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# 'Limitless possibilities' for church after latest revamp

By Katy Griffin

ST THOMAS'S Church in Salisbury is continuing its transformation.

The church was closed throughout January to allow for extensive work to be carried out to the floor, seating and nave altar areas, and reopened on February 9.

During the closure the pews were removed and replaced with new seating created by Luke Hughes. There is also a new nave altar by Hindon-based Matthew Burt which is made of English oak.

Reverend Kelvin Inglis said: "This work is much more about the people in the church and so we have made it a better place for worship. We have a wonderful nave and we have improved the comfort on the seating.

"What we now have is flexibility not only for worship for concerts but for community



Reverend Kelvin Inglis showcasing the latest refurbishment work at St Thomas's Church in Salisbury

activities. We can now move the seating. There are allsorts of things we can do. There are limitless possibilities.

"We have made changes that are not really just for us but are for the future."

On Saturday, the church held its first concert utilising the new church facilities with more events in the pipeline.

Reverend Inglis said any ideas for the newly improved space are welcomed.

As part of this latest phase of work a number of pillars were also cleaned and the floor was sanded down and cleaned. New electrics have also been installed.

"The five weeks [the church was closed] have been very difficult. We are very aware that people value this place," added Reverend Inglis.

"I would encourage people to see what we have got and be creative. We really want people

to use this."

Last summer, restoration work was carried out at the church, which included repairs to the church building, cleaning and repairs to the Doom painting as well as the restoration and cleaning of the ceilings to uncover the medieval paint, carved angels and memorials.

Plans are already being developed for the next stage of the refurbishment programme. The church hopes to put in additional toilets in the future.

John Foster, who led the re-ordering team, said he was "thrilled" with the results so far and to see the work coming to fruition was "very satisfying".

He said it had taken time to find the right design for the new-style benches, which were made especially for the church, adding: "There are lit-

tle things in the design which pick up on things in the church which you wouldn't actually notice."

The work has helped enhance the light within the church.

The refurbishment is part of the Quest 2020 appeal, which was launched in January 2018. The appeal is still ongoing to raise funds to carry out further work over the coming years.

There has been more than £420,000 in received and pledged donations.

Quest 2020 chairman John Bruce-Ball, said: "We are continuing to fundraise through a number of events, concerts and a series of talks, an autumn fair later in the year."

But, he admits there is "still work to be done".

Go to [stthomassalisbury.co.uk](http://stthomassalisbury.co.uk) for more information about the restoration programme and how to support the Quest 2020 appeal.