

Brief Outline of Project:**St Nicholas Church Arrington:****Replacement of existing fallen external clunch stone from south tower belfry surround /****Miscellaneous repointing works and removal of moss in tower/roof location of works****Background**

This application is to replace a recently fallen external stone from the south tower belfry surround and then to carry out repointing in lime mortar of open joints to prevent further deterioration of the historic fabric at St Nicholas parish church, Arrington, Cambridgeshire.

It is also proposed to undertake some repair works which take advantage of the cost and having a scaffold in place to reach some inaccessible locations. The works are identified in the 2023 Quinquennial survey; they are repointing the roof/tower flashing and removal of moss built up on the south roof slope adjacent to the tower.

Church and its place in the village

St Nicholas Church Arrington is Grade I listed and is the oldest building in this small rural community. As such it is a significant building for the community, even for those who may not be regular church goers but help to support the church financially through the Parish Giving Scheme or giving their time.

The community values the church in the village, and it is well supported at key services such as Christmas and at public events. The community also supports volunteer work in the churchyard. This is managed for biodiversity and the church was pleased to receive a silver award for churchyard management from the Wildlife Trust for Beds, Cambs and Northants. We added another silver award in May 2024 from A Rocha awarded for how we use our church building and churchyard; this makes St Nicholas one of 11 churches in Ely Diocese to gain the award. We hold an annual 'What's in your Churchyard' each summer; this attracts people of all ages from the village.

For me, as Churchwarden, and a practising specialist conservation architect, the church is important as a historic building and a place of peace and faith which has existed for approximately 1000 years.

We welcome daily visitors to the church, which is open every day, and it is great to see people, both visitors and local people come to light a candle in the space.

The church has regular services including at the nearby Clifden Close community rooms. Refreshment are served after the services which is a good opportunity to meet everyone and to catch up on news.

As a community church we meet 100% our Ministry Share annually. This year the share has increased significantly to just over £6000 and now with this unforeseen stone fall, presents challenges for this small village of 400 people. Although we strive to maintain the church and work with our QI Architect, using best conservation practice, this recent stone fall has meant that we need to work to replace the fallen stone to prevent further deterioration of any open joints in the stonework. The stone fall happened unexpectedly and so is not included in the 2023 Quinquennial Survey. The work has the support of the community and the need to undertake the work was discussed at the recent annual parish meeting.

Reason for applying

The stone that fell was clunch. This stone is no longer available since the closure of Barrington quarry. We are exploring the use of Hartham Park stone as discussed with the contractor, DAC and Church Architect as a suitable replacement for clunch. This should sit alongside the clunch stone without causing further deterioration. The use of the stone has been accepted by Ely DAC in the list B written notice for the proposed works.

The church is a member of the Cambridgeshire Historic Churches Trust, and members of the PCC are also members of the Trust. We do hope that you are able to look at this application favourably so that essential work on this significant church can take place.

St Nicholas Arrington**May 2025**