

All Saints Tower Turret Appeal



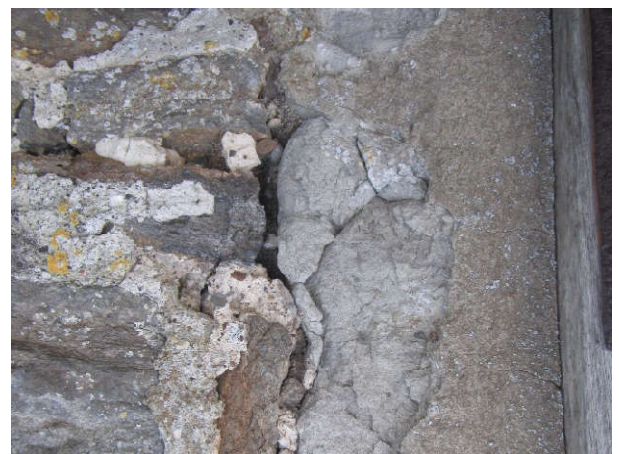
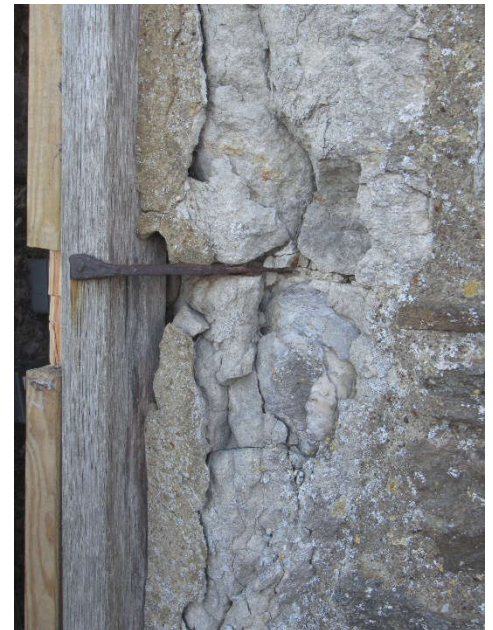
Restoration of the turret on top of the tower

The turret with its short spire replaced the earlier large spire which was blown down in 1673. It comprises a stone built, hexagonal structure in the southeast corner of the tower and covers the top of the spiral staircase. It provides access onto the lead covered wooden roof to allow flags to be flown and the star to be erected at Christmas. The Turret, with its wooden shingle covered spire and surrounding lead guttering, stops water running down the tower steps. Immediately below the Tower roof is the bell chamber with its rare set of ten bells.

Our problems: The stonework of the turret.

‘Poor-quality Kent Ragstone (which weathers white-light grey) ... is the sole material type used in the Tower Turret door jamb and lintels and has suffered extensive weathering and onion ring spalling.’ PCA REPORT NO: R13997. Dr Kevin Hayward FSA Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited.

As can be seen in the pictures, much of the stone around the Turret door is flaking and the lintel above the door is broken. The door frame has been strengthened temporarily with a secondary frame to ensure the stability of the turret, but the lintel and the stone of the jambs need to be replaced urgently.



The Spire: - Base, Shingles, and Gutter.



As the picture shows, the wooden base of the Spire needs to be replaced. In addition, the shingles are old, and some are split, they need replacing on new boarding to make them watertight. The lead guttering (right), which is set around the base of the Spire, inside and below the top of the turret, is subject to cracking and leaks.

The lead of the tower roof

The lead is thought to have been laid 100 years ago and the 'rolls' (below, right) are sagging and cracked. Although not the immediate priority, as rain is now leaking through to the wooden beams and the bells below, we hope to replace it as part of the job.



Please Donate Now

The work is expected to cost tens of thousands of pounds. We should know better by the end of March when we will launch a formal appeal, but donations can be made now to All Saints PCC Turret Fund. Place cash or cheques to 'All Saints, Staplehurst PCC, in envelopes marked 'Turret Appeal' in the wall safe. For card donations scan the QR code with your phone and follow directions.

