

26.6.20

### St Edmund's ceiling repair and redecoration

Work on the ceiling continued this week. The plaster repairs completed the previous week had dried out over the weekend so the contractors went over the whole area vacuuming, brushing down and eventually wiping down both the exposed woodwork and the plaster panels in preparation for painting the panels. We received the laboratory report on the felt material in the roof and it confirmed that there is no asbestos in this material. We are therefore much relieved that we will not have to face the significant costs of specialist removal. Painting has commenced and has proceeded quite quickly with three painters working together. Most of the panels in the South Aisle have now received their two full paint coats. The Nave and North Aisle are awaiting their second coat. The Architect made a brief inspection this afternoon and expressed his satisfaction with the workmanship. There will be some further cleaning of timbers to do on completion of the painting. We have identified one area of what appears to be an old infestation of woodworm in the roof structure and we are seeking advice as to how to proceed on this. At this stage, it seems likely that a precautionary, localized brush treatment with timber preservative, while we have easy access available, will be all that is required. I will be able to do that myself next week if necessary.

During the very heavy rainfall last week we did have a little water coming through the Sacristy roof in the usual position at the abutment with the church wall. This has been a longstanding problem, overcome (until now) by a modification to the asphalt covering. An inspection when it had stopped raining showed that a small amount of debris caught in the outlet coupled with the unusual intensity of rain had raised the water level on the roof above the minimal provision for 'ponding' available on this roof. Short of raising the parapets and increasing the depth of flashings there is little we can do to prevent this occasional problem. I will, however go up and apply some more bitumen to the point where I believe the water came in this time. We did last winter have a leak in the choir vestry roof. The repairs I did for that appeared to have withstood the test of last week's storm despite the large quantities of material that drop onto this roof from the nearby tall silver birch tree. The latest dampness on the carpet is from a leak in the sink drain. The investigations for that are ongoing, so in the meantime the sink is out of commission. Anyone fancy a little digging outside?

I have continued the work of clearing and cleaning in the tower and was able to show Peter around parts of the church he had not previously visited. Jill & I completed the brushing-down of all the walls east of the Chancel Arch and Steve Burton has moved out the Frontals cupboard and thoroughly cleaned the area behind (very rarely visited!), the heating ducts beneath and the large window above. Many thanks for your help with this heavy and dirty work Steve! Jane has had a couple of sessions cleaning our silver and brassware. We have taken the opportunity to take down and thoroughly clean and polish the Sanctuary lamp. I have taken few photos this week, but the attached close-up of the Lamp shows the dedication to one of several generations of Johnsons to head the family firm of wiremakers that operated from their factory at Ambergate, their products including bedsprings and, until the factory closed, the wire reinforcement used in our local prestressed concrete industry. When we

return to Services you may notice the lamp itself and its supporting dome and globes sparkling as they have not done for a long time. Thank you for doing these Jane and especially for including the huge brass eagle lectern in your operations. Meanwhile Michèle has been cleaning in the spiral stair tower, the lobby and the choir vestry. She is arranging for the curtains to be cleaned. All these areas are becoming rather more pleasant than formerly.



Jane and Steve continue to assist with cleaning jobs, but I'm still open to offers of help with preparations for re-opening ([gbailey@doctors.org.uk](mailto:gbailey@doctors.org.uk)). Please look in the forthcoming July parish magazine for a further list. The woodwork of the Advent Candle stand has been mended and the metal parts polished but the wooden parts need some gentle sanding and oiling and the gold painted parts need refreshing (materials provided). A cabinet in the choir vestry requires a simple plywood repair to replace parts eaten away by woodworm. Also help needed with moving this item which is very heavy. I've not had a volunteer yet to wash (domestic washing machine) some small curtains. Please come forward for this. Could someone take on the rather tedious but not heavy job of passing a rag over the numerous sanctuary curtain tracks & gliders, to avoid the washed curtains getting immediately soiled when they are put up again? At some time we will need to give the Sacristy a clean through. It has been much in use over the past few weeks. Steve would appreciate help with cleaning windows. If you are OK with working off a ladder (footed) or a stepladder this could be one for you. Although the contractors will do a final clean through, could someone come and wipe down the choir stalls and surrounding floor areas this week? They were done last week, but more dust has settled and it would be good to clear it away before it rises again! I repeat my appeal: Would anyone like to volunteer to dust and wipe down the Hymn and Prayer Books and the orders of service booklets? This will not be required until public worship can re-commence, but it would be useful to have a volunteer of two in mind for this.

Geoff Bailey