

Project Profile

St. Nicholas Church, Bristol



The Church of St Nicholas is one of Bristol's most recognisable and prominent churches within the 'Old City' area. Rebuilt over the medieval crypt in the 1760s, the Georgian church is situated against the line of the city walls and next to one of the former city gates. The interior was severely damaged during a bombing raid in 1940, and subsequently, the roof and nave were reconstructed in the 1970s by the local authority and the building was used for a short time as a museum before being used as offices and storage.



The project to repair and refurbish the Grade II* listed Church for renewed youth-oriented worship following decades of disuse has included 100% renewal of all building services, access improvements, strengthening of the modern roof structure; renewal of the ceiling and substantial upgrading of fire egress from the modern gallery level while removing detracting modern elements from the historic church volume. Following a detailed condition survey by MFA, essential high priority repair works to the fabric have also been undertaken.



Funded by the Church of England Strategic Development Fund, the project was on a very tight and finite budget and fast track programme that demanded highly creative, cost-effective solutions. A lightweight, non-combustible acoustic ceiling was created out of fire-rated birch plywood to minimise cost and installation time whilst reflecting the historic ceiling form. Creative, cost-effective solutions for the services were also developed with SGA to utilise very low-cost radiators and light fittings that were designed to work creatively with the ceiling and window grids. The design of the new ceiling and fittings was enabled by a close working relationship with the contractor's joinery shop.



MFA were lead consultants and worked closely with the Bristol; DAC and Historic England from the outset to ensure that the tight programme for the work was maintained.