

## York Minster: Camera Cantorum Repairs (1 of 2 projects funded)

*Awarded a total of £300,000 for two phases, November 2014 and March 2015, towards a £406,000 project*

### The need

The Camera Cantorum (Latin for singers' chamber), is a 15th-century building adjacent to the Minster (the cathedral is always known as York Minster). Formerly the cathedral library, the Camera Cantorum now houses both the Song School, where the choir rehearses, and the Minster shop. In 2013 a fall of stone over the public entrance to the shop required emergency repair to make the building safe for those in the area before it could re-open and this needed to be followed up with a comprehensive repair programme.

The 2009 Quinquennial Inspection had identified serious deterioration of the stonework, a problem throughout the Minster, much of which is constructed of Magnesian limestone which is particularly vulnerable to a variety of different decay mechanisms. There can also be difficulties with 19th-century construction arising from iron cramp damage or poor stone selection.



The Camera Cantorum. Photo credit: Arrol and Snell Architects.

### Outcomes

The work has made the building structurally safe and has improved its appearance. The area will now not need further major work for approximately 100 years.

### Economic and social impact

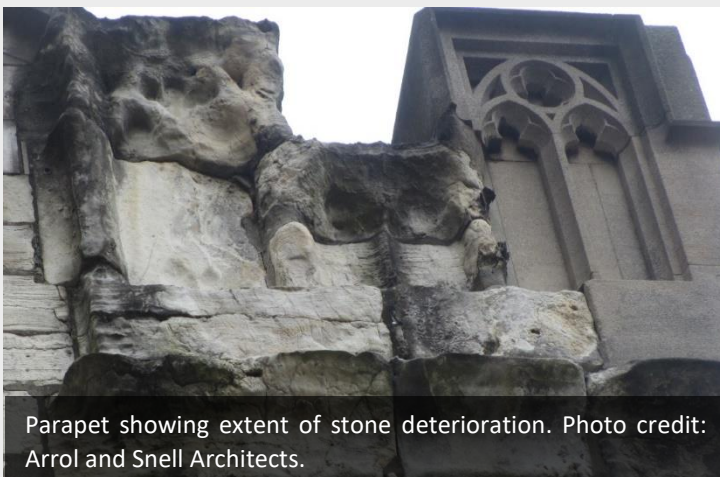
York Minster has its own stonemasons and this project challenged them and extended their knowledge and skills. Local lead workers from York were also employed. Three apprentices were employed during the project by the works department. The work has made the building more attractive and appealing to visitors and means that the choir have a better space to rehearse in. The public could see the conservation work at close quarters as some of the Minster's masons work in a mason's lodge, an open-sided shelter, located directly below the scaffold. The Minster also runs "Hidden Minster" tours, so members of the public can get closer to the building.

### Works completed and timescale

Repair work began in March 2015 and was complete by the spring in 2016. It involved renewing stone sections and carrying out mortar repairs to the high-level stonework. The in-house Minster Stoneyard masons carried out the stone repairs, while glazing repairs were undertaken by York Glaziers Trust.

### The Cathedral

York Minster is the largest of all English Gothic cathedrals, built on a site which can trace Christian activity back to the 4th Century. Construction of the present building began in 1220 and completed in 1472. Two fires in the first half of the 19th century left the nave, south west tower and south aisle roofless, but the cathedral was successfully revived and during the 20th century a focused restoration campaign was implemented. The Minster welcomes over 600,000 visitors a year and engages with 45,000 children through its learning activities and music outreach scheme. It needs to spend around £2.5 million each year on its rolling programme of conservation and repairs.



Parapet showing extent of stone deterioration. Photo credit: Arrol and Snell Architects.

# York Minster Cathedral: Quire South Side & Lady Chapel Exterior Repairs (2 of 2 projects funded)

*Awarded £500,000 in July 2016 towards a £1.3 million project*

## The need

Serious stone decay and structural instability to the south side of the quire and Lady Chapel was the most urgent outstanding problem identified in recent Quinquennial Inspections. In 2014 a large fracture was recorded in the buttress of one area, which was deteriorating at an alarming rate, and there had been serious stone falls. Following completion of repairs to the east front, which commenced in 2006, this was the next major repair area to be tackled. The Minster needs to spend around £2.5 million a year on its rolling programme of repairs for the foreseeable future, as its magnesian limestone is prone to deterioration where exposed, and problems have been compounded by past repairs using stones of different geologies and the extensive use of wrought iron fixings which are now corroding, expanding and causing masonry to fail.



The Minster south side. Photo credit: Arrol and Snell Architects.

## Outcomes

The project repaired one bay out of eleven to be repaired under the 15-year repair programme for this area of the Minster and has made it safe, but the overall project is still underway.

## Economic and social impact

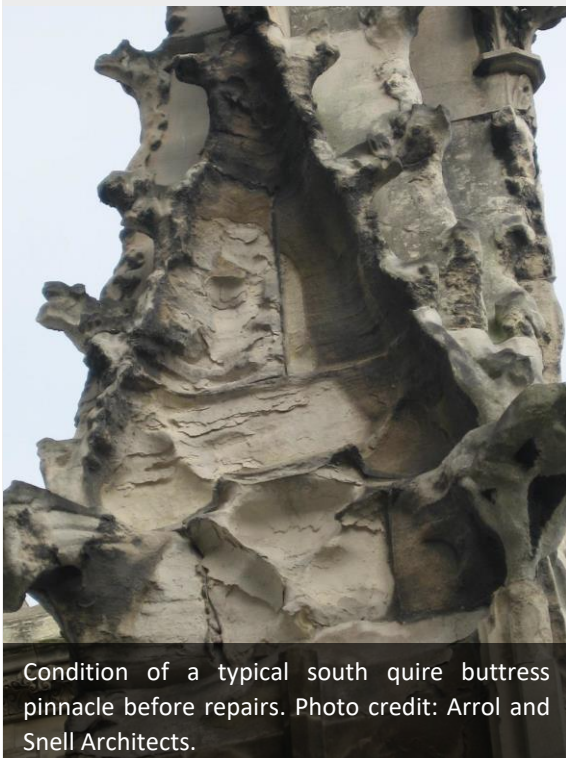
York Minster has its own stonemasons and this project challenged them and extended their knowledge and skills. Apprentices were employed during the project by the works department. Local lead workers from York were also employed. The public could see the conservation work at close quarters as some of the Minster's masons work in a mason's lodge, an open-sided shelter, located directly below the scaffold. The Minster also runs "Hidden Minster" tours, so members of the public can get closer to the building.

## Works completed and timescale

The masonry repairs were undertaken by York Minster Stoneyard. The Surveyor and the Master Mason made a careful inspection of every stone.

## The Cathedral

Always known as York Minster, this is the largest of all English Gothic cathedrals, built on a site which can trace Christian activity back to the 4th Century. Construction of the present building began in 1220 and completed in 1472. Two fires in the first half of the 19th century left the nave, south west tower and south aisle roofless, but the cathedral was successfully revived and during the 20th century a focused restoration campaign was implemented. The Minster welcomes over 600,000 visitors a year and engages with 45,000 children through its learning activities and music outreach scheme.



Condition of a typical south quire buttress pinnacle before repairs. Photo credit: Arrol and Snell Architects.