



## **Congregation ensure their magnificent self-built church is accessible to all**

When the congregation of High Street Church in Cambridgeshire outgrew the 19th Century chapel, members decided to rebuild a larger church in 2008, entirely by themselves. Finding the skills necessary to build the place of worship from within the congregation, The Ark is believed to be one of the largest self-built projects in the UK.

Nestled in the village of Isleham, The Ark Church, an impressive 2,200-sq-metre building. It is made from green oak wood, that was felled, machined, processed and jointed before it was seasoned and dried: a very traditional way of using wood and a way in which medieval houses were built.



In November 2018, nearing the end of construction, the Project Leader reached out to Contacta for assistance in designing hearing loops for the church. After a site survey, the Contacta design team recommended a Large Area Hearing Loop with a phased array configuration for the main auditorium, powered by two HLD9 Hearing Loop drivers. This would ensure the whole congregation, including hearing instrument wearers, can hear services clearly by cutting out background noise and enhancing the speakers voice. The high power capacity of the HLD9 drivers and their ability to be twinned with perfect phase shifting, delivered a perfect signal across the entire area.

A baptismal font in the centre of the main auditorium made laying the loop more complex, the design team and engineers had to plan a unique loop layout and navigate the loop cable around the font. They also had to ensure the cable was not too close to the stage, to prevent possible interference with musical instruments, which are regularly in use.

Impressed with the performance of the system, The Ark Church again linked up with Contacta when they required another large area loop for their Refectory.

The Contacta team designed and installed a second phased array hearing loop at the site in February 2021, this time powered by a V15a Hearing Loop Driver. This driver is a constant current dual output hearing loop driver, with integral phase shifter for phased array configuration.

The Ark have been extremely pleased with both systems and the service provided by Contacta, with talk of potentially installing additional hearing loop systems in their meeting rooms.

