

Saint Peter's, Willersey with Saintbury Churchwarden's & Fabric Report for the Year 2021

1. Overview

It is pleasing to report that Saint Peter's Church is in good order, with the repairs and refurbishments that we have been undertaken in the most recent seven years showing real benefits to the overall condition of the church fabric.

2. Fabric Report

2.1 General Condition and Quinquennial Report

A Quinquennial Inspection and Report was due in 2021. Given that the report costs between £1,000 and £2,000, our programme of major work has addressed all of the major recommendations in the previous two quinquennial reports, the remaining work requirement has been identified and planned and the overall good condition is generally excellent, I proposed to the PCC that we did not proceed with this. Many churches have absolved themselves of this commitment some years ago, due to lack of money. I proposed that we commission a less formal inspection by an architect at a suitable timing in the future, simply to ensure that there are no emergent structural or other problems that our normal custodianship reveals and this was agreed by the PCC.

2.2 Final Approval of the re-cladding of the Tower roof.

This important work had been completed to an excellent standard on 8 September 2020.

There was no snagging to rectify, except the need to modify the trap door which enables access from the bell chamber to the rood in order to reduce its weight.

2.3 Future Works

Action: Main Roof Project: Roof tiles on Nave, Transepts, Chancel and Porch to replace. Moss to be removed. Repair to Vestry roof. RMW will seek grants funding.
(RMW)

Action: Investigate installation of infra-red electric heating in Chancel (for Wednesday services) and Nave for improved cost and heat effectiveness. Also, investigate under-pew heating.
(RMW)

Action: Large round bush north west of Porch to be pruned. (GB)

3. Willersey Cemetery – proposed extension into Court Close

As reported in 2021, the Parish Council needs to make provision for future years burial capacity in the Parish. The PCC agreed, unanimously, to work with the Parish Council to explore the viability of land sale for this purpose in Saint Peter's known as Court Close, which is the land rented by Adam Kelly to the south of the Churchyard and cemetery.

Based on observations, the Parish Council discussed a possible site with RMW, on behalf of the PCC, and Adam Kelly, tenant, which should minimise potential impacts.

The archaeological survey revealed there were that there were no remains in the area proposed that would be problematic and the Parish Council has been successful in obtaining planning permission for the cemetery extension.

RMW continues to work with the Parish Council to arrange the necessary transfer of land.

4. Insurance, Prevention of Loss and Certification

The Church and its contents are insured on an indexed policy. The policy was revisited and amended, following a visit by a representative of the Ecclesiastical Insurance company in 2015.

Electricity, gas and lighting conductor tests and certification are up to date, with the electricity and gas boiler inspections having been undertaken in 2020.

5. Act of Remembrance and Centenary Rededication of the Parish War Memorial

Just a few days before Remembrance Sunday, 2020, I happened to look at an old, special order of service which I had always assumed to be for the dedication of the processional cross in the Chancel of St Peters and realised that it was, in fact, for the dedication of the War Memorial Cross and that the service had been held in April 1920. The Memorial Cross was first dedicated by the Bishop of Gloucester on 13 April 1920. So it had been commissioned, designed and installed only one year and five months after the end of the First World War. I managed to incorporate some of the prayers and words from that service in a 100th Anniversary Re-Dedication of the War Memorial, which we included before our Act of Remembrance.

We held all of both ceremonies outside and we took the opportunity to start to improve the Act of Remembrance ceremony, which both Scott and I had wanted to do.

Revd. Scott led us in the ceremony and it featured a brief version of Abide With Me to delineate the two acts, the National Anthem at the end, followed by Nimrod, all played as military band recordings amplified from the church porch. Air Commodore Mike Barnes (Ret.d) laid a wreath on behalf of the Parish and Councillor Neville Jelfs laid a wreath from the Parish Council and we dispensed with the laying of crosses but still read the names.

We were blessed with no hitches, fine weather and good attendance of 80 persons. I have been pleased to receive many messages of approval for a moving and significant ceremony.

6. Thanks

6.1 Church Unlocking and Locking

We all recognise the importance of Saint Peter's being open to visitors and for private prayer. We are indebted to the team who ensure this happens:

Tom & Liz King-Smith
Gillian Beale
Jenny Bond and
Elizabeth Milnes-James.

6.2 Flowers in Church

I propose a vote of sincere thanks to Saint Peter's dedicated flower arranging team for the work, creativity and skill they bring to bear to such good effect to brighten up our beautiful church and for the leadership and administration that Tini Owens and Elizabeth Milnes-James provide to ensure its success.

We should also be grateful to Elizabeth and everyone else who helped to make the 2020 Patronal Flower Festival in the church a success.

6.3 Volunteers and supporters

We are extremely grateful to the many volunteers who do so much to support St. Peter's. Their diverse and continuing efforts are vital to ensure that the Church is there for Willersey. I take this opportunity to recognise their contributions and thank them for all their works.

I would like to acknowledge the members of our PCC for their support and advice. Personally, I receive consistent, valued support from my wife, Judith, in carrying out my duties as Churchwarden and in 2020 for the important part she played in ensuring that the Community Support Group was financed and supported. I feel it important to express my gratitude to Judith publicly.

Robert McNeil-Wilson
Churchwarden

July 2021