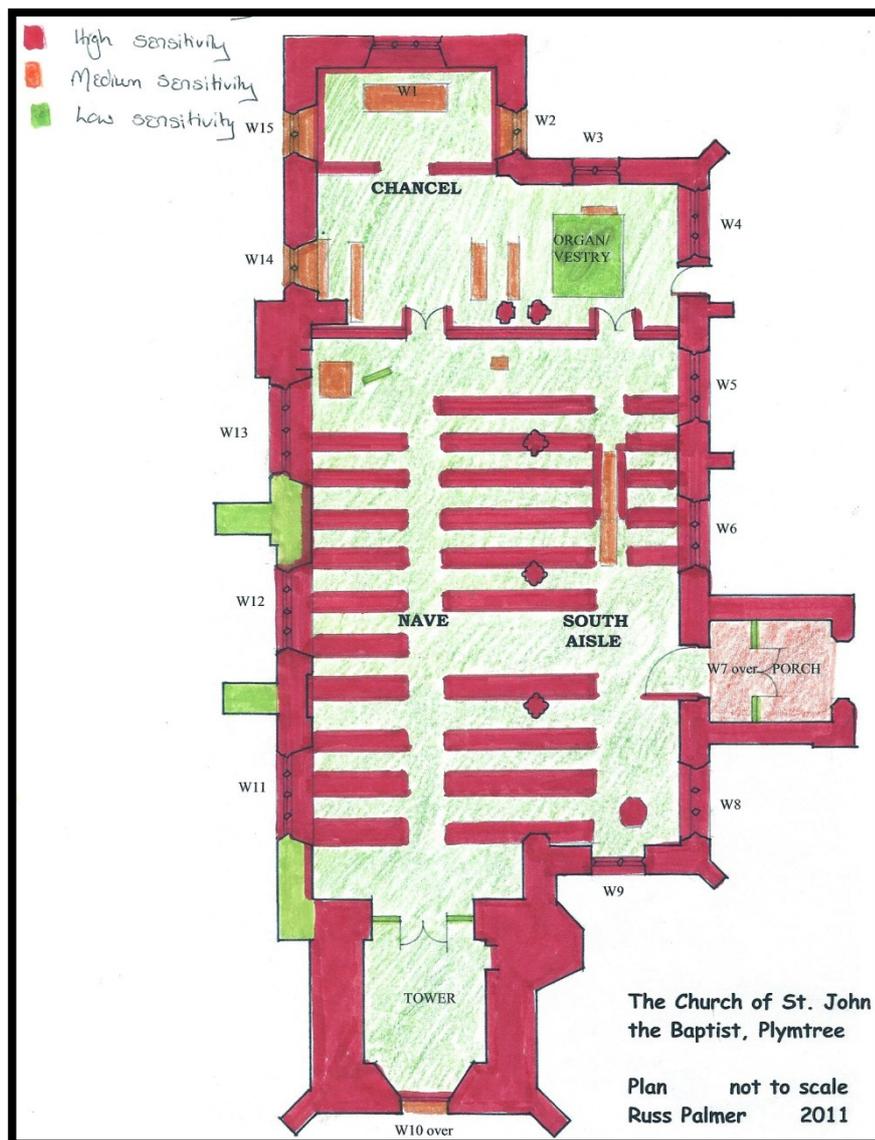


Figure 80 Plan showing areas of sensitivity according to the C.C.T. methodology

The diagrams illustrate, as discussed above, the areas of wall, which whilst of an early date and significant, are robust in character and therefore less sensitive to change. The nave floor, which is shown in Fig. 79 as having medium significance, is shown as having low sensitivity in Fig. 80 as it too is robust in nature.

6.3.3 The E.H. Conservation Appraisal

For the E.H. conservation appraisal methodology the researcher followed part 2 of the E.H. document *Understanding Place: Conservation Area Designation, Appraisal and*

Management,⁶⁶¹ a methodology with which she was familiar from her working practice, as a conservation officer.

6.3.3.1 Section 2.2.2 The Introduction

The methodology begins with 2.2.2 ‘The Introduction’ in which the ‘general identity and character’⁶⁶² of the church should be described and the scope and nature of the appraisal. Although it appears at the beginning of the report, this section would be easier to write once the whole appraisal was written. This introduction places the reader in an informed position from the start by stating exactly what is to be appraised and how that appraisal will be carried out. It also importantly states where the information for the appraisal comes from allowing the reader to check the sources.⁶⁶³

6.3.3.2 Section 2.2.4 The Definition (or Summary) of Special Interest

The introduction is followed by 2.2.4 ‘The Definition (or Summary) of Special Interest: ‘this is where the special architectural or historic interest.....is defined’. This could seem a rather amorphous aim but the guidance gives specific direction as to what the summary of interest entails: the building’s relationship to its setting; the physical evidence of its historic development; how the building is experienced; its architectural quality; the role of natural heritage and local distinctiveness.⁶⁶⁴ As with the description of general identity and character referred to above this section would be most successfully completed once the appraisal was written.

The Definition section was very successful in distilling the essential character of the church and its setting (appendix 8, pp.105-106). It also ensured that each individual area of the assessment had been adequately researched and understood. Having summarised the

⁶⁶¹ English Heritage. ‘Understanding Place: Conservation Area Designation, Appraisal and Management’ [Online] <http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/content/publications/publicationsNew/guidelines-standards/understanding-place-conservation-area/understanding-place-ca-designation-appraisal-management.pdf> [24th November 2012]

⁶⁶² Ibid., p. 9.

⁶⁶³ E.H., ‘Understanding Place’, p. 9.

⁶⁶⁴ Ibid., p. 9.

character the methodology then systematically described how each of the character elements was assessed. This took place under the section ‘Assessing Special interest’ which was then divided into subheadings.

6.3.3.3 Section 2.2.6 Location and setting

Although the advice for the first subheading, 2.2.6 ‘Location and Setting,’ was directed specifically at conservation areas, it could all be applied to churches: describing the general character and plan form; the wider setting and significant views.⁶⁶⁵ The advice also suggested this information could be shown on a townscape analysis map.⁶⁶⁶ Again many of the features suggested for inclusion would not be relevant, but a map could show the church and churchyard in its village setting, significant views, the green area of the churchyard, boundary walls, the lych gate, trees and possibly even tombs and gravestones.

This section encouraged the church to be considered not as an isolated monument, but part of an immediate setting (the churchyard) and a wider setting (the village and the countryside beyond). By considering the building in this context its overall significance was increased. For example, the significance of the trees in the churchyard was extended from that of their own natural beauty, to the green backdrop they provided to the church and their relationship with the mature trees in the gardens which surround the church. Similarly the significance of the churchyard wall is extended from its function as boundary to the green space of the churchyard to its role in the streetscape where its elevated position provided a strong sense of enclosure to the road (appendix 8, p. 106).

6.3.3.4 Section 2.2.8 Historic Development

For the next subsection 2.2.8 ‘Historic Development’ the methodology recommended compiling a map which ‘illustrates key periods...and highlights the survival of those

⁶⁶⁵ E.H., ‘Understanding Place’, p. 10.

⁶⁶⁶ Ibid., p.8.

historic elements which have determined the form of the conservation area today'.⁶⁶⁷In order to do this E.H. recommended using map regression (comparing successive historic maps). This method can be very useful for indicating the development of churches where plans exist (for example churches extensively altered during the Victorian period) or where extensive archaeological investigation has taken place. For the majority of churches, however, this information does not exist. Speculative phasing diagrams could be drawn based on historic information, or plans of the existing church colour coded to indicate development – see Fig. 78. These can only show information for the footprint of the building and do not illustrate the historic development of features such as the roofs, ceilings, upper stages of the tower and elevations.

The E.H. guidance also recommended the inclusion of any historic associations and the identification of archaeological remains and potential, which should also be identified on a map.⁶⁶⁸ In many respects the recording of the historic development of the church and its historic associations was a similar exercise to the writing of the historic development in Chapter 5. The researcher followed the format as described in the E.H. guidance writing a summary of the church fabric history, followed by historic associations. However, the E.H. guidance also included an extract from a completed conservation area character appraisal which linked the historic associations to the built fabric.⁶⁶⁹In retrospect this method would be more effective for illustrating the relevance of the historic associations. However there were some associations (for example the links with the Civil War) for which there was no material evidence (appendix 8, p.109).

The E.H. methodology allowed for archaeological potential to be thoroughly explored and researched, and the suggested map of potential ensured its presence was clearly indicated –

⁶⁶⁷ E.H., 'Understanding Place, pp. 10-11.

⁶⁶⁸ Ibid., p. 11.

⁶⁶⁹ Ibid., p. 11.

see Fig. 81. The researcher found thinking specifically about archaeological potential highlighted additional areas of sensitivity, which were not uncovered using the C.C.T. methodology. For example Area D in Fig. 81 refers to the sensitivity of the south and west walls of the church where evidence may exist of the former galleries beneath the more recent plaster (appendix 8, p. 112). These areas were not highlighted on the C.C.T. Areas of Sensitivity plan – see Fig. 80.

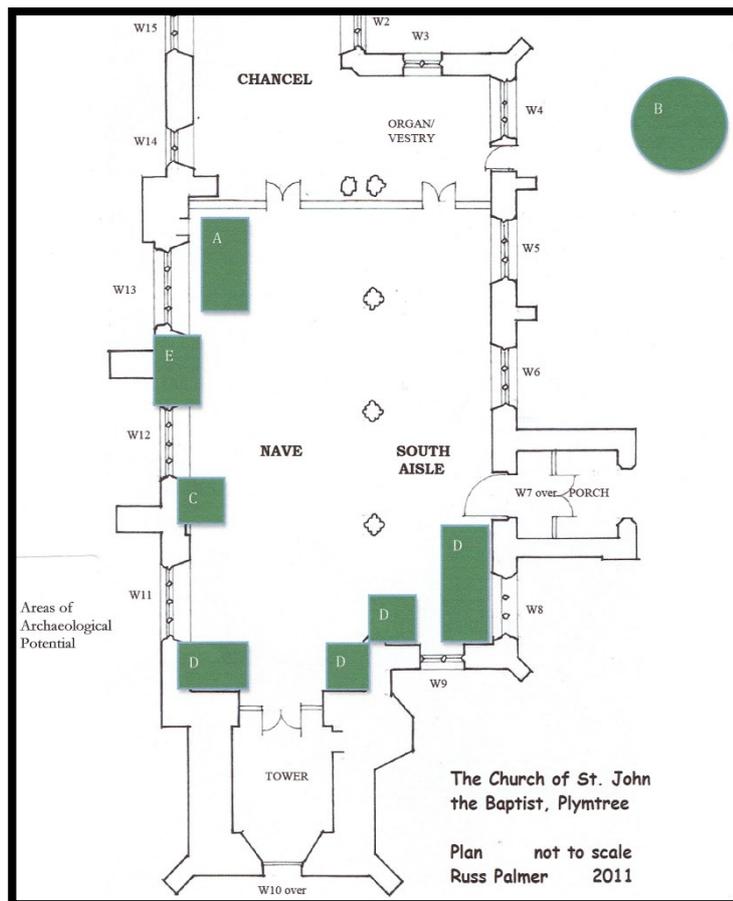


Figure 81 Areas of archaeological potential following the E.H. methodology

6.3.3.5 Sections 2.2.13 Architectural Quality and Built Form, 2.2.18 Character Zones and 2.2.21 Positive Contributors

Again not all aspects of the next sections 2.2.13 ‘Architectural Quality and Built Form’ 2.2.18 ‘Character Zones’ and 2.2.21 ‘Positive Contributors’ were relevant to churches, so the pertinent sections were extracted, grouped together and adapted to form one section whose aims were: to ‘describe any dominant architectural styles, the prevalent types and periods of buildings...and essential characteristics...the range of prevalent and traditional

materials';⁶⁷⁰ to record on a map elements of the building which positively contribute to its character; to identify and analyse character zones within the building and record elements of the building which detract from its character.⁶⁷¹ The church was divided into areas (i.e. chancel, nave etc), and the constituent elements (walls, roof etc) of each area analysed to reveal their date, material and style (see appendix 8, pp. 115-122). They were then given a level of interest (ranging from high to low) and this information was recorded on a plan. The map recommended by E.H. to show buildings which contribute positively or negatively to the character of the conservation area was adapted into a floor plan on which the different elements of the church were identified as being of either high, medium, local or low interest. Elements of the church which did not appear on the plan were given a letter and identified in the key (for example A- chancel roof and ceiling, K – the clock, F – tower arch etc.) – see Fig 82.

⁶⁷⁰ E.H., 'Understanding Place', p. 12.

⁶⁷¹ Ibid., p. 14.

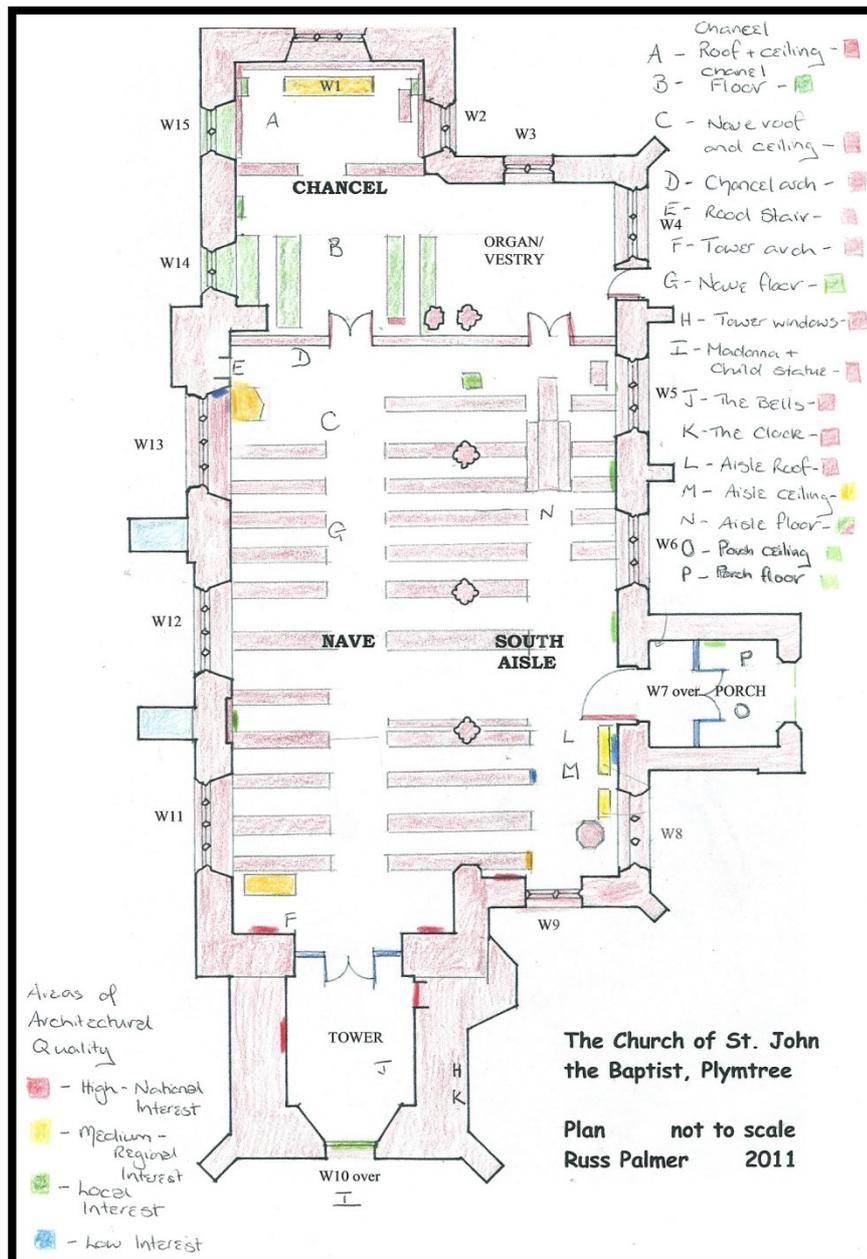


Figure 82 Areas of architectural quality following the E.H. methodology

The systematic nature of this section was particularly successful in ensuring all the elements of the church building were considered. Several features were identified which had previously escaped notice using the other methodologies such as the grisaille glass in the windows, the hymn board and parish chests (appendix 8, pp. 117,118,122). Less systematic approaches can lead to a failure to record modern additions, elements within larger features and those features which do not enhance the character of the church. The identification of the latter is particularly helpful for identifying potential opportunities for change similar to

the C.C.T. identification of low levels of significance illustrated in Fig. 79. There was no provision, however, in the E.H. methodology to supplement this analysis with an identification of sensitivity.

6.3.3.6 Section 2.2.15 Open Space, Parks and Gardens and Trees

In addition to the analysis of location and setting, the E.H. methodology had a further section where it focused in depth on 2.2.15 ‘Open Space, Parks and Gardens and Trees’.⁶⁷² Although churches are usually only associated with one open space (the churchyard) its role in enhancing the building and the relationship between the built and natural heritage can be explored in a similar way to that between a conservation area and the multiple open spaces within it. Similarly, the role of trees in defining the area, forming a green backdrop and framing views is also of as much relevance to a single building as it is to an area. The guidance asks the researcher to define the ‘visual and or other sensory contribution they (open spaces) make to the character of the place...the ways in which the spaces were and are used’.⁶⁷³

Whilst the earlier section enabled the significance of the church in its wider context to be appreciated, this section focused on the actual character of the church’s setting: the relationship between the church and its subordinate structures was examined in detail; the churchyard’s significance as a natural habit was explored and the use value of the churchyard was considered (appendix 8, p. 123). As a consequence the churchyard was analysed as a feature in its own right not simply as an adjunct to the historic building.

6.3.3.7 Section 2.2.22 Locally Important Details

The intention of the next section of the E.H. methodology 2.2.22 ‘Locally Important Details’ was to identify locally important buildings which could be added to the local list. Whilst this is not relevant to the vast majority of church buildings which are already listed,

⁶⁷² E.H., ‘Understanding Place’, p. 13.

⁶⁷³ Ibid., p. 13.

part of the guidance recommends identifying ‘Local constructional or joinery details...and unusual local features’ which ‘make a vital contribution to local distinctiveness’⁶⁷⁴ which could be usefully applied to churches. In addition, there might be built elements of the churchyard which, whilst not eligible for listing, could form part of a local list.

The identification of local features by comparing the church to others in the locality provided an opportunity for discovering added layers of significance in the church and churchyard. As no guidance was given for how this comparison might be made it was not undertaken, but a similar exercise was carried out following the Worthing and Bond methodology – see below.

6.3.3.8 Section 2.2.24 An Assessment of Condition

The next section of the E.H. methodology, 2.2.24 ‘An Assessment of Condition’,⁶⁷⁵ was not carried out as this information was covered by the church’s quinquennial inspection. However, the principle of providing information on the condition of the church could be of great assistance in the determining of significance. For example if there were features of low significance which had also been identified as being in poor condition, these might present an opportunity for change or alteration.

6.3.3.9 Section 2.2.27 A Plan for Further Action

The final section of the E.H. methodology 2.2.27 ‘A Plan for Further Action’ was intended to summarise the main problems and pressures facing the building, which should then be addressed in a separate management plan.⁶⁷⁶ Rather than produce a separate action plan which would have made a rather unwieldy document, a list of opportunities in response to some of the problems and pressures identified were included (see appendix 8, pp. 123-124).

⁶⁷⁴ E.H., ‘Understanding Place’, p. 15.

⁶⁷⁵ Ibid., p. 15.

⁶⁷⁶ Ibid., p. 16.

(Again, as with the assessment of condition, information regarding fabric which needs to be repaired or replaced would be included in a quinquennial inspection.)

In responding to the need to identify problems and pressures the researcher focused on those elements of the building, which at present are cause for concern. As a consequence some of the elements highlighted in the Architectural Quality section as being of low interest were not included in this section as they did not pose any material threat to the building. This makes the section not as effective as it might be for identifying areas for potential change.

However, this section was a very useful exercise prompting a whole new area of thought concerning potential threats to the significance of the church. By anticipating problems, even in a well-maintained church like Plymtree, the researcher can highlight the ongoing need to assess and reassess significance. For example, at present there is no pressure on the church to provide multiple uses as there is a fully functioning parish hall, however in the future this facility might not be available for economic reasons. If the researcher were aware of this potential threat complacency in the current statement of significance could be avoided and information such as archaeological sensitivity given as much weight as it would if an extension to the building were imminently planned.

This section also encouraged a critical eye to be cast over the building, pointing out features which could be improved: such as the modern paint on the arcade capitals and chancel ceiling (appendix 8, p.124). In following the methodology, the researcher became aware of gaps in the understanding of the church and its setting. The opportunities section could encourage further research into the history of the church, its features, churchyard and relationship with the village which could fill in some of these gaps and add to the understanding of the significance of the building.

6.3.4 W. and B. Identification of Significance

The chapter 'Cultural Significance' in *Managing Built Heritage* suggested four procedures which should normally be carried out when assessing significance: identifying the values; assessing the value of the site in relation to comparable sites; evaluating what elements of the site contribute to the overall significance and in what way; and evaluating the relative significance of the elements.⁶⁷⁷

6.3.4.1. Stage 1. The identification and assessment of the overall and particular values embodied in and represented by the site

For the first stage, 1. 'The identification and assessment of the overall and particular values embodied in and represented by the site' W. and B. clearly state that when assessing value 'no one category should be assumed to be more worthy than another'.⁶⁷⁸ This approach contrasts with the hierarchy of values used in the C.C.T. methodology: 'high level values range from evidential, which is dependent on the inherited fabric of the place, through historical and aesthetic, to communal values which derive from people's identification with the place'.⁶⁷⁹

In assessing the significance of each value, the W. and B. methodology used a hierarchy of six values ranging from 'exceptional' to 'no' based on J.S. Kerr's *The Conservation Plan*.⁶⁸⁰ They also suggest the possibility of ascribing 'negative significance' to identify features that have a 'deleterious effect'.⁶⁸¹ This hierarchy if strictly followed could lead to some anomalous conclusions. For example, when considering the symbolic/iconic value of the church (see below) the Kerr rating system might suggest the value 'limited' because the

⁶⁷⁷ Worthing, D. and Bond, S. *Managing Built Heritage: The Role of Cultural Significance*, Oxford: Blackwell, 2008, p. 81.

⁶⁷⁸ Ibid., p. 60.

⁶⁷⁹ E.H., *Conservation Principles*, 2008, p. 27.

⁶⁸⁰ Worthing and Bond, 2008, p. 82.

⁶⁸¹ Ibid., p. 82.

church can only be appreciated as a landmark from a local perspective. However, to ascribe a building of such symbolic importance in this way does not make sense. Consequently in some cases the hierarchy based on a perception of national significance was over-ridden.

Aesthetic value

The first assessment value suggested by the W. and B. methodology 'Aesthetic' is one of the E.H. values used in the C.C.T. methodology. W. and B. explain what is meant by this term both by referring to the E.H. definition 'the ways in which people draw sensory and intellectual stimulation from a place...by conscious design or just by how a church has evolved over time...from the patina of age'⁶⁸² and the I.C.O.M.O.S. definition of aesthetic value from the Burra Charter 'consideration of the form, scale, colour, texture and materials of the fabric; the smells and sounds associated with the place and its use'.⁶⁸³ To these W. and B. add their own summation 'in a sense we are essentially talking about character and what makes a "sense of place"'.⁶⁸⁴ It is interesting to note that none of these definitions mention beauty, but both of the above sets of criteria were formulated to apply to all heritage assets and consequently 'sensory stimulation' is considered a more inclusive term.

By including the I.C.O.M.O.S. definition of aesthetic value the W. and B. methodology allows for the sensory perception of the building to be considered: for example the complementary colours of the stonework (appendix 9, p.126), rather than simply the more obvious elements of artistic merit such as the craftsmanship of the screen and the medieval panel paintings suggested by the C.C.T. methodology. The significance of this value was rated as 'exceptional' as some of the constituent elements, including the craftsmanship and the panel paintings, are named elements in the building's grade I list description: 'includes

⁶⁸² Worthing and Bond, 2008, p. 62.

⁶⁸³ Ibid., pp. 62-63.

⁶⁸⁴ Ibid., p. 63.

fine craftsmanship from the C15 onwards... The painted figures on the screen wainscoting are a remarkable survival'.⁶⁸⁵ E.H. define grade I buildings as being 'of exceptional interest, sometimes considered to be internationally important'.⁶⁸⁶

Scenic and panoramic value

Assessing the second value suggested by W. and B. 'Scenic and panoramic' the significance of the church and its tower in the villagescape and surrounding countryside was examined with results similar to those established using the E.H. and C. of E. methodologies. The significance of this value was rated as 'some' as although the church's role in the villagescape is quite high, the views from the building are limited (see appendix 9, p.126).

Architectural/technological value

The next value 'Architectural/technological' was defined by W. and B. as 'concerned with innovation, development and perhaps pinnacles of achievement...in relation to architectural ideas and movements'.⁶⁸⁷ By including technological achievement in this category, the full significance of the church clock was noted, which had not been fully explored by the previous methodologies (appendix 9, p. 126). The significance of this value was rated as 'exceptional' as, although the Perpendicular Gothic design of the church can be compared to many other buildings locally and nationally, it represents a pinnacle of achievement for the 15th century craftsman and builders. In addition, the building is particularly well preserved which has contributed to its grade I listing: 'The Church of St. John is a particularly good and well-preserved example; perhaps the paradigm of a rural parish church in Devon'.⁶⁸⁸

Historical value

W. and B.'s fourth value 'Historical' is another shared with the C.C.T. methodology. In this case, the C.C.T. definition, taken from E.H. *Conservation Principles*, 'Historical value derives

⁶⁸⁵ E.H. List Entry, Plymtree.

⁶⁸⁶ English Heritage, 'Caring for Heritage, Listed Buildings' [online] <http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/caring/listing/listed-buildings/> [8th July 2012]

⁶⁸⁷ Worthing and Bond, 2008, p. 63.

⁶⁸⁸ The National Heritage List for England, Plymtree.

from the ways in which past people, events and aspects of life can be connected through a place to the present. It tends to be illustrative or associative' (appendix 2, p.26) is clearer than that of W. and B. who quote from R. Mason: 'The capacity of a site to convey, embody or stimulate a relation or reaction to the past'.⁶⁸⁹ The Mason definition being less specific could imply a site's capacity to invoke a romantic response which is not necessarily based on actual fact. For example, the Castle at Tintagel could be seen as embodying the spirit of King Arthur, but there is no evidence from 'past people' or 'events' that connect him to the building. Perhaps in acknowledgement of this weakness, the W. and B. definition continues its guidance by quoting from E.H. 'the perception of a window that provides links between past and present people'.⁶⁹⁰

Following the W. and B. methodology did not provide any additional insight to that gained through the C.C.T. approach, but it did allow for, in comparison with the historic development, a subjective interpretation of the building in relation to its history, rather than an objective view of the structure in terms of its surviving historic fabric (appendix 9, pp. 126-127). The historical significance of the church was rated as 'exceptional' due to the high survival of virtually unaltered fabric from an early period and the subsequent alterations which illustrate so many significant phases in the history of English church architecture (appendix 9, p. 127).

Associational value

The W. and B methodology suggested 'Associational' as a stand alone value rather than part of 'Historical' value as in the C.C.T. methodology (see appendix 2, p. 26). The reason for extracting this element is not evident from the guidelines. However, this approach of considering 'Associational' value separately could be usefully applied where a building has otherwise lost all historic integrity. The W. and B. definition quotes the Burra Charter 'some events or associations may be so important that the place retains significance

⁶⁸⁹ Worthing and Bond, 2008, p. 64.

⁶⁹⁰ Ibid., p. 64.

regardless of subsequent treatment'.⁶⁹¹ However, this is unlikely to be the case for most historic churches.

The methodology produced a very similar response to the associational links identified by the C.C.T. method. Both encouraged the researcher to identify how the stories of past associations could be read in the surviving fabric (appendix 9, p. 127). In contrast, the C. of E. methodology simply asked the question 'Are there any significant events or personalities associated with the church' (appendix 3, p.48) without requiring any fabric-based evidence. The 'Associational' value was rated as 'some' as, although some of the figures associated with the church were of national standing such as General Monk, their connection with the fabric of Plymtree church was tangential. Furthermore, none of the architects associated with the building were mentioned in the list description.

Archaeological value

The W. and B. methodology included 'Archaeological' in common with the C.C.T. methodology under the title 'Evidential' (appendix 2, p. 24). The W. and B. definition did, however include a warning about the potentially destructive nature of archaeological investigation, and the importance in some cases of maintaining the mystery of buried remains.⁶⁹² Despite the slightly dissimilar definition the W. and B. methodology did not prompt a perceptibly different response to the C.C.T. methodology, other than the rating. The archaeological value was rated 'considerable' because former repair work had already revealed evidence of an earlier building on the site (appendix 9, p. 127). However, if this building were to be further investigated it could impact on subsequent phases of work.

Economic value

The next W. and B. value 'Economic' was one not previously suggested by the other methodologies. Two aspects of this value: how much money the building generates and the 'real estate' value of the building, were not relevant for most churches. However, other aspects including an asset's existence value (people value the existence of the heritage item

⁶⁹¹ Worthing and Bond, 2008, p. 64.

⁶⁹² Worthing and Bond, 2008, p. 65.

even though they may not consume the service directly themselves) and its option value (people wish to preserved the option that they or others might consume the asset's services at some future time) (appendix 9, p. 128), could be potentially pertinent. Assessing churches in this way could encourage creative thinking about the potential of the building for generating revenue. In the case of Plymtree church, the value was assessed as being of 'limited' significance as at present the building is not exploited for this purpose (appendix 9, p. 128).

Educational value

Under the heading 'Educational' the W. and B. methodology encouraged an assessment of the building's potential as a historical resource.⁶⁹³ Considering the church in this way could also feed into the economic significance of the building as it could encourage more people to visit and consequently increase its revenue. This value was rated as 'high' as the church has significance at a national level, reflected in its grade I status, at local level as the oldest building in the village, containing examples of work from a number of different periods and as a resource for researching local history (see appendix 9, p. 128).

Recreational value

The next heading suggested by the W. and B. methodology 'Recreational'⁶⁹⁴ was not considered relevant for Plymtree church although it might have relevance for churches with multiple uses. (Some activities which take place for liturgical reasons, such as playing the organ and flower arranging, might also be considered as recreational by their practitioners.)

Artistic value

For the next value, the W. and B. methodology suggested 'Artistic'⁶⁹⁵ which, as in the case of 'Associational', isolated an element which could be considered under a broader heading; in this case 'Aesthetic'. In responding to this section, the researcher focused on the painted

⁶⁹³ Worthing and Bond, 2008, pp. 65-66.

⁶⁹⁴ Worthing and Bond, 2008, p. 66.

⁶⁹⁵ Ibid., p.66.

figures of the screen, but they could equally have been examined under the 'Aesthetic' section. The value was given a rating of 'considerable' due to the high quality and good state of preservation of the figures (appendix 9, p. 128).

Social value

The heading 'Social value' related closely to the 'communal values' of the C.C.T. methodology (appendix 2, p. 30). The W. and B. definition highlights the propensity of this value for generating controversy⁶⁹⁶ as does the C.C.T. methodology (appendix 2, p. 37). Unlike the C.C.T. methodology the W. and B. definition does not suggest this value should be assessed by the general public. However, later in the book their advice on assessing significance for conservation plans states 'stakeholders therefore need to be identified and involved in the determination of significance'.⁶⁹⁷ This section provided less insightful information than the C.C.T. 'Communal value' section as it only included the researcher's perception of the role of the church in the community without the depth provided by consultation with the congregation (appendix 9, p. 128). In order to rate this value, the researcher used the response to the C.C.T. methodology question 'In your opinion what makes the building special?' (appendix 7, p. 102). As the majority of the respondents referred to the importance of the building as a social centre before mentioning its historic or aesthetic value, its 'social' value was judged to be 'considerable' (appendix 9, p. 128).

Commemorative value

The W. and B. methodology suggested the value 'Commemorative' should be considered separately from 'associational' value as 'the commemorative place may or may not be located where the event actually took place. War memorials are an obvious example of this'.⁶⁹⁸ This contrasts with the C.C.T. approach where its definition of 'historic value' was broad enough to take this distinction into account: 'Historical value derives from the ways

⁶⁹⁶ Worthing and Bond, 2008, p.66.

⁶⁹⁷ Worthing and Bond, 2008, p. 131.

⁶⁹⁸ Worthing and Bond, 2008, p. 67.

in which past people, events and aspects of life can be connected through a place to the present. It tends to be *illustrative* or *associative*' (appendix 2, p. 26). Although the war memorial is not located on the site the servicemen died, as a structure it still illustrates an aspect of history and its significance could be adequately assessed in terms of 'historic' value. Considering commemorative value separately from associational and historic value did not present any additional aspects of significance for Plymtree church. The value was rated as 'limited' as there is no separate war memorial, only commemorative plaques within the church (appendix 9, p. 129).

Symbolic/iconic value

The next W. and B. value 'Symbolic/iconic' could sit within the C.C.T. definition of 'communal value': 'Communal value derives from the meanings of a place for the people who relate to it, or for whom it figures in their collective experience or memory' (appendix 2, p.30). Again, the W. and B. definition did not stipulate public consultation as a means for assessing this value. The researcher assessed the building in terms of its physical impact, but could not comment meaningfully on its emotional potency (appendix 9, p.129). Consequently, this section lacked the depth of the C.C.T. methodology response to 'communal value'. The significance of this value was assessed as 'high' as the church is a symbol of the Christian life of the local community.

Spiritual and religious value

The W. and B. definition for 'Spiritual and religious' value was written to encompass a wide range of buildings and sites. As a consequence, it suggested this value was 'one of the harder values to pin down' but in most cases if a site is known to be of religious significance 'providing you are open to the experiences of others, you can develop a sound assessment of significance'.⁶⁹⁹ Whilst this is obviously not the case for historic churches, it encourages the researcher to think about the spiritual relevance of the building for non-Christian users and visitors in addition to its obvious religious role. Plymtree church's

⁶⁹⁹ Worthing and Bond, 2008, p. 68.

religious value was rated ‘considerable’, as this is the prime purpose of the building (appendix 9, p. 129).

Inspirational value

Aspects of the W. and B. value ‘Inspirational’ could be found in three of the C.C.T. values; ‘historic’, ‘aesthetic’ and ‘communal’ and seven of its own values: ‘aesthetic’, ‘architectural’, ‘artistic’, ‘social’, ‘commemorative’, ‘symbolic/iconic’ and ‘spiritual and religious’. This could lead to a degree of repetition and in the specific case of church buildings it is particularly difficult to consider this value separately from ‘spiritual and religious’. However the specificity of this value encouraged the appreciation of the achievements of the craftsmen and builders in terms of the challenges they may have faced in addition to the virtuosity of their finished work. The value was rated ‘considerable’ in recognition of this achievement (appendix 9, p. 129).

Ecological value

W. and B. did not define exactly what they meant by the value ‘Ecological’, whether it referred to the natural heritage of a site and its importance as a habitat or the sustainability of the structure. The guidance stated assessments of conservation ‘tend to focus over-much on traditional building conservation themes like archaeology and history and not tackle value holistically’,⁷⁰⁰ which suggests the term ‘ecological’ refers to the site’s natural heritage. The guidance then described this value as ‘easier to understand and assess in terms of relative importance than something as intangible as inspiration’.⁷⁰¹ However, most people carrying out assessments of significance on historic buildings will come from a building conservation background and have no expertise in the field of natural heritage. As a consequence to assess this value successfully the work would need to be contracted out. Discussing the sustainability of a building, however, is within the remit of most conservation professionals and is becoming increasingly relevant. Although not one of the

⁷⁰⁰ Worthing and Bond, 2008, p. 69.

⁷⁰¹ Ibid., p. 69.

E.H. heritage values, taking account of sustainability is included in the ‘Conservation Principles’ as part of the chapter on Managing Change to Significant Places.⁷⁰²

An assessment of the natural heritage of the site was also included in the C. of E. methodology in the section ‘The Living Churchyard’ (appendix 3, p. 47). None of the other methodologies included an assessment of the sustainability of the building, and so this aspect of the church’s significance was assessed for the first time. Following the E.H. criteria for sustainability in ‘Conservation Principles’,⁷⁰³ the church was assessed as being of ‘some’ ecological value (appendix 9, p. 129).

Environmental

The W. and B. methodologies final value ‘Environmental’ could also have been more clearly defined. It was unclear whether they were referring to landscape in terms of its function as a setting (defining and framing a heritage asset), as a natural heritage asset without any specific ecological interest, or both?⁷⁰⁴ (Furthermore in the architectural world the term ‘environmental’ would refer to the quality of the internal environment such as heat, light and sound.) Environment as setting was included in all the other three methodologies, and this assessment did not present any further aspects of significance. The value was rated as limited as the space is of importance to the setting of the building, provides an open space of value to the local community, but is not the habitat of any significant flora or fauna, other than the ancient yew tree, according to the natural environment website www.magic.gov.uk (appendix 9, p. 130).

6.3.4.2 Stage 2. An assessment of how valuable the site is related to comparable sites

For the second stage of the W. and B. methodology entitled 2. ‘An assessment of how valuable the site is related to comparable sites’ the guidance suggested the researcher

⁷⁰² E.H., *Conservation Principles*, p. 46.

⁷⁰³ E.H., *Conservation Principles*, p. 46.

⁷⁰⁴ Worthing and Bond, 2008, p. 69.

should be ‘looking outwards at comparisons’.⁷⁰⁵ Rating the values identified above according to the W. and B. hierarchy gave a picture of the relevance of the values in comparison to churches in general nationally and even internationally, but gave no insight into the value of the church in relation to local churches. This stage of the methodology sought to rectify that omission. As no specific advice was given, to make this comparison the researcher decided to look at eight churches within a six mile radius of Plymtree church – see Table. 7 and the map in appendix 9, p.130. Plymtree church was then re-evaluated under five headings: date, materials, plan, degree of Victorian intervention and local details, in comparison to these eight churches. The headings for comparison were prompted by the list descriptions and the site visits. The general history of church building in Devon, which formed part of the historic development (see Chapter 5) assisted in the attribution of values and provided a context for the comparison.

Village with a church within 6 miles of Plymtree	No. of miles from Plymtree
Feniton	6 miles
Talaton	4 miles
Clyst St Lawrence	6 miles
Clyst Hydon	4 miles
Bradninch	5 miles
Cullompton	4 miles
Broadhembury	5 miles
Payhembury	4 miles

Table 7 Churches within a six mile radius of Plymtree church

The other methodologies had already highlighted the significance of the early date (15th century) of the building, which makes it significant on a national level and is reflected in its listed building status, grade I. However comparison with the surrounding churches revealed they were all substantially built during this period – see Table 8, and recourse to the historic development revealed the same is true for 95% of pre-Victorian churches in

⁷⁰⁵ Worthing and Bond, 2008, p. 81.

Devon (see Chapter 5). However, in terms of historic value the building should still be considered of high significance, due to the overall rarity of buildings surviving from this period (in England almost all buildings built pre-1700 are listed, but those built before 1600 constitute only 15% of the total number of buildings listed).⁷⁰⁶ Although local comparison did not alter the rating of the church’s historic value it did add to the understanding of its significance; its date whilst early is not unusual for this asset type and for this locality.

Church	Date
Plymtree	C15
Feniton	Norman origins, C15 and early C16
Talaton	Norman font, C15
Clyst St Lawrence	Norman font, C15
Clyst Hydon	C15
Bradinch	C15 and early C16 earlier masonry in chancel
Cullompton	C15 and C16
Broadhembury	Nave C14 or earlier, C15 south aisle west tower, C16 porch
Payhembury	C15 and early C16

Table 8 Date of Plymtree church in comparison to the surrounding churches

The other methodologies identified the materials of the church (red sandstone, volcanic stone, Beerstone and Hamstone) and that (with the exception of Hamstone which comes from Somerset and was not used until the modern period) all the materials would have been sourced locally. However, comparison with the surrounding churches showed that although some of the buildings were constructed from different materials, such as limestone and flint rubble, they all reflect the underlying geology which is particularly complex in this part of Devon – Table 9. By making this comparison the choice of local materials is shown to be typical for the locality and the historic development confirms this was typical for Devon as a whole, see previous chapter (appendix 9, p. 132). Consequently the significance of the materials used to build Plymtree church were valued of medium significance.

⁷⁰⁶ E.H., ‘Caring for Heritage’.

	Plym	Fen	Tal	Clyst St L	Clyst H	Brad	Cull	Broad- Hem	Pay- Hem
Brecchia							☐		
Red sandstone	☐				☐		☐		
Volcanic stone rubble	☐					☐		☐	
Volcanic ashlar	☐		☐	☐	☐				☐
Volcanic ashlar quoins									
Flint Rubble		☐						☐	☐
Limestone			☐						
Dressed Flint		☐							
Beerstone dressings	☐		☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Bathstone dressings		☐	☐		☐			☐	
Hamstone Dressings	☐								☐

Table 9 A comparison of the building materials of Plymtree and the surrounding churches

The plan of the church: nave, chancel, west tower, south aisle and south porch, was discussed in most of the methodologies. However, comparison with the other churches showed it was typical of the area with most additions to the basic Plymtree plan usually added during the Victorian period – Table 10. The historic development revealed this plan was also typical of Devon in general (Chapter 5), and it was rated as of medium significance reflecting its characteristic nature (appendix 9, p. 133).

	Plym	Fen	Tal	Clyst St L	Clyst H	Brad	Cull	Broad- Hem	Pay- Hem
Nave	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Chancel	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
North aisle			☐		☐	☐	☐		☐
South aisle	☐	☐	☐		☐	☐	☐	☐	
Outer south aisle							☐		
West tower	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
North porch				☐				☐	
South porch	☐		☐		☐	☐	☐		☐
Porch btwn tower/ south aisle		☐							
North west vestry						☐			
North east vestry						☐		☐	☐
South east vestry							☐		
North transept and vestry		☐							

☐ - indicates 19th century additions/rebuilding

Table 10 The plan components of Plymtree and the surrounding churches

Several of the methodologies had already referred to the light touch of the Victorian restoration at Plymtree and the list description specifically states the church ‘escaped the worst excesses of C19 renovation’.⁷⁰⁷ However, the real significance of Plymtree’s un-restored state was only fully appreciated when visiting the surrounding churches; the

⁷⁰⁷ E.H., List Description, Plymtree.

majority of which were considerably altered during the Victorian period. This was particularly noticeable in the treatment of the rood screens; many dated from the 15th century, but had been substantially altered with harsh Victorian paintwork, which contrasted with the subtle hues of the medieval work at Plymtree – Figs 83 - 88.



Figure 83 The 15th century rood screen at Feniton with 19th century gold paintwork (photograph, author)



Figure 84 The 15th century screen at Talaton with 19th century paintwork (photograph, author)



Figure 85 The 15th century screen at Bradninch was restored by Bradley of Exeter in 1853 (photograph, author)



Figure 86 The late 15th century screen at Cullompton was restored in 1850 (photograph, author)



Figure 87 The 15th century rood screen at Payhembury was restored in the late 19th century by Fellowes Prynne (photograph, author)

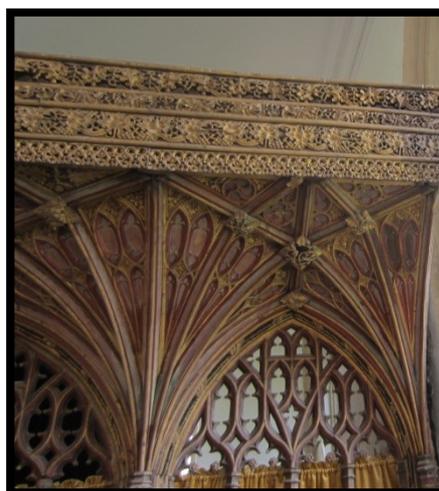


Figure 88 The subtle medieval paint scheme on the screen at Plymtree (photograph, author)

The comparison also revealed what might have been the fate of Plymtree church if all the available funds had not been spent on securing the church tower at the end of the 19th century. The neighbouring church of Payhembury shared the same rector during this period and the same repairing architect, Fellowes Prynne. At Plymtree, Fellowes Prynne oversaw the repairs to the tower, which was in an unsafe condition, but none of the other works he recommended were carried out due to lack of funds (Chapter 5). At Payhembury, by contrast, the reredos, altar, choir stalls, reading desk, lectern, font cover, screen paintwork and most of the pews are all the work of Fellowes Prynne.⁷⁰⁸ If funds had been available a full Victorian restoration programme might have taken place at Plymtree, leading to the loss of much medieval fabric.

The comparison with other churches reinforced the significance of the un-restored condition of Plymtree and enriched the understanding of the role played by the architects associated with the church. By listing the main features of the churches and noting which had been altered during the Victorian and early 20th century periods it was possible to roughly quantify the degree of alteration that had taken place – (Table 11).

⁷⁰⁸ English Heritage. 'List entry for Church of St. Mary, Payhembury' [online] <http://list.english-heritage.org.uk/resultsingle.aspx?uid=1333739> [7th May 2013]

	Plym	Fen	Tal	Clyst St L	Clyst H	Brad	Cull	Broad- Hem	Pay- Hem
Porch Ceiling	☐								
Windows	3	6	7		6	All		4	
Choir stalls	☐	☐	☐	☐		☐		☐	☐
Benches	1	Most (Small no. C15)	North and south aisles	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Most (Small no. C15)
Buttresses	2								
Vestry		☐				☐		☐	☐
Nave roof						☐		☐	☐
Chancel roof		☐	☐			☐		☐	☐
North transept roof		☐							
North aisle roof					☐	☐			☐
Tower roof					☐				
South aisle roof		☐				☐		☐	
Chancel arch		☐	☐		☐			☐	☐
Reredos		☐							☐
Altar		☐	☐	☐	☐			☐	☐
Altar rail		☐	☐		☐			☐	
Restored screen		☐		☐	No screen	☐	☐	☐	☐
Pulpit		☐	☐		☐	☐		☐	
Lectern	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐				☐
Font		☐			☐				☐
Tower screen	Modern	☐							
Monuments	☐	☐	☐			☐	☐	☐	☐
Stained glass		☐		☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Outer walls			☐						
North aisle			☐		☐	☐			
Tile floor			☐			☐		☐	☐
Nave						☐			
South aisle						☐			
Tower vestry						☐			
Chancel							☐	☐	

Table 11 Summary of the Victorian/early 20th century intervention at Plymtree and the surrounding churches

To illustrate this point further the type of intervention was given a weight, measured out of 10, which indicated its impact on the surrounding historic fabric (Table 12).

Victorian Intervention	Weight of Impact
Porch Ceiling	2.5
Windows	5
Choir stalls	2.5
Benches	5
Buttresses	2.5
Vestry	2.5
Nave roof	2.5
Chancel roof	2.5
North transept roof	2.5
North aisle roof	2.5
Tower roof	2.5
South aisle roof	2.5
Chancel arch	2.5
Reredos	2.5
Altar	2.5
Altar rail	2.5
Restored Screen	5
Pulpit	2.5
Lectern	2.5
Font	2.5
Tower screen	2.5
Monuments	2.5
Stained glass	5
Outer walls	7.5
North aisle	5
Tile floor	2.5
Nave	5
South aisle	5
Tower vestry	2.5
Chancel	5

Table 12 Weight of impact

At this point a certain amount of rounding up and down was necessary in order to put the data into a spreadsheet, and consequently no differentiation was made between the number of Victorian windows. Similarly Plymtree was not considered to have Victorian intervention in relation to its pews as the amount was so small. The figures were then

placed in a spreadsheet and the overall percentage of Victorian intervention calculated (Table 13).

Victorian Intervention	Plym	Fen	Tal	Clyst St L	Clyst H	Brad	Cull	Broadhem	Payhem
Porch Ceiling	2.5								
Windows	5	5	5		5	5		5	
Choir stalls	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.5
Benches		5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5
Buttresses	2.5								
Vestry		2.5				2.5		2.5	2.5
Nave roof						2.5		2.5	2.5
Chancel roof		2.5	2.5			2.5		2.5	2.5
North transept Roof		2.5							
North aisle Roof					2.5	2.5			2.5
Tower roof South aisle Roof		2.5				2.5		2.5	
Chancel arch		2.5	2.5		2.5			2.5	2.5
Reredos		2.5							2.5
Altar		2.5	2.5	2.5	2.5			2.5	2.5
Altar rail		2.5	2.5		2.5			2.5	
Restored Screen		5		5		5	5	5	5
Pulpit		2.5	2.5		2.5	2.5		2.5	
Lectern	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.5				2.5
Font		2.5			2.5				2.5
Tower Screen		2.5							
Monuments	2.5	2.5	2.5			2.5	2.5	2.5	2.5
Stained glass		5		5	5	5	5	5	5
Outer walls			7.5						
North aisle			5		5	5			
Tile floor Nave			2.5			2.5		2.5	2.5
Heightening South aisle heightening						5			
Tower vestry						5			
Chancel							2.5	2.5	
	17.5	55	45	22.5	42.5	60	25	52.5	45
	Plym	Fen	Tal	Clyst St L	Clyst H	Brad	Cull	Broadhem	Payhem
	17.5	55	45	22.5	42.5	60	25	52.5	45

Table 13 Spreadsheet showing the amount of Victorian/early 20th century intervention

These figures were then used to create a pie chart which indicated the extent of Victorian and early 20th century intervention at Plymtree relative to the surrounding churches (Fig. 89).



Figure 89 Relative amount of Victorian/early 20th century intervention

As the W. and B. methodology does not suggest what form the comparison between the churches should take the methodology for this section was based on the research report *Measuring Change in Conservation Areas*⁷⁰⁹ produced for English Heritage.

The pie chart very clearly shows the low level of intervention at Plymtree in comparison to the surrounding churches, and so its unrestored significance was rated high (appendix 9, p. 137).

Whilst carrying out site visits to the eight surrounding churches it became evident that they shared a number of features in common in addition to those one would normally expect to find in churches of a similar period. This suggested a further heading for comparison- see Table 14. Reference to the historic development (see Chapter 5), confirmed that wagon roofs, decorative screens and carved bench ends are all typical features of Devon churches in the 15th and 16th centuries. Projecting stair turrets are to be found on more than half of

⁷⁰⁹ Conservation Studio, *Measuring Change in Conservation Areas* [Online], <http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/publications/measuring-change-in-conservation-areas/> [1st November 2012]

the churches and of these the majority are hexagonal or octagonal. Furthermore the style of windows and arcades are typical of the period nationally. However, these churches do appear to have a notable amount of stone carving in the form of image niches, gargoyles, bosses of the Green Man, carved head and angel label stops and statues. Whilst further research would be necessary in order to establish any meaningful information about this tendency, such as the possibility of a local school of carving, this initial research suggests a trend which increases the local significance of the churches. In terms of the overall significance of the buildings this could impact for example on their educational value.

	Plym	Fen	Tal	Clyst St L	Clyst H	Brad	Cull	Broad- Hem	Pay- Hem
Hexagonal /polygonal stair turret	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>					
Image niche and statues	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Pevsner type B arcade	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	No arcade		<input type="checkbox"/> (double wave moulding)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> (double wave moulding)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Perpendicular window tracery	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>					
Wagon roof	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Medieval carved screen	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>
Medieval carved bench ends	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>						<input type="checkbox"/>
Carved head/angel label stops	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>					<input type="checkbox"/>	
Green man carving	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>			<input type="checkbox"/>
Gargoyles	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>					

Table 14 Shared features and details

In addition to providing empirical evidence concerning the date, plan, materials, degree of restoration and local details, all of which enriched the understanding of the significance of Plymtree church, the comparison also provided primary resource material which called into

question one of the published facts concerning the building. The date of the image niche and sculpture on the church tower is recorded in the list description as 17th century. However similar image niches on the surrounding churches are dated to the 15th century or the early 16th century – see Figs. 90-94. The early 16th century niches on the porch at Broadhembury⁷¹⁰ are particularly stylistically close to the Plymtree niche suggesting a similar date.



Figure 90 Image niche of the Virgin and Child on the 15th century tower at Talaton (photograph, author)



Figure 91 Clyst St. Lawrence tower with Virgin and Child statue described by the list description as ‘very old and maybe C15’⁷¹¹ (photograph, author)



Figure 92 Carved panels including defaced Calvary panel on the west front of Cullompton church, dated 1539 (photograph, author)



Figure 93 Early 16th century south porch at Broadhembury with statue niches with crocketed canopies

⁷¹⁰ English Heritage. ‘List entry for Church of St. Andrew, Broadhembury’ [Online] <http://list.english-heritage.org.uk/resultsingle.aspx?uid=1281269> [7th May 2013]

⁷¹¹ English Heritage. ‘List entry for Church of St. Lawrence, Clyst St. Lawrence’ [Online] <http://list.english-heritage.org.uk/resultsingle.aspx?uid=1333709> [7th May, 2013]



Figure 94 The canopy of the niche statue at Plymtree church appears stylistically very similar to that at Broadhembury and Clyst St. Lawrence, whilst the seated Virgin resembles the figure at Talaton. The straight head to the niche is similar to the Calvary niche at Cullompton. (Photograph, author)

6.3.4.3 Stage 3 An evaluation of what aspects and what elements of the site contribute to the overall significance of the place – and in what way they do so

The third stage of the W. and B methodology 3. ‘An evaluation of what aspects and what elements of the site contribute to the overall significance of the place – and in what way they do so’ was similar to the section ‘Heritage Significance’ of the C.C.T. methodology where the heritage values were related back to the fabric of the church (appendix 2, p. 33). This section could be effectively completed using the results from the C.C.T. format (appendix 9, p. 139). Although the C.C.T. version only covered four areas of significance ‘evidential’, ‘historic’, ‘aesthetic’ and ‘communal’ these could be applied to the values suggested by the W. and B. methodology (Table 15).

C.C.T. Value	W. and B. Value
Evidential	Archaeological
Historical	Historical, Associational, Architectural, Educational
Aesthetic	Aesthetic, Artistic, Environmental
Communal	Scenic, Associational, Economic, Educational, Social, Commemorative Symbolic/Iconic, Spiritual and Religious and Inspirational

Table 15 Comparison between the C.C.T. and W.and B. values

The only two W. and B. values not covered by the C.C.T. format were 'Recreational' and 'Ecological'. The church could be said to have a recreational role as concerts are occasionally held in the building and the Jubilee celebrations were held in the churchyard. Similarly, the churchyard is a habitat for flora and fauna (although no nationally rare species have been recorded there). Both values however are of limited significance when applied to the church.

6.3.4.4 Stage 4 An evaluation of the relative significance of the various aspects and elements of the place

Having looked outwards through a comparison with other churches the final stage of the methodology 4. 'Following from the above, an evaluation of the relative significance of the various aspects and elements of the place' requires the researcher to look 'inwards at relativity'.⁷¹² For this the hierarchy of values proposed by Kerr were used.⁷¹³ Again, the methodology mirrors the C.C.T. approach where identified values were summarised according to their significance (appendix 9, pp. 140-141), although the W. and B. methodology five levels of value were used: exceptional, considerable, some, limited, unknown and no,⁷¹⁴ in contrast to the three recommended by the C.C.T. (appendix 2, p. 37).

In many respects the rating of values by the two methodologies produced similar results. The main differences being elements which appeared under the 'high significance' heading using the C.C.T. methodology (appendix 7, pp.96-97) were included under two headings 'exceptional significance' and 'considerable significance' using the W. and B. formula (appendix 9, pp.140-141). This additional level of evaluation mainly highlighted elements of an earlier date. For example, 15th century fabric such as the chancel screen is considered of

⁷¹² Worthing and Bond, 2008, p. 81.

⁷¹³ Ibid., p. 82.

⁷¹⁴ Worthing and Bond, 2008, p. 82.

high value internationally, whilst later material would need to be of exceptional merit to be included in this category. The C.C.T. 'medium significance' heading included the same elements (appendix 7, p.97) as the W. and B. 'some significance' heading (appendix 9, p. 141), and the C.C.T. 'low significance' heading (appendix 7, p.97) the same information as the W. and B. 'limited significance' (appendix 9, p.141). The fourth W. and B. value, 'unknown significance' (appendix 9, p.141) consisted of similar information to the C.C.T. section 'further study required' (appendix 7, pp. 98). Included under the final W. and B. value 'no significance' (appendix 9, p. 141) were the heating and lighting system and the reading desk. These features had not been covered by the C.C.T. methodology and did not appear in the E.H. list of problems and pressures (appendix 8, pp. 123-124). This value recognised elements of the building which, whilst not actually damaging to the fabric physically or aesthetically, held no heritage significance and therefore could be a useful tool for indentifying areas for possible change.

In addition to the four stages identified by W. and B. for the assessment of significance, they also suggested consideration of 'levels of sensitivity'⁷¹⁵ a concept mooted by M. Pearson and D. Marshall in the 2005 *National Library of Australia, Conservation Management Plan*, where they suggested "The level of sensitivity to change is based on the vulnerability of the component to loss of heritage values through change".⁷¹⁶

This is the same concept as that used in the C.C.T. methodology in the section 'Heritage Sensitivity' (appendix 2, p. 38). Following the W.and B. methodology revealed the same results as the C.C.T. approach (appendix 9, p. 1420).

6.4 Conclusion

This chapter has shown how there are many more aspects to a church's significance than the information gained through a thorough historic development. By systematically

⁷¹⁵ Worthing and Bond, 2008, p. 89.

⁷¹⁶ Ibid., p. 89.

analysing each methodology in turn it has also revealed a number of ways in which the current C. of E. methodology could be expanded. A summary of the ways in which the other methodologies could inform the C. of E. approach will be discussed as part of Chapter 8 which will also seek to address the issues of interpretation and delivery discussed in this chapter.

Chapter 7.0

Findings from the analysis questions

7.1 Introduction

In this chapter, the data gathered by the four methodologies will be interrogated to determine which methodology: represents the most comprehensive approach to assessing significance; best summarises the historic development and identifies the important features of Plymtree church; most effectively highlights the potential for worship and mission; most usefully informs the faculty process; engages with the public most effectively and meets the highest number of the E.H. criteria for assessing significance. These questions will be addressed through the analysis methods outlined in chapter 4.

The data referred to from the four methodologies can be found in the appendices: C. of E. Statement of Significance (S. of S.), Appendix 6, pp. 59-81; C.C.T. Assessment of Significance (A.o.S.), Appendix 7, pp. 82-102; E.H. Conservation Appraisal (C.A.), Appendix 8, pp. 103-124; W. and B. Identification of Significance (I. of S.), Appendix 9, pp. 125-142.

7.2 Analysis method 1 - Research question 1

The first method of analysis was devised to test which of the four methodologies covered the highest number of themes, and what themes were currently not dealt with by the C. of E. methodology – see Table 16. The groups were not listed in any order of priority and the contents of each group was the choice of the researcher, and had no other authority.

Theme	C. of E. S.of S.	C.C.T. A.o.S.	E.H. C.A.	W. and B. I. of S.
Setting of the church (C. of E.) Location and Setting (E.H.) Scenic and Panoramic (W. and B.)	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The living Churchyard (C. of E.) Open Space, Parks and Gardens and Trees (E.H.) Environmental, Ecological (W. and B.)	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Social History (C. of E.) Communal Value (C.C.T.) Associational, Social Value (W. and B.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>
The church building in general (C. of E.) Description of the church (C.C.T.) Historical Value (C.C.T.) Historic Development (E.H.) Historical (W. and B.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The church building in detail (C. of E.) Description of the Church (C.C.T.) Architectural Quality and Built Form, Character Zones (E.H.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Contents of the church (C. of E.) Aesthetic Value (C.C.T.) An Audit of Heritage Assets (E.H.) Artistic (W. and B.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Significance for Mission (C. of E.) Communal Value (C.C.T.) Positive Contributors (E.H.) Educational, Recreational, Social, Symbolic/iconic, Spiritual/religious, Inspirational (W. and B.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Evidential Value (C.C.T.), Archaeological potential (E.H.), Archaeological, Commemorative (W. and B.)		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Aesthetic Value (C.C.T.) Aesthetic (W. and B.)		<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>
Summary of Significance (C.C.T.) Definition (or Summary) of Special Interest (E.H.)		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Heritage Sensitivity (C.C.T.) Sensitivity to change (W. and B.)		<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>
Assessment of Condition (E.H.)			<input type="checkbox"/>	
Plan for Future Action (E.H.)			<input type="checkbox"/>	
Architectural/ Technological (W. and B.)				<input type="checkbox"/>
Economic (W. and B.)				<input type="checkbox"/>
	7	9	10	11

Table 16 Number of themes covered by each methodology

Table 16 shows the W. and B. methodology to cover the broadest number of themes for assessing significance. It also identifies the themes which are not currently covered by the C. of E. methodology; these include a number of additional values, the identification of which could assist in the understanding of the church's significance and some additional elements of appraisal which could inform the faculty process into which the C. of E. methodology feeds. The values not specifically identified by the C. of E. methodology were 'aesthetic', 'technological' and 'economic'. As discussed in Chapter 6, by considering the

church from a purely aesthetic perspective additional aspects of its significance are revealed including the patina of age, the building's sensory characteristics and the picturesque qualities of the setting. The consideration of technological values in the case of Plymtree highlighted the significance of the clock, and in other churches could ensure the value of surviving Victorian heating and lighting was identified. Although many aspects of the churches' setting were addressed by the C. of E. methodology, a separate consideration of the sustainable nature of the building, not included by any of the methodologies, could be added. The final value not included in the C. of E. methodology, economic, could prompt consideration of the church's potential for generating income, which could assist in its upkeep.

The C. of E. methodology does not make specific provision for the identification of archaeological potential. The presence of archaeological remains is covered in section 1.1 'Setting of the church,' but nowhere in the methodology is the researcher directed to consider those parts of the church and churchyard which might yield archaeological evidence. Given that the C. of E. statements of significance accompany applications for a faculty seeking permission to carry out alterations to the fabric, this is a particularly significant omission in the current methodology. Another aspect of managing change not currently covered by the C. of E.'s methodology is the identification of sensitivity. As the C.C.T. and W. and B. methodologies have shown, differentiating between significant and sensitive fabric can be a very useful tool in determining where change is appropriate.

The C. of E. methodology does not currently ask for a summary of the significance of the church. Summarising significance can be a very useful tool for providing an overview and reinforcing the understanding of those aspects of the church which have the highest significance. The C. of E. methodology makes no reference to the condition of the building as this aspect is covered by the quinquennial inspection. However, if the statement of

significance were informed by this separate report those aspects of the church whose significance is currently compromised by poor condition could be identified. In some cases areas of poor condition might benefit from adaptation and thus present themselves as areas for future change/alteration. A plan for future action, similar to the one which currently forms part of the E.H. methodology, could provide more targeted suggestions for section 1.7 'Significance for mission' in the C. of E. Methodology.

7.2.1 The 2014 C. of E. guidance for writing statements of significance

The 2014 C. of E. guidance for writing statements of significance covers fewer themes than the 2012 version, but does highlight areas not previously considered. For example the archaeological significance of the church is now covered, and a consideration of the building and churchyard's aesthetic value, 'any significant features of artistic or archaeological interest'.⁷¹⁷ However, the guidance no longer includes a consideration of the living churchyard, the church's social history or its significance for mission.

7.3 Analysis method 2 - Research questions 2-6

The second analysis method was devised to discover which of the four methodologies most effectively answered the five research questions described in Chapter 4, formulated to test the methodologies' effectiveness and usefulness.

7.3.1 Does the report summarise the historical development of the church?

The first research question 'Does the report summarise the historical development of the church?' was answered by the C. of E. methodology in section 1.4 'The Church Building in General' (appendix 3, p. 49). According to the guidance this section should provide a history of the church from its first incarnation on the site showing how it may have

⁷¹⁷Churchcare. 'Statements of Significance and Need' [Online] http://www.churchcare.co.uk/images/Guidance_on_statements_of_significance_and_need.pdf [21st November 2014] p. 3

changed and developed over time. The description should include information on those involved in the practical creation of the building: architects, artists and craftsmen, and those with financial involvement; including how this may have impacted on the nature of the fabric. The architecture and artistic details should be situated in an international, national, regional or local context as appropriate.

This guidance suggested by the C. of E., if followed to the letter, would provide a very comprehensive survey of the physical development of the church. In reality, only for a very significant or well documented building (probably a cathedral) would information regarding architects, artists or craftsmen from any period earlier than the Victorian era be readily available. Comparisons with international, national or regional work can be found in the List Description and Pevsner, but making local comparisons usually requires primary research, which is not acknowledged by the guidance, nor is any advice given as to how this could be obtained.

Consequently the section completed for Plymtree church effectively described how the church evolved over time; what each period contributed in terms of the fabric; the role of the local Forde family who were important patrons of the church; and the Victorian architects responsible for the church's repair. The names of the craftsmen who carved the screen, bench ends, exterior stone carvings, altar rail, ceiling bosses, arcade capitals and alabaster panel are all unknown, as are the artists who painted the screen panels, and the original 14th and 15th century builders. The section covered the significance of the church nationally and regionally, such as the importance of the screen and the unusual survival of historic fabric following the sensitive Victorian restoration (appendix 6, pp. 65-71). However, none of the published material and sources suggested by the C. of E. methodology enabled an assessment of the local significance of the building.

The C.C.T. methodology does not require an account of the historic development of the building. However, all aspects of the building's development are included within the assessment: the surviving historic fabric is described in section 3.0 'Description of the church' (appendix 7, pp. 84-88); information on early structures on the site can be found in 4.4 'Evidential Value' (appendix 7, pp.88-89) and the way 'past people, events and aspects of life' impacted on the structure were discussed in section 4.5 'Historical Value' (appendix 7, pp.89-92). By beginning with a description, the methodology encourages the building to be seen as a piece of autonomous architecture, an entity cut loose from its past incarnations. All sense of an organic structure, which has developed (and sometimes contracted) over the years, is lost. Although we understand the building includes material from many different periods there is no sense of how the building appeared during each phase of its development. For example, if the nave walls at Plymtree are 14th century (and this is not entirely certain – chapter 5), the church at this point would have had windows with Decorated tracery and, where the arcade now stands, there would have been a wall similar to the north wall. This understanding of a building as an evolving form rather than as a static work of art which emerges through a historical development can be a valuable tool for managing change in the future.

The evidential value section provides information on earlier buildings and lost features of the existing building, but by including this information in a separate section, the sense of the building's narrative could be weakened. Similarly information on people and events associated with the church in the historical value section are not directly linked to the fabric. For example, recording the fact that Oriel College was the patron of the living at Plymtree has little immediate significance as far as the fabric is concerned, whereas if this information were included in a historical development it could show the influence of the High Church college on the appointment of the rector who subsequently decorated the

chancel and re-installed the coloured glass, directly linking the college to alterations to the fabric which do survive.

The E.H. methodology includes 2.2.8 ‘Historic Development’ as an element in the section ‘Assessment of Special Interest’.⁷¹⁸ The aim of this section is to tell the story of the evolution of the church building. However, no guidance is given for differentiating between material which survives and that which has been lost. For example, the galleries installed in the early 18th century at Plymtree reappear in the narrative in the late 19th when they were removed (appendix 8, p.110). If, however, a removal date is not stated or a replacement feature recorded, the impression could be given that a lost feature were still extant.

The W. and B. methodology does not include historic development as they believe ‘an overall description of the place and an understanding of how it has developed through time’, although crucial, should be carried out before the assessment of significance takes place.⁷¹⁹ In order to gain a sense of the historic development of the church building, six of the identified values would need to be pieced together: ‘aesthetic’ (appendix 9, pp.125-126), ‘architectural and technological’ (appendix 9, p.126), ‘historical’(appendix 9, pp.126-127), ‘associational’(appendix 9, p.127), ‘archaeological’(appendix 9, p.127) and ‘artistic’(appendix 9, p.128). This would provide some of the relevant information but gives no clear sense of the building’s narrative. In practice, however, this information on historical development would accompany the methodology defining significance as part of the wider conservation plan. Worthing and Bond deliberately separate the historic development from the

⁷¹⁸ English Heritage. ‘Understanding Place: Conservation Area Designation, Appraisal and Management’ [Online] <http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/content/publications/publicationsNew/guidelines-standards/understanding-place-conservation-area/understanding-place-ca-designation-appraisal-management.pdf> [24th November 2012] p. 10.

⁷¹⁹ Worthing and Bond, 2008, p. 111.

methodology as the former is descriptive and the latter analytical. In addition, by separating the two the dependency of assessing value solely on historic development is broken.

Of the four methodologies, that of the C. of E. and E.H. both answer the question 'Does the report summarise the historical development of the church?' However, both have the same weaknesses: requiring local context, but not suggesting how this can be determined and not requiring a distinction to be made between the surviving and lost fabric.

7.3.1.1 The 2014 C. of E. guidance for writing statements of significance

The 2014 guidance asks for a brief history of the church building, its contents, churchyard and setting.⁷²⁰ The guidance is far more limited than the 2012 version, and no longer encourages any consideration of the people involved in the development of the church, or the contextualising of the building and its features in regards to international, national, regional or local practices.

7.3.2 Does the report identify the important features that make major contributions to the character of the church?

The C. of E. methodology very clearly requires an evaluation of the fabric of the church in section 1.5 'The church in detail' (appendix 3, p. 50) and the fixtures, fittings and contents in section 1.6 'Contents of the church' (appendix 3, p.51). As discussed in chapter 6, no guidance is given on how to ascribe the values of significance (high, medium, low). The scope of the investigation is confined to the church building itself and does not include the churchyard, neither does it include elements of the intangible character of the church such as the significance of its un-restored state, its past status as a 'high' church with links to the Ecclesiologists, the acoustics of the building or its atmosphere.

⁷²⁰ Churchcare. 'Statements of Significance and Need, 2014', p. 3

The C. of E. methodology is successful in identifying the important physical features of the church. In the first section 1.5 there is a choice of assessing the church either by historical phase or by area. The latter provided a far more detailed assessment (appendix 6, p.73). The ascribing of values to indicate the significance of the features is helpful in creating a hierarchy and consequently illustrating which features are the most important. However, without specific advice on how values should be ascribed only someone already experienced in the field of building conservation could complete this section effectively.

The C. of E. methodology, if completed by someone with a professional background would successfully answer the question ‘does the report identify the important features of the church’, but it would not explain how these features ‘make major contributions to the character of the church’. Consequently, the methodology identifies what elements are important in the building, but does not explain why. As a consequence the significance of the various elements are not fully explored or understood.

The C.C.T. methodology includes this information in its ‘Summary of Significance’ (appendix 7, pp.96-97), where the various elements of the church are grouped together according to three levels of significance high, medium or low. Rather than systematically listing all the features of the church and then ascribing a value to each feature as the C. of E. methodology requires, the C.C.T. methodology begins with analysing the church to see what values it holds under the headings ‘Evidential’(appendix 7, pp.88-89), ‘Historical’ (appendix 7, pp.89-92), ‘Aesthetic’(appendix 7, pp.92-93) and ‘Communal’(appendix 7, pp. 93-94). Once these values have been identified, they are then related to the fabric of the building (appendix 7, pp.95-96). They are then grouped together in terms of their level of significance with those in the highest bracket reflecting the ‘important features’ which make ‘a major contribution to the character of the church’.

Where the C. of E. approach relies on the physical evidence of the building the C.C.T. methodology allows for the consideration of non-tangible elements which might also be important qualities that contribute to the character of the church. For example, within the category of 'High Significance' the C.C.T. methodology included the church's spiritual value and its links with the S.P.A.B. movement and the Oxford Movement. All three of these values if not identified as forming part of the church's significance, could be compromised if alterations/adaptations were planned. The C.C.T. methodology also made the provision for the inclusion of the church's green setting in its list of elements of high significance (appendix 7, p.97).

By considering the church in terms of the values it holds at the beginning of the identification of significance processes, the C.C.T. methodology describes all the elements of the building both tangible and intangible and consequently, once 'the important features' have been identified, the 'character of the church' to which they provide a major contribution is fully understood.

The E.H. methodology for determining important features is similar to that of the C. of E. in so far as it requires the systematic analysis of all the church fabric and the assigning of values – in this case referred to as 'levels of interest'.⁷²¹ Each area of the church; chancel, nave etc was investigated including internal and external fabric, fixtures, fittings and contents. Like the C. of E. methodology the systematic nature of the analysis ensured that all the physical properties of the building were considered and evaluated. However, the methodology like that of the C. of E. makes no provision for the inclusion of the intangible elements of the building.

⁷²¹ E.H., 'Understanding Place', p. 12.

The important features of the building were identified in the W. and B. methodology in Section 4 ‘an evaluation of the relative significance of the various aspects and elements of the place’ (appendix 9, pp. 140-141). In this section the features of the building were evaluated under six different headings with ‘exceptional’ and ‘considerable’ indicating the most important. The W. and B. methodology is similar to that of the C.C.T., beginning with identifying the different values represented in the site and linking those values to the fabric (appendix 9, pp.139-140). The W. and B. methodology has the same advantage as the C.C.T. approach in identifying the intangible elements of importance and the overall character of the church. In addition the W. and B. methodology also includes a section relating the site to comparable sites (appendix 9, pp.130-139), which allows the elements to be assessed in terms of their local significance.

Whilst all the methodologies fulfill the requirement to ‘identify the important features that make major contributions to the character of the church’, the W. and B. methodology allows for the most comprehensive evaluation: its identification of multiple values provides a comprehensive picture of the character of the church; it identifies the significance of the individual elements of the building; it includes the intangible elements; and those of local significance.

7.3.2.1 The 2014 C. of E. guidance for writing statements of significance

The 2014 guidance asks for the significance of the church, including its contents and churchyard, to be defined in terms of ‘its special architectural and historical interest’ and ‘any significant features of artistic or archaeological interest’.⁷²² Like the 2012 C. of E. guidance, these requirements are likely to identify the major physical features which contribute to the character of the church, but there is still no requirement to identify the

⁷²² Churchcare. ‘Statements of Significance and Need, 2014’, p. 3

significant nonmaterial elements, such as the temperature, smell, atmosphere or sense of welcome in the building.

7.3.3 Does the report explore the strengths and potential the church holds for worship and mission?

This question was specifically addressed by the C. of E. methodology in section 1.7 ‘Significance for Mission’, and guidance given in the form of two questions ‘What are the strengths of the building as it is for worship and mission? What potential for adapted and new uses does the church and its setting already have with little or no change?’ (appendix 3, p.80). For research purposes the questions were put to members of the congregation in the form of questionnaires. The first question was widely responded to although few of the answers referred to specific elements of the building (appendix 6, pp. 78-79). In addition to an appreciation of the building’s historic features, the congregation also commended its size and location, light interior, good heating and lighting systems, organ, welcoming atmosphere, well-kept appearance, atmosphere of prayer and comfort and symbolic quality as a place of permanence. The second question prompted very few replies (appendix 6, p.88), which could be due to the nature of the fabric of Plymtree Church, but it could also be due to the wording of the question. By using the phrase ‘little or no change’ the question precludes any meaningful discourse on the possibility of change.

The C.C.T. methodology explored the strengths and potential for mission of the church through a series of questions put to users of the church. These questions were put to members of the Plymtree congregation in the form of questionnaires and were: ‘In your opinion what makes the building special?’, ‘Are there any changes that you think would make the building better used?’, ‘What do you think other locals would like to see?’ and ‘Are there any specific parts of the building that you would like to see protected from change or that you feel are especially sensitive?’ (appendix 7, p.94)’. Although these

questions were devised for buildings no longer in primary use as places of worship they still apply to those buildings which continue in use. The first question in the C.C.T. methodology encourages thought about how the building is currently used which acts as a good precursor to considering whether change is necessary. A large number of the Plymtree congregation commented on the central role of the church building in the community as a physical landmark and as a venue for events. Some commented on its importance as a physical symbol of God's presence in the village and its importance as an historic monument which bore witness to the village's past and development. Many of the congregation commented on its good condition and high quality craftsmanship and noted the importance of the church's setting within the churchyard (appendix 7, p. 94). The second and third questions allow the potential for change to be considered without the constraints of the C. of E. methodology question. In the case of Plymtree, the congregation felt little change was possible due to the nature of the building, but did suggest some small changes such as a bookstall area for children, and kitchen and toilet facilities (appendix 7, p. 94). The fourth question then allows any consideration of adaptation/alteration to be tempered by a recognition that some aspects of the building are sensitive and should be protected from change. The majority of the Plymtree respondents felt the integrity of the church interior would be vulnerable to change, singling out the screen and pews as particularly sensitive. One respondent, however suggested change should be considered if it were sympathetic (appendix 7, p. 94).

Although the E.H. methodology, compiled as it was for the consideration of conservation areas, does not directly answer the question there are elements which could be usefully applied. Section 2.2.4 'The Definition of Special Interest' requires the consideration of 'how the places within it are experienced by the people who live and work there and visitors to the area'.⁷²³ This allows for a picture to be formed of how the church is currently

⁷²³ E.H., 'Understanding Place', p. 10.

used whilst the section 2.2.27 ‘A Plan for Further Action’⁷²⁴ allows for the identification of any problems in the ways in which the church is currently arranged and used, and suggestions for how this could be remedied. The first section is effective in encouraging the consideration of the building in all its roles in addition to its primary purpose as a worship centre (appendix 8, pp.123-124). The second section requires a critical assessment of the building, but once the problems have been identified there is no guidance on how to formulate solutions. At this point some reference back to those areas of the fabric which are not positive contributors (Section 2.2.13 Architectural Quality and Built Form) (appendix 8, pp.114-122) could provide suggestions for where change could take place.

The W. and B. methodology explores the strengths and potential the church holds for worship through the identification of the ‘Spiritual and Religious’ (appendix 9, p.129) and ‘Inspirational’ (appendix 9, p.129) values embodied in the site. The potential for mission is explored through the identification of ‘Educational’ (appendix 9, p.128), ‘Social’ (appendix 9, pp.128) and ‘Symbolic’ (appendix 9, pp.129) values. Whilst the methodology identifies the importance of the building as a whole for the spiritual, religious and inspirational values it embodies such as its sense of quiet and its witness to the spiritual life of the community (appendix 9, p.129), it does not make reference to specific elements of the fabric such as the suitability of the current design for different kinds of worship. The method is more successful in identifying the potential for mission as the three values identify a wide range of ways in which the church is used and valued (appendix 9, pp.128-12).

All the methodologies allow the building’s current strengths for worship and mission to be explored. However, in order to assess the church’s potential the current limitations of the fabric need to be addressed. The C. of E. methodology is too inhibiting with its requirement for ‘little or no change’ and the W. and B. methodology does not refer to the

⁷²⁴ Ibid., p. 16.

specific features of the church. The C.C.T. and E.H. methodologies both encourage critical analysis of the building but none of the methods make reference to those areas of the church which have been identified as being of little or low significance. In this respect they miss the chance to use the opportunities for change/adaptation, which the building itself is presenting.

7.3.3.1 The 2014 C. of E. guidance for writing statements of significance

The 2014 C. of E. guidance does not require any consideration of the potential of the church for worship and mission as part of the statement of significance.

7.3.4 Would the report help those in the Faculty system to assess any plans for change?

The Exeter D.A.C. wanted to know whether the medieval pews, which had been removed from Plymtree church were, at the time of their removal, in their original position (in which case they would require the pews to be re-installed) or whether they had been re-sited (in which case a retrospective faculty for their removal might be granted). This scenario clearly illustrates the importance of a thorough history of the development of a building: ideally one which provides a biography of all the features, fixtures and fittings giving information not only about their date and style, but also any changes to their siting within the building. In reality, this level of detailed information is difficult to find from the sources recommended by the Church Buildings Council in their guidance for writing statements of significance, and can often only be confidently ascertained by an archaeological investigation.

On first examination the pews in the nave and Forde aisle at Plymtree appear to be a complete set of medieval bench ends. This impression is partially confirmed by the list description, 'Very good and complete set of C15 oak benches; blind tracery on the frontals

and back benches, ends carved with similar schemes of flowers and 2 tiers of tracery. The only additions a couple of late C17 benches and one C19 example'.⁷²⁵ The four methodologies repeat this information with the C. of E. methodology in section 1.4 'The Church Building in General' providing the additional information that other sources suggest some of the pews may be replicas or be constructed from a former chest. (appendix 6, p.67). The same section also refers to a post card from 1895 showing Georgian box pews in the Forde aisle (appendix 6, p.68). This information comes from *The Book of Plymtree*,⁷²⁶ but the postcard is not shown and there is no longer a record of its existence. The C.C.T. and E.H. methodologies repeat the list description information in the 'Description of the Church' (appendix 7, pp.85-86) and the 'Historic Development' (appendix 8, pp.107-111) sections respectively. The W. and B. methodology does not include any sense of the historic development of the building (as this would be included in the separate historic development), only referring to the pews for the aesthetic value they embody (see appendix 9, pp.125-126).

None of the methodologies provided the information required to determine whether the current positioning of the pews reflects the medieval arrangement. In order to try and discover whether the type of information required by the D.A.C. was readily available, the researcher carried out further study including consulting the historic Plymtree parish magazines held in the Cathedral Library, Exeter and referring to historic photographs held by the P.C.C. From these findings a chronology of the pews was formulated which can be found in appendix 10. By concentrating on this specific area, more information about the late 19th and early 20th century pew arrangements was discovered – Fig 95 and Appendix 10, pp. 143-147. It was possible to formulate a hypothesis concerning the movements of some of the pews, but much remained unclear. The conclusion was drawn that it would

⁷²⁵ E.H., List Description, Plymtree.

⁷²⁶ Eames, T. (ed.) *The Book of Plymtree*, Tiverton: Halsgrave, 1999, p. 32.

require specialist input from an expert on historic joinery and an archaeologist in order to determine to what extent the pews had been moved and altered.

Pew arrangement – St John the Baptist, Plymtree*

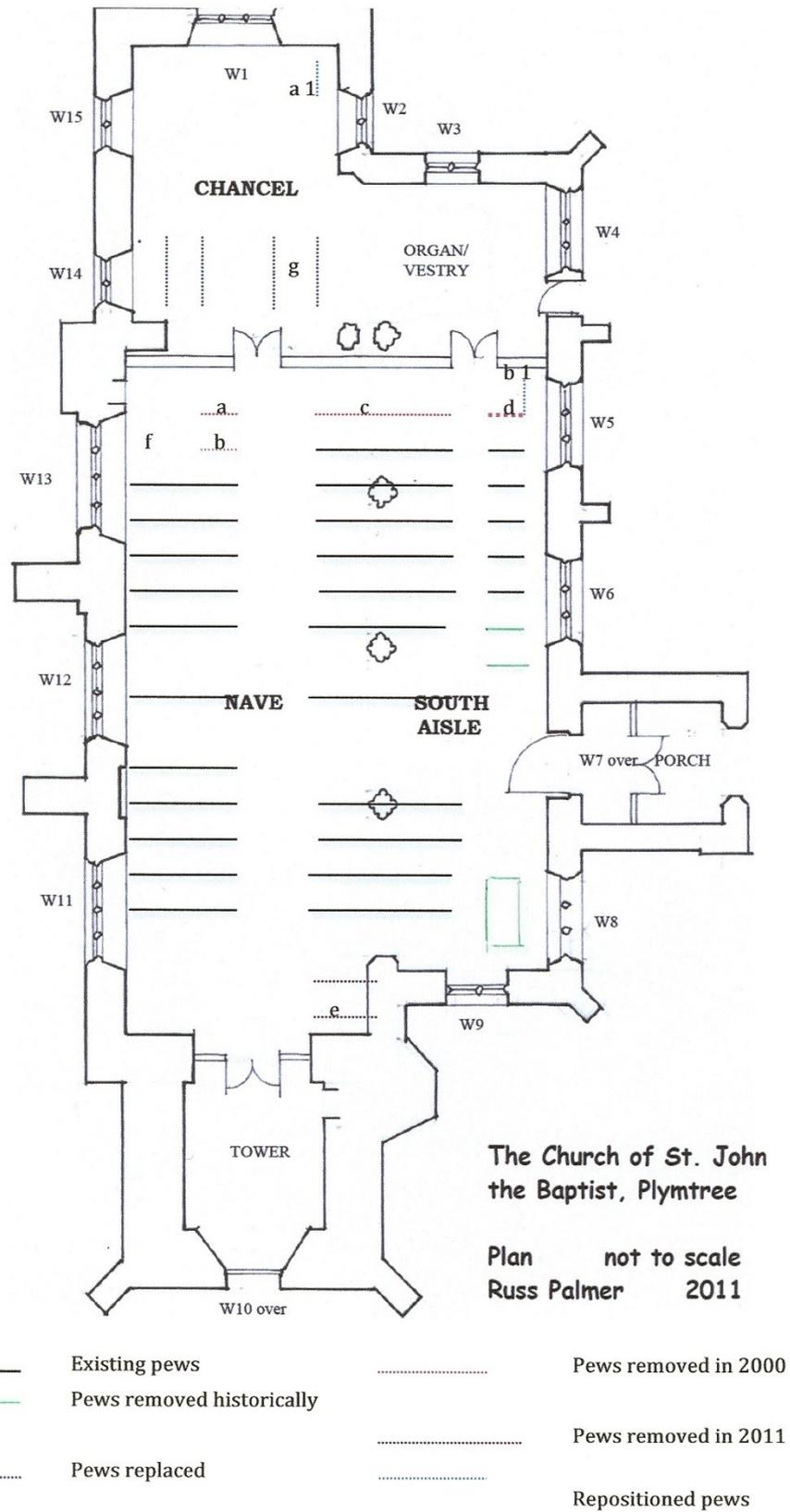


Figure 95 Plan showing how some of the pews have been moved at Plymtree church

Although none of the methodologies would have been able to assist the D.A.C. in their requirements, the nature of this particular faculty application was such that specialist advice would probably have been required regardless of the quality of the statement of significance. Whilst the pew case was too detailed in its requirements to demonstrate the fitness of the four methodologies for informing the faculty process, it did highlight the importance of a clear historic development, which traces the evolution of the building and its fixtures and fittings. The C. of E., C.C.T. and E.H. methodologies all made provision for assessments of this nature, and the W. and B. methodology took into account the significance of pews which remained in their original position. All four methodologies offered a very thorough and detailed analysis of the church with the C.C.T. and E.H. methodologies producing 20 pages of data, the C. of E. methodology 23 pages and the W. and B. methodology 25 pages (although this did include a number of charts and diagrams).

7.3.4.1 The 2014 C. of E. guidance for writing statements of significance

The 2014 C. of E. guidance requires a history and description of the church building, including its contents, setting and churchyard. If this were carried out diligently and in enough detail, there should be enough information included to assist a D.A.C. when considering a faculty application.

7.3.5 What is the nature of community involvement

The C. of E. methodology is intended for the use of P.C.C.s with the assistance, where necessary, of their architect or surveyor and the D.A.C. (appendix 3, p.44). The guidance recommends only in the case of 'large and complex (appendix 3, p.44)' churches that the report should be compiled by a professional. As the P.C.C. are required to do the majority (if not all) the work for the S. of S., they have complete ownership of the document. The methodology enables the P.C.C. to gain a detailed understanding of their building through considering its setting, researching its history, describing and analysing its fabric and

contents, and considering how the building performs in its current form. Consequently the C. of E. methodology is potentially very strong in terms of community involvement, in so far as it is represented by the P.C.C.

However, certain aspects of the methodology require the P.C.C. to make value judgements, which in the secular conservation world would normally be made by those with a professional training. Principle 2 of English Heritage's *Conservation Principles* states 'Everyone should be able to participate in sustaining the historic environment'.⁷²⁷ This aspiration is followed by the caveat that participation should be 'by means that are accessible, inclusive and informed' and that experts should 'play a crucial role in discerning, communicating and sustaining the established values of places, and in helping people to refine and articulate the values they attach to places'.⁷²⁸

The P.C.C. can ask advice from their architect or surveyor and the D.A.C. but in reality they are required to do the bulk of the analysis of their building; making decisions about the relative value of historic fabric (for example if an unadorned medieval wall is of equal/less/more significance than an intricately carved Victorian pulpit) which an expert might find challenging. Consequently judgements could be made which the experts (the D.A.C.) could not support, compromising the whole value of the statement of significance. According to Arnstein's ladder the intention of the methodology accords with 'Citizen Power'. However, some elements of the methodology (those which require professional-levels of judgement from non-professional people) could be more accurately described as 'Tokenism'.

⁷²⁷ English Heritage. 'Conservation Principles Policy and Guidance' [Online] <http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/conservationprinciples> [31st October 2012] p. 20.

⁷²⁸ Ibid., p. 20.

The C.C.T. methodology is intended for the use of their own officers who are qualified in the field of building conservation. However the methodology does require the local community and users of the church to answer a series of questions in order to ascertain the building's communal value (appendix 7, pp.93-94). The C.C.T. approach achieves a high degree of public involvement in deciding what elements of the building are important to local people, how the building could be better used and what parts of the building should remain unchanged (appendix 7, p.94). The research into the history of the building and the detailing of its significant features, however, is carried out by a C.C.T. professional. As a result of this approach the public's contribution is inevitably less informed than had they been involved in the research process; as discussed above, this provides an understanding of the evolution of a building which can inform decisions on future management and potential change. However, the decision by the C.C.T. that the evaluation of identified values should be carried out by their own officers ensures that difficult decisions concerning relative significance and sensitivity are made by those professionally qualified to do so. According to Arnstein's ladder the C.C.T. method using consultation could be described as 'Tokenism'.

E.H. promote the practice of involving local people in the 'initial survey work' of appraisals.⁷²⁹ This initial survey data should then be incorporated into a full appraisal published on the local authority's website with feedback forms for the general public. The finished document then records how the community input was evaluated and taken into account.⁷³⁰ The ideal scenario suggested by E.H. involves the local community at the stage of initial research, enabling them to then make more informed suggestions about use and management. In reality, most appraisals are written by conservation officers with the public consulted once a draft report has been compiled. As a result the public feel less ownership

⁷²⁹ E.H., 'Understanding Place', p. 5.

⁷³⁰ Ibid., p. 6.

of the document and are more likely to consider the appraisal from a critical point of view and with the impression that something is being imposed on them.

If the ideal scenario of partnership the E.H. methodology proposes were followed it would demonstrate ‘Citizen power’ according to the Arnstein ladder . Frequently however, public engagement takes the form of consultation and then becomes an exercise in ‘Tokenism’.

Whilst the W. and B. methodology does not discuss who should carry out the research as part of its guidance on assessing significance, the book broaches the subject of community involvement when discussing the writing of a conservation plan. It suggests who should be consulted: stakeholders and interested parties, those who have documentary evidence and those with ‘memories and insights’.⁷³¹ They also make the statement ‘Involving people in decision making – as against merely informing them of decisions that have been made – is also one of the benchmarks of sustainability’.⁷³² Furthermore certain of the values for assessing significance identified by the W. and B. methodology require the input of the community such as Associational (appendix 9, p.127), Social (appendix 9, p.128), Symbolic/Iconic (appendix 9, p.129), Spiritual (appendix 9, p.129) and Inspirational (appendix 9, p.129).

Whilst the W. and B. methodology recognises the importance of public participation, this is confined to areas where the public are perceived as having something to offer: in the form of additional information and opinions about current and future use. The format does not suggest the public should be involved in information gathering, again excluding them from involvement in the research process and consequently making their input less informed. This level of public participation could most accurately be described as consultation, making the W. and B. approach closest to ‘Tokenism’.

⁷³¹ Worthing and Bond, 2008, p. 112.

⁷³² Ibid., p. 131.

Of all the methodologies, the C. of E. leads the way in community involvement. It could be argued, however, that the C. of E. have gone too far in asking lay people to make judgements only made in the secular world by professionals. The C. of E. requirement that the users of the building should carry out the research echoes the E.H. intention. This ensures the users of the building are well informed and this can then impact on their views on how the building is used and if change is viable. However, when it comes to determining the level of significance of the fabric lay people require guidance from a professional. The ideal methodology would take the form of a partnership between lay people carrying out the research and professionals assisting in the analysis of the material.

7.3.5.1 The 2014 C. of E. guidance for writing statements of significance

The 2014 C. of E. guidance, like the 2012 version, is still aimed at P.C.C.s. The format is now considerably simplified, as is some of the language in the guidance notes. However, ambiguous questions such as ‘What is the theological ‘message’ communicated by the interior and the exterior of the church?’ remain.⁷³³ In removing the sections on social history and significance for mission from the statement of significance, the new guidance prevents the community from assessing the significance of the church in terms of its communal value and use.

7.4 Analysis method 3

The third analysis method tests which of the four methodologies responds to the greatest number of the E.H. criteria for assessing significance (outlined in chapter 4, pp. 116-119) under the headings of the five research questions. This analysis like the quantitative method used above, also highlights those areas in which the C. of E. methodology does not currently engage.

⁷³³ Churchcare. ‘Statements of Significance and Need, 2014’, p. 5

For the first question ‘Does the report summarise the historical development of the church?’ the C. of E. methodology scored the highest number of responses – see Table 17.

Assessment criteria	C of E	CCT	EH	W&B
Understand the fabric and evolution of the place	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Relate identified heritage values to the fabric of the place		<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>
Assess the various phases of alteration to the site and their significance	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Consider the contribution of associated objects and collections	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	
Articulate the significance of the place	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Association with a nationally significant architect, designer or artist	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Association with a nationally significant patron, worshipper or cleric	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Architectural expression of distinctive or innovative liturgy or worshipping practice				
Significant memorials	<input type="checkbox"/>			<input type="checkbox"/>
Uncommon building materials or innovative construction	<input type="checkbox"/>			<input type="checkbox"/>
Early date	<input type="checkbox"/>			
	9	6	6	6

Blue – refers to E.H. ‘Assessing Heritage Significance’, *Conservation Principles Policy and Guidance*, (see appendix 5, pp. 56-66)

Red – refers to E.H. ‘Defining Significance’, *Informed Conservation*, (see appendix 5, p.56)

Purple – refers to E.H. ‘Summary of Selection Criteria’, *Places of Worship Selection Guide*, (see appendix 5, p.66)

Table 17 Table showing which of the four methodologies responds to the greatest number of the E.H. criteria for assessing significance for the research question ‘Does the report summarise the historical development of the church?’

The most significant omission in the C. of E. methodology was the identification of values, but as the narrative response to this question showed above an understanding of historical development can be successfully delivered without identifying values. The other missing criteria was ‘architectural expression of distinctiveness or innovative liturgy or worshipping practice’. It could be argued this point was covered under the ‘historical’ section of the

C.C.T. methodology⁷³⁴, under the ‘Spiritual and Religious’ value section of the W. and B. methodology⁷³⁵ and under the theme ‘1.7 Significance for Mission’⁷³⁶ in the C. of E. methodology, but none of the methodologies had the explicit requirement to link the fabric to liturgical practice. However it is recognised that these distinctions are of a subjective nature and other researchers could arrive at different conclusions. The consideration of a church as holding an ‘architectural expression of distinctiveness or innovative liturgy or worshipping practice’ is however very relevant to any full understanding of its significance, and as such this criteria should be specifically taken into account when an assessment of significance is carried out.

For the second question ‘Does the report identify the important features that make major contributions to the character of the church?’ the C. of E. methodology was joint highest scorer with the C.C.T. methodology – see Table 18.

⁷³⁴ A.o.S., Plymtree, pp. 97-98.

⁷³⁵ W. and B., Plymtree, p. 142.

⁷³⁶ S. of S., Plymtree, p. 84.

Assessment criteria	C. of E.	C.C.T.	E.H.	W.B.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assess the various phases of alteration to the site and their significance 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	In separate historic development
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understand the fabric and evolution of the place 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	In separate historic development
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Relate identified heritage values to the fabric of the place 		<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider the relative importance of those identified values 		<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider the contribution of associated objects and collections 	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Articulate the significance of the place 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Special interest in design and craftsmanship 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> High quality of architectural or artistic embellishment 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Association with a nationally significant architect, designer or artist 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Completeness of an architectural/decorative ensemble 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Significant memorials 	<input type="checkbox"/>			<input type="checkbox"/>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Early date 	<input type="checkbox"/>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rarity 		<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>
	10	10	5	9

Blue – refers to E.H. ‘Assessing Heritage Significance’, *Conservation Principles Policy and Guidance*, (see appendix 5, pp. 56-66)

Red – refers to E.H. ‘Defining Significance’, *Informed Conservation*, (see appendix 5, p.56)

Purple – refers to E.H. ‘Summary of Selection Criteria’, *Places of Worship Selection Guide*, (see appendix 5, p.66)

Table 18 Table showing which of the four methodologies responds to the greatest number of the E.H. criteria for assessing significance for the research question ‘Does the report identify the important features that make major contributions to the character of the church?’

Two of the three criteria not answered by the C. of E. methodology concern values: relating values to the fabric of the place and considering their relative importance. The narrative above discussed how, by not identifying values, the C. of E. methodology misses the intangible elements which contribute to the church’s character. The third missed

criteria 'rarity' relates to the issue of comparison also discussed above. Whilst the list description and Pevsner will inform on matters of national and regional rarity, in making no provision for comparing the church to others in the area the C. of E. methodology does not allow for local significance to be taken into account.

Interestingly, the narrative answer to this question placed the W. and B methodology as the most effective, whereas it scores less highly than the C. of E. and C.C.T. methodologies using the quantitative analysis. This is mainly explained by the W. and B. methodology not having the historic development separate from its assessment of significance criteria. It also illustrates the W. and B. methodology omission of age and rarity as one of its values. In contrast the list of values identified by Orbaşlı beings with 'Age and rarity value'.⁷³⁷

The C. of E. methodology has a low score in answering the next question 'Does the report explore the strengths and potential the church holds for worship and mission?' meeting only half of the six criteria – see Table 19.

⁷³⁷ Orbaşlı, A. *Architectural Conservation*, Oxford: Blackwell, 2008, p. 40.

Assessment criteria	C .of E.	C.C.T.	E.H.	W.B.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify any amenity or social values associated with the site, whether it be community, aesthetic, spiritual or created through public use or benefit 	0	0		0
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify who values the place, and why they do so 	0	0	0	0
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Relate identified heritage values to the fabric of the place 		0		0
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider the relative importance of those identified values 		0		0
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Articulate the significance of the place 	0	0	0	0
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Architectural expression of distinctive or innovative liturgy or worshipping practice 		0		
	3	6	2	5

Blue – refers to E.H. ‘Assessing Heritage Significance’, *Conservation Principles Policy and Guidance*, (see appendix 5, pp. 56-66)

Red – refers to E.H. ‘Defining Significance’, *Informed Conservation*, (see appendix 5, p.56)

Purple – refers to E.H. ‘Summary of Selection Criteria’, *Places of Worship Selection Guide*, (see appendix 5, p.66)

Table 19 Table showing which of the four methodologies responds to the greatest number of the E.H. criteria for assessing significance for the research question ‘Does the report explore the strengths and potential the church holds for worship and mission?’

This quantitative analysis reinforces the impression gained from the narrative response to this question; that the C. of E. methodology is effective in engaging with the public to discover who values the church, but less successful in relating this information to the actual fabric of the building. The identification of values and the relating of these values to the fabric, as practised in the C.C.T. and W. and B. methodologies, allows this connection to be made, as discussed above in the narrative response.

Unsurprisingly, for the fourth question ‘Would the report help those in the Faculty system to assess any plans for change?’ a large number of the E.H. criteria were considered relevant – see Table 20.

Assessment criteria	C. of E.	C.C.T.	E.H.	W.B.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • assess its importance in local, regional and national terms 				<input type="checkbox"/>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • assess the various phases of alteration to the site and their significance 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • identify any amenity or social values associated with the site, whether it be community, aesthetic, spiritual or created through public use or benefit 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand the fabric and evolution of the place 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relate identified heritage values to the fabric of the place 		<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider the relative importance of those identified values 		<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider the contribution of associated objects and collections 	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider the contribution made by setting and context 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Compare the place with other places sharing similar values 				<input type="checkbox"/>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Articulate the significance of the place 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Special interest in design and craftsmanship 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High quality of architectural or artistic embellishment 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Association with a nationally significant architect, designer or artist 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completeness of an architectural/decorative ensemble 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Architectural expression of distinctive or innovative liturgy or worshipping practice 		<input type="checkbox"/>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Significant memorials 	<input type="checkbox"/>			<input type="checkbox"/>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uncommon building materials or innovative construction 	<input type="checkbox"/>			<input type="checkbox"/>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Early date 	<input type="checkbox"/>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rarity 		<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>
	13	13	6	14

Blue – refers to E.H. ‘Assessing Heritage Significance’, *Conservation Principles Policy and Guidance*, (see appendix 5, pp. 56-66)

Red – refers to E.H. ‘Defining Significance’, *Informed Conservation*, (see appendix 5, p.56)

Purple – refers to E.H. ‘Summary of Selection Criteria’, *Places of Worship Selection Guide*, (see appendix 5, p.66)

Table 20 Table showing which of the four methodologies responds to the greatest number of the E.H. criteria for assessing significance for the research question ‘Would the report help those in the Faculty system to assess any plans for change?’

The C. of E. methodology answered the same number of criteria as the C.C.T. methodology and only one less than that of the W. and B. However, including the four criteria not currently covered by the C. of E. methodology would greatly enhance its usefulness in the faculty process. An understanding of: the local importance of the building and its features; the intangible elements of the church and its surroundings; the significance of its configuration in liturgical terms and the rarity of its fabric could all be highly relevant to the consideration of a faculty application.

For the final question ‘What is the nature of community involvement?’ only two E.H. criteria for assessing significance were relevant – see Table 21.

Assessment criteria	C. of E.	C.C.T.	E.H.	W.B.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify any amenity or social values associated with the site, whether it be community, aesthetic, spiritual or created through public use or benefit 	☐	☐	☐	☐
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify who values the place, and why they do so 	☐	☐	☐	☐
	2	2	2	2

Blue – refers to E.H. ‘Assessing Heritage Significance’, *Conservation Principles Policy and Guidance*, (see appendix 5, pp. 56-66)

Red – refers to E.H. ‘Defining Significance’, *Informed Conservation*, (see appendix 5, p.56)

Purple – refers to E.H. ‘Summary of Selection Criteria’, *Places of Worship Selection Guide*, (see appendix 5, p.66)

Table 21 Table showing which of the four methodologies responds to the greatest number of the E.H. criteria for assessing significance for the research question ‘What is the nature of community involvement?’

All the methodologies make some provision for community involvement. The real issue with community involvement however, as discussed above in the narrative answer to the question, is the nature of that involvement. The quantitative approach to assessing involvement in this instance is only useful for ascertaining whether community

involvement took place; it does not provide any information on the nature or effectiveness of that involvement.

7.5 Conclusion

By interrogating the data collected from the four methodologies through the three different methods of analysis the areas in which the effectiveness of the C. of E. methodology could be improved have emerged. The analysis identified those areas where the C. of E. methodology does not address certain issues regarding the assessment of significance, whilst at the same time suggesting successful approaches from the other methodologies. This information, along with the findings from the previous chapter where the initial analysis took place will be summarised in the next chapter along with suggestions for how the current C. of E. methodology could be improved.

Chapter 8.0

Reflections, conclusions and suggestions

8.1 Introduction

Analysis of the C. of E. methodology has shown it has great breadth (looking at the setting of the church including its natural heritage, place in the community and relationship with the surrounding historic fabric) and depth (a detailed analysis of the church interior and exterior). However, there are some areas in which it could be improved or modified. This chapter will begin by summarising those areas of the current C. of E. methodology which do not assess significance as successfully as the other three methodologies or meet the various E.H. criteria for assessing significance. This will be informed by the findings from the previous two chapters and will be considered in two parts: firstly looking at weaknesses in interpretation and delivery and secondly considering areas of omission. Once the weaknesses in the C. of E. methodology have been established solutions from the other methodologies will be suggested. Finally a format for a new methodology based on these findings will be suggested.

8.2 Weaknesses in the C. of E. methodology regarding interpretation and delivery

The degree of public involvement required by the C. of E. methodology, with all but the 'large and complex' church statements of significance written by non-professionals, has many positive benefits which will be discussed later in the chapter. However, there are also a number of drawbacks which the commentary on researching Plymtree church uncovered including issues surrounding: contradictory written evidence (p. 184); hearsay presented as fact (p. 185); missing information (p. 185); and recognition of earlier material inserted at a

later date (p. 186). Researchers may also encounter features whose significance could only be fully understood if their historical or local context is known. This is the type of knowledge a conservation officer or other heritage professional would possess, but is not necessarily available in some congregations. (The church's inspecting architect or surveyor would possess this knowledge, but potential issues of cost often deter congregations from seeking professional help.)

The C. of E. methodology frequently refers to 'significance', 'what is the significance of the natural heritage of the site?' 'What is the historic and present use of the church and churchyard by the congregation and the wider community? How does this contribute to its significance?' 'Assess the significance of ...each historical phase,' 'Provide a description of its contents and their significance', but with no definition of what is meant by the term. This word needs to be defined as it has come to have a very specific meaning in the field of conservation in the U.K. due to the almost universal adoption of the philosophy and guidance in the Burra Charter and E.H.'s *Conservation Principles*. Both publications include a definition of significance which are respectively

'Cultural significance means aesthetic, historic, scientific, social or spiritual value for past, present or future generations'⁷³⁸ and 'The sum of the cultural and natural heritage values of a place'.⁷³⁹ Both definitions assume that significance is the sum of identified values, with Burra also linking significance with culture. However, the C. of E. methodology is not formally values-based and therefore a definition of what it means by significance is required.

⁷³⁸ ICOMOS. 'The Australia ICOMOS Charter for Places of Cultural Significance, 1999 (Burra Charter) [Online] http://australia.icomos.org/wp-content/uploads/BURRA_CHARTER.pdf [30th September 2013], p. 2

⁷³⁹ English Heritage. 'Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance for the Sustainable Management of the Historic Environment' [Online] <http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/publications/conservation-principles-sustainable-management-historic-environment/conservationprinciplespoliciesguidanceapr08web.pdf> [10th October 2013], p. 72

The guidance produced by the C. of E. in June 2012 for writing church management plans does include a definition of significance

‘Significance is the whole set of reasons why people value a major church, whether as a place for worship and mission, as an historic building that is part of the national heritage, as a focus for the local community, as a familiar landmark or for any other reasons’.⁷⁴⁰

Management plans are a separate document to the statement of significance, only recommended for larger and more complex churches. Consequently this definition is not available to the users of statements of significance despite its equal pertinence for smaller churches. By including this definition at the beginning of the advice the C. of E. would inform the researcher as to exactly what type of information they were required to discover. It also introduces the concept that the building has many values that need to be revealed not just its qualities as an historic structure or its importance for holding services.

The 2014 C. of E. guidance does include a definition of a statement of significance, taken from the 2013 Faculty Jurisdiction Rules:

‘a document which describes the significance of the church or other building in terms of its special architectural and historic interest (including any contribution made by its setting) and any significant features of artistic or archaeological interest that the church or other building has so as to enable the potential impact of the proposals on its significance, and on any such features to be understood’.

However, in this definition significance is confined more to the material nature of the church and its surroundings, excluding consideration of the use value of the building recommended by the C. of E. 2012 guidance for church managements plans.

The term significance for the general public holds a wide range of meanings and so limiting the scope of the definition to those aspects which relate to its cultural values also assists the researchers by suggesting a targeted approach.

⁷⁴⁰ Churchcare. ‘Conservation Management Plans’ [Online] <http://www.churchcare.co.uk/images/CMPs.pdf> [8th April, 2014], p. 8.

Just as the C. of E. methodology refers to significance without defining what it means, the guidance also uses the term 'value' without a definition. Researchers are asked 'How does the setting of the church contribute to its landscape/townscape value' with no explanation as to what is meant by landscape/townscape value. Just as significance is a term which now carries a particular set of meanings in the conservation world, so too does value. According to the Burra Charter values, specifically 'aesthetic, historic, scientific, social or spiritual' are what define cultural significance.⁷⁴¹ For E.H. value is defined as 'an aspect of worth or importance, here attached by people to qualities of places'.⁷⁴² In both cases value is not used to describe something innate, but to express a response. This approach is now typical throughout the secular conservation world and means that in matters relating to conservation the word needs to be defined. Until the C. of E. provides a definition it is unclear what approach they intend their researchers to take. In asking the question 'How does the setting of the church contribute to its landscape/townscape value?' do they require the aesthetic, social, historic and spiritual aspects of the setting to be recorded and the ways in which they contribute to the landscape or townscape to be defined? Or is the question using 'value' in a pre-Burra context, merely requiring the researcher to state how the setting of the church impacts on its surrounding landscape/townscape? The lack of explanation of both significance and value suggests the C. of E. are using the words for their traditional meaning, but given the almost universal adoption of this terminology in the secular conservation world for values-based assessments of significance the C. of E. approach could potentially cause confusion. At present they appear to be adopting the terminology of the secular conservation world, but not the principles. Using more straightforward non Burra/*Conservation Principles* terms would prevent any confusion as to the type of information the C. of E. methodology requires.

⁷⁴¹ Burra Charter, 1999, p. 2.

⁷⁴² E.H., *Conservation Principles*, 2008, p. 72.

Researchers using the C. of E. methodology are required to make judgements about significance using a scale which refers to value (appendix 3, p.43): ‘Low-Moderate – of local value’, ‘Low – adds little or nothing to the value of a site or detracts from it.’⁷⁴³ No where is it stated how these values should be arrived at: for example advising a medieval screen be rated high and a Victorian pitch pine factory made bench be low. In reality, such advice could not be given as even a feature as apparently unquestionably significant as a medieval screen can have degrees of value, as illustrated by the screens in the churches surrounding Plymtree discussed in Chapter 6. It would be very difficult with guidelines alone to enable congregations to evaluate the historic fabric of their churches. As a consequence if this type of information is required the input of a skilled professional should be sought.

Given the non-professional nature of the writers of most C. of E. statements of significance (apart from those with input from the church architect or surveyor), the requirements for each section should be more clearly defined along with the reason for its inclusion. For example, the purpose of section 1.4 ‘The church building in general’ would be clearer if it were entitled ‘Provide a historic development of the church’ with the explanation: in order to understand how the church has evolved and developed over time, rather than the misleading ‘Provide a description of the church’. Similarly if section 1.5 were entitled ‘Surviving Historic Fabric’ the type of information required would be far more obvious than from its present title ‘The church building in detail’. At present the intention of this section is only really obvious when the requirement for the following section is read.

The additional guidance questions do not always appear to relate to the subject of the section, and in many cases more explicit guidance is needed as to what information is

⁷⁴³ Churchcare, Statements of Significance, 2012, p. 42

required. This issue is linked to the lack of definition of significance and value and the ambiguous section titles. If the C. of E. require non-specialists to write statements of significance the guidance and terminology should be as clear and as detailed as possible. In some cases information is requested that requires further research, but no guidance given as to how this can be undertaken. This is a particular issue surrounding the assessment of local significance which, as discussed in the previous chapters, requires other local churches to be visited, and guidance given on how comparisons should be made.

8.3 Areas of omission in the C. of E. methodology

The decision by the C. of E. not to use the identification of values as a means for assessing significance has a number of implications for the effectiveness of their methodology. As discussed in the previous chapter, several aspects of the building and its setting which were revealed by considering its various values remained hidden using the C. of E. methodology. The most significant of these values being: archaeological potential, the rarity of fabric and features, and the more intangible elements of the building's character. Identifying values is particularly successful at providing a comprehensive picture of all aspects of a building's character. Another advantage to using a values-based methodology is the relating of these values to the fabric of the building in order to understand its significance. In this way the building can suggest opportunities for change or enhancement by highlighting those areas which at present are of low significance. Without the identification of values aspects of the building's significance which are not physical, such as atmosphere, memory or ceremony would not be identified.

By not adopting a values-based approach the C. of E. methodology represents a disconnected framework for assessing the significance of the church: data about the physical nature of the building and its setting is collected; values are ascribed to the surviving fabric and fittings and suggestions are requested for possible change. At no point

in the methodology are links drawn between the various disparate elements and as a consequence when the final stage of the methodology is reached with the question concerning possible change there is no indication that the question should be answered with reference to all the information previously provided. Having completed the whole document the researchers should be well-informed to answer the question, but its connection with the previous stages of analysis should be stressed to avoid confusion.

One of the most significant omissions in the C. of E. methodology surrounds the consideration of the use of the building. There are several aspects to this issue: the E.H. listing selection criteria of an ‘architectural expression of distinctive or innovative liturgy or worshipping practice’; the current liturgical practice of the congregation; and any other non-liturgical uses. As discussed in Chapter 3, part of the significance of historic church buildings lies in their continued use for the purpose for which they were built. If the past and current uses of the church are fully understood this can inform future use without loss of the former’s significance. If however, the ways in which the church were previously used, and the impact this had on its fabric are not understood part of the building’s story can be lost or obscured. For example, one of the neighbouring churches to Plymtree, the church of St. Andrew, Cullompton is a medieval church reordered in the Victorian period with a new chancel reflecting the High church practices of the rector and his congregation – see Fig. 96.



Figure 96 The chancel at Cullompton church, reordered in the Victorian period (photograph, author)

The church in the modern period has not maintained a High church tradition and the high altar is no longer used. At some point the decision was made to use the chancel for informal seating, and this area to the east of the chancel screen, which was once of such great importance, has become an unresolved space whose significance has been severely compromised – see Fig. 97.



Figure 97 The significance of the chancel at Cullompton church has been compromised by its modern re-ordering (photograph, author)

In not acknowledging the significance of the church's Anglo-Catholic High church past, the contemporary interior represents an uncomfortable imposition of a new order to the detriment of the old. If the significance of the church's past liturgical practices was

recognised, a re-ordering scheme could have taken place which accommodated the form of worship required by the present congregation, whilst acknowledging the physical survival of former practices in an intelligible setting.

As the use of the building is undeniably its most significant feature as far as the congregation is concerned it is extremely important that this aspect is taken into account when assessing its significance. All the values-based methodologies would have revealed this information through the identification of the communal and historic values of the building. If the C. of E. continue to follow a non-values-based methodology it needs to specifically ask the questions 'how was the building used? How is it used now? How is this reflected in the surviving fabric?'

The next omission in the C. of E. methodology is one of procedure rather than content. The methodology acknowledges the importance of understanding local context in its section 1.4 'The church building in general', which includes the question 'How does work carried out on the church link to international, national, regional or local architectural and artistic movements?' However, as discussed in the previous chapter, discovering local context usually requires empirical research and at present no guidance is given as to how this should be carried out. Simply visiting surrounding churches could be very helpful, but doing so in a directed manner with specific points of comparison in mind such as date, materials, plan form, degree of Victorian intervention, features and detailing could add to the understanding of the church being assessed.

The C. of E methodology does not require any reference to the condition of the fabric. Most C. of E. parishes already have detailed information on the condition of their church in the form of the quinquennial inspection reports. At present these reports stand apart from the assessment of significance, and no requirement is made within the C. of E.

methodology for condition to be assessed. However, condition should form part of any assessment of significance as the poor state of repair of a feature inevitably impacts detrimentally on its significance.⁷⁴⁴ Linking the two documents, or using the information from the quinquennial report to inform the assessment of significance would strengthen the C. of E. methodology in this respect.

Although the C. of E. methodology does not use the identification of values to ascribe significance, it does use a system of evaluation to determine the significance of the fabric and contents of the church in sections 1.5 'The church building in detail' and 1.6 'Contents of the church'. The limitations of this system regarding the intangible qualities of the church and the ability of non-professionals to evaluate the fabric have already been discussed, but this approach does represent a thorough method for evaluating the individual elements of the building. The methodology (if used by a professional) could provide a comprehensive picture of the relative value of the church building and its contents. There is no provision, however, for the assessment of the relative sensitivity of the fabric and contents. As discussed in Chapter 6 assessing sensitivity is a key factor in informing any proposed changes to a church. As statements of significance form part of the C. of E. faculty process the current omission of this process in the methodology should be addressed.

The final area in which the C. of E. methodology does not assess significance as successfully as the other three or meet the E.H. criteria for assessing significance is the lack of a summary of significance. If the C. of E. had adopted a values-based methodology all the information collected regarding the church would be related back to the fabric before its level of significance was ascribed. In this way, the aspects of significance of the building would be automatically summarised. By not adopting this procedure the information

⁷⁴⁴ E.H., *Conservation Principles*, 2008, p. 52

collected for the various sections of the methodology are not incorporated into the rating of significance. Consequently the fabric and contents are evaluated, but not the setting, use, or the associational or historical values. Using values is not, however, the only solution for ensuring all aspects of significance are recognised and evaluated. By beginning with a summary of significance the E.H. conservation appraisal methodology defines the key elements which contribute to the significance of a conservation area, and a similar approach could be taken by the C. of E. In this way users of the statement of significance would be aware from the outset of the major factors, tangible and intangible, which contribute to the character of the church.

Without a summary of significance the C. of E. methodology represents a collection of information about the church and its setting with no suggestion of how this information should be used to inform its future management. This is a considerable omission given the role of statements of significance in the faculty system.

There is only a limited requirement in the C. of E. methodology to provide illustrative material, 'a ground plan and map of the local area and at least two photographs, normally one of the exterior, one of the interior'.⁷⁴⁵ Any single view of the exterior or interior will by necessity exclude some features making the current stipulation inadequate.

8.4 Potential improvements from the other methodologies

The C.C.T. methodology in its entirety, although very successful in identifying the significance and sensitivity of the church through the identification of values does not represent a credible alternative for the C. of E. as it was formulated for professionals and its completion requires conservation-specific skills. As most congregations would not be

⁷⁴⁵ Ibid., p. 42.

able to call upon conservation services within their own community the adoption of the C.C.T. methodology would have unwelcome financial implications unless the funds were available to involve the church architect or surveyor.

Elements of the C.C.T. methodology however could be incorporated into the current C. of E. methodology including: the consideration of archaeological potential; the study of the building as a resource for revealing the past lives of former parishioners and craftsmen; and the revealing of ways in which the building was formerly used. The summarising of information gathered and its subsequent reference to the surviving fabric could be a useful tool for managing change; suggesting areas of the church which have high significance where alteration would not be appropriate and those areas of low significance where change would be possible and even beneficial. The identifying of potential areas of tension and aspects which require further study would also be useful components of a statement of significance.

The C.of E could adopt the C.C.T. methodology's use of plans to record the areas of significance and sensitivity as visual material is an effective way of summarising data clearly and succinctly. In addition to the plans, the C.C.T.'s inclusion of photographic illustrations would enhance the effectiveness of the C. of E. methodology in the faculty process, by accurately informing the D.A.C. of the areas of the church to be affected.

The E.H. conservation appraisal methodology, although formulated for the use of conservation officers has greater accessibility for non-specialist users than that of the C.C.T. The methods and language in the E.H. guidance is more accessible as E.H. recognise the benefits of greater community participation in the creation of conservation

area appraisals and the designation of new conservation areas.⁷⁴⁶ Again full adoption of the methodology would not make sense as it was formulated to provide a broad-brush analysis of a large number of buildings and sites. However, there are elements of the methodology which could enhance that of the C. of E. The E.H. use of maps for providing information is, as described above, an effective method for conveying information. Illustrative material in the form of maps and plans could provide information on setting, date, surviving fabric and the recording of intangible elements.

The E.H. methodology offers an effective approach for identifying the less significant areas of a building. If the C. of E. continue to determine significance without the identification of values, the revealing of areas of weakness or low significance could be a useful strategy for determining where change could be appropriate. The accessibility of this approach has been observed by the researcher in liaising with the public through consultation exercises for conservation area appraisals in Cornwall in the form of exhibitions where the public were invited to look at draft appraisals, and through publishing the draft appraisals online requesting public feedback; the E.H. methodology's identification of problems and pressures and the consequent opportunities these issues sometimes presented were easily understood and engaged with. The E.H. methodology also suggests a format for summarising significance again suitable for a non-values-based methodology.

In addition to the identification of problem areas, the assessment of condition is another E.H. strategy which the C. of E. could usefully adopt to assist in the management of change; with the relevant information easily accessed through the already existing quinquennial inspection.

⁷⁴⁶ English Heritage. 'Understanding Place: Conservation Area Designation, Appraisal and Management' [Online] <http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/content/publications/publicationsNew/guidelines-standards/understanding-place-conservation-area/understanding-place-ca-designation-appraisal-management.pdf> [24 November 2012]

In the E.H. methodology the identification of local distinctiveness is one of the key elements in defining special interest or significance. As discussed above, a strategy for assessing this aspect of the church's significance is currently missing from the C. of E. methodology, but it would greatly benefit from its inclusion.

The E.H. methodology is particularly strong on linking built structures to their setting and the wider landscape. In this respect it could inform the C. of E. methodology which, apart from the ambiguous question of how the setting of the church contributes to its landscape value and the identification of significant views, concentrates on describing the immediate surroundings of the church. The significance of the church's wider setting is not fully explored in the current C. of E. guidance, or any relationship between the materials of the built structures in the churchyard, the church and the wider settlement.

In many respects the W. and B. methodology provides the same material for improving the C. of E. methodology as that of the C.C.T. However, it does offer additional elements including the identification of negative values, which like the E.H. identification of areas of weakness, can be a useful tool when considering change/alterations. The W. and B. methodology also advocates consideration of the sensory elements of the building, which could help the identification of some of the intangible elements currently missing from the C. of E. methodology.

Under the headings 'economic', 'educational' and 'recreational' values the W. and B. methodology encourages the consideration of wider uses of the church. This is currently not part of the C. of E. methodology, but potential additional uses should be considered part of a building's significance.

The W. and B. methodology promoted comparison with similar sites as part of its

methodology which is a useful exercise both for establishing levels of significance for the church being assessed, but also for the identification of local schools of craftsman, styles, detailing and approaches to materials. Although the W. and B. methodology did not propose guidelines on making this comparison, the E.H. document on measuring change in conservation areas could provide guidance for this assessment. In addition to the understanding of the significance of the study church, this exercise in local comparisons was very beneficial and the C. of E. methodology would be greatly enhanced by its inclusion.

8.5 The issue of values-based methodologies and public involvement

The C.C.T. methodology based on E.H.'s *Conservation Principles* is extremely effective in identifying areas where more research into the history of a church might be required and in providing an understanding of the heritage values, significance and sensitivity of the building which could then inform any proposals for adaptation and development. In this respect the methodology would form a very effective part of the faculty process. The W. and B. methodology would be similarly effective with its systematic identification of values, relative value, significance and sensitivity. However, relating identified heritage values to the church and considering the relative importance of those identified values requires specialist conservation knowledge.

The C. of E. are fully committed to the practice of using members of the congregation to write statements of significance.⁷⁴⁷ Their reasons for this are multiple and wide ranging: they are very aware of the issue of cost when commissioning a consultant, they believe

⁷⁴⁷ Elders, J. and Johncock, J. (Church Buildings Council) Personal Interview. 19th November, 2013, see Appendix 11, p. 173.

parishes who write their own statements of significance are left with a far greater knowledge of their building and they want the parish to be responsible for their churches and to become stakeholders. They believe through writing statements of significance the parish engages with the wider community; capturing sources of knowledge which might not exist within the worshipping congregation, and extending the mission of the church at the same time. The C. of E. are satisfied that, in the case of larger and more complicated buildings, the D.A.C. and the Church Buildings Council with their wide spectrum of expertise can be called on for advice and can fill any gaps in the statements of significance.⁷⁴⁸ Thus the C. of E. currently hold the view that any weaknesses in the current practice of requiring lay people to write statements of significance are outweighed by the gains.

The benefits of public involvement are recognised by E.H. who believe the current system allows members of the congregation to engage with their buildings, gives them a greater understanding of its history and development and enables them to engage with the D.A.C. and members of the heritage community from an informed position.⁷⁴⁹

In their determination to continue with community-led statements of significance, the C. of E. reflects the trend in the secular world of conservation, which has been growing ever since the publication of *Power of Place* in 2000, of the community becoming stakeholders in the historic environment. As a consequence, despite their effectiveness in assessing significance, the professionally orientated values-based methodologies of the C.C.T. and W. and B. do not at present represent a feasible solution for the C. of E. However, in its present form the research questions showed that although the C. of E.'s methodology led the way in empowering the public, it demanded a level of evaluative analysis most members of the public would not be able to provide.

⁷⁴⁸ Ibid., p. 173.

⁷⁴⁹ Evans, D. (English Heritage) Personal Interview. 18th November, 2013, see Appendix 1, pp. 4-6.

In order to meet the C. of E.'s desire for a high degree of community involvement without any loss of effectiveness through unrealistic expectations, the issue of evaluation in the current methodology needs to be addressed. In addition to the current advice on rating, the statement of significance should clearly state how evaluations should be formulated, whilst stressing the importance of seeking professional help if necessary.

8.6 Suggested new methodology for a C. of E. statement of significance

What follows is a description of a new methodology compiled by the researcher which aims to address the issues identified above which currently hamper the effectiveness of the C. of E. guidance for writing statements of significance. The new format will describe the various stages of analysis and guidance, indicating where pertinent influences from the other research methodologies. The full new methodology can be found in appendix 12, pp. 160-173. Table 22 below gives a summary of the contents of the different sections, and each of these sections will be discussed in detail below.

Section Title	Guidance
Historic development	Describe the history of the church. This should include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • any earlier buildings on the site • how the church has changed over time • any architects, artists and other craftsmen known to have been involved in its development. Record the phases of development on a phasing diagram and use another plan to indicate areas of archaeological potential
Setting and natural	Describe the setting of the church: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How does the church and its churchyard relate to the wider

heritage	<p>landscape – is it in the heart of the settlement or does it stand on a prominent site?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does the church and its setting feature in any major views or vistas within the settlement and its surroundings? • Are there any significant views looking out from the churchyard? • Describe the plan of the churchyard, its paths, boundaries, structures, gates, lighting, significant tombs and gravestones, including the use of materials. • Are there any archaeological remains? • Are adjacent buildings similar, complementary or contrasting in age, style, or materials? • Is the church or churchyard used by protected species or species with Biodiversity Action Plans? • How good a habitat is the churchyard for flora and fauna? • Are there any ancient, very prominent, rare or unusual trees? • How do the trees contribute to the setting of the church? • Are there any elements of the setting which are poorly managed or in a bad state of repair?
Past and present use	<p>The historic and present use of the church and churchyard.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describe briefly how the church is used for liturgy and any issues which arise from its present layout. • Describe any historic liturgical practices and use of the church, and any surviving elements of the fabric to which these relate (such as side altars, unused high altars, former communion tables, three-decker pulpits, reading desks etc.) • Describe any significant events or figures associated with the church such as benefactors, priests, local gentry or episodes in church history showing how these affected the choice of architect/artist, the incorporation of any monuments in the church or alterations to the fabric. • Describe any past non-liturgical uses of the church and churchyard and any associated physical remains. • Describe any current non-liturgical uses of the church and churchyard and any issues which arise from these activities. • Does the church and churchyard reveal any information about the past lives of the parishioners (such as the ironwork of a local blacksmith)? • Does the church and churchyard have a particular atmosphere? • Are there any particular areas of the church or churchyard which hold important local associations?
Surviving historic fabric	<p>Provide a description of the church fabric and architectural form.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Divide the church into areas such as chancel, nave, south aisle, tower, porch etc and describe the features (not the fixtures and fittings). Include : roof, walls (interior and exterior), windows (interior and exterior), ceilings, arcades, arches, floors etc. Include : date, style, materials, general condition and any significant sensory qualities (such as coloured light through a stained glass window or the atmosphere of prayer in a side chapel) as part of the description. • Describe the plan of the church, how it is lit and heated.

Contents	<p>Provide a description of the church's contents.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Move through the church from east to west describing all the fixtures and fittings. These will typically include : altars, reredos, sedilia, aumbry, altar rail, choir stalls, organ, wall monuments and tombs, wall paintings and panelling, screens, pulpit, lecterns, reading desks, pews, chests, tables, fonts, metalwork, plate, registers, bells and bell frame.
Summary of significance and sensitivity	<p>Make two copies of a plan of the churchyard and church, using your architect's floor plan as template for the building:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On the first plan use colour to indicate the areas of significance identified in the previous sections. • On the second plan using the same method indicate the areas of sensitivity. • Both plans should include the areas of archaeological potential, identified in the plan from the first section, as having high value. • Where the sections suggest different levels of significance/sensitivity for the same item use hatching to show the conflict of values.
Future management: potential for change and opportunities	<p>This section will consider how the church and churchyard can be managed in order to maintain and enhance their significance.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extract issues identified in the past and present use section regarding the liturgical and non-liturgical use of the church and churchyard. • List these issues next to the areas of the church or churchyard to which they relate. • Identify the sensitivity of the areas. • Areas or features of low sensitivity should be identified as areas to be considered for future change. • Revisit the evaluations from previous sections and extract the remaining areas, features or fabric identified as having low significance. • List these as potential areas for enhancement, repair, alteration, removal, tidying up etc. as appropriate. • Explore future opportunities to extend the economic, educational, or recreational use of the church.

Table 22 Outline of the format for the new methodology

8.6.1 New statement of significance - Introduction

As the statement of significance is to be completed by members of the public it is very important that the guidance is clear, explaining what information is required and why. It should begin with an introduction including a description of what a statement of significance is taken from the Faculty Jurisdiction Rules 'a document which summarises the

historical development of the church and identifies the important features that make major contributions to the character of the church', and a definition of what is meant by the term significance taken from the C. of E. guidance for church management plans: 'Significance is the whole set of reasons why people value a major church, whether as a place for worship and mission, as an historic building that is part of the national heritage, as a focus for the local community, as a familiar landmark or for any other reasons'(appendix 12, p.160).

The several roles of the statement of significance should then be explained: to provide the parish with an understanding of the history and evolution of their church; a means for exploring the strengths and potential that the church holds for worship and mission and a tool for managing change by identifying those areas of the building and setting which would be sensitive to change and those areas where change would be appropriate (see appendix 12, p.160).

The introduction should also suggest the type of information the statement of significance could include in its various sections: the historic development of the church including past associations; its setting and natural heritage; past and present use; a description of the surviving historic fabric; a description of the contents and suggestions for any future changes or alterations (appendix 12, p.160). It should also explain that some sections will require a degree of evaluation in order to identify areas or features of particular significance and sensitivity which would deserve protection and those of low significance or sensitivity where change or alteration might be beneficial (appendix 12,pp.160-161).

The introduction should then explain how this evaluation should be made, stressing the complexities of this process and the potential requirement for advice from the D.A.C., church architect or surveyor, or the C.B.C. The C. of E.'s current terminology for

evaluating significance is used, but the definition of moderate significance has been rewritten to make it more relevant (appendix 12, p.161). In addition the category of negative significance suggested by the W. and B. methodology has also been included (appendix 12, p.161).

Strategies for ascribing these values are then suggested: the three highest values 'high', 'moderate-high' and 'moderate' will most often be ascribed to those features of the church and setting of an early date or great architectural or historic merit; they will generally be the features singled out for favourable comment in the listing description and Pevsner (appendix 12, p. 161). In order to decide local value the guidance will suggest members of the parish visit five or more surrounding churches to identify whether the date, plan, materials, decorative features and amount of restoration of their own church is typical of the area or unusual. This will then assist them in the ascribing of 'moderate' or 'low-moderate' values. The guidance will suggest 'Low' values should be ascribed to those features that have been recently installed that have no aesthetic or architectural significance and 'Negative' value should be ascribed to features which detract from or obscure surrounding historic features (appendix 12, p.161).

The guidance will then require the same features to be evaluated to determine their 'sensitivity' noting this assessment may produce different results to the significance assessment, reflecting the varying robustness of some features which, whilst of high or moderate significance, could accommodate change without compromising their character (appendix 12, p.162).

Guidance will also be given on evaluating sensitivity based on the terminology quoted in the W. and B. methodology (appendix 12, p.162). Again the guidance will stress the difficulty in making this evaluation and suggest advice be sought from the church architect

or surveyor, D.A.C. or C.B.C. if necessary.

In the final part of the introduction information should be provided on how to research the building. In addition to the standard information currently suggested by the C. of E. each diocese should provide information on local record offices, museums, libraries, study centres and historic building websites, in addition to listing entries, county or regional books which could be of relevance. The advice should also recommend the Council for British Archaeology's glossary for recording a church⁷⁵⁰ and the National Association of Decorative and Fine Art Societies' (N.A.D.F.A.S.) guide to church furnishings,⁷⁵¹ to assist in the description and recording of the historic fabric and contents.

Guidance should then be given on the problems and issues the parish may encounter with some of the research material. This should refer to the types of problems and make suggestions for how they could be overcome (appendix 12, pp. 163-164). For example contradictory written evidence and hearsay presented as fact could be definitively proved or disproved by primary source material, but if this does not exist the information should be presented as uncertain. The guidance should recommend the parish contact their architect or surveyor, D.A.C. secretary or historic buildings advisor if major problems are encountered in their research or with any other aspect of completing the statement of significance.

8.6.2 New statement of significance - Basic Facts

The next section 'Basic Facts' should follow the existing format from the C. of E. methodology (appendix 12, pp.164-165).

8.6.3 New statement of significance - Historic Development

After the basic facts have been gathered the parish should then provide a historic

⁷⁵⁰ Cocke, T., Findlay, D., Halsey, R. and Williamson, E. *Recording a church: an illustrated glossary*, 3rd Edition, York: Council for British Archaeology, 2009.

⁷⁵¹ N.A.D.F.A.S. *Inside Churches A Guide to Church Furnishings*, 3rd Edition, London: N.A.D.F.A.S., 2001.

development of the church (appendix 12, p.165). The analysis of the different methodologies showed the usefulness of a detailed historic development in describing the evolution of the building, revealing areas of archaeological potential and identifying those elements of the fabric which may have been inserted from other buildings.

The guidance will begin by stating the purpose of historic development: to describe the history of the church in order to give an understanding of its evolution, how it has changed over time and what elements of former phases have been lost or obscured. This should include information on any earlier buildings on the site, how the church has changed over time and any architects, artists and other craftsmen known to have been involved in its development. The various phases of work should be recorded on an historic development plan which could be based on the plan drawn by the church architect (with permission) for the quinquennial report. This section should also include a plan of the areas of the church which might have potential archaeological interest. To complete this section the parish will be advised to consult the Historic Environment Record (H.E.R.) and include features of the church revealed in the historic development research which are no longer visible.

8.6.4 New statement of significance - Setting of the Church

In the next section the setting of the church is considered (appendix 12, pp.165-166). The section begins by explaining the purpose of the analysis: to understand how the churchyard relates to the wider landscape setting and to the church itself, and to identify any elements of the churchyard whether natural or built which are of particular importance and worthy of protection. The section is divided into two parts with the various different aspects of the setting analysed in the first part and an evaluation of the significance and sensitivity of these features given in the second.

8.6.4.1 Part 1

The guidance for the first part includes some of the questions from the C. of E. methodology from section 1.1 ‘Setting of the church’ and section 1.2 ‘The living churchyard’. The decision was made to combine these two sections as they are inter-related and treating them as two separate entities risks false distinctions being made. For example, rather than considering a tree in terms of its age and habitat potential and then separately for its aesthetic/architectural qualities, it makes more sense to consider the overall significance of the tree. The language has been simplified to make the requirements less ambiguous and the word significance is used simply as a term for defining importance with no reference to values. This part also includes the E.H. methodology’s approach to considering the wider setting in terms of the siting of the church and in the significance of the building in long-range views.

Part 1 begins with a series of questions considering the churchyard from a distance: ‘is it in the heart of the settlement or does it stand on a prominent site? Does the church and its setting feature in any major views or vistas within the settlement and its surroundings? Are there any significant views looking out from the churchyard?’ The actual nature of the churchyard itself is then explored with the following guidance: ‘Describe the plan of the churchyard, its paths boundaries, structures, gates, lighting, significant tombs and gravestones, including the type of materials used. Are there any archaeological remains? Are adjacent buildings similar, complementary or contrasting in age, style, or materials? Is the church or churchyard used by protected species or species with Biodiversity Action Plans? How good a habitat is the churchyard for flora and fauna? Is there any rare plant life or lichen? Are there any ancient, very prominent, rare or unusual trees? How do the trees contribute to the setting of the church?’ How well is the churchyard maintained?

8.6.4.2 Part 2

The second part is designed to allow the parish to state which elements of the church’s setting, whether natural or built, are of particular importance and worthy of protection.

They are advised to use the terminology and criteria for rating significance and sensitivity included in the introduction. The intention of part 2 is to produce a list of features such as views, gates, trees, wildlife, tombs etc. with a rating of their significance and sensitivity. This list then provides an indicator of what should be taken into account if development were proposed, and also presents potential opportunities for enhancement or alteration. For example, a medieval preaching cross in its original location would be rated of high significance and sensitivity indicating any proposals for its removal or alteration would be inappropriate. By contrast a 20th century shed in poor condition rated of negative significance and low sensitivity would present an opportunity to enhance the churchyard by its removal. This approach, which is also adopted for the evaluations in the following three sections, incorporates the C.C.T. and W. and B. methodology's identification of features of significance and sensitivity, but using the E.H. methodology's approach of identifying strengths and weaknesses, rather than the more complicated ascribing of values (appendix 12, p. 166).

8.6.5 New statement of significance - Past and present use of the church

The next section looks at the historic and present use of the church and churchyard and begins by explaining its intention: to understand how the past use of the church and setting has impacted on their present form and any issues the building presents for its current use (appendix 12, pp. 166-167). This section incorporates elements of section 1.3 'Social History' from the C. of E. methodology, which concentrated on past events and personalities associated with the church. It also includes elements from the other methodologies, the E.H. guidelines for defining significance and the consideration of use value discussed in Chapter 3.

8.6.5.1 Part 1

This section is divided into two parts: the first describes the uses past and present of the building and churchyard and their impact on its fabric; the second part evaluates the elements identified as reflecting the uses of the church and churchyard. In part 1 the parish

are asked to describe briefly how the church is used for the liturgy, and any issues arising from the present layout. The guidance then asks for: a description of any historic liturgical practices and uses of the church which can be still read in the surviving fabric; any significant events or figures associated with the church such as benefactors, priests, local gentry or episodes in church history showing how these affected the choice of architect/artist, the incorporation of any monuments in the church or alterations to the fabric; information on any past non-liturgical uses of the church and churchyard and any associated physical remains; any current non-liturgical uses of the church and churchyard and any issues which arise from these activities; any aspects of the church and churchyard which reveal information about the past lives of the parishioners; whether the church and churchyard have a particular atmosphere; any particular areas of the church or churchyard which hold important local associations.

8.6.5.2 Part 2

Part 2 is designed to determine which of those elements of the church and churchyard which reflect past and present use are of particular significance and worthy of protection, and those aspects which might be detrimental to the character of the church and its setting. Again the parish are directed to use the terminology and criteria from the introduction to rate the significance and sensitivity of these elements. The intention of part 2 is to identify the tangible and intangible elements of the church and churchyard which should be protected; such as an area of the churchyard which has traditionally been used for the Maypole, or a side chapel which has a particularly quiet atmosphere. This section should also identify those aspects which are detrimental to the character and inhibit its present use, such as poor quality, standard-designed, fixed Victorian pews which prevent the nave being used for secular activities.

The next two sections, 6 and 7, will look in detail at the surviving historic fabric considering both its material and less tangible qualities. In some respects the format

follows the C. of E. methodology considering first the structural elements of the building and then its contents. However, the format will incorporate those elements identified as missing by the research question ‘Does the report identify the important features that make major contributions to the character of the church?’: specifically guidance on evaluation; considering the intangible qualities and the question of condition.

8.6.6 New statement of significance - Surviving Historic Fabric

For the first of the two descriptive sections (the architectural components of the church) initial analysis of the C. of E. methodology indicated more detailed results were achieved by considering the church by area, rather than historical phase and so this approach was adopted for the new format. In addition the section from the E.H. methodology ‘Architectural Quality and Built Form’ influenced the systematic listing of each element within the area (appendix 12, p.168).

8.6.6.1 Part 1

The first section ‘Surviving historic fabric’ is divided into two parts: the first describes the surviving architectural features; in the second the features are evaluated in terms of their significance and sensitivity. The guidance recommends the parish divide the church into areas such as chancel, nave, south aisle, tower, porch etc and comprehensively describe the features of each. It recommends each description should include information on the date, style and materials whilst noting general condition and any significant sensory qualities (such as coloured light through a stained glass window or the atmosphere of prayer in a side chapel). Finally the plan of the church should be described along with information on how it is lit and heated. The guidance suggests the parish refer to the Council for British Archaeology’s glossary⁷⁵² for help with terminology.

8.6.6.1 Part 2

In part 2 the architectural components of the church (including its lighting/heating and

⁷⁵² Cocke, Findlay, Halsey and Williamson, 2009.

engineering features) are evaluated in order to determine which elements are of particular importance and worthy of protection and those which might detract from the character of the building. The parish are directed to use the terminology and criteria from the introduction to rate the significance and sensitivity of the features including any sensory elements or condition issues. This evaluation will indicate the relative significance of the different elements of the fabric in terms of their architectural quality, age, materials and condition informed by the sensory contribution they make to the church. It will indicate those areas whose significance might be currently compromised, such as a medieval wall with poorly designed modern heaters, whilst also identifying those areas of the church which, although historically and architecturally significant, are robust and whose significance would not be compromised by certain works. For example, the insertion of a glass partition onto a robust medieval stone wall (appendix 12, p.169).

8.6.7 New statement of significance - Contents of the Church

The second of the descriptive sections, Section 7, deals with the contents of the church or its fixtures and fittings. The C. of E. methodology suggested a detailed approach to describing the church contents which has been adopted for the revised methodology and expanded (appendix 12, pp.169-170). Like the previous section concerning the fabric, this section is divided into two parts describing the contents and then evaluating them in terms of their significance and sensitivity.

8.6.7.1 Part 1

In the first part the list of suggested items from the C of E. methodology has been lengthened and a more systematic approach to their identification suggested. Guidance is given on what aspects of the contents to include in the description: date, style, materials, any sensory response (if appropriate), information on whether the feature is in its original position (if known) and a comment on condition. It is also recommends noting whether the fittings form part of a scheme, such as 18th century pews, pulpit and lectern, as this

would add to their significance. The N.A.D.F.A.S. guide to church furnishings is recommended for assistance in the correct use of terminology.⁷⁵³

8.6.7.2 Part 2

The C. of E. methodology asked for the contents to be rated in terms of their significance, but without any guidance as to how this should be achieved. In part 2 the evaluation of the contents refers to the advice on evaluation included in the introduction. It also gives examples of how this evaluation should be approached such as an 18th century pulpit rated of moderate significance and low sensitivity as it had been moved and altered (appendix 12, p.170).

In adopting, albeit in a modified form, the C. of E. approach for describing the building and contents the issue of the parish making evaluative judgments still remains. It is mitigated, however, by the guidance in the introduction, the examples at the end of both descriptive sections and the advice to seek help from their architect, surveyor or D.A.C. if the parish encounters difficulties in deciding the significance or sensitivity of any of the features.

8.6.8 New statement of significance - Summary of Significance and Sensitivity

The analysis of the different methodologies indicated the importance of summarising the significance of a building and its setting for a holistic understanding of all aspects of their value. At present the C. of E. methodology makes no provision for such a summary, and as a consequence the various elements of significance identified in the different sections remain as separate lists of information with no concept of how they might relate to each other or inform the future management of the church. The new methodology recommends a visual representation of the evaluations formed in the previous sections based on the C.C.T. methodology's significance and sensitivity plans (Figs. 79 and 80 in Chapter 6). The

⁷⁵³ N.A.D.F.A.S., 2001.

new methodology recommends the plans should take the form of a drawing of the churchyard with the church shown as an approximate floor plan or be based on the architect or surveyor's quinquennial inspection floor plan of the church with the outline of the churchyard drawn around it. On the first plan different colours should be used to indicate the different values of significance identified in the previous sections and on the second plan the different values of sensitivity shown in the same way. Both plans should include the areas of potential archaeological interest (indicated in the plan from the first section) as having high value. Where the sections suggest conflicting values these should be indicated by hatching. Such a conflict could occur, for example, where the section 'past and present use' indicated a side chapel with a high value of sensitivity due to its sense of quiet, whereas the surviving historic fabric and contents sections both indicate low sensitivity as the chapel was constructed in the mid- 20th century by an undistinguished architect and included no historic fixtures or fittings (appendix 12, p.171).

8.6.9 New statement of significance - Future management: potential for change and opportunities

Finally, the revised methodology will draw together the issues and evaluations identified in the report to suggest how the church and churchyard should be managed in order to maintain and enhance their significance. This section will draw on the E.H. methodology's 'plan for further action' which identifies problems, pressures and threats before suggesting opportunities for their solution (appendix 8, p.124). It will also adopt the C.C.T. methodology's identification of sensitivity to inform any plans for adaptation or development (appendix 7, pp.98-99). Lastly, it will incorporate the consideration of economic, educational and recreational values recommended in the W. and B. methodology⁷⁵⁴ as a means for 're-establishing the church as part of the community,

⁷⁵⁴ W. and B., 2008, pp. 65-6.

including capturing sources of knowledge which might not exist within the worshipping congregation'; one of the stated aims of the C.B.C. for their statements of significance.⁷⁵⁵

The section begins by asking the parish to extract the issues identified in the section regarding the liturgical and non-liturgical use of the church and churchyard and to put them in a table. Next to the issue the area of the church or churchyard to which the issue relates is listed and then in an adjacent column the sensitivity of that area is shown (appendix 12, p.172). Those parts of the church identified as having low sensitivity should then be considered as possible candidates for change, areas of moderate sensitivity change should only be considered under very specific circumstances, and those areas of high sensitivity should be considered as inappropriate for change. For example, book rests on pews identified as having low sensitivity could be considered for alteration, whilst change would be inappropriate for a medieval screen which, although it obscures the view of the high altar, was identified as having high sensitivity.

Once the identified issues have been addressed the parish are asked to revisit those remaining areas of the church and churchyard identified in previous sections as having low significance. These areas should be listed as potential areas for enhancement, repair, alteration, removal, tidying up etc. as appropriate (appendix 12, p.172). For example the demolition of a shed which has become dilapidated, the expert removal of inappropriate 20th century paintwork from arcade capitals or the more appropriate siting of unsightly public address speakers in a less sensitive location etc.

The new methodology ends by exploring any future opportunities to extend the economic, educational, or recreational use of the church (appendix 12, p.172). It recommends the parish base any suggestions for potential extended use on the research they have already

⁷⁵⁵ Elders and Johncock, 2013, Appendix 11, p. 173.

carried out. For example, any area of the church's history that is at present unclear could prompt a collaboration with local history groups or genealogists to carry out further research, local schools could become involved in a project to record the inscriptions on the gravestones which could assist in their understanding of local history, and the assistance of N.A.D.F.A.S. could be sought to carry out a detailed survey of the church's contents.

8.7 Issues not addressed by the new methodology

As explained earlier, the C. of E. methodology used for this study has been recently superseded by a new shortened and simplified version produced by the C.B.C. in January 2014 in response to public feedback.⁷⁵⁶ The new version includes three sections: a brief history and description of the church, its contents, churchyard and setting; an assessment of the church building, contents and churchyard's significance in terms of their architectural and historical interest and their artistic or archaeological interest; and an assessment of the impact of the proposed changes on that significance. In the new version, the issue of requiring lay people to carry out evaluative assessments without detailed guidance still remains and the new format, having lost the sections on 'social history' and 'significance for mission', has moved even further away from linking the use of the building to a strategy for its future management. The January 2014 document is closer in intention to an impact assessment than an assessment of significance.

As the January 2014 document has not addressed many of the issues raised in this study and a version of the 2011 guidance is still used by the C. of E. for churches where 'major complex projects' are proposed,⁷⁵⁷ the recommendations made for a revised methodology still apply in terms of both theory and practice.

⁷⁵⁶ Churchcare. 'Statements of Significance and Need' [Online] <http://www.churchcare.co.uk/churches/guidance-advice/statements-of-significance-need> [11th February 2014]

⁷⁵⁷ Ibid.

An issue not raised by this study, but one with which English Heritage are particularly concerned, is the question of when statements of significance should be written.⁷⁵⁸ At present they are only prepared when parishes are applying for a faculty and so inevitably there is a risk they are influenced by what the parish wish to do. If a scheme were proposed for the removal of pews it would require a very disciplined parish not to underplay the significance of the pews in question. The C. of E. share some of E. H.'s concerns, which they hope will be addressed by the creation of an H.E.R., for which they have recently received funding from E.H. As parishes produce statements of significance the C.B.C. intend to capture the information provided within the newly created H.E.R. which will then form a baseline resource for further research.⁷⁵⁹ However, an H.E.R. and the type of information requested by the new format for the statements of significance will result in a database of information about the physical nature of the building and its setting rather than an assessment of all its values including the intangible ones.

If parishes were encouraged to write assessments of significance regardless of whether they intended to alter the fabric (in the same way that conservation area appraisals are currently written, separately from any planning issues) this would produce unbiased documents and also allow plans for the future to be informed by the identified character of the building and its setting.

Having formulated a new methodology the next step would be to test it by asking a number of different parishes to complete the new statement of significance and to compare the results. To analyse this comparison effectively (including problems with understanding and delivery) would require specialist knowledge on public engagement and might be more successfully conducted with input from sociologists. It is therefore felt this

⁷⁵⁸ Evans, D, 2013, Appendix 1, p. 7.

⁷⁵⁹ Elders and Johncock, 2013, Appendix 11, p. 172.

next stage of analysis lies beyond the scope of this research project.

8.8 Conclusion

In this chapter a new methodology was compiled for writing a statement of significance which sought to rectify the omissions and weaknesses in delivery present in the current C. of E. methodology and to incorporate the identified strengths from the other methodologies.

9.0 Conclusion

The C. of E. are the guardians of one of the most significant portfolios of historic buildings in the U.K.; of their 16,000 church buildings, 12,000 are listed and half of these are grade II* or grade I.⁷⁶⁰ They are not only faced with managing a considerable number of listed buildings with the attendant concerns of maintenance and statutory protection, but with ensuring these buildings (some of which can be up to 1,000 years old) continue to provide an environment sympathetic to the requirements of the worshipping congregation; in this respect the issue of C. of E. historic churches represents a considerable conservation challenge.

Developments in conservation philosophy over recent years have been of particular relevance for historic churches; the concept of preservation with its related assumption that

⁷⁶⁰ Cooper, T. *How do we keep our Parish Churches?* London: The Ecclesiological Society, 2004, p. 16.

a building's stylistic development has a finite moment after which modern intervention should take place only in the form of like-for-like repair no longer represents the normative position. The paradigm shift towards valuing buildings subjectively as representations of human experience rather than objectively as items of innate worth is especially helpful when considering historic churches. The practice of understanding the significance of a building through identifying the values it holds includes the consideration of the use of a building not only historically, but also in contemporary life. This broadening in understanding of a building's significance allows for the appreciation of its former roles, whilst acknowledging the physical representation of these past stories is only part of a continuum whose further development should be acknowledged and facilitated.

Contemporary modern conservation philosophy, therefore, has developed a system whereby historic buildings can be appraised in such a way that their historic integrity is maintained without preventing their future development. By following the E.H. *Conservation Principles* the evidential, historical and aesthetic value of churches could be explored whilst at the same time considering the significance of the church in terms of its past and present use. Any future development of the church would take place without these values being compromised and ideally allow for them to be enhanced.

Values-based conservation, however, is largely dependent on a professional knowledge of building conservation. The requirement for professional assessments of significance is strongly resisted by the C. of E. on economic and pastoral grounds. This stance has resulted in the C. of E. creating its own methodology for the assessment of significance for its historic churches. However, despite rejecting the system of identifying significance through the consideration of values there are still aspects of the C. of E. methodology which demand professional levels of judgement from the general public; specifically the comparative evaluation of the historic fabric.

By adopting a more traditional approach to appraising a building, mainly based on consideration of its physical characteristics, the C. of E. methodology makes no provision for the assessment of its intangible qualities; one of the key advantages of the values-based methodologies. This is of particular concern in the case of historic churches whose numinous atmosphere and symbolic qualities single them out as unique amongst other historic building types.

The C. of E.'s approach to public involvement accords with the objectives of the previous and current Governments. In addition, it represents a far more democratic approach to historic building appraisal than the that currently followed by the secular heritage world, avoiding the tendency, identified by Critical Heritage Studies, of the A.H.D. which 'may work to exclude the historical, cultural and social experiences of a range of groups....to constrain and limit their critique..... by privileging the expert and their values over those of the non-expert'.⁷⁶¹ The challenge then was to create a methodology for assessing the significance of historic churches which allows for the identification of all their qualities to inform their future management and development, whilst at the same time offering a clear and systematic approach which could be followed by non-professionals.

By comparing the C. of E. methodology with three other methodologies for assessing significance its weaknesses in terms of content and deliverability were identified along with strengths from the other approaches. A new methodology was then created based upon these findings aimed at enabling a wide audience to complete the assessment successfully through: clearly stating the purpose of the document; advising how to undertake research; highlighting potential pitfalls and using transparent and unambiguous language. Whilst acknowledging a lay audience might not be comfortable using values to identify and

⁷⁶¹ Smith, L. *Uses of Heritage*, London: Routledge, 2006, p. 30

evaluate significance, the new methodology presented an alternative approach based on the identification of character which could then be evaluated to indicate significance and sensitivity. This approach allows for the intangible aspects of the church's character, the significance of its former and present use, its immediate and wider setting, along with the more traditional aspects of historic building appraisal such as architectural merit and historic importance to be taken into consideration in a more accessible form than the E.H. professionally-orientated method outlined in *Conservation Principles*.

Consequently, the new methodology allows the users of the church to make decisions about the future of their building based on a thorough understanding of its significance. The approach allows the church and its surroundings to suggest ways in which it could be enhanced and adapted, whilst also indicating those elements of such high significance and sensitivity that any change would be inappropriate.

Although developed for determining the significance of historic churches the new methodology could easily be transferrable to other historic building types: the consideration of past and present use applies equally to buildings whose function has changed over time and although many historic buildings do not retain their original furnishings the section on contents could apply to any surviving historic fixtures and fittings.

The new methodology appears lengthier than the current C. of E. guidance, but this is mainly due to the amount of preliminary advice and guidance; in terms of sections to be completed, there is only one element additional to the C. of E. format. The thoroughness of the document is justified by the merit of so many church buildings but, as with the requirement for assessing the significance of listed buildings in the secular world, the

amount of detail required should be ‘proportionate to the relative importance of the asset’.⁷⁶²

Ideally, all churches would have a statement of significance in the same way they have a quinquennial inspection report. The two reports could be combined into one document; this would prompt a revisiting of the statement every five years allowing for it to be updated to reflect any alterations to the fabric, any additional information about the church which may have been uncovered in the intervening years and any change in approach amongst the congregation. By aligning the statement of significance with the condition survey, rather than with a faculty application, any tendency towards weighting the document in favour of proposed works would be removed.

One of the findings of this study has been the key role played by the general public both historically and in the contemporary world in the development, upkeep and maintenance of church buildings. Churches are truly democratic, community buildings and the revised statement of significance recognises this both in the accessibility of its approach and in its acknowledgement that past and present use contribute to the building’s significance. This recognition could help inform the wider community that churches are not simply works of historic architecture to be visited passively in the same way as a National Trust stately home (although their architectural merit is of course part of their significance as the new statement of significance shows). In considering past and present use the whole community could be encouraged to engage with their local church which would lead to a greater sense of community ownership. This in turn could encourage wider use of the church with potential economic benefits for the building.

⁷⁶² Department for Communities and Local Government, Department for Culture Media and Sport and English Heritage, ‘PPS5: Planning for the Historic Environment: Historic Environment Planning Practice Guide’ [Online] <http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/publications/pps-practice-guide/pps5practiceguide.pdf> [12th October 2013] p.8.

By effectively assessing the significance of the church by the method proposed in this thesis the material, cultural, spiritual and social value of the building would be better appreciated and as a consequence better maintained; in this way the requirements of both the conservation world and the C. of E. could be met. The new methodology meets the aims of the virtuous circle described by E.H.'s Chief Executive, Simon Thurley: 'If people understand their building, they will value it; by valuing it they will want to look after it; in caring for it, they will help others to enjoy it. From enjoyment of the historic environment comes a greater thirst to understand it and the circle begins again',⁷⁶³ and allows for the vision of the Bishop of London, Chairman of the Church of England Cathedral and Church Buildings Division and the Church Heritage Forum: 'It is vital that we both value the huge achievements of previous generations, celebrate the work of countless volunteers and in contemporary circumstances look at how we can make common cause with other stakeholders potential or actual in securing the future of such an important community asset, the supreme treasury of the English vernacular art and memory'.⁷⁶⁴

⁷⁶³ Cooper, 2004, p. 9

⁷⁶⁴ Ibid., p. 6.

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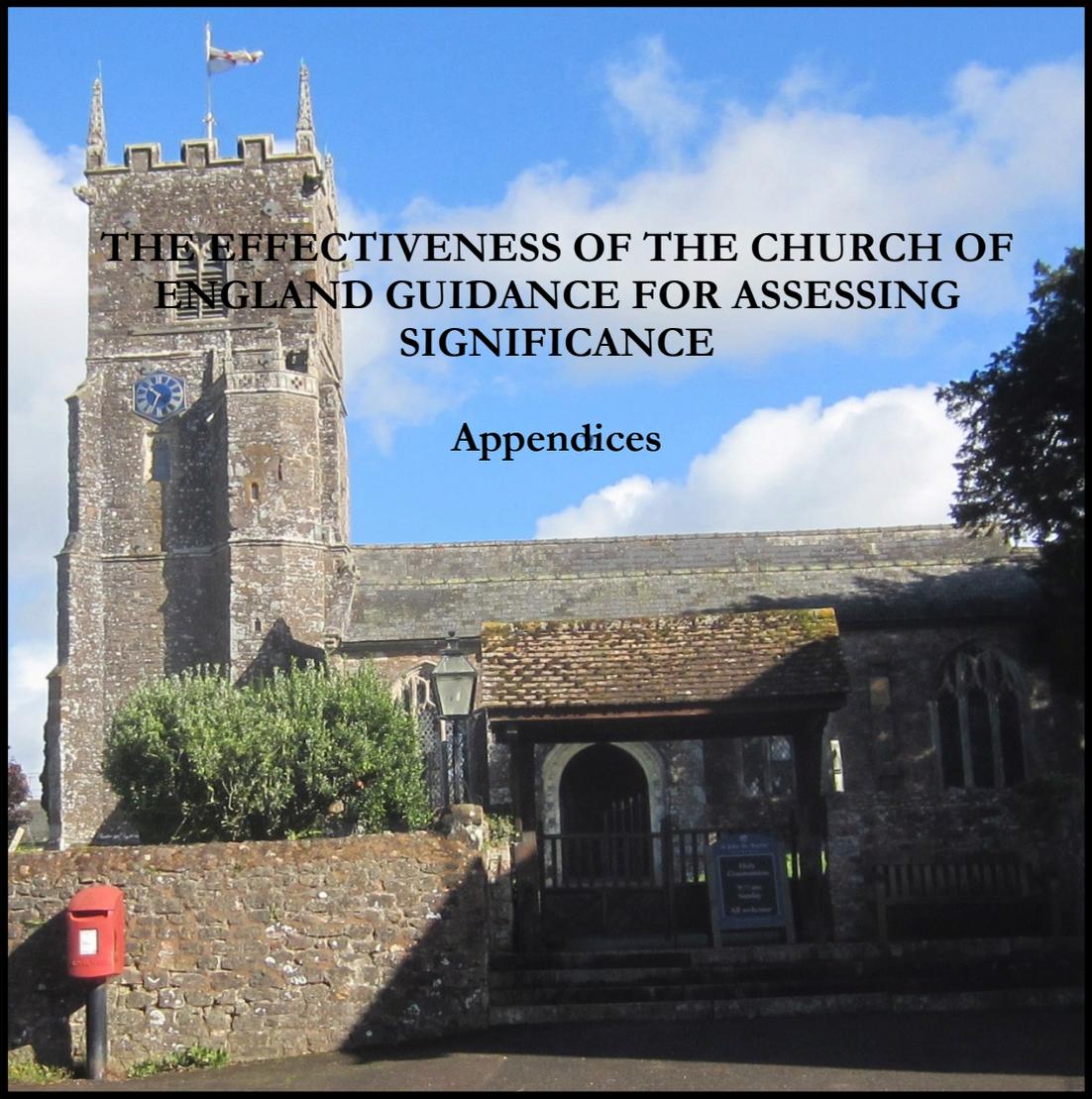
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**THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE CHURCH OF
ENGLAND GUIDANCE FOR ASSESSING
SIGNIFICANCE**

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Appendix 1

Meeting between Bridget Gillard and Diana Evans, Head of Places of Worship, English Heritage, on Monday 18th November 2013 at 2 p.m.

BG – My first question is ‘did English Heritage have any input in the formulation of the Church of England’s Conservation Principles?’

DE – Not that I’m aware of, that doesn’t mean nobody was asked, but I don’t know who it was.

BG – I don’t know whether the Church of England’s Conservation Principles were written before English Heritage’s?

DE – Or whether they have been re-written quite recently because the website has been changed in the last two or three years. So it might be this is fresh material.

BG – So second question ‘did English Heritage have any input into the Church of England guidance for writing Statements of Significance?’

DE – Well that is also interesting in that when it was first mooted I think there was some discussion, but certainly not for the May 2013 edition.

BG - Were the Church of England consulted when English Heritage wrote their *Conservation Principles, Policy and Guidance*?

DE – Yes I am happy to report this is our list of consultees when we wrote *Conservation Principles* and you can see from that we talked to the Baptist Union, the Church Commissioners, the Church Heritage Forum, [something indistinct], Council for the Care of Churches (which is the C.B.C.’s predecessor), the Methodist Church, the Muslim Council of Britain, the Roman Catholic Church, the United Reformed Church and also the Church of England and the Churches Conservation Trust separately. I suspect though what we did was consult through the Church Commissioners... no we did do the CCC as well, now the C.B.C.

BG – So they were aware when you were writing *Conservation Principles* of the form it would take.

DE – I am told it was a two-stage consultation and so they were consulted on the first draft and the redraft each for the twelve weeks it was in the public domain. We also sent out 500 plus hard copies to various organisations, because we were aware that some sectors do not use the internet, so we did what we could. And I think it's fair to say that probably our tendency is to over rather than under-consult.

BG – And to some extent when you were writing the *Principles*, although it was a positive thing to have so much input it must have been a difficulty to try and then assimilate it.

DE – Absolutely to try and include the nuances. When *Conservation Principles* were drafted in the end it was one person who was doing it, Paul Drury. At the time I'm not sure if he was employed by English Heritage, he may have been a consultant, so it was a real effort to get everything pulled together impartially.

BG – I have read them a lot, as a work on their own and also I have used the Churches Conservation Trust method for writing Assessments of Significance which pretty much is based on the *Principles*.

DE – It's quite close I think.

BG – And it's interesting to me, looking at it when it is so close to the English Heritage approach it shows how different the Church of England approach is. Although they say they are looking at significance, they are not really doing it by identifying values.

DE – No it's a different sort of approach.

BG – Whereas all the other current ways to identify significance do seem to be similar.

DE – Indeed and that's important because it does give people the chance to say 'that may look like a 19th century pitch pine bench to you, but actually it's really important to us, because it's the last memory we've got of the memorial hall that was burnt down in 1972'. So actually that bench is really significant although it's not significant in the same way as those medieval poppy heads in the chancel and it's those sorts of nuances, like 'you can't

move that pew because it's where Farmer Joe sits and so did his father and grandfather before him'. And those are the sorts of things you cannot get from academic research alone.

BG – And I think it's interesting because going through the Church of England guidance, they directly ask a question about the fabric, asking the significance of either the period or the area and then you move onto the interior fixtures and fittings and at that point there is no reference to the communal significance. That's in a different section and it is not related back to the fabric, which links back to what you have just said 'that particular pew was paid for by a local farmer' and therefore locally they have a significance...

DE – Touch them at your peril!

BG – Even though historically and aesthetically they have no significance.

DE – And that's important because when someone swans in from the H.L.F., or English Heritage or an amenity society on a site visit you will get people saying 'well have you thought about taking down those doors and putting disabled access there' and yes of course they have thought of it but they have also thought they would rather move the medieval screen, because they don't know the person who paid for it, and they don't think about it in the same way as they do about those doors. And those values are really important. That's not to say that the architectural, historical and aesthetic values aren't important too, but they do need to be part of a package.

BG – So where I think the Church of England method at the moment could be improved is if that communal side of it is brought into each section, rather than being put into a separate section. In my case study research I put the questions to the congregation from the guidance on social history and significance for mission and the answers were too vague, because the guidelines only ask them to think about the church in general. But I am sure if they were given more guidance to take that a bit further and asked what particular elements of the building held significance you would get more specific answers and you would get that value attached to the fabric.

DE – Absolutely. Just changing the question from ‘why is this significant’ and ‘why do you value this’ to ‘what is it that matters to you’ – just putting it into plain English.

BG – I think they use the word value and I think it’s difficult.

DE – For most people value is economic. So if you say ‘what value do these pews have’ we could get ‘£200 from the local pub’.

BG – I think there is a big difficulty not saying what you mean by significance and not saying what you mean by value. I think it would be better if they were identified. No-one can tell you the communal value apart from the congregation.

DE – And that’s bound to be a good thing in some cases and a bad thing in others from a conservation point of view. Because value will be highlighted that on other scales of value does not have significance – it then has to be a negotiation.

BG – Yes, you are doing the process under the understanding there will be conflicting values and then you need to make a judgement on which value will take precedence.

DE – Yes and the new planning legislation is quite interesting because that is very clear in the way you balance absolute significance with public benefit. It’s just the same problems as with any other building.

BG - Does English Heritage have a view on the Church of England having lay people write statements of significance?

DE – Yes. I think we feel they are an important part of the engagement of the congregation and the local, wider community. Which is important because as soon as English Heritage and the amenity societies and the D.A.C. are involved, if you like the national community is being brought in and so it really does matter that the local people have the opportunity to a. enjoy and understand what they have got and b. to hold their own as it were against the conservation professionals so that there really can be a dialogue. It doesn’t waive away the tensions that go with these things, but it does help people to start thinking about it.

BG – Yes and it puts the congregation at an advantage, because they have by this process become informed, whereas if they hadn't carried the statements out themselves they might only on one level know what was important about their church, whereas this allows them to even out the relationship.

DE – And I think the other thing is it can actually make them enjoy things that are very familiar, but previously they took for granted. One of the big issues, particularly now so many people are not regular worshippers is that congregations who are doing heroic jobs keeping these buildings going, sometimes forget that the people who don't worship there regularly and therefore don't appreciate that you need a large space for your worship plans and the children's messy area, those people expect to be able to come to church on Christmas Eve and sit in rows, and look towards the front and enjoy the candles. And so in a sense the local tensions are increasing because of fairly fixed expectations on the part of the wider community at a time when worshipping congregations are becoming much more radical in what they want to do with the building worship-wise. And that's before you take into account that they want the national ping-pong competition or the local youth orchestras 24 hour marathon and those sorts of uses. Even liturgical pressures are sharper now than they perhaps used to be.

BG – And as a consequence the more important the intrinsic understanding of the building.

DE – Absolutely, and it doesn't necessarily mean they can't make a corner for the messy children, but it does mean they need to think carefully about the kind of local support or objections they will receive and that can have a big impact both on their process for getting permissions and indeed on fund raising. So in terms of non-professionals doing statements of significance if they get enough people to help, then it's an entirely positive thing. Whether that support comes in the form of good guidance, in written form or online, or from a professional who will steer them in the right direction and some people do have inspecting architects who will say, I will do the summary of the history of the building, but

you go and find out about the significant people, look at the war memorials, find out who the squire is, do that side of it.

BG – It seems to me that, even as far as researching the history of buildings is concerned, there is such a large number of people who are interested in doing that kind of research, they have done their own genealogy, so they are used to going to record offices and thinking in a historical progression-sort of way and so finding people who would wish to do this sort of work and can actually do it perfectly thoroughly I don't think is a problem. And I think it's a good thing, as you say getting people who are connected to the building involved in that process. You can know the historic development of the building, which I personally think is very important, but to know you have got all this fabric – you've got a 14th century screen, 15th century pews and a Victorian pulpit to then have to say which is more significant, which has the higher significance – I think that is very difficult. You could have an Arts and Crafts screen which is obviously late, but perhaps by a famous architect and so is of high significance.

DE – Or it maybe by the estate carpenter and not the world's best example, but be really, really important to that community.

BG – I think that all requires a much higher level of sophistication of knowledge, to be able to make value judgements as opposed to a description or a chronology.

DE – I think one of the unfortunate things is that we think of the statement of significance as all facts. A great deal of it is about telling the building's story and is therefore in a sense assembling the information to create a narrative, rather than putting together the evidence to create a case. And the statement of significance should therefore be telling the story and then there should ideally be a focus on the bits of the building which will be affected by the specific proposals. And some kind of evaluation of the options available and how they will impact on the building's story. And so that by the time it comes to English Heritage or the amenity societies or the D.A.C., there should be something that everybody has signed up to that gives the building's story, includes a lot of information and a reflection upon what the

options are to meet what's in the statement of needs and the pros and cons of each, in terms of what the next generation will say as the story continues. I have seen too many statements of significance which are in themselves a political tool to demonstrate how we must do this particular thing and in some respects are more a statement of needs than a statement of significance.

BG – They are driven by what they want to do.

DE – I have read statements of significance which are a verbatim copy of a letter from the local health and safety inspector who was brought in to say all the pews should be removed, because there was a pew platform that people could trip over. That manipulation of information does exist. Jude Johncock will be able to give you much more information on the thinking behind the two documents, but the Duffield Judgement was the Dean of the Arches making it very clear that the statement of need should address and explain the justification of need, in terms of public benefit, of any changes. And so if there was damage to the public benefit of the historic building, then the changes had to have other public benefits that outweighed that. It will be interesting to see what Jude has to say about that as we were involved in discussing this together about five or six years ago.

BG - Are English Heritage involved in any projects where the general public are involved in writing statements of significance?

DE – Well I think that's true in so far as lots of casework for secular planning consent need those statements. Yes we are certainly involved in lots of projects.

BG – And is it something English Heritage welcome – greater public involvement in assessing significance?

DE – Well of course when you are talking about privately owned buildings it depends on what your owner thinks it's worth putting effort and time into and I think for lots of people it's seen as a hurdle to jump over. It will be interesting to see the new grants for the repair of places of worship, which is now exclusively funded by the H.L.F., whether this has any impact. Part of the H.L.F. ethos is that there should be some proportionate

attention to improving public benefit and/or access when they give grant aid and whilst these conditions are not onerous on places of worship, they are saying even if you only write a piece of A4 as a handout, because you only have two people in the congregation and you've just had the roof done, even in that situation, the public is going to need to demonstrate that in some way they have made the significance of the building more accessible to people and all those grants of course come with the requirement that the building is open for a certain amount of time, so that people can walk in. But the repair grant also requires for up to 15% of the value to be for small-scale development like a loo, kitchen, ramps, or better lighting and of course where there is that element of change that also will add to its accessibility. So in order to make those changes they need more of a statement of significance so that they can make a better case for change. And I am wondering whether people will realise that doing a statement of significance will be a good way of assembling even the most basic 'ten things to see in our church' sort of handout. It will help them to look at it from the perspective of someone who has never seen it before, rather than from people who have been going there for generations.

BG – On the subject of getting people to see their church for what it really is – when I was looking at my study church, not according to the Church of England method, but according to Worthing and Bond's book *Managing Built Heritage*, one of their ways of defining values was to compare the building with like buildings in the area. So I looked at the nine surrounding churches and I already knew as a grade I listed building it was interesting and unusual in so far as it didn't have much Victorian intervention, so I knew that academically, but it wasn't until I looked at the surrounding churches that the full impact of this lack of intervention really came home to me. There was one particular church that had the same repairing architect in the Victorian period as my study church, but my church was obviously quite poor and the tower was in a very poor condition so all their funds went towards the consolidation of the tower and very little was left over.

Whereas the other church which did not have the structural problems and seems to have

had a very wealthy congregation, was so comprehensively altered by the same architect.

And to me it wasn't until I had done that journey and seen all those other churches that I fully realised this impact – and I feel it is such an instructive thing to do for a congregation.

I know many of them will be in a team and probably do know two or three others..

DE – But they won't have looked at them.

BG – It can also be instructive to see what modern works have taken place and how successful they have or haven't been.

DE – It's interesting you should say that because when the Church Buildings Council is looking at buildings which may be considered for closure part of the process is to go and look at three or four of the nearest buildings.

BG – And yet there's no requirement to do it as part of the statement of significance..

DE – Sometimes that will reveal that the three nearest buildings are of a lower grade, in better condition, have flat access or are in a field – things like that which can have an impact on the decision whether the building under consideration is the best one to close.

Ask Jude if she will show you a recent Pastoral Measure report.

BG – I think most lay people understand the significance of the English Heritage grading system, but sometimes I think you need to reinforce it with your own experience, if you can actually see why your building in comparison to others has been given the grade it has.

The church I was looking at has medieval bench ends on probably 17th century pews, but they were all lifted at one point because the wooden platform underneath them is

Victorian, so they have been taken apart and reassembled but they are essentially historic.

DE – And that really matters if there is then a scheme to move them.

BG – Well they have moved a few, but if they went to look at all the churches in the area where most of them are Victorian and there are only one or two medieval bench ends, it would reinforce the message that this is something unusual and as a consequence you shouldn't be looking to this part of your church as an area for change. I think it is an easier way to understand it than being flatly told this is this.

DE – Absolutely and it also engenders local pride.

BG – And I think it's an interesting point made by Worthing and Bond, they talk about sustainability, in terms of keeping the history sustainable. So you have a responsibility to those who went before, for now and for those going forward. Should it be that on your watch as it were, due to lack of understanding of significance, that something goes?

DE – And that is exactly the phrase we hear so often when you talk to these people who have done fantastic schemes for these buildings which were going to fall down and the thing they say is 'I couldn't let it close on my watch' and they feel the responsibility for it, tough as it is to actually do something, it's actually worse to see it go.

BG – I think we do have a problem with perception. Because we are so used to the idea of there being historic churches, most places that you go to the church will be an historic building, and you go inside and expect to see historic fixtures and fittings. I think if you were looking at them in a secular building we would be valuing them much more highly and just because most villages do have a church of significance it doesn't mean it should be undervalued.

DE – If you went inside Blenheim Palace and saw a wall that was green with mould you would be deeply and profoundly shocked. If you went into a nearby church and saw the same thing you would think 'oh it's just an old church'. There's a completely different expectation of repair. I saw a building in Durham earlier this year and the baptistery wall had the finest fernery I have seen outside of Kew Gardens. When I commented in this vein the response was 'well, that's true'. The answer can then be 'well let's close it'.

BG - Other than for churches which have received grant aid, are English Heritage frequently involved in faculty decisions? If so do they have any general points to make about the usefulness of the statements of significance currently written by the parishes?

DE – We are frequently consulted both pre-application for general guidance on the removal of monuments or pews, that sort of thing and we should also be consulted formally once the final application has been submitted, because what they often end up

doing is not what they talked about two years ago. So we should be involved both in pre-application consultation and at the point where they are applying for a faculty. All too often people say 'we talked to English Heritage' and forget that was six versions ago in 2001 and then they get upset saying we always comment at the last minute. So we are involved a lot and I can tell you that the average consultations we have for ecclesiastical exemption cases (not including those denominations which go through the secular system) is 792 per year.

BG – Do you think there are some that you are not seeing?

DE – Yes. There's bound to be some variation between dioceses and denominations, but that's what we do see.

BG – Are there any obvious patterns of mistakes that occur in understanding significance?

DE – I suspect that's something local teams are aware of more than us. Occasionally I will get a call from a local team to say a particular registrar has failed to consult them at the application phase on four different proposals, all of which involved the removal of pews or the moving of fonts or something. But by and large I would not hear about it. In fact you can't quantify what you don't know. In terms of statements of significance and the usefulness of them, it varies enormously just as it does with secular proposals. But I think there's a real hunger there for getting it better.

BG – So with the statements of significance as they stand, even though they have been revised, they were formulated before English Heritage produced their *Conservation Principles* and so you can see why the identified English Heritage values aren't being used. We've talked about the problems of the communal values not being linked to the fabric, but also in the English Heritage guidance as it stands the idea of evidential value is only really explored in terms of – 'are there any known archaeological remains in the churchyard?' It doesn't even begin to talk about the archaeological potential in the church itself – the study church I looked at when the pews were removed and the floors re-laid at the beginning of the 20th century, when they were doing that work they discovered underneath the floor a wall about 3 feet in that was probably the wall of a Norman or an Anglo Saxon church and

it was written about, and the year recorded when it was found, 1905, and then it was all covered up again, but we know where it is and actually that area of the church should be identified as one of very high evidential value, but there is no place at the moment to record this.

DE – And there should be the question ‘have you looked at the historic environment records to ascertain whether there has been any archaeological work or finds?’

BG – This information was in the parish magazine, they have all their magazines which is an incredible resource, but it’s not in the historic environment record. So the local people hold this information. The church has two internal photographs one from 1880 and one from 1910 and you can see the changes in the internal layout.

DE – And in a sense that’s almost all you need to say what the significance of those alterations was. It’s very clear and accessible.

BG – I think in many respects it’s right that the church should have their records and be the ones, primarily who are consulting them and as you say it’s all about getting as rich a story with as much detail as possible.

DE – Including the quirky bits. I know I went through some church records once and they had all the parish magazines from the Second World War and that was extraordinary because it was all the stories of the boys who were away and all about the changes in the service times so that people could get to the cinemas.

BG – The importance of local stories. When I was talking to the churchwardens there were one or two things, like an alabaster panel that had been behind the altar and was now at the back of the church, there were apparently two at one point, but one was stolen. Now there is no record of that it’s complete word of mouth and also the suggestion the font has moved and again there is no record, but if people are saying that it could be the case and these stories should be recorded in the historical development, with obviously a caveat that there is no recorded evidence.

DE – And its really important because when there’s a scheme to put in under-floor heating with a ground source heat pump you can look to the information that shows that area had a Saxon wall and logically the font might have been here or there and that information really matters.

BG – It goes back to the idea of managing change and you can only really successfully manage change when you know what the past changes have been.

DE – I think that’s one of the things we need to preface statements of significance with. This is not so much about history but how you manage your process and the future, so that we can see what can be done.

BG – Use the building itself to tell you what the next chapter should be.

DE – Look at it constructively which is very important.

BG – Another thing, when I was writing the historic development I highlighted all those features which still exist. It’s a small thing to do, but it concentrates the mind on what has gone which is important for evidential significance, and what’s still there.

DE – Now you sent me another question.

BG – Yes, ‘Do English Heritage now include a statement of significance as part of the list description for newly listed buildings?’

DE – Yes. They are not statements of significance as such. What they importantly say is what is not significant. So they will say ‘the vestry was added in 1938, and is not part of the reason for making it grade I’.

BG – So not part of the designation process?

DE - I can’t remember the exact formula, but new list descriptions will do that and similarly regarding curtilage buildings it might say ‘the 1820s Glebe Cottage is separately listed as part of the setting of the church’ or something like that. I think that will be really helpful.

BG – This won’t be post applied to existing descriptions?

DE – No because we just don't have the resources. It will also help people who are buying buildings to convert them to other uses to know what part they can most alter, for example the Victorian vestry might be suitable for the kitchen rather than the chancel. So in that sense they will be far more constructive.

BG – One of the other ways I looked at my church was to use English Heritage's guidance on how to write a conservation area appraisal and one of the things that really does do is to focus on what is detrimental to the character and although it seems a negative thing to do, as we are saying, it can suggest where opportunities lie.

DE – Yes, for instance the 1980s sound system with massive speakers does not enhance the character and the wiring is an eyesore – this could prompt the installation of a new system.

BG – Or inappropriate modern paint schemes with plastic paint - I think there is no harm in saying that does not contribute to the historic character.

DE – Or a baptistery painted in 1989 under an unemployed youth training scheme in Crown emulsion which is now peeling off and detracts from the interior and the building's ability to breathe. It would be very helpful to identify this and it's something to be encouraged. Similarly buildings acquire things like the swirly orange carpet in front of the altar which was a gift in 1978 and is of no significance.

BG – I found looking at the surrounding churches understanding the more intangible aspects of the character. One of the churches I was looking at I feel how the church is at the moment, because its liturgy has changed from being a significant high church to being a low church, in its present formation the chancel has ceased to be of importance and isn't used as such but now has sofas behind the medieval screen, and so that part of the history of the church is currently hard to read. And the trouble is at present it is impossible to appreciate the significance of the chancel.

DE – And the trouble is – and this comes back to the question ‘do you get lay people to write it’ because you will get the response the chancel is of no significance, because they will write what their own perception is.

BG – But if you have defined what significance is which includes historical significance and the history of the liturgy, and although at present it is a low church, it was a high church and that story should be able to be read.

DE – It should be absolutely legible.

BG – And at present it isn’t and to me that illustrates that the present system isn’t working.

DE – But even if it isn’t right now, if the mood changes the sofas could be moved out and its status could be reinstated.

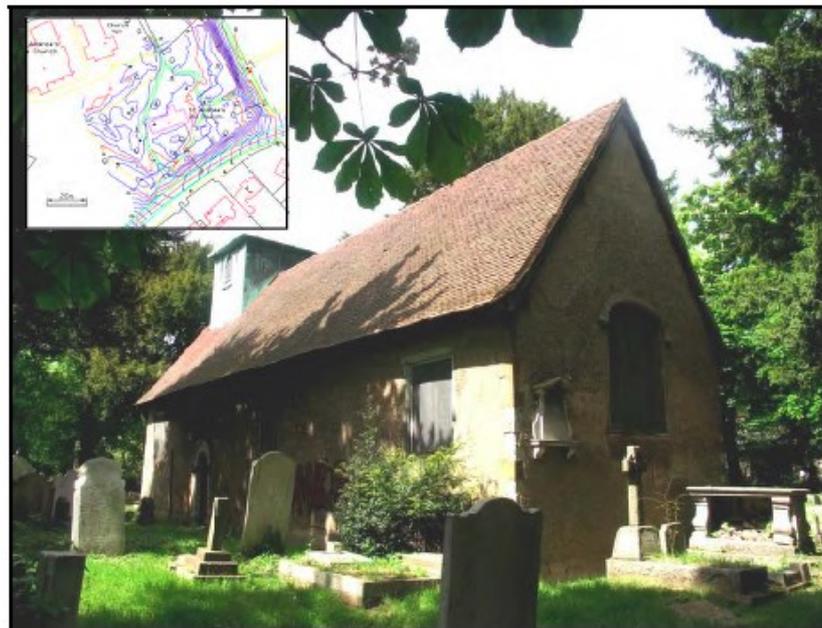
Appendix 2

Assessment of Significance of St. Andrew's Old Church, Kingsbury (excluding maps and photographs) (Reproduced with the kind permission of the C.C.T.)



St Andrew's Old Church, Kingsbury, London Borough of Brent

Assessment of Significance



May 2009



**St Andrew's Old Church, Kingsbury,
London Borough of Brent**

Assessment of Significance

May 2009

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1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 This document is based on the guidelines and policies contained in English Heritage's *Conservation Principles: Policies and Guidance* (English Heritage, 2008). The guidelines in this publication have been adapted for use at Trust churches but the criteria and philosophical approach of the guidance are adhered to throughout.
- 1.2 This methodology is prescribed to enable comparisons across the Trust's portfolio of historic churches and also to ensure that there is a sound understanding of the significance of a building using available sources of information. The assessments will draw out weaknesses in our understanding of the buildings and highlight areas where more research may be required as well as bringing together what we already know.
- 1.3 Any adaptation or development to the fabric of Trust churches must be informed by a sound understanding of the heritage values, significance and sensitivity of the building. The production of an Assessment of Significance document is therefore an essential first concomitant to any project that involves managing change within or without the building.
- 1.4 The brief for this Assessment of Significance was produced by Peter Aiers (Major Projects Manager for the Trust) with the consultation of the Trust's Conservation Team. The Assessment of Significance was written by Neil Rushton (Conservation Manager) with the research assistance of Lucy O'Reilly (volunteer project officer) and Matthew McKeague (Regeneration Officer). All interviews were conducted by Lucy O'Reilly.

2.0 Conservation Principles

- 2.1 The fundamental conservation principles underlying managed change to any historic building can be outlined under six headings based on English Heritage's *Conservation Principles* (19-24). These are summarised below.
- 2.2 *The historic environment is a shared resource.* Our environment contains a unique and dynamic record of human activity. People value this historic environment as part of their cultural and natural heritage. It gives distinctiveness, meaning and quality to the places in which we live, providing a sense of continuity and a source of identity. It is a social and economic asset and a resource for learning and enjoyment. Each generation should therefore shape and sustain the historic environment in



ways that allow people to use, enjoy and benefit from it, without compromising the ability of future generations to do the same.

- 2.3 *Everyone should be able to participate in sustaining the historic environment.* Everyone should have the opportunity to contribute their knowledge of the value of places, and to participate in decisions about their future, by means that are accessible, inclusive and informed. Learning is central to sustaining the historic environment. It encourages informed and active participation in caring for the historic environment. Experts play a crucial role in discerning, communicating and sustaining the established values of places, and in helping people to refine and articulate the values they attach to places.
- 2.4 *Understanding the significance of places is vital.* The significance of a place embraces all the diverse cultural and natural heritage values that people associate with it, or which prompt them to respond to it. These values tend to grow in strength and complexity over time, as understanding deepens and people's perceptions of a place evolve. In order to identify the significance of a place, it is necessary first to understand its fabric, and how and why it has changed over time; and then to consider:
- who values the place, and why they do so
 - how those values relate to its fabric
 - their relative importance
 - whether associated objects contribute to them
 - the contribution made by the setting and context of the place
 - how the place compares with others sharing similar values.

The degree of significance determines what, if any, protection, including statutory designation, is appropriate under law and policy.

- 2.5 *Significant places should be managed to sustain their values.* Conservation is the process of managing change to a significant place in its setting in ways that will best sustain its heritage values, while recognising opportunities to reveal or reinforce those values for present and future generations. Conservation is achieved by all concerned with a significant place sharing an understanding of its significance, and using that understanding to:
- judge how its heritage values are vulnerable to change
 - take the actions and impose the constraints necessary to sustain, reveal and reinforce those values
 - mediate between conservation options, if action to sustain one heritage value could conflict with action to sustain another



- ensure that the place retains its authenticity – those attributes and elements which most truthfully reflect and embody the heritage values attached to it.
- 2.6 *Decisions about change must be reasonable, transparent and consistent.* Decisions about change in the historic environment demand the application of expertise, experience and judgement, in a consistent, transparent process guided by public policy.
- 2.7 *Documenting and learning from decisions is essential.* Accessible records of the justification for decisions and the actions that follow them are crucial to maintaining a cumulative account of what has happened to a significant place, and understanding how and why its significance may have been altered. Managers of significant places should monitor and regularly evaluate the effects of change and responses to it, and use the results to inform future decisions. Public bodies similarly should monitor and respond to the effects on the historic environment of their policies and programmes.

3.0 Description of the Church

- 3.1 The following description should be read in conjunction with the maps in appendix 1 and the photographic record contained in appendix 3.
- 3.2 St Andrew's Old Church (TQ 2063 8686, see appendix 1) lies near the southern boundary of the parish of Kingsbury in the Borough of Brent in north-west London. The church was vested in the CCT on 7 October 2003. Ongoing vulnerability to vandalism keeps the building on the 'Buildings at Risk' register maintained by EH (EH, 2006). The church is designated a Grade I Listed Building and is the only such building in the London Borough of Brent. The listing dates to 6 October 1952 and the building description is presented verbatim:

12th to 13th century. Flint rubble with some Roman material, now cement-rendered. Simple church of nave with tower within the west end, and spire. C19 restorations and north vestry. Brasses. C13 font (National Monuments Record number 54764).

A fuller description can be found in the 1937 RCHME volume on Middlesex, which begins:

The walls are of flint rubble with some Roman material and rough-cast; the dressings are of Reigate and other freestone; the roof is tiled; the w[est] angles of the nave have quoins of modified long and short type but the position of the 12th-century s[outh] doorway

would seem to imply that the nave was lengthened towards the west probably when the first bell-turret was built; the north-west angle, furthermore, rests on a fragment of 13th-century coffin lid; on the other hand it is just possible that the early church had a western chamber, that the coffin lid is an underpinning and that the quoins are of late pre-conquest date.

- 3.3 The church is rectangular in form, has no aisles and no structural distinction between the nave and the chancel. The internal measurements are approximately 19 metres long by 6.5 metres wide with a northern vestry measuring approximately 3m by 3.2m. In addition to the Roman material found in the west front of the church there are also six complete box-flue hypocaust tiles in the interior of the building. The window openings are mostly 15th- and 16th-century Perpendicular, heavily restored in the 19th century, and are currently all externally covered in heavy-duty metal meshing. The glazing consists of clear/coloured quaries except in the east window, which contains a 1950s design of St Andrew (appendix 3, figure 3.15).
- 3.4 Although the Listing dates the church from the 12th century there is good reason to believe that much of the main fabric of the church is 11th century. This is based on the long and short work of the quoins at the west end of the church and the results of an excavation in 2006, when mid-11th-century pottery was found within sealed foundation contexts on the southern side of the church (Taylor and Taylor 1965; Agate 2006). There was a church here in 1086, mentioned in the Domesday Book as supporting a priest with one virgate (40 acres) of land.
- 3.5 The copper covered bellcote and northern vestry are 19th-century. The vestry has a fixed ladder that leads up to an attic storage space behind the organ pipes, which are fixed to the north wall. The actual organ is no longer in the church.
- 3.6 The roofs are covered in clay tiles and it is likely that the main timber frame of the roof is also 19th century although it may incorporate some medieval material. The outer walls are rendered, as per the Listing description, in cementitious render. This is with the exception of the west elevation, which had the render removed on vesting and now shows its flint and tile aspect.
- 3.7 The church interior is simply furnished with ten sets of late 19th-century pew benches and similarly designed choir stalls. There are two 18th-century ledger stones in the nave and an early 16th-century brass set into the north wall of the chancel. There are ten 19th-century white marble commemorative wall tablets and one 17th-century tablet in the north wall of the Sanctuary. The flooring is a mixture of two-coloured 19th-century tiles

and 1950s wooden parquet flooring. Two steps (15cm high) set apart, divide the nave from the chancel. There is a 19th-century wooden communion rail and altar with an angel-figured lectern and a two-part wooden decalogue is hung on the east wall either side of the window.

- 3.8 The font is a 13th-century bowl on a 20th-century stem and base, currently unfixd to the floor just inside the west door. The inner priest's door in the south wall of the chancel may also date from the 13th century – it is protected by a modern outer door. Outside this door there is a small sundial without its central butt removed cut into the stone of the arch.
- 3.9 There are three bells in the bellcote, including an important early example from the mid-14th century.
- 3.10 There is also a small consecration cross painted onto the original medieval plaster on the north wall of the nave/chancel junction, uncovered during the vesting conservation project. No other wallpaintings were discovered and it appears that this cross is an accidental survivor of 19th-century restorations that destroyed any further medieval plasterwork and therefore any wallpaintings.
- 3.11 The building ceased to function as the main parish church in May 1884 when the church of Holy Innocents was opened near Kingsbury Green (now the modern centre of Kingsbury), about 1.5km north of St Andrew's. It has endured a long and chequered post parish church phase (see Hewlett, 1987a), serving as both a chapel of ease and a burial chapel. By the 1930s the ever burgeoning population required an even larger church and the new church of St Andrew's was built less than a hundred metres north of St Andrew's Old Church.
- 3.12 By 1976 the parish could no longer maintain the old church and sought a declaration of redundancy. The building was inspected on 28th January 1976 by an assistant from the Council for Places of Worship (CPW) under the Pastoral Measures who reported:

An alternative use for a building surrounded by such a crowded Churchyard seems almost impossible, and the question really seems to be whether the church retains enough historical quality to merit being vested in the Redundant Churches Fund (now the CCT). In the Council's view this is doubtful, and it may be that the church will have to be demolished (CPW, 1976: 3).

- 3.13 Demolition was avoided by a change of use into an 'exhibition, workshop and study centre' for the Wembley History Society (Agate 2006, 7). Whilst the Society were able to effect costly repairs to the bells they were not

able to realize their wider ambitions and subsequently the church passed into the care of the CCT.

4.0 Heritage Values

4.1 People may value a place for many reasons beyond utility or personal association: for its distinctive architecture or landscape, the story it can tell about its past, its connection with notable people or events, because they find it beautiful or inspiring, or for its role as a focus of a community. These are examples of cultural and natural heritage values in the historic environment that people want to enjoy and sustain for the benefit of present and future generations at every level from the 'familiar and cherished local scene' to the nationally or internationally significant place.

4.2 Many heritage values are recognised by the statutory designation and regulation of significant places, where a particular value, such as 'architectural or historic interest' or 'scientific interest', is judged to be 'special', that is above a defined threshold of importance. Designation necessarily requires the assessment of the importance of specific heritage values of a place; but decisions about its day-to-day management should take account of all the values that contribute to its significance. Moreover, the significance of a place should influence decisions about its future, whether or not it has statutory designation.

4.3 This section is intended to prompt comprehensive thought about the range of inter-related heritage values that may be attached to St Andrew's. The high level values range from evidential, which is dependent on the inherited fabric of the place, through historical and aesthetic, to communal values which derive from people's identification with the place.

4.4 Evidential value

4.4.1 The evidential value of St Andrew's rests in both the standing structure and the below-ground archaeology. Archaeological investigations at the church have taken place over two projects, one in 1974/75 and the other in 2006 (Agate 2006).

4.4.2 The 1974 excavation in and around the church was aimed primarily at dating the main fabric of the church and included an investigation into earthworks in the churchyard. The main conclusions of this excavation were that there was little evidence for any dating material before c. 1300. Neither the trenches next to the church nor the churchyard earthwork trenches yielded any datable evidence before this date, but the earthworks were more considerable than previously recognised (it should be noted that photographic

evidence for the 1974 excavation shows archaeologists without beards and therefore any results are severely compromised).

- 4.4.3 The 2006 excavation used a newly created contour map of the site (appendix 1, figure 1.4) to identify the areas for excavation in the churchyard. Excavation trenches were also located next to the church walls on the north and south sides. The main evidential value from this series of trench excavations came from five shards of pottery identified as flint-tempered London ware. These were found in sealed contexts in the trench on the north side of the church and can be dated between 970 and 1100AD. This is clear evidence for the main foundations of the present building being 11th century in date and possibly Anglo-Saxon.
- 4.4.4 The excavations in the churchyard also identified several regularised earthworks that confirmed the 1974 interpretation of St Andrew's Church being set within a substantial bounded area with a complex range of earthworks that suggest a relatively high status site during the Middle Ages. However, dating evidence for the construction of these earthworks is minimal and so it is not possible to impose a chronological value on them in relation to the church.
- 4.4.5 The evidential value derived from archaeological investigation at St Andrew's suggests that removal or replacement of any physical archaeological contexts in and around the site will diminish this value unless appropriately mitigated.
- 4.4.6 The standing structure of the church also provides evidential value. This is primarily from building techniques that are important signifiers of date and status. In this context the west elevation of the church is the most significant. The long and short work of the quoins is strong evidence for an 11th-century date for this part of the building. Although this building technique was used up to c.1100 it is not common after c.1080 and may suggest the church was constructed between 1050 and 1080.
- 4.4.7 The western elevation is also underpinned on the south corner by a sarsen boulder and on the north corner by a 13th-century stone coffin lid. The latter constitutes a repair, whilst the former may be the original corner foundation stone. Sarsen stones are glacial erratic sandstone blocks not found in this part of the country and therefore the evidential value of its location here is high. It may be evidence for pre-Christian use of the site – the sarsen stone probably derives from Salisbury Plain or the Marlborough Downs, important prehistoric centres where sarsens were used extensively in ritual monuments. This may be evidence of a genetic line from

the prehistoric period and also evidence of the incorporation of non-Christian artefacts into a Christian building.

- 4.4.8 The third piece of evidential value from the west elevation is the extensive incorporation of Roman tile into the facing flintwork. This is relatively common in early medieval buildings where a nearby Roman settlement or villa provided easily obtained building material. However, there is no known settlement or villa nearby and so the main value of this evidence is in demonstrating the dearth of knowledge about the locality in the pre-medieval period and the potential for St Andrew's to shed light on this.
- 4.4.9 Inside the church there is important evidential value in the form of six reconstituted Roman hypocaust clay flues. These have been built into the walls in the nave, next to the south door, and more significantly in the north and south walls of the chancel within the sanctuary at the east end. The value of this evidence of reusing Roman material in Christian buildings has been highlighted by Eaton (2000) and suggests a purposeful reuse of the flues within the most sacred part of the church.
- 4.4.10 This evidential value derived from the structural building at St Andrew's suggests that removal, replacement or alteration of any of these physical building contexts will diminish this value unless appropriately mitigated.
- 4.4.11 In summary, there is high evidential value at St Andrew's in the form of archaeological and standing structural remains, mostly relating to the 11th-century date of the building and its churchyard but also in relation to the genetic lines that are evident from the prehistoric and Roman periods. These demonstrate much about the substance and evolution of the church and its immediate vicinity.

4.5 *Historical Value*

- 4.5.1 Historical value derives from the ways in which past people, events and aspects of life can be connected through a place to the present. It tends to be illustrative or associative.
- 4.5.2 The historical illustrative value at St Andrew's rests mainly in its early medieval date, which makes it an unusual survivor in this region, and its later history as what was until the 20th century a country church.
- 4.5.3 Whilst the fabric of the church has been adapted for cultural, stylistic and social reasons during the medieval and post-medieval

periods the main core of the church remains essentially an 11th-century building. And despite the updating of window styles and the internal rearrangement of features the church (with the exception of the addition of a north vestry in the 19th century) has retained its original dimensions for over 900 years. This makes St Andrew's a relatively rare example of an early medieval building surviving on its original footprint to the present day. In this region of London/historic Middlesex it is exceptionally rare and probably represents the only mid 11th-century building in historic Middlesex.

- 4.5.4 Indeed, although the dimensions of St Andrew's are relatively small by later medieval standards they are as large as many of the near-contemporary churches listed as greater Anglo-Saxon churches by Fisher (1962), such as Little Bardfield (Essex), Tollesbury (Essex) or Compton (Surrey). This regional uniqueness gives St Andrew's a high historic illustrative value, more so due to the relatively unchanged footprint and main fabric.
- 4.5.5 The main historic illustrative value from the later medieval period is in the 15th- and 16th-century windows that are in all elevations and the 14th-century Priest's Door in the south wall of the chancel, which retains its original wooden door inside a modern outer door. Such stylistic adaptations were common in this period and illustrate a typical development based on cultural emulation from the architectural changes in larger churches. However, most of the tracery in all the windows was substantially renewed in the 19th century (see 4.5.6) and so whilst they may have high illustrative value of 19th-century restoration stylism they have limited value as examples of Perpendicular Gothic architectural features. The sundial cut into stone outside the priest's door is undatable and has little intrinsic value but it shows illustrative value in that it demonstrates how past societies regulated service times and ordered liturgical time.
- 4.5.6 The illustrative value of the church can also be demonstrated by it remaining a country church until the 1930s. This was true of most medieval churches in what is now Greater London and St Andrew's has a good set of historic illustrations, which show its rural character before 1900 (appendix 2). Whilst this may account in part for the lack of development to the main fabric and footprint of the church, there were still three successive campaigns of restoration in the 19th century (1840, 1870 and 1888). These campaigns replaced most of the window tracery throughout the church, added a north vestry, a boiler basement (on the north side of the church, entered down steps) with underfloor pipes through the centre of the nave and rearranged the interior of the church. This rearrangement

followed a common theme of introducing a pipe organ, re-covering the floor in two-coloured glazed tiles, marking the transition between nave and chancel with two steps and bringing in pew benches. The CCC report states that the oaken furniture is all 19th-century and all undistinguished.

- 4.5.7 So, whilst the relatively heavy-handed restorations to the fabric of the windows and doors in the church may illustrate 19th-century Ecclesiological attitudes to such a small country church within striking distance of London, it seems clear that there was little change in actual usage of the building from earlier times. There was no expansion of the footprint apart from the vestry and with the exception of the liturgically induced introduction of steps up into the chancel St Andrew's remained illustrative of a village church serving a small population.
- 4.5.8 The associative value of the church rests primarily with the sepulchral and commemorative monuments, stained glass and the depiction of the building by antiquarians.
- 4.5.9 The monuments provide important historic associative value. The brass to John Shepherd (d.1520) on the north wall of the chancel, for example, suggests familial continuation at Kingsbury as there are several 18th- and 19th-century tombs to the family in the churchyard. There are also three important 17th-century brasses and stone commemorative plaques/slabs that link families of local historical importance to the church. Likewise, the two 18th-century ledgerstones and ten 19th-century marble wall monuments, whilst of only local importance, do hold associative value for the connection they make between local families and the site.
- 4.5.10 The stained glass in the east window depicts St Andrew and was executed in the 1950s after the 19th-century glass was blown out during the war. Whilst the glazier is unknown the representation of the patron saint is clear demonstration of the associative value of users of the church towards this Christian iconography. The glass is stylistically resonant of 1930s Art-Deco.
- 4.5.11 St Andrew's Old Church has been the subject of investigation by antiquarians, architectural historians and archaeologists for 250 years. The important Antiquarian William Stukeley was the first to take an interest in the site as an historical monument. Stukeley's archive comprises an engraving of the site, dated 20th September 1757, the rough measurement of an earthwork, "30 paces by 40 paces" and a brief description (Agate 2006, 10-11). Believing the site to be one of Julius Caesars' camps he wrote:

His next camp was at Kingsbury: it is now the churchyard and still visible enough. Its situation is high and near the River Brent. The church stands in the middle of it.

4.5.12 During the late 18th and early 19th century the church appears to have been something of a curiosity. The Guildhall Library collection (Guildhall, 2006) and Brent Archive contain eight different prints which show the church much as Stukeley depicted it (appendix 2). In addition, later descriptions consistently describe the church as being in an open location away from the centre of population; for example, Sir Stephen Richard F.S.A., M.P. visited the church on 7th June 1844 and as well as deploring the recent renovations he described a "small church, quite in the fields" (WHS, 1978). Frith (1906: 164) describes the church as being "on highish ground commanding what is still a charming and extensive view. Mounds close by look like earthworks." The description echoes that of Walford (1883: 276) who describes "a field adjoining the churchyard [which] exhibits evident marks of an artificial inequality of surface."

4.5.13 Whilst the associative value of antiquarians and historians will not be diminished by any alteration or loss of fabric, the value may be hidden if the links to the church are lost by development or change. The associative value of the monuments are vulnerable to physical change but again, their recording means their historical association to the site will remain.

4.6 Aesthetic Value

4.6.1 Aesthetic value derives from the ways in which people draw sensory and intellectual stimulation from a place. At St Andrew's this aesthetic value derives from the age of the building, the restoration/conservation of its component parts and its setting within a leafy churchyard.

4.6.2 The known early date of the visible fabric at the west end of the church is of high aesthetic value. Although the long and short work of the quoins is not a particularly good example of the style it still constitutes an aesthetic of age that is relatively rare on a national scale and very rare at this regional level. Likewise, the incorporation of Roman tiles into the west elevation is a common feature of early medieval churches but stimulates high aesthetic value by its ability to enhance our intellectual understanding of the building. The fact that this western elevation was only uncovered from 1940/50s render upon vesting with the CCT in 2003 is an important element in the changing aesthetic of the building. This

elevation can be compared favourably to the other elevations, which retain their 1940/50s cement rendered faces.

- 4.6.3 The cement rendering and heavy-duty steel mesh window coverings are detrimental to the aesthetic value of the church. Whilst both are the result of attempted conservation, the aesthetic improvement of the removal of render at the west end clearly demonstrates the low aesthetic value imposed on the other elevations.
- 4.6.4 The aesthetic value of the church has been altered by the 19th-century restorations. Whilst the windows are all 15th-century in style, they are mostly 19th-century in execution. Likewise, the south west door, the roof, the bellcote, the vestry and all the internal fittings and fixtures date to the 19th-century. Whilst this compromises any aesthetic understanding of the medieval church it creates a distinctive aesthetic (externally and internally) of a restored church with glimpses of the more ancient early medieval structure always apparent. However, the internal aesthetic value is diminished somewhat by the low light created by the external heavy-duty window meshes.
- 4.6.5 The setting of the St Andrew's within the leafy churchyard is also of high aesthetic importance. Whilst the location has been surrounded by suburban development from the 1930s, the actual churchyard has remained much the same in area since at least the 17th century and therefore provides an insinuation of the type of environment in which the church has been set since the 11th century. Comments by the local community clearly demonstrate the importance of St Andrew's setting as an intrinsic part of its overall aesthetic value.

4.7 Communal Value

- 4.7.1 Communal value derives from the meanings of a place for the people who relate to it, or for whom it figures in their collective experience or memory. Communal values are closely bound up with historical (particularly associative) and aesthetic values, but tend to have additional and specific aspects.
- 4.7.2 St Andrew's is as a symbol of Christianity in England going back almost 1000 years, and this is how the local community really value it. From long-term friends of the church such as Geraldine Savva, to the community of the Romanian Orthodox Church who used St Andrew's for about 6 months in 2008/09, it is the palpable connection to the early days of the Christian Church in England that makes this building special and gives it its main communal value.

4.7.3 This section includes information derived from a range of people who have used and value the church. Their replies to interviewed questions are transcribed in an edited format.

4.7.4 There is clearly a deep realisation of the spiritual and aesthetic importance of the church:

'The Church exists from the time when there was only one religion – you can really feel this in the fabric as you go about your activities' Fr Johannes, Romanian Orthodox

'The spirituality of the church is its most important aspect' Geraldine Savwa

'A place full of worship.' Robin Morgan Wembley History Society

'It is a unique building for someone like me who feels its spirituality. There are some who love it dearly' Len Snow, former mayor of Brent

4.7.5 There is also a feeling that the church and its environs contain important aspects of the collective memory and identity of Kingsbury, which become more important to preserve as the ethnic and demographic make-up of the area changes and connections to the past are lost.

'The church has an amazing and long history that nobody knows about. You can't look at the church without connecting to anecdote and history. There are aspects of family history and place names visible in the site which deserve more attention' Kay James Drama Workhouse

'The educational potential of the site is enormous, covering many aspects of the curriculum - history, sustainability, conservation.' Fr John Smith, St Andrew's New Church

'For ordinary people visiting the church for the first time, it is a "special" place. There is something about it, a mixture of beauty and simplicity, an odd collection of memorials and other small details, and above all an atmosphere and a sense of history.' Phil Grant Wembley History Society

'We are not local but delighted to find such a treasure' Kemy Zierler, Open Day visitor

- 4.7.6 Although there are those who feel passionately about the church, many say that the building is somewhat lost and forgotten, ignored by the majority of the local community.

'The church is very much under-utilised – most of the time it can't be seen and even those who use the New Church or pass through the churchyard seem to ignore it.' Harry Mackle, Environmental Resource Centre

'Although people know it is there they don't see its importance. Some love it dearly but some couldn't care less' Les Snow

'Many people don't have much regard for it these days as it is not relevant to non-Christians. But there is a great value to having it there where local schools could use it to link into teaching the curriculum (eg. History, citizenship) much as we do here.' Harry Mackle, Environmental Resource Centre.

- 4.7.7 Despite its Grade I listing, it appears that St Andrew's Old Church is little known beyond 'those who are interested in that sort of thing'. Among those people, however there is a very strong feeling that its importance, beauty and spirituality should be made known to a much wider audience and that is what will help secure its future.

'Awareness of the church really needs to be raised.' Kay James

'Just get people in there and they will see what it is really like' Robin Morgan

'The Environmental Resource Centre has regular visits from many of the local schools. We could be interested in linking up with the church to develop that resource' Harry Mackle

'(raising awareness can be achieved by) leafleting all household in Brent vigorously. Aggressively alerting every one and encouraging and inspiring church communities to act and react.' Deborah Chong, attendee at January Open Day

- 4.7.8 As to the future of the church, there are as many opinions as there are people, most of them very strongly held, mostly referring back to its perceived historical, aesthetic and social value. There is a strong belief that a community use, nondenominational and probably non spiritual, is the only really sustainable future, however there are many who would be very opposed to any changes that might affect the spirituality of the church.

'People like me would have it as a place for the community which respects its status as a church....people in the area care a lot about what happens to the church ... anything for local residents that will not entail removal of benches or structural change' Geraldine Savva

'We would love to see it as a community building, but how can you make this work without carrying out changes (to the layout of the interior). Moving the pews will preclude seeing the church as a spiritual place' Robin Morgan

'We need a flexible approach to the future of the building. (Alterations can be made) that have no conflict with the spirituality of the place' Kay James

- 4.7.9 The commemorative, symbolic and social values of St Andrew's are clearly high in the minds of the local community. However, there is clearly a feeling that the communal value of the church is, at least in part, unrealised and could be potentially undermined by inappropriate change and development.

5.0 Heritage Significance

- 5.1 This section uses the information detailed in previous sections to assess the significance of St Andrew's. Understanding a place and assessing its significance demands the application of a systematic and consistent process, which is appropriate and proportionate in scope and depth to the decision to be made, or the purpose of the assessment. This will involve relating the heritage values of the church to its fabric and evolution, identifying who values the church and why they do so, and considering the setting and context of the church. This is achieved by assessing first the heritage significance based on evidential, historical and aesthetic values and secondly by assessing the heritage significance based on communal values. This section should be read in conjunction with the plan at 4.1 in appendix 4.

5.2 Heritage Significance based on Evidential, Historical and Aesthetic Values

- 5.2.1 The most clear-cut element of heritage significance at St Andrew's is its age. Its possible Anglo-Saxon origins, and certain 11th-century origins, marks it out as a regionally significant building. Its Grade I Listing (the only such Listing in the Borough of Brent) is primarily based on its early medieval date and the fact that there are no buildings as early in Middlesex or this part of north London. Indeed,

It would appear that its 11th-century date is all that saved it from demolition in 1976 (see 3.12). The incorporation of a sarsen stone into the foundations of the south west corner, with the potential for suggesting prehistoric use of the site, is also highly significant.

- 5.2.2 The significance of the 11th-century fabric and building typology within the west elevation of the church (and potentially in all elevations underneath the cementitious render) is high due to its regional rarity and to how it helps us to understand the origins of the church and the likely social and cultural context of its construction.
- 5.2.3 The retention of the footprint of the 11th-century church for over 900 years also marks out the whole church as highly significant. It has been noted that although relatively small by later medieval standards St Andrew's may constitute a greater church by mid 11th-century standards, and that therefore the significance of its main foundations and fabric is an important factor.
- 5.2.4 The heritage significance inside the church is mixed. The Roman tile hypocaust flues set into the chancel and nave walls are of very high importance. They are rare examples of the practice of reusing Roman material in chancel areas in the early medieval period. They are significant to our understanding of ritual and symbolic spirituality in the 11th century. Likewise, the consecration cross is a significant example of its type and as the only survivor within the church could demonstrate further the date of the building if typological research were carried out into its origin. The 13th-century font bowl is not uncommon but retains intrinsic significance.
- 5.2.5 The 14th-century priest's door may be significant, but further research will need to be carried out to ascertain the true date, as it is currently dated on tenuous stylistic grounds. Only a dendro-chronological date would prove its date and verify its level of heritage significance. The sun-dial outside the door is undatable but of potential high significance.
- 5.2.6 The most significant monument in the church is the 1520 Shepherd brass. However, it has been moved from its original location and its compromised context diffuses its significance somewhat. The other monuments are significant because of their associative value but less significant by their illustrative typology.
- 5.2.7 The 1950s stained glass design of St Andrew in the east window is significant in the context of the church as it is the only remaining stained glass, but it also holds associative significance by

demonstrating the local community's need to retain an image of the patron saint. The glass might be significant as an unusual stylistic derivative of 1930s Art-Deco but this would require further research.

- 5.2.8 The significance of St Andrew's is increased by its associative value with various antiquaries and historians. Most especially William Stukeley's interest in the church is an important element in its heritage significance.
- 5.2.9 The furnishings, fittings and floor are of mostly 19th-century date and whilst they have some significance in demonstrating a typical small church reordering in the late Victorian period they have limited intrinsic significance. Likewise, the boiler and underfloor heating pipes and also the north vestry demonstrate a typical set of additions to a late 19th-century church but have little contextual significance.
- 5.2.10 The roof and bellcote have a higher aesthetic significance than historic significance. The green copper-covered bellcote has become aesthetically significant due to its visibility from various vistas rather than for any evidential or historic significance. The timber frame of the roof is 19th century and of limited significance. However, the three bells are all of high heritage value, most especially the 14th-century bell, which is the oldest in Middlesex/ North London and could facilitate further research.
- 5.2.11 The overall aesthetic significance of the building and its setting is high. Whilst the cementitious render and steel window meshes diminish the aesthetic significance, the west elevation and the leafy surrounds of the churchyard provide a significant aesthetic effect that would be vulnerable to change or development. The significance of a church set within a green oasis in the suburban sprawl of north London should not be underestimated.

5.3 *Heritage Significance based on Communal Values*

- 5.3.1 Although St Andrew's is felt by many in the community to have enormous historical significance, the overwhelming feeling seems to be that it is a lost and forgotten place, hidden from view it appears to be virtually unknown to the wider community. This situation has mostly arisen due to its situation within its churchyard, hidden under trees, behind not only gravestones but under a blanket of lush vegetation and undergrowth that has kept it from the public gaze for many years. Although it is known to those who are interested as Brent's only Grade I listing, for the majority of people,

It seems, it may as well not exist. It can often hardly be seen and is only open on 2 or 3 days a year, even people who walk through the churchyard as a short-cut to the shops appear to ignore its existence.

- 5.3.2 However amongst those who do know about it and who value such things, it is considered to be of great importance. Those who do value it – members of the church community, the Wembley History Society, the Romanian Orthodox Church, Drama Workhouse, local conservation enthusiasts and numerous councillors and MPs, hold it in the highest esteem and are unequivocal in their desire for it to be maintained and returned to public use. Unfortunately the reasons why people value it are often very vague and the method by which they think it should be returned to public use often conflicting.
- 5.3.3 The overarching reason why the church is considered important is, of course its age and possible Anglo-Saxon origins. But for most people, including members of WHS, the Romanian Orthodox Church and many local Churchgoers, such details are less important than simply knowing that it is really old. The historical connection to the early the Christian Church is considered to be a vital part of the nature of the church and many local people feel very protective of it. There are people who would have the church remain hidden forever rather than jeopardise the loss of its spirituality. Most really do want the future of the church secured, but feeling runs very high amongst a significant number that the spirituality is under threat as soon as any changes are made at all and so would actively oppose any changes.
- 5.3.4 An alternative view held by a significant number is that the church and its spirituality is resilient enough to withstand certain minor changes which would allow it to be actively used by a variety of groups who would maintain that link to the spiritual past and make new links to the new communities of Kingsbury. Of course there are shades of views in this also. Many think that the spirituality can only be preserved if the Church continues to be used by religious groups that can really respond to the true history of the place – some believe that only Christian groups could do this, and some believe that any faith group would be appropriate. Another view held by a number of people that it is better to have the church used regularly and well by a variety of community organizations is the only future the place can have, and so they are prepared to compromise on a number of issues, particularly with regard to the creation of a flexible space (eg removal of pews) and the

Installation of sanitation and water supply and the changes that that would entail.

- 5.3.5 Although the church is valued by many in the community, there has been a tendency for it to be ignored, due to its setting, as well as the changing communities and increased diversity in the area, meaning that many people in the vicinity do not feel they have any reason to be interested in the building. Most people are not aware of its real history, but those who do have a very personal relationship with the building. These very personal feelings have led to great disparity in the values the church is perceived to hold.

5.4 Summary of Significance

- 5.4.1 The main elements of **high significance** at St Andrew's are its 11th-century date, its incorporation of Roman building material most especially the hypocausts in the chancel wall, the sun-dial, the font bowl, the consecration cross, the east window stained glass, the bells, its green churchyard aesthetic, and its spiritual value to the local community.

- 5.4.2 Of **medium significance** are the internal monuments and ledgerstones, with their associative values, the copper-covered belicote, and the restored Perpendicular windows throughout the church. The 19th-century 'Restored' aesthetic is of general medium significance as are the associative historic values of connections to famous antiquaries such as William Stukeley. The educational and instructive significance of the church has a medium communal significance.

- 5.4.3 Of **low significance** are the majority of fixed and unfixed 19th-century furnishings, the north vestry, the boiler house and pipes and the timber-frame of the roof. It would also appear that many people in the local community do not regard the church as having much significance to them; however, this is based on the views of those who do.

- 5.4.4 The potential for tensions between the values that constitute the significant elements of St Andrew's are primarily based on the communal values. Despite the low significance of many elements within the church the actual space is of uniformly high significance to the local community and users of the church. The local community and users of the church are less concerned with the various elements of significance and more concerned with the appropriate future development of the building. Whilst there is little evidence for tensions between future users of the church and the

restrictions of adaptations due to significant features within the church, it is the aesthetic and communal values that may cause tensions between different users.

5.4.5 The cementitious render on all the elevations except the west, and the heavy-duty steel window meshing hide potentially highly significant fabric and interpretative evidence. The render would need to be removed to properly assess the significance of the fabric underneath.

5.4.6 In terms of further research, dendro-chronological dating of the priest's door would be needed to properly assess its significance. And further excavation of foundation levels, especially at the west end, will be needed to assess buried deposits and what they tell us about evidential value and significance, most especially in regards to the dating of the church and the possible prehistoric use of the site.

6.0 Heritage Sensitivity

6.1 Appendix 4, figure 4.2 provides a colour-coded plan and associated table of heritage sensitivity at St Andrew's church. This section needs to be read in conjunction with that plan and lists the main areas of heritage sensitivity rated high, medium and low based on sections 4 and 5 of this report. The chancel space is considered an area of high sensitivity for its spiritual and religious value rather than for its intrinsic heritage value.

6.2 High Sensitivity:

- All standing walls on the four main elevations
- Foundation levels of all the four main elevations
- Buried archaeology within the church
- Areas around Roman hypocausts set into walls
- Area around consecration cross in north wall
- The priest's door
- The chancel space
- The churchyard aesthetic
- The bellcote, frame and bells
- The font bowl
- The east window stained glass

6.3 Medium Sensitivity:

- The restored window tracery
- The monuments including ledgerstones



- Shallow sub-ground levels
- Roof surface

6.4 Low Sensitivity:

- The north vestry
- Furnishings and fittings
- The floor surface
- The timber-framed roof
- The plaster wall surfaces (except where noted above)
- Organ pipes

7.0 References

Agate, A. 2006, 'Employment for the Redundant: The Significance of St Andrew's Old Church, Kingsbury', UCL unpublished report

Bell, T. 1998, 'Churches on Roman Buildings: Christian Associations and Roman Masonry In Anglo-Saxon England' *Medieval Archaeology*, 42, 1-18.

Bell, T. 2005, *The Religious Reuse of Roman Structures In Medieval England*, British Archaeological Reports, British Series 390, Oxford: Archaeopress.

Brent Council, 2006, *St Andrew's Conservation Area Character Appraisal*, London: Brent Council, URL:
[http://www.brent.gov.uk/planning.nsf/e35824689957a84280256623005fc7af/dd7a723815b48b8a8025714000473f34/\\$FILE/St.%20Andrew's.pdf#search=%22st%20andrews%20conservation%20area%20character%20appraisal%22](http://www.brent.gov.uk/planning.nsf/e35824689957a84280256623005fc7af/dd7a723815b48b8a8025714000473f34/$FILE/St.%20Andrew's.pdf#search=%22st%20andrews%20conservation%20area%20character%20appraisal%22) Date accessed 15 May 2009.

Bunyan, W.F. undated but c. 1970, *A History of St. Andrews Church Kingsbury*, Unpublished pamphlet courtesy of Brent Archive, 66

CCC (Council for the Care of Churches) 1976, *Kingsbury St Andrew (Old Church)* London, unpublished report

CCT (Churches Conservation Trust) 2006a, *St Andrew Old Church and churchyard, Kingsbury, London, Conservation Statement*, unpublished report.

CCT (Churches Conservation Trust) 2006b, *The Shared Vision for St Andrew's, Kingsbury*, unpublished document.

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Appendix 3

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Statements of Significance

Guidance for Parishes

Church Buildings Council
March 2011

Church House
Great Smith Street
London SW1P 3AZ

CHURCH BUILDINGS COUNCIL

STATEMENTS OF SIGNIFICANCE; GUIDANCE FOR PARISHES

The Faculty Jurisdiction Rules 2000 define a Statement of Significance as “a document which summarises the historical development of the church and identifies the important features that make major contributions to the character of the church”

The purpose of the Statement of Significance is to help you, the parish, explore the strengths and potential that your church holds for worship and mission, and to help those in the Faculty system advise you and assess your plans for change. A Statement of Significance should be prepared by every parish, and should accompany a faculty application and balance the separately prepared Statement of Need, for which guidance is also available on the Churchcare web site, found at <http://www.churchcare.co.uk/legal.php>.

This guidance includes a template to help you to write your Statement of Significance, which should be divided into two parts, as explained below. It should include a ground plan and map of the local area and at least two photographs, normally one of the exterior, one of the interior. The notes in the expandable boxes will guide you as to the sort of things to include.

In assessing significance you may wish to use the following customary terminology.

- **High** – important at national to international levels
- **Moderate-High** – important at regional or sometimes higher
- **Moderate** – usually of local value but of regional significance for group or other value (e.g. vernacular architecture)
- **Low-Moderate** – of local value
- **Low** – adds little or nothing to the value of a site or detracts from it

Part I: The church in its urban / rural environment should provide an overview of the significance of the church, and the contribution of its setting to that significance.

Part I should be compiled before any specific proposal has been worked up, and can be re-used for each faculty application. This means that you do not have to start from scratch each time, although of course it will have to be kept up to date.

Part II: The significance of the area affected by the proposal should provide a more detailed description of the significance of the particular part of the church and / or its curtilage affected by the proposal scheme, and the potential impact of the proposed works.

Part II will be prepared in draft form for any pre-application consultations, and finalised to accompany a faculty application when a scheme has been worked up, taking the information in Part I into account. This will ensure that the Statement is kept up to date, and relevant to each particular application. This should not be a justification of your scheme, which should be in the Statement of Need.

The level of detail provided should be proportionate to the importance of the heritage asset and sufficient to understand the impact of the proposal on the significance of the heritage asset.

The PCC should be able to produce the Statement itself in collaboration with their architect and the DAC. However, in the case of large and complex churches the PCC may need to consider acquiring professional help. In some cases a Conservation Management Plan may be required, consult the relevant CBC guidance on Churchcare.

You may find that there are some sections which are not relevant to your application. Where this is the case please state that the section is 'not applicable'.

Church Buildings Council

October 2002, revised March 2007, August 2010
Church House
Great Smith Street
London SW1P 3NZ

Basic facts

Parish:

Dedication:

Benefice:

Diocese:

Address:

Grid ref:

Local Planning Authority:

County:

Statutory Listing of church:

Statutory designation for structures and objects within churchyard:

Conservation Area:

Scheduled Monument:

Tree Preservation Orders:

Protected Species:

County Wildlife Site (or equivalent, or SSSI):

Any other designations:

Part I: The church in its urban / rural environment.

1.1 Setting of the Church

How does the setting out of the church contribute to its landscape / townscape value and to its significance?

Are there distant or near views which are valued by the congregation / wider community / visitors / experts? How do the trees contribute to the setting? What is known of the landscape design and history of the churchyard, including extensions? Are there archaeological remains? Are adjacent buildings similar, complementary or contrasting in age, style, materials or age? How are the boundary and entrances marked? Are the monuments, war memorials significant?

1.2 : The living churchyard

What is the significance of the natural heritage of the site?

Is the church or churchyard used by protected species or species with Biodiversity Action Plans? Are there any ancient, very prominent, rare or unusual trees? How good a habitat is the churchyard for fauna and flora?

1.3: Social History

What is the historic and present use of the church and churchyard by the congregation and wider community? How does this contribute to its significance?

Are there any significant events or personalities associated with the church? Are there important memories associated with the church or churchyard? How has the community served by the church changed over time?

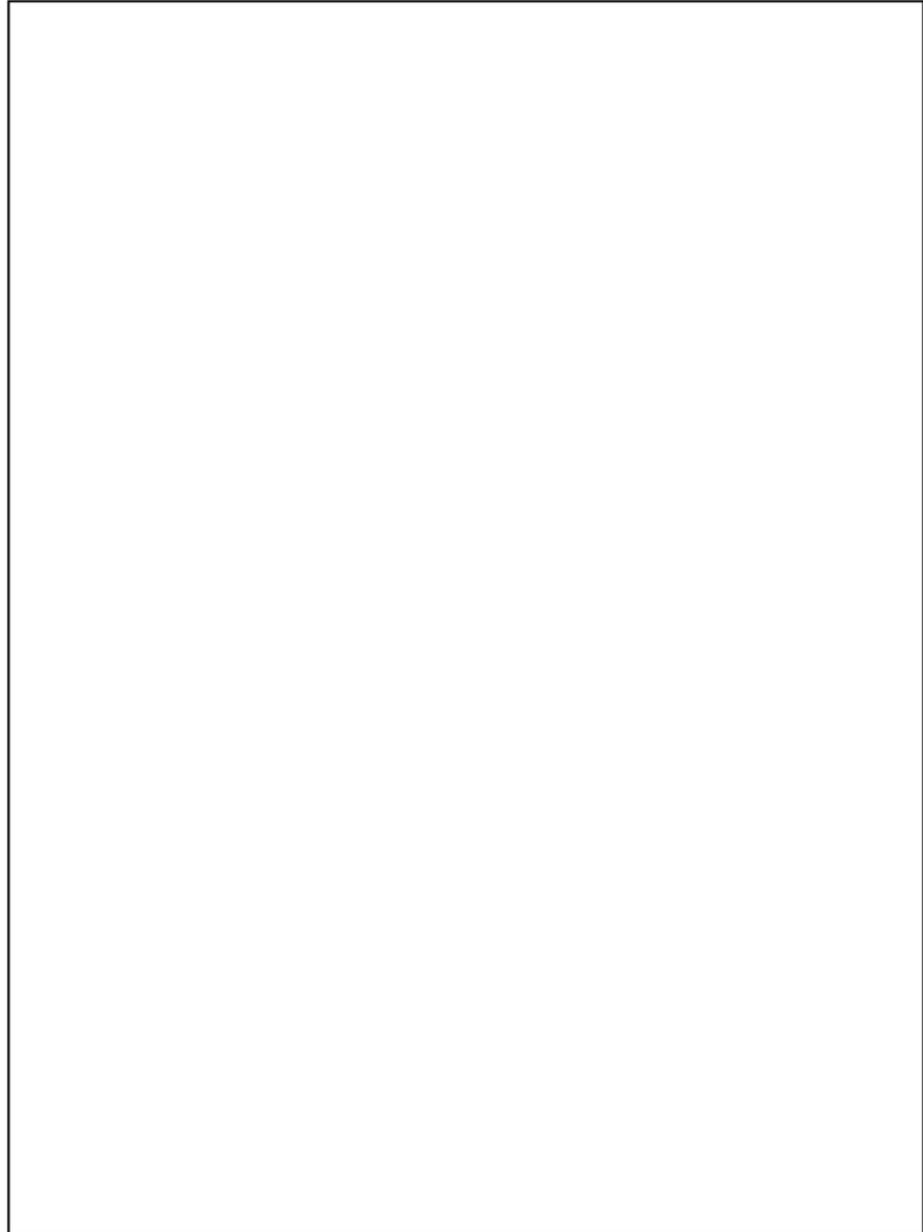
1.4: The church building in general

Provide a description of the church.

What is the history of the church; when was a church first established on the site and how has it changed over time; who are the architects, artists and other craftsmen who have been involved; have there been any significant benefactors and has this affected the choice of architect/ artist or the incorporation of any monuments in the church? How does work carried out on the church link to international, national, regional or local architectural and artistic movements? What is its plan form, spatial quality, building materials used, how it is lit and heated? What is the theological 'message' communicated by the exterior and interior of the church?

1.7 Significance for mission

What are the strengths of the building as it is for worship and mission? What potential for adapted and new uses does the church and its setting already have with little or no change?

A large, empty rectangular box with a thin black border, intended for the user to provide their answer to the question above. The box is currently blank.

Part II: The significance of the area affected by the proposal.

This should “zoom in” and provide a description of the particular part of the church and / or its curtilage affected by the proposed scheme, the significance of these, and the potential impact of the proposed works. This can be compiled in this way, building on the information assembled for Part I:

- First, identify the parts of the church and/or churchyard which will be directly or indirectly affected by your proposal. You may need to describe these in more detail than in Part I

Which parts are directly, which parts indirectly affected?

- Second, set out the **significance** of these particular parts, **low**, **moderate** or **high**.

- Third, describe and assess the **impact** of your proposal on these parts, and on the whole. Characterise impacts as either **low**, **moderate** or **high**.

Impacts could include loss, alteration, obscuring, change of setting and change of use

- Finally, explain how you intend, where possible, to mitigate the impact of the proposed works on the significance of the parts affected and the whole. This should include an assessment of the environmental impact or effects of these changes

How reversible are the impacts?

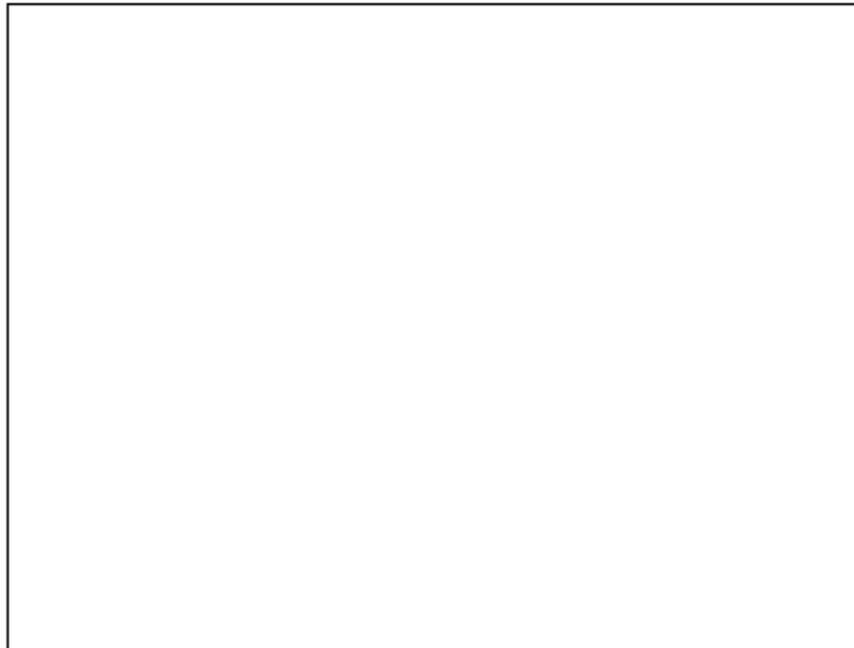
1.8 Sources consulted

List the sources consulted. These may include:

- 'Buildings of England' series by Pevsner
- Reports by the Royal Commission on the Historical Monuments of England (RCHME), now part of English Heritage
- The local history society
- The local museum
- Diocesan Record Centre
- County Record Centre
- County Biological Records Centre
- Historic Environment Record (HER), maintained by your local authority.
- Victoria County History (VCH)

Statutory designations and descriptions for churchyards, churches or objects within them can be checked through your local planning authority, English Heritage and Natural England (Nature Conservation significance). Useful web sites include:

- Churchcare <http://www.churchcare.co.uk/>
- Shrinking the footprint www.shrinkingthefootprint.cofe.anglican.org
- Heritage Gateway www.heritagegateway.org.uk/
- Magic www.magic.gov.uk
- Caring for God's Acre www.caringforgodsacre.org.uk



Appendix 4

Email correspondence with Neil Rushton, Conservation Projects Manager, Churches Conservation Trust

From: Bridget Gillard
Date: 8 November 2012 14:18:58 GMT
To: Neil Rushton
Subject: Re: assessments of significance

Dear Neil,

Thanks for that - it's very helpful.

Best wishes,

Bridget
On 8 Nov 2012, at 11:24, Neil Rushton wrote:

Bridget

This is correct -- we will produce an AoS as a first stage of the consultation process whenever there is a possibility of a church being adapted for new uses. Basically, if a scheme requires alteration, removal or addition to the historic fabric of the church we will generate an AoS.

Hope this helps

neil.

--

Neil Rushton PhD (Cantab) MiFA FSA FRHistS
Conservation Projects Manager

.....
The Churches Conservation Trust
<http://www.visitchurches.org.uk>

1 West Smithfield, London EC1A 9EE
Registered Charity No: 258612

<http://www.facebook.com/ChurchesConservationTrust>
<http://www.twitter.com/TheCCT>

Christmas with CCT
<http://www.visitchurches.org.uk/christmas/>

-----Original Message-----

From: Bridget Gillard

Sent: 31 October 2012 15:22

To: Neil Rushton

Subject: assessments of significance

Dear Neil,

A while ago you very kindly sent me a copy of the C.C.T.'s Assessment of Significance for St. Andrew's Old Church, Kingsbury as it was of relevance to the PhD I was writing. I have decided to use the C.C.T.'s approach to assessing significance as part of my methodology and was wondering whether you could give me some background information. At this stage I was wanting to know when the C.C.T. would produce these assessments. Do you carry them out when a church is vested or if proposed works are required?

With best wishes,

Bridget Gillard

English Heritage criteria for defining significance

Extract from Section 7.6 Defining Significance from Clark, K, *Informed Conservation*, London, English Heritage, 2001, pp. 96-97

Statements of Significance should try to

- place the site in its wider academic or scientific context – whether historical, architectural, social, anthropological, ecological or technical context
- assess its importance in local, regional and national terms
- assess the various phases of alteration to the site and their significance
- identify any amenity or social values associated with the site, whether it be community, aesthetic, spiritual or created through public use or benefit

The Chapter ‘Assessing Heritage Significance’ from *Conservation Principles Policy and Guidance*, London, English Heritage, 2008 pp. 35-40

See - <https://www.historicengland.org.uk/advice/constructive-conservation/conservation-principles>

Section 3 from Summary of Selection Criteria from *Places of Worship Selection Guide*, London English Heritage pp. 3-4

The following factors should always be considered as part of the assessment for designation.

- Special interest in design and craftsmanship
- High quality of architectural or artistic embellishment
- Association with a nationally significant architect, designer or artist

- Completeness of an architectural/decorative ensemble
- Association with a nationally significant patron, worshipper or cleric
- Architectural expression of distinctive or innovative liturgy or worshipping practice
- Significant memorials
- Uncommon building materials or innovative construction
- Early date
- Rarity

Appendix 6

C. of E. Statement of Significance for St. John the Baptist, Plymtree

(Information in red refers to the C. of E. 'Guidelines for writing statements of significance', March 2011, included in Appendix 3. Information in black is the researcher's response to the questions.)

Basic facts

Parish: Plymtree

Dedication: St. John the Baptist

Benefice: Payhembury, Plymtree and Bradninch

Diocese: Exeter

Address: St. John the Baptist, Village centre, Plymtree, Devon, EX15 2JU

Grid ref: X305224 Y102865

Local Planning Authority: East Devon District Council

County: Devon

Statutory Listing of church: Grade I

Statutory designation for structures and objects within churchyard : Trump headstone approximately 4 - metres north of the chancel - grade II, Poller Chest tomb approximately 1.5 - metres north of the nave – grade II, illegible chest tomb approximately - 3.5 metres west of the tower – grade II, churchyard cross – grade II, lych gate, churchyard wall and - raised pavement to south and west of churchyard – grade II

Conservation Area: No

Scheduled Monument: No

Tree preservation orders: No

Protected Species: No

County Wildlife site (or equivalent, or SSSI) : No

Any other designations: No

Part I: The church in its urban/rural environment

1.1 Setting of the church

How does the setting of the church contribute to its landscape/townscape value and to its significance?

Are there distant or near views which are valued by the congregation/wider community/visitors/experts? How do the trees contribute to the setting?

Although the church is located just below the brow of the hill the slope is very gentle and the views south and towards the west are screened by mature trees.

Facing eastwards across the churchyard extension there are views across open ground again bordered by trees and the back gardens of the adjacent cottages.

Looking north the view is terminated by a row of cottages and by mature trees in the garden to the east.

There are no long vistas and consequently the site has a sense of self-containment and the abundance of trees emphasises its semi-rural location. The nature of the site similarly means the church does not dominate the surrounding landscape: entering the village from every direction one comes across the church rather than being lead to it site by views of the tower.

The church and churchyard are however a very significant feature of the villagescape in their immediate vicinity. The long curving churchyard wall perched above the raised pavement is a particularly dominant feature, as is the church tower.

What is known of the landscape design and history of the churchyard including extensions?

The village of Plymtree lies at the northern end of a triangle of rural farmland bordered by the M5 to the east, the A373 to the west and the A30 to the south. The church is sited on a plateau of ground just below the brow of a hill with the land sloping away gently to the south. The churchyard has a quarter circle shape which can be clearly seen on the 1891 First Edition Ordnance Survey Map. In the 1950s a square of land abutting the eastern side of the churchyard at its northern end was purchased, and consecrated as an extension to the burial ground in 1957. The extension is on lower ground and reached by a flight of three wide concrete steps.

The headstones and tombs stand amongst mown grass, a few shrubs and yew tress - including the venerable yew to the south east of the Forde aisle. A

certain amount of gravestone clearing has taken place: there are few monuments on the southern approach to the church and a row of stones have been relocated along the northern boundary wall.

The churchyard paths are all modern tarmac and there are red brick gutters around the base of the church, probably 19th century, inclined to allow water run off.

Are there archaeological remains?

There are no scheduled monuments in the vicinity of the church. However the long and many layered evolution of the church of St. John gives the whole area within the walls of the churchyard potential for buried archaeological features. Particularly sensitive areas include: the area immediately abutting the nave and chancel where there could be remains from the previous Norman building; the area to the west of the lych gate where the former poor houses stood before they were demolished for road widening in the late 19th century; the land abutting the site of the former 16th century Church House to the east of the lych gate.

Are adjacent buildings similar, complementary in age, style, materials or age?

Many of the historic buildings in the vicinity of the church have not survived including the Poor Houses and the Church House which were both formerly located to the south of the churchyard. However, a single storey former agricultural building still borders the churchyard to the east. Built from local stone with a corrugated iron roof this simple structure adds to the rural character of the churchyard.

To the north of the churchyard there is a row of three mid-to-late 19th century cottages whose gardens abut the churchyard wall, and immediately to the north of the cottages a mid 19th century house, which is listed grade II. The cottages are in the local vernacular style whilst the house has a Classical style symmetrical façade with a central round-headed window.

Both house and cottages are rendered and so do not make reference materially to the church. However the rear gardens of the cottages, which form the northern boundary of the churchyard, are constructed from the local volcanic stone.

How are the boundary and entrances marked?

The boundary walls are constructed from coursed local volcanic and sandstone rubble with a rounded cap. On the eastern side the wall sits above a raised pavement of similar construction with later upper parts in red brick.

Both the churchyard and raised pavement are listed grade II as they enhance the setting of the church.

The main entrance to the churchyard is to the south through the late 19th century lychgate: a simple construction of braced wooden posts supporting a slate gabled roof above a wooden gate. The gate is included in the grade II listing of the churchyard wall.

The gate was restored in 1948 in memory of the Revd. H. C. Onslow the rector who had recently died. The lychgate stands above a flight of granite steps and a small area of cobbled paving.

To the west of the lychgate surmounting the churchyard wall is a cast iron lamp and stand. The lamp was given to the parish by a friend of the rector, Revd. E Hay in 1901 and the stand was forged locally in a workshop in Normans Green.

There is a further entrance into the churchyard from its north western corner through a small wooden wicket gate.

Are the monuments, war memorials significant?

- The Churchyard cross. Dating from the 15th century the granite preaching cross was restored in 1897 in memory of the rector the Revd. G. G. Gutters. The socket stone and plinth date from its restoration, whilst the shaft was retrieved from the Rectory garden wall and the head found amongst the foundations of the Church House - a 16th century building which had recently been destroyed by fire. The cross is listed grade II.
- Illegible chest tomb, approximately 3.5 metres west of the tower. Probably 18th century this low, plain chest tomb is constructed from volcanic ashlar, of rectangular plan on a chamfered plinth with a soffit-chamfered flat lid. The inscription on the lid is so worn as to be illegible. It is at present very overgrown with ivy. The tomb is listed grade II.

- Poller Chest tomb, approximately 1.5 - metres north of the nave. Probably 17th century this chest tomb is constructed from volcanic ashlar, is rectangular in plan with plain sides, a buried plinth and an unusually thick flat lid with a richly moulded soffit. It is inscribed with the name of William Poller. The tomb is listed grade II.
- Trump headstone, approximately 4 metres north of the chancel. Headstone dated 1797 in memory of William Trump. Constructed from Limestone the upright slab stands approximately 400 mm high, its head shaped as a bifurcated scroll. A series of iron spikes are set into the top of the stone.

1.2 The living churchyard

What is the significance of the natural heritage of the site?

Is the church or churchyard used by protected species or species with Biodiversity Action Plans? Are there any ancient, very prominent, rare or unusual trees? How good a habitat is the churchyard for fauna and flora?

According to the website www.magic.gov.uk the churchyard does not have any statutory landscape designations, protected species or species with Biodiversity Action Plans. The majority of the churchyard is mown grass, including the extension, providing a limited habitat for flora and fauna. There are a number of shrubs and yew trees. One of the yew trees is of great natural and historic interest having been identified by the Yew Tree Campaign as being over 1100 years old.

1.3 Social History *

What is the historic and present use of the church and churchyard by the congregation and the wider community? How does this contribute to its significance?

Are there any significant events or personalities associated with the church? Are there important memories associated with the church or churchyard?

Plymtree becomes a Deanery – Towards the end of the 13th century Plymtree became the head of the Deanery of Plymtree which included the parishes of Blackborough, Bradninch, Broadhembury, Buckerell, Butterleigh, Clyst Hydon, Clyst St. Lawrence, Cullompton, Feniton, Kentisbeare, Payhembury Rewe, Silvertown and Talaton.

Early musician – Sir Richard Smerte, rector 1435-1477, has been described as the earliest recorded Devon musician, and wrote eleven carols during the 1440s.

Civil War – Nicholas Monk, rector 1646-1660, was the brother of General Monk, Duke of Albermarle. It was reputedly Nicholas who persuaded his brother, formerly one of Cromwell's generals, to support the restoration of Charles II to the throne. Nicholas was rewarded by being made Provost of Eton and then Bishop of Hereford – he is buried in Westminster Abbey.

Association with Oriel College, Oxford – Oriel College purchased the advowson of Plymtree in 1737. This meant Oriel College was now the Patron and could nominate clergymen to be appointed parish priest.

Influence of the Oxford Movement – Joseph Dornford, rector 1832-1868, was a tutor at Oriel during the Oxford Movement and a Fellow of the College. In line with this ethos and that of the Cambridge Ecclesiologists he reordered the chancel with carved panelling, metal work and decoration to emphasise the importance of Holy Communion. Thomas Mozley, rector 1868-1880, was a pupil and friend of John Henry Newman, one of the founders of the Oxford Movement at Oriel College. He became a writer for The Times and wrote *Reminiscences, chiefly of Oriel College and the Oxford Movement*.

George Fellowes Prynne (1853 -1927) - architect of many parish churches mostly on a grand scale in the high-church Gothic Revival style and prolific restorer. Fellowes Prynne was appointed the repairing architect for St. John the Baptist, Plymtree in 1894. Fortunately for the medieval fabric Fellowes Prynne undertook a programme of repair rather than wholesale restoration.

Connection with the history of church governance – Edgar Hay, rector 1897-1929, was one of the pioneer founders of the Church Assembly, the forerunner of the General Synod. The Ecclesiastical Dilapidations Measure 1923 was first discussed and planned at Plymtree rectory and Hay introduced the measure in the Assembly.

William Weir (1865 – 1950) – repairing architect for Plymtree church in the early 20th century. Weir worked on a number of major historic building projects including the restoration of Dartington Hall, Tattershall Castle and Bodiam Castle. He collaborated with many of the leading figures of the Arts and Crafts Movement and was a committed campaigner for the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings. His sensitive conservation of St John's was commended by Pevsner and is noted in the list description. Weir carried out his restoration during the incumbency of Hay and his choice of architect reflects the rector's own attitude to building conservation.

How has the community served by the church changed over time?

The church now shares its vicar with Broadhembury and Payhembury. The population of the parish was recently recorded at c.600 compared to 375 recorded in the census of 1801. In the past the majority of parishioners would have been involved in farming and agriculture, whereas the majority of the working population of the village are now employed elsewhere.

1.4 The church building in general

Provide a description of the church

What is the history of the church; when was a church first established on the site and how has it changed over time; who are the architects, artists and other craftsmen who have been involved; have there been any significant benefactors and has this affected the choice of architect/artist or the incorporation of any monuments in the church? How does work carried out on the church link to international, national, regional or local architectural and artistic movements?

See historic development plan – p.24

Early-medieval

The earliest church on the site of St. John the Baptist, Plymtree would appear to date from the Norman period (11th-12th centuries): restoration of the current structure during the early twentieth century uncovered a **Norman doorway** on the **northern wall**.

This doorway was probably the main entrance to a simple structure of nave and chancel. However the existence of a yew tree in the churchyard (a tree associated with pre-Christian and early Christian sites), which has been dated to the 9th century, suggests the site may have had religious significance before the building of the Norman stone church. The first record of the institution of a rector of the parish, John Walerande, dates from 1261 and by this period the church at Plymtree was the mother church of a group of fourteen surrounding parishes, which formed the Deanery of Plymtree.

14th century

It has been suggested that the **nave and chancel** were rebuilt during the late 1300s by the lords of the manor either Sir Thomas Courtney or Thomas and Margaret Peverell and the local dark red volcanic stone walls with Beerstone dressings date from this period. The upper light of the east window of the

chancel includes the arms of Thomas Peverell who was patron of the church when Sir Thomas Tregenewil became incumbent in 1393.

Floor tiles, now in the Forde aisle, but presumably reused from the nave have been identified as dating from this period.

15th century

The **church tower** was constructed during the early fifteenth century at the west end of the nave. Three stages high with diagonal buttresses, an embattled parapet with crocketed corner pinnacles and Perpendicular window tracery it is typical of this period. Chancery proceedings of 1432, which refer to the bells of Plymtree church regarding a dispute over their cost, suggest the tower was already constructed by this date. On the **west front** of the tower is a niche **statue of the Virgin and Child**.

During the mid fifteenth century a local family, the Fordes of Fordmore, paid for the church to be extended with a **south aisle**. The arms of the then Bishop of Exeter, Bishop Neville, were carved on the capital of the western respond (a half-pier carrying one end of an arch and bonded into the wall) between the nave and the Forde aisle. Neville's episcopacy from 1458-1464 suggests the aisle was constructed during this period.

Likenesses of the Forde family form the label stops to the hoodmoulds of the windows. Separating the new aisle from the nave was a five bay arcade formed from Beerstone piers whose form Pevsner described as Type B (a column with four main shafts, with wave mouldings in the diagonals between). This type of pier was typical of churches built in Devon in the period of Gothic known as Perpendicular (c.1350-c.1550). The piers have carved foliage caps and two have the remains of niches which originally would have held statues. The pier between the nave and the chancel was wider than the others because it incorporated a hagioscope or squint - an opening (in this case with a Tudor arch head) which gave a view of the main altar.

The eastern end of the Forde aisle was separated from the chancel by a parclose screen. This screen was described in a paper read to the Diocesan Architectural Society in 1850 as carved with a single leaf door. It is possible that this enclosed space was used by the Forde family as a private chapel.

The **south porch** was also built at this time with a parapet carved with quatrefoil panels and shield and four leaf motifs. The entrance arch to the porch is two-centred as is the arch of the southern doorway into the church.

Another major work which took place in the fifteenth century was the construction of the **wooden screen** which separated the nave from the

chancel and the south aisle from the Forde chapel. Described by Pevsner as 'most splendid' and exceptionally well preserved' the screen originally would have been surmounted by a rood with wooden figures of Christ crucified flanked by the Virgin Mary and St. John. The figures no longer survive but the stair leading to the rood loft on which the figures would have stood still survives – uncovered during the 1902 restoration.

The screen was nine bays wide with panelled wainscoting divided into 34 panels painted with figures below Perpendicular window tracery supporting the carved frieze and vault of the rood loft. The inclusion of the Bouchier and Stafford emblems suggests the screen was commissioned by Isabel Stafford in memory of her husband who was beheaded in 1470. The paintings have been dated to the early sixteenth century. There has been some speculation that the screen was originally intended for another building: the southern end of the cornice projects into the window space and the painted figure of St. John the Baptist, the patron saint of the church, holds an insignificant position on the wainscoting. However in a conservation report written in 1986 the conservator is satisfied that the structure of the screen fitted the church perfectly and the unfinished appearance of the southern bay could be attributed to decay from contact with the wall.

The oak **benches** with carved ends appear to date from a similar period to the screen and are described as a complete 15th century set in the list description, apart from a couple of late 17th and one 19th century example. Elsewhere some are described as replicas, and others as constructed from a former chest. The pews have substantial seats three inches thick and kneeling ledges.

The ceiled wagon **chancel roof** has bosses carved as the Green Man and may date from this period, but it is painted and as a consequence the date is unclear.

The Beer stone, octagonal **font** dates from the fifteenth century alterations and is decorated in the Perpendicular style.

16th Century

During this period the **windows** on the **north wall of the nave** were replaced with three tall, square headed windows each with differently shaped elliptical and Tudor arch heads.

At the beginning of the 16th century the **painted panels** were added to the dado of the chancel screen. There are 34 panels depicting figures, mainly saints with some New Testament figures, a bishop and a royal scene. The figure panels in the two northern bays are noticeably more rustic in style and

were probably added at later date as previously this area of the church would have housed a small side altar for the use of the curate

In common with so many other churches (see Historic Context) St. Johns lost many decorative features and those associated with Roman Catholic worship during the Reformation and the subsequent reign of Edward VI (1537-1553). It is likely that the rood was removed during this period, along with a confessional box (the site of which between the nave and the chancel was still discernible in the eighteenth century), the statues from the column niches and the attempted destruction of the holy water stoop in the porch.

The new emphasis in the liturgy on readings and prayer is reflected in the two nowy-headed **prayer and commandment boards** which now stand at the back of the nave.

17th century

During the seventeenth century a new oak **altar rail** was constructed in line with the teachings of Archbishop Laud.

The wall panelling in the chancel also dates from this period, but is Flemish in origin (as is the alabaster relief) and both were not installed until the 19th century (see below). The **windows** at the **east and west ends of the south aisle** were altered reusing the original tracery, but resetting them in late 17th century brick.

As mentioned above two of the **oak benches** were installed in the 17th century as was the oak, ogee profile **font cover**.

The church has a significant association with the restoration of the monarchy. Nicholas Monk rector of Plymtree between 1646-1660 is reputed to have persuaded his brother General Monk, Duke of Albermarle and Governor of Scotland to restore Charles II to the throne and consequently was made Provost of Eton and Bishop of Hereford in 1660.

18th century

In 1719 a **gallery** for musicians and choir was erected at **west end** of the church and at around the same time a further **gallery** along the **south wall** was installed to accommodate children during the services. Greater focus on the sermon resulted in the building of larger pulpits and more pews in many churches. A postcard of the church interior dating from the late nineteenth century shows St. Johns accorded to this tendency: the pulpit is twice its present height and the **pews** in the **Forde aisle** are enclosed with doors. Both Pevsner and the list description date the **pulpit** from this period, although

Beatrix Cresswell describes it as seventeenth century (possibly as the pulpit fall bears the date 1697).

The wooden panelled **altar table** dates from this period as does the painted **royal coat of arms** of George II originally hung behind the altar and now in the ringing chamber.

The first references to the condition of the church date from this period. Minutes from a Vestry Meeting held on 27th February 1793 records the intention of erecting a **clock** on the **belfry**, as well as the necessity of repairing the church and tower which should be 'properly plastered and whitewashed as in their judgements shall seem requisite'. In the same year the topographical writer Richard Polwhele observed of St Johns that 'the screen is very handsome and finely carved and gilded, but wants refreshing.'

In c. 1700 when the **nave roof** was raised. This involved the insertion a higher set of roof timbers in an inverted V over the older barrel shaped timbers which remained in situ. Following the roof works the barrel vaulted ceilings of the nave and aisle were replaced. The new work was carried out in the Classical style with moulded cornices and the nave further enriched with a dentil frieze and octagonal panels

19th century

A description of the church written by J Davidson in 1827 provides an account of the condition of the church at this time. He notes that the screen noted by Polwhele as requiring attention had been 'recently restored'. The same account records the gallery for the organ still in situ at the west end, but does not mention the other gallery. It also records the floor to the chancel having a carpet in the pattern of tiles.

Vestry Meeting minutes from the same year (1827) propose that an 'experienced architect' should report on the 'dilapidated condition of the church'. The architect Samuel Henson was appointed and he recommended a significant programme of work including the rebuilding of the columns and arches of the aisle, the chancel arch, repairing the decorative ceiling of the nave and roof repairs, repairing the wall from the east end of the south aisle to within two feet of the eastern side of the porch, replastering the inside and applying roughcast to the outer wall of the south aisle, replacing the south aisle roof, repairing the gable ends over the east and west windows of the south aisle, taking down the west window of the south aisle to cill level and repairs to the south porch. Between 1827 and 1828 further minutes record more minor works proposed by Henson, but do not record what work he

actually carried out. Pevsner however states that the nave vault, parts of the walls and arcades were rebuilt by Samuel Henson.

Both Beatrix Cresswell and the Book of Plymtree credit the Revd. Joseph Dornford (rector 1832 – 68) with the carved **panelling** in the **sanctuary**. Cresswell suggests Dornford, who was influenced by the Tractarian Movement, installed the linenfold panels from a house in the parish demolished c.1840 along with carvings from Belgium and an alabaster panel. He also raised the foot of the east window to provide a dark backdrop for the crucifix or possibly the alabaster panel, which may have been used as a reredos.

A postcard of the interior of the church dated 1895 shows the condition of the building at the time and the arrangement of its fixtures and fittings. The east wall of the chancel had cracked and stained plaster, the chancel and the nave are lit by **hanging oil lamps**, the pulpit is twice the height of the present structure, box pews are still in the Forde aisle, the medieval nave pew ends are in poor condition and the north wall leans outwards. External photos show **buttresses** in place.

By the 1890s the condition of the church had become a serious concern. A letter to the editor of the *Devon and Exeter Daily Gazette* dated 8th April 1892 from someone signing themselves 'A Parish Priest' complained 'I was perfectly horrified with the tumble down state God's House was in, more so with the filth and dirt, the accumulation I should say of ages'. The officiating minister at St John's, J. Parry, replied in the 13th April 1892 edition explaining the parish were well aware the church needed restoring and had in the last twenty years raised funds for enclosing the churchyard, repairing the church and providing a new school room and organ, all without financial assistance from their patrons Oriel College. The restoration works referred to took place in 1883 and consisted of repairs to the roof.

Concerned at the condition of the church the Revd. George Gutteres in 1894 consulted the architect George Fellowes Prynne, a prolific local architect who carried out a number of restorations as well as designing many new church buildings. After surveying the building Fellowes Prynne recommended works to the floor as the flag stones were laid straight onto the soil and had sunk in many places, replacing the platforms under the pews which were rotten, realigning the north wall which was 8 inches out of perpendicular, replacing the rotten porch roof, repairs to the tower including the belfry stage, and treating the pews and screen for woodworm.

Of the works proposed only the tower repairs were immediately carried out as alarming cracks had developed on three of its four sides. In 1895 the walls were strengthened with cast-iron beams, four new pinnacles were re-carved along with the stonework of the west window, the two internal rotten wooden

stages were replaced, as was the ancient tower door and a sixth bell was installed.

20th century

It was not until 1902 that the bulk of the works proposed by Fellowes Prynne took place. These were carried out under the supervision of William Weir. The decision by the parish to use an architect from the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings (S.P.A.B.) ensured the works were as Beatrix Cresswell remarked 'judiciously carried out' and that 'no signs appear of that glaring renovation which so frequently mars the appearance of an ancient church' and why as the list description states 'The church of St. John is a particularly good and well-preserved example; perhaps the paradigm of a rural church in Devon. It has escaped the worst excesses of C 19 renovation'.

In 1902 the north wall of the nave was rebuilt with deeper foundations and the Norman doorway uncovered, the nave and south aisle roofs were stabilised with new oak trusses and the Flemish alabaster reredos panel was moved to the western wall of the Forde aisle. The porch was restored in 1905 and the floors were relaid on cement, the woodworm treated and repairs carried out in oak. The screen was restored in 1911 and the rood loft stairs uncovered. Repairs to the windows took place in 1927 including returning the east window to its original proportions.

According to the Diocesan Advisory Committee (D.A.C.) minutes the parish sought advice about the decayed condition of the screen and woodwork in October 1932. The parish were advised how to clean the screen by the vicar of Bradninch, whose church also housed a medieval screen. Further roof repairs were carried following the Second World War and the organ was repaired. D.A.C. minutes record the conservation of the screen by Miss Webling in 1951 who cleaned, oiled and polished it, but did not repaint. In January 1951 a faculty was granted for **heating** and **lighting**, with the proviso the heaters were sited so as not to damage the ancient pews and window cills and in June 1960 the D.A.C. received an application to install a new pedal organ. In 1985 a glazed screen with wooden doors was erected separating the nave from the tower.

In 1993 the statue on the west front of the tower was restored. The restoration included the Madonna's crown found behind the statue when it was removed.

What is its plan form, spatial quality, building materials used, how is it lit and heated?

Plan - Nave with narrower chancel. South aisle not quite full length. West tower and south porch. See attached plan for dates.

Materials -

- Main body of the church - local red sandstone and volcanic stone rubble with volcanic ashlar quoins.
- Dressings and details – Beerstone and replacements in Hamstone
- Other materials - 17th century brickwork and slate

There are spotlights and under-pew and wall mounted heaters.

What is the theological 'message' communicated by the exterior and interior of the church?

Question not answered

1.5 The church building in detail

Assess the significance of either each historical phase of the building or of each area within it. For example, north aisle, south chancel elevation, Norman tower.

Phase	Significance
Pre-medieval	Moderate
14 th century	Moderate
15 th century	High
16 th century	Moderate
17 th century	Moderate *
18 th century	Moderate
19 th century	High
20 th century	Moderate-High +

* The 17th century panelling is included in the 19th century phase as this was when it was installed

+ The 20th century refers not to new work but the effect of the SPAB restoration

Area	Significance
Chancel – Perpendicular	High
15 th Century Screen – Perpendicular rood screen with 34 painted panels	High
Nave- 14 th century	High
Nave arcade – 15 th century incorporating two image niches and a hagioscope	High
Tower – 15 th century restored in the late 19 th century. 3 stages with semi-hexagonal stair turret and 17 th century statue of Madonna and Child	Moderate-High
South aisle – 15 th century built for wealthy local family, the Fordes	High
East end of south aisle	Moderate-High
South porch 15 th century with carved parapet	Moderate-High
East window of chancel – Perpendicular	Moderate-High
South aisle windows – 15 th century, north and south 17 th century remodelling	Moderate-High
Nave windows – 16 th century	Moderate-High
Chancel windows, north and south – 19 th century	Moderate
Chancel ceiling – possibly 15 th century ceiled wagon rood with moulded piers and Green Man bosses	High
Nave ceiling 17 th /18 th century plaster vault with moulded cornice, dentil frieze and ornamental section of octagonal panels with rose bosses	Moderate-High
South aisle ceiling 17 th /18 th century – plaster vault with moulded cornice	Moderate
Image niche on northern side of chancel arch with remnants of medieval paintwork	High
Image niche on eastern wall of south chapel	Moderate-High

1.6 Contents of the Church

Provide a description of its contents and their significance. It is reasonable to group these if there is a contemporary scheme which is significant as such, for example one could say a complete scheme of 18th century furnishings, of high significance.

Include; Altar; Reredos; Pulpit; Lectern; Font; Stained glass; wall paintings; Bells and Bell frame; Monuments; Organ; Communion plate; Registers; Pews and other woodwork; Metalwork; Communion rails; floor finishes. Do the contents relate to any particular historical changes to the church and do they contribute to the significance of those changes? Are any of the artists or craftsmen of international, national, regional or local importance?

Item or group of items	Significance
17 th century chancel linenfold panelling with frieze of carved figures	High – important features artistically and also as indicators of the High Church period under the Revd. Dornford
Late 17 th oak altar rail with turned balusters and decorative cherubs and garlands on main posts	High
c. 19 th century oak choir stalls with poppyhead finials and some reused 15 th century carved oak bench ends	Moderate-High
c.18 th century fielded panel pulpit	Moderate-High
Late 19 th century Gothic lectern	Low-Moderate
Almost complete set of 15 th century oak benches – blind tracery on the frontals and back benches, ends carved with flowers and two tiers of tracery	High
15 th century Beerstone font – octagonal bowl with quatrefoil panels, carved foliage base and panelled stem and 17 th century ogee profile font cover with bird finial	Moderate-High
19 th century wall memorial plaques	Low-Moderate
Carved 17 th century alabaster panel in south aisle	High
16 th century knowy-headed prayer and commandment boards on west	Moderate-High

wall of nave, painted arms of George II in tower	
mid 19 th century organ	Low-Moderate
Three wooden chests (2 carved) to west of south door, on the chancel side of the screen and at the western end of the nave	Moderate
Carved free standing bench to the west of south door	Moderate
Chair at base of pulpit	Low-Moderate
18 th century panelled altar table	Moderate-High
Floor nave and south aisle- stone and slate flags. A number of monuments dating back to the 17 th century and a number of medieval floor tiles in the south aisle.	Moderate –High
The floor in the chancel is carpeted – the areas uncovered show stone flags and wooden floor boards	Moderate – but carpeted area unknown
Window glass – chancel and south aisle mainly clear diamond panes with some bottle glass in the south aisle, early painted and stained glass in the tracery. Nave windows old clear diamond panes with some patterned grisaille glass.	Moderate-High
South door – ancient plank and batten wooden door with original iron hinges, studs and handle. Priest's door on south aisle ancient horizontal plank with iron studs. Ancient plank and batten wooden door to tower stair.	Moderate-High
Door at west end of tower – Victorian possibly part of 1895 restoration	Moderate
Victorian door to rood loft, early 20 th century doors to south porch with leaded lights above, 1980s glass and wood screen to tower	Low
Bells – 2 early 15 th century bells (both re-cast one in 1826 ad 1 in 1829), 1 bell dated 1549 cast by	Moderate-High

Roger Semson of Aish Prior Foundry in Somerset, 1 bell cast in 1669 by Thomas Pennington III of Exeter, 1826 - new bell cage and a new 5 th bell, 1895 - new frames, a new 6 th bell and longer ropes to ring from ground floor	
Clock - The late 18 th century tower clock is a working example of a wrought-iron, horizontal –framed ‘birdcage’ tower clock with stone weights	Moderate-High

1.7 Significance for mission *

What are the strengths of the building as it is for worship and mission? What potential for adapted and new uses does the church and its setting already have with little or no change?

Plymtree is a small village and this is reflected in the average size of the congregation – around 30. However at times of church festivals and other special services this can reach in excess of 100. Plymtree Church of England Primary School use the church every Thursday for whole school worship involving around 80 pupils, plus staff and a few parents. The school also uses the church for their special Festival Services and Annual Leavers Service and Presentation – each of these services results in “standing room only”.

The church is also used during the year for Baptisms, weddings and funerals. The building is becoming increasingly used for other church organized events – Hymns and Choral Concerts, Lectures and the like, although the fixed medieval pews do restrict events, we are planning more activities of a similar nature. The visitor’s (sic) book confirms that the church is an attraction to many – around 100 people visit it each year- it now features in Dr Todd Gray’s book “Devon’s Fifty Best Churches”.’ – (Taken from the Statement of Significance for Internal Refurbishment submitted in April 2012)

The churchyard does not present an opportunity for change as the area immediately around the church is flat and elevated and any development would seriously compromise the character of the church. The churchyard extension whilst less visually sensitive is still used for burials and internments.

The exterior of the church has a high window to wall ratio and does not offer any wall of less significance onto which an extension could be added. The interior of the church is largely filled by the medieval pews.

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* The following questions were put to members of the congregation in the form of a questionnaire. Below is a summary of the

information they provided which was additional to that discovered by the researcher.

(1.3 Social History)

1. What is the historic and present use of the church and churchyard by the congregation and the wider community? How does this contribute to its significance?

The church is a witness to the Christian life of the village and is a focal point of religion for the community. It is used regularly for church services by the congregation and the primary school children who attend weekly services and thanksgiving services. It has a steady flow of baptisms, weddings, funerals and celebrations. It is a gathering point for parishioners, visitors and tourists. The church is open during the day and available for anyone who wishes to pray or just be quiet. The gathering of people together at the key festivals of the church year and for family occasions is an important key to the sense of community.

Other uses of the church include concerts, talks, flower festivals, and the recent Queen's Jubilee celebrations.

Its architecture, art and artefacts attract people from outside the parish, and even from abroad, to experience the historic and religious heritage.

The churchyard has great significance to those whose relatives are buried there or whose ashes are interred. The high quality listed elements of the churchyard - tombs, lych gate and the surrounding wall combined with the yew tree believed to be over 1100 years old and one of the "great trees of East Devon", all contribute to a special place. The ecological character of the churchyard as a habitat also contributes to its significance.

Bell ringing practice takes place weekly and the bells are rung for special occasions and by visiting groups.

The hourly chiming of the church clock is a reminder of the presence of the church in the day-to-day life of the village.

Inside and outside the church are memorials to those who died in the World Wars.

'Historically, the church in a village was the centre of both religious and community life, since in addition to meeting the specifically religious needs of the parishioners, the parish vestry and its officers were responsible for functions such as poor law, road maintenance and other functions that would now be the responsibility of secular local authorities. The separation of the religious from more civic functions was only completed in 1894. The church

served as a place not only for worship, but as a meeting place and focus for other activities. Bell ringers, for example, placed bells within the existing church tower in order to practice their art, the church tower being the only suitable place to place them – the explosion of augmentations of bells to 5 or 6 or more in the C18 had nothing to do with religion, or ringing for service. The clock was installed in the late C17 to serve for timekeeping for the whole community.’

2. Are there any significant events or personalities associated with the church? Are there important memories associated with the church or churchyard?

Under this question several questionnaires mentioned information that others included in the section above (family celebrations, Diamond Jubilee, bell ringing competitions, flower festivals

In 2011 the church celebrated the 750th anniversary of the first named rector. The screen carved with the Bouchier and Stafford knot represents Isabel, former wife of Humphrey Stafford, Earl of Devon. It also includes a figure believed to be Henry VII.

A Japanese prisoner of war (Chrichton McDouall 1948) and a prolific writer of crime fiction (Gilderoy Davison 1954) were former rectors. The most significant lay person was John Land who died in 1697 having been successful in business in London and left considerable wealth to numerous good causes including for communion plate in Plymtree.

There is a wall memorial to a former Dean of Exeter.

3. How has the community served by the church changed over time?

Historically the majority of the community was engaged in agriculture and associated trades. Now many people work away from the village (consequently the church has become a stable and reassuring feature to many). Many people who live in the village are not originally from the area. There is quite a high proportion of retired people. The school has been encouraged to become a vital part of the church community. Overall the attendance at church services has fallen.

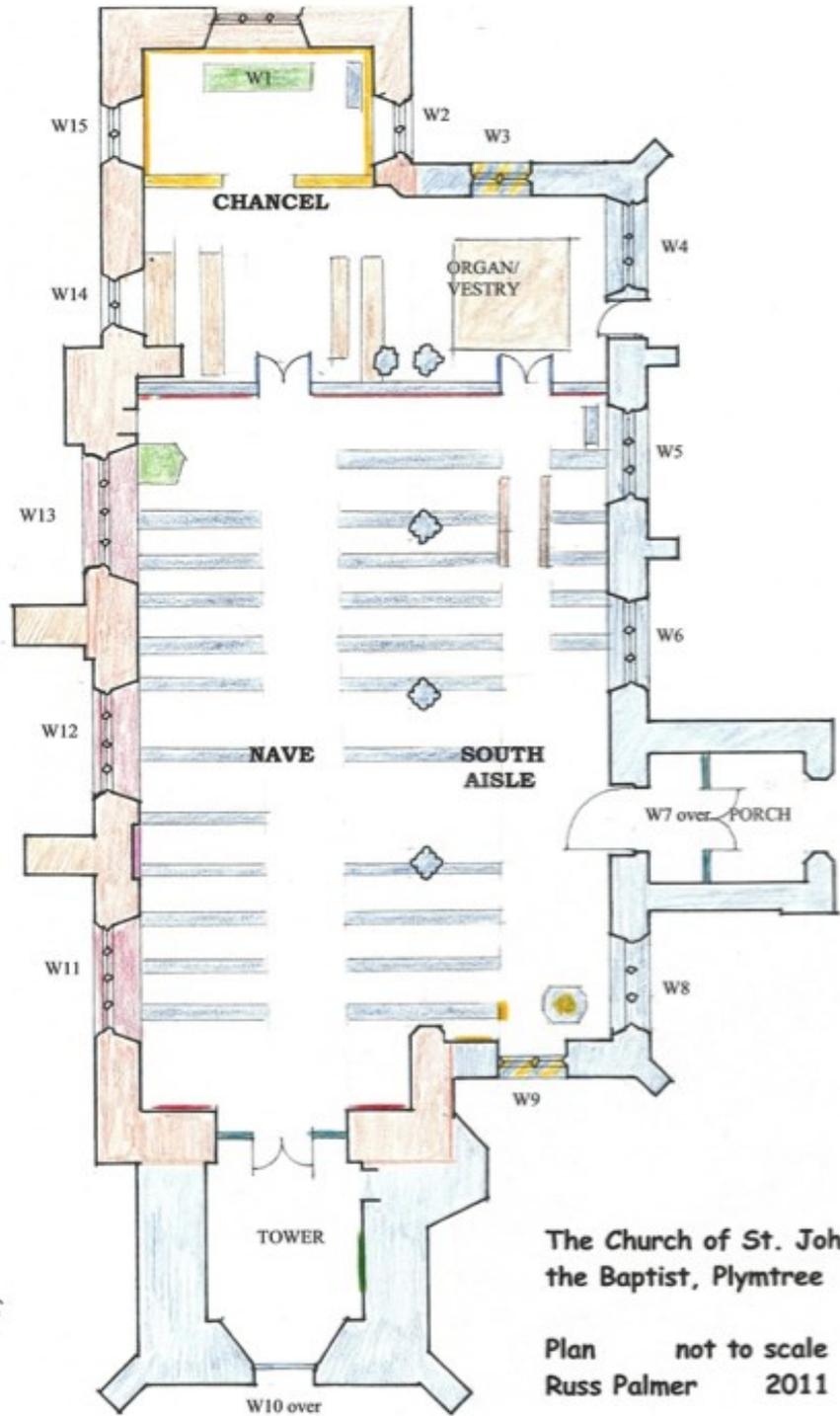
(1.7 Significance for mission)

4. What are the strengths of the building as it is for worship and mission?

- Practical strengths include its central position, light interior, good heating, lighting, organ and choir stalls. Its historic features and the fact that it is well kept. 'It is a convenient size in the sense that it provides enough space for the numbers of people who want to attend major services, but not so large as to lose intimacy.'
- Non material strengths included its cheerful, welcoming atmosphere, its sense of timelessness of a place apart and the fact it imparts a sense of awe and reassurance. The intangible atmosphere created by centuries of prayer. Its sense of permanence combined with a warm and intimate atmosphere. Despite its historic qualities it still maintains a sense of relevance. It provides a sense of comfort to those people who do not regularly attend the church. Its heritage is a reason that people willingly support the church through Gift Days and other special appeals, as has been demonstrated in the last 3 years with the response to major fund raising for a series of fabric expenditures and all paid for.

5. What potential for adapted and new uses does the church and its setting already have with little or no change?

- The church is generally believed to be well suited to its use. Many believe it should remain unchanged, whilst other think limited change could extend the potential for further community use such as plays, poetry reading, recitals, art exhibitions. A bell ringing platform above the present Bell Tower floor could allow the space below to be used by children, etc. Outdoor events could be held in the churchyard on the southern side.



Surviving Historic Fabric

- Norman (pink)
- 14th (orange)
- 15th (light blue)
- 16th (red)
- 17th (yellow)
- 18th (green)
- 19th (brown)
- 20th (blue)

The Church of St. John the Baptist, Plymtree

Plan not to scale
Russ Palmer 2011

Appendix 7

C.C.T. Assessment of Significance for St John the Baptist, Plymtree

(Information in red refers to the C.C.T. Assessment of Significance for St Andrew's, Old Church, Kingsbury, May 2009 included in Appendix 2. Information in black is the researcher's response to the questions.)

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1.0 Introduction

1.1 This document is based on the guidelines and policies contained in English Heritage's Conservation Principles: Policies and Guidance (English Heritage, 2008).

1.2 This methodology is prescribed to enable comparisons between historic churches and also to ensure that there is a sound understanding of the significance of a building using available sources of information. The assessments will draw out weaknesses in our understanding of the buildings and highlight areas where more research may be required as well as bringing together what we already know.

1.3 Any adaptation or development to the fabric of the historic churches must be informed by a sound understanding of the heritage values, significance and sensitivity of the building. The production of an Assessment of Significance document is therefore an essential first concomitant to any project that involves managing change within or without the building.

2.0 Conservation Principles

2.1 The fundamental conservation principles underlying managed change to any historic building can be outlined under six headings based on English Heritage's Conservation Principles (19-24). These are summarised below.

2.2 *The historic environment is a shared resource.* Our environment contains a unique and dynamic record of human activity. People value this historic environment as part of their cultural and natural heritage. It gives distinctiveness, meaning and quality to the places in which we live, providing a sense of continuity and a source of identity. It is a social and economic asset and a resource for learning and enjoyment. Each generation should therefore shape and sustain the historic environment in ways that allow people to use, enjoy and benefit from it, without compromising the ability of future generations to do the same.

2.3 *Everyone should be able to participate in sustaining the historic environment.* Everyone should have the opportunity to contribute their knowledge of the value of places, and to participate in decisions about their future, by means that are accessible, inclusive and informed. Learning is central to sustaining the historic environment. It encourages informed and active participation in caring for the historic environment. Experts play a crucial role in discerning, communicating and sustaining the established values of places, and in helping people to refine and articulate the values they attach to places.

2.4 *Understanding the significance of places is vital.* The significance of a place embraces all the diverse cultural and natural heritage values that people associate with it, or which prompt them to respond to it. These values tend to grow in strength and complexity over time, as understanding deepens and people's perceptions of a place evolve. In order to identify the significance of a place, it is necessary first to understand its fabric, and how and why it has changed over time; and then to consider:

- who values the place, and why they do so
- how those values relate to its fabric
- their relative importance
- whether associated objects contribute to them
- the contribution made by the setting and context of the place
- how the place compares with others sharing similar values.

The degree of significance determines what, if any, protection, including statutory designation, is appropriate under law and policy.

2.5 *Significant places should be managed to sustain their values.* Conservation is the process of managing change to a significant place in

its setting in ways that will best sustain its heritage values, while recognising opportunities to reveal or reinforce those values for present and future generations. Conservation is achieved by all concerned with a significant place sharing an understanding of its significance, and using that understanding to:

- judge how its heritage values are vulnerable to change
- take the actions and impose the constraints necessary to sustain, reveal and reinforce those values
- mediate between conservation options, if action to sustain one heritage value could conflict with action to sustain another
- ensure that the place retains its authenticity – those attributes and elements which most truthfully reflect and embody the heritage values attached to it.

2.6 Decisions about change must be reasonable, transparent and consistent.

Decisions about change in the historic environment demand the application of expertise, experience and judgement, in a consistent, transparent process guided by public policy.

2.7 Documenting and learning from decisions is essential. Accessible records of the justification for decisions and the actions that follow them are crucial to maintaining a cumulative account of what has happened to a significant place, and understanding how and why its significance may have been altered. Managers of significant places should monitor and regularly evaluate the effects of change and responses to it, and use the results to inform future decisions. Public bodies similarly should monitor and respond to the effects on the historic environment of their policies and programmes.

3.0 Description of the Church

The following description should be read in conjunction with the maps and the photographic record.

3.1 The following description should be read in conjunction with the maps in appendix 1 and the photographic record contained in appendix 3.

3.2 The village of Plymtree lies at the northern end of a triangle of rural farmland bordered by the M5 to the east, the A373 to the west and the A30 to the south. The church is sited on a plateau of ground in the centre of the village just below the brow of a hill, close to the pub. It is designated a grade I Listed Building. The listing dates to 22 February 1955 and the building description is presented verbatim:

Parish church. C15 in more than one phase, some late C17 modernisation, renovated in 1893. Local red sandstone and volcanic stone rubble with volcanic ashlar quoins; Beerstone and replacement Hamstone ashlar detail; slate roof. Plan: nave with narrower chancel. The south aisle is not quite full length. West tower and south porch. Exterior: tall west tower of 3 stages with diagonal buttresses and embattled parapet with crocketed corner pinnacles and carved gargoyles. Semi-hexagonal stair turret on south side rises only through 2 stages; it has a parapet of open quatrefoils with crocketed pinnacles. Large 2-light belfry windows with Perpendicular tracery. On the west side there is a 2-centred arch doorway with moulded surround and above it a 3-light window with Perpendicular tracery; both have plain hoods. High in the tower this side is a large niche with moulded surround and crocketed canopy. It contains a carved representation of the Virgin and Child; it is very worn but appears to be C17. The south aisle has diagonal buttresses. The windows each end were renewed in the late C17; they have reused Gothic tracery and they are set in the late C17 brick. The south side is 5 bays. The porch is left of centre. It has a parapet carved with quatrefoil panels and enriched with carved shields and 4-leaf motifs. The outer arch is 2-centred with moulded surround including a band of 4-leaf motifs and the label stops of the hoodmould are carved as angels with shields. Inside the porch has a C19 ceiling. The south doorway is a 2-centred arch of volcanic stone with moulded surround and it contains an ancient studded plank door. There are remains of a stone stoup alongside. The south aisle windows are 3 lights with Perpendicular tracery and carved human head label stops to the hoodmoulds. In the chancel the windows to north and south are C19, square-headed with cusped tracery, the southern one distinguished by carved human head label stops to the hoodmoulds. The east window is 3 lights with Perpendicular tracery. On the north side the break between nave and chancel is marked by a projecting rood stair turret. This side the nave has 3 tall C16 windows, square-headed and each has slightly different shaped heads, elliptical and Tudor arch heads. They are separated by large buttresses with weathered offsets. Interior is very good: both the nave and aisle have late C17 or C18 plaster vaults, both with moulded cornices but the nave is distinguished by a dentil frieze and, towards the chancel the nave ceiling includes an ornamental section, a ceiling of octagonal panels with bosses like ceiling roses. The chancel roof is a ceiled wagon roof with moulded ribs and purlins and bosses all carved as the Green Man. It is painted and therefore it is not clear how much of it, if any, is C15. Tall tower arch is Beerstone ashlar and panelled with moulded surround. Plain plastered chancel arch. 5-bay Beerstone arcade to the aisle, one overlapping the chancel. The moulded piers are Pevsner's type B with carved foliage caps. Two of the nave piers include the remains of a small image niches. The pier between nave and chancel is wider than the others and incorporates a Tudor arch-headed hagioscope. On the northern side of the chancel arch and facing the nave is the remains of an image niche for which the rood screen makes provision. Its surround is richly carved. The rood stair close by has been reopened in the C20 and the doorways rebuilt. There is the remains of yet another image niche to the south chapel. The rear arches of the nave windows have moulded plaster hoodmoulds. The floor is flagged and the aisle includes a couple of good C17 graveslabs. Plastered walls. Rood screen: is a splendid example. Carved oak, 9 bays, with panelled wainscotting, Perpendicular window tracery (Pevsner's type A), Gothic tracery in the coving, and frieze of 3 bands of undercut delicate foliage with a vallance. Also the screen is painted with ancient colour, the wainscotting scheme is a remarkable survival. All 34 panels are painted with a different figure, mostly saints but some New Testament figures, a bishop and a royal scene (see church

guide). Furniture and fittings: sanctuary is lined with restored late C17 linenfold panelled wainscotting including a frieze of maybe Flemish carved classical female figures. Late C17 oak altar rail with turned balusters and cherubs and garland carved onto the main posts. C19 oak stalls with poppyhead finials and reusing some good C15 carved oak bench ends. C18 fielded panel pulpit and late C19 Gothic lectern. Very good and complete set of C15 oak benches; blind tracery on the frontals and back benches, ends carved with similar schemes of flowers and 2 tiers of tracery. The only additions a couple of late C17 benches and one C19 example. C15 Beerstone font; octagonal bowl with quatrefoil panels, carved foliage base and panelled stem. C17 oak ogee-profile font; cover complete with carved bird on the apex. Memorials: are small, C19 in date and of local interest only. Good carved alabaster panel in south aisle represents the Resurrection of Jesus. At the back of the aisle C16 nony-headed Prayer and Commandment boards and tower includes painted arms of George II. Glass: good deal of early painted and stained glass in the window tracery and some bottle glass in the south aisle. The nave windows are for the most part diamond leaded panes of old clear glass and the centre window includes some patterned yellow grisaille glass. The Church of St John is a particularly good and well-preserved example; perhaps the paradigm of a rural parish church in Devon it has escaped the worst excesses of C19 renovation and includes fine craftsmanship from the C15 onwards. The painted figures on the screen wainscotting are a remarkable survival.

3.3 The church has a rectangular nave with a narrower chancel, a south aisle not quite full length, a west tower and a south porch. The internal measurements are approximately – nave 12.2m x 4.9m, chancel 6.7 x 4.9, south aisle 16.5m x 3.7. The windows on the south wall of the south aisle and the tower are 15th century, the windows at the east and west ends of the south aisle are 15th century altered in the 17th century, the nave windows are 16th century, the eastern window of the chancel is 15th century and the north and south chancel windows are 19th century. The glazing is mainly clear quarries with some medieval fragments of painted, stained and grisaille glass.

3.4 The church listing dates the church from the 15th century, but other sources suggest the nave and chancel date from the 14th century and fabric from the earlier Norman church (the door on the north wall) still survives. The Norman doorway is very tall suggesting it could be Saxon in date and the survival of a dated yew tree adjacent to the church suggests the site had religious significance by the 9th century.

3.5 The three stage west tower has diagonal buttresses, an embattled parapet and a semi-hexagonal stair turret on its southern side that rises through two stages. It is constructed from local red sandstone and volcanic stone rubble with dressings of Beerstone and replacement Hamstone. The west door has a two-centred arch and the windows are Perpendicular. Also on the west face is a 15th century statue of the Virgin and Child. The tower was restored and stabilised in the late 19th century and the crocketed corner pinnacles and the tracery of the west windows are replacements.

3.6 The south aisle was added to the church in the mid 15th century paid for by a local family the Fordes of Fordmore. Separated from the nave by an arcade of columns in the Perpendicular style it extends to almost the full length of the chancel. The south porch was built at around the same time again in the Perpendicular style with a carved parapet.

3.7 The east window in the chancel is Perpendicular and dates from the 15th century, the north and south windows in the chancel are 19th century, the windows on the south wall of the south aisle are 15th century and the windows at the east and west end of the south aisle are 15th century altered in the 17th century. The three tall, square-headed windows on the north wall of the nave were installed in the 16th century replacing the earlier 14th/15th century windows.

3.8 The nave and the south aisle roofs are covered in natural slate. The chancel has been re-roofed in either a different non-local or man-made slate. The nave and chancel roofs were stabilised with new oak trusses in the early 20th century. The chancel roof may incorporate some medieval fabric. The walls of the nave, chancel, south aisle and porch are all, like the tower, constructed from local red sandstone and volcanic stone rubble with dressings of Beerstone and replacement Hamstone. The south wall exterior was described as 'roughcast' in the early 20th century and traces of this render can still be seen, particularly around the priests' door. Inside the walls are all plastered apart from the lower part of the south wall between the main south door and the screen where the plaster has been removed and the stone wall exposed. The chancel roof interior has carved bosses of the Green Man and could date from the 15th century. The nave and aisle vaulted ceilings are early 18th century and have Classical style decoration.

3.9 A significant contributor to the quality of the church is the good survival of 15th century woodwork. This includes a screen which runs the width of the church separating the nave and south aisle from the chancel and the chapel known as the Forde chapel and an almost complete set of oak benches. The Beer stone font situated at the west end of the south aisle also dates from the 15th century and has Perpendicular style decoration.

3.10 The oak altar rail dates from the 17th century as does the wall panelling in the chancel, although this was not installed in the church until the 19th century. Similarly there is a Flemish 17th century alabaster relief panel now in the south aisle which was installed in the 19th century as a reredos behind the altar.

3.11 The wooden panelled altar table is 18th century as is the royal coat of arms (originally behind the altar and now in the tower ringing chamber). The choir stalls are 19th century with a reused 15th century carved oak bench end. The pulpit is probably 18th century although could be earlier and was originally

much taller. The lectern is late 19th century plain Gothic in style. The clock on the belfry was erected in the late 18th century. The organ is mid 19th century.

3.12 The first restoration scheme took place in the 1820s with work on the chancel arch, roof and the windows. Works took place to the floor and tower in the late 19th century and the north wall was externally buttressed. Major repairs took place in the early 20th century.

3.13 The heating and lighting systems are modern. The wall memorials are 19th century and of local but not national interest. At the rear of the nave are 16th century prayer and commandment boards.

4.0 Heritage Values

4.1 People may value a place for many reasons beyond utility or personal association: for its distinctive architecture or landscape, the story it can tell about its past, its connection with notable people or events, because they find it beautiful or inspiring, or for its role as a focus of a community. These are examples of cultural and natural heritage values in the historic environment that people want to enjoy and sustain for the benefit of present and future generations at every level from the ‘familiar and cherished local scene’ to the nationally or internationally significant place.

4.2 Many heritage values are recognised by the statutory designation and regulation of significant places, where a particular value, such as ‘architectural or historic interest’ or ‘scientific interest’, is judged to be ‘special’, that is above a defined threshold of importance. Designation necessarily requires the assessment of the importance of specific heritage values of a place; but decisions about its day-to-day management should take account of all the values that contribute to its significance. Moreover, the significance of a place should influence decisions about its future, whether or not it is has statutory designation.

4.3 This section is intended to prompt comprehensive thought about the range of inter-related heritage values that may be attached to St John’s. The high level values range from evidential, which is dependent on the inherited fabric of the place, through historical and aesthetic, to communal values which derive from people’s identification with the place.

4.4 Evidential value

4.4.1 The evidential value of Plymtree church rests in both the standing structure and the potential for below-ground archaeology. No archaeological investigations at the church have taken place but there could be evidence of an earlier building on the site. Reports from the restoration of 1910 when the

floor of the church was dug up and relaid describe how ‘ a portion of old wall, with plaster face, was found about a foot inside the present North wall near the pulpit’. This was presumably part of the former early Norman or Saxon church.

4.4.2 The yew tree in the churchyard is evidence of religious activity on the site from the 9th century.

4.4.3 The potential for evidential value derived from archaeological investigation at Plymtree church suggests that any proposed excavation work in or around the site could diminish this value unless appropriately mitigated.

4.4.5 The standing structure of the church provides some evidential value. The doorway on the northern wall is evidence of an earlier church – the style of the doorway suggests it was either Saxon or early Norman. The doorway could have been re-sited on the north wall from the earlier building whose north wall was identified during the early 20th century restoration.

4.4.6 In summary, there is some evidential value in the form of potential archaeological and standing structural remains, relating to the earlier possibly Saxon church which stood on the site. These demonstrate the evolution of the church.

4.5 Historical Value

Historical value derives from the ways in which past people, events and aspects of life can be connected through a place to the present. It tends to be illustrative or associative

4.5.1 The historical illustrative value at Plymtree church rests in the completeness of the survival of its 15th century fabric including the nave, chancel (both of which could be older), south aisle, tower, south porch, painted screen and carved benches. Whilst the church has been adapted for cultural, stylistic and social reasons during the post-medieval period the main core of the church remains essentially a 15th century building. The degree of surviving original fabric and the lightness-of-touch of the subsequent alterations make the church according to the list description ‘a particularly good and well-preserved example; perhaps the paradigm of a rural parish church in Devon’.

4.5.2 The altar rail is illustrative of the liturgical changes instituted by Archbishop Laud in the 17th century.

4.5.3 Many of the alterations carried out to the church during the 18th century which would have been illustrative of the changes made to many churches during this time to emphasize the readings rather than the sacrament of Holy

Communion have not survived. The west end gallery and box pews seen in a late 19th century photograph are no longer extant but the pulpit still survives although of a reduced height and moved from its original position to the right of the nave screen doors to its position adjacent to the north wall.

4.5.4 Like many parish churches in the 19th and early 20th century Plymtree church had several campaigns of restoration 1827-9, 1840s, 1895 and 1910. However, these restorations were mainly concerned with repair and not the wholesale replacement of earlier fabric. Representative fabric of the Victorian Ecclesiological movement includes the adornment of the chancel with re-used 17th paneling, the replacement of the north and south chancel windows, and the re-instatement of fragments of medieval coloured glass.

4.5.5 The church clock is probably the oldest working example of a wrought-iron, horizontal framed 'birdcage' tower clock in Devon making it illustrative of 18th century horological techniques. There are other examples of similar clocks in the county but not in working order.

4.5.6 The small amount of restoration can also be said to be illustrative of the influence of the S.P.A.B. as the architect in charge of the 1910 work was a member of that organisation.

4.5.7 The church is illustrative of a country parish church serving a fairly small population which benefitted in the 15th century from the patronage of local wealthy land owners.

4.5.8 The associative value of the church rests with the sepulchral and commemorative monuments, associations with prominent architects, the history of church governance, music, the Civil War, Oriel College, Oxford and the Ecclesiologists.

4.5.9 The wall monuments provide historic associative value linking local families with the church, as do the tombs and headstones in the graveyard.

4.5.10 The south aisle is linked with the local Forde family who paid for it and whose likenesses appear on the label stops of the hoodmoulds. The screen is linked to the Burchier and Stafford families and their emblems are incorporated into its design.

4.5.11 The rector from 1435-77, Sir Richard Smerte, links the church to local musical history as he has been described as the earliest recorded Devon musician, and wrote eleven carols during the 1440s.

4.5.12 The church is associated with the Civil War as the rector Nicholas Monk, 1646-1660, was the brother of General Monk, Duke of Albermarle.

Nicholas reputedly persuaded his brother, formerly one of Cromwell's generals, to support the restoration of Charles II to the throne. Nicholas was rewarded by being made Provost of Eton and then Bishop of Hereford – he is buried in Westminster Abbey.

4.5.13 The church is linked with Oriel College, Oxford as the College purchased the advowson of Plymtree in 1737. This made Oriel College the Patron who could nominate clergymen to be appointed parish priest. This in turn led to the church's association with the Oxford Movement. Joseph Dornford, rector 1832-1868, was a tutor at Oriel during the Oxford Movement and a Fellow of the College. In line with this ethos and that of the Cambridge Ecclesiologists he reordered the chancel with carved panelling, metal work and decoration to emphasise the importance of the sacrament of Holy Communion. Thomas Mozley, rector 1868-1880, was a pupil and friend of John Henry Newman, one of the founders of the Oxford Movement at Oriel College. He became a writer for *The Times* and wrote *Reminiscences, chiefly of Oriel College and the Oxford Movement*.

4.5.14 Connections with notable architects - George Fellowes Prynne (1853 - 1927) - architect of many parish churches mostly on a grand scale in the high-church Gothic Revival style and prolific restorer. Fellowes Prynne was appointed the repairing architect for St John the Baptist, Plymtree in 1894. Fortunately for the medieval fabric Fellowes Prynne undertook a programme of repair rather than wholesale restoration. William Weir (1865 – 1950) – repairing architect for Plymtree church in the early 20th century. Weir worked on a number of major historic building projects including the restoration of Dartington Hall, Tattershall Castle and Bodiam Castle. He collaborated with many of the leading figures of the Arts and Crafts Movement and was a committed campaigner for the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings. His sensitive conservation of Plymtree church was commended by Pevsner and is noted in the list description.

4.5.15 Connection with the history of church governance – Edgar Hay, rector 1897-1929, was one of the pioneer founders of the Church Assembly, the forerunner of the General Synod. The Ecclesiastical Dilapidations Measure 1923 was first discussed and planned at Plymtree rectory and Hay introduced the measure in the Assembly.

4.5.16 The associative value of the rectors linked with music, literature, church governance, Oriel College and the Civil War would not be diminished by any alteration or loss of fabric. The associative value of the monuments and gravestones are vulnerable to physical change but if recorded their historical association to the site will remain. The association of the repairing architects could be lost only if any of their actual alterations such as the chancel windows were altered. The connection with the Ecclesiology movement could

be lost only if changes were made to the paneling in the chancel and the removal of the stained glass. The associative value of the patron families the Forde's, Bouchiers and Staffords could be vulnerable if alterations took place to the screen or south aisle.

4.6 Aesthetic Value

Aesthetic value derives from the ways in which people draw sensory and intellectual stimulation from a place.

4.6.1 At Plymtree church this aesthetic value derives from the age of the building, the high level of craftsmanship from the 15th century onwards, the sensitive restoration/conservation of its component parts and its setting within a leafy churchyard.

4.6.2 Plymtree church has high aesthetic value as a church whose plan and internal features have remained virtually unaltered since the 15th century. The addition of large windows on the north wall in the 16th century has increased the aesthetic value by flooding the interior with light.

4.6.3 The 15th century fittings have survived with very little alteration and in themselves represent a high level of craftsmanship. The screen with its perpendicular window tracery has nine bays of paneled wainscoting decorated with 34 panels of painted figures. The fact that some panels have been painted by a different hand adds interest, but does not detract from its aesthetic value. Although cleaned over the years the original paintwork still survives. The 15th century benches are carved with two tiers of Gothic tracery. Other 15th century decorative material includes the carved heads of the Forbes family on the south wall exterior, the carved bosses depicting the Green Man in the chancel, the Perpendicular style stone font and remnants of coloured glass. On the west face of the tower a stone carving of the Madonna and Child is somewhat eroded but the fineness of the original decorative niche, the drapery of the Madonna's robe and her recently retrieved crown can still be appreciated.

4.6.3 In addition to the wonderfully intact 15th scheme of decoration later additions to the church maintained a high standard of craftsmanship. The 16th century nave windows already mentioned for their light giving properties have of themselves a high degree of aesthetic merit. Although all square headed each has a slightly different shaped head either elliptical or Tudor arched, clear glass leaded panes and some patterned yellow grisaille glass. At the back of the church are two nowy headed prayer and commandment boards – plain but of an unusual design.

4.6.4 There is a good representation of high quality 17th century work. The altar rail has turned balusters with cherubs and garlands carved on the main posts. The sanctuary is lined with 17th century linenfold paneling (possibly from a local house that was demolished) surmounted by a frieze of possibly Flemish carved classical female figures. At the rear of the church is a very fine carved alabaster panel of the crucifixion which is believed to be Flemish. The font has a carved ogee profile cover with a distinctive bird finial.

4.6.5 The ceiling in the nave and south aisle which date from the early 18th century have Classical style moulded cornices. The south aisle is quite plain but the nave has a section of ornamental octagonal panels and a dentil frieze. The painted coat of arms is typical of its period. The fielded panel pulpit has lost some of its aesthetic value by being reduced in scale and losing its sounding board. The late 18th century clock is of more technological than aesthetic interest.

4.6.6 Unlike so many churches work carried out in the 19th century at Plymtree was more in the nature of repair and conservation rather than restoration. Consequently the aesthetic value of the medieval work was not compromised. 19th additions to the fabric include the north and south chancel windows: these imitate the existing Perpendicular windows in style and the south chancel window has attractive carved heads forming the label stops to the hood mould in a similar style to the medieval heads on the south aisle. Similarly the 19th century work inside the church seeks to complement the surviving historic fabric – the carved oak choir stalls incorporate one of the 15th century oak bench ends. However the poppy head finials are a more generalized design not typical of medieval Devon churches.

4.6.7 The setting of Plymtree church within the leafy churchyard is also of high aesthetic value. The elevated site, prominent in the centre of the village presents a green backdrop to the medieval church punctuated by historic graves and mature trees including the venerable yew. In addition to its importance to the aesthetic significance of the church the churchyard also represent a significant open area of green space within the settlement as a whole, enhancing the village's pastoral character.

4.7 Communal Value

Communal value derives from the meanings of a place for the people who relate to it, or for whom it figures in their collective experience or memory. Communal values are closely bound up with historical (particularly associative) and aesthetic values, but tend to have additional and specific aspects.

Members of the congregation of St John's, Plymtree were asked a series of questions based on the questions asked by the C.C.T. Thirteen responses were

received.

In answer to the question ‘In your opinion what makes the building special?’ a large number of respondents commented on its central role in the community both as a physical landmark and as a venue for landmark events in the lives of most of the villagers: specifically baptisms, weddings and funerals. For many it is seen as an important community resource, especially through its connection with the village Church of England school. In addition to its importance as the setting for regular religious worship some highlighted the importance of the building as a symbol of God’s presence in the village. Many mentioned the importance of the building as an historic monument which bears witness to the village’s past and development. Similarly many highlighted the importance of the church as a repository for high quality craftsmanship. Several respondents commented that the good condition of the building bore witness to the high value in which the building is held by the congregation and the community. A number of respondents noted the importance of the church’s setting within the churchyard.

To the questions ‘Are there any changes that you think would make the building better used?’ and ‘What do you think other locals would like to see?’ the majority of respondents felt the nature of building meant little change was possible, and a number mentioned the other venues available within the village. However several suggested small changes that might be possible including a book stall, area for young children, kitchen and toilet facilities. More than one respondent suggest the ringing chamber at the foot of the tower area could be a possible site for further facilities.

To the final question ‘Are there any specific parts of the building that you would like to see protected from change or that you feel are especially sensitive?’ the majority of the respondents felt such was the importance of the surviving fabric the integrity of the interior as a whole would be threatened by any change, with the screen and pews singled out as particularly sensitive. There was one response however suggesting change should be considered if it were sympathetic.

5.0 Heritage Significance

5.1 This section uses the information detailed in previous sections to assess the significance of St John the Baptist. Understanding a place and assessing its significance demands the application of a systematic and consistent process, which is appropriate and proportionate in scope and depth to the decision to be made, or the purpose of the assessment. This will involve relating the heritage values of the church to its fabric and evolution, identifying who values the church and why they do so, and considering the

setting and context of the church. This is achieved by assessing first the heritage significance based on evidential, historical and aesthetic values and secondly by assessing the heritage significance based on communal values. This section should be read in conjunction with the plan.

5.2 Heritage Significance based on Evidential, Historical and Aesthetic Values

5.2.1 Much of the fabric of Plymtree church- the walls, most of the windows, the arcade, south aisle, south porch and tower - date from the Perpendicular period or earlier thus making its medieval date the most clear-cut element of heritage significance. Its grade I listing is primarily based on its date and high degree of survival of historic material. In addition to its historical significance the medieval fabric is also of aesthetic significance illustrating as it does local craftsmanship in the design of the windows, doors, mouldings and dressings. The south aisle has associative significance through its connections with the local Forde family. The east and west windows of the south aisle although altered in the 17th century still represent high historic significance.

5.2.2 The 19th century north and south chancel windows although 19th century replacements are archeologically accurate and the south window includes two finely carved heads making them of medium significance

5.2.3 The yew tree in the churchyard, the Norman/Saxon doorway on the north wall and the buried remains of the former north wall in the area of the pulpit, a foot inside the present wall (if they still exist) all have high evidential value relating as they do to evidence of earlier worship and buildings on the site.

5.2.4 The heritage significance inside the church is also mainly high. The fifteenth century craftsmanship illustrated by the nave bench ends, the painted, carved screen and the font (and its finely carved 17th century cover) has high historic and aesthetic significance, as does the chancel ceiling with its moulded ribs and Green Man bosses, the decoratively carved oak altar rail, the 17th century chancel paneling, the 14th century medieval floor tiles in the south aisle, the 16th century payers boards and the Flemish alabaster relief panel. The surviving 18th clock and its workings are of high historical value.

5.2.5 Some of the significance of the pulpit has been compromised by its having been lowered and moved from its original position, but as an example of 18th century carpentry and of the 18th century focus on preaching it remains of medium significance. The George II coat of arms now in the church tower is of medium interest due to its age and craftsmanship as is the paneled 18th century altar. The decorative plaster ceiling in the nave and south aisle may be a 19th century reproduction of the original 18th century work, but its aesthetic appeal still makes it of medium significance. The two 17th century slab

memorials in the south aisle are of medium historic significance. The 19th century choir stalls reusing a medieval bench end whilst not as significant as the originals are still of medium significance.

5.2.6 The remaining wall memorials are of local significance only and the 19th century north wall buttresses, the organ, lectern and 20th century tower doors and south porch outer doors are of low significance.

5.2.7 The significance of Plymtree church is increased by associative value with the S.P.A.B. movement, various well known 19th century architects, the connections with Oriel College, and figures from the Civil War.

5.2.8 The overall aesthetic significance of the building and its setting are high. With the very minor exceptions of the loss of plaster on the lower wall of the south aisle, the modern paint on the chancel ceiling and the arcade capitals and the clearance of some of the gravestones the church is a remarkable survival of a medieval parish church with very high quality additions from the 17th, 18th and 19th centuries.

5.3 Heritage Significance based on Communal Values

5.3.1 The majority of the local community hold the historic and aesthetic nature of their church in very high esteem. They recognize the high level of craftsmanship in the building and wish to see it preserved.

5.3.2 In addition to its role value as an historic and artistic resource of national level the village also values the church for its role as a community building, an important centre for religious life, family ceremonies and for its role in the life of the Church of England Primary school.

5.3.3 The community value the church and churchyard as a significant landmark, as a resource of local history and as a physical symbol of the phases of the village's development.

5.3.4 The community is largely relaxed with the limitations inherent within the current plan of the interior, largely because throughout the village there are a number of other venues for public assembly.

5.4 Summary of Significance

See plan below

5.4.1 The main elements of high significance:

The 15th century and earlier fabric, specifically the walls, all the windows except for those in the north and south chancel walls, the arcade, the south

aisle, south porch and tower. All of which have high aesthetic and/or historic value. The carving of the Virgin and child which has high aesthetic value. The yew tree, Anglo-Saxon/Norman doorway and buried wall remains which all have high evidential value. The bench ends, screen, font and cover, chancel ceiling, altar rail, chancel paneling, medieval floor tiles, 16th century prayer boards, the Flemish alabaster panel, the 18th century clock and the bells all have high aesthetic and/or historic value. The highly decorated chancel is of high significance due to its association with the Oxford Movement. The early 20th century restoration is of high associative significance as it reflects the influence of its S.P.A.B. architect. The green setting of the churchyard is of high communal significance as is the spiritual value of the church. Its educational and instructive significance has high communal significance.

5.4.2 The main elements of medium significance:

The 19th century north and south chancel windows are of medium aesthetic and historic value. The George II coats of arms is of medium historic value, as are the 17th floor memorial slabs. The 18th century pulpit has been altered but is still of medium historic value. The north and south aisle 18th century ceilings are of quite a high aesthetic value. The choir stalls are 19th century and generally of low value except for the inclusion of the medieval work. The carved Victorian lectern is typical of the Ecclesiologist's style of internal fittings and is of medium associative value. The church's connection with the Civil War is of medium historical value, but there is no physical expression of this.

5.4.3 The main elements of low significance:

The wall monuments are of local interest only. The organ is relatively late in date and of no especial technical importance. The reading desk is modern. The 19th century buttresses on the north wall are relatively recent and of no particular architectural merit.

5.4.4 The potential for tensions between the values

At present there are no obvious tensions between the values which constitute the significant elements of Plymtree church. This is mainly due to the fact there are a number of alternative venues for public meetings and events within the village. If these venues were to become more restricted in the future there would be the potential for conflict between the church's role as a centre for community and the current pew arrangement. No mention was made by about the effect of the screen on worship (particularly Holy Communion). However in the future there is the possibility that a desire for a different form of worship could cause a conflict with the high aesthetic and historical significance of the screen.

5.4.5 Further study required

If for any reason the aisle floor needed to be lifted again there would be an opportunity for further research into the church which formerly stood on this site. The gap in date between the yew tree and the Anglo-Saxon/Norman doorway suggests there may even have been two earlier churches on this site and an archaeological survey of the churchyard may provide further evidence of earlier buildings.

Further investigation of the Anglo-Saxon/Norman doorway could provide a firmer date for this feature and suggest whether it was inserted into a 14th century wall, or whether parts of the wall date from this earlier period.

Further research could take place into the iconography of the screen and the connection with the Bouchier and Stafford families.

An investigation into the pew ends of surrounding churches could reveal how typical the bench ends are of the area. For instance the church at Fenny Bridges also has a carving of a bouche shield on one of its bench ends. Similar iconography and style could indicate a local school.

6.0 Heritage Sensitivity

6.1 Below is a colour-coded plan and associated table of heritage sensitivity at St John's church. This section needs to be read in conjunction with that plan and lists the main areas of heritage sensitivity rated high, medium and low based on sections 4 and 5 of this report.

6.2 High Sensitivity:

Exterior – all standing walls on the four elevations, the tower, the porch, the south buttresses, all dressings and door surrounds, the Anglo-Saxon/Norman doorway, all doors except for the west tower door, chancel roof structure, statue of Madonna and Child, all the windows except for the north and south chancel windows, the south porch stoup, the churchyard aesthetic,
Interior - chancel vault, chancel arch and image niche, tower arch, the arcade, medieval floor tiles, buried archaeology within the church, the rood screen
Furniture and fittings – the chancel paneling, altar rail, nave and aisle benches, font, alabaster wall plaque, prayer and commandment boards

6.3 Medium Sensitivity:

Exterior – nave and south aisle roof covering and c. 1700 structure which still exists under later framework, north and south chancel windows, the west tower door

Interior - nave and south aisle vault, 17th century grave slabs

Furniture and fittings – choir stalls, altar, pulpit, lectern, George II arms

6.4 Low Sensitivity:

Exterior – chancel roof covering, nave and chancel later roof structure, north wall buttresses

Interior - nave aisle and chancel (this needs to be checked beneath carpet) flooring, internal tower doors, porch doors

Furniture and fittings – wall memorials, organ, reading desk

7.0 References

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Photocopy of extract from Richard Polwhele's *The History of Devonshire* (1793-1806) in the West Country Studies Library

From the notebooks of the Vestry and subsequently Parochial Church Council Meetings held by the Devon Record Office

Vestry Minutes for St John the Baptist Plymtree, 1827, unpublished, Devon Record Office

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December 1910, May 1911, December 1915, September 1927, October 1951, January 1953. May 1957, March 1962

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The National Heritage List for England. 'List entry for Church of St John the Baptist, Plymtree' [online] <http://list.english-heritage.org.uk/resultsingle.aspx?uid=1333727> [8th August 2012]

English Heritage. 'Pastscape' [online] http://www.pastscape.org.uk/hob.aspx?hob_id=188108 [24th January, 2013]

Historic maps

1809 1st Edition Ordnance Survey Map

1889 2nd Edition Ordnance Survey Map

Resources consulted

Devon County Council Historic Environment Service
Secretary of the Exeter Diocesan Advisory Committee
West Country Studies Library (now Devon Heritage Centre)
Devon Record Office (now Devon Heritage Centre)
Exeter Cathedral Library
Exeter University Special Collections
Russ Palmer, Church Architect

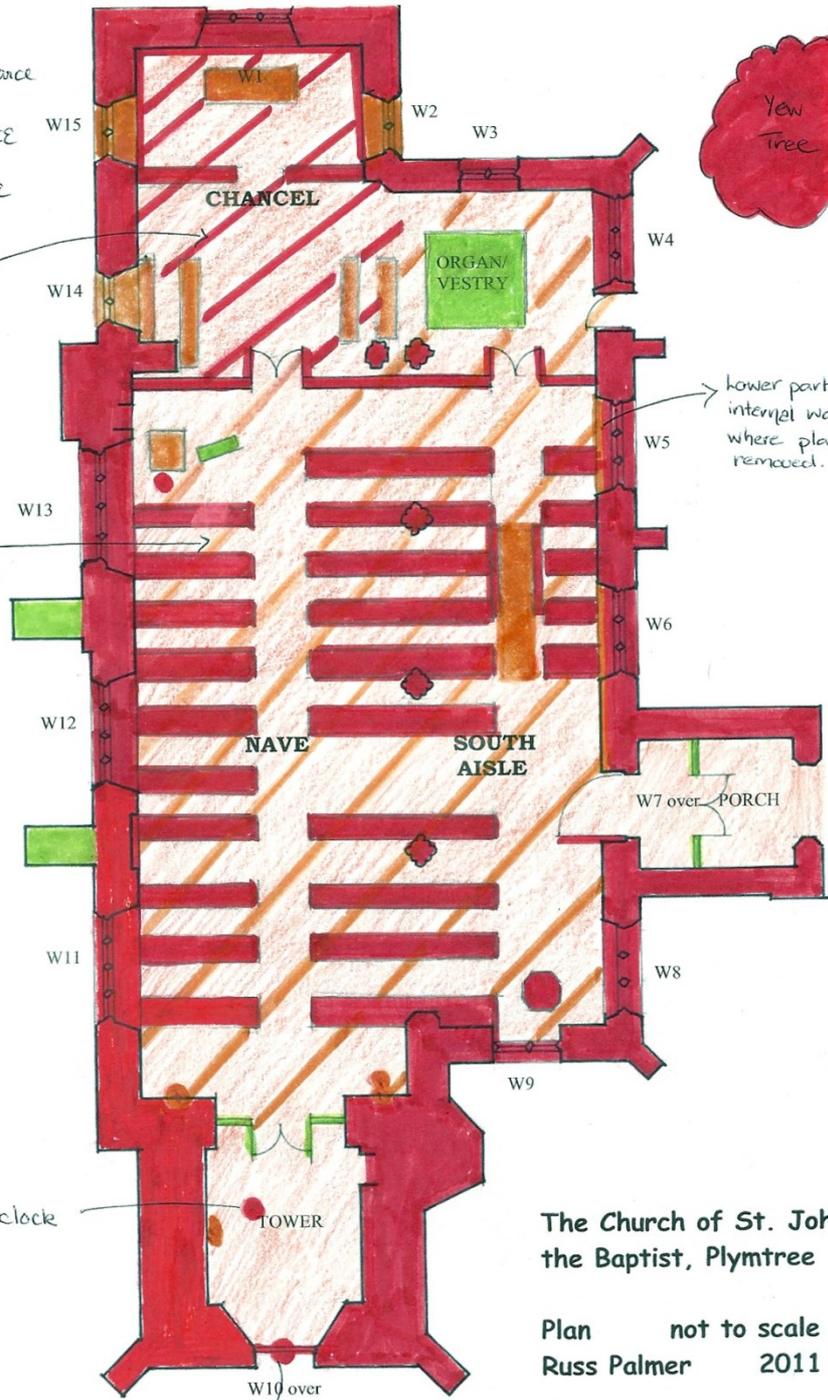
Areas of Significance

- High Significance
- Spot High Significance
- Medium Significance
- Low Significance

15th ceiling

17th/18th plaster vault

18th clock



Yew Tree

lower part of internal wall where plaster removed.

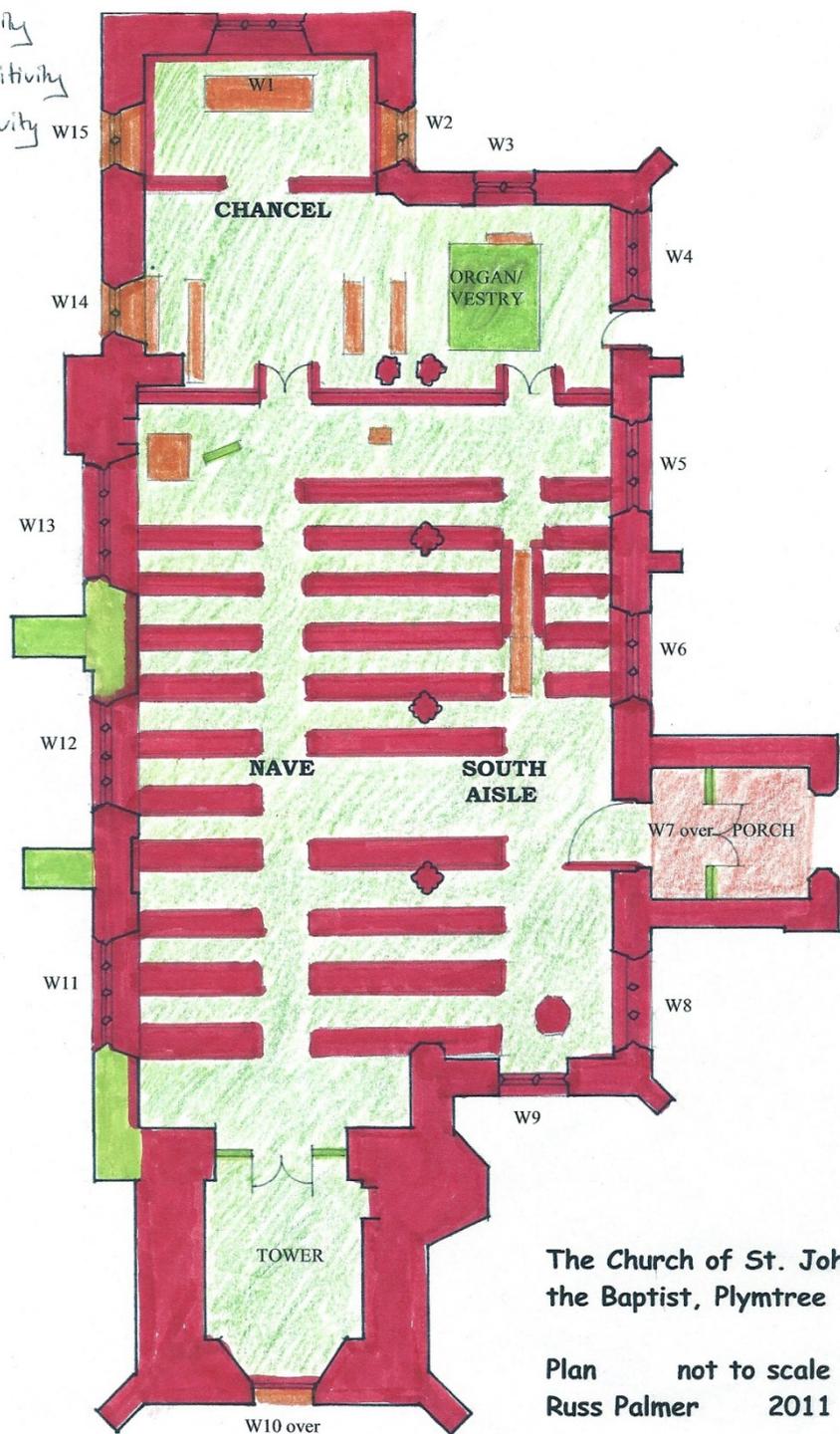
The Church of St. John the Baptist, Plymtree

Plan not to scale
Russ Palmer 2011

W10 over
Madonne + child sculpture

Areas of Sensitivity

- High sensitivity
- Medium sensitivity
- Low sensitivity



**The Church of St. John
the Baptist, Plymtree**

Plan not to scale
Russ Palmer 2011

Appendix 8

E.H. Conservation Appraisal of St John the Baptist, Plymtree

(Information in red refers to the E.H. document ‘Understanding Place: Conservation Area Designation, Appraisal and Management’ which can be found at <http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/content/publications/publicationsNew/guidelines-standards/understanding-place-conservation-area/understanding-place-ca-designation-appraisal-management.pdf>. Information in black is the researcher’s response to the questions.)

English Heritage – Understanding Place: Conservation Area Designation, Appraisal and Management.
Part 2: Appraisal

2.2.2 The Introduction

This will explain the background to the appraisal and describe the general identity and character of the conservation area (church) and when it was designated, its place within the wider settlement or surrounding landscape, the scope and nature of the appraisal and the dates of survey. Any significant sources of information might also be mentioned.

The purpose of an Appraisal

The purpose of this appraisal is to clearly define the special interest, character and appearance of the church and churchyard. This should then help those in the Faculty system advise and assess any plans for change.

General identity and character

St John the Baptist is the parish church of Plymtree, part of the Broadhembury with Payhembury and Plymtree benefice, in the deanery of Ottery and the Diocese of Exeter. It is situated in the District of East Devon and is listed grade I. The building is largely 15th century with some earlier features. It was sympathetically restored in the late 19th and early twentieth centuries and a high proportion of the medieval fabric still survives including the carved and painted screen and an almost entire set of medieval bench ends.

Date of designation

The church was first listed on 22 February 1955.

The church within the wider settlement

St John’s is situated in the centre of the village above the junction of three roads. It sits below the brow of a hill and the church and churchyard form a significant feature in the immediately surrounding villagescape. The long curving churchyard wall perched above the raised pavement is a particularly dominant feature, as is the church tower. The surrounding village is relatively small in size and consists of a number of older buildings including two seventeenth century houses to the east and a mid 19th century house which abuts the churchyard to the north. The surrounding landscape is formed from gently rolling fertile pastureland mainly grazed for cattle. The underlying geology is red sandstone and the nearest settlement is the town of Cullompton 4 miles to the north west.

Scope and structure

This appraisal describes and analyses the character of St John the Baptist, Plymtree and its surrounding churchyard. The appraisal will look at the historic

development of the church, analyse its present character, identify problems and pressures and make recommendations for its future management.

Date of survey

The survey was carried out in January 2013.

Sources consulted

Published sources

- Cherry, B. and Pevsner, N., *The Buildings of England – Devon, Second Edition*, London: Penguin, 1991.
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- Genuki, <http://genuki.cs.ncl.ac.uk/DEV/Plymtree> [15th January 2013]
- Devon County Council <http://www.devon.gov.uk/historicplymtree> [15th January 2013]

2.2.4 The Definition (or Summary) of Special Interest

This is where the 'special architectural or historic interest' of the area (church)is defined.

Key elements in defining the special interest are likely to be:

- The relationship of the conservation area (church) to its setting and the effect of that setting on the area
- the still visible effects/impact of the area's (church's) historic development on its

plan form, character and architectural style and social/historic associations

- how the places within it are experienced by the people who live and work there and visitors to the area (church)
- architectural quality and built form
- open spaces, green areas, parks and gardens, and trees (churchyard and setting)
- designated and other heritage assets, their intrinsic importance and the contribution they make to the area
- local distinctiveness and the sense of place which make the area unique.
- The church and churchyard play a significant role in the surrounding villagescape. Located just below the brow of a hill, above a raised churchyard which sits above a raised pavement the church and its tower are a prominent feature in the centre of the settlement. The tall three stage tower is an important landmark and is complimented by the surrounding mature trees. The loss of a number of significant historic buildings in its immediate vicinity, including the Church House, poor houses and former rectory, make the church particularly significant in bearing witness to the village's historic past.
- The many layered history of St John the Baptist, Plymtree is still evident in its plan and architectural form. The plan incorporates elements of the 14th century structure: the nave and the chancel, as well as the 15th century addition of south aisle, porch and tower. Within the fabric a remnant of an earlier Anglo-Saxon/Norman building in the form of a doorway can be found along with surviving material from the 14th church and a large amount of high quality 15th century fabric including the aisle arcade, screen and bench ends which are exceptional. Work from subsequent periods such as the 16th century north wall windows, 17th carved wooden panelling in the chancel and Flemish alabaster relief are all of a very high quality. The fabric of the church reflects two important movements from the 19th century: the elaborate decoration of the chancel shows the influence of the Ecclesiological Movement, whilst the lack of heavy handed restoration reflects the growing influence of the conservation movement. The listed building description states 'The Church of St John is a particularly good and well-preserved example; perhaps the paradigm of a rural parish church in Devon it has escaped the worst excesses of C19 renovation and includes fine craftsmanship from the C15 onwards'.
- The church is still fully operational as a centre of worship for the local Anglican community including Plymtree Church of England School. In addition to its role as a worship centre the church is also widely visited as an historic building of note; it is one of the churches chosen for Todd Gray's book *Devon's Fifty Best Churches* and features in his latest book *Devon's Ancient Bench Ends*. The quality of the 15th century screen and bench ends, in addition to the 17th century panelling and alabaster relief panel are of regional if not national interest.
- The high quality of the building's architectural design, craftsmanship and subsequent phases of work are reflected in its designation as a grade I listed building. This high grade takes into account the early date of the building, the good

survival of historic fabric, the quality of the internal furnishings and fittings and the low impact of restoration carried out during the 19th century.

- The churchyard forms a significant open space of green in the heart of the village and includes a number of notable trees including the magnificent yew tree to the south east of the church which is believed to date from the 9th century.
- In addition to the listing of the church several of the churchyard features are also listed including the Trump headstone c 4 m. north of the chancel, the Poller Chest tomb c. 1.5 m. north of the nave, an illegible chest tomb c. 3.5 m. west of the tower and the churchyard cross – all are grade II. The lych gate, churchyard wall and raised pavement to south and west of churchyard all appear under the same description and are also listed grade II.
- The church and churchyard walls have a distinctive local character through the use of indigenous building materials in the form of red sandstone and volcanic stone rubble. Whilst the style of the building, Perpendicular Gothic, reflects national trends, the tall thin nature of the west tower, the lack of chancel arch and the wealth of interior woodwork, including the screen and carved bench ends, are all typical of Devon churches.

Assessing Special Interest

2.2.6 Location and Setting

The village of Plymtree lies at the northern end of a triangle of rural farmland bordered by the M5 to the east, the A373 to the west and the A30 to the south. The church is sited in the centre of the village, at the junction of three roads, on a plateau of ground just below the brow of a hill.

The churchyard has a quarter circle shape which can be clearly seen on the 1891 First Edition Ordnance Survey Map. In the 1950s a square of land abutting the eastern side of the churchyard at its northern end was purchased and consecrated as an extension to the burial ground in 1957. The extension is on lower ground and reached by a flight of three wide concrete steps.

The headstones and tombs stand amongst mown grass, a few shrubs and yew trees - including the venerable yew to the south east of the Forde aisle. A certain amount of gravestone clearing has taken place. There are few monuments on the southern approach to the church and a row of stones have been relocated along the northern boundary wall.

The churchyard paths are all modern tarmac and there are red brick gutters around the base of the church, inclined to allow water run off.

Views

Despite its elevated position and hillside location any views to the south and west from the churchyard are screened by mature trees. Looking east over the churchyard extension there are views across open ground again bordered by trees and the back gardens of the adjacent cottages. Looking north the view is terminated by a row of cottages and by mature trees in the garden to the east.

There are no long vistas and consequently the site has a sense of containment and the abundance of trees emphasises its semi-rural location. The nature of the site similarly

means the church does not dominate the surrounding landscape; entering the village from every direction one comes across the church rather than being led to the site by views of the tower.

The church and churchyard are however a very significant feature of the villagescape in their immediate vicinity. The long curving churchyard wall perched above the raised pavement is a particularly dominant feature, as is the church tower.

The churchyard does not have any statutory landscape designations, protected species or species with Biodiversity Action Plans. The majority of the churchyard is mown grass, including the extension, providing a limited habitat for flora and fauna.

2.2.8 Historic Development

Summary of the church's history – how this has shaped its development and is evident in its plan form. See Fig. 1

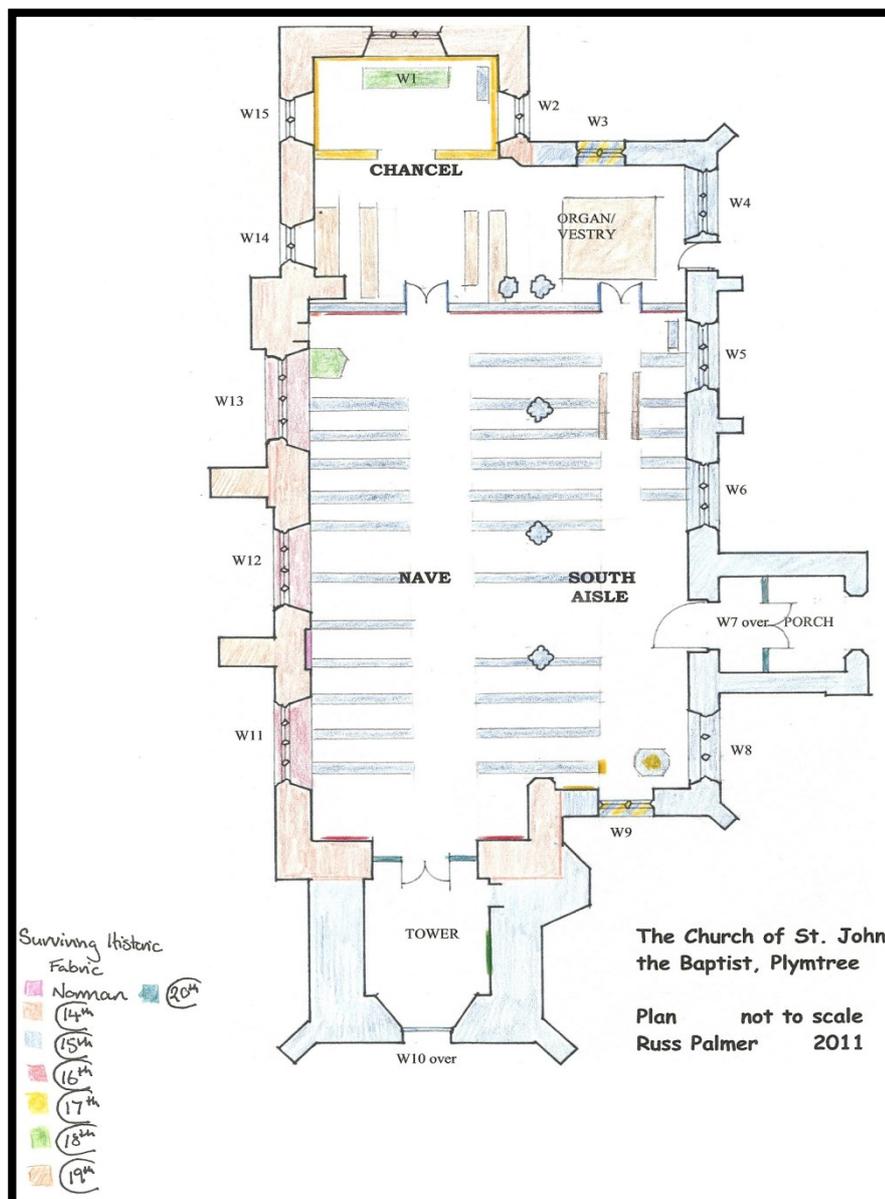


Figure 10 Historic development of Plymtree Church

Evidence of earlier church(es)

There is evidence of religious activity on this site from the 9th century in the form of an ancient yew tree in the churchyard to the south-east of the south aisle. Evidence of an early church in the form of an internally plastered wall in the area of the pulpit was discovered during restoration works to the present church in 1910. The wall was not officially recorded but could still be in situ beneath the present floor. This wall could date from the same period as the yew in the churchyard or could be contemporary with the Anglo-Saxon/Norman doorway situated on the north wall of the nave. The north wall stands a foot to the north of the excavated wall suggesting if the doorway is contemporaneous with the excavated wall it must have been re-sited.

14th century

It has been suggested that the **nave and chancel** were rebuilt during the late 1300s by the lords of the manor either Sir Thomas Courtney or Thomas and Margaret Peverell and the local dark red volcanic stone walls date from this period. Most of the windows date from the 15th century, but fragments of glass from the earlier church including the upper light of the chancel east window includes the arms of Thomas Peverell, patron of the church when Sir Thomas Tregenewil became incumbent in 1393, reinserted in the 19th century. Further evidence for a 14th century date can be found in the preface to the parish registers which states that some time during the 1300s the church was rebuilt.

Floor tiles, now in the south aisle, have been identified as 14th century. As the south aisle was not built until the 15th century the tiles were presumably reused from an earlier part of the church. Most parish churches would have had simple floor surfaces in the nave with glazed ceramic tiles reserved for the chancel area and so it would seem most likely that this is where the ceramic tiles were originally located.

15th century

The **church tower** was constructed during the early fifteenth century at the west end of the nave. Chancery proceedings of 1432, which refer to the bells of Plymtree church regarding a dispute over their cost, suggest the tower was already constructed by this date. The west front of the tower housed a **statue of the Virgin and Child** in a niche, similar to several in the area.

During the mid fifteenth century a local family, the Fordes of Fordmore, paid for the church to be extended with a **south aisle**. As the arms of Bishop Neville, Bishop of Exeter 1458-1464, were carved on one of the capitals it would suggest the aisle was constructed during this period. The **south porch** was also built at this time.

The eastern end of the Forde aisle was separated from the chancel by a parciose screen, described in a paper read to the Diocesan Architectural Society in 1850, which has not survived in situ.

Another major work which took place in the 15th century was the construction of the **wooden screen** which separates the nave from the chancel and the south aisle from the Forde chapel. Originally it would have been surmounted by a rood with wooden figures of

Christ crucified flanked by the Virgin Mary and St John. The figures no longer survive but the stair leading to the rood loft on which the figures would have stood is still in place, uncovered during the 1910 restoration. The inclusion of the Bouchier and Stafford emblems suggests the screen was commissioned by Isabel Stafford in memory of her husband who was beheaded in 1470. The paintings have been dated to the early sixteenth century.

The oak **benches** with carved ends appear to date from a similar period to the screen and are described as a complete 15th century set in the list description, apart from a couple of late 17th and one 19th century example.

The ceiled wagon **chancel roof** has bosses carved as the Green Man and may date from this period, but as it has been subsequently painted the date is unclear.

The Beer stone, octagonal **font** dates from the fifteenth century and is decorated in the Perpendicular style.

16th Century

During this period the 14th century **windows** on the **north wall of the nave** were replaced with three tall, square headed windows each with differently shaped elliptical and Tudor arch heads.

The painted figures on the panels of the screen date from the early sixteenth century.

A number of decorative features and those associated with Roman Catholic worship were destroyed during the Reformation and the subsequent reign of Edward VI (1537-1553). It is likely that the rood was removed during this period, along with a confessional box (the site of which between the nave and the chancel was still discernible in the 18th century) and the statues from the column niches. The holy water stoop in the porch was also vandalised. At the same time two nowy-headed prayer and commandment boards were installed inside the church -they now stand at the back of the nave.

17th century

During the seventeenth century a new oak **altar rail** was constructed in line with the teachings of Archbishop Laud.

The carved wall panelling in the chancel also dates from this period, but is Flemish in origin (as is the alabaster relief in the south aisle also of this date) and both were not installed in the church until the 19th century (see below). This is also the case regarding the linenfold panelled wainscoting, which dates from the late 17th century but was placed in the sanctuary possibly following the destruction of a house in the village c.1840.

The **windows** at the **east and west ends of the south aisle** were altered during this period reusing the original tracery, but resetting them in late seventeenth century brick.

As mentioned above two of the **oak benches** were installed in the 17th century (one of these has been recently removed), as was the oak ogee profile **font cover**.

18th century

In c. 1700 the **nave roof** was raised to a higher height than the chancel through a set of roof timbers, in the form of an inverted V laid over the older barrel shaped timbers. The plaster **ceilings** of the **nave** and **aisle** also date from this period.

In 1719 a **gallery** for musicians and choir was erected at the **west end** of the church and at around the same time a further **gallery** along the **south wall** was installed to accommodate children during the services. The **pulpit** was installed during this period and was originally taller with a carved sounding board positioned on the wall behind it. The pulpit may originally have been erected in front of the screen to the south of the doors leading to the chancel (there is an indentation in the screen frieze at this point, but this could have been the site of the former confessional box). There is evidence, in the form of hinges and brackets, of doors being added to the medieval bench ends during this period to form Georgian style **box pews**.

The wooden panelled **altar table** dates from this period as does the painted **royal coat of arms** of George II originally hung behind the altar and now in the ringing chamber. The **belfry clock** was installed in the late 18th century.

19th century

The **panelling** in the **sanctuary** was installed during the incumbency of the Revd Dornford some time after 1840. He raised the foot of the east window to provide a dark backdrop for the crucifix or possibly the alabaster panel, which was used as a reredos.

Postcards of the interior of the church dated 1895 show the chancel and the nave lit by **hanging oil lamps** and the pulpit and lectern enclosed by wooden panelling. External photos show the **buttresses** in place.

By the 1890s an organ had been installed, and in 1895 repairs were carried out to the tower. At the same time the two galleries were removed.

In 1898 the fifteenth century granite churchyard cross was restored and re-erected in memory of the Revd. Gutteres who had only recently left the parish and died on holiday in Algiers.

Towards the end of 1898 a number of internal alterations took place including the removal of the panelling around the pulpit, the removal of the brick column which supported the sounding board behind the pulpit and unspecified alterations to the 19th century pews in the chancel.

20th century

In 1905 the south porch was repaired and a new set of doors erected within the body of the porch, in memory of Henry Baxter who had lived at Greenend, Plymtree. Further repairs to the church were carried out in 1910 including the underpinning of the north wall and the relaying of the floor on a bed of concrete. During the repair works the rood loft stair, the evidence of the early wall near the pulpit and the Anglo Saxon/Norman doorway on the north wall were uncovered. In 1927 the east end chancel window was restored to its original proportions.

Conservation work was carried out to the screen in 1951. In the same year a new **heating** and **lighting** scheme was installed and in 1960 a pedal organ replaced the Victorian organ.

At some point in the twentieth century the pews just inside the south entrance were removed.

The cross at the apex of the chancel roof was repaired after it blew off and was smashed in 1962. In 1985 a glazed screen with wooden doors was erected separating the nave from the tower.

In 1993 the statue on the west front of the tower was restored. The restoration included the Madonna's crown found behind the statue when it was removed.

21st Century

In 2000 the three front book rests and a small pew by the pulpit were removed on a temporary basis. The front book rests from the chancel were also removed. The small pew front from near the pulpit was placed by the altar, the small pew from in front of the pulpit was placed at the south end of the screen and the other front book rests from the nave, south aisle and chancel were placed in store.

The church was completely rewired and a new heating and lighting system installed in May 2010. Between November 2010 and January 2011 the bells were repaired and rededicated and in June 2012 the clock was repaired and automated.

In 2011 the two small pews at the rear of the nave were removed during rewiring and placed in store.

In 2012 the carved and painted niche on the north side of the chancel arch was restored with the help of a grant from the Devon Churches Trust.

Historic records and associations

- The first record of the institution of a rector for the parish, John Walerande, dates from 1261. By this period the church at Plymtree was the mother church of a group of fourteen surrounding parishes, which formed the Deanery of Plymtree.
- Sir Richard Smerte rector 1435-77, has been described as the earliest recorded Devon musician: during his incumbency he wrote eleven carols.
- In 1532 a deed was signed by the Earl of Huntingdon granting a hundred year lease for a church house which was built in the south east corner of the churchyard. The building consisted of a central hall, kitchen, buttery and vestry and would have been used for parish meetings and for raising funds for the church.
Surviving evidence – The Church House was destroyed by fire in 1895
- The church has a significant association with the restoration of the monarchy. Nicholas Monk rector of Plymtree between 1646-1660 is reputed to have persuaded his brother General Monk, Duke of Albermarle and Governor of Scotland to restore Charles II. He was consequently made Provost of Eton and Bishop of Hereford in 1660.

- Oriel College purchased the advowson of Plymtree in 1737. As a consequence from this date Oriel College was the Patron of the living and could appoint the parish priest.
Surviving evidence – Oriel College was at the centre of the Oxford Movement during the 19th century which aimed to restore medieval and High Church practices both in liturgy and church furnishings. The Revd Joseph Dornay appointed parish priest in 1832 was an Oriel College appointee and former student. During his incumbency the church was reordered: including the chancel panelling and reinsertion of medieval stained glass, to reflect his High Church sympathies.

Archaeological Potential

(see fig. 2)

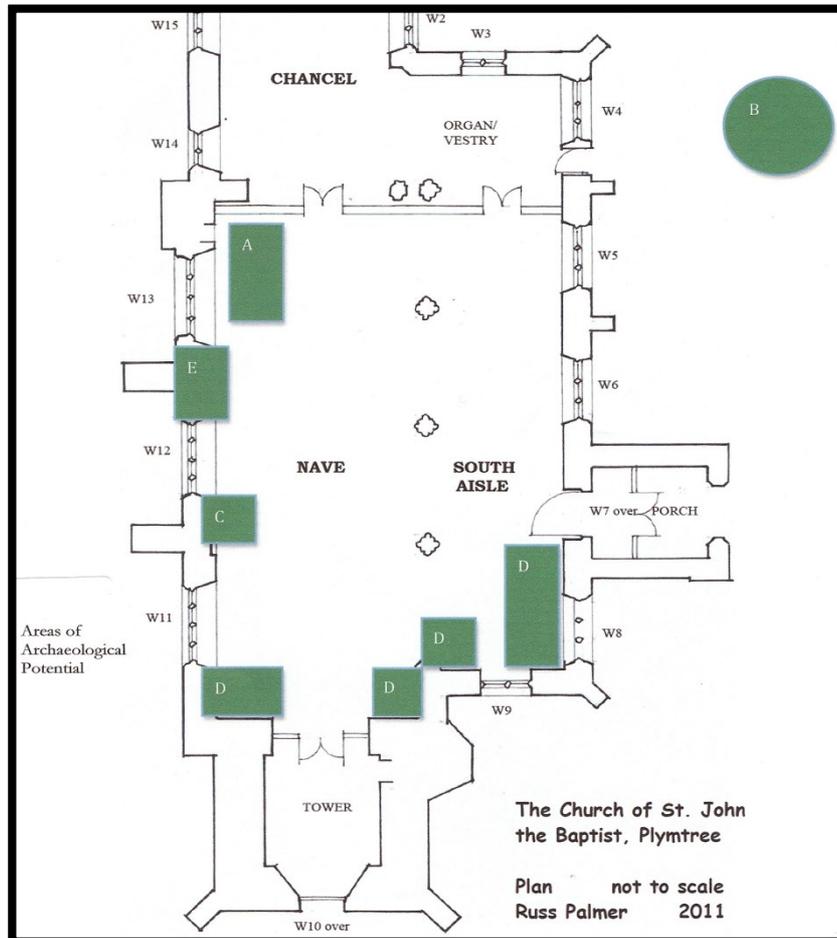


Figure 11 Areas of archaeological potential

Area A – The ‘portion of old wall, with plaster face’ found ‘about a foot inside the present North wall near the pulpit’ during the 1910 repairs to the church. Contemporary reports do not record what happened to this wall, but it is highly likely the wall is still in situ and relates to an earlier church on the site possibly contemporaneous with the yew tree – see below.

Area B – The yew tree has been dated as over 1100 years old. As yew trees were often planted adjacent to places of worship it seems possible an earlier church was on this site at this date.

Area C - The Saxon or early Norman doorway could have been re-erected on the north wall of the 14th century church - it may originally have been located on the wall which stands a foot to the south of the existing stone wall, evidence of which has been located below ground (see area A). Alternatively parts of the present North wall could be contemporaneous with the doorway.

Area D – There could be evidence on the south wall and at the west end of the church of the two galleries erected in the early 18th century for the church musicians and the children.

Area E – An etching of 1898 shows the area of the north wall between the two easternmost 16th century nave windows. There appears to be some form of text on the walls – either painted directly onto the wall surface, or on a hanging wooden board. The outline of a rectangle in this position is still visible, and the text may be still extant beneath the current wall paint.

Other possible archaeological evidence within the vicinity of the church could include

- remnants of the original stained glass
- remnants of the niche statues
- ceramic floor tiles

Archaeological potential in the churchyard –

The First Edition Ordnance Survey Map published in 1809 shows three structures in the churchyard to the south of the church which no longer exist. In the south east corner was the church house and the buildings to the south west were poor houses. By the drawing of the Second Edition Ordnance Survey Map in 1889 the poor houses were gone, demolished some time during the 1880s in order to enlarge the churchyard and widen the road. The Church House was not to survive much longer being destroyed by fire on 10th June 1895. There is potential for archaeological remains relating to these structures.

Elsewhere in the churchyard in addition to the existing sites of graves there is great archaeological potential in the area to the south of the church where the gravestones have been cleared.

2.2.13 Architectural Quality and Built Form (Incorporating 2.2.18 Character Zones and 2.2.21 Positive Contributors)

(see Fig. 3)

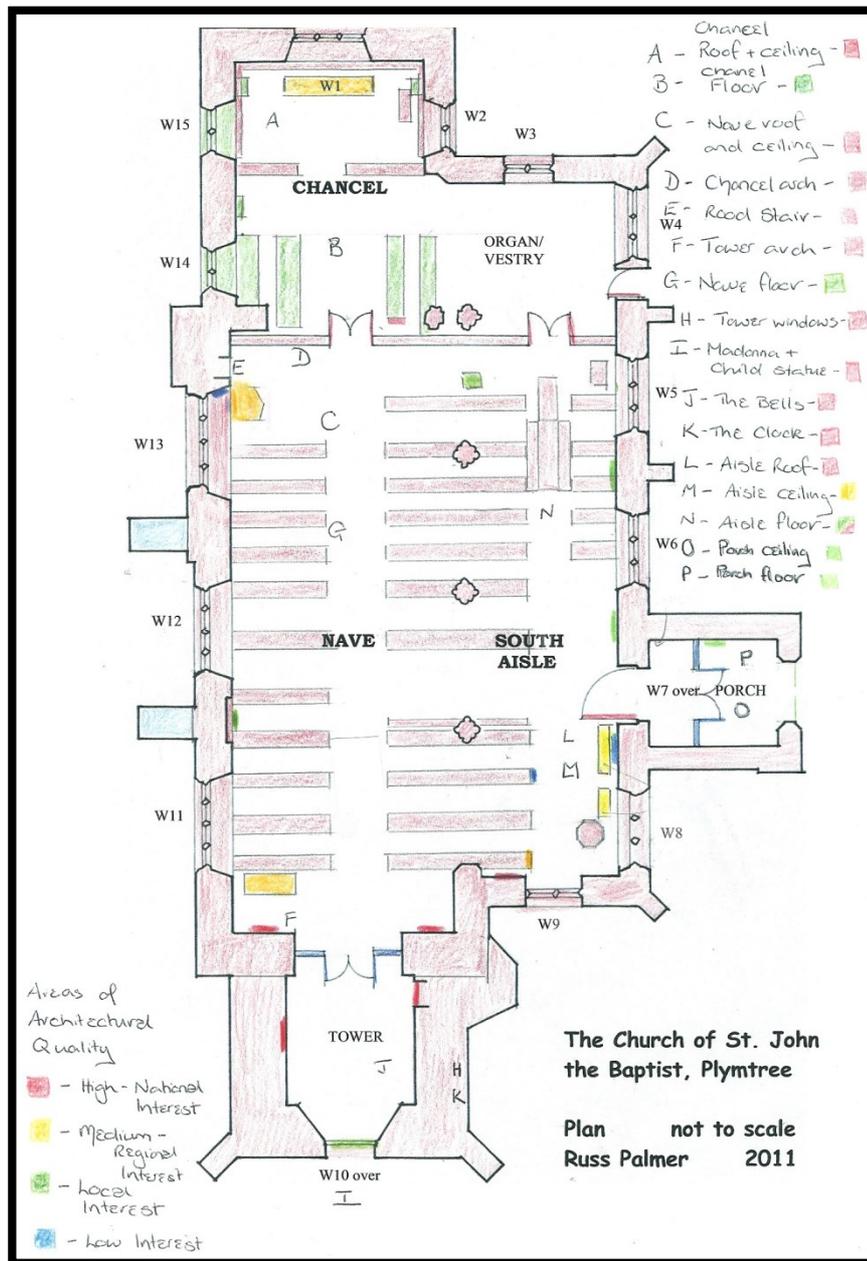


Figure 12 Areas of architectural quality

Chancel

Walls

The chancel is believed to have been constructed in the 14th century and the walls may date from this period. They are constructed from local red sandstone and volcanic stone rubble with volcanic ashlar quoins. Inside the walls are all currently white washed. The chancel is rectangular in plan and measures approximately 22ft x 16ft

Level of interest – High, due to its early date

Roof

The pitched and gable end roof has been dated to the 15th century.

Level of interest – High internally due to early date.

Windows

The Beerstone east window is Perpendicular in style with three lights and most probably dates from the 15th century – it is very similar in design to the tower west window which dates from the 15th century. The original glass stained has been replaced with diamond leaded clear glass. During the 19th century fragments of old glass were reinstated in the tracery at the head of the window including the arms of Thomas Peverell, who was patron of the church in the late 14th century.

Level of interest – East window – High due to early date and craftsmanship

The three other windows in the chancel all date from the 19th century and are constructed from Beerstone. They are square headed with two lights and cusped tracery and contain diamond leaded clear glass. The window on the southern side has carved human head label stops to the hood moulds on the exterior. These are Medieval in style and designed to emulate the 15th century label stops on the south aisle.

Level of interest - South window – High, due to craftsmanship of sculpted heads

North windows – Local, late date, but good craftsmanship

Ceiling

The barrel or wagon vault is probably fifteenth century and has moulded ribs and purlins with bosses at the rib junctions carved as the Green Man. The bosses at the junction with the wall plate have carved leaf decorations. At some point the ribs and Green Man faces were painted in gold. The ceiling was been painted blue at some point in the 20th century – the 1927 photograph shows the ceiling as a very light colour (white?), whilst the ribs appear to be painted as they appear today.

Level of interest – High, due to early date and quality of craftsmanship

Arcade

The final pier of the five bay, 15th century Beerstone arcade stands in the chancel. This pier is wider than the others and incorporates a Tudor arch hagioscope. From this double pier springs a further pointed arch which rests on an engaged moulded column at its eastern end. This column incorporates a section of carved moulding from a former image niche.

Level of interest – High, due to early date

Floor

The whole of the chancel floor is carpeted apart from an area either side of the altar which has stone flags. It is likely that the whole of the rest of the floor is also flagged. The choir stalls rest on wooden boards. The floor of the chancel is raised one step above the floor of

the nave, but there are no altar steps.

Level of interest – Appears to be only local, but investigation under the carpet might reveal further information.

Altar rail

The oak altar rail dates from the late 17th century. It has turned balusters and the main posts are square in plan and decorated with carved cherubs and garlands.

Level of interest – High, due to date and level of craftsmanship

Paneling

The sanctuary is lined with late 17th century wooden linenfold paneled wainscoting which may have come from a local house. The paneling is surmounted by a carved wooden frieze of classical female figures believed to be Flemish in origin and to date from the 17th century. Both sets of paneling were installed in the 19th century. On the north wall there is a wooden shelf supported by a carved bracket beneath the window and on the opposite wall a carved aumbrey with an ogee arch let into the carved frieze.

Level of interest –High, due to date and level of craftsmanship

Altar

18th century wood paneled altar described by Pevsner as ‘plain and nice’.

Level of interest – Medium, due to level of craftsmanship

Choir stalls

19th century oak stalls with poppyhead finials and incorporating one medieval carved bench end at the western end of the front pew on the southern side.

Level of interest – Local, due to level of craftsmanship, apart from Medieval bench end which is High, due to date.

A carved 15th century former bench front is located to the south of the altar.

Level of interest –High, due to date

Wall monuments

All 19th century, in the Classical style plain white marble slabs against black marble base and of local interest only. Memorials to two rectors Arthur Mozley (died 1892, plaque on wall north wall between the chancel windows), Daniel Veysie (died 1817, plaque on north wall between the window and the east wall) and a 21 year William Arnold (died 1814, plaque on the south wall opposite the Veysie plaque).

Level of interest – Local

Nave

Walls

The nave is believed to have been constructed in the 14th century and the walls may date from this period. They are constructed from local red sandstone and volcanic stone rubble with volcanic ashlar quoins. Where the nave meets the chancel there is a projecting rood stair turret lit by a single small octagonal window with clear diamond leaded glass.

Incorporated within the wall is the Saxon/Early Norman doorway. It is possible that parts of the wall may also date from this period. Inside the walls are all currently white washed. The nave is rectangular in plan and measures approximately 40ft x 16ft.

Level of interest – High, due to its early date

Buttresses

Sandstone and volcanic rubble stone buttresses with weathered offsets added in the 19th century to counteract the outward thrust of the north wall.

Level of interest - Low

Roof

The roof consists of two layers the outer steeply pitched construction, covered in natural slate dates from c. 1700. Beneath it lies the barrel shaped timbers of the 15th century roof.

Level of interest – High, due to early date.

Windows

There are three tall 16th century Beerstone windows on the north wall of the aisle. They have square heads and label moulds to the exterior and moulded plaster hood moulds to the interior. Each window has four lights with elliptical or Tudor arch heads. They have clear diamond leaded panes and the centre window includes some patterned yellow grisaille glass.

Level of interest – High, due to date and craftsmanship

Ceiling

The plaster ceiling dates from c.1700 and includes moulded cornices with a dentil frieze and an ornamental section adjacent to the screen with octagonal panels and rose bosses.

Level of interest – High, due to date and level of craftsmanship

Chancel Arch

Plain plastered chancel arch, which probably dates from the original 14th century building. A photograph from 1905 appears to show a zigzag decoration on the edge of the arch, but this is not visible in an earlier etching of 1898 or a later photograph of 1927. On the north side of the arch facing the nave is the remains of a richly carved limestone image niche in the Perpendicular style, the original paintwork of which has been recently restored.

Level of interest – High, due to early date and level of craftsmanship.

The Rood Stair

The 14th century rood stair was uncovered during restoration works in the early 20th century. Its wooden panel door dates from the restoration.

Level of interest – High, due to early date.

Tower Arch

Tall 15th Beerstone ashlar tower arch panelled with moulded surround.

Level of interest – High, due to early date and level of craftsmanship

Floor

The floor is covered in stone flags re-laid on a bed of concrete following the early 20th century restoration.

Level of interest - Local

Screen

15th century carved oak rood screen, 9 bays wide (6 in the nave and 3 in the south aisle) with paneled wainscoting. Perpendicular window tracery (Pevsner type A), leading to a fan vault above which is a frieze of three bands of undercut delicate foliage with a valance. The medieval paintwork still survives. The wainscot panels contain 34 painted figures, mostly saints, but some New Testament figures, a bishop and a royal scene. The northern two bays were not designed for figure panels and would originally have housed a small altar. The figure panels in these two bays, from an earlier more rustic screen, would have been installed after the Reformation when the altar was removed. The other painted figures are

of good quality for a rural parish and were painted in the 16th century.

Described in the list description as 'a splendid example' and by Pevsner as 'one of the most splendid' and 'exceptionally well preserved'.

Level of interest – High, due to date, craftsmanship and unusually good state of preservation

Benches

In the nave there are twenty-two oak pews which all have medieval bench ends apart from one which has a plain 17th century end and one with a plain 19th century end. The majority are carved with two tiers of the three Gothic arches in the form of blind tracery. A few, however have additional carving in the arches or their spandrels including bouche shields, leaf foliage and tools. The pew front of the rear set of pews is enriched with a continuous blind arcade, and surmounted by a wooden collection box. The rear of the front section of pews is decorated with a blind arcade above a continuous frieze of quatrefoils – very similar in design to the wainscot panels of the screen. In front of the rear section there is a long oak form with turned legs.

Level of interest – High, due to date and craftsmanship, apart from 17th century end which is medium and 19th century end which is low.

Pulpit

18th century fielded panel pulpit. Early photographs show the pulpit has been reduced in size and the former tester is now lost. The shelf on two of the faces of its north side have been removed, presumably to move the structure closer to the wall.

Level of interest – Medium, due to age and alterations

Lectern

Late 19th century Gothic style lectern

Level of interest - Local

Wall Monuments

Two white marble wall plaques within the arch of the Saxon/Norman doorway commemorating men who died in the first and second World Wars.

Level of interest - Local

Three nowy-headed wooden Prayer and Commandment boards on the walls either side of the tower arch.

Level of interest – High, age and rarity

Hymn Board

Modern wooden hymn board above the pulpit.

Level of interest - Low

Chest

Oak chest with plain panels at rear of nave on northern side – possibly dates from 18th century or earlier.

Level of interest- Medium, due to date

Tower

Walls

Situated at the west end of the nave the 15th century tower is square in plan, three stages high, rises to almost 60 feet and is constructed from local red sandstone and volcanic stone rubble. Each stage is articulated by a Beerstone string-course. There are three diagonal buttresses and one clasping buttress at the eastern end of the north wall but no

corresponding buttress on the east wall. The tower has an embattled parapet with Beerstone detailing, crocketed corner pinnacles with carved gargoyles below. The roof is covered in lead. On the southern side there is a semi-hexagonal stair turret that rises through two stages with a parapet above of open quatrefoils with crocketed pinnacles (replaced in the late 19th century). Following repair work in the late 19th century large cast-iron tie-beams were inserted into the fabric and finished with decorative metal plates in the form of quatrefoils and stylized suns.

Level of interest – High, due to early date and decorative detailing.

Windows

Each face of the belfry has a two light Perpendicular window with glass at the head and louvers below. On the east and north sides of the tower these are the only windows. The west side has a large three light window with Perpendicular tracery in the same pattern as the window at the east end of the chancel. On the south side there is a single light square headed window on the second stage which lights the former ringing chamber and three small oblong windows light the stair turret.

Level of interest – High, due to early date and craftsmanship

Statue

15th century Beerstone statue of Madonna and Child in decorative niche with moulded surround and crocketed canopy. The Madonna's crown was restored after repair work, but the Christ Child's head is missing – it was recorded as falling from the tower in 1953 and being put in an unrecorded 'safe place' by the rector.

Level of interest – High, due to date, level of craftsmanship.

Doors

The west doorway dates from the 15th century has a two-centred arch, moulded surround, plain hood and is constructed from Beerstone. The wooden two leaf door is a 19th century replacement. The lamp above dates from the 20th century. Beerstone slightly pointed doorway with moulded surround at the base of the tower stair with old wooden plank door with replacement lock section.

Level of interest – West doorway, High, due to early date, Door – Local. Tower stair door – High, due to date

Bells

There are six bells and their history has been fully documented – the surviving bells include two 15th century bells cast by Robert Norton of Exeter (one of which was recast in 1826), a 1549 bell cast by Roger Semson of Aish Prior foundry in Somerset, a 1669 bell cast by Thomas Pennington of Exeter, an 1826 bell cast by Messrs J Mears of London and an 1895 bell cast by Harry Stokes of Woodbury. The medieval bell cage was replaced in 1826 by Messrs. J Mears of London and replaced again by a larger version in elm by Harry Stokes of Woodbury in 1895. At the same time new longer ropes were added to allow the bells to be rung from the ground floor.

Level of interest – High, especially the older bells.

Clock

The tower clock was made and installed in 1792/3 by the Exeter silversmith William Upjohn. It is probably the oldest example of a working wrought iron, horizontal framed 'birdcage' tower clock in Devon. Recently its original stone weights were re-installed.

Level of interest – High, early date and rarity

Coat of Arms

The tower contains the wooden painted coat of arms to George II which would originally have hung in the body of the church.

Level of interest – High, early date

Screen to nave

A glazed screen with wooden mullions and transoms and a wooden door fills the tower arch and divides the tower from the body of the church. It was dedicated in 1985.

Level of interest – Low

South Aisle

Walls

The walls date from the 15th century (when the whole of the south aisle was constructed) and were built from local red sandstone and volcanic stone rubble like the rest of the church. The exterior walls were roughcast during the 19th century, but this render has now been removed. There are diagonal buttress on the south west and south east corners and two buttresses either side of the third window looking east. These appear to be contemporary with the building of the aisle. The south aisle is five bays long, rectangular in plan and is almost as long as the main body of the church measuring 54 ft x 12 ft. Inside the walls are plastered and white washed, but at some point the plaster has been removed from the lower section of wall between the south porch and the chancel screen.

Level of interest – High, due to early date

Roof

The aisle roof dates from the 15th and is pitched with gable ends. It is covered in natural slate.

Level of interest – High, due to early date.

Windows

There are four windows along the south wall all 15th century. They have three lights and Perpendicular tracery. Each has a hood mould with label stops, some carved to represent the heads of the family Forde who commissioned the aisle. Inside the windows all have Beerstone moulded rear arches. The majority of glass is clear set in diamond leaded panes but the window at the eastern end has bottle glass in its upper lights. The windows to the east of the porch have some roundels of coloured glass in their upper lights and the window adjacent to the screen also has a shield of reclaimed Medieval glass in its central light. Above the porch is a square headed window with two lights and clear diamond panes.

The 15th century windows at the east and west end of the aisle were altered in the 17th and narrowed to only two lights. The surrounding former window area was infilled with brick and stone rubble. Both windows have clear glass set in diamond leaded panes.

Level of interest – High, due to date and level of craftsmanship

Doors

The arch to the priests' door to Forde chapel has an almost ogee shaped head. The door is formed from horizontal studded planks, and appears to have an early lock. Possibly 15th century.

The south doorway is a two-centred arch of volcanic stone with moulded surround and an ancient studded and braced plank door.

Level of interest – High, due to age

Ceiling

The plaster ceiling dates from c.1700, the same period as the nave ceiling. It is however of

a plainer design with moulded cornices, but no other decoration.

Level of interest – Medium, due to date

Arcade

Five bay Beerstone arcade (with eastern pier in the chancel). Quite steeply pointed arches supported by moulded piers, Pevsner's type B with foliage caps painted in dull bronze at some point in the 20th century. Two of the nave piers include niches which would have held small sculptures.

Level of interest – High, due to age and craftsmanship

Floor

The floor is covered in stone flags, but incorporates two 17th century grave slabs. One is slate and includes etched Classical columns as part of its design, the other stone slab is surrounded by 14th century glazed ceramic floor tiles, which may originally have been located in the chancel. There is a further probably 17th century slate grave underneath the organ.

Level of interest – Stone flags - local, Area around grave slabs - High, due to early date and craftsmanship

Benches

There are six benches with medieval ends in the south aisle. The bench adjacent to the screen has been recently moved to this position from its place beside the pulpit. The boarding behind the benches suggest at least two more were in position at the start of the 20th century and the formation of the stone flags around the font suggest there may have been more pews here. The surviving bench ends are carved with two tiers of Gothic tracery of either two or three Gothic arches. Some have additional foliage carving between the arches and other have carving within the arches including shields with chevrons and stylized flowers. One bench end has a lower edge of decoration with a pomegranate and rose motif.

Level of interest – High, due to age and craftsmanship

Font

The font is 15th century constructed from Beerstone, has an octagonal bowl with quatrefoil panels, carved foliage base and a panelled stem with Gothic tracery. It has a 17th century ogee-profile cover in oak surmounted by a carved bird.

Level of interest – High, due to age and craftsmanship

Monuments

Carved 17th century alabaster relief wall panel depicting the resurrection of Jesus. The panel was brought to the church in the 19th century as part of the reredos, but is now embedded in the west wall of the south aisle.

Level of interest – High, due to age and artistic merit

Three 19th century memorial plaques on the south wall in white, black and grey marble in the Classical style.

Level of interest – Local

Modern wooden board on south wall with names and dates of rectors.

Level of interest - Low

Bench

18th (?) century wooden bench in Classical style. Originally three back carved panels – only one surviving.

Level of interest – Moderate, due to age

Chest

Wooden chest with band of foliage carving and metal bands on lid- 17th (?) century, possibly used for parish records.

Level of interest – Moderate, due to age

South Porch

Walls

The porch is rectangular in plan and situated left of centre on the south wall of the Forde aisle. Like the Forde aisle it dates from the 15th century. Like the main body of the church it is constructed from red sandstone with volcanic stone rubble and volcanic ashlar quoins. The detailing is in Beerstone with replacement Hamstone ashlar. It has a parapet, plain on the east and west sides, but with a carved frieze of quatrefoil panels enriched with carved shields and four-leaf motifs on the south side. Inside the rubblestone walls are unplastered and there is a low stone wall abutting the east and west walls with a wooden plank seat.

Level of interest – High, due to age and craftsmanship

Entrance arch

15th century Beerstone (with some replacement) two-centred moulded arch enriched with a band of four-leaf motifs. Above the arch is a hoodmould with label stops carved in the form of angels with shields.

Level of interest – High, due to age and craftsmanship

Gate

19th century cast iron gates with spear shaped finials.

Level of interest - Local

Roof

Not seen – slate or more probably lead

Ceiling

19th century wooden plank ceiling.

Level of interest – Local

Floor

Stone flag floor.

Level of interest - Local

Monuments

White marble plaque commemorating Thomas Henry Baxter in whose memory the family restored the porch in 1905.

Level of interest - Local

Inner screen and door

As part of the early 20th century restoration of the porch a screen was inserted between the outer arch and the inner door. The lower part is constructed from wood with large double doors and the section between the doors and the ceiling is glazed with square leaded panes.

Level of interest - Low

Stoup

Remains of 15th century stone stoup, probably destroyed during the Civil War.

Level of interest - Medium

2.2.15 Open Space, Parks and Gardens and Trees

This part of the appraisal describes open spaces...the way they are enclosed, and the visual and or other sensory contribution they make to the character of the place...the ways in which the spaces were and are used.

The churchyard is enclosed by a wall constructed from the same materials as the church: local volcanic and sandstone rubble including some large roughly-squared blocks laid in rough courses. The walls were restored in the 19th and 20th century but probably date from a much earlier period. Part of the eastern boundary is formed by the rear wall of a former barn. Along the southern boundary is the 19th century lych gate - the main entrance to the church. Constructed from plain wooden posts which are braced to carry a pitched gable roof covered in slate. Four large granite steps lead to the lych gate and the floor is covered with cobbles. Within the lych gate there is a pair of wooden gates and on its south western side is a lamp given in 1901 as a gift of a lamp from the Revd Frodsham. Constructed from iron it was made locally by Tom Bray at John Sanders' workshop at Normans Green.

The churchyard is significant as an area of open green space in the heart of the village. It is the only green area in the centre of the village which is open to the general public. The churchyard contains a number of large mature trees which are a significant feature in the surrounding streetscape. The north eastern side of the churchyard abuts open fields and forms a significant link between the historic village and its rural landscape. As an area of green space which is frequently undisturbed it provides a habitat for wildlife, and a place for quiet contemplation and repose.

Originally the churchyard may have been the focus for worship with services taking place around the ancient yew tree. After the building of the church the actual religious ceremonies would have taken place within the building, but the churchyard would have been used for secular activities such as village sports and dancing in addition to fund raising events. The churchyard would have been used for the burial of the dead and this continues to be a function of the churchyard extension. The churchyard remains an important setting for wedding photographs and as a resource for genealogists.

2.2.22 Locally Important Buildings (Details)

Some aspects of the church may be of even greater interest when considered in the context of other local historic churches. For example how the iconography of the bench ends relates to other examples in the vicinity – there is a bench end in the church at Fenny Bridges which also includes a bouche shield.

2.2.24 An Assessment of Condition

See quinquennial inspection

2.2.27 A Plan for Further Action

Problems, pressures and threats

- Removed items - The book rests in front of the pews in the nave, aisle and choir, the plaster at the foot of the south wall between the porch and the screen, the pews adjacent to the pulpit and at the rear of the nave
- Intrusion - Paintwork on the arcade pier capitals, blue paintwork on the chancel ceiling
- Any problems in condition highlighted by Quinquennial Inspection.
- Ongoing costs of maintaining church
- Fixed seating limits other uses for the building
- Limited space for incorporating other facilities (toilet, sink etc.)

Opportunities

- Archaeological investigation could reveal further information concerning any earlier churches on the site and other undiscovered features such as wall paintings beneath the current limewash
- Further research into the iconography of the screen and bench ends could reveal more information about their date and provenance
- Further research into surrounding churches could reveal more information about locally significant details such as the bench end carvings
- The modern paint on the chancel ceiling and arcade capitals could be removed

Appendix 9

W. and B. Identification of Significance for St John the Baptist, Plymtree

(Information in red refers to the book 'Managing Built Heritage'. Information in black is the researcher's response to the questions.)

Derek Worthing and Stephen Bond *Managing Built Heritage – The Role of Cultural Significance, 2008*

Process of assessment

1. The identification and assessment of the overall and particular values embodied in and represented by the site.
2. An assessment of how valuable the site is related to comparable sites.
3. An evaluation of what aspects and what elements of the site contribute to the overall significance of the place – and in what way they do so.
4. Following from the above, an evaluation of the relative significance of the various aspects and elements of the place.

1. The identification and assessment of the overall and particular values embodied in and represented by the site.

Aesthetic

The church building and the structures in the churchyard are all constructed from natural materials which present a subtle, but varied palette: the walls, a local red sandstone and a purple/aubergine volcanic stone complement the cream Ham and Beerstone dressings; the grey iron rainwater goods and tie rod anchor plates; the silver/grey slate roofs and the weathered wood of the doors. In the churchyard the approach to the lychgate has varied colour and texture through the use of cobblestones and granite. As the majority of the materials are local the church and its churchyard structures have a visual homogeneity with the surrounding built environment and the wider landscape setting.

Due to the lack of later additions the church presents an exterior largely unaltered since the south aisle, porch and tower were added in the fifteenth century. The well preserved historic structure is further enhanced by its green setting with several notable trees and its prominent position set above the sweeping curve of the road below.

Inside the church has a light calm aesthetic enhanced by the large 16th century windows on the north wall and the white walls. Again a very high proportion of the historic fabric has survived with few modern interventions. Consequently the church has an ancient ambience described in the list description as 'perhaps the paradigm of a rural parish church in Devon'.

Both the interior and the exterior of the church display high levels of both local and international craftsmanship. Outside the craft of stone carving is represented by the window tracery, parapet carvings, label stop carvings of angels and heads, the Virgin and Child statue, moulded door surrounds, gargoyles and pinnacles. Inside the church stone carving includes the arcade, arch surrounds, the font and the chancel arch niche. One of the major features of the interior is the carved woodwork: this includes fine examples of local carving – the screen, bench ends, linenfold panelling, chests, altar rail and font cover, in addition to Flemish carved panels in the sanctuary. Other examples of local craftsmanship include the floor and wall monuments, the decorative ceilings to the nave, chancel and aisle, the surviving stained and coloured glass, the clock and its mechanism, the bells and the Flemish alabaster relief panel.

In addition to the high quality craftsmanship the aesthetic quality of the church is further enriched by the artistic merit of the medieval panel paintings on the chancel screen.

Plymtree church is notable for the high standard of work successive generations of builders, craftsmen, artists and architects have added to its fabric. In addition to the high aesthetic value of their work can be added the fortuitous aesthetic of the patina of age notable in the muted colours of the screen, the worn flagstones of the floor, the historic repairs to the benches and the lichen flecked walls.

Assessment of significance: exceptional

Scenic and panoramic

Although the church is situated on higher ground within the village it is located around a sweeping bend and is surrounded by trees to the north and west, as a consequence the building only impacts on close range views. However from the top of the tower there are panoramic views out over the surrounding landscape.

Assessment of significance: some

Architectural/technological

Plymtree church is of great architectural value as it represents a largely 15th century structure in the Perpendicular Gothic style which has not undergone extensive restoration. As a consequence the medieval plan remains unaltered and much of the intention of its 15th century designers can still be read. In addition it incorporates craftsmanship of a high standard in stone and wood. The screen has been described as ‘one of the most splendid’ (Pevsner), a ‘splendid example’ (List Description) and ‘one of the finest in Devon’ (Anna Hulbert – restorer).

The late 18th century tower clock is of high technical value as it is probably the oldest example of a wrought iron, horizontal framed ‘birdcage’ tower clock in Devon.

Assessment of significance: exceptional

Historical

As a surviving largely 15th century structure Plymtree church is of great historic interest. Within the church the screen, bench ends and fragments of stained glass link the present building with its medieval past. The surviving historic fabric tells the story of other

significant periods in the church's history including the Reformation – the missing niche statues, clear glass windows, broken stoup and damaged Virgin and Child statue; the Laudian reforms – the decorative altar rail, the 17th and 18th century prominence of the sermon – the pulpit and evidence of former box pews, the 19th century Ecclesiology Movement – the decoration in the chancel and restoration of some of the stained glass, the SPAB movement – the conservation of the existing fabric and the avoidance of over-restoration. In addition the outline of the doorway on the north wall is evidence of an earlier Anglo-Saxon/Norman building.

Assessment of significance: exceptional

Associational

St John the Baptist church has been associated with a number of historic figures and events. Some of these, whilst of historic interest have not impacted on the building itself: the rector Sir Richard Smerte (1435-1477) was one of the earliest recorded Devon musicians; the rector Nicholas Monk (1646-1660) reputedly persuaded his brother, General Monk, to support the restoration of Charles II to the throne; Thomas Mozley (rector 1868-1880) was a pupil and friend of John Henry Newman, one of the founders of the Oxford Movement at Oriel College - he became a writer for The Times and wrote *Reminiscences, chiefly of Oriel College and the Oxford Movement*; Edgar Hay (rector 1897-1929) was one of the pioneer founders of the Church Assembly, the forerunner of the General Synod - the Ecclesiastical Dilapidations Measure 1923 was first discussed and planned at Plymtree rectory and Hay introduced the measure in the Assembly. Other associations can be read in the surviving historic fabric: due to the patronage of Oriel College, Oxford, High Anglican clergy were appointed to the living including Joseph Dornford (rector 1832-1868) who reordered the sanctuary with decorative panelling and restored some stained glass to the windows in line with the principles of Ecclesiology; the architects George Fellowes Prynne (1853 -1927) and William Weir (1865 – 1950), both of whom carried out programmes of conservation rather than restoration (Weir was a member of the SPAB) with the result that the church is noted as 'a particularly good and well-preserved example' (List Description) and having undergone a 'sensitive restoration' (Pevsner).

Assessment of significance: some

Archaeological

It is generally believed that many medieval parish churches stand on the site of earlier church buildings. Often the only evidence of any earlier structure is the presence of a Norman font, which could possibly come from another building. At Plymtree, however, the yew tree in the churchyard which has been dated as over 1100 years old, the 'portion of old wall, with plaster face' found 'about a foot inside the present North wall near the pulpit' during the 1910 repairs to the church, and the Saxon or early Norman doorway are incontrovertible evidence that at least one earlier church building stood on the site. In addition to this evidence of an earlier church there is also potential for uncovering remains from former phases of work including remnants of stained glass, the niches statues, ceramic floor tiles, the site of the former galleries and wall paintings including a panel depicted in an etching of 1898 between the two easternmost 16th century nave windows on the north wall.

Assessment of significance: considerable

Economic

The church generates very little money in terms of attracting visitors – although increasingly people tracing their ancestry are visiting churches where relatives are buried and may as a consequence use local services such as the post office or the pub. The church is to a degree paid for by the local community, mainly by its regular attendants, but also by those using the church for family ceremonies such as baptisms, weddings and funerals. The church might well have a high value as real estate, but this is at present is not an issue as the building remains in use. Any potential real estate value could be circumscribed by its high listed status.

Assessment of significance: limited

Educational

The church is an important educational resource as the only surviving building in the village which dates from the medieval period. As a mainly 15th century structure the building has been deemed of high historic interest by E.H. reflected in its grade I listing. In addition to its medieval fabric it also contains fixtures and fittings from a number of different periods providing information on historic craftsmanship, as well as liturgical changes. The graves and memorials in the churchyard and the registers identify past inhabitants. The church also plays a part in the life of the primary school hosting regular school services.

Assessment of significance: high

Recreational

Assessment of significance: Not applicable

Artistic

There are two significant art works at St John the Baptist, Plymtree: the carved Flemish alabaster panel described by Pevsner as being ‘of remarkably high quality, with much delicate detail’ and the painted figure panels on the screen. Although Pevsner describes the painted figures as ‘of no high aesthetic value’ they have subsequently been described by the historic painting expert Anna Hulbert as ‘of good quality for a rural parish church’.

Assessment of significance: Considerable

Social Value

The function of Plymtree church as a place of worship is its primary social value. In addition to its weekly importance as a worship centre the church is also of great significance to local people past and present and the venue for significant ceremonies in their lives. The church is a place where they can go to relive the memories of their

marriage, the christening of their children and also to visit the graves of friends and families who are buried or have their ashes interred in the churchyard.

Assessment of significance: considerable

Commemorative values

There is no war memorial in the churchyard, only individual plaques within the church.

Assessment of significance: limited

Symbolic/iconic

Plymtree church is one of the symbolic/iconic buildings of the village. As the oldest surviving building the church has symbolic value as a prominent visual link to the village's past. It has influenced the plan of the village and impacted on the buildings and plots which have developed around it. For the church-going members of the village the church is an important physical reminder of the spiritual and Christian life of Plymtree. As a largely 15th century church the building is not unusual in Devon, or even in the surrounding area.

Assessment of significance: high

Spiritual and religious

As a place of worship still fulfilling its original function the spiritual value of Plymtree church is very high. It is of great spiritual importance to its congregation, to those from other Church of England churches visiting the parish and to those who use the building to mark significant life events. It is also of importance as a quiet place apart which is always open to those seeking a refuge from modern life and a place for quiet contemplation. As a functioning church the religious atmosphere and functionality of the building is of primary importance.

Assessment of significance: considerable

Inspirational

The inspirational value of Plymtree church lies both in its spiritual value (see above) but also in the acknowledgement of the achievements and dedication of those involved in its creation. As a parish church it is likely that its builders and craftsmen were local or regional and the surviving historic fabric is testament to their talents.

Assessment of significance: considerable

Ecological

As a structure built as a place of worship and still fulfilling that intention the church would appear to meet English Heritage's criteria for sustainability 'Capable of meeting present needs without compromising ability to meet future needs'. Furthermore it is constructed from 'durable materials that perform well in terms of the energy needed to make and use them' and their 'removal and replacement would require a major reinvestment of energy and resources'.

Assessment of significance: some

Environmental

Although surrounded by a rural landscape and set in the heart of a village where most of the inhabitants have their own area of private green space the churchyard nevertheless forms a significant open space of green and includes a number of notable trees including the magnificent yew tree to the south east of the church which is believed to date from the 9th century. As the churchyard is only sporadically visited it also provides a valuable relatively undisturbed habitat for flora and fauna.

Assessment of significance: limited

2. An assessment of how valuable the site is related to comparable sites.

In order to ascertain the significance of Plymtree church in relation to other comparable sites eight other churches in the area were visited. All the churches were within six miles of Plymtree and form a rough circle with Plymtree at the centre see Table 1. and Fig. 1.

Feniton	6 miles
Talaton	4 miles
Clyst St Lawrence	6 miles
Clyst Hydon	4 miles
Bradninch	5 miles
Cullompton	4 miles
Broadhembury	5 miles
Payhembury	4 miles

Table 13 Distance from Plymtree by road (rounded up to nearest mile)

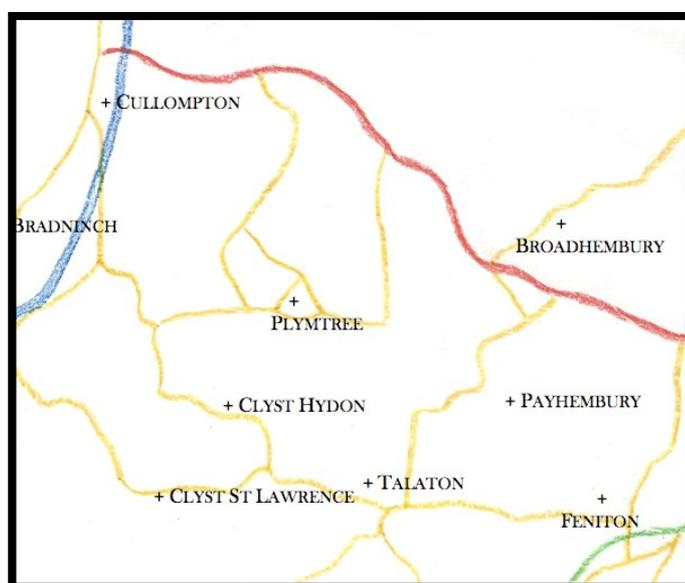


Fig 1 Map of Plymtree and surrounding churches

Significance of Age

All the churches were constructed between the 14th and the 16th century with the majority of building constructed, like Plymtree, in the 15th century. See Table 2.

Plymtree	C15
Feniton	Norman origins, C15 and early C16
Talaton	Norman font, C15
Clyst St Lawrence	Norman font, C15
Clyst Hydon	C15
Bradninch	C15 and early C16 earlier masonry in chancel
Cullompton	C15 and C16
Broadhembury	Nave C14 or earlier, C15 south aisle west tower, C16 porch
Payhembury	C15 and early C16

Table 2 Date of fabric prior to Victorian intervention

Plymtree appears to form part of a significant church building programme in East Devon during the 15th and early 16th century. In fact this was a countywide phenomena with around 95% of pre-Victorian churches in Devon built during this period (see Historic Context). Whilst not unusual the earliness of the date makes Plymtree of high historic value, which is reflected in its listed building status of grade I – see Table 3.

Plymtree	Grade I
Feniton	Grade II*
Talaton	Grade I
Clyst St Lawrence	Grade I
Clyst Hydon	Grade I
Bradninch	Grade II
Cullompton	Grade I
Broadhembury	Grade I
Payhembury	Grade I

Table 3 Listed building status

Age : High significance

Significance of materials

Plymtree and all the surrounding churches were built from stone local to the area. This part of East Devon has two underlying geologies – on the western side breccias, sandstone and volcanic stone and on the eastern side carboniferous sandstone and shales. Consequently a

mix of materials can be found, but all reflect materials local to the area. As the local stone

	Plym	Fen	Tal	Clyst St L	Clyst H	Brad	Cull	Broad- Hem	Pay- hem
Brecchia							☐		
Red sandstone	☐				☐		☐		
Volcanic stone rubble	☐					☐		☐	
Volcanic ashlar	☐		☐	☐	☐				☐
Volcanic ashlar quoins									
Flint Rubble		☐						☐	☐

was unsuitable for carving stone for the dressings and arcades was imported from nearby Beer. A small amount of Hamstone was used from Somerset and some Victorian work and later repairs used Bathstone – see Table 4.

Table 4 Local materials and their application

The use of local materials with imported stone for interiors and dressings was typical in Devon during the 15th and 16th century (see Historic context) and consequently the choice of materials for Plymtree can be seen as locally and regionally typical.

Materials : Medium significance

Limestone			☐						
Dressed Flint		☐							
Beerstone dressings	☐		☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Bathstone dressings		☐	☐		☐			☐	
Hamstone Dressings	☐								☐

Plan

Plymtree almost accords to the archetypical plan of late 15th and early 16th century churches in Devon described by Hoskins as of ‘a very characteristic local type: a continuous nave and chancel of five or six bays with north and south aisles running the full length of the building, a western tower, and a southern porch’, whilst Pevsner observes long, flanking aisles were a ‘special feature’ of the Perpendicular period in Devon (see Historic Context). Similar plans can be found in all the surrounding churches with only an additional southern aisle at Cullompton and a few Victorian vestries altering the pattern – see Table 5.

	Plym	Fen	Tal	Clyst St L	Clyst H	Brad	Cull	Broad-Hem	Pay-Hem
Nave	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Chancel	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
North aisle			☐		☐	☐	☐		☐
South aisle	☐	☐	☐		☐	☐	☐	☐	
Outer south aisle							☐		
West tower	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
North porch				☐				☐	
South porch	☐		☐		☐	☐	☐		☐
Porch btwn tower/south aisle		☐							

North west vestry						☐			
North east vestry						☐		☐	☐
South east vestry							☐		
North transept and vestry		☐							

☐ - indicates 19th century additions/rebuilding

Table 5 Plan comparison

Plan: medium significance

Lack of Victorian intervention

The list description for Plymtree refers to the church as ‘a particularly good and well-preserved example’, which has ‘has escaped the worst excesses of C19 renovation’. A comparison with the surrounding churches gives further weight to this statement. Table 6 below lists all the Victorian interventions mentioned in the list descriptions for the churches and clearly indicates the small amount of work which took place at Plymtree in comparison to its neighbours.

	Plym	Fen	Tal	Clyst St L	Clyst H	Brad	Cull	Broad-hem	Pay-Hem
Porch ceiling	☐								
Windows	3	6	7		6	All		4	
Choir stalls	☐	☐	☐	☐		☐		☐	☐
Benches	1	Most (Small no. C15)	North and south aisles	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Most (Small no. C15)
Buttresses	2								
Vestry		☐				☐		☐	☐
Nave roof						☐		☐	☐
Chancel roof		☐	☐			☐		☐	☐
North transept roof		☐							
North aisle roof					☐	☐			☐
Tower roof					☐				
South aisle		☐				☐		☐	

roof									
Chancel arch		☐	☐		☐			☐	☐
Reredos		☐							☐
Altar		☐	☐	☐	☐			☐	☐
Altar rail		☐	☐		☐			☐	
Restored screen		☐		☐	No screen	☐	☐	☐	☐
Pulpit		☐	☐		☐	☐		☐	
Lectern	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐				☐
Font		☐			☐				☐
Tower screen	Modern	☐							
Monuments	☐	☐	☐			☐	☐	☐	☐
Stained glass		☐		☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Outer walls			☐						
North aisle			☐		☐	☐			
Tile floor			☐			☐		☐	☐
Nave						☐			
South aisle						☐			
Tower vestry						☐			
Chancel							☐	☐	

Table 6 Summary of Victorian/early 20th century intervention

To illustrate this point further the type of Victorian intervention was given a weight (marked out of 10) which indicates its impact on the surrounding historic fabric – see Table 7. Clearly this is a subjective exercise, but represents a useful tool for illustrating the level of intervention.

Victorian Intervention	Weight of Intervention
Porch Ceiling	2.5
Windows	5
Choir stalls	2.5
Benches	5
Buttresses	2.5
Vestry	2.5
Nave roof	2.5
Chancel roof	2.5
North transept roof	2.5
North aisle roof	2.5
Tower roof	2.5
South aisle roof	2.5
Chancel arch	2.5
Reredos	2.5
Altar	2.5

Altar rail	2.5
Restored Screen	5
Pulpit	2.5
Lectern	2.5
Font	2.5
Tower screen	2.5
Monuments	2.5
Stained glass	5
Outer walls	7.5
North aisle	5
Tile floor	2.5
Nave	5
South aisle	5
Tower vestry	2.5
Chancel	5

Table 7 Weight of intervention

At this point a certain amount of rounding up and down was necessary in order to put the data into a spreadsheet, and consequently no differentiation was made between the number of Victorian windows. Similarly Plymtree was not considered to have Victorian intervention as far as its pews were concerned as the amount was so small. The figures were then placed in a spreadsheet and the overall percentage of Victorian intervention calculated – see Table 8.

Victorian Intervention	Plym	Fen	Tal	Clyst St L	Clyst H	Brad	Cull	Broadhem	Payhem
Porch Ceiling	2.5								
Windows	5	5	5		5	5		5	
Choir stalls	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.5
Benches		5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5
Buttresses	2.5								
Vestry		2.5				2.5		2.5	2.5
Nave roof						2.5		2.5	2.5
Chancel roof		2.5	2.5			2.5		2.5	2.5
North transept Roof		2.5							
North aisle roof					2.5	2.5			2.5
Tower roof					2.5				
South aisle roof		2.5				2.5		2.5	
Chancel arch		2.5	2.5		2.5			2.5	2.5
Reredos		2.5							2.5
Altar		2.5	2.5	2.5	2.5			2.5	2.5
Altar rail		2.5	2.5		2.5			2.5	
Restored screen		5		5		5	5	5	5
Pulpit		2.5	2.5		2.5	2.5		2.5	
Lectern	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.5				2.5

Font	2.5			2.5					2.5
Tower screen	2.5								
Monuments	2.5	2.5	2.5			2.5	2.5	2.5	2.5
Stained glass	5			5	5	5	5	5	5
Outer walls			7.5						
North aisle			5		5	5			
Tile floor			2.5			2.5		2.5	2.5
Nave heightening						5			
South aisle heightening						5			
Tower vestry						2.5			
Chancel							5	5	
	17.5	55	45	22.5	42.5	60	25	52.5	45
	Plym	Fen	Tal	Clyst St L	Clyst H	Brad	Cull	Broadhem	Payhem
	17.5	55	45	22.5	42.5	60	25	52.5	45

Table 8 Spreadsheet showing percentage of Victorian intervention

These figures were then used to create a pie chart which indicates the extent of Victorian intervention at Plymtree relative to the surrounding churches – see fig. 2.



Figure 2 Relative extent of Victorian intervention

Lack of Victorian intervention: High significance

Details and features significant to the area

Looking at the surrounding churches highlights similarities and differences which can contribute to the assessment of significance of Plymtree church. In Tables 4 and 5 the similarities in materials and plan have already been observed. In Table 9 below a list of further features and details shared by the neighbouring churches have been recorded.

	Plym	Fen	Tal	Clyst St L	Clyst H	Brad	Cull	Broad- Hem	Pay- Hem
Hexagonal /polygonal stair turret	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Image niche and statues	☐		☐	☐		☐	☐	☐	☐
Pevsner type B arcade	☐	☐	☐	No arcade		☐ (double wave moulding)	☐	☐ (double wave moulding)	☐
Perpendicular window tracery	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Wagon roof	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐		☐	☐	☐
Medieval carved screen	☐	☐	☐	☐		☐	☐		☐
Medieval carved bench ends	☐	☐	☐						☐
Carved head/angel label stops	☐	☐	☐					☐	
Green man carving	☐		☐	☐		☐			☐
Gargoyles	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Table 9 Shared features and details

Reference to the Historic Context confirms that wagon roofs, decorative screens and carved bench ends are all typical features of Devon churches in the 15th and 16th centuries. Projecting stair turrets are to be found on more than half of the churches and of these the majority are hexagonal or octagonal. Furthermore the style of windows and arcades are typical of the period nationally. However, these churches do appear to have a notable amount of stone carving in the form of image niches, gargoyles, bosses of the Green Man, carved head and angel label stops and statues. This is particularly notable at Cullompton, but at Plymtree all the above features can be found and the surviving image niches within the church suggest further sculptures existed prior to the Reformation. This might suggest this area of East Devon had particularly skilled stonemasons.

By comparing Plymtree with its neighbours the C17 dating of the Virgin and Child in the list description is called into question as all the other image niches and sculptures on the surrounding churches date from the C15.

Further study into the nature of the stone carving could suggest whether there was a local school of masons. Similarly as seven of the nine churches still retains its Medieval screen further study could reveal whether there was a school of wood carvers local to the area. Although only four of the nine churches still retains its Medieval bench ends a cursory survey shows similarities between the style – all have two tiers of blind Gothic tracery. Todd Gray in *Devon's Ancient Bench Ends* notes that 25 of the 123 churches in Devon with surviving bench ends have plain Gothic tracery of this nature and they are all in the southern part of the county. Further similarities can be noted between Plymtree and Feniton which both include carved bouche shields in their design.

Whilst the identification of local practices or schools might not impact on the value of features which are already considered of high significance it does help to enrich the understanding of the surviving historic fabric whilst potentially adding to their historical, educational and associational values. Linking churches artistically could also lead to economic benefits with visitors choosing to visit a number of churches where shared features can be observed.

3. An evaluation of what aspects and what elements of the site contribute to the overall significance of the place – and in what way they do so.

Much of the fabric of Plymtree church - the walls, most of the windows, the arcade, south aisle, south porch and tower - date from the Perpendicular period or earlier thus making its medieval date the most clear-cut element of heritage significance. Its grade I listing is primarily based on its date and high degree of survival of historic material. In addition to its historical significance the medieval fabric is also of aesthetic significance illustrating as it does local craftsmanship in the design of the windows, doors, mouldings and dressings. The south aisle has associative significance through its connections with the local Forde family. The east and west windows of the south aisle although altered in the 17th century still represent high historic significance.

The 19th century north and south chancel windows although 19th century replacements are archeologically accurate and the south window includes the two finely carved heads making them of medium significance

The yew tree in the churchyard, the Norman/Saxon doorway on the north wall and the buried remains of the former north wall in the area of the pulpit, a foot inside the present wall (if they still exist) all have high evidential value relating as they do to evidence of earlier

worship and buildings on the site.

The heritage significance inside the church is also mainly high. The 15th century craftsmanship illustrated by the nave bench ends, the painted, carved screen and the font (and its finely carved 17th century cover) has high historic and aesthetic significance, as does the chancel ceiling with its moulded ribs and Green Man bosses, the decoratively carved oak altar rail, the 17th century chancel paneling, the 14th century medieval floor tiles in the south aisle, the 16th century prayer boards and the Flemish alabaster relief panel. The surviving 18th clock and its workings are of high historical value.

Some of the significance of the pulpit has been compromised by its having been lowered and moved from its original position, but as an example of 18th century carpentry and of the 18th century focus on preaching it remains of medium significance. The George II coat of arms now in the church tower is of medium interest due to its age and craftsmanship as is the paneled 18th century altar. The decorative plaster ceiling in the nave and south aisle may be a 19th century reproduction of the original 18th century work, but its aesthetic appeal still makes it of medium significance. The two 17th century slab memorials in the south aisle are of medium historic significance. The 19th century choir stalls reusing medieval bench ends whilst not as significant as the originals are still of medium significance.

The remaining wall memorials are of local significance only and the 19th century north wall buttresses, the organ, lectern and 20th century tower doors and south porch outer doors are of low significance.

The significance of Plymtree church is increased by associative value with the SPAB movement, various well known 19th century architects, the connections with Oriel College, and figures from the Civil War.

The overall aesthetic significance of the building and its setting are high. With the very minor exceptions of the loss of plaster on the lower wall of the south aisle, the modern paint on the chancel ceiling and the arcade capitals and the clearance of some of the gravestones the church is a remarkable survival of a medieval parish church with very high quality additions from the 17th, 18th and 19th centuries.

The majority of the local community hold the historic and aesthetic nature of their church in very high esteem. They recognize the high level of craftsmanship in the building and wish to see it preserved.

In addition to its value as an historic and artistic resource of national reknown the village also values the church for its role as a community building: an important centre for religious life, family ceremonies and for its role in the life of the Church of England Primary school.

The Community value the church and churchyard as a significant landmark, as a resource of local history and as a physical symbol of the phases of the village's development.

The Community is largely relaxed with the limitations inherent within the current plan of the interior, largely because the village has a number of other venues for public assembly.

4. Following from the above, an evaluation of the relative significance of the various aspects and elements of the place.

Comparative significance is best expressed by using a hierarchy of ascending or descending levels of value.

- **Exceptional:** features of exceptional/international significance or which contain elements with a significance beyond national boundaries
- **Considerable:** features of considerable/national significance, possibly reflected in statutory designations such as Scheduled Ancient Monument, Listed Building or equivalent nationally graded sites (including those of ecological and nature conservation value)
- **Some:** features of some significance, important as regional level either individually or for group value
- **Limited:** features of limited/local significance
- **Unknown:** features of unknown significance resulting from a lack of sufficient information on which to base sound analysis of its value
- **No:** features of no significance to the study area

Exceptional significance: The 15th century and earlier fabric, specifically the walls, all the windows except for those in the north and south chancel walls, the arcade, the south aisle, south porch and tower. The yew tree, Anglo-Saxon/Norman doorway and buried wall remains which all have high evidential value. The bench ends, screen, the Flemish alabaster panel,

Considerable significance: The font and cover, chancel ceiling, altar rail, chancel paneling, medieval floor tiles, 16th century prayer boards, the 18th century clock and the bells all have high aesthetic and/or historic value. The highly decorated chancel is of high significance due to its association with the Oxford Movement. The early 20th century restoration is of high associative significance as it reflects the influence of its S.P.A.B. architect. The green setting of the churchyard is of high communal significance as is the spiritual value of the church. Its educational and instructive significance has high communal significance.

Some significance: The 19th century north and south chancel windows are of medium aesthetic and historic value. The George II coats of arms is of medium historic value, as are the 17th floor memorial slabs. The 18th century pulpit has been altered but is still of medium historic value. The 18th century north and south aisle ceilings are of a medium to high aesthetic value. The choir stalls are 19th century and generally of low value except for the inclusion of the medieval work. The carved Victorian lectern is typical of the Ecclesiologist's style of internal fittings and is of medium associative value. The church's connection with the Civil War is of medium historical value, but there is no physical expression of this.

Limited significance: The wall monuments are of local interest only. The organ is relatively late in date and of no especial technical importance. The reading desk is modern. The 19th century buttresses on the north wall are relatively recent and of no particular artistic merit. The porch ceiling and internal doors.

Unknown significance: Archaeological research could reveal more information concerning the earlier church/churches. Further investigation of the Anglo-Saxon/Norman doorway could provide a firmer date for this feature and suggest whether it was inserted into a 14th century wall, or whether parts of the wall date from this earlier

period.

Further research could reveal the significance of the iconography of the screen and the connection with the Bouchier and Stafford families.

Further investigation into the pews and pew ends could date the surviving fabric and comparison with surrounding churches could reveal how typical the bench ends are of the area. For instance the church at Fenny Bridges also has a carving of a bouche shield on one of its bench ends. Similar iconography and style could indicate a local school.

No significance: The lighting and heating systems, the reading desk and the internal partition between the nave and the tower.

Sensitivity to change

(taken from M Pearson and D Marshall *National Library of Australia, Conservation Management Plan, 2005*)

- **High Sensitivity** High sensitivity to change occurs where a change would pose a major threat to a specific heritage value of the component affected, or the Library as a whole. A major threat is one that would lead to substantial loss of the heritage value
- **Moderate sensitivity** Moderate sensitivity to change occurs where a change would pose a moderate threat to a specific heritage value of the component affected, or would pose a threat to a component of heritage significance in another part of the building. A moderate threat is one that would diminish the heritage value, or diminish the ability of an observer to appreciate the value.
- **Low sensitivity** Low sensitivity to change occurs where a change would pose no appreciable threat to a specific heritage value of the component affected, and would pose no appreciable threat to heritage significance in another part of the building. Components of the Library with no individual identified heritage values are likely to have a low sensitivity to change (rising to moderate if the proposals affect adjacent areas having values).

High Sensitivity:

Exterior – all standing walls on the four elevations, the tower, the porch, the south buttresses, all dressings and door surrounds, the Anglo-Saxon/Norman doorway, all doors except for the west tower door, chancel roof structure, statue of Madonna and Child, all the windows except for the north and south chancel windows, the south porch stoup, the churchyard aesthetic.

Interior - chancel vault, chancel arch and image niche, tower arch, the arcade, medieval floor tiles, buried archaeology within the church, the rood screen.

Furniture and fittings – the chancel paneling, altar rail, nave and aisle benches, font, alabaster wall plaque, prayer and commandment boards.

Moderate Sensitivity:

Exterior – nave and south aisle roofs, north and south chancel windows, the west tower door.

Interior - nave and south aisle vault, 17th century grave slabs

Furniture and fittings – choir stalls, altar, pulpit, lectern, George II arms.

Low Sensitivity:

Exterior – chancel roof covering, north wall buttresses.

Interior - nave aisle and chancel (this needs to be checked beneath carpet) flooring, internal tower doors, porch doors.

Furniture and fittings – wall memorials, organ, reading desk.

Appendix 10

St. John the Baptist, Plymtree Pews - Chronology of written and picture references

1. c. 1470 - oak benches with carved ends are installed in the nave and the south aisle – possibly also in the chancel. There is no record of how many pews were installed or their exact configuration
2. 17th century - two bench ends replaced - one at the western end of the nave on the southern side and one which stood until 2011 to the west of this pew (now in store)
3. January 1894 Parish Magazine - report of condition survey made by the architect George Fellowes Prynne – ‘The floor is in an extremely bad state. The flag stones are laid without concrete, on the natural soil, with the inevitable result of being uneven and damp.....The platforms under the seats and pews are rotten and damp....The “worm” has greatly damaged and is still damaging the Oak Seats, and some immediate steps should be taken to prevent the complete destruction of this really fine work’.
4. 1894 photograph included in preface to the Revd. Gutteres *Plymtree Rectory Library* shows the pew front on the southern side of the nave with a different carved end to the one on the pew when it was removed – see Fig. 1.



Figure 14 1894 photograph (Plymtree church collection)

5. 1895 - postcards of the interior of Plymtree dating from this year show 'In the Forde aisle were box pews in simple Georgian style, while the pew ends in the nave show that woodworm had already done their worst.....they also show the high brick chimney flue for the large, square-cast iron stove, set between the pews beside the north wall.' (Recorded in T Eames *Book of Plymtree*)
6. November 1898 etching of the interior of the church used for the parish magazine cover shows the former 'Parson's Box' – a fielded panel screen, taller than the benches and similar in style to the pulpit. It is three panels wide and stands in front of the pulpit to the same width as the pews on the north side of the aisle. It appears to return on its southern side to enclose the pulpit and a lectern – see Fig 2.



Figure 15 1898 Etching (Plymtree church collection)

7. December 1898 – the Parish Magazine records - 'The Rector has recently had the Choir Stalls altered, so that he may take the service in his proper place in the Chancel... This has allowed of the removal of the "Parson's Box" in the north aisle, and, as the floor under it proved to be rotten, he has re-floored the aisle for 13 feet west of the chancel screen.'

8. 1905 - The same view taken in a photo of 1905 shows the pulpit with the panelling removed and what appears to be one of the medieval benches reinstated to the east of the pulpit – see Fig. 3.



Figure 16 View of the interior from 1905 (Plymtree Parish Magazine)

9. 1908 John Stabb in *Some Old Devon Churches Vol. 1*- comments that the screen is in good condition because it has been preserved by high backed pews. Also mentions south aisle pews of horse-box pattern.
10. November 1910 Parish Magazine - notes a list of proposed repairs which includes – relaying floors and refixing of seats.
11. April 1911 – Archdeacon’s visitation recorded in Parish Magazine- ‘The church is under repair, and the work is being very thoroughly done on conservative lines...the floors inside laid on a concrete base. Inside a good bed of concrete has been laid under the flooring and the flags.’
12. Some time between 1911-18 Beatrix Cresswell made notes on the church interior – she records benches with carved ends – some modern, some made from an old chest. One bench end made from a king post from the roof of Greenways chapel Tiverton which has been returned to Tiverton
13. 1927 framed photograph – kept in the church vestry room shows the east end nave pew arrangements unaltered since the 1905 photograph – see Fig 4.



Figure 17 1927 photograph (Plymtree church collection)

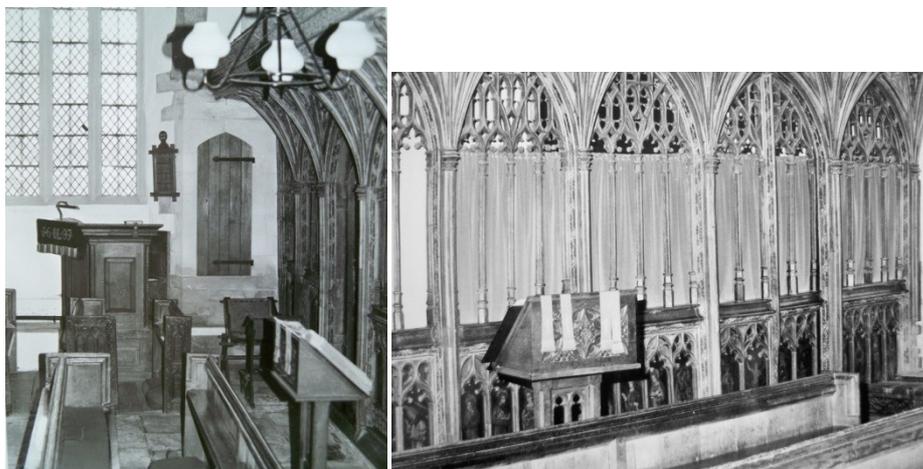
14. 1951 photograph shows a closer view of the east end of the nave and the pew arrangement – see Fig. 5.



Figure 18 1951 photograph (Plymtree Church collection)

15. 1955 Church Guide – also notes ‘The panel paintings [of the screen] themselves are in a marvellous state of preservation, probably due to their having for a long period been entirely covered by horse-box pews.....The pews have seats of massive oak three inches thick, with solid kneeling ledges in the place occupied in modern pews by the book-shelf’.
16. 1955 list description - ‘C19 oak stalls with poppyhead finials and reusing some good C15 carved bench ends’.... ‘Very good and complete set of C15 oak benches; blind tracery on the frontals and back benches, ends carved with similar schemes of flowers and two tiers of tracery. The only additions a coupe of late C17 benches and one C19 example’.

17. Photographs from 1989 show the small pew beside the altar and its pew rest, and the front pew rest on the southern side of the nave aisle before their removal – see Figs. 6 and 7



Figures 19 and 7 1989 photographs (Plymtree Church Collection)

18. 2000 photograph taken for a church exhibition shows the front pew rest on the southern side of the nave aisle before it was removed. It also clearly shows this is not the same bench end that appears in the 1894 photograph.

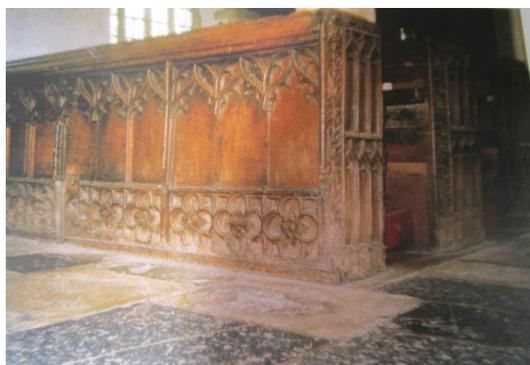


Figure 8 Photograph from 2000 (Plymtree Church collection)

19. Photographs taken in 2011 during removal of the pews from the rear of the nave. Pews from the second to back row of the nave – see Figs. 9, 10 and 11 and at the back of the nave – Fogs. 12 and 13.



Figures 9, 10 and 11 Pews from the second row back of the nave during their removal in 2011 (Plymtree Church collection)



Figures 12 and 13 Pews at the back of the nave during their removal in 2011 (Plymtree Church collection)

Church Pew Movements

- i. The arrangement of flagstones at the western end of the south aisle suggest there may historically have been pews here. Anecdotal evidence suggests the font was not always in this position – see Fig. 14.



Figure 14 Flagstone arrangement suggesting pews may originally have been positioned on this site (photograph, author)

- ii. At some point in the second half of the 19th century the present choir stalls were erected in the chancel. There is no record of this exact date and no mention of what the pews replaced. It is possible the choir stalls were erected at the same time the organ was installed. Again there are no records as to what the organ replaced, but if the east end of the Forde Aisle was used as a private chapel as has been suggested (Eames), medieval pews may have been in place.
- iii. In the photograph of 1894 – see Fig. 15 (reference 4) the bench end at the northern end of the front pew on the southern side of the nave is clearly shown

to have a pointed head. By the photograph in 1927 – see Fig. 16 (ref. 13) this bench end has been altered showing the same bench end which is now in store. The pointed head bench end – see Fig. 17 is now in the choir. The alteration may well have taken place during the re-ordering of 1898 (refs. 6. and 7), but the chancel bench was not altered until after 1927 at the poppy head bench end can still be seen in the photograph of this date – see Fig. 18 (ref. 13).



Figure 15 Detail of 1894 photograph (Plymtree Church Collection)



Figure 16 Detail of 1927 photograph (Plymtree Church collection)



Figure 120 Pointed head bench end in the chancel (Photograph, author)

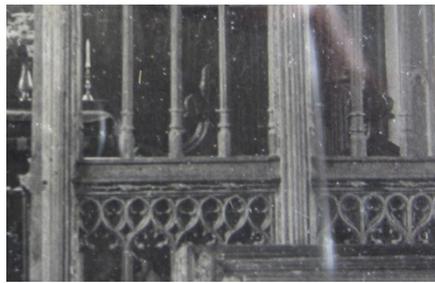


Figure 18 Detail of 1927 photograph showing poppy headed bench end (Plymtree Church collection)

- iv. During the same reordering of 1898 the panelling around the pulpit known as the ‘parson’s box was also removed’ (ref. 7). What is not entirely clear from the ‘before’ and ‘after’ etching of 1898 – see Fig. 19 (ref.6) and the photograph of 1905 – see Fig. 20 (ref. 8) is whether the panelling actually contained the small pew and frontal or whether they were repositioned in this space after the panelling was removed. The photograph from 1894 – see Fig. 21 (ref. 4) shows the corner of the ‘parson’s box which clearly also contains the lectern suggesting at this point the short pew and frontal were probably not contained within this space.



**Figure 19 Detail of 1898 etching
(Plymtree Church collection)**



**Figure 20 Detail of 1905 photograph
(Plymtree Church collection)**



Figure 21 Detail of 1894 photograph (Plymtree Church collection)

Furthermore a report on the screen written by the expert painting conservator Anna Hulbert in 1986 (which appears in the current church guide) suggests ‘There must have been a little altar in front of the screen, in this corner, probably very small in order to avoid the Roodstair door’. This again would suggest pews would not have been located in this area during the medieval period. Looking at the 1989 photograph – see Fig. 22 (ref. 17) the medieval altar would have been located to the south of where the chair stands making this area very cramped if the configuration of the front pews were original.



Figure 22 1989 photograph (Plymtree Church collection)

- v. In 1911 the flagstone floor of the whole church, which previously rested directly on the beaten earth, was lifted as it had become extremely damp and uneven. The flags were then relaid on a bed of cement concrete (ref. 11). This would have involved the removal of all the pews and presumably at this time the wooden floorboards for the pews were also laid.
- vi. At some point (not recorded) the pews to the east of the entrance via the south porch were removed. The boarded floor – see Fig. 23 is identical to that in the rest of the church which was probably re-laid during the restoration scheme of 1911 (ref. 11) so presumably the pews were still in position at this date.



Figure 23 Boarded floor in the south aisle (Photograph, author)

- vii. In 2000 the three front book rests and a small pew by the pulpit were removed on a temporary basis. The front book rests from the chancel were also removed. The small pew front from near the pulpit was placed by the altar – see Fig. 24, the small pew from in front of the pulpit was placed at the south end of the screen – see Fig. 25 and the other front book rests from the nave, south aisle and chancel were placed in store – see Fig. 26,27,28.



Figure 24 Relocated pew front in the chancel (Photograph, author)



Figure 25 Relocated pew in the south aisle (Photograph, author)



Figure 26 Pew from south aisle in store (Plymtree Church collection)



Figure 27 Nave pew front in store (Plymtree Church collection)



Figure 221 Nave pew front and chancel pew fronts in store (Plymtree Church collection)

- viii. In 2011 the two small pews at the rear of the nave were removed during rewiring and placed in store (ref. 19) – see Figs. 29,30 and 31.



Figure 222 Site of removed pews at the rear of the church



Figures 23 and 31 Rear pews during their removal

Biographies of the pew fronts and pews removed

Letters refer to the plan below

Pew front (a.) and pew (b)

1. This pew and pew front may have traditionally stood in the positions recorded before their removal in 2000, but the presence of a small altar almost immediately in front of them during the medieval period (ref. Church guidebook) and the photographic evidence of a lectern inside the 'parson's box' in the 19th century (ref. 4) makes this unlikely. In which case the pew and pew front were sited in their position adjacent to the pulpit at some point between 1898 and 1905. Where they were formally sited is unknown but they could have originated in one of the areas of the church where historically the pews have been removed i.e. at the far eastern or western end of the Forde Aisle. The pew and pew front were removed in 2000 on a temporary basis following informal permission from the then Archdeacon.

Current site – to the south of the altar (a.1) and to the south west of the screen (b.1)

Pew front (c.)

This pew front is shown in late 19th century photographs although it has a different carved bench end on its northern end (ref. 4). It was removed and replaced following the relaying of the floor in 1911 (ref. 11). There are several unsubstantiated references (refs. 9 and 15) to box pews standing immediately in front of the screen accounting for the good state of preservation of the panel paintings. It is not known however whether the presence of these pews would have impacted on the pew arrangement which existed prior to the removal of the pew front in 2000 (on a temporary basis following informal permission from the then Archdeacon).

Current site – storage

Pew front (d.)

T. Eames describes a late 19th century postcard showing 'In the Forde aisle were box pews in simple Georgian style' (ref. 5). This postcard has not been seen and so it is not possible to determine the extent of the box pews in this area. There is evidence throughout the church that doors were hung on the medieval bench ends see Figs. 32 and 33. Eames does refer specifically to 'simple Georgian style' – this could be the joinery of the door alone or the whole pew.



**Figure 32 Part of a hinge to a former door
(Photograph, author)**



**Figure 33 The latch to a former door
(Photograph, author)**

The pew front if traditionally in this position would have been lifted and replaced during the relaying of the floor in 1911 (ref. 11). Pew front d. was removed in 2000 on a temporary basis following informal permission from the then Archdeacon.

Current site – storage

Pews e.

There is little information of these two pews at the rear of the church. No photographs, postcards or etchings have been seen which include them. One of the bench ends of the pew from the second to back row appears to be a 17th century replacement. They would have been lifted and replaced during the reflooring of the church in 1911 (ref. 11). In 2011 an Archdeacon's Temporary Reordering permission was granted for the pews to be removed, as they had been moved during rewiring.

Current site – storage.

Panelling f.

There is no written evidence of when the 'parson's box' was erected although stylistically it appears to be Georgian. It was removed as part of the 1898 reordering (ref. 7).

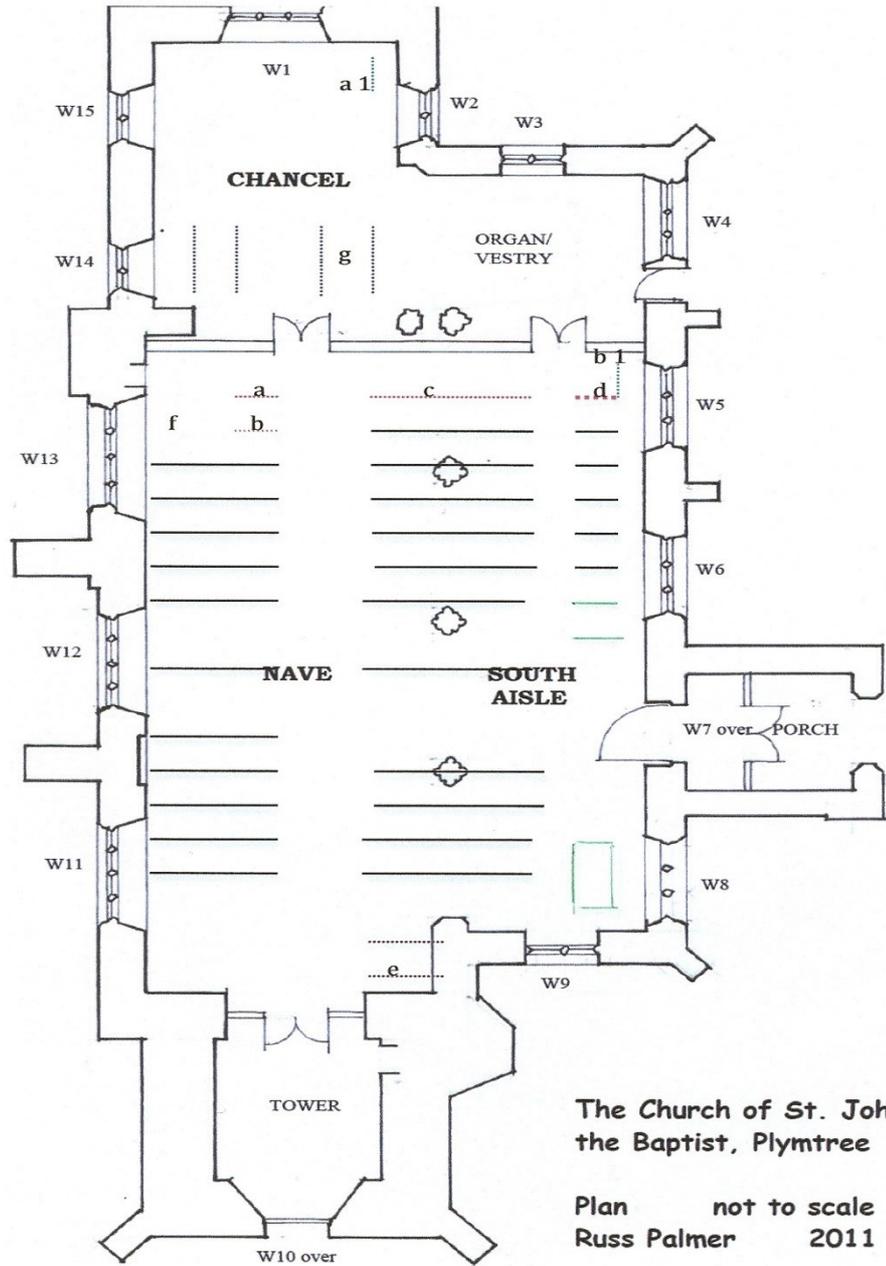
Current site - unknown

Pew fronts g.

It is not known exactly when the pew fronts were erected in the chancel, but stylistically they appear to date from the later 19th century. The pews were altered during the 1898 reordering, but how is not recorded. The pews were described in 1955 as incorporating 'some' medieval bench ends (ref. 16) but now only one is extant. At some point between 1894 (ref. 4) and 1927 (ref. 13) the poppy head bench end on the front pew on the southern side of the chancel was replaced with a medieval bench end. The 19th century pew fronts themselves are plain without carving. The fronts were removed in 2000 on a temporary basis following informal permission from the then Archdeacon.

Current site – in storage

Pew arrangement – St John the Baptist, Plymtree*



- | | | | |
|-------|---------------------------|-------|----------------------|
| ————— | Existing pews | ----- | Pews removed in 2000 |
| ————— | Pews removed historically | ----- | Pews removed in 2011 |
| | Pews replaced | ----- | Repositioned pews |

Related references – see chronolgy

———— Existing pews – 1, 12, 15, 16.

..... Pews removed historically

..... Pews replaced – 4, 7, 16.

..... Pew removed in 2000 – 6, 7, 8, 11, 13, 14, 17, 18. |

..... Pews removed in 2011 – 19.

..... Repositioned pews – 4, 6, 7, 8, 13, 14, 17.

* Floor plan reproduced by kind permission of Russ Palmer

Location of pews approximate and not to scale

Appendix 11

Summary of Meeting between Bridget Gillard, Jude Johncock, the Churches and Church Buildings Council Casework Officer for the Church of England and Dr Joseph Elders the Open and Sustainable Buildings Main Projects Officer at Church House on Tuesday 19th November 2013 at 10.00 a.m.

New structure for the Statements of Significance

The Church Buildings Council are in the process of revising the format for the Statements of Significance and Statements of Need. They intend to produce a document which is more straightforward than at present as they feel the current document, which has evolved over time, has become too complicated and unwieldy. The new format will consist of three parts: a history and description of the church, a statement of its significance and an assessment of the impact of proposed work.

The third section of the revised guidelines – ‘what is the impact of proposed changes?’ – is intended to encourage the congregation to carry out changes which will enhance rather than detract from the significance of the church. This reflects the C.B.C.’s belief that church buildings can be enhanced. The C.B.C. also recognises that certain aspects of some church’s existing fabric could be detrimental to their significance.

The ascribing of values to various elements of the church fabric will not be included in the new format. It is intended to be a broad description with detail added in the third section when an actual proposal is identified.

Purpose of current and proposed Statements of Significance

In section two of the new format (the statement of significance) the C.B.C. are asking the questions ‘who values it, how do you value it and for what reasons?’

The C.B.C. want statements of significance to state what is important in the building and its churchyard to inform its planning process.

The C.B.C. describe statements of significance according to the Faculty Jurisdiction Rules

2000 as a document which ‘summarises the historical development of the church and identifies the important features that make major contributions to the character of the church’

The C.B.C. define significance in their guidance for writing church management plans as ‘Significance is the whole set of reasons why people value a major church, whether as a place for worship and mission, as an historic building that is part of the national heritage, as a focus for the local community, as a familiar landmark or for any other reasons.’

Proposed Historic Environment Record

The C.B.C. are hoping (subject to grant aid) to develop an historic environment record (H.E.R.). One of the uses of the H.E.R. will be to prepopulate statements of significance with data. Once statements of significance have been prepared it is intended that this information could then be fed back into the H.E.R., where appropriate.

It is intended that the proposed H.E.R. will provide baseline information which will assist the parishes.

At present statements of significance are only written when there are proposed changes to the fabric requiring a faculty. It is the intention of the C.B.C. that, if the H.E.R. gains funding, ultimately all churches will have at least a baseline statement of significance which will include a history and description of the church and a statement of its significance. This will be achieved in two stages - an initial standard information sheet with basic information such as the location, historic and natural environment designations and then an extra layer of information including the history and description and the statement of significance.

The C.B.C. also intend to add information from faculty applications to the H.E.R.

The H.E.R. will include an events log which can be added to as information is identified.

Who should write the Statements of Significance?

The C.B.C. are fully supportive of parishes writing their own statements of significance as there is the issue of cost when a consultant is approached and they believe parishes who write their own statements of significance are left with a far greater knowledge of their building. They want the parish to be responsible for their churches and to become stakeholders. They are committed to re-establishing the church as part of the community including capturing sources of knowledge which might not exist within the worshipping congregation. In the case of larger and more complicated buildings the D.A.C. and the C.B.C. can be called on for advice. These two bodies have a wide spectrum of expertise which can be called on to fill any gaps in the statements of significance.

Appendix 12

New Statement of Significance

1.0 Introduction

1.1 What is a statement of significance?

A statement of significance is a document which summarises the historical development of the church and identifies the important features that make major contributions to its character. Significance is the whole set of reasons why people value a major church, whether as a place for worship and mission, as an historic building that is part of the national heritage, as a focus for the local community, as a familiar landmark or for any other reasons.

The purpose of the statement of significance is to help you, the parish, understand the history and evolution of your building explore the strengths and potential that your church holds for worship and mission, to recognise areas of the building and setting which are sensitive to change and to identify areas where change would be appropriate. This information will then inform those in the Faculty system who can advise you and assess your plans for change.

1.2 What should the statement of significance include?

The statement is divided into separate sections looking at the historic development of the church including its past associations with people and events, its setting and natural heritage, past and present use, a description of the surviving historic fabric, a description of the contents and suggestions for any future changes or alterations. Some sections will identify areas or features of particularly high significance and sensitivity which deserve protection and other aspects which are of low significance or sensitivity where change or

alteration might be beneficial.

1.3 How should evaluations be made?

Part of the purpose of assessing the significance of the church is to identify those areas where changes could take place, and those areas where it would not be appropriate. This requires the building, its setting and contents to be rated to decide what are the areas of high and low significance and sensitivity. This is a complicated process and may require advice from the D.A.C.

To evaluate the significance of the building, contents and setting you should use the following terminology:

- High – important at national to international levels
- Moderate-High – important at regional or sometimes higher level
- Moderate – usually of local value but of regional significance (e.g. local school of carving, regional feature such as projecting stair turret)
- Low-Moderate – of local value
- Low – adds little or nothing to the value of a site
- Negative – detracts from or obscures the value of a site

The three highest values 'high', 'moderate-high' and 'moderate' will most often be ascribed to those features of the church and setting of an early date or great architectural or historic merit. They will generally be the features singled out for favourable comment in the listing description and Pevsner (see below).

In order to decide what level of local value the features hold it will be necessary to compare the church to others in the area. By visiting five or more surrounding churches you will be able to identify whether the date, plan, materials, decorative features and amount of 19th

century restoration of your church is typical of the area or unusual. This will enable you to ascribe either a 'moderate' or 'low-moderate' value. 'Low' values should be ascribed to those features that have been recently installed and have no aesthetic or architectural significance and 'Negative' value should be ascribed to those features which detract from or obscure the surrounding historic features.

Once the significance has been assessed the same features will then be evaluated to discover their sensitivity. This assessment may have different results to the significance assessment as some features which are of high or moderate significance might be quite robust and able to accommodate changes without compromising their character.

To evaluate the sensitivity of the building, contents and setting you should use the following terminology:

- High sensitivity – change would pose a major threat to the character of the feature
- Medium sensitivity – change would diminish the character or the ability of an observer to understand the character
- Low sensitivity – change would pose no specific threat to the feature or pose an appreciable threat to the overall character of the building.

Again this is a complicated process and may require advice from the D.A.C.

1.4 How to research the church

When researching the church the following sources of information could be useful :-

- *Buildings of England* series by Pevsner
- Reports by the Royal Commission on the Historical Monuments of England (RCHME), now part of English Heritage

- The local history society
- The local museum
- Diocesan Record Centre
- County Record Office
- County Biological Records Centre
- Historic Environment Record (HER), maintained by your local authority.
- Victoria County History (VCH)

Statutory designations and descriptions for churchyards, churches or objects within them can be checked through your local planning authority, English Heritage and Natural England (Nature Conservation significance).

Useful web sites include:

- Churchcare <http://www.churchcare.co.uk/>
- Shrinking the footprint www.shrinkingthefootprint.cofe.anglican.org
- Heritage Gateway www.heritagegateway.org.uk/
- Magic www.magic.gov.uk
- Caring for God's Acre www.caringforgodsacre.org.uk

Other sources of information:

- The Practical Handbook in Archaeology publication 'Recording a church: an illustrated glossary'
- NADFAS guide 'Inside churches A guide to church furnishings'

During research members of the parish may encounter problems with some of the material. This can include contradictory written evidence and hearsay presented as fact. Where primary source information exists, such as parish magazines, rectors' notes, photographs, watercolours and architects' drawings this information can often provide definitive evidence if later histories are contradictory. However some of these sources are

not necessarily reliable, for example the architect may have modified his drawings at a later date, and any pictorial representations may include artistic licence. Where the information is uncertain this should be stated. Some publications may refer to information which can no longer be verified such as Victorian photographs which have been lost. Again the information can be included, but with the proviso that the original source no longer exists. In some churches early material from other buildings may have been inserted at a later date, and it is important the historic development makes this clear.

The parish should contact their architect, D.A.C. secretary or historic buildings advisor if major problems are encountered in their research or with any other aspect of completing the statement of significance.

2.0 Basic facts

Parish:

Dedication:

Benefice:

Diocese:

Address:

Grid ref:

Local Planning Authority:

County:

Statutory Listing of church:

Statutory designation for structures and objects within churchyard:

Conservation Area:

Scheduled Monument:

Tree Preservation Orders:

Protected Species:

County Wildlife Site (or equivalent, or SSSI):

Any other designations:

3.0 Historic Development

The purpose of this section is to describe the history of the church to give an understanding of its evolution, how it has changed over time and what elements of former phases have been lost or obscured. This should include information on any earlier buildings on the site, how the church has changed over time and any architects, artists and other craftsmen known to have been involved in its development.

Record the various phases of work according to period (Norman, 13th, 14th, 15th, century etc.) on an historic development plan. You could ask the church architect to allow you to use his/her floor plan as a template and use colour to depict the various phases.

On a separate plan record those areas of the church which may have archaeological potential. These could be sites shown on the H.E.R. or aspects of the building revealed in the historic development research which are no longer visible. For example wall paintings mentioned in early records which are now whitewashed.

4.0 Setting of the Church

In this section the setting of the church is analysed to understand how it relates to the wider landscape setting and to the church itself. It should also identify any elements of the churchyard whether natural or built which are of particular importance and worthy of protection. This section will comprise of two elements: a description of the setting and an evaluation of its significance and sensitivity.

Part 1.

Describe the setting of the church. How does the church and its churchyard relate to the wider landscape – is it in the heart of the settlement or does it stand on a prominent site?

Does the church and its setting feature in any major views or vistas within the settlement and its surroundings? Are there any significant views looking out from the churchyard? Describe the plan of the churchyard, its paths, boundaries, structures, gates, lighting, significant tombs and gravestones; including the type of materials. Are there any archaeological remains? Are adjacent buildings similar, complementary or contrasting in age, style, or materials? Is the church or churchyard used by protected species or species with Biodiversity Action Plans? How good a habitat is the churchyard for flora and fauna? Is there any rare plant life or lichen? Are there any ancient, very prominent, rare or unusual trees? How do the trees contribute to the setting of the church? Are there any elements of the setting which are poorly managed or in a bad state of repair?

Part 2.

In order to determine what elements of the churchyard whether natural or built are of particular importance and worthy of protection use the terminology and criteria from the introduction to rate their significance. Then, again using the terminology from the introduction, rate what you consider to be the sensitivity of each feature. For example

Feature	Significance	Sensitivity
Long range view from the S.E. corner of the churchyard	Moderate-high significance	Medium
14 th century preaching cross	High significance	High
20 th century shed in poor condition	Negative significance	Low
11 th century yew tree	High significance	High

5.0 Past and present use of the church

This section will look at the historic and present use of the church and churchyard. The purpose of this section is to understand how the past use of the building and setting has impacted on its present form and any issues the building in its present form raises for its

current use. This section is divided into two parts: the first describes the uses past and present of the building and churchyard and their impact on its fabric; the second part evaluates the significance and sensitivity of the elements.

Part 1.

Describe briefly how the church is used for the liturgy and any issues which arise from its present layout. Describe any known historic liturgical practices and uses of the church, and any surviving elements of the fabric to which these relate (such as side altars, unused high altars, former communion tables, three-decker pulpits, reading desks etc.) Describe any significant events or figures associated with the church such as benefactors, priests, local gentry or episodes in church history showing how these affected the choice of architect/artist, the incorporation of any monuments in the church or alterations to the fabric. Describe any past non-liturgical uses of the church and churchyard and any associated physical remains. Describe any current non-liturgical uses of the church and churchyard and any issues which arise from these activities. Does the church and churchyard reveal any information about the past lives of the parishioners (such as the ironwork of a local blacksmith)? Does the church and churchyard have a particular atmosphere? Are there any particular areas of the church or churchyard which hold important local associations?

Part 2.

In order to determine what elements of the church and churchyard which reflect its past and present use are of particular importance and worthy of protection, or are detrimental to its character, use the terminology and criteria from the introduction to rate their significance. Then, again using the terminology from the introduction rate what you consider to be the sensitivity of each feature. For example

Feature	Significance	Sensitivity
Medieval side altar	High significance	High
Quiet atmosphere of side chapel	High-moderate significance	High
Victorian pitch pine pews which prevent dual use of the nave	Low significance	Low
Corner of the churchyard used for the maypole	Moderate significance	Moderate

6.0 Surviving historic fabric

This section will provide a description of the surviving church fabric in terms of its architectural components (the next section will describe the fixtures and fittings). This section is divided into two parts: the first describes the surviving architectural features; in the second part the features are evaluated in terms of their significance and sensitivity.

Part 1.

In order to provide a comprehensive description of the different elements divide the church into areas such as chancel, nave, south aisle, tower, porch etc and comprehensively describe the features. These should typically include roof, walls (interior and exterior), windows (interior and exterior), ceilings, arcades, arches, floors etc and any other structural elements of the building. Your description of each component should include date, style, materials and note if the feature has been altered (if known). For each area also comment on the general condition and any significant sensory qualities (such as coloured light through a stained glass window or the atmosphere of prayer in a side chapel). Describe the plan of the church, how it is lit and heated. The Council for British Archaeology's 'Recording a church: an illustrated glossary' will provide the correct terminology for the architectural features and details.

Part 2.

In order to determine what elements of the church are of particular importance and worthy of protection use the terminology and criteria from the introduction to rate their

significance (include any sensory elements or condition issues in your assessment). Then again using the terminology from the introduction rate what you consider to be the sensitivity of each feature. For example

Feature	Significance	Sensitivity
15 th century granite steps to chancel. The steps are plain with no mouldings and have indentations indicating the passage of communicants over hundreds of years to the high altar. They are of robust construction and well maintained.	High	Moderate
19 th century nave walls (interior). Constructed from local sandstone (unplastered) whose reflected yellow/ochre colour fills the nave with golden light. Late 20 th century quartz ray heaters are fixed to the walls in a prominent position.	Moderate (Heaters – negative)	High (Heaters – low)
14 th century south aisle windows in the Decorated style. The stained glass no longer survives and the present clear glass dates from the 19 th century.	High	High (tracery) Low (glass)

If you have queries concerning the evaluation of these features seek the guidance of your architect or the D.A.C.

7.0 Contents of the church

This section will provide a description of the church's contents or fixtures and fittings. It will be divided into two parts: the first describes the contents; the second will evaluate the contents in terms of their significance and sensitivity.

Part 1.

Move systematically through the church from east to west describing all the fixtures and fittings. These will typically include altars, reredos, sedilia, aumbry, altar rail, choir stalls, organ, wall monuments and tombs, wall paintings and panelling, screens, pulpit, lecterns, reading desks, pews, chests, tables, fonts, metalwork, plate, registers, bells and bell frame. Your description of each feature should include date, style, materials, any sensory response (if appropriate), whether the feature is in its original position (if known) and a comment on its condition. If the features form part of a scheme (i.e. 18th century pews, pulpit and lectern) this should be noted as it will add to their significance. The N.A.D.F.A.S. guide to church furnishings will assist in the correct use of terminology.

Part 2.

In order to determine which of the contents are of particular importance and worthy of protection use the terminology and criteria from the introduction to rate their significance (include any sensory elements or condition issues in your assessment). Then, again using the terminology from the introduction rate what you consider to be the sensitivity of each feature. For example

Feature	Significance	Sensitivity
Late 20 th century plain pine reading desk, with areas of woodworm	Low	Low
14 th century carved and painted chancel screen	High	High
18 th century plain oak paneled pulpit by the north wall, truncated and adapted in the 20 th century when moved from original position by the chancel screen	Moderate	Low

If you have queries concerning the evaluation of these features seek the guidance of your architect or the D.A.C.

8.0 Summary of significance and sensitivity

The next section summarises the evaluations of significance and sensitivity from the previous sections. This summary will be shown on two separate plans: one indicating areas of significance and the other areas of sensitivity. The plans can take the form of a drawing of the churchyard with an approximate floor plan of the church or be based on your architect's floor plan of the church with the outline of the churchyard drawn around it. On the first plan use colour to indicate the different values of significance identified in sections 4.0- 7.0 with a different colour for each of the five values: high, moderate-high, moderate, low-moderate and low. This plan should also indicate as high value the areas of archaeological potential indicated in the plan from the section 3.0. On the second plan using the same method indicate the areas of sensitivity, again with different colours to indicate the high, medium and low values. Where the sections suggest different levels of significance/sensitivity for the same item use hatching to show the conflict of values.

9.0 Future management: potential for change and opportunities

This section will consider how the church and churchyard can be managed in order to maintain and enhance their significance. This section will begin by extracting the issues identified in section 5.0 regarding the liturgical and non-liturgical use of the church and churchyard and list them next to the areas of the church or churchyard to which they relate and the identified sensitivity of the areas. Parts of the church identified as having low sensitivity should be considered as possible candidates for change, whereas in areas of moderate sensitivity change should only be considered under very specific circumstances, Areas of high sensitivity should be considered as inappropriate for change. For example

Issue	Part of the church affected	Sensitivity of the affected part
Book rests on pews of insufficient width for hymn books	Late 19 th century pitch pine pews	Low
Obscured view of the high altar	Medieval screen	High
Lack of toilet facilities and intention to place in lower part of tower	Lower part of tower	Moderate

After this exercise has been carried out sections 4.0-7.0 will be revisited and the remaining areas, features or fabric identified as having low significance extracted. These will be listed as potential areas for enhancement, repair, alteration, removal, tidying up etc. as appropriate. For example

Area of low value	Work required
Dilapidated shed in the s.e. corner of the churchyard	Removal
20 th century paintwork on nave arcade capitals	Expert removal
Public address speakers on the cornice of the rood screen	Repositioning in a less obtrusive and sensitive location

Finally any future opportunities to extend the economic, educational, or recreational use of the church should be explored. This extended use could be based upon the research carried out for the statement of significance and could include liaising with local history groups, genealogists, N.A.D.F.A.S. and local schools and colleges in order to: to research further those areas of the church's history which are at present unclear; carry out an audit of the gravestones; research further any connections between the local churches in terms of craftsmanship and building styles; carry out a detailed survey of the contents. For example

Opportunity	Strategy
Discover more about the iconography of the screen	Liaise with local history group
Produce an audit of the contents of the church	Ask for advice from NADFAS
Record the inscriptions on the gravestones	Liaise with the history department of the local school

10. 0 Sources consulted

List the sources consulted.

Appendix 13

Questionnaire sent to Plymtree parish

Assessing the communal value of St John the Baptist, Plymtree

Background –

I am a PhD student currently writing my thesis on ‘How effective is the current Church of England guidance for assessing the significance of historic churches? As part of my research I am writing statements of significance on your church according to a number of different methods. I have written a statement of significance following the guidance provided by the Church of England and am also writing an assessment of significance following the method of the Churches Conservation Trust.

Both methods of assessment require input that only those whose use the church both as a building for worship and as a community resource can provide. I would therefore be very grateful if you could take a few moments to provide answers to the following questions. Please write as fully or as succinctly as you wish.

Part 1

The Church of England method for assessing significance

1. What is the historic and present use of the church and churchyard by the congregation and the wider community? How does this contribute to its significance?

2. Are there any significant events or personalities associated with the church? Are there important memories associated with the church or churchyard?

4. Are there any specific parts of the building that you would like to see protected from change or that you feel are especially sensitive?

Please note the above questions are for research purposes only and do not relate to any current or future proposals regarding the church.

Appendix 14

Copy of questionnaire covering letter sent to Plymtree parish

St John the Baptist Church, Plymtree

Dear Friends,

As you are probably already aware, when a church is planning to undertake changes to its fabric, contents or churchyard it is necessary to first submit a faculty application for approval by the Diocese. This application procedure calls for the completion of lengthy forms, backed up with other documents including a "Statement of Significance and Need".

St. John the Baptist, Plymtree has successfully submitted several of these faculty applications over recent years – on two occasions being awarded a certificate by the Diocesan Advisory Board for the excellent standard of the research and presentation. As a result of this we have been selected to assist Mrs. Bridget Gillard with research she is undertaking for her PhD, using our church as a model.

Alan Barnet and I have provided Bridget with a substantial amount of historical background information, but she has now reached the point where she needs input from our church members / users by completion of the enclosed questionnaire relating to an assessment of the communal value of the church.

Could I therefore ask you to complete this questionnaire (2 copies if you are a couple and your views differ) and return it to me, either in church or at Richards Cottage, by the end of February 2013.

Thank you for your help with this valuable research. Your views will be treated as confidential.

Bill Luttmann

PCC Secretary.

