

200123-1267-CSW  
23<sup>rd</sup> January 2020

Mr Graham Kitchen  
The Garden Room  
62 Lockeridge  
Marlborough  
Wiltshire  
SN8 4EY

Dear Graham,

### **TRIAL HOLE & DRAINAGE INSPECTION AT ST NICHOLAS CHURCH, FYFIELD**

Further to our telephone conversation, I did say that I would formalise the findings of the trial hole and drainage inspection at the Church.

#### **Trial Hole-**

I met with Elliot and his operative at the Church on Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> January 2020, at around 9.30am. A neat trial had been dug adjacent to the Tower on the North side, as indicated on the plan overleaf. At my request the hole was deepened a little further to an approximate depth of 1100mm. The trial hole uncovered soil that appeared well draining and not of a high clay content.

It appeared from the face of the tower wall, that the base of the trial hole may well have reached the base of the wall as the stonework appeared to 'cut back in'. At the rear of this short report is a sketch section through the trial hole and the approximate internal floor level of the tower and church.

The findings suggest that as a result of the high ground level in comparison to the low church / tower internal floor level, that ground water held in the soil, seeps slowly into the wall build up, and migrates eventually causing damp in the tower corners (where there are probably some voids between the larger stones). This is also exacerbated further with the discharge of the rainwater chute at high level from the tower roof.

All of this we already knew to some extent, however the hole has allowed us to appreciate how the tower wall was built below ground. Basically the wall continues down with only a minimal step out from the face above. Should we proceed with a French drain then this may be kept reasonably tight to the tower (apart from the buttress projections).

#### **Rainwater Drainage-**

Alpha Rod Drain Services were in attendance. Each of the rainwater downpipe / drain connections were reviewed. A small access panel was cut in one of the drains to allow further access.

It was clearly evident that all the underground drains from the downpipes, were completely silted up and contained quite a lot of root material, so much so that it was not possible to run a camera down to inspect the length of the pipe(s). In order to do so, the underground pipes would need to have been excavated and cleared manually which a) we do not have permission for, and b) would have been quite costly.

The conclusion is that the underground rainwater pipework is not effective and it is unlikely to be able to take rainwater sufficiently far enough from the Church.

The following sketches record the findings. I would suggest the next stage is to formalise proposals for the following:

1. New downpipes from the tower roof connected to either a new land drainage system (around the tower or taken to a separate soakaway, away from the tower completely).
2. Create a 'french drain' around the tower to reduce the amount of ground water generally around this area, to hopefully in the long term, reduce the rising damp further.
3. Clear/excavate (a little), the ground gutter around the church to ensure it flows as envisaged
4. Excavate and potentially replace the underground rainwater pipework and take to a new soakaway(s).

Obviously the above will involve, DAC approval / Archdeacon approval, production of drawings and a specification and formal pricing. As you know we had indicative costs from PJE which we could get formalised in relation to a spec and drawings.

The above will of course incur fees. What is the current state of play in the provision of finance for the above? Of course I would not proceed without authority to do so. Presently I have just kept a record of my time. Enclosed with this information is a small account from my visit to the church and production of this information to date. Also enclosed is PJE's invoice for the trial hole and drainage inspection. This was reduced from their earlier quote as a result of not being able to run the camera through.

Yours sincerely,

Calvin Weaver BA(Hons) DipArch EED, RIBA  
Encs



