

HOLY  
WELL  
GLASS



By Appointment to  
Her Majesty The Queen  
Stained Glass Conservators  
Holy Well Glass, Wells

## CONDITION REPORT/ CONSERVATION PROPOSAL

LOCATION: King's College Chapel, Cambridge.

The Side- Chapels

Date of survey: 12<sup>th</sup> November 2020



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## FLOORPLANS – Architects annotation

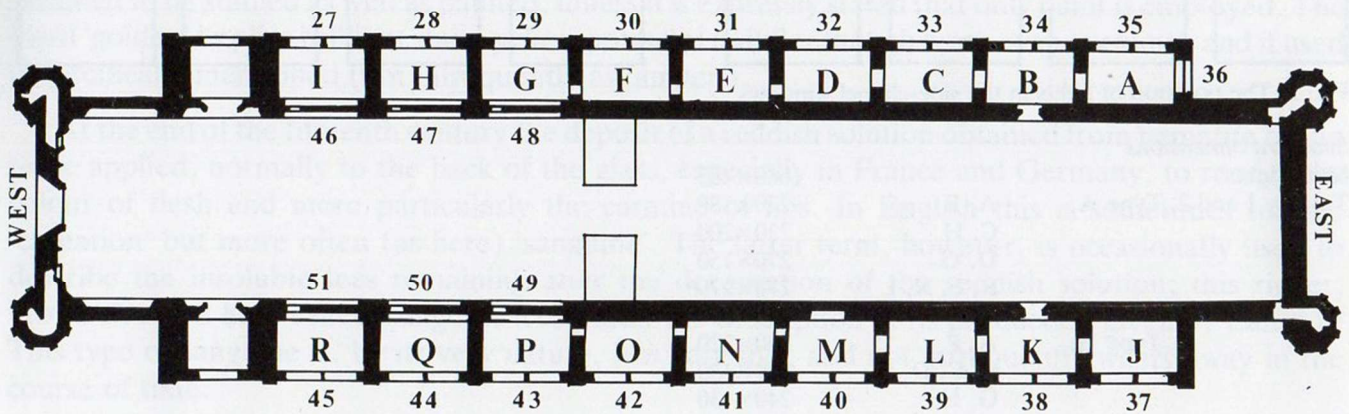
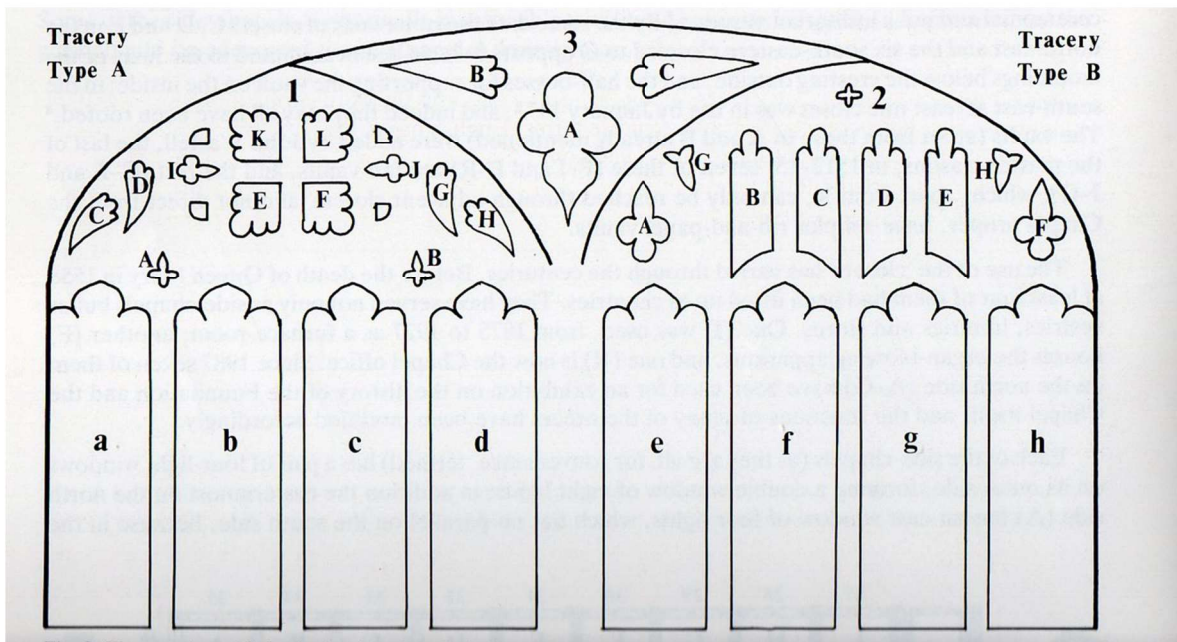


Fig. 1. The notation of the side-chapels and their windows

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## **Narrative:**

The chapel at King's College is rightly recognised as amongst the most beautiful buildings in Europe, and its magnificent scheme of 16<sup>th</sup> century glass to the main windows is an essential element in its architectonic impact.

However, the side-chapels contain a very important and beautiful collection of historic glass, predominantly European glass, but some very early English fragments, introduced by discerning collectors, and agents for the college over an extended period. Glass is positioned in the exterior walls of the chapel, but also to the window openings to the inner chapel walls.

The condition of the glass is generally good, but recent inspections by the chapel's Architect Oliver Caroe has identified some areas of concern. This report concentrates on these condition defects, and proposes remedial works, for which budget costs are provided.

It is straightforward to comment on these immediate problems, and to identify them as a high priority for works. These should be addressed as soon as practicable, however there are more complex issues, identified by the architect, which will require more involved planning, and the design of discrete conservation campaigns for some windows.

Works to these particular areas are driven by the extremely poor condition of the external tracery stonework, which may well necessitate removal of stained glass. Side-chapels J and K are amongst this group. The glass in these chapels is of superb quality, including in chapel J, an unusual depiction of The Holy Hunt, dating from the first years of the 16<sup>th</sup> century, probably from Cologne, and figure of Kings from a Jesse Tree window circa. 1530, which Wayment<sup>1</sup> suggests may be from the cathedral at Auxerre. Chapel K has a fine collection, including the figures of two saints, again probably Cologne school, from the early 16<sup>th</sup> century. There are serious concerns with the condition of the stained glass, but as works to these side- chapels will form part of the medium-term conservation plan for the chapel, immediate works are not detailed.

It should be noted that all of the glass set in the exterior walls is very dirty on both faces. We were asked if the college staff could clean the glass, however we would advise caution. Historic stained glass has kiln fired painted detail, which is kiln fired onto the surface. This can be very delicate, and easily damaged. It would be prudent to ask glass conservators to carry this out, which need not involve huge expense. It should also be borne in mind that a small team of conservators, used to cleaning historic glass, can evaluate condition, and carry out cleaning in a very efficient way, meaning that a cleaning operation could be accomplished in a relatively short time.

The opening casements, which are mainly historic lift-off pintel types, are in poor decorative order. Some works are detailed below to casements with glazing in poor structural condition. These would be re-decorated as part of the works. A price is also given to re-decorate all of the remaining opening casements, which would be prudent maintenance.

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<sup>1</sup> Hilary Wayment's excellent standard work concerning the glass to the side-chapels of 1988- sponsored by the Cambridge Antiquarian Society, and the Provost and Scholars of King's College has provided substantial information regarding the stained glass and its attributions.

### **High Priority Conservation works**

**Note: the provision of light-weight aluminium scaffolding access is included in costs below.**

**For all conservation works detailed a full written and photographic report will be provided.**

### **Chapel H:**

#### **Description:**

**The catch to the casement light in light d, does not engage properly, and requires in-situ filing and re-decoration to fit properly. The right- hand 16<sup>th</sup> century painted and stained windmill to this panel is cracked, with previous resin repair and backing glass broken- probably due to slamming of the casement to close.**

**The inner wall glazing has a lovely crowned pomegranate rebus 15<sup>th</sup> century. This has previous repairs, but has sustained an impact and is markedly bowed, with cracked glass.**

**The light has a horizontal division, meaning that only the lower section need be removed for remedial works.**

#### **Projected works:**

**Remove casement frame by lifting off pintels. Partially dismantle and re-lead, carry out resin edge bond to windmill refit on pintels ensuring that catch engages properly. Remove lower section of inner wall pomegranate panel. Dismantle and re-lead panel, carry out resin repairs to damaged sections, provide 1mm protective backing glass to repaired areas.**

**Condition/ Priority Code – C 3**



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## Chapel G

### Description:

The stained glass to the chapel is in generally good order. The exception is the small-scale tracery of the outer wall glazing. A number of these have what appears to be ancient very slender cast lead comes. The glass is broad glass probably 17<sup>th</sup> century.

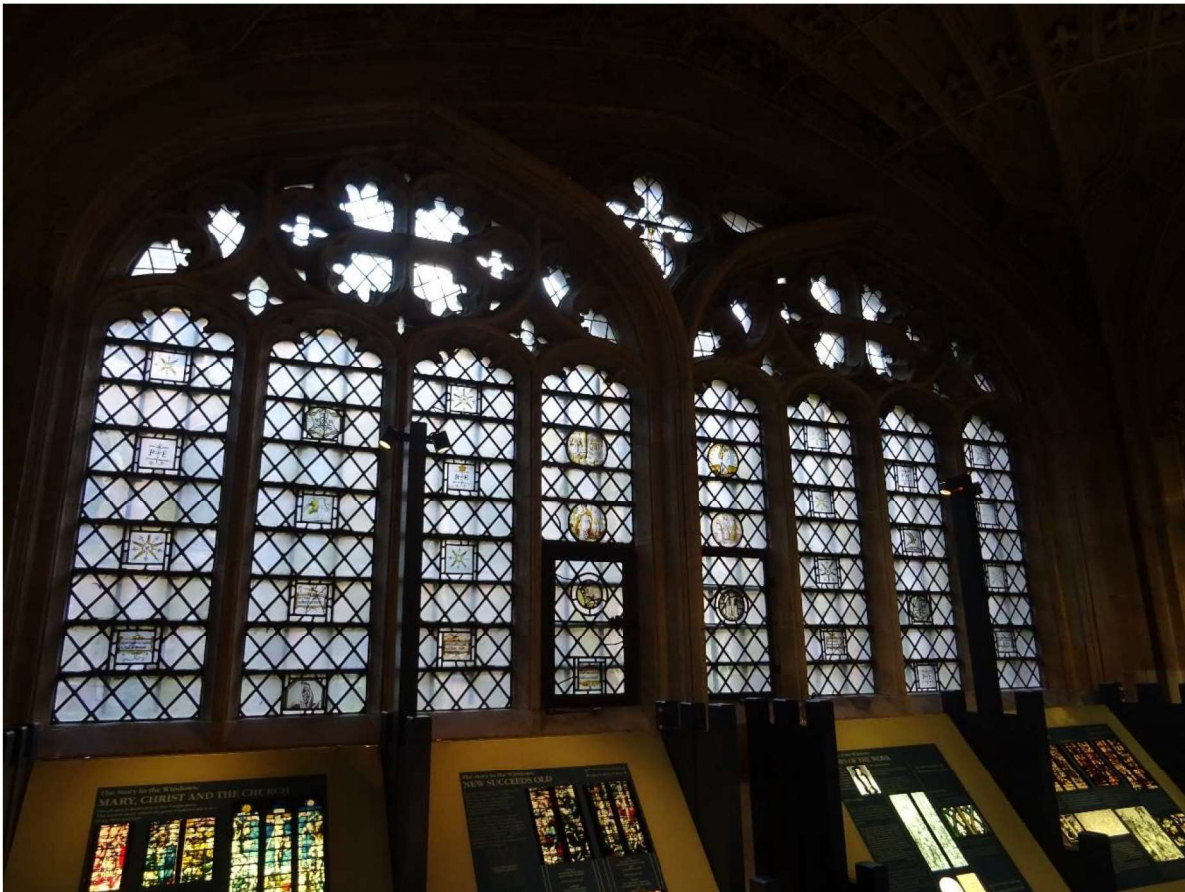
12 of the largest tracery panels should be removed for conservation works when practicable, as they are very bowed and weakened. However, this will be a conservation exercise. The panels should be carefully flattened, and the comes re-cemented to firm them and ensure that they are watertight. Any broken solder joints to be re-soldered. They should not be dissembled. Panels to be re-instated into lime mortar.

The stained glass to the inner wall glazing has superb portrait heads, reputedly by Arnold of Nijmegen. The stained glass sections are in good order, but the plain glazing to the upper tier is rather rickety, with glass rattling in the comes. However, these panels are not set against the weather, and only a watching brief should be kept on them.

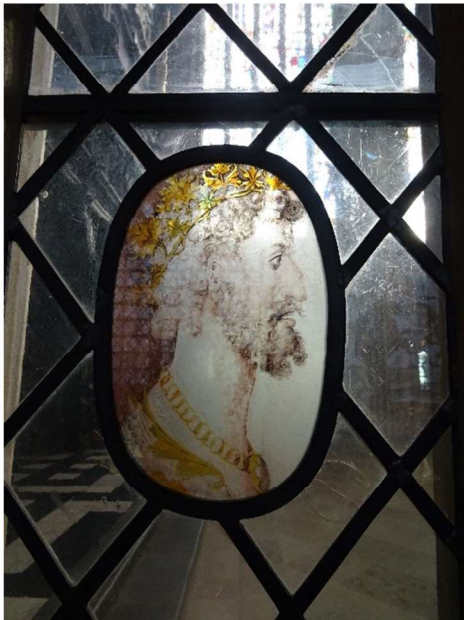
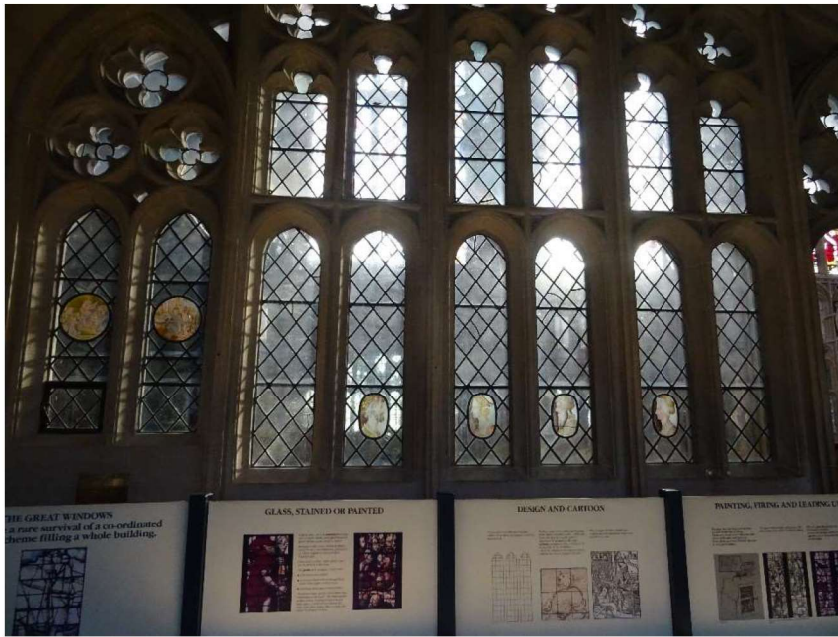
**Projected works:**

**Remove 12no larger tracery panels, temporarily glaze openings. Carefully flatten and re putty conserving early lead. Refix into lime mortar**

**Condition/ Priority Code – C 3**



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## Chapel F

### Description:

The glass to this chapel is generally in good order. The exceptions are the two opening casements to lights d and e, which are in parlous condition. The casement frames are pintel type, and lift off from inside the building. Removal for necessary works is therefore relatively straightforward. The sprung opening stay, which is a rather nice feature, is missing from the casement in light e.

### Projected works:

Remove opening casements to lights d and e, temporarily glaze openings. Remove leaded panels from frames. Decorate frames to specification. Re-lead panels, fix to refurbish frames with hot rivets. Refit on site.

Manufacture and fit new curved stay.

Condition/ Priority Code – D 4





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## Chapel C

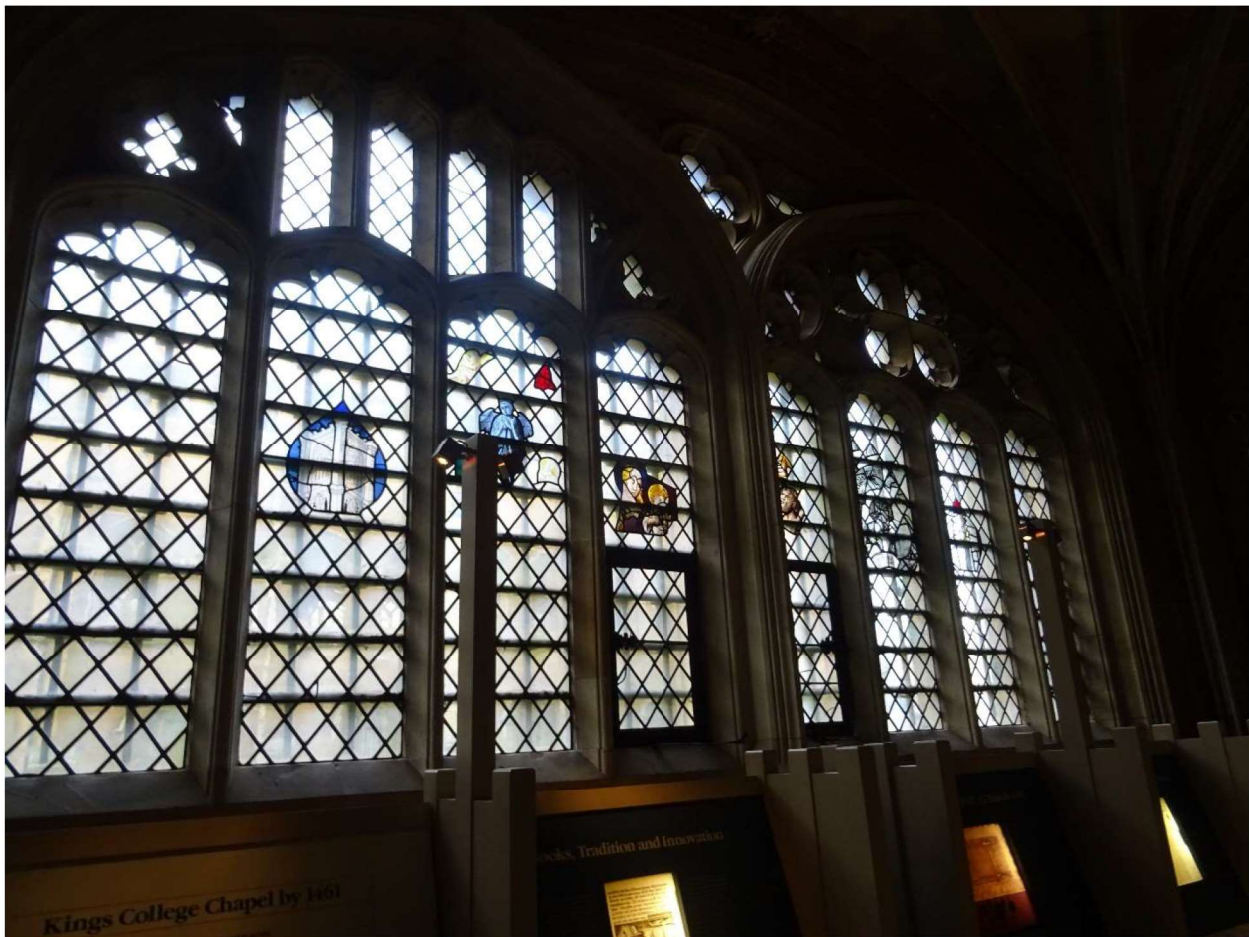
### Description:

The stained glass is generally in good order, however the glazed panels have come loose from the casement frames in lights d & e. This can be successfully dealt with on site by re-siting the perimeter leads, and re-puttying.

### Projected works:

Lift off casement frames to lights d & e, move to van onsite for works. Reposition perimeter lead on frames, remake pot rivets, rehang on pintels

Condition/ Priority Code – C 3



## Chapel A

### Description:

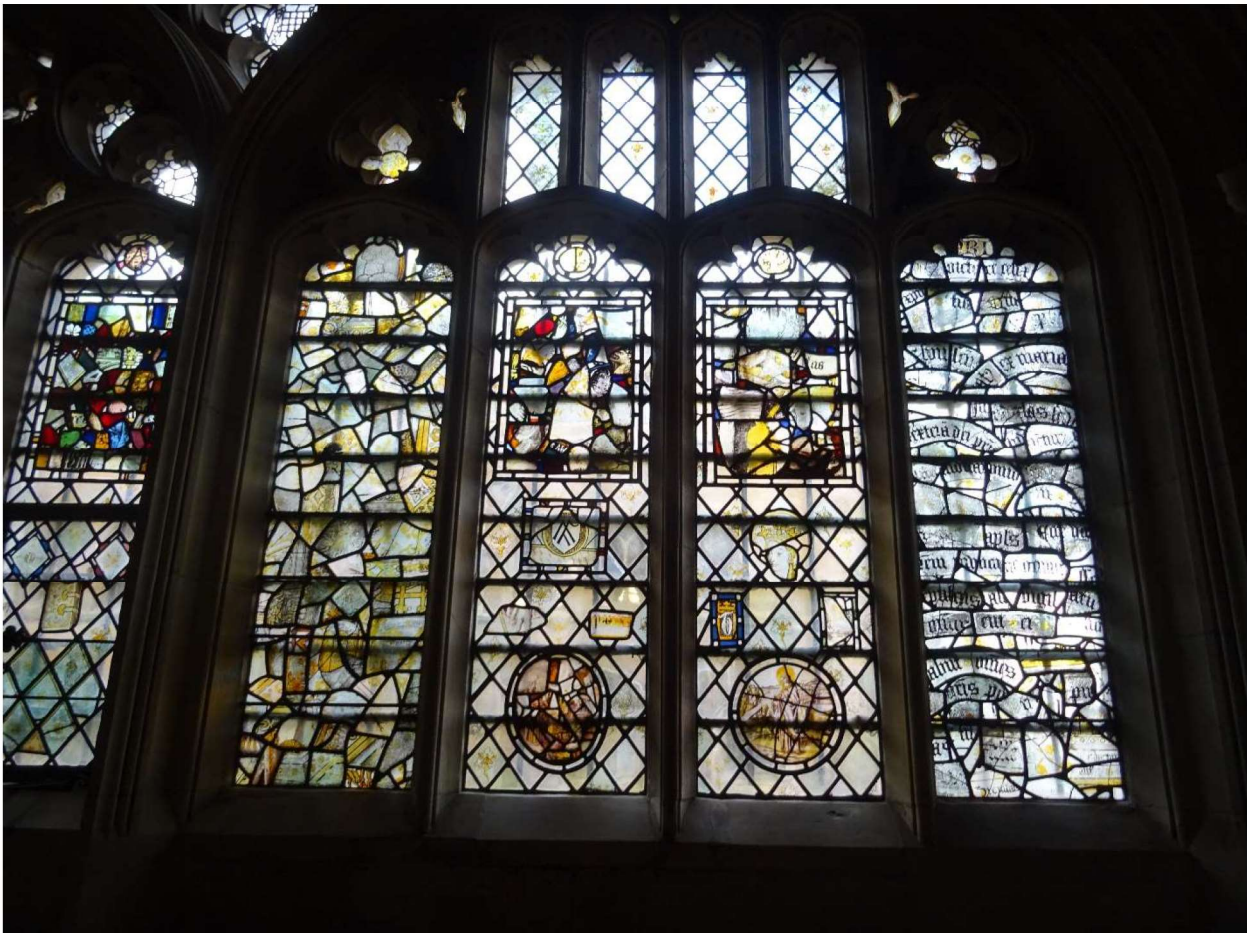
The chapel has two windows. The eastern elevation window is in good order.

The north elevation window is in reasonable condition, the exception being the tracery section illustrated, which has 15<sup>th</sup> century quarries with painted and stained floral motifs. This panel is severely bowed, with glass multi cracked and protruding from the lead.

### Projected works:

Remove tracery b by carefully chipping away perimeter mortar, install temporary glazing, transport to workshop. Dismantle and re-lead panel. Carry out resin repairs to cracked medieval quarries. Re-fix on site into lime mortar.

Condition/ Priority Code – C 3





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## Chapel N

### Description:

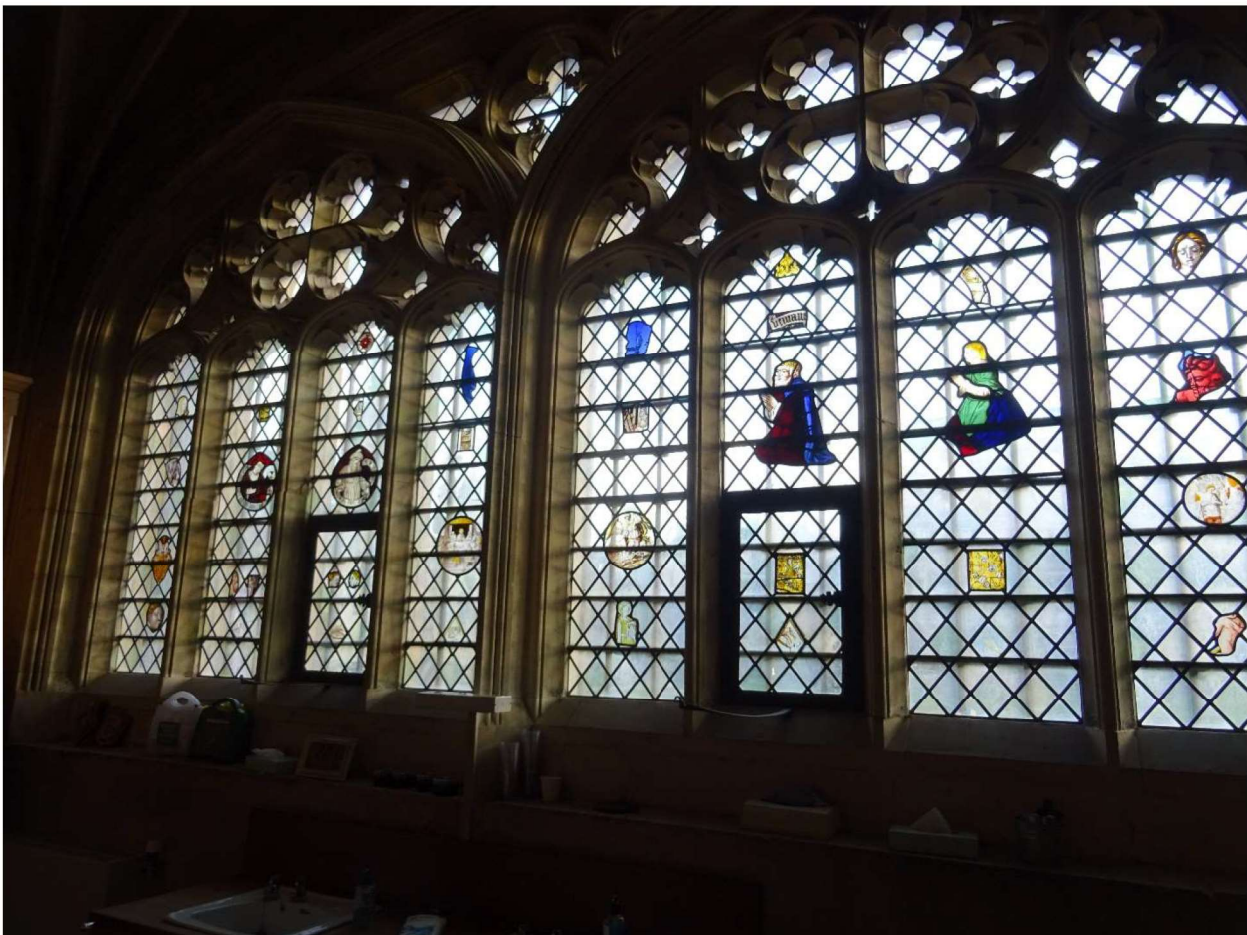
The casement panels in lights c and f are in very poor structural condition, with failed lead work, cracked solder joints, and failure of perimeter leads adjacent to the iron frame.

A fine 15<sup>th</sup> century bird in paint and silver stain, is multi cracked, and requires edge bonding with epoxy resin as apart of the conservation works.

### Projected works:

Remove opening casements to lights c and f, temporarily glaze openings. Remove leaded panels from frames. Decorate frames to specification. Re-lead panels, fix to refurbish frames with hot rivets. Refit on site. Carry out resin repairs to 15<sup>th</sup> century bird quarry

Condition/ Priority Code – D 4





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## Chapel O

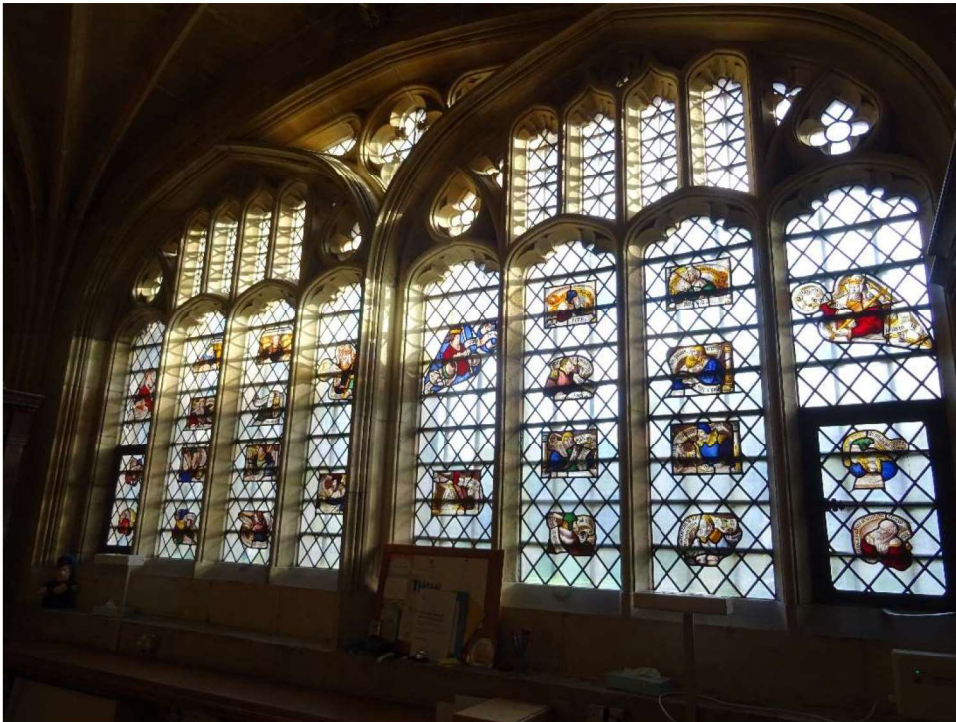
### Description:

The casement panels in lights a and h are in very poor structural condition, with failed lead work, cracked solder joints, and failure of perimeter leads adjacent to the iron frame.

### Projected works:

Remove opening casements to lights a and h, temporarily glaze openings. Remove leaded panels from frames. Decorate frames to specification. Re-lead panels, fix to refurbish frames with hot rivets. Refit on site.

Condition/ Priority Code – D 4





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Appendix 1:

KEY TO CONDITION AND PRIORITY CODES:	CONDITION CODE	PRIORITY CODE
Good condition. Monitor in quinquennial inspections. No works required at present. Incorporate into conservation programme for attention in 20 to 30 years from now.	A	1
Slight structural or technical problem. Monitor in quinquennial inspections. Works required in the medium term. Incorporate into conservation programme for attention in 10 to 15 years from now.	B	2
Structural or technical problems which give cause for concern. Requiring works in the short term. Incorporate into conservation programme for attention in 1 to 5 years from now.	C	3
Serious condition requiring remedial works at earliest opportunity. Incorporate into conservation programme for immediate attention.	D	4