



LIFE DRONFIELD BUILDING HISTORY TOUR



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Building History Tour

Welcome

This tour helps you read the Life Dronfield building as a layered historic place: vicarage, tithe barn site, Georgian frontage, Sunday School, parish halls and community charity.

As you walk, look for clues in brick, stone, windows, rooflines, blocked openings, old walls and new repairs. The building does not need to look perfect to tell an important story.

You can follow the printed guide only. QR codes add optional video for visitors who want to see more.

HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

- Start outside, across the road from the front.
- Follow the numbered posters and the Go next directions.
- Only enter spaces that are open and safe on the day.
- Use your phone torch if you choose to visit the basement.

A self-guided walk through a building shaped by centuries of church, community and care.

20-30 minutes | no phone needed



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STOP 1

A Building of Many Layers



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STOP 2

The Vicarage

In the 1600s, an L-shaped vicarage was built here to house the vicar of St John the Baptist Church. It may have replaced an earlier building, and it formed part of the working life of the parish.

The vicarage was arranged over several levels, with service space below, main rooms above and staff accommodation higher up. The building was both a home and a working part of church and community life.

The Entrance Lobby is the orientation point for the tour. You do not need a phone to follow the route.

LOOK FOR

The relationship between the building, Church Street and St John the Baptist Church across the road.

GO NEXT

Move from the Entrance Lobby towards the corridor beside the basement doorway.

Begin outside, where the whole front can be read at once. The brick frontage, bay windows, rooflines and joins all show a building that has been altered and reused over several centuries.

Notice the Georgian brick frontage, the two-storey bay windows and the rhythm of the sash windows. These visible details help tell the story of a building that has repeatedly adapted to the needs and tastes of each generation.

LOOK FOR

GO NEXT

The brick frontage, bay windows, sash windows, rooflines and changes where different parts of the building meet.

Cross safely and enter through the front door into the Entrance Lobby.



STOP 3

The Hidden Kitchen Below



If you are able to go down safely, use the basement stairs and use the torch on your phone. There is no fixed lighting in the basement.

As you go down, look for the outlines of the earlier staircase still visible on the walls. In the first room, look to the left for the metal remains of windows that once brought light in from the rear yard.

In the further room, the far corner contains evidence of the butcher's block. These clues remind us that the vicarage was a working household, with hidden spaces that supported daily life above.

LOOK FOR

Old staircase outlines, metal window remains from the rear yard, and the butcher's block evidence in the further room.

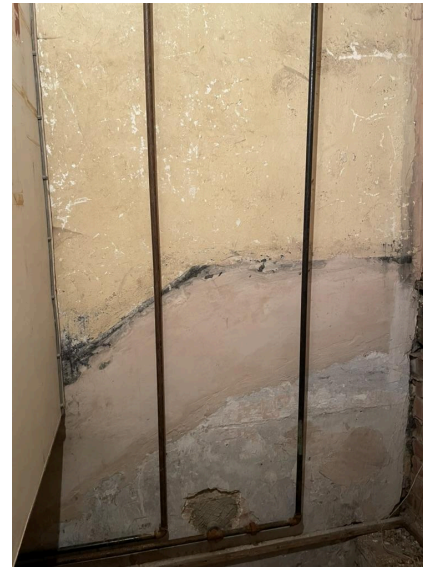
GO NEXT

Return carefully to the corridor. If able, continue upstairs; otherwise continue to the Main Hall.



STOP 3 DETAIL

What to look for below





Stair traces: look at the walls as you descend. The earlier stair line is still readable in the plaster and wall surface.

Lost light: in the first room, the metal remains of former windows show how light once reached the basement from the rear yard.

Working space: in the further room, the butcher's block evidence points to practical household use below the main rooms.



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STOP 4

Upstairs: A Working Household



Visitors can access both the Play Room and the Conference Room. These upper rooms help us understand the vicarage as a lived-in household, not just a building connected with the church.



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STOP 5

The Main Hall

Barn, Sunday School and memory



The earliest known story of this part of the site is connected with a tithe barn, probably built during the 15th or 16th century. Tithes were payments made to support the local church and clergy, often one tenth of agricultural produce.

In the 1800s, the older barn was replaced by a church hall. From the 1889 Ordnance Survey map onwards, this area is labelled as a Sunday School. The use changed, but the connection with church and community continued.

The current storage room would not have existed in this form. It sits where the historic main staircase came up from the entrance porch, showing how people once moved from the front of the house to the rooms above.

In the Conference Room, the exposed beams and stone walling reveal older fabric within a building that has been adapted many times.

LOOK FOR	GO NEXT
The exposed beams, stone walling and likely line of the historic main staircase.	Return downstairs and continue into the Main Hall.

This hall has served numerous purposes including a tithe barn, community hall, School Room, Sunday School sessions, Community groups, Amature Dramatic Performances, Political hustings, a place to sign on the dole and now it serves as a skate hub from Dronfield as a team look to build a permanent outdoor facility in the town.

LOOK FOR	GO NEXT
The scale of the hall, the roof form, the windows and the way the room still feels made for gathering.	Leave the Main Hall and go outside to view the wall between Life Dronfield and the Red House.



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STOP 6

The Wall That Remembers



Photo placeholder: export the supplied HEIC as JPG or PNG and this panel can use it here.

Stand where you can see the wall between Life Dronfield and the Red House. It is believed that this wall was made using stone from the southern wall of the tithe barn when that earlier structure was taken down in the 1800s.

This is a good reminder that old buildings do not always disappear cleanly. Parts of them can survive in new positions, reused in later phases and still quietly carrying the earlier story.

From here, look back towards the Main Hall roof. The two air vents are Victorian in style and would have helped remove smoke when the hall was used for community events and smoking indoors was common.



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STOP 7

A New Chapter for Dronfield



<p>LOOK FOR</p>	<p>GO NEXT</p>	<p>Building history video</p>	<p>Renovation vision video</p>
<p>The wall fabric between Life Dronfield and the Red House, and the two Victorian-style roof vents on the Main Hall.</p>	<p>Return to the Entrance Lobby for the final stop.</p>	<p>Life Dronfield is the latest chapter in this building's long story of service. Today the charity supports lunches, families, young people, co-working, community events, quiet reflection and local partnership.</p> <p>The building's future is not only about preserving old walls. It is about keeping a historic place alive and useful for the people of Dronfield now and for the generations still to come.</p> <p>If you remember this building as parish halls, Sunday School, church rooms, community space or anything else, Life Dronfield would love to hear from you.</p>	
<p>9</p>		<p>LOOK FOR</p>	<p>GO NEXT</p>
		<p>Signs of present community use. The building is still gathering people.</p>	<p>This is the end of the tour. Please share a memory or scan the QR codes to watch the films.</p>
		<p>10</p>	



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Films and memories



Building history video



Renovation vision video

The printed guide stands alone. These films simply add movement, voices and a sense of what the building can become.

Personal memories are part of the building's history. If you remember Sunday School, parish halls, events, groups or family stories connected with this place, please share them with Life Dronfield.



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Thank you for visiting



This tour is a first step in helping more people discover, understand and care for the Life Dronfield building. By supporting Life Dronfield, you help protect a historic place and keep it useful for Dronfield today.