

New illumination for Romsey Abbey

Client
Romsey PCC Fabric Committee

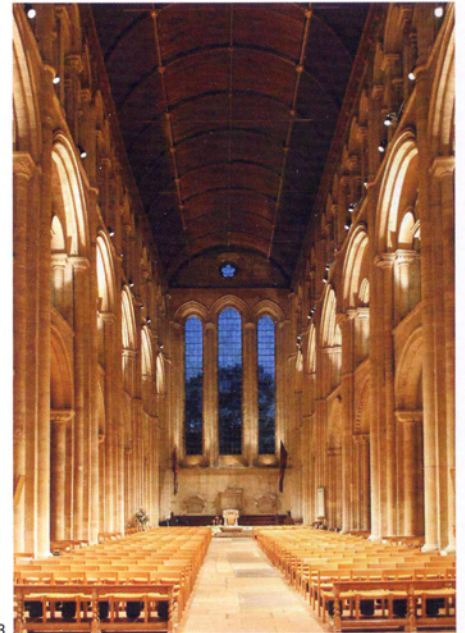
Main contractor
A.C. Lighting

Hampshire, England



The magnificent Norman church at Romsey stands on a religious site that has been occupied since early Saxon times, and certainly long before the convent was founded in 907. The church was abandoned by the nuns during Danish raids in the late 10th century. On their return, the church was restored and extended. The Norman church was begun around 1120. It is cruciform in shape, 77.7 metres in length, and built mainly of Binstead stone from the Isle of Wight. The Nave was completed in the early 13th century, with the last arches in the Early English style. Recently named as one of the 100 best loved

places of worship in Britain in a national newspaper survey, the Abbey also hosts several high profile concerts a year and various community activities. Regular visitors include the Romsey singers, Romsey Choral Society, the Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra and the City of Southampton Orchestra. During 2007, a new architectural lighting system was supplied and installed, utilising more than 300 individual fixtures. The Abbey approached A.C. Lighting to provide a solution that would address the poor general lighting and expensive running costs of the Church's existing system. As the project's primary lighting contractor, A.C. Lighting employed David Atkinson Lighting Design (DALD) to design and specify a new lighting system, then supplied, installed, commissioned, and programmed the control system. To increase the general lighting levels along the Nave, Crossing, North & South Transepts, Chancel and Sanctuary, the existing ETC Source 4 Pars were repositioned from the Triforium level to the Clerestory level. The fixtures are now fitted with anti-glare louvres to help minimize the off-access glare, which previously had been a major issue with the Abbey. With sustainability, maintenance and energy efficiency as key considerations, the project team wanted to minimise the use of incandescent lamps. Accordingly, it was agreed to place parabolic reflectors with 150W long life metal halide lamps from the Triforium level, to be used as general lighting throughout the day when there are no services or events. With the Abbey having such an abundance of outstanding architectural detail, the team decided to pick out key features such as archways and window reveals with uplighters, in this instance Woody narrow beam fixtures fitted with a spreader lens.



To ensure conservation issues would be suitably addressed, fresco wall paintings and carved wooden panels are illuminated using UV filters and controlled lighting levels. On the ground floor, low voltage fittings are positioned on the capitals of the various columns to uplight the vaulting and downlight the side aisles and chapels. Long life lamps have been used throughout the Abbey, with the added advantage that a presettable dimming system can be used. The dimming system is controlled by four LCD touch panels which provide access to numerous custom scheme presets for the different services and events held and staged in the Abbey.