

## Holy Trinity Paulton Statement of significance

<https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1320745>

PAULTON C.P. CHURCH STREET (south side) ST 65 NW 1/3 Church of the Holy Trinity 21.9.60 G.V. II\* Anglican Parish Church. Dated 1757 and 1839, the latter by John Pinch. Ashlar, freestone dressings, slate roof. West tower, nave, north and south aisles, north porch, chancel, south chapel, north organ chamber. Square tower of 3 stages with set-back buttresses and full-height circular stair turret, first stage has plinth, tudor-arch west door with heavy moulding and a good plank door below a small ogee-headed window, (strings between stages also appear between buttresses), second stage has quatrefoil to west, at third stage the buttresses peter out with crocketed finials, each side has a 2-light pointed window below a hoodmould with quatrefoil pierced tracery, then ogee quatrefoils, that to west with date (clockwise 1757 seems most likely), then ogee frieze as corbel table below quatrefoil pierced parapet with obelisk corner finials, tower stands at west end of north aisle of church of 1831. Gabled nave has 3-light pointed, cusped west window, buttressed aisles have 4 similar 2-light windows, one over south door under label, one absent at site of gabled north porch with moulded, pointed arch below date scroll, diagonal buttressed, gabled chancel has 3-light, pointed east window as elsewhere, similar 2-lights to north and south gabled chapels. Interior. 4-bay Perpendicular arcade, shafts on very thin piers, very rich, small chancel with mock hammer beams with angels, nave roof of arch-braced queen post construction with tracery spandrels. Fittings: octagonal font of C16?, stone pulpit, perpendicular details as in local tradition, complete set of pews with poppy heads. Monument: at west end of south aisle is a C14 chivalic figure under hood with head stops. (Source: N. Pevsner : Buildings of England : North Somerset and Bristol : ig58).

**HOLY TRINITY.** The tower is dated prominently 1757 – on a quatrefoil on the w front. There are also other quatrefoils and ogee-headed windows. Even the quatrefoils are made ogee. The set-back buttresses and the pinnacles developing out of them are surviving Somerset tradition, though the

obelisk shape of the pinnacles is clearly enough post-medieval. The w doorway oddly enough looks C17, and the bell-openings genuine C15. The corbel-table on the other hand is obviously 1757. Could the pierced parapet and top pinnacles also be as early? The rest of the church was rebuilt in 1839 (by *John Pinch*, GR). It has the usual lancet windows with Perp tracery. Aisled interior in the Perp Somerset tradition, though in typical early C19 proportions. – PLATE. Chalice and two Patens 1801. – MONUMENT. Knight, praying, in long surcoat, the head under a trefoiled arch, which rests on two head-stops; c. 1290. – Knight, c. 1360, badly mutilated. ROMAN HOUSES. Reported in 1818 a pair of houses of corridor-type.

From: The Buildings of England: North Somerset and Bristol Nikolaus Pevsner. 1958

Holy Trinity Paulton has a Family Service every Sunday at 11am and a quiet prayer service at 5pm. Average Sunday attendance has tripled in the past year from pre lockdown levels of 25 to a regular worshipping community of 75, and the number of children has increased from none to around 15 per service. There are regular weekly toddler groups on Mondays and Fridays during term time attracting 10 or more families, and 'Messy Church' activities in school holidays that can attract up to 50 children. There is also a cafe session every Tuesday all year round and a discussion group on Tuesday evenings. Along side this the church holds many additional events and festival celebrations throughout the year.

### **The church in its urban / rural environment.**

Holy Trinity Paulton is situated centrally in Paulton on a main road through the village. It is set in a large church with a 1950's vicarage directly behind. The site of the Church joins to the Old Vicarage and Old gate house, now private accommodation and a veterinary practice, and then on to the village hall and public park. Opposite the church is a very large new housing estate built on a brownfield site of a printing business that closed in 2009. The village is a busy and growing community with an active parish council, uniformed organisations, sports and recreational groups and many public events in which the church participates.

### **1.2 The Living Churchyard**

The churchyard is closed to new graves but still occasionally inturs ashes

The churchyard includes a cholera monument to 23 men, 23 women and 26 children who died in a cholera outbreak in 1832 and 14 men, 14 women and 34 children from a second outbreak between 1844 and 1850. There are several other monuments in the churchyard. There are also several large trees that are subject to protection orders.

### 1.3 Social History

Paulton is a large village and civil parish, with a population of 5,302, located to the north of the Mendip Hills, in the unitary authority of Bath and North East Somerset (BANES), England.

Paulton is a former coal mining village and the terminus of the Somerset Coal Canal is at Paulton basin, just north of the village. Paulton was home to the now-closed Polestar Purnell's printing factory. The area has been designated as an 'area of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance' under section 69 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. Industry has now left the area

The centre of the village is the location for the war memorial and a small library. There is another war memorial just outside the village, to the southwest, which commemorates the location where 23 men were killed on 17 September 1944 when the glider they were flying in crashed en route from R.A.F. Keevil to Arnhem, as part of Operation Market Garden.

### 1.7 Significance for mission

The church's seasonal festivals are still popular community activities that have attracted large crowds. Sunday attendance had been in gradual decline, but is now growing under the new incumbent. The church building is used during the week for bible study, morning prayer, toddler groups, a coffee morning, a knitting group and various seasonal community events

2.1 Identify the parts of the church and/or churchyard which will be directly or indirectly affected by your proposal.

Only the interior of the church will be affected by the proposal, and of this only the pews and flooring

2.2 Set out the significance of these particular parts.

The pews are listed as a 'complete set of pews with poppy heads' by Historic England. The pews are a dominant visual feature of the church taking up the majority of the floor plan. They are pine pews with carved oak ends and top pieces, their condition is reasonable, but show signs of past alteration. See attached document for further detail on the history and significance of the pews.

### 3.1 Describe and assess the impact of your proposal on these parts, and on the whole.

The impact of the proposal will be to reduce the number of pews from eleven pairs of 4m pews fixed in place on raised platforms down to 4 pairs of 3m pews. The impact of this would be to greatly reduce the amount of dark wood within the church. The church would regain some of the light and space of its pre-restoration aesthetic making the detail of the columns and flooring more visible. The removal of the pews would represent a partial loss of this aspect of Victorian architecture and also of a substantial amount of seating that would need to be replaced.

### 3.2 Explain how you intend, where possible, to mitigate the impact of the proposed works on the significance of the parts affected and the whole

The loss of the complete set of pews will be mitigated by the retention of 4 pairs of pews that can be used to create a central aisle to provide the focus and architectural narration during life events and other significant ceremonies. This will also allow for the Victorian features of the pews to still be in evidence in the building. The remaining seating will be replaced with stackable fabric covered chairs that will provide an equivalent number of seats in a more flexible configuration.

### Sources consulted

<https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1320745a>

The Buildings of England: North Somerset and Bristol Nikolaus Pevsner. 1958

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