

January 12<sup>th</sup> 2023

# LEIGH DELAMERE. ST MARGARET OF ANTIOCH'S Interim Church Plan

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## **Part A - [Current Report](#)**

The report current at the time of first issue summarises known activity at the church, stakeholders, trends, site resources and results in hand.

## **Part B - [Consultation](#)**

Open consultation findings summarise notes provided by survey recipients in reaction to Part A, the current report and specifies community planning meeting details.

## **Part C - [Community Recommendations](#)**

Community recommendations include the full resolutions set at the community planning meeting.

## **Part D - [Action Plan](#)**

The action plan splits tasks agreed at and implied by the community recommendations.

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## Part A - Current Report

### Church Introduction & Statement of Significance

St Margaret of Antioch Church in Leigh Delamere, Wiltshire, England was built on the site of a previous 12th-century church in 1846 and dedicated to Margaret the Virgin. It is recorded in the National Heritage List for England as a Grade II\* listed building. It was declared redundant on 1 November 1992, and was vested in the Trust on 16 December 1993.

The previous church had been built around 1190, in an Early English style with Norman features. In 1301 the patron of the church was John De la Mare. By 1846 the church was in a dilapidated condition and it would have cost more to repair than rebuild. The new church was commissioned by Joseph Neeld and designed by James Thomson, who also designed the nearby Grittleton House. Stonework from the earlier church, including the bell tower, was reused by Thomson to build Sevington School.

The Gothic chancel includes a reredos which is carved and decorated in many colours. The west window has stained glass by Thomas Wilmshurst. There are many memorials including those to the Neeld Baronets.

A new organ was installed in 1896, and electricity supplied in 1949, although attendance by this time was very low. The building was designated as Grade II\* listed in 1960, and the roadside lychgate as Grade II in 1988. The church was closed as a regular place of worship in 1992. In the 21st century a 15th-century stone rood which had been hidden under the pews was restored by Minerva Conservation and placed in the chancel.

In 2016 the church was used as a venue for "pop-up" opera with a performance of The Barber of Seville.

### Current use (bookings) & voluntary activity

St Margaret's benefits from the voluntary support of one local resident, who lives next door to the church. This volunteer set up annual "Pop-Up Opera" events to fundraise for the CCT, for which she was awarded with the Marsh Christian Trusts "Fundraiser of the Year award in 2017, and supports with organisation and cleaning before services, as well as reporting on building condition and change on a 6 monthly basis.

St Margaret's has taken part in the Heritage Open Days Festival for the past few years, thanks to the same volunteers efforts.

There have been few other uses of the church over the past decade aside from occasional filming and photography, and sometimes group tours particularly from Sevington School.

In 2018 CCT worked with an Area Volunteer to produce a new noticeboard and online audio tour for the church. This volunteer was nominated for, and won, the Marsh Christian Trusts Digital Volunteer of the Year award in 2019.

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## Collection Review

Open Churches Policy status:	Open
Local Community Officer:	Rachel Whitty
Closest Church Classification:	Open
Classification outstanding items:	
Visitor nos. 2016/ 17 (est):	765
Visitor nos. 2017/18 (est):	794
Visitor nos. 2018/19 (est):	734
Current project:	None
Cleaning schedule:	Before use.
Welcome table:	Present. Good stock of guidebooks
Keyholder role:	Fulfilled
Key representative role:	Fulfilled (CCT liaison, maintenance reporting, cleaning)
Area volunteer role:	None
Fundraising roles:	None formal
Stewardship roles:	No stewards although tours available if requested
Research, interp & talks role:	None formal.
Accessibility details:	Provided via website
CCT silver plaque:	Installed, poor condition
CCT information board:	Not installed. There is a Parish noticeboard outside lychgate.
Oak post:	Not installed.
CCT freestanding board:	Provided
Wall safe poster:	Installed, current
CCT A board:	Provided
Gift Aid envelopes:	Provided
Visitor book:	Provided
Building services:	Electric lights and sockets
Parking:	None formal. Spaces on road.
Organ:	Pipe Organ restored by Hill, Norman & Co. Now

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unplayable

Churchyard: Not owned by CCT, maintained by PCC and volunteers  
within the Friends group.

Ringable bells: No. One bell hung for swing-chiming in open cote.  
Unusable.

Pews: Yes.

Fire rated capacity: 60

Seating capacity: Not determined

Site plan: Available

Roof alarm: None

CCTV: None

Individual item security measures: None

Nearby attractions:

Public transport:

Social media presence: None.

Images on CCT website: One of three

Regular feature parish news: Unsure

Services per year: 1

CofE support for services: Yes

Christmas memory tree: No.

Tea Party: No.

Historic Church Tour: No

Heritage Open Days: No

Ride & Stride: No

Champing: No.

Retail: No.

Risk assessment general: Current

Risk assessment fire: Current

COSHH listing: Current

Portable appliance listing: Current

Security Audit: 2015

Children's explorer cart: No.

Children's trail: No.

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## Conservation reports

Condition Report:

Repairs liability: £320,470

Annualised maintenance: £3221.62

• <b>Short term:</b>	<b>£18,150.00</b>
- Roofing patching and ridge repairs	£4,250.00
- RWG and gullies	£7,500.00
- Parapet repairs	£6,400.00
• <b>Medium term:</b>	<b>£259,820.00</b>
- Partial reroofing	£235,000.00
- Repairs to external walling	£15,800.00
- Internal stone conservation to corbels, windows and door surrounds	£9,020.00
• <b>Long term:</b>	<b>£42,500.00</b>
- Flooring repairs	£40,000.00
- Panelling repairs	£2,500.00
• <b>Desirable:</b>	<b>£</b>

All cost figures are estimates, exclusive of VAT and professional fees

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## Income, Expenditure & Balances

Income 2019-2020:	£195
Wall safe 2018-2019 (incl. above):	£95
Income 2018-2019:	£543
Wall safe 2018-2019 (incl. above):	£163
Income 2017-2018:	£635
Wall safe 2017-2018: (incl. above):	£0
Income 2016-2017:	£715
Wall safe 2016-2017: (incl. above):	£55

### Expenditure

Conservation expenditure '18/'19:	£0
Maintenance expenditure '18/'19:	£650
Maintenance expenditure '17/'18:	£512
Electricity '18/'19:	£63
Electricity '17/'18:	£81

### Balances

Restricted Balance Report Jul '19	£0
Income less expenditure '18/'19	-£170
Income less ann. maint.'18/'19:	-£2678.62

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## **Local Community Officer's Summary**

St Margaret's church offers a cool, peaceful and inviting excursion off the busy M4 motorway. Visitors arriving at the church will find it open, welcoming and clean and tidy, thanks to a supportive local volunteer. Once their eyes have adjusted to the dimly lit interior they will find a wealth of interesting features and beautiful Victorian stained glass.

St Margaret's church, Leigh Delamere, has been fortunate over the years that I've been with the CCT to have had the voluntary support of one particularly dedicated neighbour who has achieved impressive things there; hosting pop up opera and theatre events to raise funds, producing displays for Heritage Open Doors Days and generally taking great care of the church.

With some more staff support from the CCT these Heritage Open Doors events may be able to raise more funds. It is hoped that This is my Theatre may want to perform in the church again in the future, as they did in 2019.

Improved visitor interpretation (currently a CCT guidebook and an online audio tour) and scheduled guided tours could increase the donation per head at Leigh Delamere, and the church could be explored as a champing site.

The proximity to the M4 service station at Leigh Delamere provides an opportunity perhaps for future funding / employee volunteering. There is also scope to form a more formal partnership with Sevington Victorian School, who sometimes conduct group visits to the church.

It is hoped that ideas for future use and new potential supporters might arise from the church plan consultation process.

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## Part B - Consultation (Interim Round September 2020)

### Summary of consultation responses received by end August 2020

*Following distribution of fifteen questions through our standard church plan questionnaire in summer 2020 to existing Churches Conservation Trust correspondents, (together with an invitation for correspondents to share the survey and associated Church Plan Part A), **two responses** were received for **Leigh Delamere, St Margaret's** by the deadline of **August 30th**.*

The responses received were from respondents both writing in a **personal** capacity, who confirmed that their responses related to **St Margaret's Leigh Delamere**.

In addressing the question of *a perfect outcome for our work together at the church* the respondent indicated **1) would like to re-instate having a service once a year and I would like the church used for live performances of various types, as has happened in the past. 2) Heritage day and occasional service**

In writing about challenges anticipated in respect of repair liabilities and running costs, the respondent indicates **1) Raising funds via events or grants being available. Preserving the Heritage of the building. 2) Obviously a challenge to raise funds**

Thinking about local life away from the church, in relation to other community projects or activities which might combine with our work to protect the church for the future, the respondent indicated **1) Don't know 2) Strengthen the link with Sevington Victorian school.**

Considering if increased use of the church might benefit the community, or if increased use might benefit the church itself, the respondent indicated **1) More activities and use would increase income and improve local interest. 2) These are really stupid questions. The answer is of course increased use would/should benefit the community and that in turn would obviously benefit the church.**

In relation to identifying conservation priorities for the church, the respondent provided **1) Insufficient knowledge of church 2) Keeping it water tight and rot free**

Regarding priorities, opportunities or ideas for fundraising the respondent noted **No new ideas**. In respect of means for initiating fundraising activity, the respondent gave **My experience indicates that any fundraising activity depends 99% on the person or people doing it. CCT encourages but really doesn't do anything very much beyond that.** The respondent also indicated that they would **both** be available to participate in fundraising activity.

In seeking respondents' participation in a future group discussion regarding church planning the respondent indicated **1) Would be happy to meet in person 2) would not be willing to meet.**

In answering our final, open question about any additional church matters not covered in other areas of the survey, the respondent indicated **This is one of the most stupid surveys of many I've been asked to complete. Who on earth thought it would be a good idea to have fingers and a pencil at the side? When did you last use a pencil for an online survey? This does CCT no good whatsoever.**



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In addition to responses fielded through the questionnaire, a further **[no response]** respondents wrote back to their Local Community Officer, expressing the following perspectives:

**Nil**

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## **Part C - Community Recommendations (to follow meetings scheduled for October 2020 - January 2021 ahead of final report April 2021.**

*Minutes of meeting between Ed McGregor (EM) and main volunteer on the 22 Feb 2021.*

*A questions whether the church really needs re-roofing. They think that the church roof in good condition and not leaking. They suggests follow up is needed from CCT in order to confirm the extent of repairs needed and a more realistic quote for repair. They also suggests asking contractors for photographic evidence of their visits should be part of their contract. EM notes that one the main actions noted for him in Part D below is to get further interpretation and clarification from colleagues on conservation priorities noted in this plan.*

*A notes that it is a shame that they do not meet with the CCTs maintenance contractors when they come to the church. They would very much appreciate notification, preferably in the form of a telephone call, in advance of their visits. As they are never informed of visits they are sceptical of their presence. A also suggests photographic evidence of their visits.*

*A notes that she would like to do additional fundraising for the church but of course in the current circumstances this isn't possible. EM notes that previously fundraising for the church has been very much due to A and some further community support would be of course welcome.*

*A reflects on the strong potential to link up with Sevington school and suggests that the CCTs Heritage Learning Officer could engage with them in future. Pupils would need bus transport to site, which could be problematic. More adult group visits could be encouraged.*

*A notes that putting the visitor book for the church away as part of Covid-19 safety measurements, was an unnecessary and unfortunate step to take, due to the low potential risk to Covid-19 transmission posed at this little visited rural church.*

*Additional support from the local parish team would be very much welcome in future, and is somewhat lacking currently.*

*A has worked with This Is My Theatre previously but it wasn't particularly successful. A is also sceptical of the potential to engage with Benjamin Dry as noted in the action plan below. Performances from local artists and groups would be more popular. A also reflects, somewhat in jest, on the potential for filming in the vaulted crypt – which is a stunning space, but currently not accessible to visitors and would need further investigation in terms of its suitability / safety for access.*

### **Meeting with RW LCO and main volunteer referred to as A on January 12<sup>th</sup> 2023**

RW and A have already met on RW's first maintenance visit. RW states this is an opportunity to revisit some of the issues already raised by A and formalise them in the action points of the church plan as follows:

- Contact with local incumbent – email provided by A to build relationship and explore services being held at the church

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- Article in Parish Newsletter(Honeycomb) to raise awareness of the church, how it could be used and attract additional volunteers – WI, Adult Groups and rambblers were also discussed.
  - Provide additional information on noticeboard outside of church
  - Provide A with maintenance contractor visit dates
  - Provide costs of providing electric light in sacristy – this could be used as green room for events. The idea of maybe putting on Gilbert and Sullivan appealed as the Victorian setting would work – A to check with IF opera – RW to check out Illyria. A would be very happy to host a picnic beforehand and hire out portaloos. A felt that music would work better than theatre at the church.
  - Revisit linking up with Sevington School
  - RW would also work with Conservation to check out accuracy of Conservation reports
  - A was delighted a wedding was taking place this year in May and hoped this could attract other potential hirers – maybe advertise on noticeboard with pictures ?
  - Heritage Open Days were also discussed but A was due to be away this September so maybe consider the following year.
  - A raised that the Autumn Edition of Pinnacle had incorrectly referred to a picture of LGD as Choir Stalls – RW to follow up.

The meeting concluded with a follow up date set for October 2023 but they would keep in touch via email and maintenance visits

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## Part D - Action Plan (Interim Plan September 2020)

The action plan below has been written post the *interim edition* of the church plan, published at the end of **September 2020** and a first full edition of the church plan to be published at the end of March 2021.

### Community Actions

#### Short term actions (to end September 2023)

- Display additional posters on noticeboard outside church
- Work with LCO to produce article in local parish magazine

#### Medium term actions (to end March 2024)

- Investigate suitability of church for concerts or other uses, and of promotion to prospective local audiences such Gilbert and Sullivan Operas
- Consider use of the church as gallery space, offering local artists and makers a chance to mount exhibitions, or providing community groups and educational establishments with a suitable venue for temporary displays
- Consider the suitability of the site for Champing
- Investigate potential for partnership with Sevington School.
- Investigate potential for encouraging more group visits to the church
- Whenever possible encourage increased use of the church by the local parish team.

#### Long term actions (to end September 2024)

#### Actions complete (to end January 2023)

- Review CCT Cleaning Churches standard and report

### Local Community Officer Actions

#### Short term actions (to end September 2023)

- Contact local incumbent to investigate holding services in the future
- Investigate improving the visitor information available in the parish noticeboard, just outside the church.
- Work with A to publish article in local parish newsletter/call for volunteers
- Review church web page to ensure clear directions available for all visitors
- Support CCTs Estate Officer in ensuring that A is notified before a contractor visit to the church
- Suggest to the EO that maintenance contractors to CCT churches provide photographic evidence of their visits

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- Ask EO to get electrical contractor to quote for additional lighting in the sacristy for use as a green room.

### **Medium term actions (to end March 2024)**

- Consider adding video directions to the church for prospective visitors' information
- Investigate suitability of church for concerts or other uses, and of promotion to prospective local audiences.
- Investigate potential for partnership with Sevington School.
- Investigate potential for encouraging more group visits to the church
- Consider use of the church as gallery space, offering local artists and makers a chance to mount exhibitions, or providing community groups and educational establishments with a suitable venue for temporary displays
- Consider the suitability of the site for Champing

### **Long term actions (to end March 2024)**

### **Actions complete (to end January 2023)**

- Distribution Part A reports for each church to all existing correspondents, together with survey
- Receive, anonymise and collate survey responses and add to Church Plan Part B
- Resolve initial findings, conclusions and recommendations based on Part A & B, expressed as short, medium and long-term actions
- Publish Part A, B & D as Interim Church Plan to colleagues by end September 2020
- Undertake staff consultation against Interim Church Plan by end November 2020
- By end November 2020 review colleagues' feedback regarding updates to church plan part A, to include
  - Conservation interpretations
  - Presentation improvements
  - Champing data
- Complete community audit to identify additional survey respondents and participants in face-to-face or digital meetings by end November 2020
- Repeat survey for additional respondents by end January 2021
- Agree dates for face-to-face or digital community meetings by end January 2021
- Resolve updated findings, conclusions and recommendations based on Part A, B & C expressed as short, medium and long-term actions for each site (Part D)
- Publish Church Plan Version '2021-22'
- Share CCT Cleaning Churches standard and report
- Approach Benjamin Dry cellist in case of availability and interest in concert Summer 2021

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## **CCT Actions Other**

### **Short term actions (to end September 2023)**

- Provide interpretation of maintenance and repair plans to further explain anticipated costs described in part A above.

### **Medium term actions (to end March 2024)**

### **Long term actions (to end September 2024)**

### **Actions complete (to end January 2023)**

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## Appendix 1: Summer 2020 Questionnaire

1. This is the first of fourteen questions in the survey - thank you in advance for working through each one. First of all, we need to know if you're completing the survey on behalf of an organisation or writing in a personal capacity (If you're writing on behalf of an organisation, please use the text box to let us know which one. Thank you!)
2. Which church are you writing about? (Don't worry, you can complete additional questionnaires for other sites if you like!) Please state the location and dedication, as in 'Sapperton, St. Kenelm's'. Thank you.
3. People are involved with our sites in so many different ways. In your own words, please describe your relationship with the church building.
4. Some people are actively involved at the churches we look after together. If you're part of this group, tell us about your involvement. Cleaning, attending services and fundraising are just a few of the most frequent activities we share, but we'd appreciate as much detail as you might be happy to provide.
5. In your own words, and having reviewed 'Part A' of our church plan (sent to you by email with the invitation to this questionnaire), please describe a perfect outcome for our work together at the church. What would you like to see happen in terms of community involvement and other use of the building?
6. Bearing in mind the repair liabilities and running costs described in the report you've read, what challenges do you anticipate for a sustainable future at your church?
7. Thinking about local life away from the church, which other community projects or activities are you aware of that could combine with our work to protect the church for the future?
8. Here are two questions together... Could increased use of the church benefit the community? How would this increased use benefit the church itself?
9. What do you think are the most important conservation priorities at your church? For each or all of these priorities, please also let us know about any ideas you have for addressing them.

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10. Income and expenditure for the church is detailed in 'Part A' of the report we sent you. Addressing conservation priorities will entail finding new ways to raise funds. Tell us about any ideas or opportunities you have identified for raising additional income at the church.
  
  11. What do you think might be the best ways to get started with any fundraising activities you have suggested?
  
  12. If you don't already, would you be interested and available to take part in future fundraising activity?
  
  13. Almost done! We'd like to invite you to join us in a group discussion about the church later this year, either in person or through 'phone / video conference. Would you be willing to join the discussion?
  
  14. Last question! Is there anything else you'd like to share about your interest in the church which we haven't asked you already? Otherwise, thank you again so much for reflecting on the future of the church through your answers.



