

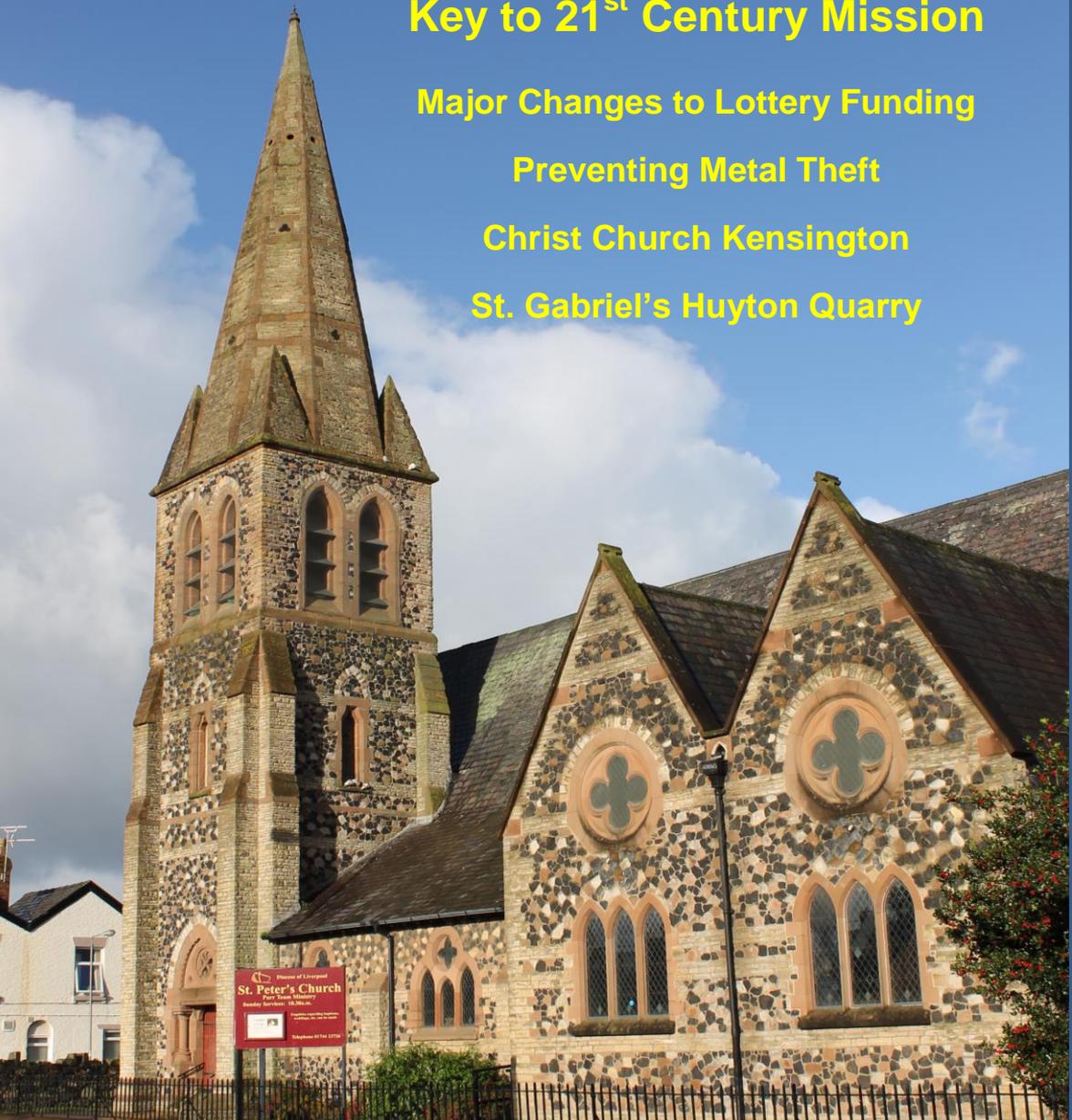
OPEN AND WELCOMING – the Key to 21st Century Mission

Major Changes to Lottery Funding

Preventing Metal Theft

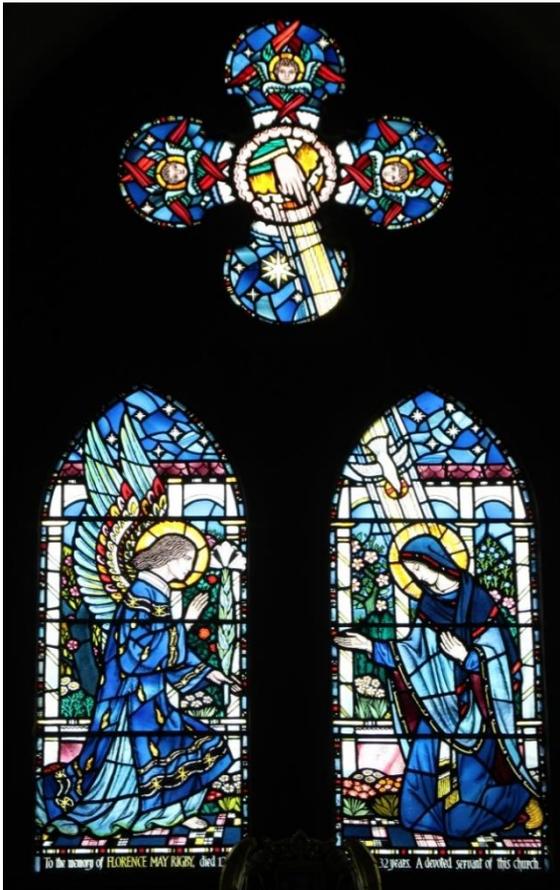
Christ Church Kensington

St. Gabriel's Huyton Quarry



Church Heritage & Buildings Newsletter

No. 10 – April 2019



Cover Photograph: St. Peter's Church, Parr, St. Helens (1864-5 by J. Medland Taylor, Listed Grade II), is an unusual church, being one of only four surviving churches to use local industrial copper slag in its construction. The church is currently undergoing major roof repairs and a radical internal reordering including a new heating installation and is expected to reopen in July 2019. Note the extremely unusual double south transept.

St. Peter's is home to this beautiful Arts & Crafts style stained glass window, sadly unsigned, depicting the Annunciation (celebrated on March 25th, the date of this issue's publication).

Church Heritage & Buildings Newsletter is published by Ian Simpson, the Liverpool-based church building and facilities management consultant currently working as Heritage Officer for the Diocese of Liverpool. Ian is also the Vice-Chairman of the Churches Visitor & Tourism Association (CVTA) and a member of Future for Religious Heritage (FRH).

Important: all the views and opinions expressed in this Newsletter are Ian's own and do not necessarily represent the official position of the Diocese of Liverpool, CVTA or FRH.

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Next issue: No. 11, due out on May 20th.

Welcome!

It's been two years since I produced the last edition of my Heritage & Buildings Newsletter – I put it to one side in order to concentrate upon the Restoration Project at St. Agnes & St. Pancras, Toxteth Park, which I was project managing. That project – financed by what used to be called the Heritage Lottery Fund among others – was a huge success, so much so that we'll be launching Phase II later this year.

The Newsletter has a new look (which I hope you like) but I suspect I'm going to be banging on about the same familiar themes around the importance of opening your church to welcome people and the imperative to keep on top of routine maintenance. If you haven't made a new year resolution for 2019 can I humbly suggest "this year we will keep the church open to welcome visitors and tourists, and we will not fall behind with our gutter cleaning"? Maybe if every PCC made this resolution (assuming they kept it) I could talk about something else!

Enjoy the Newsletter and don't forget to let me know if there's something going on at your church which you'd like to see featured in these pages. Back issues plus an index can be found on the Publications page at www.iansimpson.eu.



St. Thomas, Ashfield (Wavertree) – one of the Lost Churches of Liverpool I'll be discussing in my presentation on the evening of Tuesday 11th June.

Events, Talks and Workshops in 2019

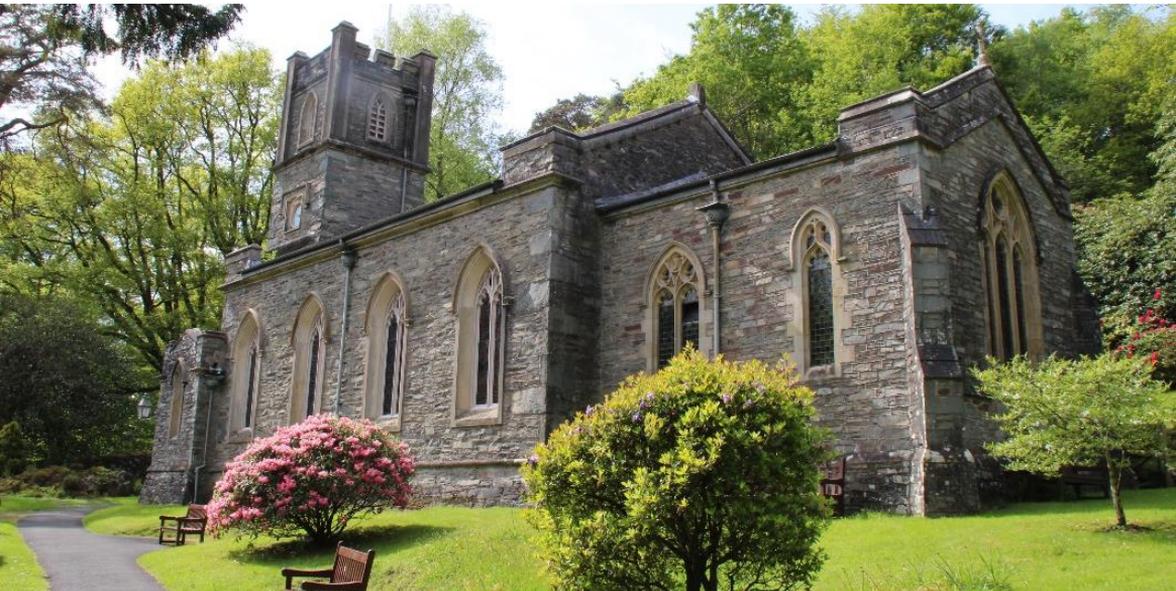
As ever I am involved in a number of daytime and evening events which touch upon various aspects of church and / or local history or the care and maintenance of church buildings. For some events there are still “TBC”s so keep an eye on my website <http://www.iansimpson.eu> or look out for the next edition of this Newsletter at the beginning of April. Unless otherwise stated these events are FREE to attend.

Care and Maintenance of Historic Tiled Floors at *Christ Church, Linnet Lane, Liverpool L17 3BG*. Tuesday 30th April 10.30am – 2.30pm. Lunch included.

Maintenance Planning for Churches at *Christ Church, Crook Lane, Wharton, Winsford CW7 3DR* (Diocese of Chester event). Thursday 9th May, 10.30am start, lunch included. Cost TBC.

Statements of Significance and Need at a church TBC in the Liverpool area. Tuesday 21st May, 10.30am start. Fee / lunch arrangements TBC.

Lost Churches of Liverpool – an Illustrated Journey Back in Time at *St. Mary & St. Cyril's Coptic Orthodox Church, Derby Lane, Liverpool L13*. Tuesday 11th June at 6.30pm.



Stained Glass Windows by Henry Holiday – Lake District Coach Tour *picking up from St. Chad's Kirkby at 08.30 and Kirkby Railway Station at 08.40 then visiting churches in Keswick, Wythburn, Grasmere and Rydal (above).* Saturday 9th June 2019 – FREE as funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund. Lunch break in Grasmere – BYO or visit a local café.

The 150th Anniversary of St. Margaret of Antioch, Toxteth at St. Margaret's, Princes Road, Liverpool L8 1TG. Various events, dates TBC in July, August and September 2019. Further details to follow.

Please email me – ian@iansimpson.eu – for more details on any of the above events or if you are organising an event which you'd like me to advertise here.

Open Churches

As you know, I am always delighted to spread the word about churches which are open to receive and welcome visitors. Here are some suggestions for churches you may like to visit:

BLUNDELLSANDS, St. Nicholas *Bridge Road, Blundellsands, Liverpool 23.*
Grade II Listed sandstone church, 1873-4 by T.D. Barry & Sons (extended 1894 by W.D. Caröe). Open Tuesdays, 10-12, and Thursdays, 2-4. Guided tours and an excellent free history / guide book. Refreshments available.

UP HOLLAND, St. Thomas The Martyr *Church Street, Up Holland, W. Lancs.*
Grade I Listed church dating from 1307, extended in 1882. Open weekdays, 10.30-12 and 2-4. Free guide booklet. Church café opening soon.

WAVERTREE, St. Bridget with St. Thomas *Bagot Street / Lawrence Road, Liverpool L15 2HB.* Grade II* Listed Italianate church by E.A. Heffer (1872) featuring a Salviatei reredos of Da Vinci's "Last Supper". Open Wednesdays, 9.30-11.30. Refreshments available.

If you'd like to see YOUR church featured here, send me the details by about May 13th to get in CHBN 11.

Open and Welcoming – the Key to 21st Century Mission

At a discussion recently concerning the future development and care of a large Medieval church in Lancashire I was asked to talk about some churches which had started opening their doors to welcome visitors and tourists in the last few years and the benefits to the churches of doing so.

I spoke about a few good examples known to me either through my work with the Diocese of Liverpool or the Churches Visitor & Tourism Association (CVTA) and discussed a few of the things these churches do to welcome their guests. In one church a free meal of nutritious soup is offered to guests; another offers tea and biscuits – both of these are in inner-city Liverpool and their work helps to break down social isolation as visitors sit down together to enjoy the hospitality offered.

I discussed rural churches which offer visitors the facility to make hot drinks even when there is no-one to “staff” the building, or offer the use of their WC facilities to travellers. These churches earn the gratitude of many a walker who is glad of these simple kindnesses.

Some churches offer free literature to visitors, either telling the story of the church or sharing the Christian faith with them. Free “book exchanges” are becoming more popular as library services are cut as well.

These things, and many more, are all important – after all, “inasmuch as ye have done it to the least of these My brethren, ye have done it unto Me” (Matt. 25, v. 40, KJV) – but what really transforms the simple act of opening the church into an act of mission and outreach, I told my friends in Lancashire, is the **quality of the welcome offered**.

I have been convinced for a while that the long term decline in church attendance and the diminishing role of the church in public life is because church buildings have become ingrained in mainstream perception as the preserve of inward-looking social groups rather than the vibrant public open spaces which they should be. Worse, where they are closed six days per week and showing evidence of neglect, they speak of a religion from times past rather than the offer of an encounter with the Living God. In short, they have given up their place at the heart of the life of the community and become “other” .

It doesn't have to be this way – indeed, it shouldn't be this way – and thankfully there is a way back. The way back is to start **welcoming people** into God's house again.

I am not talking here about one of the multi-million pound “evangelism” schemes into which the Church Commissioners and others are currently pouring money.

It's much easier, and much more cost-effective: any church can throw open its doors and welcome people in, and at its simplest there need not be any financial cost to doing so.

Just invite people in. Let them know they can be themselves, feel at home and ask any questions they wish.

The church doesn't need to be staffed when left open, although you must take care to lock away any easily-portable valuable items and you must inform your insurers of the opening hours.

Obviously, if you can find enough volunteers to staff the church to welcome visitors, the experience you can offer can be improved. Visitors usually like the opportunity to ask questions or to be shown the highlights of a church. There is a positive benefit to the volunteers as well, as they can make new friends and experience social contact.

If you want to learn more about opening your church to welcome visitors and tourists, why not book a FREE place on my talk on May 7th (details above)?



STOP PRESS

The Diocese of Liverpool has announced formally that my position as Heritage Officer is to be made redundant; my final day in post will be Friday, June 14th, 2019. I hope to be able to make an announcement about how I will be supporting churches after that date in the very near future. Watch this space!



New Life for Christ Church, Kensington

I am delighted to report that the former Christ Church, Kensington (1870, by W. & G. Audsley, Listed Grade II) is now back in use as a place of worship after years in a derelict condition and latterly inhabited by squatters. It has been acquired by the Christian Gold House Chapel, a Pentecostal church with strong links to the West African country of Ghana.

Built in polychromic brick to a Romanesque style, Christ Church is a major landmark on Kensington, on the main A57 road linking Liverpool with St. Helens and passed by many thousands of people daily.

The building is in a poor condition following years of neglect; substantial work is needed to rain-proof it, deal with vegetation growth to the tower and elsewhere, and repair the damage done to the interior by the squatters. It closed as an Anglican church in 1975

You can find out more about the Christian Gold House Chapel at <https://cghministry.com/>. Best wishes to Pastor Samuel Sarpong and his congregation both in their ministry to this deprived inner-city community and their efforts to restore this important church building to its former glory.



Interior of former Christ Church looking east (above) with detail of the surviving stained glass (below), 1st August 2018.





Metal Theft on the rise again ☹️

The cowards who make their living by stripping metal from historic buildings and selling it for scrap seemed to be on the back foot for a while following the introduction of rules making it more difficult to sell scrap metal for cash.

As the picture (*left*) shows, they are making a comeback and metal theft is once again a major threat to our historic church buildings. This is St. Mary, Walton, following a visit by copper thieves in September 2018.

St. Mary's is fortunate to have been covered in full by insurance and so the cost of the repairs will be met in its entirety.

Do not necessarily assume that this will be the case of your church is targeted, however. A standard condition of insurance contracts now is that a forensic detection solution such as SmartWater or SelectaDNA is applied to external metals, that this is registered and kept up-to-date and that appropriate signage is displayed alerting potential criminals to the fact.

Failure to do any of these things might mean that in the event of a lead or copper theft your claim could be rejected – so check NOW. If it is over five years since the forensic solution was applied, it is time to reapply it. Check that your registration with the solution provider is up-to-date. Physically look around and verify that the signage is present, visible and in good condition.

Another good reason that an insurer might find for rejecting a claim in the event of metal theft is that you – however inadvertently – helped the thieves. For instance if you left wheelie-bins out and the thieves used these to get up on to the roof (or to carry away their ill-gotten gains) this could be seen as contributory negligence.

If your church has a roof alarm it is essential that the annual maintenance contract is adhered to as failure to maintain this essential piece of kit will invalidate your insurance in respect of metal theft.

Of course, your insurers should be the last line of defence in the battle against metal thieves: it is much better to prevent a theft from happening than to deal with the aftermath.

The first thing you can do is to make sure your church looks like it is regularly used and cared for. There is evidence that part of the attraction of church buildings to thieves is that they are perceived to be disused.

Tidy up the grounds. Get rid of vegetation and overgrowth. Repair fences and gates and reinstate any missing locks. Take down out-of-date signage. If your church is one of those which is closed for most of the week, get it open, invite the community in and get people taking an interest in it. The more a building is in use, the less attractive it is to the metal thief as he will perceive a greater chance of being caught in his crime.



Vigilance is critical. Encourage the congregation and people living near the church to keep an eye out for anything suspicious. Vans and workmen outside or around the church at odd times of the day (between 6pm and 8am) should be challenged or reported to the Police – honest tradespeople attending a call-out will not object to being challenged.

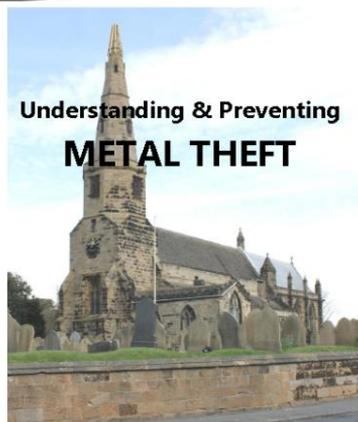
You can download a FREE A4 or A3 poster (*left*) alerting people to the need for vigilance from

<http://www.iansimpson.eu/LeadTheftPoster.pdf>

Watch out for drone activity around the church. It is illegal to fly a drone within 150ft of a building without the owner's permission, so it is legitimate to challenge a drone operator in the vicinity of the church – they may well be using the drone to spot lead or other metals at high level.

In September 2018 I revised and updated my guidance document on the Diocese of Liverpool's website, and it can be downloaded, free of charge, at <http://www.liverpool.anglican.org/heritage-support> or send me an A5 SAE and I'll pop one in the post.

A Making it Easier Guide
For Churchwardens, Building Managers and PCC Members



May 2014

Changes to Lottery Funding for Heritage



On January 30th the National Lottery's distributor for heritage funding was relaunched as the **National Lottery Heritage Fund** to coincide with the launch of the Strategic Funding Framework for 2019-24.

This is not a cosmetic change. The organisation has a new devolved regional structure which is expected to speed up the decision-making process and a completely new grants programme has been opened for applications.

National Lottery Grants for Heritage is an open programme offering grants of any amount between £3,000 and £5,000,000. All share the same set of nine defined outcomes, which for the first time include "People will have greater wellbeing".

All projects are required to achieve the mandatory outcome "A wider range of people will be involved in heritage" as a minimum.

For grants of between £3,000 and £10,000 up to 100% of project costs can be covered (although it is always considered a positive thing if a contribution is offered) and a decision will be made within eight weeks of the application.

Applications for grants of between £10,000 and £100,000 are also assessed within eight weeks; for the first time these grants are available to private owners of heritage provided that the public benefits offered outweigh the financial gain.

For the first time, grants of £100,000 to £250,000 are available via a single-stage application. This will take twelve weeks to assess and up to 95% of eligible project costs can be covered. Quarterly deadlines apply for the submission of applications over £100,000 – the first are March 5th 2019 and May 28th 2019.

An innovation at the £250,000 and above level is the introduction of a compulsory Expression of Interest form which must be submitted prior to application. Those whose proposals are seen as viable will be formally invited to apply; applicants who are unsuccessful at this stage will get some feedback as to why this is so.

The minimum levels of partnership funding (“match funding”) required is 5% for applications below £1 million and 10% above that level.

The maximum length of the Development Phase for all projects over £250,000 is now two years.

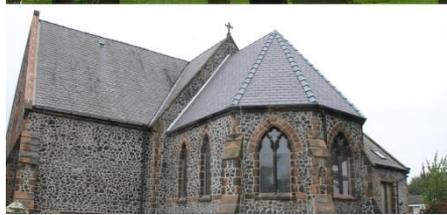
The application form has been completely revamped and there are some new questions to consider, for example: What will you do to ensure your project is environmentally friendly? Does your organisation need to undertake any capacity building activity to better deliver your project? Some other questions have been “tweaked” to reflect the new priorities as well, so it is not recommended to resubmit a previous failed application if you have been unsuccessful in the past.

There is much more emphasis on project evaluation in the new grant programme and all applicants are asked to devote at least 2% (and up to 7%) of the budget to producing an evaluation report which must be submitted before the final 10% of the grant can be claimed.

The payment regime has also changed: all grants over £100,000 are now paid in arrears based on actual spend – how this will work in practice remains to be seen but applicants will need to seriously consider the cash flow implications before applying.

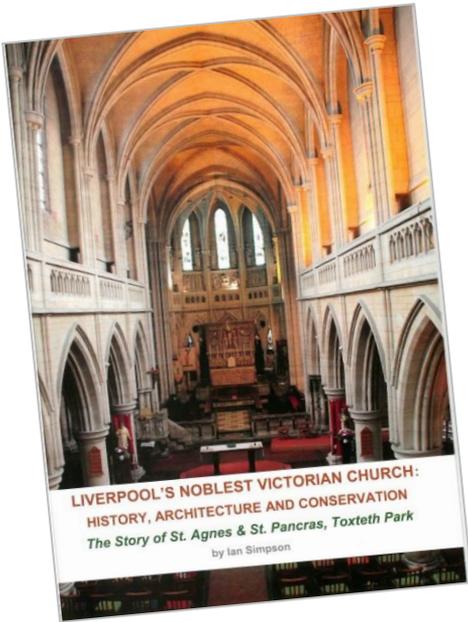
Thankfully there is a lot of guidance available on the new website: www.heritagefund.org.uk, and all applicants MUST familiarise themselves with this material before applying.

Right: A selection of Liverpool Diocese churches which have benefited from HLF grant assistance since 2013, from top St. Michael-in-the-Hamlet; Blundellsands St. Nicholas; Edge Hill All Saints; Halsall St. Cuthbert; Hale St. Mary and Parr Mount Holy Trinity.



Liverpool's Noblest Victorian Church

According to renowned architectural critic Sir Nikolaus Pevsner, St. Agnes' Church on Ullet Road in the Sefton Park area is Liverpool's noblest Victorian church. As someone who was intimately involved in the 2016-8 repair and conservation work at John Loughborough Pearson's Grade I Listed masterpiece I cannot disagree and so I borrowed Pevsner's accolade for the title of my book which discusses the history of the church, its architecture and the efforts being made to keep it both watertight and fit for 20th Century use.



During the course of my research I discovered that as early as 1887 the heating within the church was found to be inadequate; even to this day the winter cold is the building's Achilles heel. The intention is to install a new heating system by the end of 2019 to fix this problem for good. Another long-standing problem to be addressed is the condition of the Parish Hall, a Grade II Listed building in its own right.

The book is available completely FREE as it is funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund – to get your copy simply send me an A5 stamped, self-addressed envelope with £1.26 postage. If you want to enclose a donation towards the next phase of the repair works (hopefully to start in summer 2019) please enclose a cheque made out to “the PCC of St. Agnes & St. Pancras Church”; I will pass your donation on.



St. Gabriel's Glorious Glazing

One of my favourite projects of 2018 was the installation of a wonderful stained glass window by the Anglo-Finnish artist Carl Edwards (1914-1985) at St. Gabriel's Church, Huyton Quarry.

The window dates from 1956 and was rescued by Design Lights when the Bolton church in which it had been installed became redundant. It spent some time in their store before being restored and adapted to fit the tracery at St. Gabriel's.

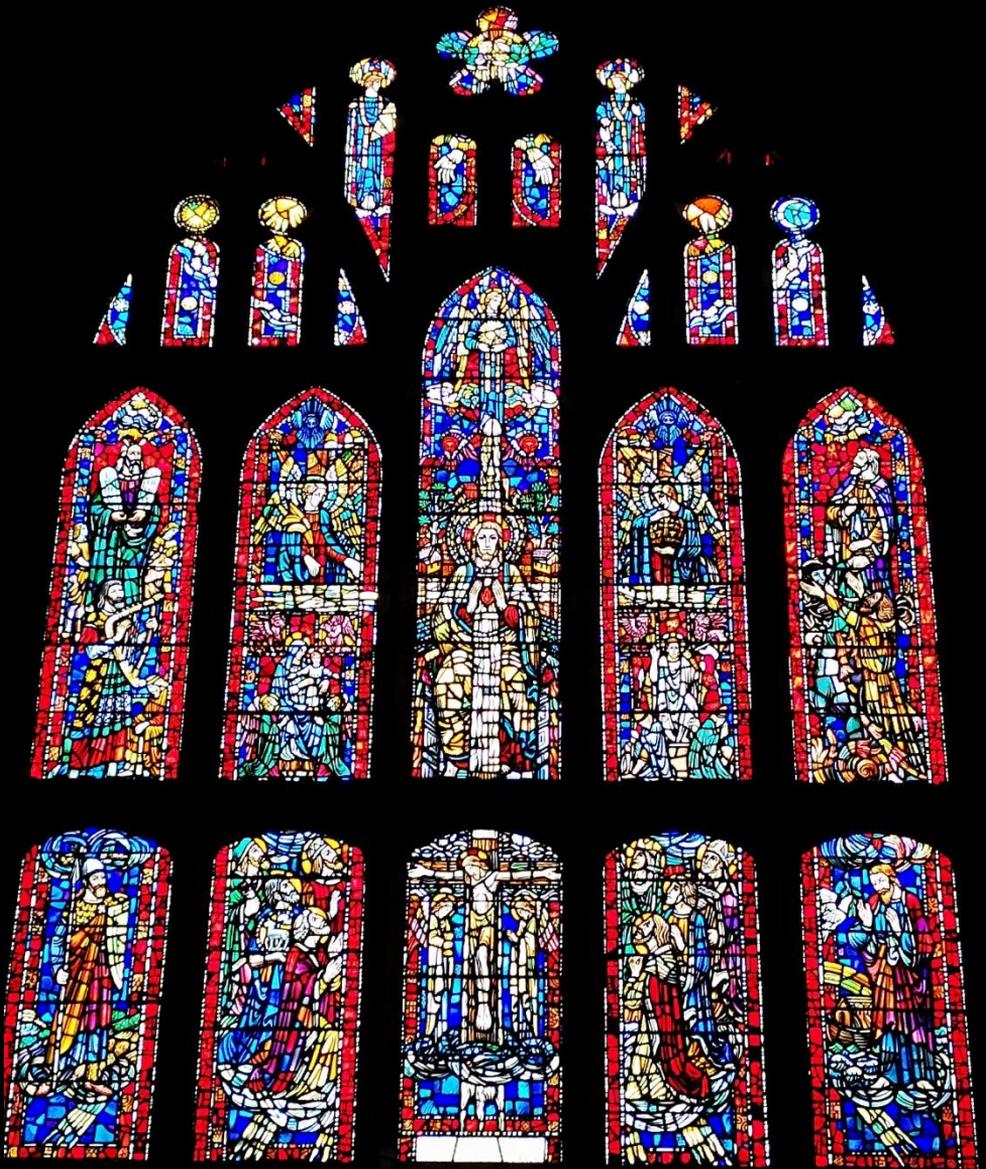
The original clear glazing at St. Gabriel's was "embellished" during the 1970s with patches of translucent coloured sticky-backed plastic which produced an effect best described as unbecoming of the House of God. The effect of the newly-installed window is transformational.



This project has brought a stunning piece of art into a church which serves one of the most deprived communities in the land. Local people responded with enormous generosity to the fund-raising campaign, with over 50 people, not all members of the church, giving in memory of loved ones. A Heritage Lottery Fund "Sharing Heritage" grant of £10,000 was awarded to complete the funding package.

The next step – funded by a parishioner's generous donation in memory of her son – is to install another light from the Edwards window in the chancel south wall.

After that, who knows? Stained glass windows are a bit like (so I'm told) tattoos: once you have got one, you need to get more! Best wishes to Canon Mal Rogers and to everyone at St. Gabriel's.



St. Gabriel's "new" window in all its glory following the removal of the scaffolding, December 2018. *Photo: Canon Mal Rogers MBE*