

Gwernaffield Church N. Wales, Victorian encaustic & geometric tile restoration.

The Grade 2 listed Church was originally built Circa 1760 it burnt down in a fire around 1790 and was rebuilt in the early 1800's, the church floor tiles were put down as & when the church had enough funds as the tiles are from different time periods.

The tiled floors had suffered water damage from a leaking roof.

Also a new heating system had dried out the floor to such an extent that the screed had shrunk causing the tiles to buckle or heave.



Victorian encaustic & geometric tiled floor showing water damage.

In other parts of the church tiled areas had been badly re-laid by rank amateurs a common problem with churches as members of the congregation offer to help and often cause more damage as they lack the necessary skill-set. Often using neat cement and re-laying the tiles back into position but not removing / grinding down the screed to a sufficient depth to accept the replaced tile & adhesive, so the tile is raised slightly above the surrounding tiles and as a consequence is caught by heels etc and eventually cracks and gets thrown away and the resulting space is filled in with unsightly mortar/cement.

The porch tiles red & black geometric (not shown) were all lifted and re-fitted on a new screeded base & laid using a flexible based adhesive & grout.

P2.

Within the main aisles and in front of the choir stalls plus a small section on the altar floor approx 22 sq metres of new Victorian reproduction geometric tiles from Platts of Stoke and re-claim original Victorian geometric tiles from stock were used to restore the missing /damaged sections.

We lifted approx 20 sq metres of tiles that were loose in patches in the aisles and choir stalls area these tiles were loose so they needed to have the edges & backs cleaned by striking the stuck-on mortar with sharpened chisels or heavy duty scrapers.

Parts of the main aisle had been used to bury prominent citizens so those areas had to be restored with care as didn't want to disturb the containers.

One section of the floor had collapsed into the crypt below as the joist had rotted, this was replaced and we put a metal plate into the supporting stonework below to allow screed to be used to build the floor back-up until the tiles could be re-fixed.

Some sections had been taken up and then re-laid out of sequence, we see that a lot on our contracts and it never ceases to amaze me that people re-lay the tiles in some cases quite well but neglect to put them in the correct sequence given that the pattern is a repeat and so there will be examples of the correct pattern.



Floor prior to cleaning the tiles lean to the right that is the original setting.

P3.

Below pictures of the altar floor tiles showing missing or damaged tiles.



The Victorian encaustic & geometric tiles on the altar floor prior to restoration.

The above tiles are a better stamp of tile than that used in the main aisles and are a finer finish the main aisle tiles are of a coarser finish and the colours are not as definitive.



Victorian encaustic & geometric altar tiles restored.

P4.

Most of the restored sections were tiled using a variety of BAL (building adhesive ltd) products such as CTF 3 this was used anywhere the work was going to be slow and therefore needed a slower setting adhesive, Bal rapid was used in areas that could be fixed in a shorter space of time.



Victorian encaustic & geometric tiled floor fully restored.

This project took just under a month to carry out with a team of four, the PCC for this church was initially that worried about how the floor would look when restored that they had commissioned a carpet! The carpet wasn't used.

To age the new tiles so they blended in we spread a mixture of anthracite grout over all of the tiles left it down overnight with the heating on full, the result after cleaning looked very good.

All the floor sections were cleaned at least five times and sealing took place a couple of day's later using Sheldon research Stone-glow sealer.

This Contract was carried out in 1996.

P5.

Reference for Holy Trinity Church.

PARISHES OF GWERNAFFIELD AND LLANFERRES

**Holy Trinity Church, Gwernaffield
St. Berres' Church, Llanferres**

**Rev. STEPHEN CAWLEY
Vicar**

10th December, 1996.

**The Vicarage,
Cilcain Road,
Gwernaffield,
Mold,
Flintshire CH7 5DQ
(01352) 740205**

To Whom it may concern.

MR. S. J. SINNOTT.

THE HERITAGE TILING AND RESTORATION COMPANY.

Mr. Steven Sinnott and his Company have recently completed the restoration of the tiled floors in the sanctuary, choir and nave of Holy Trinity Parish Church, Gwernaffield.

The appearance of his work may be seen in situ or judged from photographs which support this reference.

We have been pleased with his professional manner and the quality of his work, and we are very satisfied with the end product.

Yours, etc.,

M. V. J. Seaborne

Dr. Malcolm V. J. Seaborne.

Stephen Cawley

Rev'd. Stephen Cawley.