



CONSERVATION MANAGEMENT PLAN
for
Great Malvern Priory,
the parish church of St Mary and St Michael,
in the diocese of Worcester



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Modification Log

Date	Version	Modifications
01 July 2014	1 st draft	Received from Joe Elders
20 March 2015	Issue 1.0	Update of 1 st draft with many amendments and additions including objectives for development of the building. Developed by MA, Released following approval by PCC.
17 March 2017	Issue 2.0	New section 5 on 'Condition of fabric'. Re-casting of Section 6 on 'Assessment of potential and constraints' to include need to restore fabric, explain problems of current ordering more fully, and add 'Next Steps'. Re-drafting of Executive Summary. Update of Appendix B and replacement of Appendix C to describe the Friends. Minor amendments throughout. Developed by HW. Released following PCC approval.
19 th November 2020	Issue 3.0	Title changed to Conservation Management Plan. Section 2.2 (Priory and Community) extended. Old Section 6 pruned and split into two Sections (6 and 7). Section 6 now describes limitations of the current ordering. Section 7 now describes PCC's aspirations for sustainable wider use and current progress. Exec Summary and Appendices updated. Scope for development of building included as Appendix D. Developed by HW. Released following PCC approval.
11 th January 2021	Issue 3.1	Appendix D (Scope for development of building) Updated
22 nd November 2023	Issue 4.0	Changed to refer to Development Plan as defining the preferred options for building development. Section 7 replaced by new text that points to this Plan, Appendix D deleted, Section 5.7 added to describe recent work, Section 4.3 added, Executive Summary amended. Developed by HW.
8 th April 2024	Issue 4.1	Updates to Exec Summary and sections 5 & 7.

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Message from the Parochial Church Council (PCC)

Great Malvern Priory is a major church that belongs to the Major Churches Network. There has been a worshipping Christian community at Great Malvern for over 900 years, perhaps even before the founding of the Priory in 1085. The church was from the beginning fully integrated into the life of the local community that grew up around it.

Although worship is the primary purpose of the building, our Benedictine foundations also emphasise the importance of welcome and hospitality as a witness to God's love.

The present church community is seeking to fulfil these roles in the context of a rapidly changing society. We aim to see the Priory flourishing as an integral part of the life of the local community, not only as a place for worship and quiet reflection, but also as an educational and cultural venue. Visitors often comment on the atmosphere of peace, and the beauty of the Priory, but there are aspects of the building that bear witness to the fact that it is over 150 years since the last major re-modelling. We want to restore and refresh this valuable heritage for future generations, while increasing access to it for everyone to use and enjoy. There is also the opportunity to make a substantial contribution to the economic regeneration of the town by opening up parts of the churchyard and enhancing the presence of the Priory in the town.

The Priory is one of the major parish churches of England and the challenge of maintaining such a large and historic building as a place of worship and community resource is enormous. Although much has already been achieved, work is still needed to conserve the fabric and update the building and the churchyard appropriately for 21st century needs and expectations.

This Conservation Management Plan is a timely and vital document. It sets the scene and provides an authoritative context for any conservation and development work. The PCC sees this as an opportune time to refresh the building for the future, bringing it up to modern standards. This will support more diverse styles of Christian worship, and better equip the Priory to provide hospitality to visitors and a facility for the local community. There is a need also to resource the building so that it can tell its story – one of many centuries of prayer and service, reflecting the love of God to local people and visitors alike.

The PCC would like to thank the many groups and individuals who have contributed to this document including church groups, town groups and the Diocesan Advisory Committee. Special thanks also are due to Dr Joseph Elders of the Church Buildings Council for all his hard work in helping to produce the Conservation Management Plan.

Executive summary

Great Malvern Priory is one of the finest historic parish churches not only in Worcestershire, but in England. Its exceptional architectural, art historical, archaeological, and historic importance is recognised in its Grade I listing. Of particular note is its architecture comprising a Norman nave dating from 1085 and extended in the C15th in an ornate perpendicular style; its collection of medieval stained glass, generally regarded as the most complete collection of English C15th and early C16th stained glass outside York Minster; its collection of medieval tiles, one of the largest and best preserved in England; and misericords dating from the C14th and C15th. There is also a fine organ and a ring of 10 bells, including one from the C14th.

The Priory, located at the historic heart of the town, should however not be seen as an isolated historical monument, but understood within its wider human and natural environment, and as an asset for the local and wider community. The Priory is open every day under the oversight of a full-time Custos and volunteers. It attracts around 40,000 visitors/year. Apart from regular and well-attended services of worship in a variety of styles and supported by a rich and varied musical tradition, the building is used by local schools, hosts orchestral and choir concerts, plays and regular programmes of lectures and organ recitals.

Unfortunately, recent surveys have shown the fabric of the building to be in urgent need of repair and conservation:

- Following falls of stone, both externally and internally, a comprehensive inspection of all the stonework by Sally Strachey Historic Conservation (SSHC) in 2016 removed any stone that was found to be loose and in danger of falling, and recorded over 600 defects in the condition of the stonework in detailed illustrated reports. SSHC identified appropriate repairs to each of these defects together with budgetary estimates and priorities, most being recommended within a 2 or 5 year timescale. During 2018 and 2019 the PCC rebuilt the top 6m of the SW buttress where large stones were in danger of falling, rebuilt an unstable section of the west wall, and carried out cleaning and repairs to the North Porch where again the rear pinnacles were found to be in a precarious condition. Considerable further repair work is required to all elevations and to the tower.
- Following concerns about the glass, York Glaziers Trust (YGT) conducted a survey of all 40 windows in the Priory. Their conservation report, received in 2016, noted that the primary concern is the corrosion of the glass in the 14 main medieval windows (which include the largest windows in the Priory). This corrosion is caused by condensation and moisture which leach salts from the glass to cause pitting and loss of paint. YGT concluded that 'the immediate requirement' is the installation of internally ventilated protective glazing to inhibit the ongoing cycles of corrosion that are damaging this historic and unique collection'. Cleaning medieval glass is highly specialised so as to ensure the historic paint is not disturbed. We have no record of the glass being cleaned in over 100 years if ever. Therefore YGT recommended that once removed for installation of protective glazing, the windows should be cleaned in the studio to remove soot, dirt and corrosion products, and some repairs carried out. York Glaziers provided budgetary estimates for the conservation of each of the 14 main medieval windows. These estimates

summed to £2M plus the cost of access and VAT at 2016 prices. In 2023 the Creation window in St Anne's Chapel was cleaned, repaired and installed behind protective glazing. The work has established a methodology for the conservation of other windows in the Priory.

- The lead on the aisle roofs dates from the 1860s and small leaks occur frequently despite regular maintenance. A supplementary inspection report by the Priory Surveyor, dated January 2016, identified many defects and recommended that the lead be re-laid. In 2023, the lead on the roof of St Anne's Chapel was replaced. Lead on roofs of the three remaining aisles still requires renewal.

The Priory also suffers from limitations in the building's facilities which fall far short of modern standards and expectations. These limitations hinder wider use. They include:

- Difficult access for the public, especially for wheelchair users, but also for contractors requiring access for maintenance to be conducted in accordance with acceptable safety standards.
- Many different floor levels within the church result in trip hazards and again restrict access by wheelchair users.
- Very limited toilet provision (2 WCs) with no baby changing facilities, which again is not accessible to wheelchair users.
- Negligible catering facilities.
- A lack of storage space which gives rise to cluttered spaces that detract from the serenity of the ancient building.
- Poor heat distribution from old cast-iron radiators around the outer walls.
- Heavy Chancel furniture which does not lend itself to both traditional and more contemporary styles of worship and which cannot easily be transformed to make space for concerts and other events.
- Inadequate space for choir practices and for other meetings

In 2019, the PCC awarded small studies to three architectural practices to consider both the condition of the fabric and to propose ways to overcome the limitations in the building's ordering. Each practice put the cost of repair, conservation and building development in the region of £12M + VAT at 2019 prices, split approximately equally between repair/conservation and building development. In 2024, the PCC carried out a project to remove the trip hazards in the nave by lowering the floor to the level of the tiled aisles. During the work under-floor heating was installed. This improves heat distribution and improves the building's carbon footprint.

The above repairs and projects over the last decade, supplemented by various studies, assessments and community surveys, have enabled the PCC to propose a phased programme of repairs, conservation and re-ordering. The PCC intends to appoint an architect to take this major project forward while determining a funding strategy that seeks grant funding from NLHF and from other trusts and partners.

The PCC aims to see the Priory flourishing and sustainable as an integral part of the life of the local community, not only as a place for worship but also in demand as a venue for cultural, educational and community events. With this in mind, this

document has been compiled by the PCC in order to act as a catalyst for restoring, conserving and developing the church building as:

- a community and cultural asset as well as a place of worship and contemplation
- a place to learn about the history of Christianity in the area, and the rich local heritage of this place and area
- a cultural centre, a place to enjoy music and art, working in partnership with other organisations to offer a resource and attraction, both locally and regionally.

The aim is not only to respect the significance of the building and site and the values attached to it by the people of Great Malvern and beyond, but to enhance it, to make it better, to unlock its dormant potential.

1 Introduction

The Parochial Church Council asked Dr Joseph Elders, Major Projects Officer of the Church Buildings Council (CBC), to prepare this Conservation Management Plan (CMP) in 2014 on behalf of the PCC and the diocese. The document has since been developed with advice from members of the PCC and the Priory congregation, members of the Worcester Diocesan Advisory Committee (DAC), and officers of the CBC and English Heritage.

It was written to act as a catalyst for improving the accessibility, use, and social and educational value of the church and site, as a place of Christian worship and mission, and as a community and educational resource. The CMP will be of value to the Parochial Church, and to the Town, District and County Councils in providing appropriate and dynamic policies and direction for day to day management of the site as well as higher level needs and projects.

It is an important document for evaluating short-, medium- and long-term programmes of work. These might involve applications for grant-aid from English Heritage, Worcestershire County Council, the National Lottery Heritage Fund, the CBC and other sources. Preparation of a CMP plan is a prerequisite for (or advantageous towards) receiving grant aid from most of these bodies.

The CMP follows the guidance on conservation management plans published by the CBC in 2007 and revised in 2012. As this guidance makes clear, a conservation management plan on a major church is *“a useful tool for recognising and reconciling tensions that may arise between the necessary life of the church and the significance of the place, and to help the church and its community to transcend these in order to develop and grow.”*

Conservation management and planning are increasingly understood to be crucial to the beneficial use and guardianship of important historic structures and sites. Such plans are designed to describe a place and its community and define its significance. They then go on to assess the vulnerability of the place. Finally they establish policies to ensure the long-term protection of the place, and the retention (or if possible enhancement) of its significance.

The objectives of the Conservation Management Plan

The objectives of the plan are therefore to:

- Understand the Priory building and site and its use by the community by drawing together information including documents and physical evidence in order to present an overall description of the place through time. This includes a brief description of the Priory and site today, how it is used and perceived, and identifies areas for further research.
- Assess the significance of the Priory and its principal components both generally, and on a local, national and international level.
- Define vulnerability and potential by identifying issues affecting the significance of the site and building, or which could affect them in the future, and how threats can be mitigated, and potential realised.

- Develop management policies to ensure that the significance of the church and site is retained in any future conservation, use or alteration. If possible this significance should be enhanced through implementation of these policies.

Status of the Conservation Management Plan

This CMP essentially summarises what is currently known about the church and site, and bases its evaluation of significance, vulnerability, potential and management policies on this summary. Observations have been made which attempt to interpret what can be seen and what has already been written and collated in the light of current understanding. Several histories of the church have been written, notably the Victoria County History on which this document leans heavily, although there have been some changes since this history was prepared in 1924. Copious records also survive in the CBC's own files.

The CMP is not a closed document, but will be regularly consulted, checked, corrected if necessary, and updated. It will have a close relationship to other key documents, notably the Inventory and the Quinquennial Inspection reports.

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2 Understanding the place and the community

This section seeks to describe the place and to put it within its environmental, archaeological, historical, religious and social context. The information is summarised within the CMP itself. More detail is given in previously existing material, to which reference is made.

2.1 The location and setting of the Priory

Great Malvern is a very attractive historic spa town, the centre of which is designated as a Conservation Area, with the Priory at its core. Great Malvern is defined by its topography, and the contours of the hills define the western edge and also the linear development of the town. The Priory lends itself to views both from the valley towards the Malvern Hills and from the Hills looking down towards the town.

Great Malvern is situated at the base of the Malvern Hills; the quarried stone is very much integral to the character of the town, including the Priory church. Open spaces, landscaping and the spread of mature trees give the town a mature and attractive feel, typified by Priory Park.



The setting of the Priory looking from the east towards the town ©
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The conservation area is bounded to the north and south by two other conservation areas (Malvern Trinity and Malvern Wells respectively) with most of the area to the west of the Worcester to Hereford railway line. The setting of the town on the lower slopes of the Malvern Hills is integral to the character of the conservation area, and provides an interesting and dramatic backdrop. The Malvern Hills are designated as an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

The stone from the hills and the woodland of Malvern Chase, which was originally in royal hands, and the many natural springs, were the reasons for the four key stages of development of Great Malvern.

- The Medieval period when the historic core developed around the Priory, and in the 16th century with the development as a coaching stop at the Unicorn public house.
- The Regency period with the spa town spreading from the base of the Malvern Hills and down into the valley.
- The Victorian development, characterised by large houses on individual plots, built during a period of great affluence for the town.
- The 20th century when the Malvern theatres founded by Bernard Shaw and Barry Jackson in 1929 established Malvern as a cultural centre as well as a traditional spa and recreational centre. The town also grew as an education centre and there was a focus of scientific research and development. The Three Counties Showground and Worcestershire Golf Course are added attractions.

There has also been considerable growth in the last 40 years and a number of new housing estates have been built, especially on the western fringe of the town, substantially increasing the population. Great Malvern now has a total resident population of just over 31,000.

The setting of the Priory

A plan of the church and its immediate surroundings can be found on page 23.

The large and handsome ancient church itself (National Grid Reference: SO775458) was originally a Benedictine priory church. The domestic buildings of the Priory have not survived and there is no curtilage to the south and west.

To the west of the church, the Abbey Gatehouse, much changed and restored, is now the town museum. (The use of the name “Abbey” is typical of the “bigging-up” of the Georgian and Victorian periods; this was of course never more than a priory (as at Bolton “Abbey” in Wharfedale, Yorkshire.)

The gate-house is a 15th-century building. The front is a Victorian rebuilding, panelled and embattled, with a wide four-centred archway in the centre with a small projecting oriel window above it. The rear elevation has an arch of similar form with original jambs and restored head and above it a carved angel; the upper part on this side is of red brick and the square-headed windows are considerably restored. The top of the exterior east wall is decorated with 15th century medieval tiles of the same design as used in the Priory. The other monastic buildings lay to the south of the church, but have been entirely demolished.

Immediately to the west of the church, and between it and the Abbey Gatehouse, lie buildings belonging to the Victorian Abbey Hotel. The hotel gardens back on to the church on the south side on the site of the demolished Priory cloister. The church community has a good working relationship with the hotel management and staff.

The churchyard

The Priory stands in the south-west corner of the large churchyard which is raised over 1m above Church Street along its northern edge. The road climbs quite steeply from the Victorian and modern town up to the Priory. Belle Vue Terrace with the hill rising behind creates an impressive backdrop for the Priory church, which nestles into a platform in the hillside and while visually prominent from some angles, disappears from others.

The churchyard was closed for burials in 1856 and responsibility for the continuing maintenance lies with Malvern Hills District Council.

The churchyard is a treasured open space with public footpaths leading through it. There are a variety of interesting trees, including several brought from other countries at the time Malvern was developing as a spa town. Many of the trees have now reached maturity.

Within the churchyard is a modern house, originally built as accommodation for the Priory Custos, and now providing offices for the Vicar, Church Manager and Parish Administrator. There is also an area of glebe land.

There is only one access point for cars, through a wide gate in the north-east corner of the churchyard from Church Street, which runs along the north side of the churchyard.

Parking for churchgoers and visitors is limited at the church to spaces along the path to the porch at the north side, and three reserved spots at the west end where a high retaining wall closes the view. There are about twenty spaces in total.

The Priory drive and the churchyard to the south of the drive is the largest area of relatively flat land in the town centre.

The churchyard has monuments dating from the late 17th century, and includes a number of very fine stone grave markers and chest tombs, twelve of which are individually listed grade II. The stone used is generally limestone, but there are some other sources, particularly amongst those from the 19th century.

One of the gravestones is a small memorial to Charles Darwin's daughter Anne, who died probably of scarlet fever or tuberculosis (or both) in 1851 in the town, where her father had brought her for the water "cure".

There is a medieval standing stone cross, situated in the churchyard north of the north door of the Priory, and just in front of steps leading up to the Priory Gateway, now the museum. The cross was formerly surmounted by a square late 17th century sundial with bronze gnomons, and a repaired version of the 17th century sundial, given in the 20th century, is now set on a base a short distance away.



The Priory churchyard

Standing crosses served a variety of functions. In churchyards they served as stations for outdoor processions, particularly in the observance of Palm Sunday. After the Reformation, some crosses continued in use as foci for municipal or borough ceremonies, for example as places for official proclamations and announcements.

The cross, which is also Listed Grade II, has a base of four steps, and is octagonal in plan with a diameter of 3m. The shaft was restored in 1896 and now has a moulded neck and a simple cross head under a gabled canopy. The grave marker to the north-east of the cross is excluded from the scheduling, although the ground beneath it is included. While much of the cross has survived from Medieval times, its subsequent restoration illustrates its continued function as a public monument and amenity.

The Lyttelton Well

The Priory was instrumental in establishing the 'Lyttelton Well'. The Well uses rooms adjacent to the Priory churchyard on the north-east side that originally were the Lyttelton School prior to its use as the church hall and rooms. In 1994 the Diocese leased the building to the Lyttelton Well Company, which is supported by twenty-two local churches, to develop a Christian resource and outreach centre. The centre is a focal point for Churches Together in Malvern and promotes the Gospel and offers physical, mental, and spiritual care for the people of Malvern and the surrounding areas.

The premises consist of a café, Christian bookshop and counselling suite which are staffed by a team of volunteers and a small core of paid staff, together with a resource room and two letting halls.

The bookshop offers a wide range of Christian literature and church supplies to various local churches of different denominations, while the café serves meals and light refreshment in a friendly and welcoming environment.

The letting rooms can accommodate up to 100 people and are regularly used by the Priory and particularly for children and young people's activities.

2.2 The Priory and the community

The role of the Priory in the community has changed radically since the construction of the original Priory; it was not always a parish church as some monastic churches were. The original parish church was a separate building, where the post office is now, uphill to the north-west. By the time of the Reformation the parish church was in a state of disrepair and after petitioning the King the parishioners succeeded in buying the Priory church for £20.

This was from the beginning a high profile foundation under royal patronage through Westminster Abbey. It is closely bound up with the history of the historic town and region of Great Malvern. The date of origin of the first Priory building is unclear and must be unravelled from the legends; the earliest physical remains in the fabric date to the late 11th century.

The Priory is located at the historic heart of Great Malvern, and the town and area could scarcely be imagined without it. As stated in the State of the Historic Environment Reports produced by English Heritage: "*The church is usually the oldest and most important listed building in a settlement as well as an icon for community memory and a focus for social activity.*"

This description fits the Priory well. The Priory belongs very much to the people of Great Malvern and the surrounding area, not just to the regular worshipping community. This sense of communal ownership and belonging has perhaps weakened during the late 20th century, a fairly typical development, and could be strengthened. This is one of the imperatives behind the present proposals.

Throughout its existence each generation has made its mark on the Priory. Many generations of local folk are buried there, and the monuments inside and outside the Priory are an often eloquent reminder of hundreds of years of community life. The Priory also hosts civic functions and is a source of local pride, and its maintenance must be considered a remarkable achievement.

Leadership and Management

Great Malvern is in the Diocese and the Archdeaconry of Worcester, and in the Deanery of Malvern. The Priory is the Parish Church of St. Mary and St. Michael in the parish of Great Malvern and the freehold is vested in the incumbent.

The Priory has a well defined and experienced leadership team, overseen by the Vicar. Decision-making on liturgical, pastoral and financial affairs is vested in the

PCC (Parochial Church Council) which is underpinned by a number of committees, including two committees that are responsible for maintenance and repairs and for developing plans to reorder the building to meet strategic objectives for community engagement, mission and worship. Overall financial management is carried out by the PCC's Finance Committee. Day-to-day management is carried out by the Management Team comprising the vicar, wardens, treasurer, secretary and Church Manager, assisted by the Custos (Head Verger). Paid staff include a Church Manager, a Custos, a part-time deputy Custos, a part-time Parish Administrator, and a part-time Director of Music.

The Priory is fortunate to have among its membership a number of well qualified and experienced volunteers who give professional oversight and management to all aspects of the ministry, work and witness of the Priory. . The leadership aims to strengthen the Priory as a central and vital focus to the life of the town and the wider community.

The Friends of Great Malvern Priory

The Friends of Great Malvern Priory is an independent charity whose objectives are to support the maintenance, restoration and enhancement of the fabric, and to encourage knowledge and enjoyment of the building and its heritage. Membership of The Friends is open to people of all faiths and none and the membership includes many who live outside Malvern.

The Friends organise weekly guided tours of the building advertised through the Malvern Tourist Office, they manage the Friends Priory Shop, arrange an annual Heritage and Faith Lecture and a community carol service, and with the PCC organise 'Lunchbox' (these being short talks and concerts during lunchtimes from September to April). The Friends publicise their events and activities on the Priory website. A list of services, events and the Priory magazine are sent electronically to members of the Friends each month. An outline of The Friends organisation is described in Appendix C

Worship

The Priory has been a place of Christian worship for nearly 1,000 years and today is the spiritual home of 350 recorded on the Priory Electoral Roll. The planning of the rich variety of worship is carried out by a Worship Committee of the PCC.

Services are conducted on every day of the week including three or four services on Sundays when the average total attendance is 310 people. The main Sunday morning service includes a variety of types and styles of worship including Holy Communion following a Church of England's Common Worship Order, Altogether Worship where children and young people often contribute, and Morning Prayer. The Sunday early morning communion service follows the 1662 Book of Common Prayer and the evening service takes the form of sung Evensong, Holy Communion, or monthly informal worship. Additional services are held on religious festivals. Two Christingle services in December 2019 attracted a combined congregation of over 900. The building is also used for civic services and by local state and public schools for carol and commemoration services.

The Priory was designed as a monastic church within a Benedictine community. As such the quire (the east end of the building) is larger than that in a parish church as it served the monastic body while the rest of the parish used the nave. To an extent the building is still used as two parts with some services using either the east or the west ends, and some using the whole building.



Christingle service with a congregation of 800+

Worship at the Priory is supported by the Malvern Priory Choirs, the Praise Group, the Worship Band and the Priory Orchestra.

The Choirs Association consists of the Priory Choir, the Priory Singers and the Junior Choir (totalling around 45 adults and 25 juniors). An unparalleled breadth of music is performed to cathedral standard including full Choral Evensong and unaccompanied plainsong. The Director of Music is Piers Maxim.

The Praise Group is a group of singers and instrumentalists who lead worship in informal services, and the Worship Band and amateur orchestra (composed of players of all ages) play mainly for Altogether Worship.

Education

Education in a variety of forms is provided by the Priory for all age groups, in both the Priory congregation and the wider community.

A number of children's groups for ages from 3-18 years meet on Sunday in lively and engaged groups to have fun and develop their faith. Messy Church caters for parents and children together to meet every 6 weeks and engage in activities in an informal setting.

In the wider community the concentration of effort among younger people is at Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 (4-11 year olds) and the Priory clergy have responsibilities

at Malvern Parish School which is a Church of England voluntary aided primary school.

Each year 'Lifepath' takes place over 5 days in June. It aims to give primary school pupils from Key Stage 2 the opportunity to learn about and enact the lifepaths of Brother Aldwyn and the Benedictine monks who founded the Priory in 1085, and to be inspired by the building they created. In 2019 over 700 children from over 20 local schools spent a day focussing upon the way in which Aldwyn, along with his fellow monks, built and established the Priory as a centre of prayer and worship, healing and hospitality, art and music, at the heart of life in Medieval Malvern. The children participate in activities that include building arches, medieval medicine, spinning wool, hand-bell ringing and stained glass window design as well as prayer and worship. 140 volunteers from 20 churches organised and led the week.

'Lunchbox' is held fortnightly from September to April and provides an opportunity for people (typically around 150) to meet over a packed lunch and hear short concerts or talks on varied subjects. Talks in 2019 ranged from Electric Cars to Malvern during WWII.

Bellringers meet weekly to practise before ringing on Sundays and for special occasions. Since the ring was extended to 10 bells in a strengthened frame, new ringers have been recruited and trained. Junior and adult handbell groups also meet to learn the art of handbell ringing

Educational visits by groups from local secondary schools are welcomed, and input is tailored to meet their specific requests.

Children in the Junior Choir are offered training which leads to Royal School of Church Music qualifications, and the Malvern Priory Choirs Association provides an organ scholarship.

The Friends organise an annual 'Heritage and Faith' lecture which has always been well attended. Recent topics have included the Priory's Magnificat Window and the influence of Gilbert Scott. They also organise an annual outing to a church or cathedral of heritage interest.

The details of the wide variety of education activities that are available for all age groups are shown in Appendix A .

Cultural activities

Plays, concerts, lectures and exhibitions are held in the church and there are good links with the Malvern Theatres and many local and more distant organisations. Concerts benefit from the fine acoustics of the building. Those in 2019 included performances by the Birmingham Bach Choir, Eboracum Baroque and the English String Orchestra. Students in early music from the Birmingham Conservatoire give frequent short lunchtime concerts with their tutor. There are regular organ recitals on Saturday mornings by visiting organists on the recently restored fine four manual Nicholson organ.

Performances of a Mystery Play took place over two weeks at Easter 2019. This was performed by a mix of professional and amateur actors. Over 1,000 people attended. The church is also used for many exhibitions.

A full list of events and musical, community and cultural activities that took place in 2019 is given in Appendix C .



Elgar Chorale concert

Visitors

The Priory is open every day for visitors, manned by a full-time Custos and volunteers. Regular guided tours are offered by The Friends. 'Welcome Days' are held periodically throughout the year when free refreshments are served, musicians give short performances and local artisans set up stalls in the Priory drive to sell their wares.

Welcome leaflets in several languages are available, and a general guide book, a book specifically on the stained glass, and booklets on the tiles, misericords and organ are provided in English. Further information is provided via an 'App' and DVDs. The church welcomes about 40,000 visitors each year but could achieve considerably more.

While the parish has gone to considerable trouble to illustrate the history of the Priory with information boards in various places, there is potential for explanation of the heritage to be made more accessible. This might involve interactive displays and presentations and could include collaboration with the Malvern Museum.

The churchyard is used for occasional food and/or craft fairs which attract many visitors. Special "welcome days" are held on these occasions and as many as 4,000 visitors are received by the Priory on these days.



Christmas market in the Priory drive

Malvern Hills District Council recently led a regeneration project with Heritage Fund support called “Route to the Hills”. The project aimed to improve and enhance the public open spaces in the town, to encourage more people to visit the town, and to bring economic benefit to the local community. This was achieved by developing a heritage “route” around the town using various interpretive techniques to engage and inspire target audiences.

The route passes through the Priory churchyard and past the main entrance to the Priory. Further work is needed to put the Priory at the heart of visitor attractions to the town. The numerous features of the Priory could be more clearly and attractively presented if funding could be found and an integrated vision developed.

In terms of tourism, the church is “on the radar” but perhaps not as much as it could (and should) be. Worcestershire Travel Guides on the web comments: “*St Mary’s, Great Malvern, is one of the finest parish churches in the country*”. A press release by Visit Worcestershire (August 2010) confirms that: “*The value of tourism in Worcestershire reached £971 million – 14% of the overall economy*”. This is the social and economic context for the opportunity to develop the Priory.

Community Care

As has been mentioned, the Priory is the spiritual home of over 300 people. Groups and contacts within this body lead to a sense of belonging that fosters well-being and combats loneliness. Many of these activities reach out into the wider community. This work is coordinated by the Mission Committee of the PCC.

Priory members meet together, typically weekly, in small groups in each other’s homes to read, pray and get to know and generally support each other.

Clergy and lay members visit local care homes and hold services. Around 30 people act as 'Priory Area Links'. They keep in touch with Priory members in their area and others who they hear would like contact and support. They work with the Pastoral Support Team composed of the Vicar, his wife and other volunteers who provide support during illness or bereavement. Newcomers are welcomed and invited to Newcomers' teas. Monthly Sunday lunches for the congregation in a local hostelry are well attended.

A 'Dementia Awareness Group' has benefited from the guidance of a consultant psychiatrist and aims to offer support to carers. Through the Priory's support to the Lyttelton Well, and 'Churches Together in Malvern', a counselling service is offered to many. More recently a project to relieve debt is now serving the local community.

As mentioned above, 'Lunchbox', held fortnightly from September to April, provides an opportunity for people (typically around 150) to meet over a packed lunch and hear short concerts or talks on very varied subjects..

The Priory Magazine, containing articles about Priory events and members and news from around the diocese, is published every month and circulated widely. The Friends distribute a copy to all their members electronically.

Impact

That the Priory continues to be a much valued asset to Malvern can be judged from the wide range of services and activities organised by the church itself and by the number and popularity of concerts, plays and exhibitions held within it. As described above, weekly attendance at religious services averages 300 and 150 typically attend Lunchbox where the talks and concerts are on subject of wide interest.

The Lifepath week has taken place each year for the last 10 years and continues to be greatly appreciated by both school teachers and children that attend and the great many volunteers that participate. The Priory receives very many appreciative comments each year. In 2019, one teacher commented:

"Personally, I can't think of any way it could be improved. The activities were so carefully planned, with teaching and practical work in all cases. All the helpers were absolutely lovely, showing patience and kindness to the children. You must spend so much time in the planning and organisation of this hugely successful project.... It's such a fantastic outreach with the Christian message."

Several of the schools have sent feedback from the children themselves, much of it with delightful drawings of things they had most enjoyed. Some of the comments have been:

"I never knew that in a church you sing such fun songs."

"I loved it and my parents loved hearing about it."

"Thank you for the inspiring Lifepath day... It will last in my lifetime brain."

"I will remember how kind and fun you are the most, and I wish I could come again."

"It was so fun and I didn't know I could be so happy... For me it was a superb trip. I will tell everyone I see about it."

"Thank you for all my souvenirs I took home."

“Just carry on doing the same exciting activities, the lovely songs and being the same kind and caring people.”

“I’m glad the monks made the priory, else we wouldn’t have met you.”

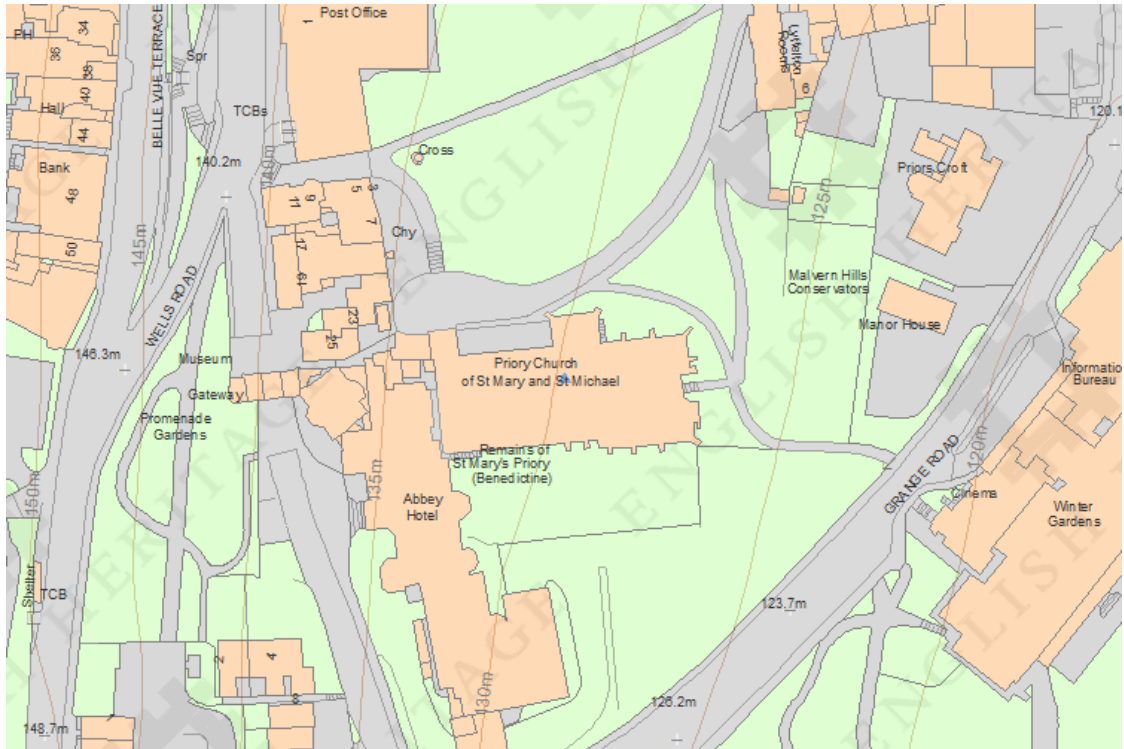
“We had an epic day... I would give Lifepath 100% awesomeness and 10 out of 10.”



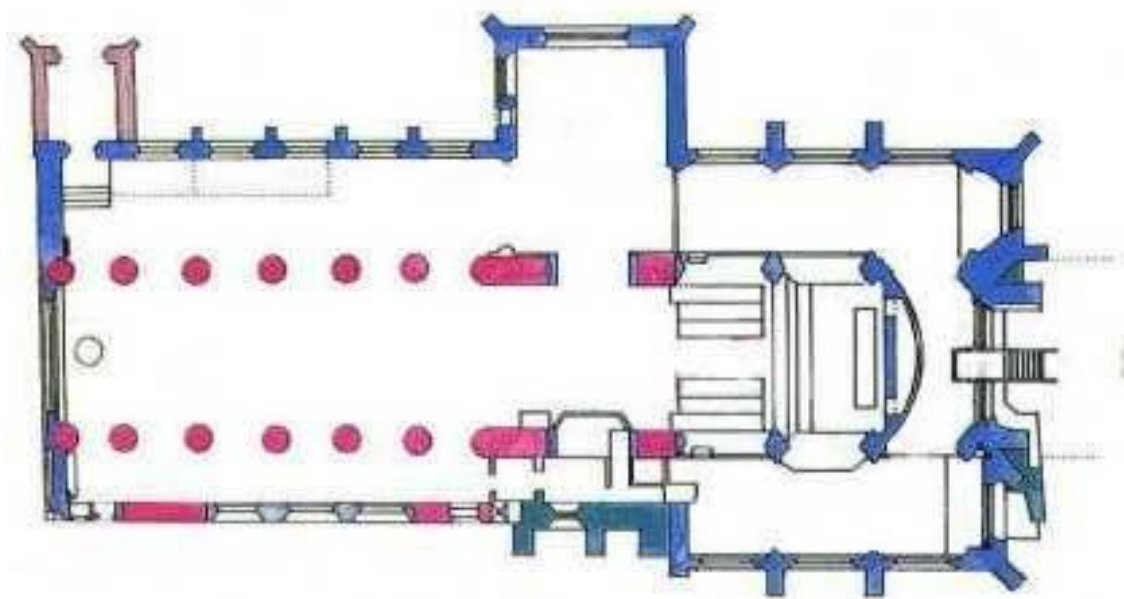
‘Lifepath’

3 Description of the building and the site

This section gives a brief summary of the history of the Priory. It describes the Priory and churchyard as they are at the time of writing, attempting to be as comprehensive as possible without going into great detail.



Map of Great Malvern, from English Heritage list description, church at the centre (licence number 102006.006.)



Plan of the church with phasing (pink Norman, blue late Medieval, purple Victorian rebuild)

3.1 History and archaeology of Great Malvern and the Priory

Summary

The following is based mainly on information on the Heritage Gateway. It is meant as background information only.

Prehistoric

The Malvern hills were settled in the Bronze and Iron Ages and the “British Camp” above Great Malvern dates to this period. There are a number of scattered findspots of flints, and Bronze Age tools and pottery are known in the area, though none in the immediate vicinity of the site. Stray finds from all these periods are possible.

Roman

In the Roman period between the 1st and 5th centuries there is little evidence of settlement or activity in the Great Malvern area.

Anglo-Saxon

Again little is known of this period up until the eve of the Conquest, although legend tells of a hermitage here before the latter. Only archaeological investigation could provide more information here.

Norman

According to the 12th century chronicler William of Malmesbury the Priory was founded by a monk from Worcester called Aldwin, at the behest of Bishop Wulstan, in the 1060s during the reign of Edward the Confessor. The manor and Priory however are not recorded in the Domesday Survey.

The earliest surviving parts of the Priory are late 11th century, from which the aisle arcades and entrance to the south chapel survive. The remains of the crypt beneath the Lady Chapel appear to also date from the close of the 11th century.

Medieval

Throughout the Medieval period the church was altered and expanded. The aisles were widened in the 13th century; the north porch was added in the 14th century. The Lady Chapel was rebuilt and lengthened probably late in the 14th century.

More rebuilding was undertaken in the 15th century, being begun by Prior John Malverne about 1440. The presbytery was first rebuilt and finished probably in 1460, when the Bishop of Worcester consecrated seven altars in the priory church. It was followed by the transepts, central tower and nave clerestory, the latter being completed about 1480. All the windows were ornamented with magnificent stained glass. This work finished in 1502.

Post-Reformation

After Henry VIII's dissolution of the monasteries in the 1530s the Protestant Bishop of Worcester, Hugh Latimer, did what he could to save the Priory for the community as a parish church. The Priory buildings were however mostly demolished or stripped, including the cloisters, south transept, east Lady Chapel and a chapel on the north side.

Only three of the domestic buildings used by the monks survived the dissolution. The Prior's Lodge became a private house before being replaced by other buildings. The magnificent 14th century timbered Guesten Hall existed until 1841 when a Victorian developer demolished it to make way for the Abbey Hotel. The Hall was said to be one of the finest examples of its period in the country.

Of these buildings only the Gatehouse still stands, which as noted above is now home to the Malvern Museum. A few of the carved timbers from the Hall can be seen in the Gatehouse.

Great Malvern Priory church came under the patronage of the Crown, before being sold to the town for 20 pounds as its parish church. The church was far too large for the small parish, and large parts of it fell into disrepair. This lack of maintenance, and the distance of Malvern from any large cities which meant it became something of a back-water until the 18th century, may have contributed to the survival of the stained glass and other features.

19th century

By 1788 the Priory had become so ruinous that it was not safe, and plans were suggested for its repair. In 1809 a brief was granted to collect money for this purpose, and work began in 1812. £1,700 was collected for repairs, but was not spent on the crumbling structure or roof. Instead, donors' coats of arms were displayed in a new stained glass window, controversial gallery pews were installed in the transepts, and the misericords were painted a "clay-coloured tint." There was more work in 1816, 1834 and 1841, chiefly through the efforts of Dr. Card, the vicar, appointed in 1815. The tower was restored in 1852.

The influx of wealthy visitors to Malvern's water cure brought money into the town and the population grew. As a consequence of this new found prosperity the Priory was heavily restored in the 1860s by the leading and prolific Gothic Revival architect George G. Scott, at a cost exceeding £11,000. While making the building suitable for worship in the 19th century, some aspects of this work now hinder the use of the building for worship and community and cultural purposes in the 21st century.

	Monarch	Dates of Reign	History of Malvern Priory	Historical Events
Saxon England	Edward the Confessor	1042 - 1066	Manor of Powick given by Edward to Westminster Abbey	
	Harold II	1066		Norman Conquest
Normans	William I (Conqueror)	1066 - 1087	Norman Priory founded in 1085 Aldwin becomes the first Prior	Doomsday Book 1086
	William II (Rufus)	1087 - 1100		
	Henry I	1100 - 1135	Walcher of Lorraine is the second Prior	First trial by jury
	Stephen	1135 - 1154		Civil War (The Anarchy) 1135 - 1153
	Henry II	1154 - 1189	Lady Chapel built	Murder of Thomas Becket 1170
Plantagenets	Richard I (Lionheart)	1189 - 1199		
	John	1199 - 1216		Magna Carta 1215
	Henry III	1216 - 1272	Knight's tomb installed sometime during the 13th Century	First English Parliament 1265
	Edward I	1272 - 1307	Worcester/Westminster jurisdiction dispute 1278 - 1293	
	Edward II	1307 - 1327		
	Edward III	1327 - 1377	Black Death reduces number of monks to 10	Black Death 1348 - 1350
	Richard II	1377 - 1399		Peasants Revolt 1381
House of Lancaster	Henry IV	1399 - 1413		
	Henry V	1413 - 1422		Battle of Agincourt 1415
	Henry VI	1422 - 1261 & 1470 - 1471	Redevelopment of Priory begun c.1440 New building consecrated by Bishop of Worcester 1460	Wars of the Roses Battle of Tewkesbury 1471
	Edward IV	1461-1470 & 1471-1483	West Window given by Richard of Gloucs. (Later Richard III)	Caxton Printing Press 1476
House of York	Edward V	1483		
	Richard III	1483 - 1485		Battle of Bosworth 1485
Tudors	Henry VII	1485 - 1509	North Transept Magnificat window given by Henry VII in 1501/2 Redevelopment of the Priory is completed	Columbus discovers America 1492 Arthur, Prince of Wales dies 1502
	Henry VIII	1509 - 1547	Dissolution of the Priory begun in 1539 Destruction of Lady Chapel, South Transept, Cloisters, and monks' living quarters. Bells and 74 tons of lead from roof removed and sold. Inhabitants of Malvern pay £20 to save the Priory church	Reformation
	Edward VI	1547 - 1553		
	Mary I (Tudor)	1553 - 1558	Hugh Latimer, former Bishop of Worcs. burned at the stake	
	Elizabeth I	1558 - 1603		Spanish Armada 1588
	James I	1603 - 1625	Thomas Habington details the contents of the Priory Two bells given in 1611	Gunpowder Plot 1605 Pilgrim Fathers 1620
	Charles I	1625 - 1649	Priory escapes the ravages of the Civil War	Civil War 1642 - 1649
	COMMONWEALTH	1649 - 1660	and the purges of Oliver Cromwell	
Stuarts	Charles II	1660 - 1685		Restoration. Plague
	James II	1685 - 1688		
	Mary II & William III	1688 - 1702		Glorious Revolution 1688
	Anne	1702 - 1714	Magnificat Window damaged during storms Three more bells given	Union with Scotland 1707
	George I	1714 - 1727		
	George II	1727 - 1760		1745 Jacobite Rebellion
House of Hanover	George III	1760 - 1820	By 1788 Priory almost a ruin. Pigeons kept in transept. In places the walls were black with damp and the roof leaked	American War of Independence Cook lands in Australia 1770
	George IV	1820 - 1830		Regency 1810 - 1820
	William IV	1830 - 1837		
	Victoria	1837 - 1901	Full restoration of Priory under Gilbert-Scott begun in 1860 Tiles with Prince Albert's coat of arms added to North Aisle North porch rebuilt in 1894 Queen Victoria Jubilee Windows installed in 1887 & 1897	Great Exhibition 1851 Boer War (1899 - 1902)
	Edward VII	1901 - 1910	Glass in St Anne's chapel re-arranged in 1910	Suffragette Movement
	George V	1910 - 1936		World War I (1914 - 1918)
	Edward VIII	1936		
House of Windsor	George VI	1936 - 1952	Stained Glass removed for safety during the war	World War II (1939 - 1945)
	Elizabeth II	1952 -	Toilets installed in North Porch in 1984 Tom Denny Millennium Windows installed in 2004	Man lands on the Moon 1969

Priory and monarchy timeline 1042-2015 © K. Wells 2015

20th century

Electricity was installed in the Priory in 1910 and the gas lighting was replaced with electric lighting. The church has been subject to a number of repairs, minor re-ordering and refurbishment episodes. Most notably, repairs to the glass including repatriation of stray pieces and re-leading was begun in 1910 by Kempe under the supervision of Dr Montague Rhodes James and between 1915 and 1919 under the supervision of Gordon MacNeil Rushforth who later published a seminal academic study of the Malvern windows¹. During World War II the glass was removed to safe storage. Significant repairs to the external stonework were carried out in the 1960s, '70s and '80s and to most of the clerestory windows in the 1980s. A small access for the disabled was created. Various new facilities were introduced into the Priory including a vestry which is currently used by the choir, a flower vestry and the bookshop and children's area.

21st century

A number of major projects have been undertaken including

- 2004: re-building of the organ;
- 2008: new seating to replace the 1860 Victorian seating;
- 2010: new sound system;
- 2012: new lighting and electrical system;
- 2014: new boiler and heating controls;
- 2015: strengthening of the bell-frame and augmenting the peal of bells.
- 2018: rebuilding of the top 6m of the SW buttress
- 2019: Stabilising the pinnacles, renovation and cleaning of the N Porch.
Rebuilding an unstable section of the West Wall

Significant repairs to the stonework, conservation of the medieval windows and re-ordering, possibly including a new building in the churchyard, to create standard facilities, better disabled access and flexible spaces for community use, are being considered as described in in section 7.

3.2 Description of the Priory today

Ground plan

The ground plan comprises: a central tower, nave with north and south aisles with north transept, chancel, sanctuary, ambulatory, south chapel (St Anne's Chapel) and vestry.

¹ Rushforth, G. McN. *Medieval Christian Imagery as illustrated in the painted windows of Great Malvern Priory Church Worcestershire*. Clarendon Press, Oxford (1936)

Dimensions

The description of the Priory recorded in the Victoria County History indicates the building to be in cruciform shape consisting of a quire and presbytery with the nave being 25m x 8.2m (82' x 27'), the central crossing being 8.2m (27') square and chancel being about 17m x 8.2m (56' x 27'). The aisles and chapels on the north and south sides vary in width up to 5.5m (18') wide. All the measurements are internal.

Materials

The Priory is constructed from a mixture of buff, red and green sandstone with cream limestone for some window tracery; some grey-green stone in the Norman parts; tile covered pitched roof to the nave and chancel; lead covered timber roofs to the aisles; stone vaulting to the crossing and the chancel aisles.

3.3 The exterior of the Priory

The Priory is dominant from some views of the town, but disappears in others, due to the hillside location. The tower can be seen from some distance and frames several key views, notably from the Malvern Hills and from the lower land to the east.

The church, along with the Gateway, is all that now remains of the original Priory and the main viewed elevation is the north side. The exterior of the Priory was rebuilt entirely in the gothic perpendicular style during the 15th century and restored in the 19th and 20th centuries and gives no hint of the early Norman building to be found inside.

The stone used in the medieval masonry is from a variety of sources and shows as different colours ranging from deep red to green. Nevertheless it presents a remarkably consistent vista, a finely balanced modulated building which at first sight appears to belie its complex development.

The main tone of the building is given by the big 3-light windows in the nave and 4-light windows in the chancel. All clerestory windows are transomed. The walls have a pierced embattled parapet carried across the western gable with a niche in the centre containing a modern figure, while the great 9-light 15th century west window is in three main divisions, each of three lights. The side lights and all below the transom are blank panels.

The Tower

The central tower of three stages was built in the 15th century and is of a piece with the north façade. The tower is finished with a pierced embattled parapet with square pierced pinnacles at the angles surmounted by pierced spirelets and finials.



The Priory seen from the south-east (a view of the Priory from the north is shown on the front cover of the Plan)

The north transept

The north transept is much lower than either the chancel or nave and has a wide arch on the east, perhaps of late 14th-century date. The large window in the north face, known as the 'Magnificat Window', has six lights with a transom and tracery. In the west wall there is a three-light traceried and transomed window. The exterior of the transept is finished with a panelled and embattled parapet continued across the gable.

The south transept

The south transept has been destroyed except for the start of the side walls.

The chancel

Externally the eastern arms and aisles have plain embattled parapets, carried also across the base of the main east gable. The Great East Window is pointed with 32 traceries and has eight lights with transom and a massive central mullion. It is reputed to be the largest window in an English parish church.

Below the east window and of the same width is a broad and low three-centred Victorian arch, with the remains of an arch below it formerly opening into the Lady

Chapel. There is a flight of steps to an ogeed doorway within the glazed Victorian arch.

The Lady Chapel was probably destroyed at the Dissolution, but the plan has been recovered by excavation.

The north porch

The porch was reconstructed in 1894 so as to mirror closely the original design. Repairs and cleaning were carried out in 2019 The room above the porch is lighted by two two-light windows with traceried square heads which form part of a line of similar panels carried across the front; the rest of the wall face is also panelled, but most of the facing is modern. Between the windows is an original niche with an elaborately carved limestone canopy of rich tabernacle work.

The parapet is panelled and embattled with square crocketed pinnacles at the angles. The roof of the porch is stone vaulted and mostly modern, but most of the carved foliage and grotesque bosses are original. The room above is approached by a modern staircase in the thickness of the west aisle wall.



The North Porch

The south elevation is only visible from the hotel gardens and is more complex, and is described in the interior section below.

3.4 The interior of the Priory

The walls are generally bare stone but the walls of the side aisles and part of the west wall are plastered.

There are numerous wooden floor plinths throughout the building. Most of the walking areas have plain or patterned Victorian quarry tiles, and there are areas of stone flooring.

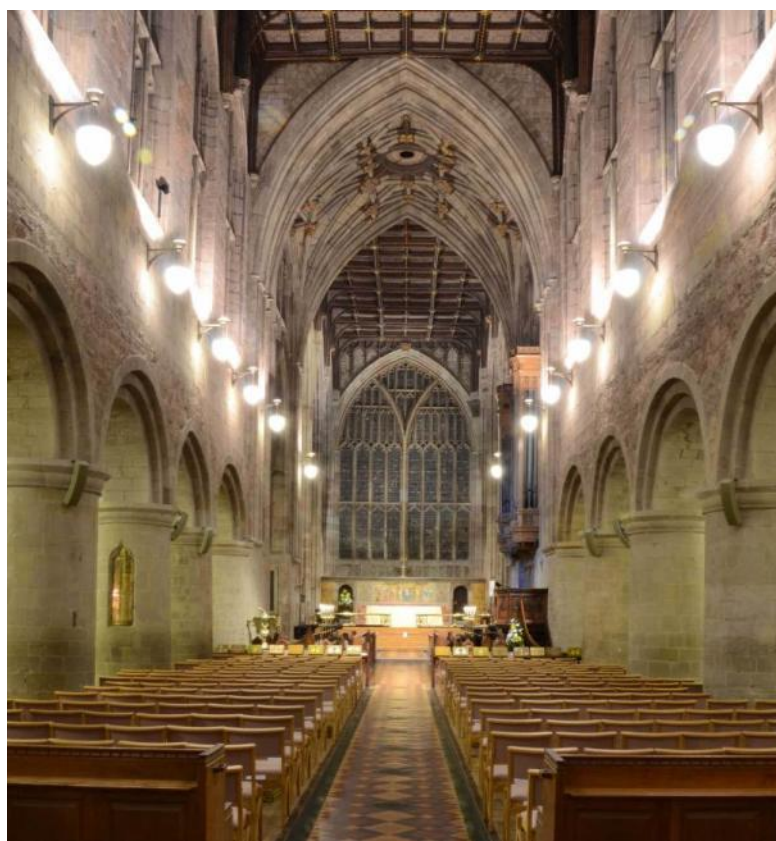
The Priory's collection of medieval floor tiles is among the largest of any English parish church. Produced locally between 1450 and 1500, tiles with over one hundred different designs were removed from the floors and placed on the walls at the east end of the building during the Victorian restoration. The floor tiles were replaced with copies of the medieval tiles made by Minton.

The nave

The nave is of six bays, but possibly the original intention was to extend it further to the west. The arcades are uniform and of early 12th century date with short cylindrical columns. The 12th century masonry of small uncoursed rubble rises only some 3 ft. above the arch crowns. Above the second pier on the south are two filled mortises, perhaps marking the position of the rood screen.

Above the arcades the walls are blank to the base of the clerestory windows, which are of three transomed 15th century lights. It was apparently intended to vault the nave, as the wall is set back to receive it above the window heads and also on the west face of the tower.

The 15th century nave ceiling is flat with moulded wall-posts and curved brackets resting on moulded stone corbels; the eastern spandrels are traceried, and at the intersections of the ribs are curved bosses like those in the eastern arm. In the nave clerestory are many coats of arms (of the early 19th century).



Interior looking east

The north aisle

The north aisle was widened in the 15th century and has a moulded and pointed 15th century arch opening into the transept. In the north wall are five uniform windows, all of the same date, with modern tracery of three lights. In the last bay is the north door opening into the porch.

The south aisle

The south aisle could not be expanded in the same way because the cloisters joined the south wall. In the east bay is the 12th century processional door from the cloister with a moulded round arch. Above the door is a blocked round-headed window of the same date. The arch opening into the south nave aisle is also of the same date and is semicircular with chevron ornament on the west face.

The Norman south wall remains standing for the first five bays and is pierced by three Victorian windows. In the last bay are two 15th century doorways, the westernmost being blocked. One of these was evidently the western processional door, and the second was possibly the night stair from the dorter normally in the east wing of the cloister.

From the last pier on this side a 15th century four-centred arch is sprung across the aisle.

The crossing

The 15th century central tower was built on the 12th century piers. The east and west arches of the crossing are similar, two-centred and moulded. Within the west arch is a deep panelled band making the arch on this side considerably wider. The north and south arches are lower and narrower, but the jambs and arch moulds are similar, all being of the 15th century.

The face of the wall on either side of them is the early 12th century masonry. The walls above them within the crossing are elaborately panelled with blind tracery in the form of a window of four main and eight subsidiary lights. The crossing is covered with a rich lierne vault with numerous subsidiary ribs and a circular bell-way in the centre. At every intersection is a carved boss mostly of foliage, but four bearing repainted shields.

The crossing has a set of choir stalls and the pulpit and the organ are positioned in the south arch of the crossing.

Chancel and sanctuary

The chancel has two sets of misericords from the 14th and 15th century. Each set originally contained 12 stalls and the carvings depict mythical creatures, scenes from everyday life and the labours of each month.

The chancel of the church is three bays long with moulded piers and responds and pointed arches, all of the 15th century.

The space beneath these arches is panelled in six divisions, the two side ones blank and the four in the centre pierced to form clerestory windows. The flat timber ceiling

is panelled in six bays from east to west, and three across. The corbels which support the moulded wall-posts are formed by the springing stones of an intended vault. Each panel is subdivided with Victorian carved bosses.

The mullions of the east window are carried down to form a stone screen. The screen is now glazed and the doorway is used as an entrance.

A flight of five steps leads to the sanctuary and the communion table and a striking glass mosaic reredos. The subject is the Adoration of Christ by the magi and shepherds. The tile panels on the far left and right of the reredos are medieval.

Two round-headed doors, one on either side of the communion table, lead to the sacristy which is not roofed and is enclosed on the east by a plain wall segmental on plan.



The sanctuary

Beyond the sanctuary is an ambulatory with the preserved collection of medieval wall tiles and leading to St Anne's chapel at the east end of the south aisle.

St. Anne's Chapel

The chapel is similar in general character to the north choir aisle. The east window has modern tracery and is set in a rectangular altar recess.

Flanking the east window, which is not quite central, are carved grotesque corbels or image brackets. On the south respond is a pillar piscina. The vault is similar to that in the north aisle and in the south wall are three windows similar to those on the north and having a row of quatrefoil-headed panels below the sills. In the west wall is a pointed arch opening into the former transept. It is apparently of rather earlier date than the rest of the rebuilding.

The 15th century chantry chapel opens from St Anne's Chapel. It has two four-centred arches on this side with a band of traceried panelling above. Against the inner or north wall are two tomb recesses with elaborately cusped four-centred arches. The chapel has a richly panelled fan-vaulted roof in two bays and contains a collection of architectural objects including a recut slab with inscription to Walcher Lotharingus, prior 1125, another to William de Wykewane, fragments of coupled columns and bases, bosses, etc.

The north choir aisle

The aisle is covered with a simple stone vault with carved bosses at the intersections. The east window of the aisle is of three lights with tracery and is set in an altar recess.

3.5 Stained glass

The windows of Great Malvern Priory contain a remarkable quantity of fine stained and painted glass dating from the 15th to the 21st centuries. The unique and beautiful medieval glass, for which the Priory is renowned, dates from c.1430-1502 and is regarded by experts² as being nationally important. A recent report on the glass stated:

*“The Malvern windows are generally regarded as probably the finest collection of English 15th and early 16th century stained glass outside York Minster. In this building it is possible to trace the whole development of native glass-painting over a virtually continuous period of some seventy to eighty years, beginning with the International Gothic style of the east window and ending with the more pictorial style of the Magnificat Window in the transept”.*³

The 15th century redevelopment of the Priory in the perpendicular gothic style of architecture created a building which was, in essence, a framework for stained glass. The medieval artists and craftsmen involved in the Priory's glazing were among the best in the country; the patrons and donors who gave them were among the most powerful people in the land, including Bishop John Alcock, Lord Chancellor of England; Richard Beauchamp, Earl of Warwick and his wife Isabella Despenser; Richard, Duke of Gloucester and Ann Neville; and King Henry VII.

The Great East Window (c.1430) is reputed to be the largest window in an English Parish Church. It is attributed to the workshop of the renowned stained glass artist John Thornton of Coventry who also glazed the Great East Window of York Minster. The north transept Magnificat window (1501/2) contains a rare contemporary portrait

² For example: G.McNeil Rushforth FSA, Professor Richard Marks MA, PhD, FSA, David O'Connor PhD, FSA, Heather Gilderdale Scott PhD.

³ O'Connor, D., *Report for the Friends of Great Malvern Priory*, November 2001

of Prince Arthur Tudor. That window is attributed to Thomas Wodshawe and Richard Twygge who was a glazier of Westminster Abbey⁴.



15th Century stained glass – God speaks to Abraham

The medieval glass of St Anne's Chapel features a spectacular series of panels narrating stories from Genesis. Other Priory windows depict events from the Gospels as well as saints, angels, bishops and donors. In a rare survival, figures of all the Nine Orders of Angels can still be seen.⁵

In 1833, A.W. Pugin wrote that the Priory's medieval windows were

*"truly magnificent...and may be rated among the finest of English glass of the 15th century"*⁶.

⁴ Richard Twygge, glazier, is named in Westminster Abbey accounts for 1507-8 and 1509-10. See Marks, R., *The Stained Glass of the Collegiate Church of the Holy Trinity, Tattershall, Lincolnshire*, (Garland Publishing 1984) Page 67

⁵ Only two in situ examples of a main light scheme devoted to the subject of the Nine Orders of Angels survive in England, the other is at All Saint's North Street, York. See Vidimus article Panel of the Month, issue 35. ISSN 1752-0741

⁶ Nott, J., *Church and Monastery of Moche Malverne* p.153 (Malvern 1885)

The Priory also contains distinctive 19th century glass. Successive restorations were commemorated with the insertion in glass of patrons' coats of arms. The earliest set was painted by the artists of Chamberlains of Worcester in 1820. A later group includes the arms of King William IV and Queen Adelaide.

The work of 19th and early 20th century glazing firms (including Clayton and Bell, Winfield and Co. and Charles Kempe) can also be seen. The Winfield and Kempe windows commemorate Queen Victoria's golden and diamond jubilees of 1887 and 1897 and can be seen in the north nave aisle and at the east end of St Anne's Chapel. The 1887 'Jubilee of Nations' window in the north aisle contains a rare depiction in glass of Victoria's grandson Kaiser Wilhelm II.

The most recent additions to the Priory's long tradition of stained glass can be seen in the two Millennium windows created by Thomas Denny. They were commissioned by the Friends of Malvern Priory and installed in the north choir aisle in 2004.

Detailed academic accounts of the medieval glass can be found in Rushforth⁷ and Gilderdale Scott⁸, while a general guide covering all the glass has been written by Wells⁹.

3.6 Furnishings and fittings

Medieval tiles

Malvern Priory's collection of medieval tiles is among the largest of any English parish church¹⁰. 1300 tiles of 100 different designs survive, almost all of which date from between 1450 and 1500.

Although the majority of tiles were made to cover the floor, some were also used to decorate sections of the walls. The north and south ends of the reredos screen contain tiles bearing heraldic emblems which, unusually, bear an inscription dating them precisely to 1453. Because these tiles are wall mounted and have never been moved, their glaze has not worn and they provide a rare example of the lustre and colour of medieval tiles in their original state¹¹.

⁷ Rushforth, G. McNeil, *Medieval Christian Imagery as illustrated by the Painted windows of Great Malvern Priory* (Oxford 1936)

⁸ Gilderdale Scott, H., *The Painted Glass of Great Malvern Priory (Worcs) c. 1430 – c. 1500* PhD thesis, the Courtauld Institute of Art, 2008

⁹ Wells, K.J., *A Tour of the Stained and Painted Glass at Great Malvern Priory* (Friends of Malvern Priory 2013) ISBN 978 0 9510294 5 9

¹⁰ Molyneux, N.A.D.; McGregor, J.E., *The Medieval Tiles at Great Malvern Priory, Worcestershire* (The Friends of Malvern Priory, 1997)

¹¹ Van Lemmen, Hans, *Medieval Tiles*, (Shire Publications, 2008), p.29.



Medieval tiles in the ambulatory. Photo © Adrian Fletcher www.paradoxplace.com

Most of the medieval tiles at the Priory are now collected together on the south wall of the north choir aisle and the curved ambulatory wall at the east end of the church. They were mounted here during the 19th century restoration of the church under George Gilbert Scott. Unfortunately Portland cement was used to fix them to the wall, a material which has had an adverse effect on the glaze.

In the centre of the north choir aisle wall are examples of rectangular wall tiles still arranged in columns of five which make up a repeated vertically-linked frieze. Notably, the very top of this set includes a date inscription: 'anno re[ign]i h[enry] vi xxxvi' or the 36th year of Henry VI's reign (being 1457/8)¹². Other tile designs of note include a crown surmounting a double 'M' monogram marking the dedication of the church to the Virgin Mary and perhaps also St Michael. Tiles with symbols of the passion feature frequently, as do ones featuring a pelican plucking at its breast to feed its young – a medieval emblem of Christ's self sacrifice.

All the tiles were manufactured at Malvern in kilns on Priory lands just a few hundred yards from the church¹³. They are all two-colour tiles made using the inlaid technique. 15th century Malvern tiles can be found as far afield as Shrewsbury, Gloucester Cathedral, Monmouth, St David's Cathedral in Pembrokeshire¹⁴ and Westminster Abbey¹⁵, showing how widespread was the scale of demand and distribution.

¹² Molyneux, N.A.D.; McGregor, J.E., *The Medieval Tiles at Great Malvern Priory, Worcestershire* (The Friends of Malvern Priory, 1997), p.23.

¹³ One kiln was discovered in 1833, seven feet underground and another was found in 1902.

¹⁴ Molyneux, N.A.D.; McGregor, J.E., *The Medieval Tiles at Great Malvern Priory, Worcestershire* (The Friends of Malvern Priory, 1997)

¹⁵ NADFAS Report, 2000

The national significance of the Malvern Priory tiles is shown by examples now in the collections on display of both the Ashmolean Museum in Oxford¹⁶ and the British Museum in London¹⁷.

Medieval misericords

Great Malvern Priory's twenty-two medieval misericords are one of the most tangible links to the Priory's Benedictine origins. The secular-themed carvings are full of character and humour and give valuable insights into the medieval world and mindset.

There are two sets of stalls. The earlier set (c.1380) portrays mythical creatures from popular bestiary books and features a wyvern, cockatrice or basilisk, and a mermaid and merman (the latter being a rare depiction). Also featured in this series are intriguing 'turning of the tables' images: three mice hang a cat while two owl 'supporter' carvings look on from each side. A domestic 'turning of the tables' is shown on another misericord which plays on the reversal of medieval gender roles: a woman hits her husband over the head with a distaff while making him remove her boots.

In a different domestic scene, a practice of medieval medicine is shown by a carving of a uroscopy. It is rare in such carvings for the doctor to be shown as a man and not a satirical ape¹⁸.

The later set of stalls depicts the labours of the months and was carved in the 15th century¹⁹. The series includes scenes from the agricultural year, such as mowing with a scythe (July), harvesting grapes (September) and the killing of an ox (December). The figures wear clothes dating from the late 14th century. Similarities in the figures and the shape of the misericords and supporter carvings have linked Malvern's misericords to the Labours of the Months series of misericords at Worcester Cathedral.²⁰

¹⁶ A unique tile showing Christ emerging from the tomb which was probably removed from the Priory and given to the Ashmolean at the time of Gilbert Scott's restoration.

¹⁷ A series of five wall tiles making up a complete vertical set.

¹⁸ This misericord showing a uroscopy formed part of a paper written by Henry Connor MD, FRCP. See: Connor, H., *Medieval uroscopy and its representation on misericords – Part 2: misericords*, (Clinical Medicine Vol. 2 No 1, Jan/Feb 2002).

¹⁹ Sources vary as to the date. Grössinger suggests an early 15th century (due to fashions depicted and links to Worcester's misericords of c.1400) while Edminson and the Priory's NADFAS report give a later date of c.1480. See: Grössinger, Christa, *The World Upside-Down: English Misericords*, Harvey Miller Publishers, (London, 1997) and Edminson, V.L., *Ancient Misericords in the Priory Church of St Mary and St Michael Great Malvern*, (1996 edition).

²⁰ Grössinger, Christa, *The World Upside-Down: English Misericords*, Harvey Miller Publishers, (London, 1997) p. 44.



Medieval misericords

The seat, ledge and misericord of each monk's stall were carved from a single block of oak. Each stall has a carving on the elbow. These include faces and fantastical creatures as well as dogs, boars and a squirrel holding a nut.

In the 19th century a further twelve stalls were added to the Priory; three at the east end of each row. They are significantly narrower than their medieval predecessors and are carved from hardwood with the misericord applied to pine seats.

The misericords at Great Malvern Priory feature in Christa Grössinger's comprehensive study, 'The World Upside-Down: English Misericords'.

Monuments

The Priory boasts a large and fine collection, the earliest being a recumbent figure of a knight in mail on the north side of the presbytery in high relief of about 1200; the figure has a short pick, long surcoat and oval-shaped shield. On the south side of the presbytery is an alabaster altar tomb with recumbent effigies to John Knotsford who died in 1589, and Jane his wife, daughter of Sir Richard Knightley. The male effigy is in armour picked out in red and the lady wears a large ruff and heavy necklaces. John Knotsford purchased the site of the Priory and its land in 1545 after the destruction of the monastic buildings had begun in 1541.

At the east end of the tomb is a shield of Knotsford impaling Argent two pales gules (evidently intended for Knightley, perhaps repainted), and at the sides are figures of two daughters, each with a coat of arms. To the east of the tomb kneels the life-size alabaster figure of another daughter, Anne, with an elaborate head-dress and a prayer desk in front. In the sacristy are numerous heraldic floor slabs of the Lygon family; they include those of Mary wife of William Lygon of Madresfield, 1668; of Penelope (Lygon) wife of Robert Walweyn of Newland; of William Lygon, sen., 1720; of William Lygon, jun., 1716; of Richard Lygon, 1687, and of Frances (Skinner) wife of Robert Gower, 1668. The Knotsford monument rests on the roof of the 15th century chantry chapel opening from the south aisle.

Within St Anne's Chapel the sunken chantry chapel contains the tomb lids of Walcher of Lorraine, the second Prior of the Priory in the late 11th and early 12th centuries, and William de Wykewayne the Prior in the 13th century.

The coat of arms over the transept doorway is that of the Beauchamp family. Until 1860 it was situated at the apex of the east window which it is thought was donated by Richard Beauchamp and his wife Isabel Despenser.

The white marble monument is in memory of Sophia Thompson (1800-1886) who is buried in the transept. It was carved by leading Victorian sculptor Peter Hollins, and is widely regarded as being one of his more important works. She is depicted in the neo-classical style at the moment of her death, as she turns in joy to see the Risen Lord. This fine piece was partly obscured by boards and chairs during a visit, highlighting the problems with space and storage.

Bells

The church tower has a ring of ten bells. The oldest is from the 14th century and is inscribed in Latin: 'I am called the Virgin Mary's Bell'. It is listed for preservation by the CBC. In 1611 two bells were given by Anne Savage and her son John. Three were given during the reign of Queen Anne in 1706 and 1707, and another three were added to celebrate Queen Victoria's Golden Jubilee in 1888. These are the treble, fifth and tenor by Taylor of Loughborough, 1887. The eighth is inscribed, 'An (i.e., Ann) Saveg, John Saveg I.H. E.H. 1611'; the seventh, 'I.H. E.H. 1611'; the sixth is mediaeval, inscribed, 'Virginis egregie vocor campana marie' in Lombardic letters; the fourth, 'Richard Leeth and Edmund Gifford, churchwardens 1707'; the third by Abraham Rudhall, 'God save the queen and church A.R. 1706'; the second also by Abraham Rudhall, 'Prosperity to all our benefactors A.R. 1707'; sanctus, uninscribed. The sixth bell was cast at Gloucester about 1350 and does not form part of the ring.

In 1887 the old bell clappers were removed and mounted on a piece of oak from the belfry. They can be seen in the north porch.

The bell frame, designed and made by the same firm who cast the 19th century bells, John Taylor & Co of Loughborough, has wooden horizontal beams and cast iron "A" shaped, vertical frames. Unfortunately this was not a particularly successful design and a large number of frames of this type have been replaced. Whitechapel Bell Foundry has recently carried out major work on the frame and bells at the Priory to solve these difficulties with the bell frame. The work included the addition of a further two bells to create a ring of 10 bells worthy of the Priory.

Organ

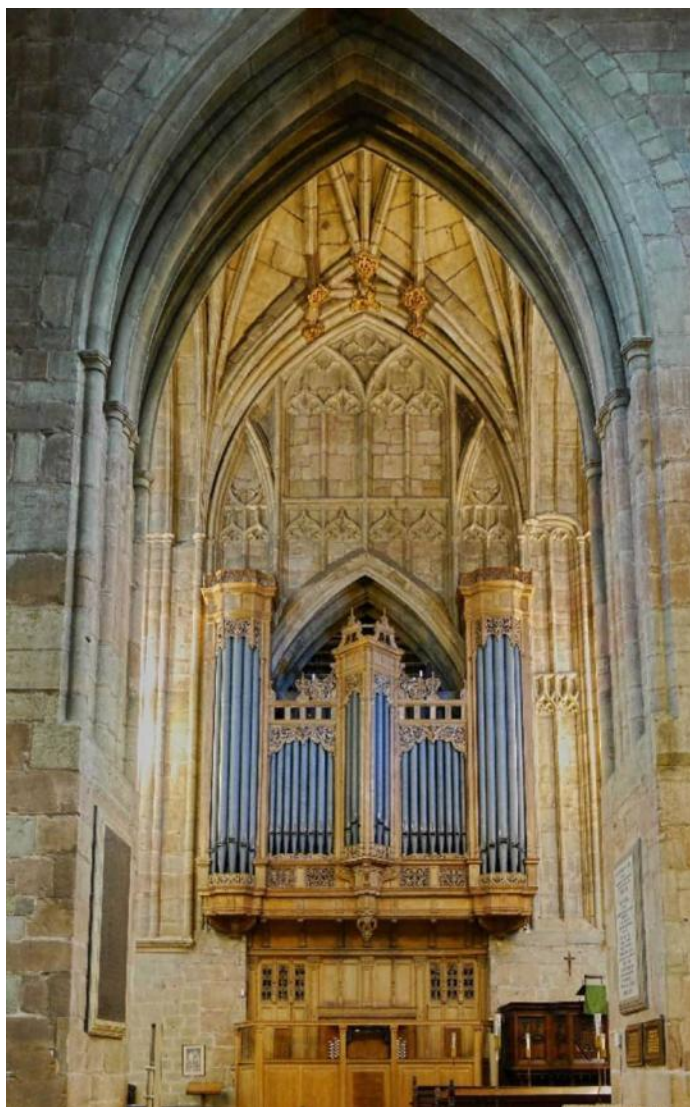
There are records of organs in the Priory since 1551. The first record of an organ occurs in an inventory of 1551 which listed 'a Peyre of Organyes' (pair of organs), the phrase used in those days to denote a single instrument. It would probably have stood upon a screen at the entrance of the choir. In 1725 a gallery was erected at the west end of the church for the 'psalm singers'.

In 1817/18 the church bought an organ by the English builder Samuel Green, which is thought to have come from the Concert Room in The Opera House, Covent Garden, where it had been installed in 1794. This was subsequently sold in 1850 to

the United Methodist Church at Dudley Port, Birmingham, and replaced by a new two manual instrument from Nicholson's of Worcester.

In 1861, during the restoration of the building by Sir Gilbert Scott, this instrument was moved from the west end to a gallery position under the south arch of the central tower, the position of the present organ. A third manual (Choir) was added at this time, and in 1880 a fourth manual (Solo). The gallery was then removed and the console placed at floor level. With the addition of lever pneumatic action, the organ was now 'an imposing instrument', but its great size required three men to operate the bellows! By 1904 the organ was in serious need of repair, but work had to be postponed because of the First World War.

In the mid-1920s Dr Louis Hamand FSA (organist 1910-1945) accepted responsibility for raising nearly £5000 for a new organ and took the lead in defining its specification. The new organ was built by Rushworth & Dreaper of Liverpool and was completed in 1927. A portion of the existing pipework, mostly from the organs of 1861 and 1880, was incorporated in an otherwise entirely new instrument. The oak case, which was added in 1932, was designed by W D Caroe, the Priory architect, of national renown. It was made by Messrs Haughton Brothers of Worcester from wood grown in Malvern Chase.



The organ

The organ loft was erected in 1961 in memory of Dr Hamand, who not only master-minded the specification and fund-raising for the 1927 organ, but also meticulously supervised the storage of the Priory's mediaeval glass during the Second World War.

In 1977 a complete overhaul was undertaken by Rushworth and Dreaper Ltd, the original builders.

In 2004 the organ was again rebuilt by Nicholsons, the builders of the 1850 organ, whose factory was now conveniently situated in Malvern. The organ was completely rebuilt, the pneumatic action being replaced with an electro-pneumatic action incorporating the latest developments in construction techniques and long-lasting materials.

The new organ is similar in size to the previous organ. Nearly all the pipes from the previous organ have been retained and have undergone extensive refurbishment. A new blower system has been constructed. The existing magnificent oak case of the organ has been retained and cleaned and waxed. The end result of over 150 years of development is an organ containing the best pipes and sound of the 19th and 20th centuries with a 21st century design and construction. Its sounds are projected clearly into the building and it is fully maintainable. Regular organ recitals are held in the Priory and organists from around the world say it is a joy to play.

Altar

Victorian, part of Sir George Gilbert Scott's refurnishing.

Reredos

The reredos is a fine glass mosaic depicting the Adoration of Christ by the magi and the shepherds. Designed by Sir Arthur Blomfield, it was donated by the Revd Edward Peek of Lyme Regis in 1884.

Pulpit

The pulpit is made of oak and at one time had a canopy over it. It was constructed by Joseph Wood of Worcester in about 1864 from a design by Sir George Gilbert Scott.

Font

The Priory font has an early Norman bowl, which at one time in the 19th century was used as a garden ornament but was restored with a new base in 1838.

Altar rail

The brass rails still contain fittings from the gas lighting standards that were used in the late 19th century.

Parclose screens

The parclose screens in the west bays of the quire are of the 15th century and delicately executed; the fourteen panels on each side have traceried heads and the cornice is enriched with carved vine leaves and fruit.

Choir stalls

The choir stalls, situated in the Crossing, were designed by Sir George Gilbert Scott and installed as part of the Victorian modernisation. The stalls were designed for a choir of men and boys and are not suited to contemporary choirs. The choir stalls are removable but are extremely heavy and very worn as a result of being moved and replaced for 160 years,

Communion plate

This is believed to be Victorian or later.

Registers

The registers before 1812 are as follows:

- i. all entries 1556 to 1617;
- ii. all entries 1617 to 1701;
- iii. all entries 1709 to 1803;
- iv. baptisms 1801 to 1812;
- v. burials 1801 to 1812.

These are held in Worcestershire Record Office.

War memorials

There is a large wall monument on the south wall of the south aisle near the west corner, in memory of the fallen in World War I and incorporating a memorial to those who gave their lives in World War II.

Miscellanea

There are photographs of church, late 19th and early 20th century, watercolours and postcards, and other photographs and drawings, in the church.

4 Assessment of significance

Major early Medieval churches and churchyards such as Great Malvern Priory are rare, and of enormous interest and research potential, not only for the historian, archaeologist, and architectural or art historian, but for everybody interested in local and national history; the Priory is rich in material resources for understanding the past.

A church has stood here as a beacon of continuous Christian mission for nearly a thousand years, placing worship at the very centre of local life. Churches are by no means static or frozen in time, indeed the fact that they have been subject to constant change throughout their history makes them all the more important and fascinating.

In order to manage this change responsibly, it is necessary to define the relative significance of every aspect of the church and churchyard within its local, regional and national context. This relative significance is categorised in the subsequent sections of the Plan as follows, after Kerr (1994) and the CBC guidance (2007/2012):

- Exceptional** important at national to international levels.
- Considerable** important at regional level or sometimes higher.
- Some** usually of local value but possibly of regional significance for group or other value (e.g. a vernacular architectural feature).
- Local** of local value.
- Negative** or intrusive features, i.e. those which actually detract from the value of a site, for example a concrete boiler house adjacent to a medieval church.

4.1 Statutory designations

The Priory building with its fixed contents is of considerable significance as a major medieval priory church with a complex architectural, archaeological and art historical development and history, recognised in its English Heritage Grade I listing. The national Heritage List for England includes the following entry-

Name: PRIORY CHURCH OF ST MARY AND ST MICHAEL

List entry number:1082794

Location:

PRIORY CHURCH OF ST MARY AND ST MICHAEL, CHURCH STREET

County	District	District Type	Parish
Worcestershire	Malvern Hills	District Authority	Malvern

Grade: I

Date first listed: 30-Nov-1949

Date of most recent amendment: 30-Nov-1979

UID: 152053

CHURCH STREET 1. 5245 (south side) Priory Church of St Mary and St Michael. Norman and Perpendicular. The monastic church of the Benedictine Priory founded circa 1085. One of the more important greater parish churches, rich in mediaeval glass, tiles, monuments, etc, restored by Sir G G Scott in 1860-1.

Listing NGR: SO7759545852

The medieval churchyard cross in the north-west corner of the churchyard is a scheduled monument.

There are no tree preservation orders applying to trees within the churchyard, but the conservation area designation confers similar protection.

There are presently no other statutory designations beyond those given above.

4.2 A detailed breakdown of what is of significance

One of the great parish churches of England, and arguably the most important Benedictine Priory church in Worcestershire, Great Malvern Priory is of **exceptional** architectural significance and landscape value, and of **exceptional** historical and archaeological significance. The site is of potentially **exceptional** significance, especially seen in the context of the earlier church buildings and associated burials.

The social, religious, and community significance of the Priory

The Priory is of **exceptional** significance as a focus and centre for mission and worship for the congregation, parish, Diocese, and for the Church of England. It is the major physical manifestation of the durability of the Christian faith in this place.

The Priory is of **exceptional** significance as a symbol of civic identity and pride in the history and cultural continuity of the area, being one of the largest and oldest buildings still used by the community (and for the original purposes).

The Priory and the churchyard are of **exceptional** significance as a landmark visual feature in the town of Great Malvern. Great Malvern Priory is a tourist attraction in its own right, with the church contributing greatly to the attractiveness of the town and area. It is therefore of **considerable**, potentially **exceptional** significance as an attraction for the tourist industry and economy of Great Malvern, Worcestershire and the wider region.

The church is of **considerable** significance for the local community, particularly young people, as shown by the range of activities which take place in it.

The significance of the Priory for our understanding of medieval liturgy

The architecture and arrangement of any church are dictated primarily by the liturgical rites which take place within and around it. The form of the church building is therefore of **exceptional** significance for our understanding of the evolution of a medieval church in terms of its liturgy, the south chapel (St Annes's Chapel) and ambulatory being of particular interest in this respect. More research into these issues could add considerably to our understanding.

Significance for our understanding of Post-Reformation liturgy

The evidence for this exists only in the form of illustrations of the interior dating to the 18th and early 19th centuries, and accompanying descriptions, which is of **some** significance for our understanding of the liturgy of this period.

Significance of the liturgical developments of the 19th and 20th centuries

The Victorian scheme is in itself of **some** significance as an example of the liturgical fashion of the late 19th century, and of the work of Sir George Gilbert Scott.

The musical significance of the Priory

The organ is of **considerable** significance as a fine instrument with excellent tonal qualities, which exploits superb acoustics within the church.

The **considerable** significance of music to the parish and its worship is illustrated by the fact that the Priory has a paid Director of Music, has produced a number of CDs and has been used by the BBC to broadcast church services. It is a favoured concert venue for community choral events, for major and small instrumental performances and during festivals, and it is intended to increase this use in conjunction with other institutions and events.



The Priory combined choirs

The significance of the bells

The bells are a fine ring of ten of **considerable** significance, part of a long tradition of bell-ringing here and considered one of the better rings in Worcestershire.

The ecological significance of the Priory

The Priory in its surroundings is of **some** ecological significance, with mature trees, grass and lichens.

The archaeological significance of the Priory

The Priory building itself is of **exceptional** archaeological significance. Despite the many changes including window and fabric replacements, much original and cumulative fabric remains from the 12th and 15th centuries in particular.

The significance of the site of the Priory

The site is of **considerable** potential for the archaeology and history of the Medieval period, and reference will be made to the Historic Environment Record and contact made with the County Archaeologist and English Heritage if any development of the site or building is being considered.

There is also **slight** potential for the existence of Anglo-Saxon, Roman or prehistoric remains. The potential for such remains would raise the significance to **exceptional** if confirmed.

The site is of **exceptional** archaeological significance as a burial ground used for at least 900 years, regarding its potential for the study of human remains and burial practice over this long period.

The historical significance of the Priory

The evidence represented by the Priory and site is therefore of **exceptional** significance for the development of Christianity in Worcestershire and England, initially as a Priory, and subsequently as a parish church.

Within the Priory the intramural monuments are of **considerable** historical significance in themselves for the understanding and research of local and social history, recording the clergy, dignitaries, families and beneficiaries of the church and town. The War Memorial is of **local** significance.

The art historical significance of the Priory

The medieval stained glass is of **exceptional** art historical significance.

The medieval tiles are of **exceptional** art historical significance.

The medieval chantry chapel is of **exceptional** art historical significance.

The 15th century misericords are of **exceptional** art historical significance.

Generally, the 18th to 20th century wall monuments and ledger slabs are of **some** or **considerable** art historical significance for the development of funerary art and lettering during this period.

The 13th, 16th and 17th century monuments and the memorial to Sophia Thompson are of **exceptional** art historical significance.

The Victorian and later furnishings and fittings are of **local** significance.

The chests are of **considerable** significance.

The font is of **considerable** significance as example of late Norman work, and the cover a good example of Jacobean work, and is of **some** significance.

The 17th and 18th century liturgical items are also of **considerable** art historical significance.

The architectural significance of the Priory

The Norman parts of the church are of **exceptional** architectural significance.

The tower is of **exceptional** significance as an outstanding example of the Perpendicular style of the mid 15th century in Worcestershire.

The plan form of the church is of **considerable** significance for the development of Benedictine churches.

The Victorian reordering by Scott is in general now so compromised as to be of **some** significance as already noted.

4.3 Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA)

In 2023 the PCC employed the Museum of London Archaeology to prepare a HIA report to enable the PCC to understand the effects of proposed alterations upon the significance of the listed building, internally and externally, and on the setting of any other nearby heritage assets.

The report²¹ presents an assessment of significance against different categories (National, Exceptional, Regional, Local) from those above but the conclusions are generally consistent. However, experts in the field of stained glass claim that the Priory's English medieval glass is of international, rather than national significance. Professor Sarah Brown of York University, Director of York Glaziers Trust and General Secretary of the International Scientific Committee for the Conservation of Stained Glass has written, 'The Priory's medieval glass is of international significance. It is the best preserved and most extensive programme of English Benedictine glazing to have survived the Reformation and Dissolution of the Monasteries, and as a dependent of the royal Abbey of Westminster, offers a glimpse of the lost glories of royal glazing of the period'.

²¹ Heritage Impact Assessment for Great Malvern Priory, Museum of London Archaeology, Report No. P23-180.v4.0, October 2023

5 The condition of the fabric

Despite regular quinquennial inspections and the major repairs carried out in the 20th century as described in section 3.1, falls of stone occurred, both externally and internally, in 2015. This together with concern about the condition of the stained glass from a report in 2009, caused the PCC to commission comprehensive surveys of the stonework and stained glass. Both surveys reported in 2016.

5.1 Stonework

The survey of the stonework was carried out by Sally Strachey Historic Conservation (SSHC). Over a 2-week period, masons examined all faces of the tower and external walls using rope access and examined the interior from a cherry picker. During this time they removed much loose and delaminating stone. In addition, since parts of the interior stonework and ceiling panels were covered in soot, wax and other deposits, specialists conducted cleaning trials and provided advice on cleaning techniques.

Reports from the survey^{22,23,24} total nearly 300 pages and provide a detailed account of the condition of the stonework and of recommended actions for repair. An accompanying spreadsheet and over 2,000 associated photographs identify around 600 defects and the repair actions required together with their priority.

The documents paint the Priory as being in a poor, and in some respects, critical condition in need of urgent repair. Problems include:

- Movement and cracking in the West and East elevations with a danger of large stones falling from the SW buttress (the area around has been cordoned off).
- The pinnacles of the N Porch were becoming unstable and would need attention within 2 years
- Very high levels of dampness (levels which are damaging to stone) most notably in St Anne's Chapel and at the West End caused by many open joints in the stonework at all levels and possibly also with poor drainage.
- Continuing decay and delamination of stone (including some replaced in the 1980s), in part cause by incorrect and widespread use of cement mortar (which has become brittle, cracked and loose) in many parts of the building.

²² *Condition and Recommendation Report: The External Stonework and External and Internal Window Stonework, Great Malvern Priory Church, Sally Strachey Historic Conservation, September 2016*

²³ *General inspection of the Internal Stonework and Recommendations for Cleaning, Great Malvern Priory Church, Sally Strachey Historic Conservation, September 2016*

²⁴ *Workmanship and Material, Repair and conservation of the Stonework, Great Malvern Priory Church, Sally Strachey Historic Conservation, September 2016*



Cracked and decayed section of tower string course



Cracked section being removed for safety



Decayed stone, failed cement pointing and vegetation bedded in open joints in exterior of St Anne's Chapel

As a way forward, the reports recommend that:

- A report is commissioned on the drainage system around the Priory and that a structural engineer is included in the results.
- A structural engineer reviews movement through the east and west elevations and recommends what specialist techniques for repair might be needed.
- Water ingress is reduced within a 2-year rolling programme of repairs to the internal and external stonework to all areas except the tower.
- A 5-month programme of repairs to the tower using rope-access is developed within 5 years to treat priority areas.
- In addition to repairing the external stonework which will include cleaning and removing vegetation, consideration is given to a programme of cleaning heavily soiled areas of interior stonework which are diminishing the overall legibility and aesthetic impact of the interior, and reducing the porosity of the surface of the stone and its ability to breathe.

- A health check of the external and internal stonework is conducted every 5 years to remove any unstable areas of stone and to remove accumulations of dust and debris from internal areas.

SSHC provided a detailed breakdown of budgetary costs for stonework repairs. In round figures, these costs are of order £1.5M to which must be added the significant costs of access (particularly high for the tower), professional fees and VAT.

5.2 Roofs

The tiled roofs of the nave, chancel and transept were renewed in the 1980s and are in good condition. However, the Quinquennial Inspection report from 2013 identified that some relaying of the lead on the aisle roofs should start within the quinquennium. In a subsequent report on the nave aisle roofs²⁵, the Priory's surveyor identified many defects and recommended that the lead be re-laid within 18 months. The chancel aisle roofs are believed to be in a similar poor condition.

5.3 Health and Safety and Maintenance

The development of Health and Safety regulations mean improvements are required to provide safe access to the roofs and roof spaces. The recent emphasis on conservation-led maintenance and repair also militates against volunteer involvement, as specialist (and increasingly, accredited) expertise is required for jobs previously done by laymen, or by building firms with limited experience of working with historic materials and fabric.

5.4 Stained Glass

During 5 days in November 2015, three conservators from York Glaziers Trust (YGT) conducted a condition survey of all forty stained glass windows in the Priory, using a cherry picker and ladders for access. Their two-volume report^{26,27} notes that the quantity of original medieval glass represents a significant and rare survival from an English parish church, due to its origins as a Benedictine Priory and its royal patrons.

However, the report explains that while the leadwork of the 14 main medieval windows is generally stable following various campaigns in the 20th century, the primary concern is the condition of the glass itself which is deteriorating. The deterioration is due to the action of rain and internal condensation which produce cycles of corrosion that attack the paint layers as well as the body of the glass itself. Corrosion of medieval glass results in pitting as moisture leeches salts from the glass. These salts can then run down the glass mixing with dirt and dulling the

²⁵ Arnold, D., *Great Malvern Priory Supplementary Inspection Report*, Arnold Bartosch Ltd., January 2016

²⁶ *Great Malvern Priory, Parish Church of St Mary and St Michael, Condition Survey and Conservation Recommendations*, The York Glaziers Trust, 2016

²⁷ *Great Malvern Priory, Parish Church of St Mary and St Michael, Illustrations*, The York Glaziers Trust, 2016

appearance. Examples of this corrosion and the crusts formed by corrosion salts and dirt can be seen in the images below.



Example of corrosion from the exterior side of a window in St Anne's Chapel. Different levels of corrosion are visible, as well as extensive pitting with a mixture of dirt and corrosion products

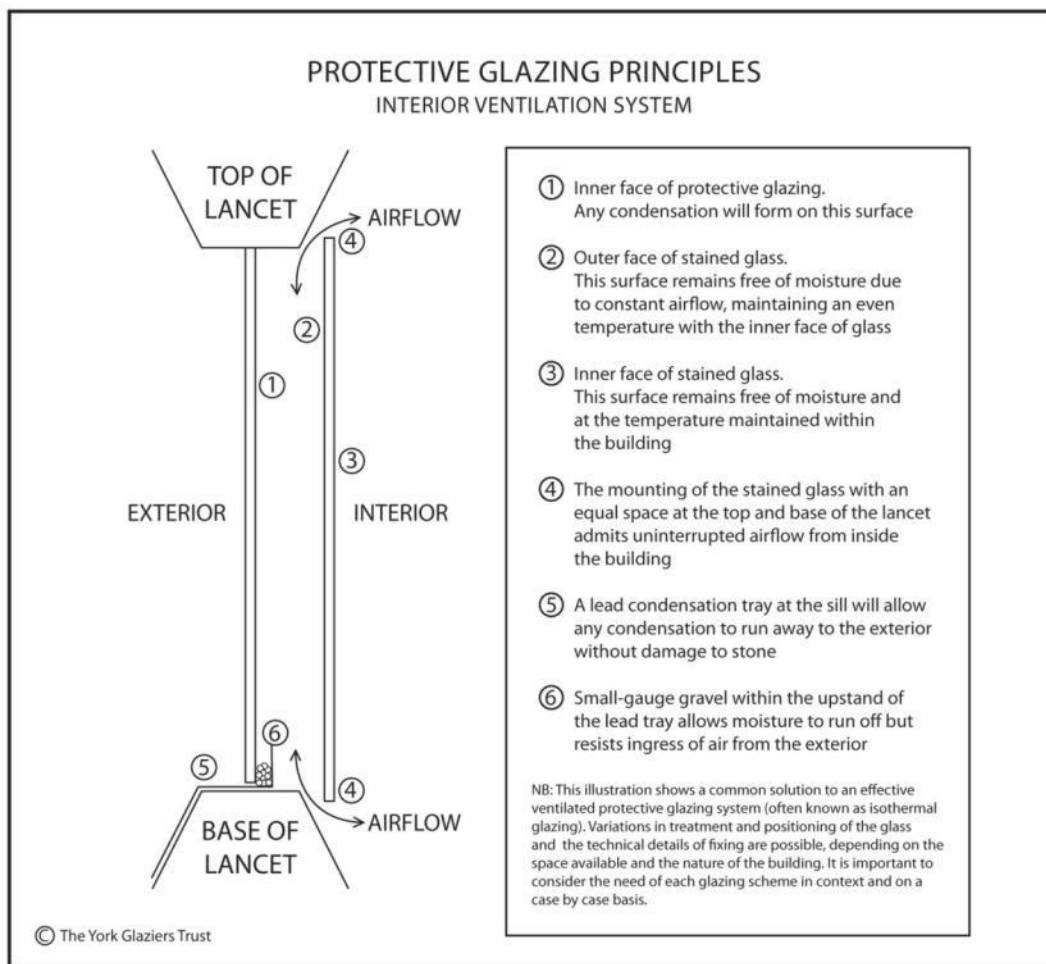


Dirt and corrosion crusts on the interior glass surface in St Anne's Chapel

Caption & Images © York Glaziers Trust 2016, used with permission

The report allocates the 40 windows into three groups with different priorities for conservation. The 'High Priority' group comprises the 14 main medieval windows: these being the windows on the south side of St Anne's Chapel, those in the Chancel Clerestory, the East, West and Magnificat windows, the Magnificat's partner window on the west side of the north transept, and the Gospel window in the nave north aisle. The report states that the 'immediate requirement' is the installation of internally ventilated protective glazing to inhibit the ongoing cycles of corrosion that are damaging this historic and unique collection.

Internally ventilated protective glazing involves installing exterior colourless glazing that is leaded to match the main cartoon of the stained glass so that it retains the familiar appearance of stained glass when viewed from outside. This new glazing can be mounted in the original glazing groove with the stained glass mounted on a frame 30-50 mm inside. YGT explain that this is the most satisfactory solution as it creates a watertight seal to the exterior and allows warmer air from the interior to circulate on both sides of the ancient glass, thus inhibiting condensation. YGT recommend that a trial is conducted to verify the design and appearance of protective glazing and suggest the medieval windows in St Anne's Chapel would be suitable due to their vulnerable condition and easy accessibility.



*Schematic showing Internally Ventilated Protective Glazing
(Illustration © York Glaziers Trust 2016)*

Historic England has sponsored a research study into different types and designs of protective glazing²⁸ and shows this it is generally effective in reducing condensation and has some benefits in thermal insulation.

Cleaning medieval glass is highly specialised and must be done under a magnifying lens so as to examine the adhesion of the medieval paint to the glass and to ensure that cleaning does not remove or damage it. It is not known whether the Priory's glass has ever been cleaned. (The windows in St Anne's chapel were last re-leaded by the Kempe studio in 1910 and the Vicar at the time, Canon Deane, noted in the parish magazine that the windows were not cleaned because the view then was simply to touch the paint could damage it.) Hence YGT recommend that once removed for installation of protective glazing, the medieval windows should be cleaned in the studio under a microscope and repairs conducted to stabilise and edge-bond glass breaks and remove plated pieces.

YGT allocate those windows that contain fragments of medieval glass and the recent Thomas Denny windows (which already show signs of corrosion on the interior of the

²⁸ 'Conserving Stained Glass using environmental protective glazing', Historic England, Research Report Series 43-2017, ISSN-4453, Tobit Curteis and Leonie Seliger

leads) to a 'Medium Priority' group that would benefit from protective glazing in due course. The 'Lesser Priority' group comprises the remaining Victorian windows which have no immediate conservation issues other than inspection on a quinquennial basis.

YGT has provided a budgetary estimate of the cost of conservation as described for each of the 14 main medieval windows. Together these costs sum to £2.0M to which must be added the cost of scaffolding and VAT.

5.5 Cost of repair and conservation

During 2019, the SSHC, YGT and the latest quinquennial report were reviewed by three architectural practices. Each was of the view that the cost of repair and conservation was in the region of £5M + VAT at 2019 prices.

5.6 Heritage At Risk Register

Historic England has placed Great Malvern Priory on the Heritage At Risk register in view of the urgent need to conserve the historic glass, repair the stonework and renew the lead on the aisle roofs. The list entry number is 1082794 and condition 'very bad'.

5.7 Repairs following the surveys of the stonework, medieval glass and lead roofs

Following the SSHC survey of the stonework, the YGT survey of the glass and the survey of the lead roofs, various remedial actions and repairs were undertaken, both to arrest the most urgent areas of decay and to identify techniques and costs ahead of a more extensive programme of repair and conservation.

A structural engineer's report²⁹, commissioned to address the main findings of the SSHC survey, recommended that:

- the top section of the SW Buttress be rebuilt with stones tied into the adjoining walls
- a section of the West Wall behind the North Aisle be rebuilt.
- movement at the east end was not structurally significant.

The SW buttress was then rebuilt in 2019 at a cost of £30k+fees+VAT, and in 2020 the unstable section of the west wall was rebuilt, the pinnacles of the N Porch were stabilised and the Porch cleaned and repaired³⁰ at a cost of £107.6k +fees+VAT.

²⁹ Structural Report, Malvern Priory, Church Street, Malvern, FW Haywood and Associates, report 11540, October 2017

³⁰ Urgent Stonework Repairs at Great Malvern Priory during 2019, H Wells, December 2019

A Building Performance Survey³¹ was carried out by Tobin Curteis in January 2022. This made a number of recommendations concerned with rainwater disposal and heat distribution and confirmed decisions to replace the lead roof on St Anne's Chapel and to install under-floor heating in the nave.

In 2023 a project to repair and conserve window sIII in St Anne's Chapel was undertaken by YGT as recommended in their survey. The work was in accordance with a Method Statement³² produced by YGT and included cleaning, edge bonding breaks in the glass, making minor repairs to the leadwork, all carried out in their studio, and the installation of environmental protective glazing. While the glass was removed, the window stonework was repaired by SSHC. The glazing work cost £75k+VAT and included monitoring the performance of the protective glazing in avoiding condensation over 12 months. The associated stonework repairs cost £31.5k+fees +VAT.

The lead on the roof of St Anne's Chapel was replaced by Loxstone at a cost of £114k+fees+VAT in 2023.

A project to lower the floor in the nave to the level of the tiled aisles, thus removing the trip hazard of the pew plinths, and to install under-floor heating as recommended by Tobit Curteis was completed in March 2024. The anticipated cost was £265k+fees +VAT. Reynolds Conservation was the prime contractor.

Despite these repairs the need to repair the stonework, including that of the tower, to conserve and repair the remaining 13 medieval windows, and to renew the lead on the other aisle roofs remains and becomes more urgent as time passes.

5.8 Funding

The PCC is grateful to the following bodies and trusts for their grants towards the cost of work described above in this section 5:

The Friends of Malvern Priory	The National Lottery Heritage Fund
The Garfield Weston Foundation	The Headley Trust
The Wolfson Foundation	Church Care
The Droitwich Preservation Trust	The Worshipful Company of Glaziers and Painters of Glass

³¹ Great Malvern Priory, Worcestershire, Preliminary Assessment of the Environmental Issues Associated with the Conservation and Development Work and of the Building, Tobit Curteis, report GMPR01.1, January 2022

³² Great Malvern Priory, Stained Glass Conservation Methodology for St Anne's Chapel, Window sIII, York Glaziers Trust, September 2021

6 Issues and Constraints affecting the Church

The PCC aims to see the Priory flourishing and sustainable as an integral part of the life of the local community, not only as a place for worship but also in demand as a venue for cultural, educational and community events. The following aspects of its current ordering limit both its flexibility to support different styles of worship and also its attractiveness as a venue for community events.

6.1 Limitations for Worship

The Priory was re-ordered in 1860-62 to make it suitable for Victorian styles of worship. The nature of worship has changed considerably since that time and the Victorian re-ordering is now a constraint to the present wide variety of worship styles currently used in the Priory.

The current ordering suits large formal services. While these will continue, less formal services are popular when all ages (families, adults and children) are present. The raised rectangular floor plinths impede the positioning of seating for such informal services and for meetings held 'in the round', and the difficulty of moving the choir pews prevents the positioning of a portable altar at the front of the crossing for smaller, less formal communion services.

6.2 Limitations in Access

Difficult entrances

Compliance with the Disability Discrimination Act is problematic. The main entrance has steep uneven steps immediately behind doors which, as shown below, are a clear danger for the unwary. Access for wheelchairs is provided through the north transept door which is too narrow for larger mobility scooters, and wheelchairs must manoeuvre around tight corners imposed by the presence of the choir vestry. Once inside there are changes in floor level that are difficult to navigate.



The entrance steps and raised floor plinth to the right



Entrance for disabled in North Transept

Changes in Floor Level

The raised floor plinths throughout the building and numerous changes in floor level present serious trip hazards and present particular difficulties for wheelchairs. The floor plinths also constrain the positioning of seating which limits flexible use of the building for both worship and cultural events. Some of the different levels in the nave and chancel are shown in the photograph below.



Different floor levels in the nave and chancel

In 2023 the PCC commissioned a thorough access audit³³. This identified many shortcomings of the building and churchyard beyond those mentioned above.

6.3 Lack of modern facilities

Inadequate toilet and baby-changing facilities

The Priory has only two toilets which are in the North Porch. This provision is inadequate for concerts, performances or lectures when many people would wish to use them during intervals. Furthermore, they are not accessible to wheelchair users.

There are no baby-changing facilities.

Heat distribution

Despite a modern boiler and control system, heat distribution from the old cast iron radiators around the outer walls is insufficient to maintain a comfortable temperature within the building on cold evenings. Under-floor heating is required. (Note that the floor plinths are suspended some 30-35 cms above the substrate below. The project to install under-floor heating in the nave demonstrated that it was possible to install under-floor heating without disturbing the substrate.)

Inadequate Catering Facilities

Current catering facilities amount to little more than a kettle, an urn and a sink with uncertain drainage. They are inadequate even to allow preparation of basic refreshments.

6.4 Other limitations

Choir Pews

For performances by visiting choirs, orchestras and theatre companies and for less formal worship in which the communion table is brought closer to the congregation, it is necessary to remove the choir pews and erect a dais. The choir pews are extremely heavy. Moving them requires an 8-man team which organisations wishing to use the building are often reluctant to provide. When removed, the pews have to be stored in the south nave aisle where they take up space that could otherwise be used for seating. They present a risk of falling over and causing injury. Lighter, more portable choir furniture would greatly facilitate easier and greater flexibility in use of the building both for worship and for community uses.

For major services, typically those at Christmas, when a large choir is involved, the current pews are too small to seat all the choristers. Chairs have been placed in the 'well' between the elevated pews to provide additional seating but with the disadvantage that it is considerably lower than the pews.

³³ Access Audit, Great Malvern Priory, Centre for Accessible Environments, June 2023

Inadequate choir vestry/meeting room

The choir vestry was installed in the north transept in 1980. It is barely large enough for the choir to robe and affords no space for practice. Much of the choir's music has to be stored elsewhere due to lack of space. A larger room is required that could also be used for meetings and lectures to visiting groups

Lack of space to display the Priory's heritage

Through lack of space within the building, the Priory does not have any permanent display that explains its heritage and its many items of exceptional significance. Much more could be done to help visitors and the community at large enjoy the building and understand its heritage.

Lack of space for storage

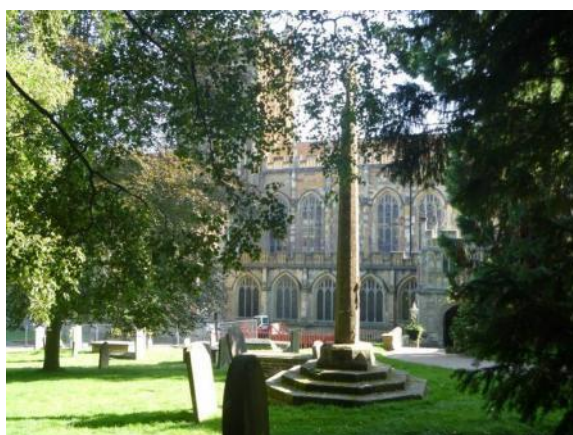
The Priory lacks space to store the many essential articles required for the life of the church. Many larger items have to be stored away from the building and carried back when needed, but some items used frequently are kept leaning against walls. These detract from the building's attractiveness and otherwise majestic appearance.

Priory Church screened from the town

As shown in the images below, the Priory has become physically screened and divided from the town by the growth of the trees in the churchyard and by unregulated car parking in the Priory drive. This diminishes awareness of the Priory as the most majestic building in the town.



View from Church Street C1900



View from Church Street today

Unregulated parking detracts from the sight lines around the building and presents difficulties for those who need disabled parking spaces. Car parking and disabled parking need to be considered as part of some re-modelling of the churchyard to the north and east of the Priory.

Carbon footprint

Although the gas-fired boilers are efficient, the heating bills are very large. Supplementing them with heat pumps and/or solar panels on the south aisle roof and improving heat distribution inside the building through under-floor heating would reduce running costs and improve the Priory's environmental footprint.

Access for maintenance

There is inadequate safe access for maintenance at high levels and further safe walkways are required in the roof spaces. These deficiencies result in increased maintenance costs.

7 Defining the way ahead

7.1 Purpose and Vision

Consistent with the Priory's Benedictine foundations that emphasise welcome and hospitality, the PCC aims to see the Priory flourishing as an integral part of the life of the local community, not only as a place for worship but also open as a venue for cultural, educational and community events.

Comments from community and user surveys have confirmed that the condition of the fabric and particularly the limitations and constraints of the current ordering as outlined in sections 5 and 6 above restrict the Priory's ability to interact with all who would come. The PCC has therefore considered options for a Priory Development Plan that proposes a major programme of work to:

- conserve, restore and refresh the significant heritage of the Priory for future generations and to enhance the building sympathetically and sustainably to meet modern-day needs, standards and expectations.
- work closely with the local community, welcoming visitors and all who come here and promoting activities which encourage discovery, learning, spiritual wellbeing and personal growth.

Consistent with this, the Development Plan has the following project vision:

Our project vision is to conserve the heritage and create a space fit for the 21st century at the heart of Malvern which welcomes all to share in an inspiring story and plays its part in building a positive future for the whole community.

7.2 The way ahead: a Phased Programme

The Development Plan proposes a phased programme of work with each phase comprising:

- repair and conservation of the stonework, windows and roofs;
- progressive re-ordering of the interior to provide universal access and to create space for interpretation of the Priory story or for exhibitions to enhance the visitor experience.

The first phase is termed 'Light and Space' to encapsulate the work to conserve several windows ('light') and to create internal space. An important aspect of the plan is the construction of a Heritage Access Building at the west end of the drive adjacent to the North Porch. This is believed to be the only way that the limitations described in section 6 can be adequately addressed.

Subsequent phases, termed 'Light and Life' and 'Light and Shade', will continue the conservation of the medieval glass windows and the stonework, make further areas of the internal space more flexible to facilitate new activities, and re-order the external space for gatherings and relaxation in the shade of the churchyard.

8 Management policies

This section sets out the policies that have been identified as required for retaining and enhancing the significance of this major church and site in the face of its vulnerability. These policies will guide and inform the PCC in decisions regarding the development of the building. Furthermore, these policies will be updated according to changes in legislation and the ongoing mission of the Priory church.

Policy 1: Review of the CMP

The PCC will create a mechanism for a Review Procedure of the CMP itself. Our knowledge of places like major churches is constantly increasing, and of course the church and site and its environment are also in a constant state of change. The CMP will provide a framework for managing information, to which new information can be added as it arises. Consideration will be given to including the regular Review Procedure into the Quinquennial Review process, to ensure that the document continuously evolves and remains accurate and useful.

Policy 2: Prime Purpose

The PCC will retain the church as a place of worship, and work with other churches within Malvern to maintain and enhance its active role within the parish, deanery and diocese. This may involve development of the building and site. Advice and support will be sought from the Diocese, the Church Care and other partners and organisations, including Historic England and the local authority.

Policy 3: Alternative Uses

The PCC will explore other appropriate related or alternative uses for all or parts of the building e.g. for community purposes, and for concerts, exhibitions etc especially if a degree of income enhancement can be achieved.

Policy 4: Premises Management

The PCC will use the adopted CMP to assist in managing the historic environment of the Priory church, its churchyard and associated structures and features. Management decisions will be taken in accordance with the principles and policies set out in the CMP.

Policy 5: Funding Strategy

The PCC will continue to develop a strategy for the sustainable care of the building and site, which will enable a strategy for funding the repairs to emerge. Such funding will be energetically sought, with advice from the Diocese, Church Care, Historic England and the local authority.

Policy 6: Fabric Conservation

The PCC is determined to enhance the ambience and retain the heritage of Great Malvern Priory and will adhere to modern building conservation principles. Maintenance and repair of this major historic building will continue to be carried out

using appropriate materials and techniques which are not damaging to its historic fabric and character. The PCC will take care to make appropriate decisions and use appropriate materials so as to avoid visually intrusive features in and around the Priory.

Policy 7: Access

The PCC is mindful of its obligation to the congregation, the local community and its many visitors to provide access for all. The PCC will explore potential for better public access where this is appropriate and not in conflict with existing (or possible future) uses. The PCC will commission a Disability Audit by a qualified person as soon as possible to ensure compliance with the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 to consider all disability issues and take 'reasonable steps' to eliminate any discriminatory arrangements. The recommendations of the audit will be considered by the PCC which will seek to implement its recommendations, so long as these are acceptable in conservation terms and do not involve negative impact on or intrusion into significant fabric (including visual intrusion).

Policy 8: Safety

The PCC has adopted a Health and Safety Policy to comply with the requirements of the Health and Safety at Work Act (1974) and subsequent legislation published under the Act. The policy describes the Statement (of PCC policy), Organisation (responsibilities of groups and individuals) and Arrangements for health and safety in the Priory. Risk assessments are carried out for all aspects of the premises and activities undertaken within them which may present a significant risk to users.

Training in relevant aspects of safe practice (e.g. work at heights, manual handling etc.) is given to staff and appropriate surveys and assessments (e.g. portable appliance test and inspection, fixed wiring tests and display screen assessments) are carried out at regular intervals. An Asbestos Management Building Survey was carried out by Worcestershire Scientific Services in April 2012 and a record of asbestos in the building is maintained for reference by those carrying out works and by the emergency services.

Evacuation procedures in the event of an emergency when the church is in use (e.g. services, concerts etc.) have been developed and appropriate training given to staff and volunteers. Training is repeated at regular intervals, as appropriate. Fire appliances and emergency lighting are examined and tested on a regular basis.

Policy 9: Security

The PCC will ensure the protection of the building and its contents, interior fixtures and fittings from fire, lightning, theft and other safety and security hazards. Specialist safety audits and risk assessments will be undertaken to best current practice as necessary. Provision will be made for appropriate and adequate induction and on-going training for staff and contractors. Detection and alarm systems are kept serviced and up to date. Close co-ordination and co-operation with the Fire Brigade (including the facilitation of training for rescue from height) and other emergency services is practised.

The PCC will produce a Disaster Management Plan, following guidance from the Church Buildings Council and Ecclesiastical Insurance Group, to help ensure that in the event of a disaster it can respond with preparedness and in the most effective ways.

Policy 10: Safeguarding

The PCC has adopted, and reviews annually, a Parish Safeguarding Policy and a Policy on Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults following Diocesan guidelines. These policies are displayed in the Priory. The PCC is committed to following the House of Bishop's child protection policy - Protecting all God's Children (2010) and to the policy which addresses the needs of adults experiencing or at risk of neglect or abuse (vulnerable adults) - Promoting a Safe Church (2006). Volunteers and paid staff are recruited according to the national church Practice Guidance: Safer Recruitment (2016 – reviewed and revised annually).

The PCC has also agreed to abide by Diocesan policies on Recruitment of ex-Offenders; Disclosures from DBS; Handling, Use, storage and Disposal of Disclosure Information; and the Hiring of the Premises for Activities outside PCC control.

Policy 11: Children and Youth Policy

The Policy for all Priory Children and Youth Groups covers the procedure for the recruitment of new leaders; adult/child ratios; the requirement to keep registers, consent forms and contact details of all the children attending groups; the procedure to be followed when organising trips away from the Priory; evacuation procedure from the Lyttelton Rooms in the event of fire; first aid procedures and email security.

Policy 12: Statutory Requirements

The PCC will periodically review the statutory requirements and constraints governing the management of the church and site with the help of the Archdeacon and DAC, particularly in the light of the proposed Heritage Protection Review and Heritage Protection Agreements with English Heritage and the local authority. If necessary, short guidance notes will be circulated to PCC and other interested parties so that all are fully aware of necessary procedures.

Policy 13: Planning Matters

The PCC will make strong representations to the appropriate planning and strategic bodies on all issues and proposals that might affect the PCC directly or indirectly, making use of the material in the CMP.

Policy 14: Conservation Reports

There are various aspects of the church and its furnishings and fittings which would benefit from research into the possibilities of proactive conservation techniques. The DAC and CBC will be approached for advice and possible funding. Efforts will be made to procure grant aid towards research and conservation work, including:

- the medieval stained glass;

- the medieval tiles;
- the woodwork, particularly the medieval misericords;
- the monuments, including the chantry chapel.

Policy 15: Visitor Welcome

The PCC will continue to maintain and seek to further develop a welcome to visitors, in particular to:

- Keep the Priory open throughout the week, welcoming all according to their needs, while aiming to increase both the number of visitors and the value they gain by visiting the Priory.
- Help visitors to appreciate the beauty, historical, architectural and religious significance of the building, its contents and surroundings – a place of Christian worship and ministry for nearly a thousand years – by maximising access and the richness of the visit experience for all. This would be achieved by drawing on the increased understanding of the building facilitated by the conservation management process, developing new ways of presenting information to our visitors, and exploring the possible development of a visitor centre.
- Provide facilities and a quiet area of the building for private devotions and prayer.
- Provide appropriate pastoral care to those entering the Priory with particular needs and concerns.

Policy 16: Archaeology Policy

Policy 16a: The church and churchyard have been defined as being of exceptional archaeological significance. The policy of the PCC is to protect and if possible enhance this significance. The guidance set out in ADCA 2004 and Elders 2005 will be followed.

Policy 16b: The policy of the PCC in regard to human remains and their archaeology is to follow the procedures laid down by the Church of England/ English Heritage 2005 guidance document.

Policy 17: Heritage Recording

The PCC will continue to work in the long term with the architect and potential external partners such as Historic England, NADFAS (The National Association of Decorative & Fine Arts Societies), and university departments towards developing and maintaining a comprehensive database (in hard copy and digital formats, with appropriate storage locations and environments) of accurate records for the interior and exterior of the church and the area surrounding including:

- Part of the site has already been surveyed, and a geophysical survey of the floors within the church and the remainder of churchyard will greatly increase knowledge of the development of the church, while providing useful information regarding possible future development of the building and site.

- A fabric typology survey (internal and external) identifying original fabric and subsequent phases of repair/restoration graphically, photographically and in text will be of great use to disentangle the complex history of the building.

Policy 18: Ecology

The PCC will encourage diversity of habitat in areas of open space where this is appropriate, taking notice of lichen on walls and monuments and the presence of any protected species and the legal requirements in this respect.

Policy 19: Environmental Responsibility

The PCC will take into account in all its policies the need for environmentally and economically sustainable development and management, and will consult the DAC regarding playing its part in “Shrinking the Footprint” of the church in terms of its environmental impact. An environmental audit will be undertaken in order to inform decision making and this will be kept up to date.

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Appendix A The Friends of Great Malvern Priory

The Society of The Friends of Malvern Priory was formed in 1949. Its mission is:

- *To educate the public about the Priory and to foster public interest in the building and its grounds.*
- *To support the maintenance, restoration and enhancement of the Priory's fabric, furnishings and adornments.*
- *To promote the Priory's musical tradition for the public benefit.*

The Friends are strictly non-denominational and have members not only in the Malvern area but in many other parts of Britain and countries throughout the world.

The Friends are governed by a Constitution. The initial Constitution was adopted at the first general meeting on 16 July 1949. This provided for a Council that is responsible for the policy and management of The Friends including decisions relating to grants to the Parochial Church Council (PCC).

The Friends first registered with the Charity Commission under charity number 503383 on 13 November 1974. All the members of the Council are Trustees of the Charity. The constitution is being revised in 2020, the new Objects being those in italics above. The Friends, as a separate registered charity, are independent of the PCC but close contact is maintained with the PCC through the Vicar, churchwardens and two other representatives of the PCC who are members of the Council.

In recognition of their first objective listed above, The Friends aim to enable more people to have access to and an understanding, appreciation and enjoyment of the Priory and its treasures. They organise weekly guided tours of the building advertised through the Malvern Tourist Office, they manage the Priory Shop, arrange an annual Heritage and Faith Lecture and a community carol service, and with the PCC organise 'Lunchbox' (these being short talks and concerts during lunchtimes from September to April). The Friends' publicise their events and activities on the Priory website. A list of services, events and the Priory magazine are sent electronically to members of The Friends each month.

With regard to providing funding for repairs to the building, the PCC makes requests for grants to the Friends' Council which seeks to ensure that such grants meet the charity's objectives. The Friends play a significant role in funding restoration work in the Priory.

Appendix B Education

Educational opportunities for children and young people within the Priory community

Sunday Mornings – Children and young people are welcome at all Priory services, particularly the 10.30am service. Once a month there is an Altogether Worship service where the Christian teaching is very accessible to children and young people. At other 10.30am services, a member of the clergy will address the children, introducing them to an important Christian theme, which may then be developed when the children depart to age-related groups during a part of the service.

The aim of these groups is to give Priory children and young people the opportunity to discover and reflect on the gospel of Christ in a way which is relevant, enjoyable and age-appropriate.

Other Groups meeting weekly in term time:

- **Table Tennis** – (mixed adult/young people) an opportunity for teenagers to join an all-age informal group and to develop sport and sportsmanship skills.
- **Junior Choir** – age range 7-18yrs - This group meets to prepare for 10.30 Sunday morning worship and other special services. The members of the Junior Choir learn a great deal about choral singing, music and the Christian faith. They work towards Royal School of Church Music awards.
- **Junior Handbells** – age range 7years-18yrs. This group meets to learn the skill of hand bell ringing and to practise for special services eg Christmas.
- **Tower Bell Ringing** – Young people are welcome to join the Tower team and will be taught the skill of bell-ringing alongside the adult members of the team.

Groups meeting less often:

- **Orchestra** – (mixed adult/young people) This group meets to prepare for some Altogether Worship and special services. Young people playing any instrument are encouraged to join and music can be adapted to their particular instrument/ability where necessary.
- **Worship band** – (mixed adult/young people) meets to prepare for some Altogether Worship services and the monthly, informal, café-style evening service (The Gathering)
- **Priory young people** (aged 14-18) have the opportunity to meet with youth leaders in informal settings to enjoy fellowship and to explore ways in which their Christian faith impacts their lives.

Young people doing Christian work in the UK or overseas, for example during a gap year, are encouraged to do so and can apply for a small grant from the PCC to help offset costs.

Educational opportunities for children and young people from the wider community:

- **Messy Church** – Families and children from the church and local community come together approximately every six weeks to find out more about the Christian faith through craft, games, celebration and sharing food. Messy Church is a vibrant additional church community open to all.
- **Lifepath** – During one week in June, children from local primary schools are invited to spend a day at the Priory to find out about life as a medieval monk. They have an opportunity to try out new skills such as calligraphy and bell ringing and to reflect on their own path through life. Typically, during the week, six to seven hundred children attend and it is always a very joyous occasion!
- **Local schools** -Priory clergy have links with local schools
- **School visits to the Priory** – as part of their RE or history curriculum. Schools can request a guided tour by one of the Guided Tour Team.
- **Senior and Junior Organ Scholarships** are awarded to suitable candidates. Benefits include free organ tuition at the Priory.

Educational opportunities for adults within the Priory community:

- **Adult Choir and Priory Singers** – meet weekly to prepare for 10.30 morning worship and Evening services.
- **Adult Handbells Group**– meets weekly to practise skills and prepare for special services.
- **Home groups** – provide opportunities to study the Bible and grow in faith and fellowship.
- **Study courses such as Alpha and H+** - provide an opportunity to deepen Christian faith and understanding of the Bible.

Educational opportunities for adults within the wider community:

- **Lunchbox** – takes place twice a month during the autumn/winter in the Priory. Visiting speakers talk on a wide range of topics or local choirs/ musicians perform a short concert.
- **Friends' Heritage and Faith Lecture** – The Friends organise an annual lecture. Recent subjects have included the Priory's Magnificat Window and the influence of Gilbert Scott.
- **Science and Faith Lecture** – In recent years the Priory had invited eminent scientists to give an insight into their research and explain the influence of their Christian faith on their work.
- **Guided tours of the Priory** –conducted by members of The Friends or congregation for visiting groups and individuals.
- **Drama productions** – these may be Christian or secular eg Shakespeare, miracle plays, plays by local drama groups etc.

- **Concerts** – by local and visiting groups/choirs eg Malvern Festival Chorus, Boyan Ensemble of Kiev, All The King’s Men (Canadian male voice choir) and Eboracum Baroque
- **Lectures** - by visiting and local experts in their field eg a lecture by Alister McGrath on C. S Lewis; a lecture by Katherine Wells on the Priory stained glass.

Appendix C Users and events in the Priory in 2019

The list of users and events in the Priory covers the period January 2019 - December 2019, and includes exhibitions, concerts, special services and a variety of miscellaneous uses.

Exhibitions in the North Aisle

Autumn in Malvern – a festival of the arts organised within the town

Fairtrade Fortnight

Great Malvern Banner exhibition – *faith banners from organisations and churches across the community*

Malvern Justice and Peace Group

Malvern Hills District Council – Environment Photo competition winners

Malvern Museum – History of Great Malvern Priory

Concerts

Aldwyn Voices – *part of Autumn in Malvern Festival*

August Recital Series – variety of musicians from around the country

Bells Beyond Belief – Priory Handbells in collaboration with Handbell Ringers of Great Britain, West Midlands

Birmingham Bach Choir - St John Passion

Canadian Male Voice Choir

Malvern Festival Chorus

Organ recitals – *Programme of Saturday lunchtime recitals by eminent organists*

Eboracum Baroque, Messiah

English String Orchestra - a series of concerts

Malvern Mayor's Charity concert

Malvern Town Council Charity Christmas concert

Messaien – Nativity

Malvern Priory Junior Choristers

Priory Early Music Series – in collaboration with Royal Birmingham Conservatoire (6 free lunch time concerts per academic year given by students of the Conservatoire)

Royal School of Church Music

The Quiristers

Special Services

Choral Evensong – visiting choirs

MU Women's World Day of Prayer

Malvern College Commemoration Service

Malvern Parish School Leavers' Service

Pets' service

Regent's College Graduation Service

Malvern Town Council - *Armistice and Remembrance Civic Services*

St Richard's Hospice Lights of Love

The Friends of Malvern Priory Thanksgiving Service

Dementia Friendly Carol Service

Malvern St James School Carol Service

Malvern Parish School Carol Service

The Chase Academy Carol Service

Friends Community Carol Service

Miscellaneous

LunchBox Held twice/month during September – March, bring your own lunch and enjoy a short talk or concert

Lifepath - Local schools spend a day in the Priory learning about the Benedictine way of life. Typically around 700 school children visit over the course of a week

Mystery Play – Performed in the Priory over a two week period by a mix of professional and amateur actors and with music composed by the Priory's Director of Music.

Friends Heritage and Faith Lecture – a lecture on the influence of Gilbert Scott

Welcome Days – *live music and refreshments offered on occasional Saturdays.*

Christmas Lights Switch On Welcome Day - *in 2019 attracted over 5000 visitors*

Craft and Food Fairs in Priory Grounds

Farmers' Markets in the Priory Grounds

Guided Tours

Friends Outing – a coach trip to Melbourne, Derbyshire to see a Norman church whose architecture may resemble the original architecture of the Priory before its remodelling in the C15th.

Tower Open days

Ringing Chamber Open days

Visiting Schools – tour and talk

Malvern in Bloom; judges start or end their day in the Priory

Wyche School event – opportunity for children to exhibit a project worked on in the autumn term

Tiny Tunes – musical 'bites' for mums and toddlers

Malvern Hills District Council – *environmental photographic exhibition and Green Fair*