

1.3.2.4 Circulation Space

In addition to the principal spaces within the building, there exist a number of ancillary spaces including offices, WC facilities, reception rooms and circulation spaces. There is also a vast roof space above the first floor ceiling, as well as several small rooms within the tower which was inaccessible during the site visit. These are predominantly located on the lower ground and ground floors of the building, though the circulation spaces extended across all floors of the Tabernacle.

The circulation spaces are located in each of the four corners of the building, providing access from the Vestry through to the ground floor and first floor gallery. The south-west staircase provides access into the spire, and access to the roof space is gained via a trapdoor above the north-west staircase. The stair cores are typically plainly decorated, though they are bright, pleasant spaces lit by large windows and modern hanging light fittings. This has required some modern trunking and services to be fixed to the walls, this is most obtrusive within the small ground floor room leading from the main entrance (south west corner).

The staircases are of a good solid quality and are cantilevered with turned timber balustrading. The south-west and north-west stair cores are the principal routes up to the gallery and into the roof space, and as such are of slightly higher quality finish and of grander scale than those at the rear of the building. The stair handrails are of a simple turned design, and finished with a dark coloured stain on the handrails and painted balustrading beneath, the paintwork on the stairs appears to be regularly renewed. Modern lino flooring and edge strips have been installed onto the stairs, and original tongue and groove dado has been retained. At the base of the south-west staircase, there are some rotten and broken balustrades where damp has caused damage to the timber. Evidence of water ingress and damp are prevalent throughout the south-west stair core.

A number of high quality original features exist within the stair cores, notably the original timberwork from the staircase and doors leading into the gallery. These include attractive original ironmongery and fittings.

A number of WCs have been installed into the north-east and south-east stair cores. One of these is thought to possibly correspond to a historic water closet leading off of the Ministers rooms on the ground floor, though the existing sanitary-ware is modern.

Roof Space

The roof space is a vast open area above the Hall ceiling. Access throughout the roof space can be traversed across beams and planks. The majority of the massive roof beams are presumed to be original, though the roof was re-slatted in 1995-7, and the underside of the modern roof membrane is visible within the roof space. What appears to putlog holes are visible in the walls these are evidence of the original scaffolding used in the construction of the Chapel. A modern roof light had been installed above the access staircase to provide additional light. The nature of the building's design means that this window is not visible externally.

