

**St. Mary's Church  
Watford, Herts.**

*HN844*

Report No. 575

<b>Site name and address:</b>	St. Mary's Church, Watford, Herts. WD18 0EG		
<b>County:</b>	Hertfordshire	<b>District:</b>	Watford
<b>Village/town:</b>	Watford	<b>Parish:</b>	Watford
<b>Planning reference:</b>	n/a	<b>NGR:</b>	TQ 110 963
<b>Client name and address:</b>	St. Mary's Church PCC, Watford, Herts. WD18 0EG		
<b>Nature of work:</b>	Under-floor heating	<b>Former land use:</b>	Church
<b>Site Status:</b>	Listed Building	<b>Reason for investigation:</b>	Faculty jurisdiction
<b>Position in planning process:</b>	n/a	<b>Project brief originator:</b>	n/a
<b>Size of affected area:</b>	TBC	<b>Size of area investigated:</b>	c.40m <sup>2</sup>
<b>Site Code:</b>	HN844	<b>Other reference:</b>	n/a
<b>Organisation:</b>	Heritage Network	<b>Site Director:</b>	David Hillelson
<b>Project type, methods etc...</b>	Evaluation	<b>Archive Recipient:</b>	Watford Museum
<b>Start of work</b>	06/01/2010	<b>Finish of work</b>	15/01/2010
<b>Related SMR Nos:</b>	n/a	<b>Periods represented:</b>	Medieval - Modern
<b>Oasis UID:</b>	Heritage1-70043	<b>Significant finds:</b>	Medieval - Modern
<b>Monument types:</b>	Burial Vault – 18 <sup>th</sup> -19 <sup>th</sup> Century; Stone Foundations - Medieval		
<b>Physical archive:</b>	Human Bone, Clay Pipe, Floor and Roof Tile, Iron Nails		
<b>Previous summaries/reports:</b>	St. Mary's Church, Watford: Geophysical Survey Report (HN report no.526)		

**Narrative:**

In response to the requirements of a diocesan faculty, the Heritage Network has been commissioned by Watford Parochial Church Council to carry out a programme of archaeological investigation in advance of a proposal to install under-floor heating in the tower, nave and aisles of St. Mary's Church, Watford (Figure 1).

The present interim report is intended to summarise the results of a field evaluation focused on features identified using ground penetrating radar, in advance of a full report on the project as a whole.

In advance of the field evaluation, a Geophysical Survey using Ground Probing Radar (GPR) was conducted in the nave of St. Mary's Church. The objective of the survey was to locate any anomalies that may be of archaeological significance prior to any intrusive work. The GPR survey identified a number of anomalies which may be associated with graves and two specific areas located in the eastern end of the nave which may be associated with vaults. Areas of complexity were noted in the west tower area which might be caused by buried structural remains and debris.

Following the results of the geophysical survey a total of 6 test-pits were excavated across the site, located around the areas of archaeological potential focusing on Features 1, 4, 6, 7, 9 and 10, as defined by the GPR survey (Figure 2).

In each location flagstones were lifted up and set aside to give access to a minimum intended area of 1m<sup>2</sup>. However due to on site restrictions regarding the practicalities of lifting some of the flagstones, the test-pit sizes varied from 0.7m to 1.8m in length and varied from 0.36m to 0.93m in width.

The results from each test-pit are summarised below:

*Test Pit 1*

<b>Length (m):</b>	0.70	<b>Width (m):</b>	0.69	<b>Maximum Depth (m):</b>	0.45	<b>Orientation</b>	E-W
Context	Type	Description	Dimensions (m)				
			Length	Width	Depth		
-	Layer	Pinkish Grey (5YR 7/2) Overburden.	0.70+	0.69+	0.45		
101	Structure	Wall Foundation	0.70+	0.40+	0.30		

*Test Pit 2*

<b>Length (m):</b>	0.70	<b>Width (m):</b>	0.69	<b>Maximum Depth (m):</b>	0.45	<b>Orientation</b>	E-W
Context	Type	Description	Dimensions (m)				
			Length	Width	Depth		
-	Layer	Light Grey (5YR 7/1) Overburden	0.70+	0.69+	0.45		
401	Structure	Modern brick duct	0.93+	0.40	0.45+		
402	Fill	Very Dark Grey (10YR 3/1) soot from within [401]	0.93+	0.25	0.10		

*Test Pit 3*

<b>Length (m):</b>	0.92	<b>Width (m):</b>	0.55	<b>Maximum Depth (m):</b>	0.32	<b>Orientation</b>	E-W
Context	Type	Description	Dimensions (m)				
			Length	Width	Depth		
-	Layer	Pinkish White (7.5 YR 8/2) Overburden	0.92+	0.55+	0.32+		
601	Structure	Brick Vault	0.92+	0.55+	0.25+		

*Test Pit 4*

<b>Length (m):</b>	1.20	<b>Width (m):</b>	0.93	<b>Maximum Depth (m):</b>	0.45	<b>Orientation</b>	N-S
Context	Type	Description	Dimensions (m)				
			Length	Width	Depth		
-	Layer	Pinkish White (5 YR 8/2)	1.20+	0.93+	0.45+		
701	Layer	Light Yellowish Brown (2.5 YR 6/4)	1.20+	0.93+	0.45+		
702	Structure	Brick Vault	0.75+	0.35+	0.30+		
703	Structure	Modern brick duct	0.93+	0.50+	0.30+		

*Test Pit 5*

<b>Length (m):</b>	0.90	<b>Width (m):</b>	0.90	<b>Maximum Depth (m):</b>	0.45	<b>Orientation</b>	-
Context	Type	Description	Dimensions (m)				
			Length	Width	Depth		
-	Layer	Reddish Brown (5 YR 4/4)	0.70+	0.40+	0.20		
901	Layer	White compacted chalk floor make up layer	0.70+	0.40+	0.07		
902	Layer	Reddish Brown (5 YR 4/4)	0.70+	0.40+	0.18		

### Test Pit 6

<b>Length (m):</b>	1.80	<b>Width (m):</b>	0.36	<b>Maximum Depth (m):</b>	0.45	<b>Orientation</b>	E-W
Context	Type	Description			Dimensions (m)		
					Length	Width	Depth
-	Layer	Reddish Brown (5 YR 4/4)			1.80+	0.36+	0.45+
1001	Structure	Flint foundations of wall of south aisle			1.80+	0.10+	0.45+

### Finds Assessment

Context	CBM		Human Bone		Iron Nails		Clay Pipe		Comments
	No	Wt	No	Wt	No	Wt	No	Wt	
701	1	110	5	70	1	120	1	1	Decorated Tile
TP 1 U/S							2	5	
902	1	100	5	20					
TP 10 U/S			1	30	2	15			
<b>Total</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>210</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>120</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>135</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>6</b>	

#### Finds Concordance

A total of 2 fragments of CBM, weighing 210g, was recovered from two stratified contexts during the course of the evaluation.

A single fragment of medieval decorated floor tile was recovered during the excavation of layer (701) in Test Pit 7. The floor tile, was not complete and was in poor condition, but retained traces of decoration and glazing. The floor tile measured 60mm in length by 50mm in width and 20mm in depth.

A single fragment of orange ceramic roof tile was recovered from (902) in Test Pit 9. The roof tile was incomplete and measured 100mm in length by 50mm in width and 20mm in depth. It contained a small nail hole measuring 10mm in diameter.

A total of 3 iron nails, weighing 135g, was recovered from two of the excavated test pits. Test pit 7 contained a large iron nail weighing 120g and measured 140mm in length by 20mm in width. Test pit 10 contained 2 small iron nails which weighed 15g and measured 50mm in length by 1mm in width.

3 fragments of clay pipe were recovered from two of the excavated test pits. Test pit 1 contained two of the clay pipe fragments from within the unstratified overburden layer and one fragment was recovered from Test Pit 9.

11 pieces of human bone, weighing 120g, were recovered from three of the excavated test pits. Test pit 7 contained the distal epiphysis of a left femur, the neural arch of a thoracic vertebra, a fragment of skull and 2 further fragments. Test pit 9 contained 2 rib fragments, 2 skull fragments and an unidentified fragment. Test pit 10 contained a left side temporal which was missing the majority of the squama. These remains were badly fragmented, reflecting post-mortem damage, but exhibited little wear to the cortical bone. They appear to be of adult size and well fused but it is not possible to determine the sex of the individuals based on the elements present.

Based on the small and fragmentary nature of the finds assemblage no further work is proposed.

### Discussion

The evaluation conducted by the Heritage Network successfully located and identified the brick vaulted structures anticipated from the GPR survey in Test Pits 6 and 7. The vaults were sealed but it is considered to be highly likely that burials will be present within them. Disarticulated human bone and iron nails uncovered in Test Pit 7 may indicate the presence of other nearby burials.

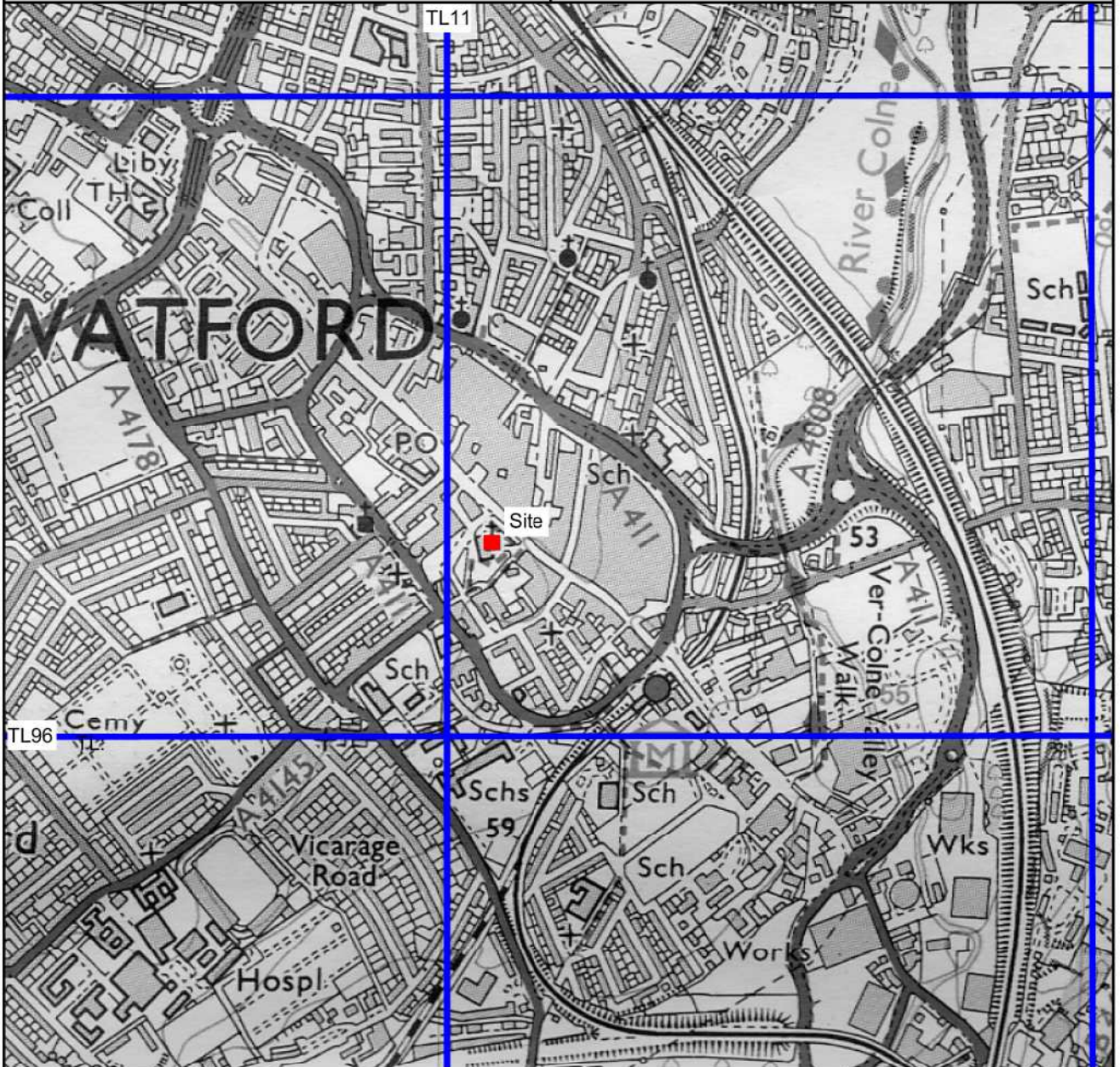
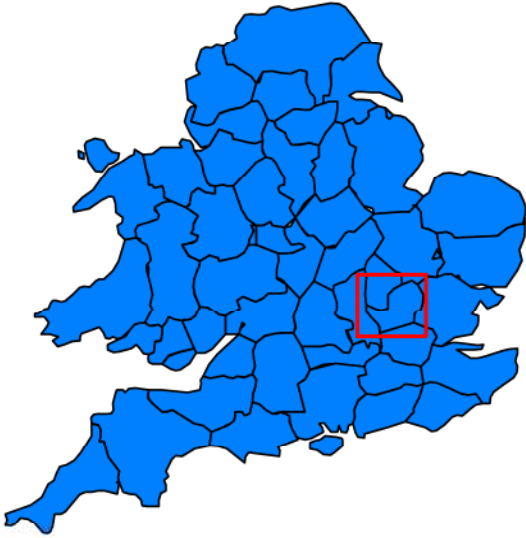
Test Pit 1, which was located inside the west tower, revealed a flint wall foundation aligned north-south [101], confirming the results of the GPR survey which indicated the possible presence of structural remains or debris in this area. It is possible that this wall represents the foundations of an earlier western tower.

Test Pits 4, 9 and 10 were targeted on GPR anomalies which had been interpreted as possible burials. Test pit 4 contained a Victorian brick duct [401] which appears to be associated with an earlier heating system. Test Pit 9 revealed a chalk make up layer [901] which may form part of a medieval or post-medieval floor. Test pit 10 was sited between a substantial grave and the wall of the south aisle, exhibiting its foundations[1001]. These were formed of flint rubble, of a similar nature to the footings seen in Test Pit 1. Investigation beneath the grave slab revealed a makeup layer which included modern brick, suggesting that the slab had been relaid in recent times, but no evidence of burials was uncovered.

Main text: Greg Jones, Jan 2010.  
Bone report: Mark Winter, Jan 2010.

**Illustrations:**

Figure 1 .....	Site Location
Figure 2 .....	Trench location
Plate 1 .....	Test pit 1, looking South
Plate 2 .....	Test pit 4 looking West
Plate 3 .....	Test pit 6, looking North
Plate 4 .....	Test pit 7 looking West
Plate 5 .....	Test pit 9 looking East
Plate 6 .....	Test pit 10 looking West











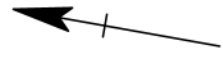
Site Location

Scale 1:1000

Location of Test Pits and  
GPR Interpretation

KEY

-  Possible vault with burials
-  Possible structural remains
-  Possible burials
-  Drain or cable duct
-  Carpet edging
-  Limit of study area
-  Impact depth from surface
-  Test Pits



Scale 1:100

Figure 2

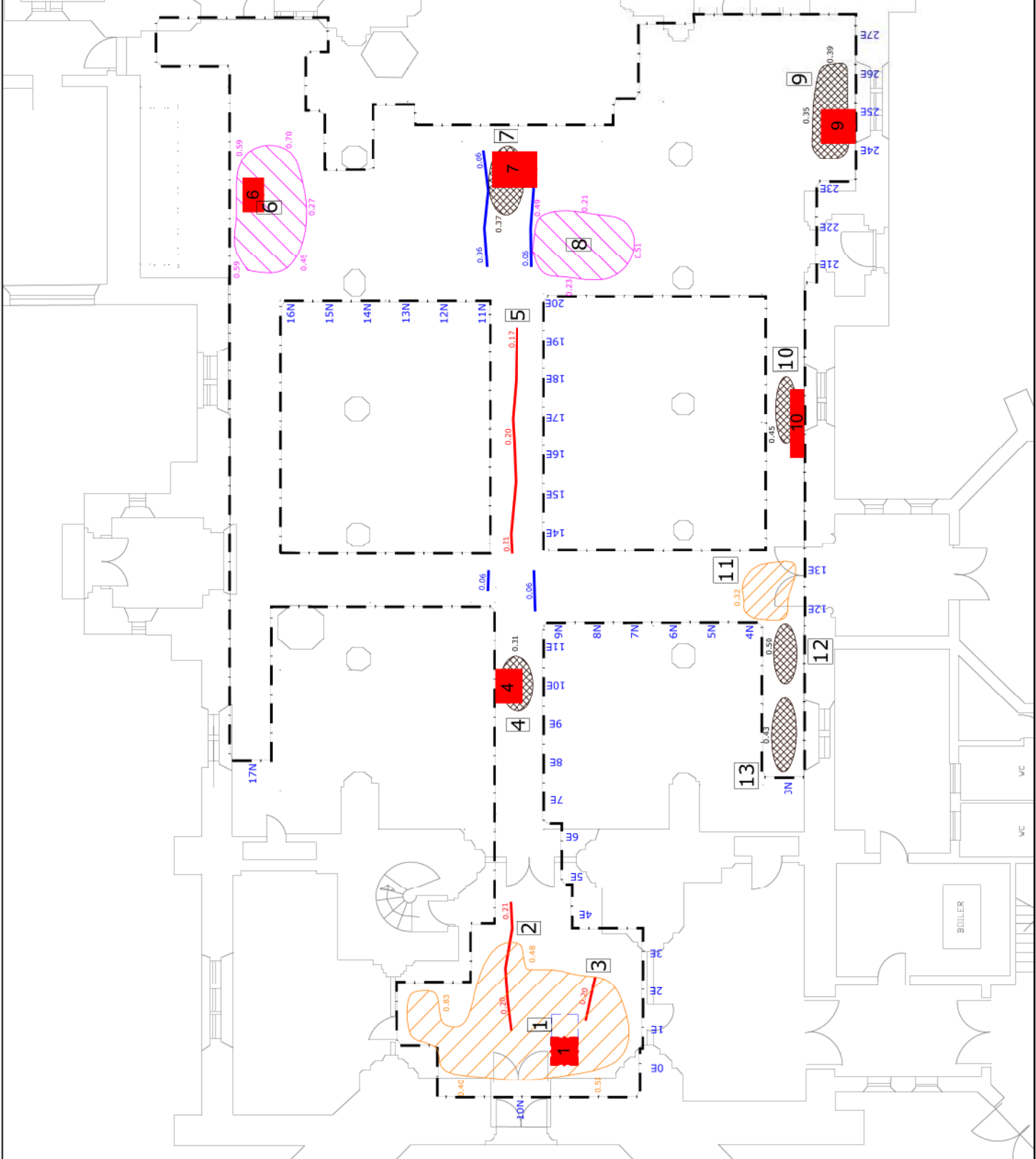




Plate 1: Test Pit 1, looking south



Plate 2: Test Pit 4, looking west



Plate 3: Test Pit 6, looking north



Plate 4: Test Pit 7 looking west





Plate 5: Test Pit 9, looking East



Plate 6: Test Pit 10, looking West



# Appendix

## OASIS Data Entry Form

OASIS ID: *heritage1-70043*

<b>Project details</b>	
Project name	Watford, St Marys Church
Short description of the project	In response to the requirements of the diocesan faculty, the Heritage Network has been commissioned by Watford Parochial Church Council to carry out a programme of archaeological investigation in advance of a proposal to install under-floor heating in the tower, nave and aisles of St. Mary's Church, Watford. The evaluation conducted by the Heritage Network successfully located and identified the brick vaulted structures anticipated from the GPR survey in Test Pits 6 and 7. The vaults were sealed but it is considered to be highly likely that burials will be present within them. Disarticulated human bone and iron nails uncovered in Test Pit 7 may indicate the presence of other nearby burials. Test Pit 1, which was located inside the west tower, revealed a flint wall foundation aligned north-south [101], confirming the results of the GPR survey which indicated the possible presence of structural remains or debris in this area. It is possible that this wall represents the foundations of an earlier western tower. Test Pits 4, 9 and 10 were targeted on GPR anomalies which had been interpreted as possible burials. Test Pit 4 contained a Victorian brick duct [401] which appears to be associated with an earlier heating system. Test Pit 9 revealed a chalk make up layer [901] which may form part of a medieval or post-medieval floor. Test Pit 10 was sited between a substantial grave and the wall of the south aisle, exhibiting its foundations [1001]. These were formed of flint rubble, of a similar nature to the footings seen in Test Pit 1. Investigation beneath the grave slab revealed a make-up layer including modern brick, suggesting that the slab had been relaid in recent times, but no evidence of burials was uncovered.
Project dates	Start: 06-01-2010 End: 15-01-2010
Previous/future work	Yes / Not known
Any associated project reference codes	HN844 - Contracting Unit No.
Type of project	Field evaluation
Site status	None
Current Land use	Community Service 1 - Community Buildings
Monument type	BURIAL VAULT Post Medieval
Monument type	STONE FOUNDATIONS Medieval
Significant Finds	HUMAN BONES Post Medieval
Significant Finds	CLAY PIPE Post Medieval
Significant Finds	FLOOR TILE Medieval
Significant Finds	ROOF TILE Medieval
Significant Finds	IRON NAILS Post Medieval
Methods & techniques	'Targeted Trenches'
Development type	Building refurbishment/repairs/restoration
Prompt	Faculty jurisdiction
Position in the planning process	Pre-application
<b>Project location</b>	
Country	England
Site location	HERTFORDSHIRE WATFORD WATFORD St Mary's Church

Postcode	WD18 0EG
Study area	210.00 Square metres
Site coordinates	TQ 110 963 51.6540426812 -0.395252084169 51 39 14 N 000 23 42 W Point
Lat/Long Datum	Unknown
Height OD / Depth	Min: 0m Max: 0m
<b>Project creators</b>	
Name of Organisation	Heritage Network
Project brief originator	N/A
Project design originator	Heritage Network
Project director/manager	David Hillelson
Project supervisor	Greg Jones
Type of sponsor/funding body	Parochial Church Council
<b>Project archives</b>	
Physical Archive recipient	Watford Museum
Physical Archive ID	HN844
Physical Contents	'Ceramics','Human Bones','Metal'
Digital Archive recipient	Watford Museum
Digital Archive ID	HN844
Digital Contents	'Stratigraphic'
Digital Media available	'Images raster / digital photography'
Paper Archive recipient	Watford Museum
Paper Archive ID	HN844
Paper Contents	'Stratigraphic'
Paper Media available	'Context sheet','Drawing','Photograph','Plan','Report','Section'
<b>Project bibliography 1</b>	
Publication type	Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)
Title	St. Mary's Church Watford, Herts: Interim Archaeological Report
Author(s)/Editor(s)	Jones, G.
Other bibliographic details	Report no. 575
Date	2010
Issuer or publisher	Heritage Network
Place of issue or publication	Letchworth Garden City
Description	A4 Booklet, 4 pages, 2 figures, 6 plates
Entered by	Helen Ashworth (hma@heritagenetwork.co.uk)
Entered on	24 January 2011