

Parish Church of St. Michael & All Angels, Mottram in Longdendale

NEW CHURCHYARD PATH DESCRIPTION

September 2022

This description should be read in conjunction with the two scaled drawings included in the application documents.

Present path

Access through the main gate to the south porch of the church building is very difficult for disabled or elderly people and for families with baby buggies etc. The present path was created in the 19th century from gravestones and other stone flags.

Over time, the surfaces of the stones have become spalled, and they have settled so that they are no longer level. Any cement pointing between the stones deteriorates quickly in the exposed position of the churchyard, and is difficult to maintain effectively. Rain, snow and ice can make the surface slippery in cold weather.



New path

We propose to replace the path with a continuous, slip resistant, level surface from gate to porch, that will be low on maintenance, and resistant to the effects of water and ice. The path material from the gate will be resin-bound stone chippings in a mix of light sandy colours for best night-time visibility.

Just outside the porch, there will be a well defined circular area of a darker colour mix, forming a large, level 'gathering area' for visitors. At the centre of the circle, we propose to inset a circular black granite memorial stone to the late Rev Dr Richard Hills MBE, former honorary curate of Mottram parish, founder of the Manchester Museum of Science of Technology, and generous benefactor of the church.

The path construction will be permeable and SUDS (Sustainable urban drainage system) compliant. Water can drain through to the subsurface, making ice formation less likely. The surface is slip resistant and requires less maintenance than the existing stones. It is used at many heritage sites, including in this Diocese, eg at St. Mary's Disley, a church of a similar age to ours, with the approval of Historic England.

Gravestones

Plans from before the 1827 churchyard extension show the arrangement of the graves at the front of the church to be completely different from the present arrangement, so there is no doubt that the gravestones forming the surface of the present path from the gate to the porch are no longer over the graves they once marked. The making of a new path therefore, would not present any issues regarding the change in position of any grave.

We will not dispose of any of the gravestones. Those that are in good enough condition will be kept in secure storage, to be used in our plans for the future internal reordering of the church building. Any that are not suitable for this purpose will be relocated elsewhere in the church yard. The position of the two oldest marked gravestones (dating to the 17th century), alongside the present path, will be preserved as closely as possible.

Lighting

We propose to install four low level lighting bollards along the length of the path. These lights will be supplied by armoured cabling in a duct below the path, and be controlled by a PIR sensor located above the porch door. The same sensor will control two existing wall floodlights (above the tower and chapel doors) and one new floodlight above the porch door. The far end of the cable will be terminated in two waterproof junction boxes on the gate pillars, to facilitate any future expansion.

Seating

At the half way point, a bench will provide a rest point for visitors with poor mobility and also serve as a 'grab rail' at a point that can be particularly windy due to reasons of local topography and nearby buildings. The bench will be a solidly constructed, contemporary design made from recycled plastic. This will be more environmentally friendly than hardwood or metal, and require considerably less maintenance. The material will be black, not having a replica timber appearance - it will be an environmental statement, not an imitation.

Transition to Warhill

Just outside the churchyard, on un-registered land, there is a short band of cobblestones that currently makes a difficult transition from the tarmac surfacing of Warhill to the church gates, particularly for disabled and other visitors mentioned earlier. We intend to take up the cobblestones and replace them with tarmac, in keeping with the surrounding land surface of Warhill. This will provide a continuous smooth surface from Warhill to the gate, thus further improving the access to the churchyard.

The removed cobblestones will be used to form edging for the new path within the churchyard.

DETAIL PICTURES

Scale drawings of the path are available separately.

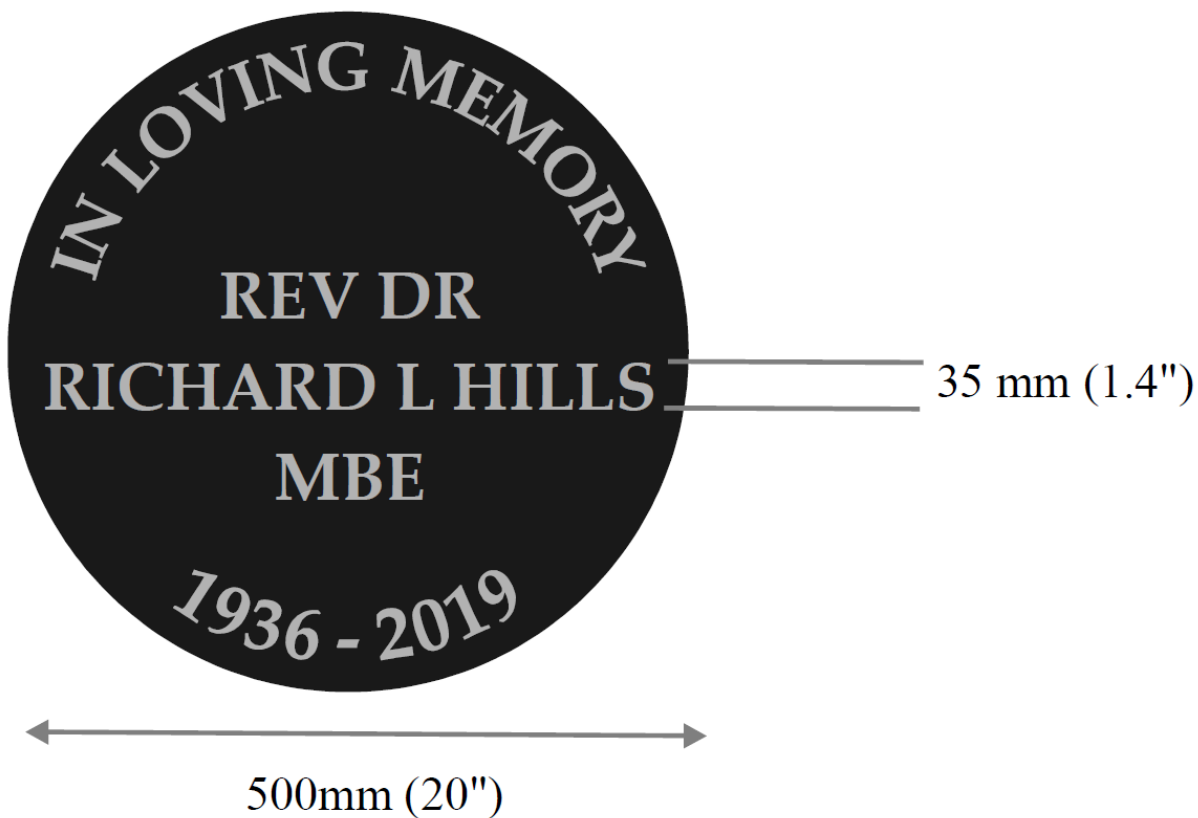
'Banchory' bench from Cyan Teak Furniture
Manufactured from sustainably sourced Indonesian Teak



'Fortress' 600mm light bollard with below ground 'root mount' from Lumena Lighting, Daventry (800mm shown)



Richard Hills memorial stone in black granite



Path samples from Peak Paving, Glossop

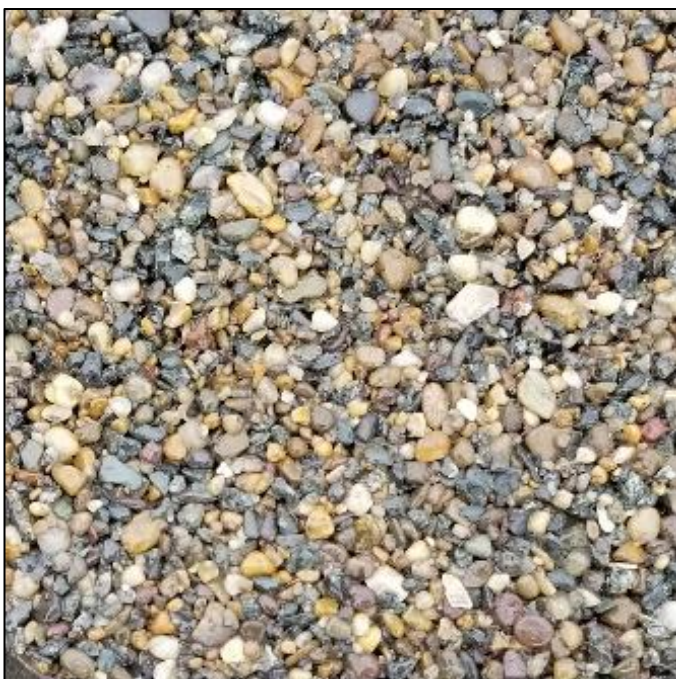
Path from gate to porch

A mix of black and sandy colours for the main part of the path from the gate. It is light enough to pick up the light from the lighting bollards, for best night time safety

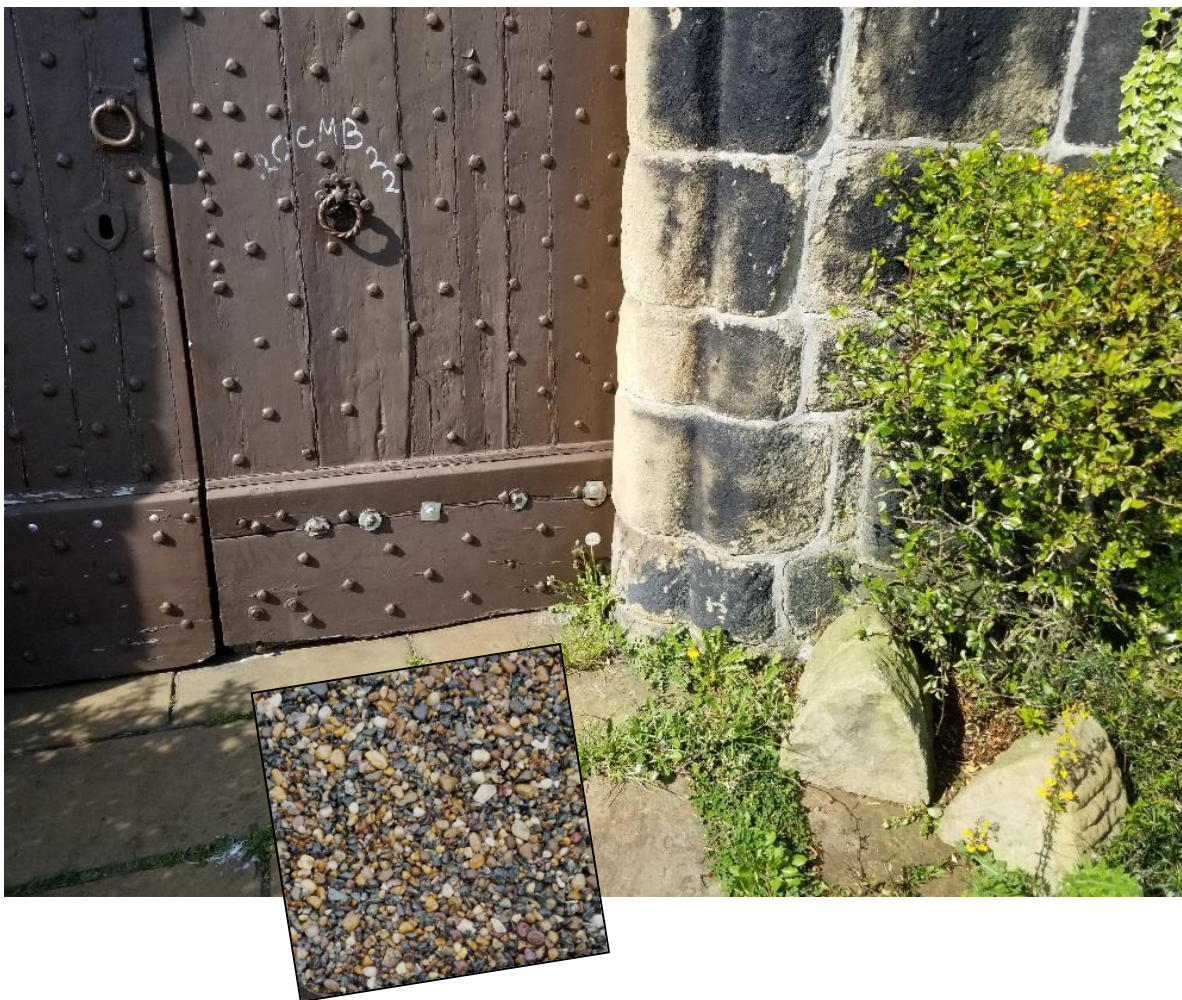


Gathering area

A darker mix of colours matching the colours of the church building, which will make a good contrast with both the path from the gate, and the memorial stone.



The path samples shown against photos of the church.



The area outside the churchyard, showing the cobbled area that is to be replaced by tarmac.

