



# **Hive Community Hub**

Formerly

Trinity Congregational Church 1837 - 1956

Christ Church Congregational Church 1956 – 1975

Christ Church United Reformed Church 1975 - 2021

School Street, Sudbury CO10 2HA

## **A Historic England Level 2 report**

Prepared by The Trustees of HIVE

Charity Registration No.1165566.

November 2023



## **Contents**

<b>Pages 3 - 33</b>	Pictorial views of the current building
<b>Page 34</b>	Outline description of the building
<b>Page 35</b>	Important changes to the building over time
<b>Page 36-7</b>	The organ
<b>Page 38</b>	Bibliography



## Pictorial Record of the building



The church taken from the south west

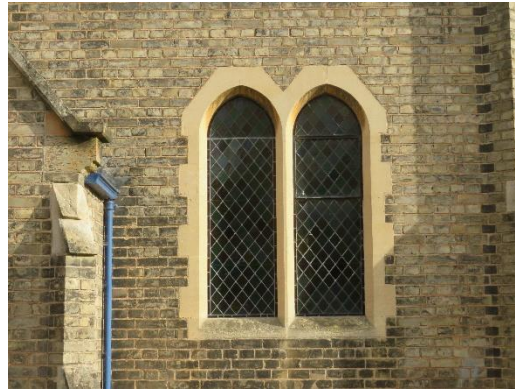


The church from the north west, showing the front entrance with the 1891 front extension.

The church taken from the south west showing the original 1836 red brick church behind.



## External views of front façade windows



Similar windows either side of main doors



Left of main window



Right of main window



Upper right of main window



## External views of front doors



Main doors



Left hand door



Right hand door

## Spire





## View of original 1837 building

View of south elevation showing white brick 1891 extension on front and 1960's extension on rear. The original rectangular church in red brick with white brick window reveals.



Front white brick 1891 extension with window



Upper windows



Lower windows



1960's extension





## Windows in 1960's extension



'Green Room'



Anthony Wheeler Room Fire Door



Anthony Wheeler Room side window



Kitchen window

## Courtyard entrance to Friar's Hall



Main entrance and door to cellar



Men's toilet window

## Windows in courtyard leading to main entrance



Lower



Upper

On east side of north tower



On north side of north tower



## Exterior views of the old Sunday School Room - Friars Hall



North east facing wall of 1890's extension to old Sunday School room, mirroring the existing 1830's schoolroom behind. And see later internal views

Friars Hall from the north side showing the double pitched roof. It is believed that the right hand pitched section was part of the original 1830s build with the left hand section added as part of the 1890s extension to the main church.





## Cellar

Access to the cellar is gained by the exterior door next to the Friars Hall entrance (see photo on Page 7). The cellar is dry and has two main rooms one which houses the gas central heating boiler and the other the pump for the organ.

There is a secondary staircase that exits on the south west side of the building and which has a window at ground level.



Main stairs down to cellar



Stairs to South West elevation



Window from cellar to ground level



Store room with ground level window



## Inside the Joy Abbott Hall (the Church)

View towards stage  
from gallery



View towards front  
from stage showing  
gallery

View towards  
front showing  
pews

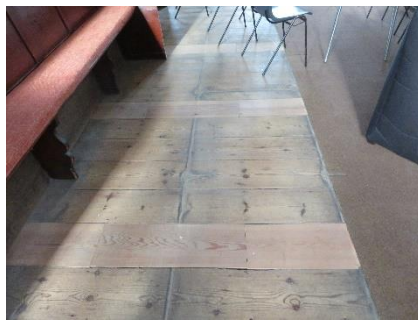


## Pews and radiators in church

Some pews at the front have already been taken out but the first photo above the original setting



Pews



Flooring



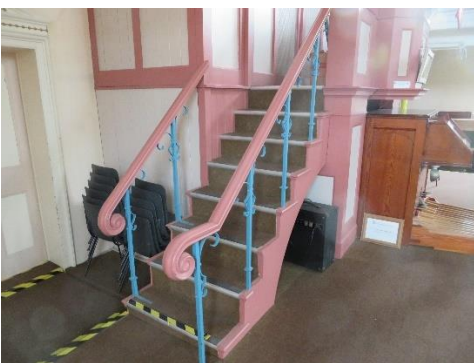
Radiators – there are 8 of these at the ends of various rows of pews





## The Stage Area

Further photos of the organ follow in that section





## The Vestibule



### Flooring



Internal doors to main front doors



Internal view of inside of front doors



In a very plain building this small piece of decorated ironmongery in the vestibule of the church stands out. It is believed to be a signalling device between two parts of the building.

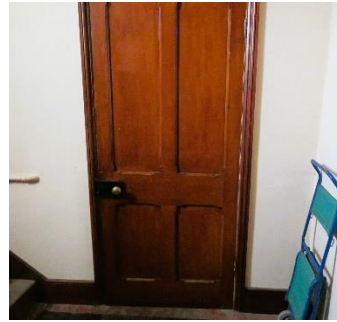








## Balcony



Door from balcony to stairwell (same other side)



North side looking towards stage



North side looking towards front of building - South side is a mirror of the north



Rear section of balcony

## Views of ground floor lobby and stairs of side towers

At either side of the vestibule are doors to the stairs up to the balcony (see photo on Page 14).

Both sides have the same structure, although it is mirrored. The ground floor of each stairwell has a storage area which is planned to be converted into a toilet.



Small storage area to left under stairs



Small storage area to right under stairs



Interior of small front door



Flooring



## Doors into Friars Hall from church and walkway into Friar's Hall



Left hand when looking at stage



Right hand when looking at stage



Walkway looking towards 'Green Room'

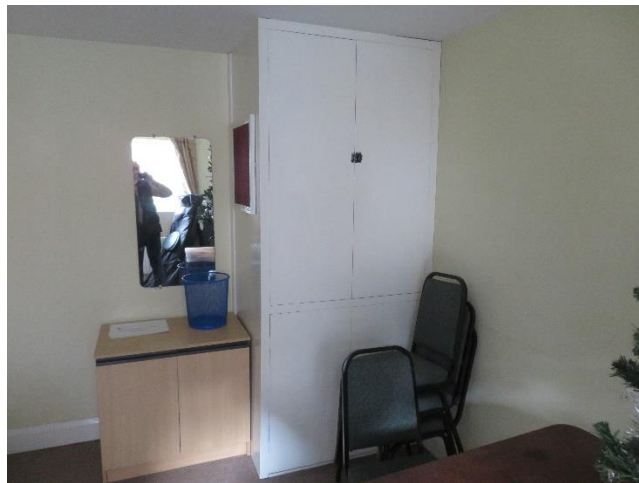


Walkway looking into Friar's Hall





## 'Green Room'





## Friar's Hall



View of Hall looking north



View of hall looking East



This view is of the inside of the Old Sunday School photo on Page 8, showing how the windows have been bricked up and plastered.

## Friar's Hall (cont.)



Fire door to rear



Radiator style



View to right of east wall



Flooring



View towards walkway at south end of hall



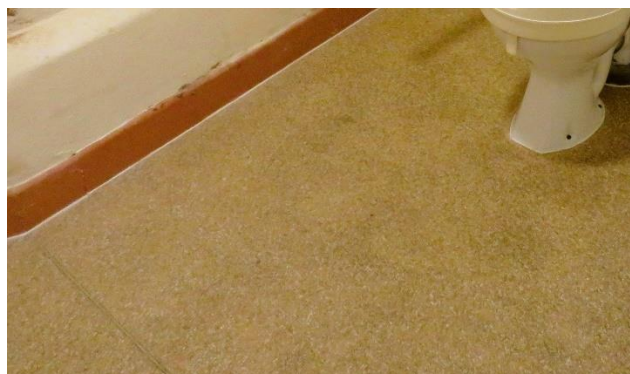
Radiator on kitchen (east) wall



## Disabled toilet (off Hall)



Disabled Toilet door on left – kitchen on right



Flooring



## Kitchen



Serving hatches to right hand side and rear walls



## Kitchen Serving Hatches



Serving hatch to Hall inside kitchen



Serving hatch in Hall



Serving hatch to Wheeler Room inside kitchen



Serving hatch in Wheeler Room





## Anthony Wheeler Room

Situated in 1960's extension



Doors to Hall



Storage in Room, under Green Room



Flooring



## Roof trusses

Original roof trusses for the 1830s school room now called Friars Hall.



Roof trusses of the 1890s extension. Finished in a similar style and colour to the original church building.





## Ladies Toilets (off Hall)



Window overlooking entrance lobby



Two cubicles



Rooflight with Georgian Wire Glass





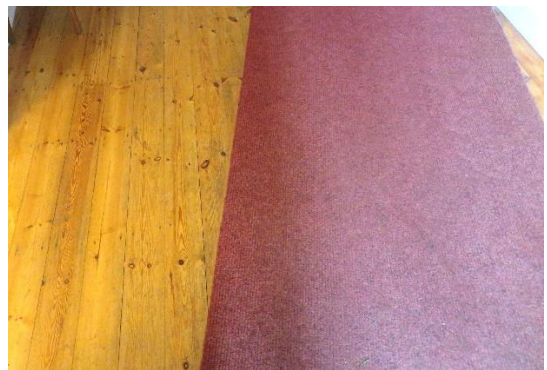
## Front Entrance Lobby



Doors to entrance lobby from Hall



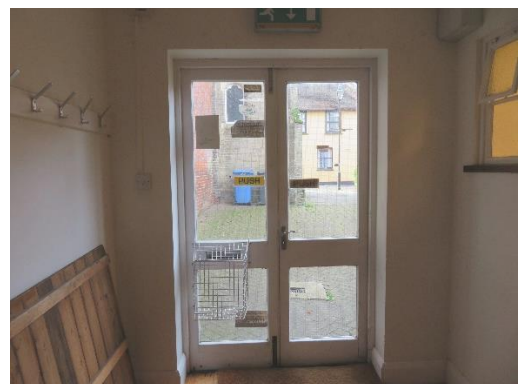
Looking from lobby towards Hall Men's toilet door on left



Flooring



Looking from lobby to front doors



Front Doors

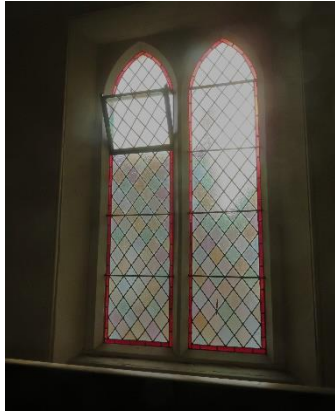


## Men's Toilet (Off Lobby)



Flooring in both toilets

## Internal views of windows



Balcony level, same both sides – left or right fanlight

South tower stairwell - top floor  
facing front



South tower stairwell –top floor  
facing south



Vestibule windows (each side of  
main doors)



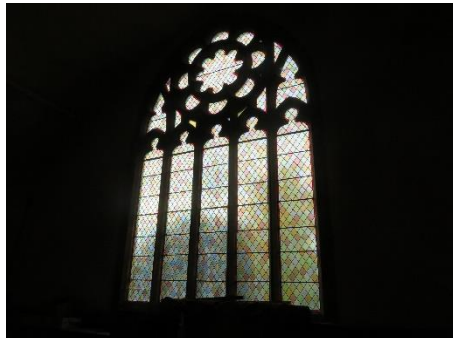




## Windows (Cont.)



Windows on top floor of north tower stairwell – left hand one faces front



Main front window



All lower windows in church



## Windows (Cont.)



'Green Room' facing south



Anthony Wheeler Room facing south



Anthony Wheeler Room facing east looking at neighbour's wall



Kitchen window facing east looking at neighbour's wall

## Windows (Cont.)



Disabled toilet facing east looking at neighbour's wall



Men's toilet looking out onto courtyard



Men's toilet looking out onto neighbour's back wall



One of two windows in ladies toilet facing north overlooking neighbour's back garden fence/wall

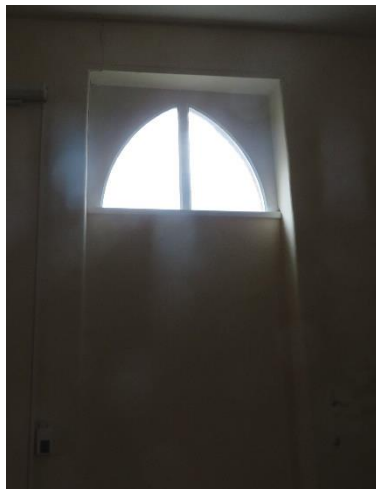




## Windows (Cont.)



Windows in Hall facing north over neighbour's garden fence



High window in hall facing west



## Outline description of the building

Trinity Church was founded in 1837 by a group of 15 secessionists led by Emily Gainsborough (the artist's great niece). Trinity Congregational Church was built on the site of a mediaeval tenter-yard.

Immediately to the north had been the chapel of St Sepulchre (12<sup>th</sup> to 16<sup>th</sup> C). This might have been built on the model of the Holy Sepulchre copied in the round church at Little Maplestead and erected by the Knights Hospitallers.

It is thought to have been pulled down during the Reformation leaving only the subterranean remains of the building. The present Gainsborough Street was formally Sepulchre Street, named after the church.

It is recorded that when the foundations of Trinity Church were being dug, several human skeletons were found, no doubt from the mediaeval burial ground.

The original church building was built in red brick with a slate roof, 5 bays long, with pilaster strips between each bay. A small section of the 1838 facade which is visible shows that it was in white brick and tuck pointed. The side windows, confined to the 3 centre bays, were sashed before 1902. These sash windows which had 2 arched timber lights were replaced in 1902 with latticed windows to match those the 1891 front extension. The white brick reveals and first floor arches are original.

The Gothic Front, in gault brick with stone dressings survives unaltered. It is symmetrical, apart from a gabled tower to the left, from which rises a louvered bell turret with slate-clad spire.

The church was last decorated in the 1970s in a colour scheme that was prevalent in late Victorian times and it is noted that the accent colours match the colours in the glass in the side windows of the church.

Against the rear wall is a large lean-to, rebuilt in 1966; this is now linked to the original 19<sup>th</sup> century former school room to form a large hall.

There is a cellar which originally ran the whole length of the church and the original arched cellar windows can just be seen from the exterior.

Access to the dry cellar is via a door near the entrance to Friars Hall with a matching entrance on the South side. The cellar was much reduced in size in the 1970s and now contains the central heating boiler.



## Important changes to the building over time

Year	Event
1837	The original church founded.
1838 - 39	Trinity church was built and the first service took place in 1838. Originally there was no balcony, the seating being on the ground floor only and in box pews. The original schoolroom seems to have been built at this time behind and to the left of the church.
1856	A three sided balcony was added and further work needed after ceiling collapse. The balcony is carried on fluted iron columns with stylised leaf capitals. The balcony seating of 1856 is of stained pine with mahogany capping to the upright panelled backs and partitions.
1865	In the main church, box pews were replaced by open benches in a similar style to the 1856 pews in the gallery.
1891	The front was built in gault brick with stone dressings and incorporates new staircases to the balcony on either side and the rear area was enlarged for the choir and an organ. It was designed by the then Minister, the Revd. Charles Henry Vine, and became the model for his church in Ilford. It is thought that the schoolroom was doubled in size at this time by replacing one wall and the addition of a beam giving a double roofed structure
1902	The double sashed side windows of the church were altered to be more in keeping with the new front of the church.
1911	A new 2 manual Conacher organ with rostrum pulpit painted in matching colours and new choir stalls were installed in the front of the sanctuary (now the stage area). The bench seats of the pre-1911 choir were installed in the rear gallery.
1960s	The entrance vestibule was widened and a glass screen added. The communion rails and choir stalls were removed.
1966	Against the rear wall of the church is a large lean-to, which replaced an original lean-to building rebuilt in 1966; this is now linked to the 19 <sup>th</sup> century former schoolroom to form a large hall. Toilets were added at the front of the schoolroom and a new entrance was added to Friars Hall.
2017	The Church closed for worship and it was put on the open market
2018	The small original organ was removed from front balcony area and installed in another church
2019	Planning permission was obtained by Hive for a change of use into a multi-use Community Centre
2021	The property was bought by Hive and renamed as the Hive Community Hub





## The organ



The two-manual Conacher organ which dominates the front of the church was installed in 1911 by the Huddersfield firm of Peter Conacher, using a then recently invented system of blowing air, known as tubular-pneumatic action.

In this system, each possible combination of note and stop has a feeder-pipe leading from the blowing system (located in the cellar) up to the relevant pipe. As the player chooses a particular note on the keyboard from a particular rank, air is directed through the relevant feeder-pipe to the organ pipe in the case above which sounds the note.

In recent years many of these had sagged and become distorted, causing some obstruction to the flow of air and thus to the effectiveness of the instrument. The organ also displays one of the earliest examples of the use of stop-keys rather than draw-stops for selecting the registration, invented by Joseph Conacher in 1908. He died in 1910 so this is one of his last designs.

Thanks to the grant from the National Heritage Memorial Fund, the old system was fully restored during the winter of 1997-98.

Over the years the organ has given excellent service, having been used extensively for public worship, concerts and recitals. Its scope is perfect for its setting and it complements perfectly the acoustic in which it is set.

It was cleaned in the mid-1950s, and some builder's dirt had to be removed after structural alterations in 1991-2. No previous restoration had been necessary other than day-to-day minor repairs to motors etc. as the leather has perished.

The result of this is the survival of a substantial inheritance of the original material, which enhances the value and authenticity of the instrument, hence our interest in having preserved it in its original form.



## TECHNICAL DETAILS OF THE ORGAN

### Current Specification

#### **Great**

Open Diapason 8'  
Dulciana 8'  
Lieblich gedakt 8'  
Hamonic Flute 4'  
Principal 4'  
Fifteenth 2'

#### **Swell**

Violin Diapason 8  
Rhor Flote 8'  
Salicional 8'  
Voix Celestes 8'  
Gemshorn 4'  
Piccolo 2'  
Cornupaeen 8'  
Oboe 8'

#### **Pedal**

Grand Boudon 16'  
Flute Bass 8'

#### Couplers

Swell to Great  
Swell to Pedal  
Great to Pedal  
Swell Octave  
Swell sub-Octave

#### Accessories

3 thumb pistons to Swell duplicated by toe pistons. Balanced Swell pedal. 3 thumb pistons to Great duplicated by toe pistons.

#### Compass

Manual CC A58 notes

Pedal CCC F30 notes



## **Bibliography**

'Two into one' A brief history of two Sudbury churches and their relationship with the Gainsborough family, by Anthony Wheeler

The Heritage site - A history of the church building in School Street by Christopher Proffitt

The Organ at Christ Church by Roger Green

Copies of these works are available from the Hive website

## **Appendix 1**

**Site plans and plans of 2023 building can be loaded onto a separate file by request**