

## Winchester Cathedral: Wiring and Lighting (1 of 2 projects funded)

*Awarded £500,000 in March 2015 towards a £1.2 million project*

### The need

The wiring and lighting throughout the cathedral was unsafe and in many places no longer working. Most of the wiring dated from 1933, with a partial upgrade carried out in the late 1960s. In September 2014 eight fire appliances had attended an electrical fire when the transformer in a light fitting above the Lady Chapel overheated. The fitting, estimated to be some 25 years old, was obsolete; all identical light fittings in the Lady Chapel had subsequently had to be disconnected and remained out of use because of the risk. The priority areas, where the wiring was so old as to be hazardous or where the number of units out of commission was in

danger of making areas of the cathedral inaccessible, were the south transept, Morley Library, retroquire, Lady Chapel, presbytery aisles, screen and quire. The cathedral already had a large Heritage Lottery Fund-supported project underway, but the costs of rewiring were not covered by the HLF funding. The priority work was covered by the grant; a further £700,000 would be required to complete the work across the whole cathedral.



Burnt-out luminaire from the Lady Chapel fire. Photo Credit: James Morse Lighting Design.

### Outcomes

Apart from routine maintenance, the electrical wiring will now not need redoing for another 20 to 30 years. Without the funding, the cathedral would have to use temporary lighting until they were able to raise the funds elsewhere.

### Social Impact

The cathedral is now safer for the public to use, with less risk of lighting failure, power outages, electric shock or fire. This means that that events including their extensive programme of First World War commemorations can continue to run in the cathedral with no risk to the public.

### Works completed and timescale

The existing wiring systems were replaced with new wiring systems and the unsafe and obsolete light fittings replaced.

### The Cathedral

Winchester Cathedral is the longest Gothic church in Europe, with an impressive vaulted ceiling. Several fascinating chantry chapels go some way to breaking up to huge length of the nave. Jane Austen was buried here in 1817 and her grave is much-visited. Part way down the nave is a black basalt 13th-century font from Tournai, beautifully carved and one of the finest fonts in Europe. Another treasure is the tiled floor of the retroquire, the most extensive medieval tiled floor in England. Winchester's Heritage Lottery Fund-supported project, Kings and Scribes, is creating new exhibition and gallery space to show its treasures, including the beautifully illuminated Winchester Bible. The cathedral welcomes some 300,000 people each year to take part in a huge range of activities, including services and ceremonies, educational visits, guided tours, local festivals and a host of cultural events.

## Winchester Cathedral: Window Repair and Conservation (2 of 2 projects funded)

*Awarded £500,000 in July 2016 towards a £698,000 project*

### The need

Despite the scale of repairs being funded under the previous grants, and by the Heritage Lottery Fund as part of the Kings and Scribes project, there remained crucial and urgent work to certain windows – glass, stonework and ferramenta (metal framing) – on the north side of the cathedral. The windows contain important survivals of the earliest glass in the cathedral, predominantly in heads of lights and traceries. Inspection revealed substantial areas of decaying stonework, disintegrating ferramenta (which had also damaged the stonework in which it was fixed) and precarious glass. The work was now critical in terms of stone conservation and public safety, as the window structures were only held in place by the ferramenta and were potentially vulnerable to falling in gusts of wind. The fragility of the leaded lights, some of which were accessible from a low roof, also presented a security hazard, as shown by the way in which a recent intruder to the building had escaped by rolling back part of a window.

### Outcomes

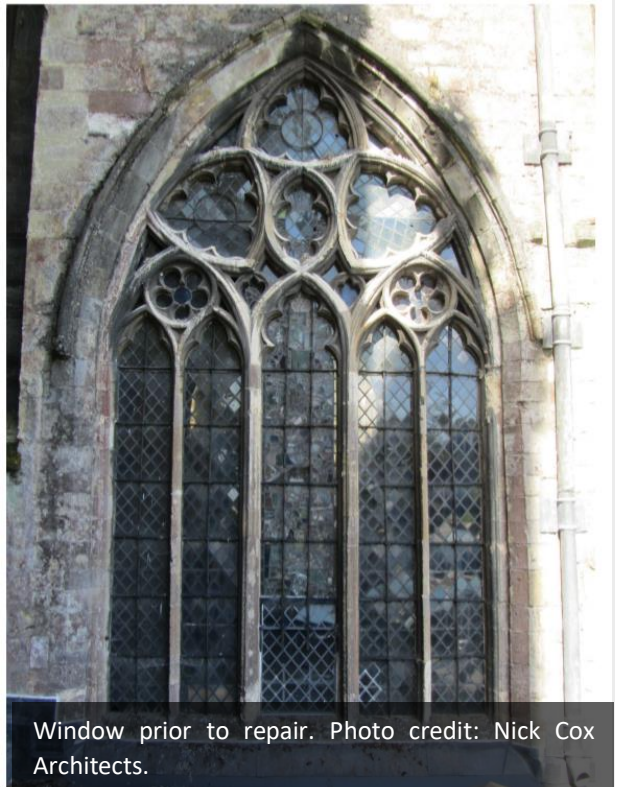
The repairs are long-term; the windows should not require further work for around 50 to 100 years.

### Economic and social impact

Two apprentices who had been brought for on the Heritage Lottery Fund-supported project were able to develop further skills on this project.

### Works completed and timescale

Carried out by Holy Well Glass, the work was due to complete in 2018. It involved the removal of windows at the west end of the north presbytery aisle and east aisle of the north transept, to allow works to stone work and ferramenta, specialist cleaning and conservation of the glass and leadwork, and in some cases the installing of internally vented protective glazing.



Window prior to repair. Photo credit: Nick Cox Architects.



Mullion split by corroding ferramenta. Photo credit: Nick Cox Architects.

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