

# **Project Brief – Lead Professional Adviser Ashby-de-la-Zouch, St Helen**

## **Introduction**

The Parochial Church Council (PCC) of Ashby-de-la-Zouch, St Helen are in the early stages of exploring options to address our wider vision for our church building.

The overall vision will include:

- significant **repairs** to the fabric: particularly the tower stonework and roof, addressing below-ground drainage and rainwater goods, window metalwork, stonework to clerestory windows, church clock, and other isolated repairs
- **reordering** works that will: increase accessibility, provide essential amenities and services, improve versatility to support a wider range of activity within the building and improve our liturgical use of the space
- measures to support our **net zero carbon** journey including new heating and the possibility of solar panels
- planning of heritage, community and environmental **activities** to engender and strengthen partnerships and increase our reach to a wider range of people

We hope to apply to the National Lottery Heritage Fund for a project scope that will help us develop our thinking about these various elements and beginning planning a suitable route to achieve our ambitions.

Currently, the work has been very broadly estimated to be in the region of £1,255,000 excl. VAT and professional fees. Part of our intention for this phase of work is to develop the ideas and identify the best ways to implement this long-term plan, including potential phasing in line with available funding opportunities.

## **How we will choose**

We will undertake a quality & price assessment before deciding who to appoint.

Submissions should provide:

- fee rates for repair and reordering projects, rates or usual prices for other relevant documents and project activity you deem necessary in line with the above brief, and a clear breakdown of day rate and time allocated for this project.
- Details of consultant skills and experience, including confirmation of Conservation Accreditation.
- An example case study of a similar project demonstrating work with Places of Worship on National Lottery Heritage Fund or other funded projects.
- A list of previous work with churches.

As we anticipate applying to the National Lottery Heritage Fund, our assessment will also consider their investment principles in our tender process. Where relevant, please provide any details where your appointment would demonstrate:

- increasing diversity in our project's supply chain
- strengthening heritage's contribution to local economies by employing local suppliers
- protecting the environment

Upon assessing the applications, the PCC may also wish to undertake interviews of shortlisted candidates. Scores will be allocated on a 60-40 basis between quality and price.

Interested parties should send their tender returns to Rev Sue Field by email at [flagstaffrector@gmail.com](mailto:flagstaffrector@gmail.com)

The deadline for returns is **Monday 1<sup>st</sup> June 2026**

If **interviews** are undertaken, we expect these will take place **week commencing 15<sup>th</sup> June 2026**. We aim to **inform applicants** of the outcome **by week commencing 22<sup>nd</sup> June**.

### **Background information**

The Church of St Helen, in Ashby-de-la-Zouch, is a Grade I listed building dating from the early 1470s, although there are a few elements from an earlier church. There are numerous heritage treasures within the building, including a wide variety of memorials, several highly significant monuments, a rare finger pillory, 10 bells recast and rehung in 2007, amongst many others.

St Helen's is an active place of worship. The church building is used for weekly Sunday services, midweek services and Saturday morning parish prayers. There is a strong choral and bellringing tradition, and the building is used by the community for music events, school visits including festivals and nativities, as well as by tourists and local visitors.

The PCC are also responsible for St Helen's Community Heritage Centre, opposite, which is in regular use by the congregation, the heritage group, other partners, and the wider community for various meetings and events.

Additional detailed history of St Helen's church is available here:

<https://www.sthelensashby.net/>

The church has been assessed as 'at risk' and is on the Historic England Heritage at Risk (HAR) Register.

## **Requirements**

The PCC is seeking the services of a conservation-accredited architect or building surveyor to act as professional lead for the building project. This project and any future phases will be dependent on securing grant funding. The successful candidate will need to satisfy all necessary requirements arising from the National Lottery Heritage Fund and/or other grant-giving bodies.

## **Repairs**

We expect this to include initially surveying the building as needed, advising on the scope and method of repairs, developing specifications suitable to obtain relevant faculty permissions including production of tender documentation, seeking suitable contractors and tender evaluation to obtain accurate costs.

As this phase is primarily to develop our ideas and inform project planning, we expect contract administration and oversight of capital work on-site to form part of a future phase of work.

## **Reordering**

This role will include production of an Options Appraisal to help us better understand how we might improve the accessibility and usage of the space to suit our needs. Currently we have identified these issues to be in relation to; spatial arrangements to suit both liturgical and community needs, provision of facilities, improving accessibility, and inadequate heating, lighting and sound systems. This will include assisting our initial discussions with the DAC and working with other consultants.

Ideally, we wish to progress these proposals to RIBA Stage 2/3 to allow us to reach a preferred option(s), meaningfully assess the implications of other project elements, get a better understanding of indicative costs to inform funding strategies and therefore plan ahead accordingly.

## **Net-Zero Carbon**

Our church is currently heated by a gas-fired low temperature hot water system, with two twenty-year-old boilers, which is inadequate for our needs. We wish to explore our options for decarbonisation including a new heating system, upgraded lighting and potentially solar panels.

## **Project Co-ordination**

The Lead Adviser role will include acting as Principal Designer, throughout the project duration, ensuring compliance with CDM Regulations 2015.

We expect that the Lead Adviser will also liaise with other consultants as part of the project development including, but not limited to: ecologist, structural engineer, building services consulting engineer re heating/solar, evaluation consultant, heritage consultant, project manager, and others as necessary and appropriate.

## **Appointment Duration**

This appointment will be subject to a break clause in contract of services following the completion of this development phase. Continuity of appointment into future phases is our preference but will be subject to procurement requirements of grant funders (including NLHF) and influenced by the outcomes of this development work regarding phasing. Where allowable given these constraints, we expect the appointed Professional Team to restart when further funding is secured, at the discretion of the PCC. The professional lead will report to the PCC or a designated sub-group representing the PCC.

### **Timings**

We are working towards submitting grant applications from December 2026 with a decision expected to be made in March 2027. We hope to seek the advice of the appointed Lead Adviser in advance of submission of funding applications, to help shape and confirm the scope of this project. We expect the duration of this phase of development work to be approximately 12 months.

### **Supporting documents**

Upon request, we can provide:

- Photographs
- Most recent Quinquennial Inspection Report
- Our current, draft, Statement of Significance and Statement of Needs

### **Queries**

If you wish we can offer the opportunity to visit the church prior to your submission week commencing 11<sup>th</sup> May. To arrange this or if you have any questions, queries, or would like to discuss the scope of works please contact Rev Sue Field by email at [flagstaffrector@gmail.com](mailto:flagstaffrector@gmail.com) or by telephone at 07885 714829