

[NEWS](#) [COMPETITIONS](#) [BUILDINGS](#) [SPECIFICATION](#) [PRACTICE](#) [MAGAZINES](#) [LIBRARY](#) [PODCASTS](#) [EVENTS](#)[Building studies](#) [House](#) [Housing](#) [Retrofit & sustainable](#) [Small project & extension](#) [Office](#) [Education](#)

FIRST LOOK

Eric Parry Architects renovates Grade II*-listed church near Waterloo

6 OCTOBER 2022 • BY ROB WILSON. PHOTOGRAPHY BY DIRK LINDNER



1/20

performance and meeting space

Eric Parry Architects (EPA) was appointed in 2010 and worked closely with vicar of St John's, the Reverend Canon Giles Goddard, to develop a brief centred on the principle of an 'open welcome'.

The church was designed in the 19th century by Francis Bedford with 20th century interventions made by TF Ford, following bombing during the Second World War. The church was rededicated in the early 1950s as the official church of the Festival of Britain, when the important altar paintings by the German-Jewish refugee Hans Feibusch were installed, which have now undergone expert conservation.

The church entrance has been remodelled, with improved accessibility and openness, with the nave now immediately visible from the street through a glazed central door and acoustic screen.

ADVERTISEMENT

In the large, open nave, which originally was flanked by two balconies, EPA has inserted a series of side panels, creating a series of faceted storey-high forms, which serve to break down the scale of the nave and help draw a focus to the sanctuary, setting off the restored murals. The panelled forms also create modelled niches to each side, one a new baptistry with re-sited 1824 font and one a new prayer chapel. In addition they work like theatrical props to frame the use of the church for performances as well as providing storage.



The central sanctuary includes solid oak furniture commissioned from specialist ecclesiastical furniture-maker Luke Hughes.

In the crypt, fully accessible for the first time via the installation of a new lift, temporary modifications were cleared away to create a variety of new spaces for

[NEWS](#) [COMPETITIONS](#) [BUILDINGS](#) [SPECIFICATION](#) [PRACTICE](#) [MAGAZINES](#) [LIBRARY](#) [PODCASTS](#) [EVENTS](#)[Building studies](#) [House](#) [Housing](#) [Retrofit & sustainable](#) [Small project & extension](#) [Office](#) [Education](#)

An installation of 60 solar panels covering almost all the south-facing roof has the capacity to generate up to 30 kWh. The airtightness of the building has been improved too by the installation of a new internal lobby space separated from the nave by glass screens, which reduces heat lost to warm air circulation, as well as the replacement of glazing and repair of windows. Acoustic and thermal insulation has been installed in the nave's ceiling.

Heat recovery ventilation units have been installed alongside the infrastructure for the future installation of air-sourced heat pumps, in anticipation of improvements in technology and affordability to make these viable. The intention is to move St John's towards the Church of England's commitment to achieve net zero carbon by 2030.

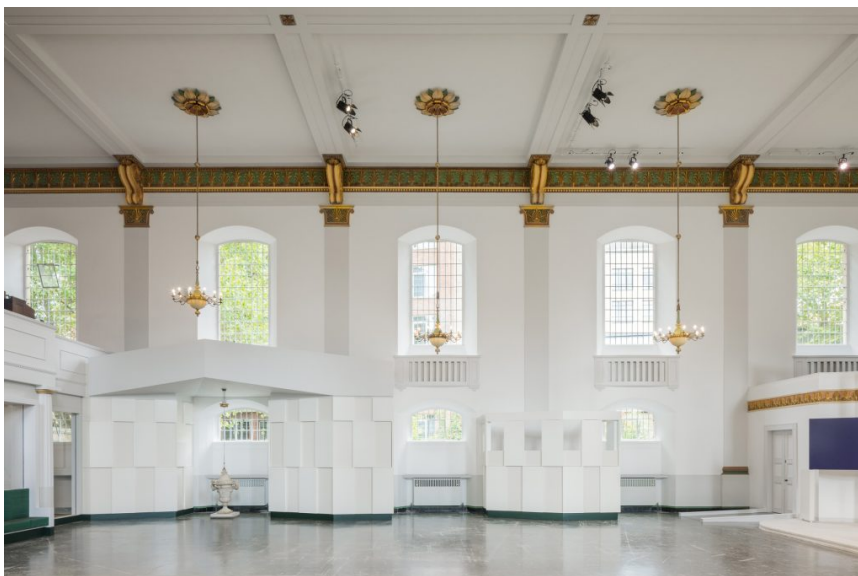
ADVERTISEMENT

The upgraded facilities are intended to support cultural, charitable and commercial activities within the nave and the crypt, supported by improved accessibility and acoustics, a new foyer area and new WCs.

The crypt will provide a home for St John's charity The Bridge at Waterloo, which focuses on homelessness and employment training, as well as provide space for resident or semi-resident local community and arts organisations.

The nave, already well-known concert venue will now be able to host year-round cultural events, but can also function as a venue for corporate and private hire, revenues from which will cross-subsidise charitable work.

Of the £5.5 million of funds raised to complete the renovations, more than £1 million came from the congregation – with other major grants came from the London Borough of Lambeth, the Big Lottery Reaching Communities Fund and The Mayor of London's Good Growth Fund.



remarkable life of the church, nearly 200 years after its dedication. St John's is a place for worship and spiritual enrichment amid the hubbub of one of London's busiest districts. These renovations enhance the facilities of the church to meet its ambitions of inclusivity, creativity and openness and play a role in the cultural, social and spiritual life of Waterloo.

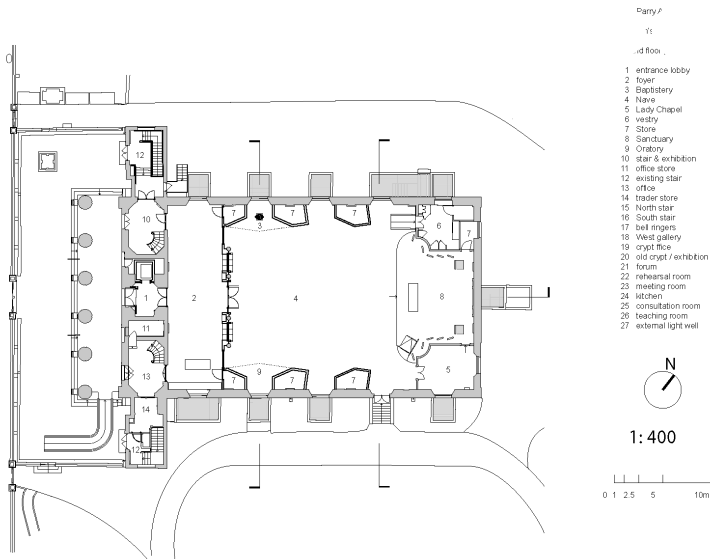
The church contains significant heritage from phases of construction in both the 19th and 20th centuries. This most recent renovation preserves and enhances those assets, preparing the church for the post-carbon era by putting in place the infrastructure for net zero carbon operation.

The St John's Waterloo project, and our earlier work at St Martin-in-the-Fields in Trafalgar Square, demonstrate the role architecture has to play in creating uses and functions that support the role of the church in the community, provide additional income and secure the long-term future of historic buildings.

The practice consulted with the congregation, and with community, statutory and local interest groups, including Historic England, Twentieth Century Society, Lambeth LBC and the Church Buildings Council to ensure that the brief and subsequent designs met the complex and overlapping needs of all users of the church.

The project anticipates public realm changes to the wider Waterloo roundabout area, which although currently in consultation, are likely to significantly increase the amount of pedestrian space and ameliorate the impact of traffic at this major road junction.

Eric Parry, principal and founder, Eric Parry Architects



Client's view

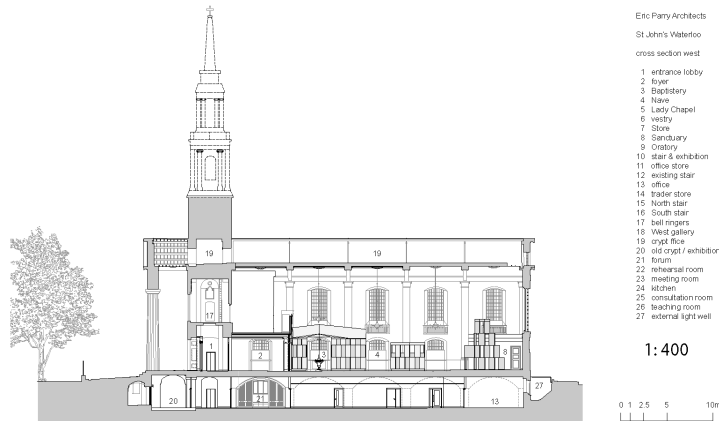
The renovation of St John's has been a huge and challenging project seen through with hard work and the utmost dedication of all involved. So it's thrilling to feel the building coming to life as we reopen. The congregation and the local community are already taking the new St John's to their hearts as they discover how much more accessible, inspiring and welcoming the

NEWS COMPETITIONS **BUILDINGS** SPECIFICATION PRACTICE MAGAZINES LIBRARY PODCASTS EVENTS

Building studies House Housing Retrofit & sustainable Small project & extension Office Education

bombed in the war and rebuilt to serve a different Britain in 1951. Once again restored and transformed, we can be here to meet the needs of the diverse communities around us and to play our part in the city for another 200 years.

Revd Canon Giles Goddard, vicar of St John's



Project data

Completion 2022

Construction cost £5.5 million

Architect Eric Parry Architects

Client St John's Church, Waterloo

Structural engineer Alan Baxter

M&E consultant OR Consulting

QS Academy

Heritage consultant Alan Baxter

Theatre consultant CharcoalBlue

Acoustic consultant Gillieron Scott Acoustics

Fire consultant The Fire Surgery

Approved building inspector Assent Building Control

Main contractor Buxton Building Contractor

COMMENT AND SHARE

TAGS

CHURCH ERIC PARRY ARCHITECTS RESTORATION WATERLOO

You might also be interested in...

NEWS COMPETITIONS **BUILDINGS** SPECIFICATION PRACTICE MAGAZINES LIBRARY PODCASTS EVENTS

Building studies House Housing Retrofit & sustainable Small project & extension Office Education

**Chippenham church with 1960s
Frank Roper artworks listed**

**Join us for the AJ Small Projects
Sustainability webinar**

**ScottWhitbyStudio to revamp
listed Church of England offices**

**Moderne revival: VEEM,
Eindhoven, by Caruso St John**

Most popular

1. Big names and emerging stars shortlisted for Essex new town
2. Grenfell architect bears primary responsibility for fire, barrister tells
3. MEP plan in £14m legal battle over defects at Manchester University building
4. Purcell wins go ahead to restore listed Victorian arches on Brighton's seafront
5. Appleton architect who made antisemitic comments to
6. University of Birmingham 2045 masterplan
7. We Made That completes makeover of Walthamstow 'Beer Mile'
8. From Kristin Scott Thomas to Julia Barfield: Who is saying what about M&S Oxford Street
9. Homes England launches £200m framework
10. Classical architecture body ousts founder and chair Robert Adam

One comment

Robert Wakeham

8 October 2022 at 9:22 am

Has removing the balconies changed the character of the naive for the better? – I wonder what motivated that decision.

[Log in to Reply](#)

[Report this comment](#)

Leave a comment

SIGN IN

or

REGISTER

a new account to join the discussion.

Please remember that the submission of any material is governed by our [Terms and Conditions](#) and by submitting material you confirm your agreement to these Terms and Conditions. Links may be included in your comments but HTML is not permitted.

NEWS	COMPETITIONS	BUILDINGS	SPECIFICATION	PRACTICE	MAGAZINES	LIBRARY	PODCASTS	EVENTS
Building studies	House	Housing	Retrofit & sustainable	Small project & extension	Office	Education		
CONTACT US	FAQS	ARCHIVE						
WHY SUBSCRIBE	TIP US OFF	TERMS AND CONDITIONS						
ADVERTISE WITH US	SPONSORED CONTENT	PRIVACY POLICY						