

Facilities Case Study: Wallingford St Mary le More: 2008-2010

St Mary's, Wallingford occupies a central position in the town, and has a thriving ministry within the community. It was felt by 2007, however, that improvements to the interior were needed, since the position of the church lent great scope for wider community use, but the interior of the church was not able to supply this. Inside, the church was darkly and poorly lit, and the 1908s tower screen and north aisle gallery were unsympathetic, inadequate and having a detrimental impact on the rest of the interior. It was proposed to remove these undesirable additions, together with most of the pews and other items of unused furniture which were considered to be cluttering the building. New floors, seating, dais, lighting, heating, WC and Kitchen facilities were proposed which would equip the church to meet the modern day needs of the community.

The kitchen particularly was important in these plans, since it was intended to offer café service, and the space freed up in the north aisle was to accommodate chairs and tables for the café. The position of the kitchen area in the north aisle is discreet, and the café area reads visually as a separate space. The cafe has been most successful within the community, as the photograph demonstrates. When not needed, the chairs and tables can be easily removed and the kitchen units and surfaces are able to be ingeniously shut away in a cupboard-style arrangement.

