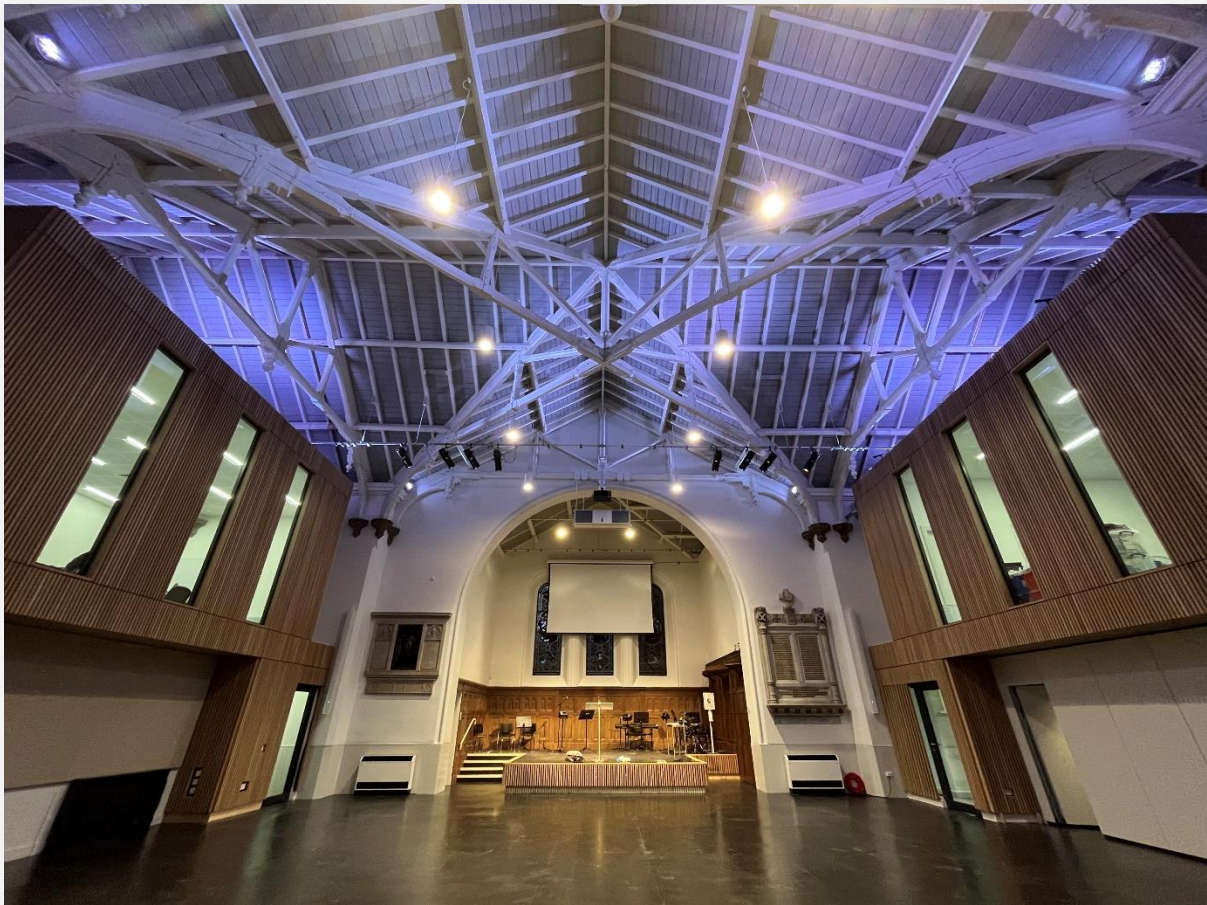


## Chalmers Church Edinburgh

Complete	Area	Client	Architect
2022	UK Scotland	Chalmers Church Edinburgh	LDN Architects

Sandy Brown was approached in 2020 to provide services to support the design of the refurbishment of the Category B listed, former Morningside Parish Church. The small cruciform-plan, Romanesque style church, was decommissioned by the Church of Scotland in 1990, and had latterly been used by both Chalmers Church Edinburgh, and Edinburgh Napier University as a performing arts centre. The proposals were to return the building to a full-time place of worship.

The acoustic conditions were a key requirement. The existing auditorium suffered from poor intelligibility of amplified speech due to excessive reverberation. Separate meeting rooms were also proposed within the transepts, and at the west-end gallery. The sound insulation between these rooms and the auditorium was a key concern as the church required the simultaneous use of the rooms for children's groups and the auditorium for church services.



© LDN Architects

We undertook a review of the architectural design proposals, and this also included baseline measurements of the existing reverberation times in the auditorium. At the time of the work, Covid restrictions meant that the church's services were broadcast online, and the church was keen that the acoustic design should consider the possibility of reduced in-person congregation sizes.

Design advice was given on the provision of sound absorbing treatment to reduce the reverberation times and improve intelligibility, in line with our recommendations. This included slatted timber and fabric-faced sound absorbing treatments to key surfaces such as the transept and gallery wall fronts.

A review was undertaken, and design advice was given on the proposed wall, floor, ceiling, and screen constructions forming the four meeting rooms and a kitchen, all of which were located directly off the auditorium. This included advice on detailing and interface requirements with the existing building fabric.

To support the project further, we undertook site inspection visits during construction to ensure the acoustic requirements were being successfully incorporated, and acoustic tests were undertaken on completion.