

## *A foreword from Peter Smyth, Managing Director*

I would like to take this opportunity to reflect on the impact that the Pandemic Covid-19 has had on both business and our personal lives over the past months. Like every other business in the country, Bakers' Directors had to make many decisions on a daily basis in response to the rapidly changing Government advice and guidelines - which for many weeks was being updated on daily. For the foreseeable future Bakers will continue to regularly provide updates to staff and customers regarding any impacts that changes to the Government guidelines will have upon our daily work and our business as a whole.

The pandemic and national lockdown had many different impacts on both our projects and employees on both a professional and personal level. In response to the pandemic our SHEQ Manager has implemented new procedures for working in our offices and on site. Importantly, our Contracts Managers and Site Managers have been key in ensuring these procedures are adhered to. Just some of the changes in place both within our offices and onsite include updated office risk assessments and site risk assessments, Covid-19 policy statement, new notices displayed in communal areas such corridors, canteens and kitchens, providing advice such as social distancing and for particular areas of high traffic or communal areas the maximum number of people allowed within a particular area at any onetime. In addition to social distancing and PPE, we periodically record the temperature of all operatives onsite.

On behalf of all of our Directors and our sister companies Collins and Curtis Masonry and Pickford Builders, I would like to take this opportunity to thank all of our staff and sub-contractors for their hard work and dedication especially over the past months.

I would also like to thank all of our existing customers for their continued support and close liaison, which has been critical over these recent uncertain times. We are fortunate to find ourselves in a strong position, but this would not have been possible without the support of our loyal customers.

If you would like to keep up-to-date with Bakers' latest projects, you can do so by visiting [bakersofdanbury.co.uk](http://bakersofdanbury.co.uk)



*Photo: Current project for Thames Park School*

## *Wyddial Hall*

Bakers recently completed phase one of works to Wyddial Hall, an early 16th century Grade II Listed building.

Works included internal remodelling, extensive new electrical and mechanical installation, joinery, ceiling and wall repairs, new cornices, decorating and some external works.



## Westminster Deanery

Bakers are midway through a £1.8 million refurbishment and roofing project at Westminster Deanery, which sits within the grounds of Westminster Abbey.

Works continued safely on site during the Covid-19 lockdown, due to sensible planning and safe working procedures put in place on site.

Roof works carried out by Bakers involved stripping the existing roof, recasting original lead and re-leading the roof adjacent to the West Towers of the abbey. The pitched tiled roof area was also stripped, with structural repairs undertaken and then retiled with a mix of reclaimed peg tiles and new handmade tiles. A full overhaul of the rainwater goods is also being undertaken, with refurbished cast iron and lead downpipes, hoppers and chutes. Bakers increased the gradient of the roof (compliant with lead sheet association guidelines).

The entire deanery including a grand function room are being renovated which includes five bedrooms, a kitchen, utility, dining area and the Dean's study and offices, along with two bathrooms and the addition of one new bathroom. Upgraded electrical and mechanical installations are being completed, along with improvements to insulation wherever possible. Full decoration is also being undertaken externally, including the 15th Century elevation being stripped of many layers of paint to reveal the original brickwork façade underneath.

A new hardwood doorway and canopy will lead to the refurbished garden, which will be landscaped and have new drainage installed before the Deanery is handed back at the end of this year.



## Bakers' Specialist Joinery Division

Bakers' joinery workshop located next to the head office in Danbury, has been very busy throughout the year taking joinery requirements from both Bakers and directly from clients.

Recent projects include a bespoke bookcase for St Andrews' Church, Impington which was manufactured using existing Oak units. The new bookcase incorporated the existing door and plaque (see photo opposite). Bakers' joinery workshop have also manufactured a number of items for the restoration project at Wyddial Hall including a bay window, a hardwood external door and a couple of fireplace surrounds. Eight Accoya windows were also recently manufactured for The Towers.

Projects coming up include new oak doors for St George the Martyr, bespoke kitchen server units for St Peters Church, Monks Eleigh and bi-fold doors for St Swithin's Church, Great Chishill.



## St Andrews' Church, Cherry Hinton, Cambs

After working on this medieval Church for the past ten months, Bakers have replaced the North Aisle with sandcast lead and carried out extensive conservation of the carved stonework dressings using traditional masons techniques, including a broad use of hot lime plastering to large internal areas of walling. All cast iron rainwater goods have been replaced and new underground drainage soakaways installed.

Thanks to support from the Heritage Lottery Fund Grants for Places of Worship (GPoW), this church has now been taken off the Heritage at Risk Register.



## *Benyon School Extension & Alterations*

Bakers of Danbury is working to complete a new build classroom extension, alteration and refurbishment works including extensive hard landscaping to Benyon School by December 31st 2020.

The works for Thurrock Council include a new build extension to provide six new classrooms, and the refurbishment of four existing classrooms, main hall, corridors, staffroom and administration areas. Bakers will handover new classrooms for the school to occupy, whilst the existing classrooms are refurbished. The existing car park will be extended to provide extra hard surface parking spaces. The existing playground will be remodeled and extended to provide a new playground, and the existing playground will be resurfaced.

As the project was considered as essential works, the construction project continued throughout the National lockdown which was put in place to prevent the spread of Covid-19. Although works were carried out whilst the school was closed, Bakers had to ensure that the school remained fully functioning because for many months, no one knew when the school will reopen. After consulting the school and Thurrock Council, it was agreed that Bakers would bring forward the refurbishment and alteration works to the corridors, main hall and the new car park extension, which were originally programmed to take place during school holidays.

To continue works during the lockdown Bakers implemented a new risk assessment to ensure social distancing and other measures were introduced to prevent the risk of spread of Covid-19 amongst everyone working on the project.

Throughout the project, monthly progress review meetings took place remotely with Bakers' Contract Manager and Site Manager, Architect, Thurrock Council and the school.



## *House extension*

Pett House was previously owned by an ex-employee's mother-in-law. Our ex-employee, Don Sweeting who owns the property next door worked at Bakers as a carpenter for a number of years and was, and still is highly regarded. When Don's mother-in-law sadly passed away he contacted Bakers to ask if we would refurbish and extend the property for his daughter and her family to move into.

Bakers recently completed the renovation and extension. The extension provides a large living room and an additional master bedroom with ensuite. The existing house was stripped back to the timber frame and part of the roof removed. The insulation in the existing house was upgraded to current regulations. The kitchen, bathroom and three bedrooms were completely renovated, which involved all plumbing and electrical.

The pitched roof to the new extension was hand cut by Bakers' carpenters, and integrated into the existing roof. The exterior of the house is part weatherboarded and rendered with a slate roof.



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Collins and Curtis recently supplied a new window to St Andrews' Church, Impington. The outer hood moulding is in Clipsham and the inner arch and tracery are in Clunch.

Various stone details have been supplied to St Johns' Church, Royston including a new quatrefoil window in Park Lane Bath stone, new window reveals and ashlar indents in Clunch and parapet copings in Barnack stone.

For All Saints Church Feering, which is undergoing a new build extension, Collins and Curtis have supplied window surrounds, a plinth detail, corbel brackets, coping stones and a recess trefoil stone, all in Stoke Ground Basebed.

This year, Collins and Curtis have provided many infills, predominantly in Portland stone for a number of banks in London which have had ATMs removed.



**Top photo:** St Andrews Church, Impington hoodmould and tracery

**Middle right photo:** All Saints Church, Feering

**Bottom left photo:** Portland Stone Cill replacements, Aldeburgh

**Bottom right photo:** Springfield Road, Chelmsford Transoms

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Pickford Builders, like the rest of the Bakers group of companies, has been greatly affected by the recent events and restrictions. The management team has had to find a pathway through all the changes and new operating guidelines to continue to offer a service to our clients. The small office in Great Dunmow is now rarely visited, as we set ourselves up for the staff to work either on a rota, from home or on site.

During the shutdown period due to COVID-19, Pickford Builders continued to receive numerous new enquiry e-mails and calls, with clients looking for assistance in pricing and carrying out a variety of different works. Alongside this, the Insurance repair works continue to come in as unfortunate owners still suffer incidents to their properties.

The enquiries received and quoted on ranged from: house extensions, new garden rooms and replacement conservatories, new and rebuilt boundary walls, alterations and extension to a barn, conversions of a listed outbuildings to homes or office's, various house repairs to roofs, doors, windows as well as internal remodeling for kitchens and bathrooms.

Projects coming up include storm repairs to a seaward facing house in Clacton. Traditional lime plaster and decorating to two farms, one in Panfield and to another in Great Canfield, internal remodeling and of a home in Thaxted, and works to create access, inspecting and cleaning to a belfry tower at St Margaret's Church, Wicken Bonhunt.

These new enquiries and projects coming up give us confidence beyond this unsettling period of time.

**Photos:** Recently completed renovation to Shalford Village Hall



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