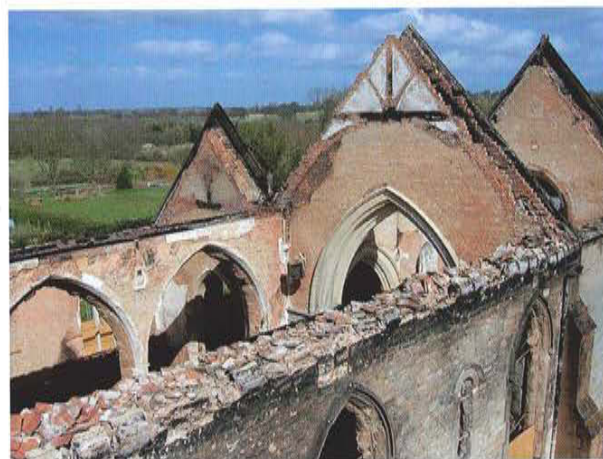
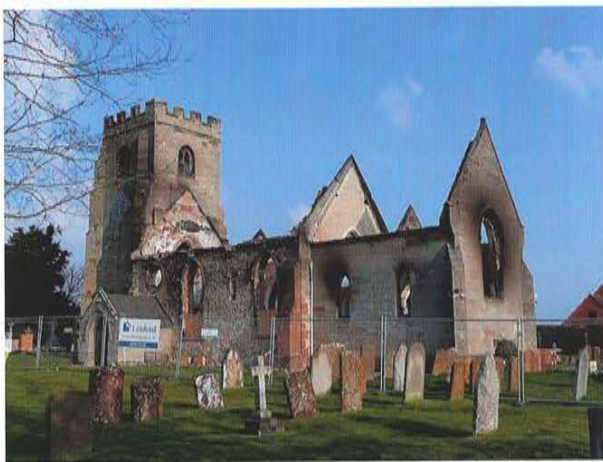


The 2015 award was presented to Patrick Crawford of Caroe & Partners for the reconstruction of the Church of St Nicholas, Radford Semele, Warwickshire.

### History

St Nicholas' Church dates from the early C12, with the existing tower and south wall of the Nave surviving from that period. Other parts of the building were substantially altered when the building was enlarged during the C19. It is Grade II listed. The building functioned as an active parish church until Palm Sunday 2008, when the building was severely damaged by fire. This resulted in the complete loss of the roof structure, windows, interior finishes, fixtures and fittings; as well as significant damage to the stonework.

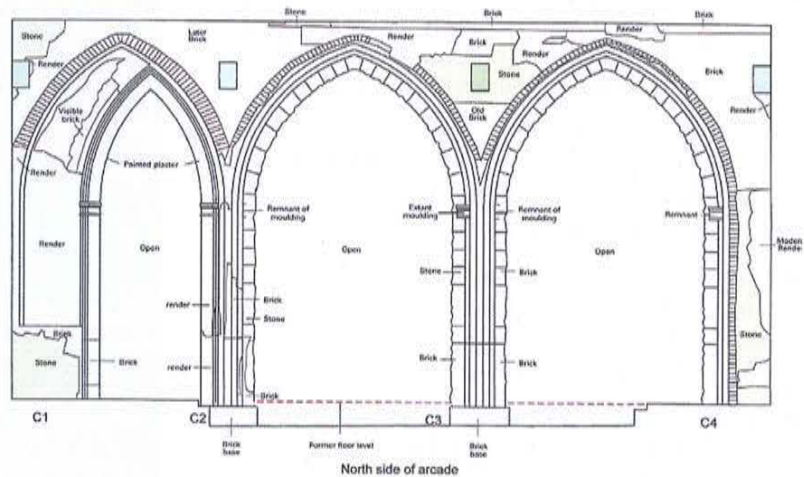
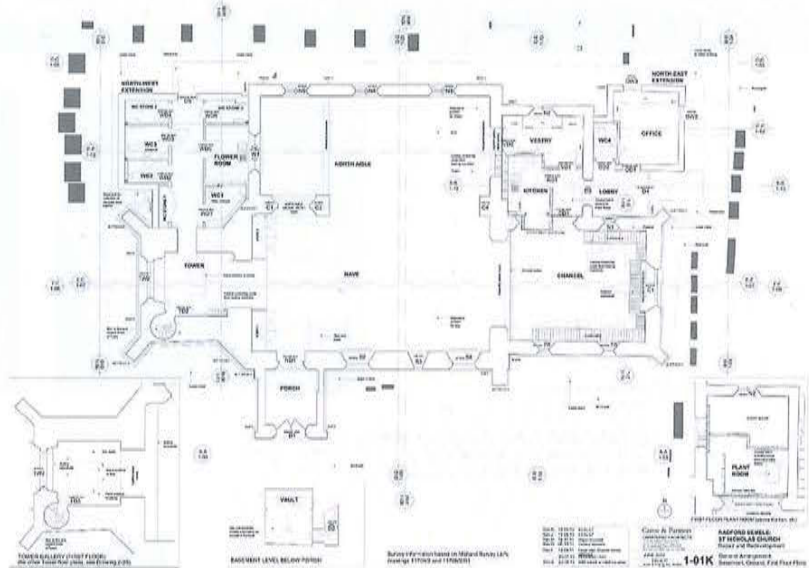
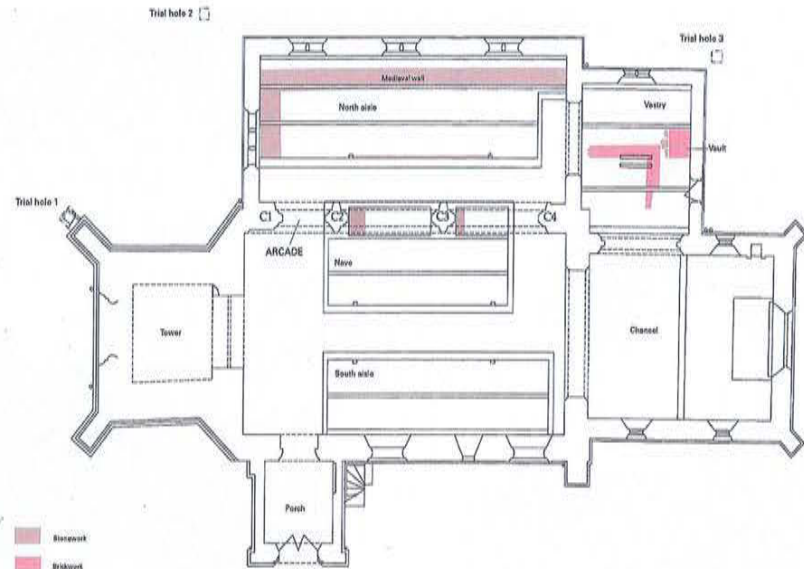


### Project Brief

Following clearance and stabilisation of the structure, Caroe & Partners were appointed by the Parochial Church Council to act as Architect for the project. The primary aim of the project was to reinstate the building as a place of worship, and the PCC saw in this an opportunity to make alterations and improvements so that it might better serve the present needs of the congregation and the local community.

In consultation with the Diocesan Advisory Committee, the congregation, the local community, English Heritage, the Victorian Society, the Church Buildings Council, the Architect and others, the PCC wrote a 'Statement of Significance' and a 'Statement of Needs'. Caroe & Partners then carried out an appraisal of various options, and from all these a design brief emerged as follows:

- The main view of the church from the south was to be reinstated to match the existing.
- The interior was to be opened up by removing part of the arcade separating the North Aisle from the Nave (there were also concerns about the stability of the arcade).
- The main interior space was to be as light and flexible as possible to facilitate a range of different activities. To this end, a new glazed gable was designed for the north wall of the North Aisle to bring in additional daylight.
- The whole interior was to be at the same level, and the Chancel therefore lowered.
- The Chancel was to be separated off by a glazed screen to allow its use as a crèche during services, or as a meeting room or a prayer space at other times. The screen should open up to maximize the area for a large congregation and enable worship in an east-west orientation.
- A Vestry was to be provided with direct access to the North Aisle.
- A kitchen was to be provided with a hatch serving into the Chancel area.
- An existing, blocked, staircase in the south wall of the tower was to be opened up to give access into the bell-ringing gallery at first floor level and an electrical equipment room above.
- One extension was to be constructed to the north-west to provide WCs, including an accessible WC and baby-change facilities. This would be reached via a new opening in the north wall of the Tower.
- Another extension was to be constructed to the north-east to accommodate an office and an additional WC, accessed via a lobby which would provide an additional means of escape from the building.
- The main spaces were to have under-floor heating.



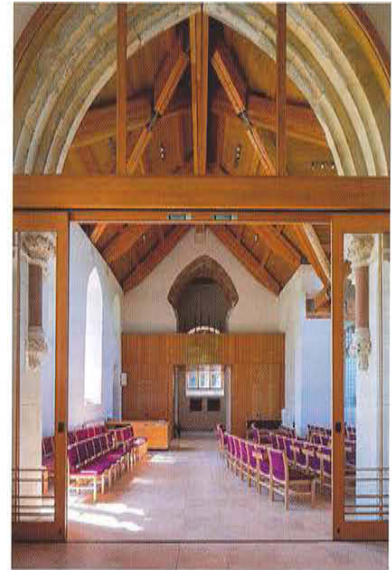


### Design and Detailing

The building was detailed and constructed using both traditional and modern techniques, as appropriate to each part:

- Stonework which had been damaged by the fire was replaced with new, and all masonry was re-pointed in lime mortar.
- The roof structure was constructed using glulam Douglas Fir beams, with exposed stainless steel fin plates and connectors. The timber sizes, the number of fin plates and the connections were all carefully designed to express the differing loadings from each part of the roof.
- Interior joinery such as the boarded ceilings, the panelling to the arches, the Chancel screen, the tower gallery balustrade, doors, cupboards and other fittings were also executed in Douglas Fir to bespoke details, resulting in a unified interior.
- Interior walls to the main church spaces were rendered and decorated in mineral paint, and the floor paved in a light-coloured English limestone.
- Externally, the stone used for the new extensions is a mottled Hollington sandstone, selected to match the existing stonework on parts of the tower, but laid in a way to differentiate the new work.
- All roofs were well insulated, the main pitched roofs being finished in handmade clay tiles.
- New stained glass windows were commissioned to designs by the Glass Artists Emma Blount and Aidan McRae-Thomson.
- The existing bells were reinstated by John Taylor & Co.





### Construction

The construction works were carried out by Croft Building & Conservation Ltd between April 2012 and May 2013. Various archaeological discoveries were made during the works including two brick vaults, which were recorded by the Project Archaeologist and then covered over.

### Budget

The project was funded largely by the insurance settlement following the fire, but also through successful local fund-raising. Costs had to be carefully controlled throughout the project to ensure that the objectives could be successfully achieved. The complete project was completed within the overall budget of £2.3 million.

### Project details

Architect	Caroe & Partners
Contractor	Croft Building & Conservation Ltd
QS and CDM	Starkey Button & Co
Structural Engineer	Frank W Haywood & Associates
M&E Engineer	Martin Thomas Associates Ltd
Lighting Designer	Light Perceptions
Stained Glass Artists	Emma Blount Aidan McRae-Thomson

