

The Barnabas Centre in Oldham

Re-lighting a modern eco-Church



St Barnabas Church was built in 1911 and substantially altered in 1932.

The latter phase occurred during the great depression so even the mighty industrial giant that was Oldham struggled to find the necessary funds. One of the usual, obvious ways to limit expenditure was to build a structure with a large, angled roof and shorter walls interrupted with a few, small windows.

This building style results in a structure with a low ceiling (which is good for heating) but the reduced amount of glass results in a dark interior. The interior of St Barnabas Church was therefore always dark. The Vicar was always stumbling when speaking because the texts were illuminated so badly. The defining moment occurred in 2014: the Church was playing host to a prestigious gathering which, on that occasion, was scheduled for a foggy November evening. Even with all the lights on, the Church interior was sufficiently dark that the Vicar could not find his own name on a signing-in sheet!

We installed first-generation LED lights in 2016, but they were neither reliable nor intense, so we replaced them in July 2022.

Eco profile

This project has improved our eco-Church profile

The entire building has been relit with LED lights.

Our LED lights consume about 3% of the energy used previously when the lighting was a combination of metal halogen and simple incandescent bulbs.

The Church no longer possesses fluorescent tubes operating with a toxic inner vapour.

Schedule

Relighting a large building is always a long and expensive process, so was undertaken in small pre-planned increments. Most of these re-lighting projects were 'bundled' into larger programmes of refurbishment. For example, we ensured the new toilet block included new sensor-driven LED lights and the new kitchen is lit by a single, intense LED. By contrast, some new lights were installed in their own right such as the dimmable LED panel in the Team Office (once the Vicar's vestry); its side rooms has a sensor-driven LED; three large LED light the long, capacious foyer. The only part of the Barnabas Centre still lit with older lights is the Community Centre Hall, and the cause of this delay is simply cost.

The largest lighting project involved relighting the entire church, nave, and chancel, in July 2022. The nave is now illuminated with five banks each of three LED arc lights. Side diffuser lights offer softer illumination along the side aisles. The chancel is lit with three LED arc lamps and a collection of LED spotlights. The end result is a church interior that glows with light and colour. The contractor was [Croft Electrical](#) based in Oldham.



Ansell AMLED



AOLLBLED 1

Summary

The types of LED light differ: we illuminated the new food rooms with square panels that emit a constant power but chose a dimmable rectangular panel for the Church office. We lit the nave with arc lights; spotlights on a separate circuit illuminate the areas above the altar and far wall. The kitchen, side hall and corridors have strip lights. And each cupboard or constricted spaces is lit with simple, single-bulb LED units.

Relighting the nave and chancel

High-bay 'luminaire' lights: 15 AOLLBLED 1 units each emitting 78 W.

Side diffuser flood lights: 8 Ansell AMLED 10 units each emitting 10 W.

Altar spotlights: 8 each emitting 10 W.

The cost of this essential work was £9,400.

St Barnabas acknowledges the generous financial support of the National Lottery Community Fund which awarded us £7,550 toward the overall cost.

The remainder was part of a wider grant from the Garfield Weston Foundation, which also funded the new sound system.



Other LED lights in the Barnabas Centre



Left This room was the inner part of the Vicar's vestry. It now houses all the records and Church supplies. It's illuminated with a single LED light on a PIR sensor.

Below A single rectangular LED unit lights the Church office. The intensity can be altered across the range 0-100% of 20 W.

