

Statements of Significance and Needs

Keri Dearmer

Senior Church Buildings Officer

Church Buildings Council



Statements of Significance and Needs

- Both statements follow the same principle, starting with the big picture and moving towards more detailed information

Statements of Significance

Section 1 – 7 topics

Section 2 – 2 topics

Section 3 – 2 topics

Statements of Needs

7 topics

Statements of Significance

significance *noun*



OPAL W

OPAL S

/sɪg'nɪfɪkəns/

/sɪg'nɪfɪkəns/

[uncountable, countable]

1 ★ the importance of something, especially when this has an effect on what happens in the future

- a decision of major political significance
- The new drug has great significance for the treatment of the disease.
- They discussed the **statistical significance** of the results.
- We should be fully aware of the significance of television in shaping our ideas.

Definition of 'significance'
significance

Collins COBUILD

(sɪgnɪfɪkəns)

UNCOUNTABLE NOUN

The **significance** of something is the importance that it has, usually because it will have an effect on a situation or shows something about a situation.

Ideas about the social significance of religion have changed over time.

A sacred site might be a mountain that is of some significance to a tribe.

Synonyms: importance, import [formal], consequence, matter [More Synonyms of significance](#)

[More Synonyms of significance](#)

Collins COBUILD Advanced Learner's Dictionary. Copyright © HarperCollins Publishers

Word Frequency



Statements of Significance

[Statements of Significance and Need \(churchofengland.org\)](http://churchofengland.org)

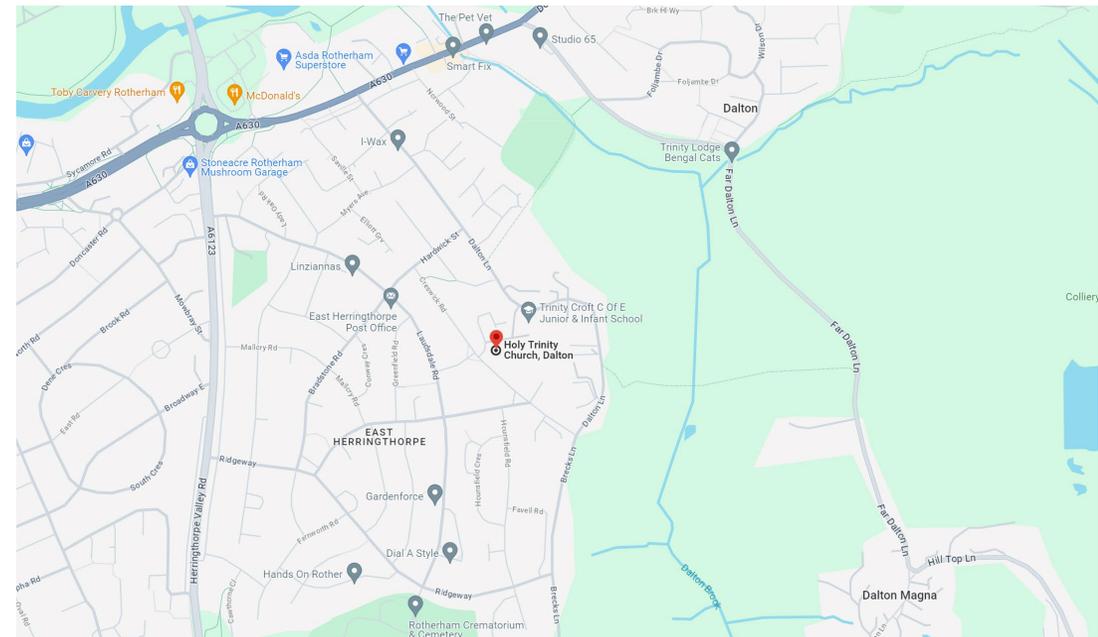
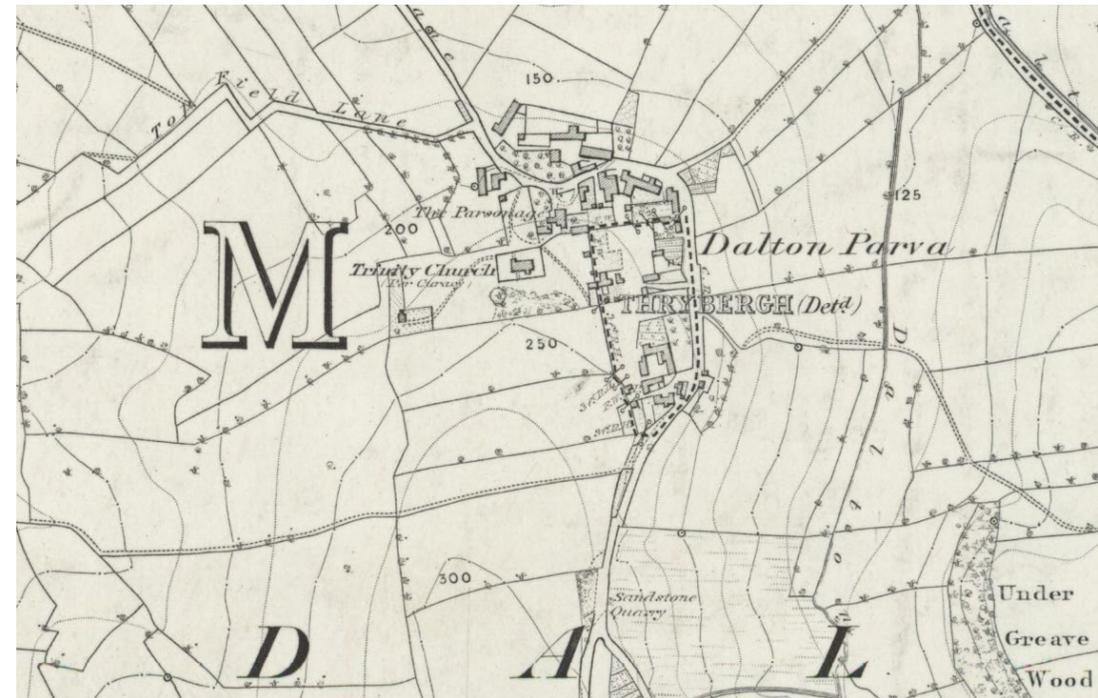
- Ideally – write this before there is an inkling of an application
- Help you to establish what is most important about the church and what is less important
- Remember that those reading the document might never have seen or visited your church



Setting of the Church

How does the setting out of the church contribute to its landscape / townscape value and to its significance?

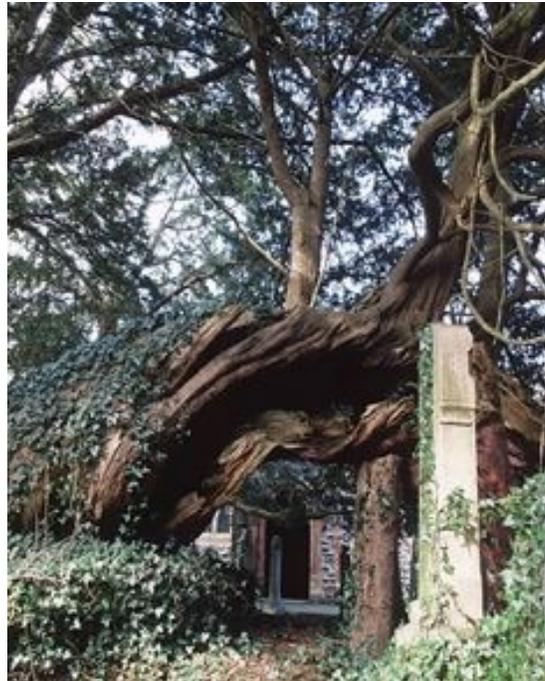
- Urban/rural?
- Within/far from a settlement?
- Trees and green space/paved or tarmacked?
- What does this mean? Why is the church here? How did it get here?



The Living Churchyard

What is the significance of the natural heritage of the site?

- Biodiversity?
- Bats?
- Ancient trees?
- Rare species – newts/orchids?
- No mow May?
- Bees/wildflowers/wild garlic?
- Lichens on the gravestones?
- No churchyard at all?



Social History

What is the historic and present use of the church and churchyard by the congregation and wider community? How does this contribute to its significance?

- How long has it been a place of worship? Has that ever changed?
- What else happens here or has happened here? Film screenings or dance recitals? Or a Roundhead stronghold during the Civil War?
- Who is buried here? Anyone interesting or famous? Or a long line of the same local family?
- What does this place mean to local people and to the rest of the world?



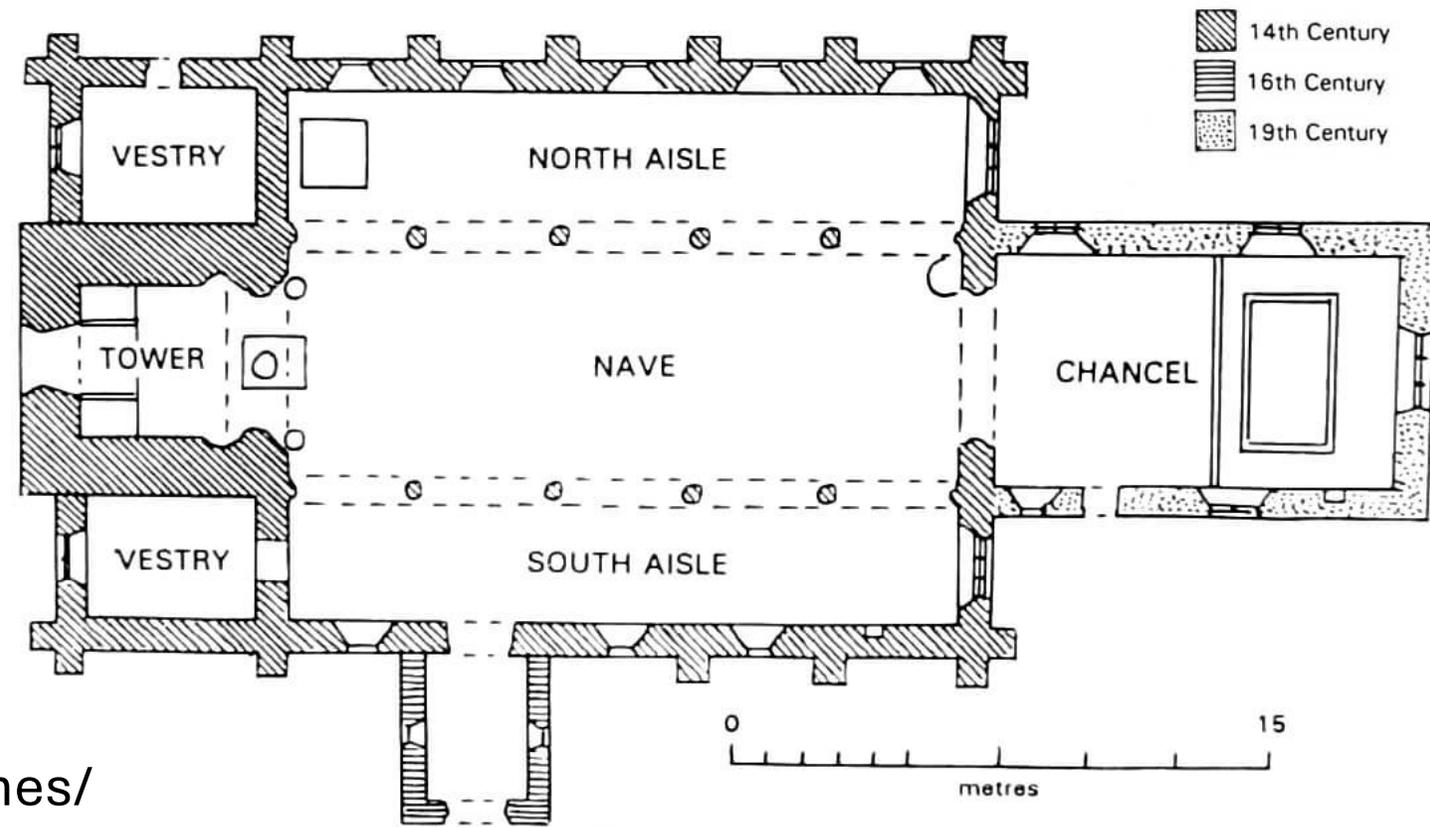
The Church Building in General

Provide a description of the church

- If your church is listed, the listing description is a great place to start.
- Have a look at your QI, the architect/surveyor will have briefly described the church and its materials

A general description:

- Nave/aisles/chancel/apse/tower/porches/ vestries?
- Materials: stone/brick/timber/slate/thatch
- Age/style
- Architect/builder





Illustrate!



The Church Building in Detail

Assess the significance of either each historical phase of the building or of each area within it. For example, north aisle, south elevation, tower

- Listing description or QI report
- **If it isn't in the Listing Description, that does not mean it's not significant.**
- Do what makes the most sense for your building.
- The Norman tower, built in 1086, the church appears in the Domesday book. The tower was altered in the mid 17th century after a portion collapsed. The materials are different because...



The Church Building in Detail

Assess the significance of either each historical phase of the building or of each area within it. For example, north aisle, south chancel elevation, tower

Dictionary

Definition

Synonyms
Synonym Chooser
Example Sentences

assess verb

as·sess (ə-'ses) a-

assessed; assessing; assesses

Synonyms of *assess* >

transitive verb

4 : to determine the importance, size, or value of

- assess a problem
- assess the damage

assess

verb [T]

UK (ə-'ses) US (ə-'ses)

Add to word list

B2

to judge or decide the amount, value, quality, or importance of something:

- The insurers will need to assess the flood damage.
- They assessed the cost of the flood damage **at** £2,500.
- Exams are not the only means of assessing a student's ability.
- It's too early to assess the long-term consequences of the two countries' union.
- [+ question word] We need to assess **whether** the project is worth doing.

assess

Word Frequency ●●●●●



Collins COBUILD

(əses) ⓘ

Word forms: 3rd person singular present tense **assesses**, present participle **assessing**, past tense, past participle **assessed**

1. VERB B2

When you **assess** a person, thing, or situation, you consider them in order to make a judgment about them.

Our correspondent has been assessing the impact of the sanctions. [VERB noun]

The test was to assess aptitude rather than academic achievement. [VERB noun]

It would be a matter of assessing whether she was well enough to travel. [VERB wh]

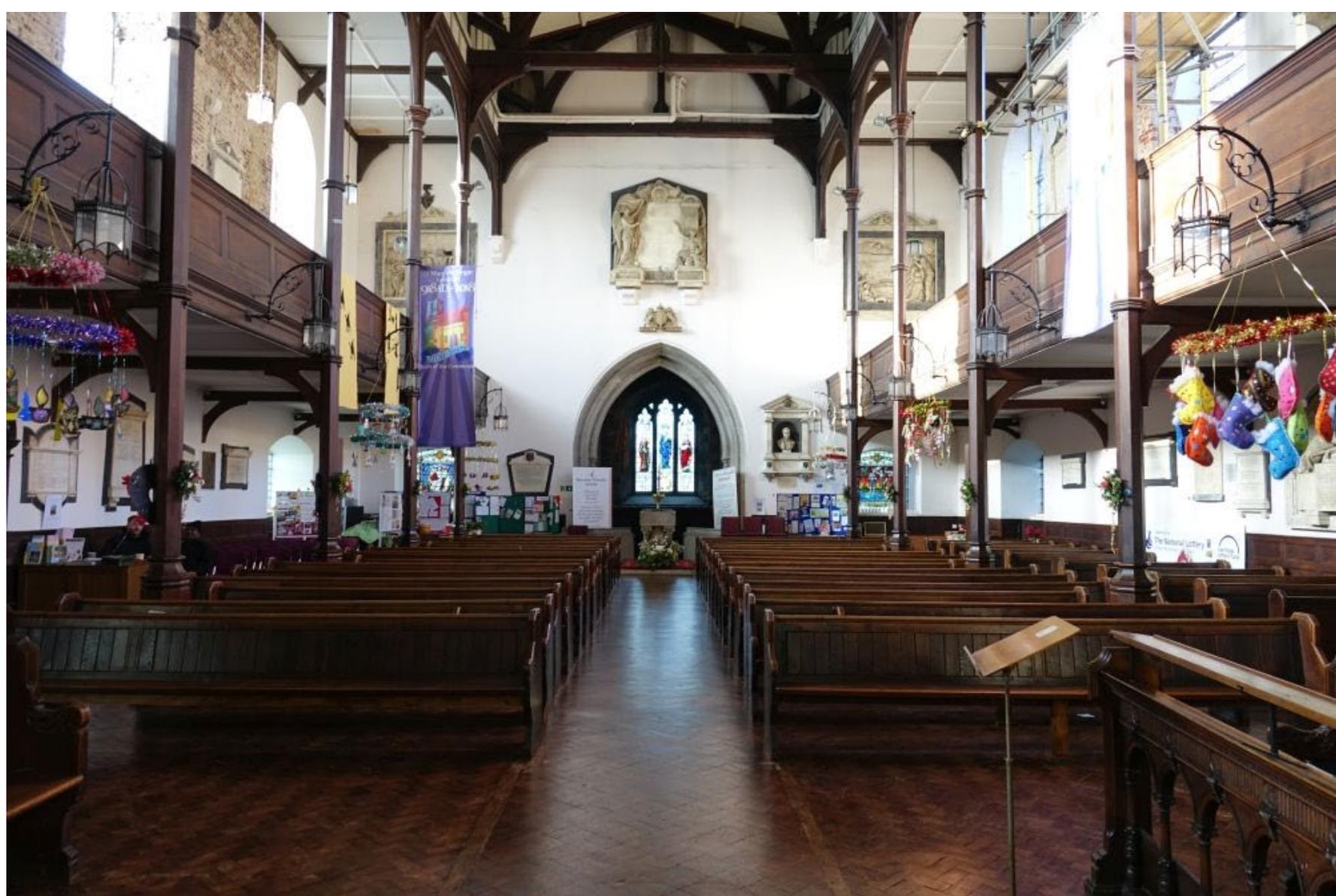
Synonyms: judge, determine, estimate, fix [More Synonyms of assess](#)



The Contents of the Church

Provide a description of its contents and their significance. It is reasonable to group these if there is a contemporary scheme which is significant as such, for example one could say a complete scheme of 18th-century furnishings, of high significance.

- Listing description or QI report
- **If it isn't in the List Description, that does not mean it's not significant.**



- It's okay to make changes.
- We're not trying to stop you from making changes.
- We're trying to help you to make the right changes.
- To not lose what's special about your church.



That's why you need to tell us what's special.



Significance for Mission

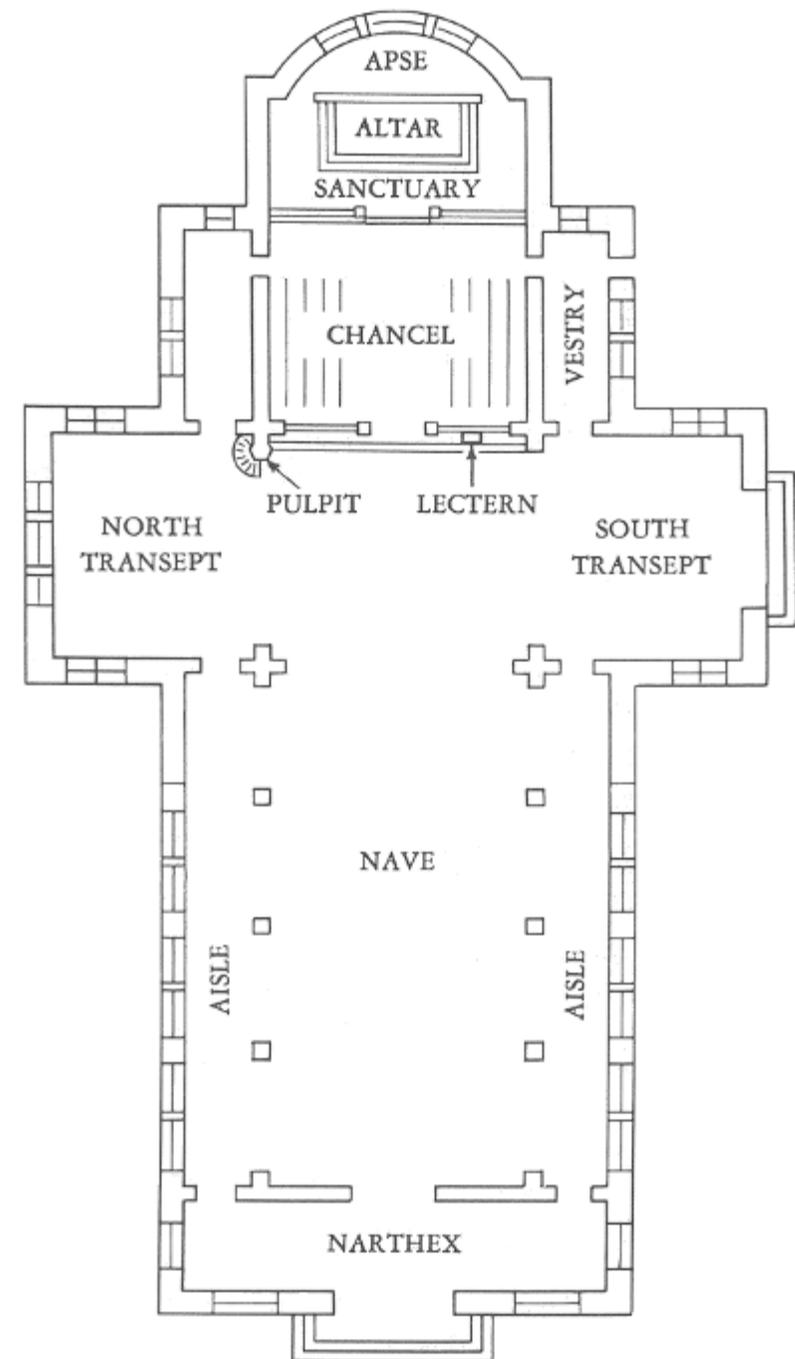
What are the strengths of the building as it is for worship and mission? What potential for adapted and new uses does the church and its setting already have with little or no change?

- What's good about it now? There must be something, or you wouldn't be there.
- Think creatively about what you could, or maybe have already done.



Second Section

- Identify the parts of the church and/or churchyard which will be directly or indirectly affected by your proposal.
- Set out the significance of these particular parts.
- Be honest.



Section Three

- Describe and assess the impact of your proposal on these parts, and on the whole.
- Explain how you intend, where possible, to mitigate the impact of the proposed works on the significance of the parts affected and the whole.
- Be honest.





*deep
breaths,*

**YOU'RE
DOING
GREAT.**



Statements of Significance and Needs

- Both statements follow the same principle, starting with the big picture and moving towards more detailed information

Statements of Significance

Section 1 – 7 topics

Section 2 – 2 topics

Section 3 – 2 topics

Statements of Needs

7 topics



Statements of Needs



Statements of Needs

[Statements of Significance and Need \(churchofengland.org\)](http://churchofengland.org)

CHURCH SERVICES SCHEDULE

SUNDAY :

9:00 A.M. SUNDAY SCHOOL
10:00 A.M. SUNDAY MORNING SERVICE
5:00 P.M. SUNDAY EVENING PRAYER MEETING
BEFORE SERVICE
6:00 P.M. SUNDAY EVENING EVANGELISTIC SERVICE
6:00 P.M. SUNDAY EVENING YOUTH SERVICE

**NOTE: NO SERVICE ON THE FIRST SUNDAY
OF THE MONTH BUT A PRAYER MEETING AT 6:00 P.M.**

WEDNESDAY :

6:00 P.M. WEDNESDAY EVENING BIBLE STUDY
6:00 P.M. MISSIONETTES GIRLS MINISTRY
6:00 P.M. ROYAL RANGERS

General Information

An overview of the parish and the current use of the building

Data

- What is the population of the parish
- How many on the electoral role?
- How often are services? How many people attend?
- What else do you do in church? Coffee mornings? Alpha? Toddlers groups?

This is not about aspirations – this is setting the scene as it is at the moment.



Statements of Needs



What do you need?

Briefly explain your needs (not your proposals).

For example: we need some flexible space to host small gatherings where we can face each other to share food.

Not: we need to remove 5 pews so we can put a table in.

For example: we need to provide a better welcome to a more diverse range of people.

Not: we need an accessible ramp

Be specific.



Statements of Needs



The proposals

Set out what you are proposing to do in order to meet the needs set out in section 2.

We propose to remove 5 pews at the west end of the nave to create X amount of space. We propose to lower the pew platforms and re-use the existing timber to create a level floor.

Show us the chairs and tables you're intending to use.

What will happen to the pews?

Details.



Statements of Needs



Why do you need it and why do you need it now?

Justify your proposals by explaining why you can't meet your needs without making changes. Also include anything which may have prompted the proposals.

- Have you been thinking about this for a long time?
- Has something changed which has prompted the application?
- What's wrong with carrying on as you are?
- How will the proposals help ministry/liturgy?
- Will you bring new people in?
- Will it help with finances?
- Can you afford it?



Statements of Needs



What is the evidence for the need?

Please explain who has been consulted

- How do you know the village is desperate for a café on Wednesday mornings?
- Who did you ask if they wanted to use the church for yoga class on Thursday evening?
- Have parents told you it's difficult to get their prams/buggies into church?
- Have you been carrying hot water around in urns for 20 years and you've finally decided that's not very safe?



Statements of Needs



How is the proposal contributing to the need for environmental sustainability?

How is it reducing the carbon footprint, contributing to the Church's commitment to be 'net zero carbon' by 2030?

- Not just about heating systems
- Reduce, reuse, recycle
- Where are you sourcing materials from?
- Who's doing the work, how far, and how do they have to travel?
- How long will the proposed changes last? Good quality materials.



Statements of Needs



What other options to meet the need were considered, taking Point 6 and the impact identified in the Statement of Significance into account?

Options Appraisal

- If you've written the statement well so far – there's no need to include "do nothing" as an option. It should be clear that that is not an option.
- Where else did you consider locating the WC?
- How else could you provide a meeting space?
- Why is this option the best?



IT'S OVER

IT'S FINALLY OVER

memegenerator.net



Questions?

It's not about preventing change – it's about ensuring that good changes are made.

Producing good statements will help you to gain permission more quickly and easily.

[Statements of Significance and Need \(churchofengland.org\)](http://churchofengland.org)

Keri Dearmer

Senior Church Buildings Officer

Church Buildings Council

