

LUXURY & HERITAGE DECORATION

Recent Works Portfolio

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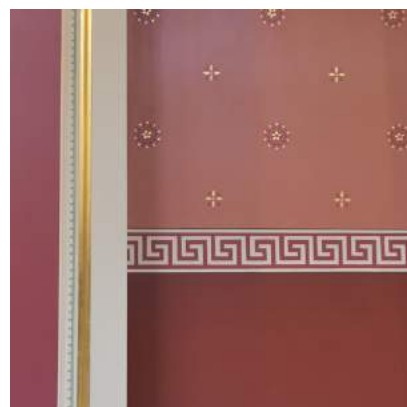
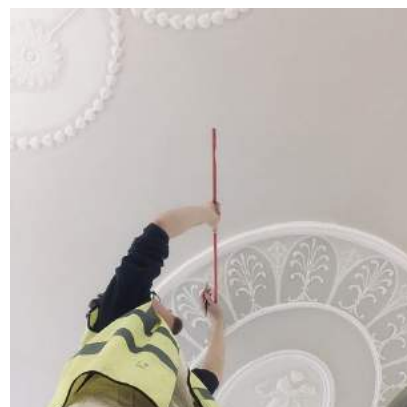
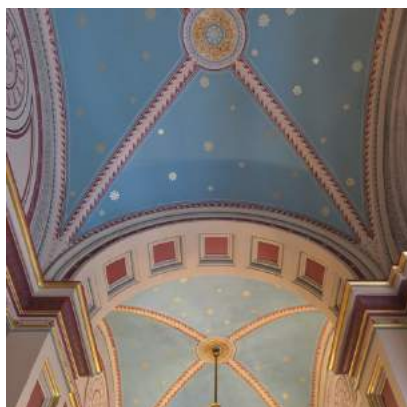
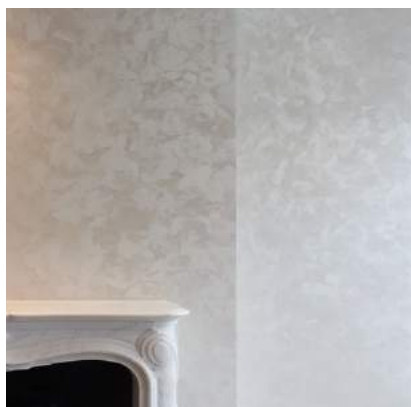
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passion
dedication
craftsmanship
creativity
heritage
skill

Our directors have worked at the highest levels of quality for many years and we know that an excellent finish requires passion and dedication. We are pleased to be building a company to deliver it.



ABOUT US

Drawing on the expertise of three generations of craftsmen, we are a small but perfectly formed company of decorators, gilders and restorers with a passion for decoration.

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EXPERTISE

Our directors have worked at the highest levels of quality for many years and we know that an excellent finish requires passion and dedication.

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CLIENTS

Our clients are highly varied and include private individuals, architects, designers, surveyors, main contractors, parish councils, buildings managers, heritage bodies and institutions.

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OUR TEAM

The team is uniquely led by a Master Decorator and an Accredited Conservator providing unrivalled expertise. Our skilled craftspeople are passionate about their work.

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CASE STUDIES

We have been very fortunate to have carried out many prestigious projects and a recent selection are presented here.

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CONTACT US

Should you have a live project, tender, or just wish to discuss your plans, please contact us by post, email or telephone.

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About Us

Britain & Co was founded on the craft skill and trade knowledge handed down by three generations of the Britain family.

Joseph Britain was born and raised in Hackney, London, and spent his working life as a French Polisher for an East End furniture company. His son Joe was evacuated during the war but returned to London as a teenager.

Joe Britain was apprenticed as a decorator to the prestigious firm Campbell Smith & Co. in 1949, and soon became one of their leading foremen. His son Chris followed in his footsteps in 1973, and also attained foreman at the early age of 18. Over the years he trained several current company owners as apprentices! They carried out work in many churches, palaces and museums.

Later in his career Chris joined Hare & Humphreys, where he met Cathy Littlejohn, and as Director and Decorations Manager they carried out many important projects. They both left the company in 2015 (just prior to its takeover) and founded Britain & Co. to continue their shared approach to working and passing on their knowledge.

Follow us to find out more...

Instagram [@britain_andco](#)

Twitter [@cathylittlejohn](#)

Facebook [@Britain & Co](#)

LinkedIn [@cathylittlejohn](#)

LinkedIn [@chrisbritain](#)



THE CHAPEL, CHARTERHOUSE, SMITHFIELD,



SOME FACTS ABOUT US

£600k

Current turnover

We are a capable, specialist and friendly family company with a big reputation. We are large enough to take on substantial work, but small enough to give our detailed attention to every client and project.

£400k+

Project delivery

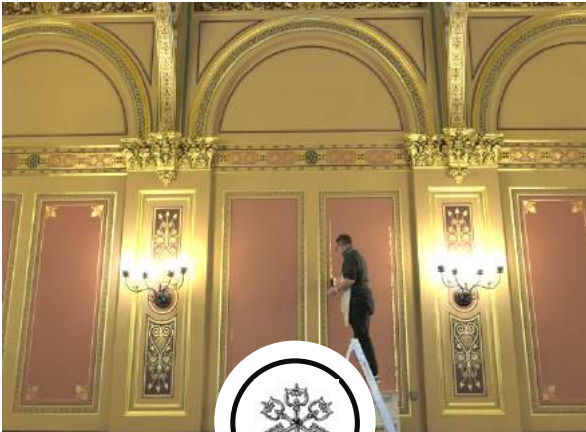
Britain & Co have delivered several large-scale projects since founding in 2015, several of £100k+ and up to £400k. Our directors have also delivered prestigious decoration projects over £1M in value.

1000+

Career projects delivered

When you work with us, you have the benefit of a highly experienced management team. Together we have delivered over 1000 specialist decoration projects to date with a combined 60 years' experience in the field.

Expertise



FINE DECORATION

With 50 years of experience in the country's finest Grade I listed buildings, the team at Britain & Co are at the forefront of crafting timeless British decoration. From historically accurate work with original materials, to practical re-creations of historic decoration using new materials, we assist heritage professionals, designers and owners to present their vision of the UK's most important interiors and private homes.

Stencilling

Marbling | Stone Effects

Graining | Faux Bois

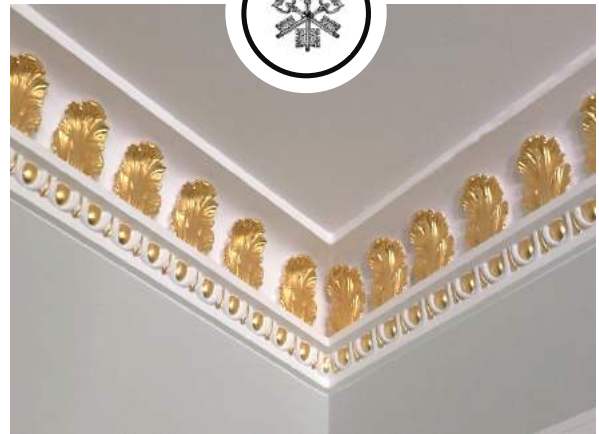
Broken Finishes | Patinas | Textures

Traditional Paints | Colours

Lacquer Finishes

GILDING

Precious metal leaf has always been prized for its lustre for the finest decoration. We use the purest gold leaf, laid with squirrel hair gilders tips, to enrich and ornament fine interiors. Platinum, Palladium and Moon Gold are also used along with the many variations of gold leaf. We can advise on the most appropriate choice of materials and allocation of solid or highlight gilding, patinas or rehausse techniques. We are highly skilled in a variety of gilding techniques, including oil gilding, modern water gilding and enamel gilding.



Architectural Gilding

Exterior Gilding

Burnished and Water Gilding

Distressed and Antique effects

Gilt walls | Ceilings

Furniture | Frames

“We know that your chosen team of specialists represents your vision and your reputation to your client, and appreciate you placing your trust in us.”

CONSERVATION

Our team are particularly valued where a project requires the combination of a thorough conservation methodology with the technical decorative skills to complete the work to an exceptional standard. Our involvement can range from consultancy and condition surveys to the completion of full conservation treatments. Our team is led by an ICON-accredited conservator (ACR) and we are members of the Conservation Register and the National Trust Register.



Decorative Surfaces

Gilding Conservation

Reinstatement

Consultancy | Advice | Reports

Historic Interiors

Wallpaintings | Murals



DECORATIVE ART

Each decorative art commission is unique and can be carried out onsite or on canvas at our workshop to our clients' requirements. We are passionate about British craftsmanship and passing on works of decorative art to the next generation. We work with interior designers, architects and private clients to create and preserve beautiful spaces.

Trompe l'oeil

Murals | Canvasses

Sky Ceilings

Faux inlays | Intarsia | Boule

Chinoiserie

Contemporary

Our Clients

Being far more than a standard decorating team, we offer the added value of our extensive expertise, project management experience, and bespoke technical solutions to every client.

Our clients are highly varied and include private individuals, architects, designers, surveyors, main contractors, parish councils, buildings managers, heritage bodies and institutions.

We are regular contractors to Historic Royal Palaces, the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, several Mayfair based Clubs and The Hatfield House Estate.



THE TEAM



CHRIS BRITAIN

Owner

Chris Britain has been a decorator for 40 years, and was apprenticed to his father, as specialist decorator, at the age of 15. He quickly became foreman and led major projects from an early age, at Bridgewater House, Buckingham Palace and the Foreign Office.

Chris was awarded the Rose Bowl, the highest award in decoration, for his work at the Silver Galleries at the V&A Museum, and was also awarded a medal from HM the Queen for his contribution to the redecoration of Windsor Castle after the fire. He founded Britain & Co to draw on the heritage of three generations of the Britain family in decoration.



“It’s essential to pass on the skills that were once handed to me, it’s a gift from one generation to the next...”



CATHY LITTLEJOHN

Owner

Cathy Littlejohn has a passion for paint, and has worked in the decoration industry for 15 years, leading many high-profile projects at Grade I Listed Properties. She holds degrees in Fine Art (Painting) and Building Conservation, and is also an accredited conservator (ACR).

Cathy was made Director of a large specialist decorating company at age 31 and has continued to develop her career by co-directing Britain & Co Ltd. Cathy is a past Chair of the Traditional Paint Forum, has featured on London Evening News, and currently is a Skills Advisor to the Queen Elizabeth Scholarship Trust (QUEST).



“I’m fascinated by how working with colour and texture can create something unexpected and new...”



THE TEAM

At the core of Britain & Co is our ‘family’ of skilled craftspeople, decorators and conservators. We have a tight-knit team of specialists who are committed to our approach and have a passion for their work. Each one brings an individual flair to our projects, and we are passionate about sharing of knowledge and skills. With many industry contacts and friendships built up over decades, we are able to expand our team to take on larger projects, or to recommend skilled craftspeople in related crafts such as carving, upholstery and heritage plastering.



“It feels like a family company. The working atmosphere is completely different...”

Case Studies

HATFIELD HOUSE, HERTFORDSHIRE

PROPERTY

Grade I Listed Country House set in Hertfordshire Estate

CLIENT

Gascoyne Cecil Estate

DATE

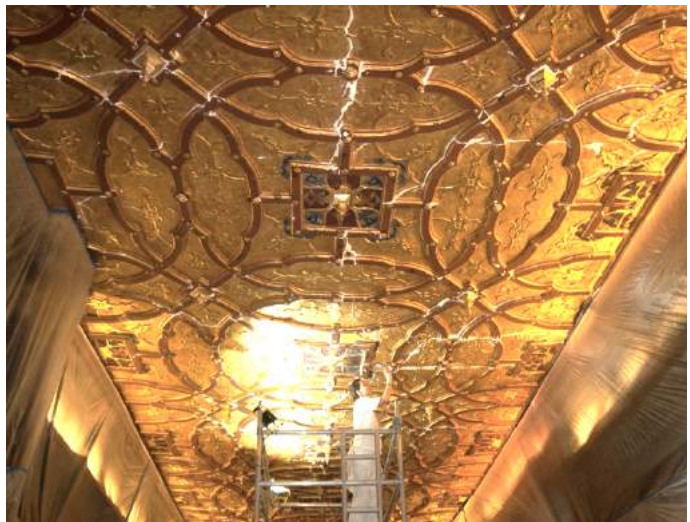
Ongoing

DELIVERED

Restoration of the Long Gallery Ceiling

Redecoration of the Armoury

External Redecoration Works



DESCRIPTION

Hatfield House is the home of the 7th Marquess and Marchioness of Salisbury and their family. A prime example of Jacobean architecture, it was built in 1611 by Robert Cecil, First Earl of Salisbury and Chief Minister to King James I

Between 2016 and 2018 Britain & Co carried out heritage decoration and specialist restoration at this historic property.

The North and South Front windows have been decorated and re-leaded, all from MEWP working platform access so as to enable filming works to be carried out.

The ceiling of the Long Gallery received structural repairs in lime plaster, re-fixing and extensive crack repairs. The gold leaf decoration was preserved and conservation cleaned. Detailed retouching was carried out to the losses and repairs, to return the ceiling to its full glory.

More recently a new scheme was devised for the Armoury including a faux stone door surround and patinated silver metal bosses to reflect the armour.



LOCARNO SUITE, FOREIGN & COMMONWEALTH OFFICE

PROPERTY

Grade I Listed Government Building

CLIENT

FCO / Interserve / Concept

DATE

2018

DELIVERED

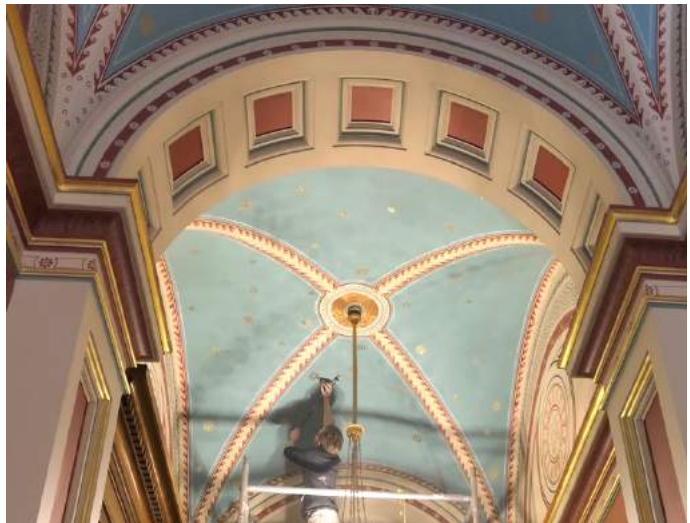
Restoration of the Grand Conference Room

Restoration of the Fine Room Corridor

Tracing, hand colour mixing and re-stencilling scheme

Hand lining and gilding in 23ct gold leaf

Reviving French polished panels and toning gilding repairs



DESCRIPTION

The Locarno Suite is a set of highly decorative function rooms designed by George Gilbert Scott in 1859. Having been overpainted for many years, they were rediscovered and fully restored in the 1990s and Chris Britain was a foreman of this team.

More recently, water damage required sections of the decoration to be re-instated, and damage to gilding and French Polishing restored.

Britain & Co were asked to return to these rooms nearly 30 years after the first restoration, and with a team carried out the preparation and redecoration required.

All colours were re-mixed by hand and sent for scanning as a record. The decoration was set out using snap lines and imperial measures, stencils were cut by hand in the Victorian tradition, and gilt lines pulled with a lining fitch and rule.

The gilding was all reinstated using 23.5 carat leaf and the repairs were carried out in shell gold. Polishing was cleaned and revived with shellac- based traditional polish.



TRAVELLERS CLUB, PALL MALL

PROPERTY

Grade I Listed Gentlemans Club in St James'

CLIENT

The Travellers Club

DATE

2017

DELIVERED

Complete redecoration of the Coffee Room in Original colours

Re-gilding in 23.5ct Gold Leaf

Mahogany Graining

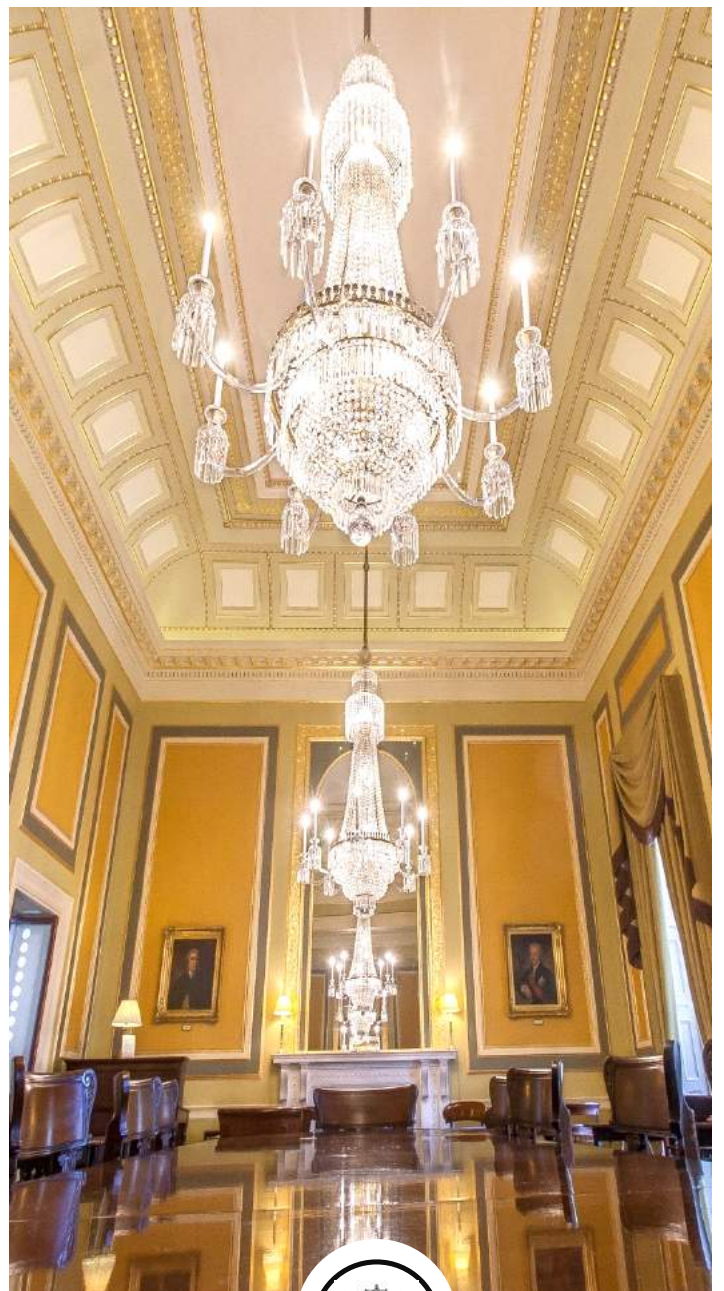


DESCRIPTION

The Travellers Club is one of the oldest gentlemen clubs in London, established in 1819 for travelers and diplomats. The property was modelled on a palazzo, by the celebrated architect Charles Barry.

Britain & Co recently carried out the complete redecoration of the Coffee Room at the Travellers Club, the double room and principal reception room adjoining Pall Mall.

The extensive work completed by our craftsmen included redecoration in original colours researched by Patrick Baty, gilding restoration, mahogany graining and loose-leaf gilding in 23.5ct gold.



AXEL VERVOORDT DESIGNER, LONDON & SURREY

PROPERTY

**Grade I Listed Country House and
Grade I Listed Townhouse**

CLIENT

AV / Vitpol / Private Client

DATE

Ongoing

DELIVERED

**Application of Broken Finishes in
lime paints and glazes**

**Bespoke mixed colours and
processes**



DESCRIPTION

One of the world's most emulated tastemakers, Belgian designer and antiqueur Axel Vervoordt is celebrated for his captivatingly minimalist interiors infused with a serene sense of history and timelessness.

Britain & Co have been working closely with Boris Vervoordt and his team at Axel Vervoordt on two commissions in order to create spaces for private clients to live and to house their extensive art collection. These works are still in progress.

The room surfaces are created in natural lime materials and many are imported from Belgium. The finishes are built up in many layers, and often incorporate material dug up from the ground of the local environment.



PRIVATE HOUSE, KENSINGTON

PROPERTY

Grade II Listed Townhouse

CLIENT

Private

DATE

2017

DELIVERED

Application of Marco Polo specialist plasters

Bespoke mixed colours and processes

Patina bronze effect staircase over 6 floors

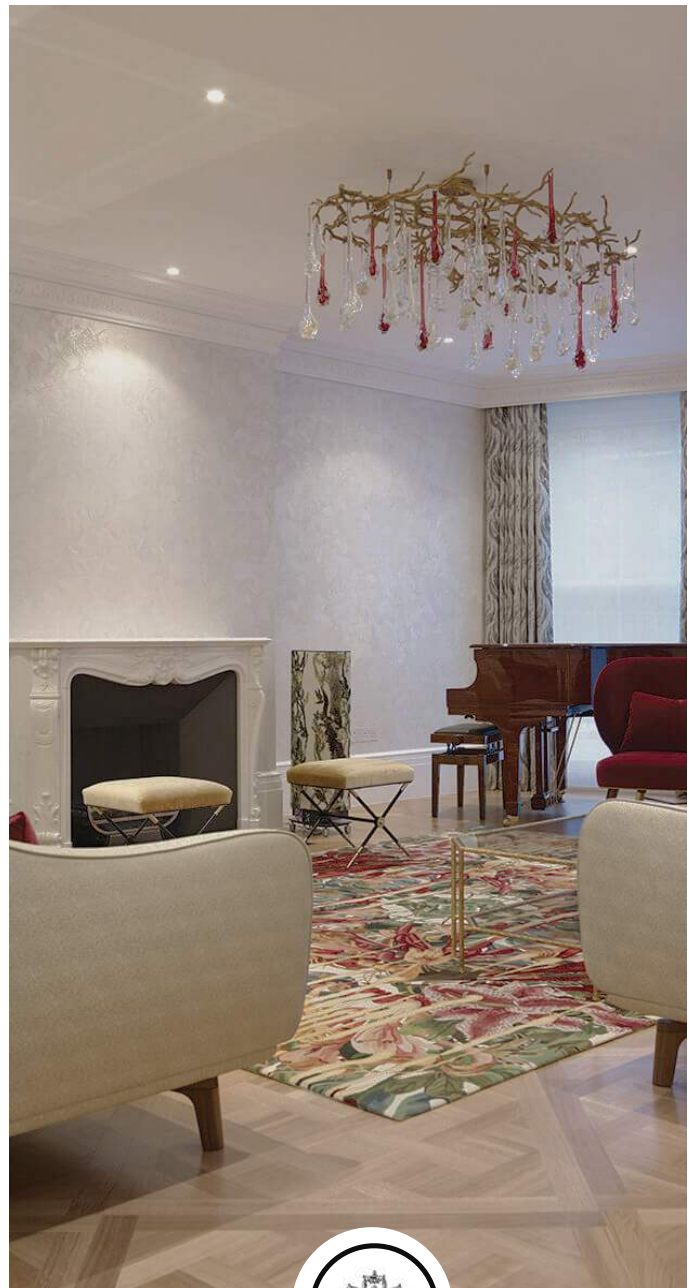
Fine decoration



DESCRIPTION

This property in Kensington is situated in one of the most desirable addresses in London. It was completely refurbished in a classic contemporary style over a period of two years.

Britain & Co provided all decoration to the interiors of the six-story property. There were also specialist metallic plasters, and a bronzed stair rail created as a bespoke effect. The cinema and bar areas were particularly luxurious with coloured plasters applied to all surfaces and a gold leaf ceiling.



HAMPTON COURT PALACE, SURREY

PROPERTY

**Grade I Listed Public Museum
Former Royal Residence**

CLIENT

Historic Royal Palaces

DATE

2017

DELIVERED

Conservation consultancy

Survey & Conservation proposal

**Cleaning and re-integration of
design**



DESCRIPTION

The Astronomical Clock at Hampton Court Palace dates to 1540 and was designed by Nicholas Cratzer and Nicholas Oursin. It is over 3 metres in diameter and is composed of four dials and a 'chapter ring'.

Britain & Co were asked to inspect the dial in 2017 and propose a treatment to clean and preserve the painted decoration and gilding on the clock dials, which were degrading through weathering.

The proposed treatment was later carried out from MEWP access over several days. This included cleaning, retouching the design in reversible paints, and application of an acrylic formulated UV barrier layer.







If you have any project enquiries, please

Contact Us

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**National
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**THE CHURCHES
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**conservation
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