

Sidholme

This month we began work on several big projects that will keep us busy for a number of months. One of which was the removal of a substantial chandelier thought to be by F & C Osler, from the Music Room of the Sidholme Hotel in Devon. The chandelier pictured on the right is the largest of the set of 7 (with 2 mediums and 4 small) chandeliers, all of which require restoration. The funds to pay for the work have been raised by the Friends of Sidholme Music Room and they hope that when visitors see the vast improvements achieved following the restoration, they will want to donate toward the revival of the others. The Friends have already raised funds in the past to restore the rooms historic organ, thought to have been purchased in 1851 from the Great Exhibition, London, possibly where this suite of chandeliers was also purchased.

Restoration works required include the blowing and hand cutting of new lead crystal pieces that have been either lost or damaged beyond repair, re-plating of the metalwork, rearrangement of misplaced crystal dressings, a full rewire and a thorough clean.



Danger – failing plaster

The plaster holding crystal arms into metal mount normally lasts 30 – 50 years depending on the environment and situation. The plaster becomes weak with regular handling, in damp or humid conditions, excessive heat or where there is vibration present. Although there are many examples of chandeliers where the plaster is 200 years old or more and still holding, it is particularly important to pay attention to the plaster on older chandeliers.

Until the early 20th century electricity was not widely used in lighting, so glass arms would have been solid, rather than hollow for electrical flexes to pass through, so the arms are likely to weigh more than modern alternatives.

So what is the solution? We can remove all the old plaster from old metal mounts and reset the arms in fresh plaster ensuring they sit straight and are firmly in place for the next 30 years.

Pictured – Failed plaster & resetting arms

