

Update to Hatley Parish Council from the Churches

Hatley St George church and parish

The task group has temporarily faltered as far as meeting, but a new architect has been appointed in the wake of Nick Warns' departure and has visited with a view to assessing costs of the work needed there – there are significant drainage issues.

Fund-raising has been seriously curtailed by Covid, as has the opportunity to socialise. The Sunday afternoon of **29th August** has been identified as an opportunity for both things, with a **Fête** scheduled in Hatley for the whole parish (i.e. including Gamlingay), being coordinated by Sarah Titmus, via the PCC which serves the parish.

11th September sees the [Ride and Stride](#) sponsored event offering opportunity to visit churches in the area, supporting [Cambs Historic Churches Trust](#), which offers grants for which Hatley St George church is eligible. It is hoped to have the Hatley St George church open – this could coincide with St Denis' if there were a desire to do so*, although St Denis' is not a parish church supported by the Historic Churches Trust as far as I know.

Services are now on a temporary post-Covid timetable which offers:

- Two opportunities a month for afternoon/evening services – by arrangement.
- Festival services where appropriate.
- Monthly 8.00 am Book of Common Prayer said communion – to date there have been two attendees at each of the 8.00 am services.

The aim is to provide worship opportunities relevant to the local community within the constraints of sharing with Gamlingay and Everton and not being a Parish Church.

There will be services for festivals in all three Benefice churches – the next one is **Harvest on 2nd October**, no final arrangements yet but Harvest Supper and sales of produce are being discussed, and Hatley church will be decorated for that weekend by anyone who would like to contribute.

Churchyards

As the Council is aware, the churchyard at St Denis' is still open for burials and remains PCC responsibility, although the building itself at St Denis' is now in the care of Friends of Friendless Churches. The PCC continues to be most grateful to the local volunteers supporting the care of the churchyards as a wildlife reserve. Through their efforts the churchyard is mown and conserved, under Nicola Jenkins' leadership.

Hatley St George churchyard is kept tidy by the Astor estate for which we are most grateful. The planned work on the yew trees has faltered as the application got lost somewhere between completion and the Diocesan decision-makers – Covid can probably be blamed, or possibly the post. The work could go ahead once the nesting season is over, we are still waiting for reply to re-application.

Very new news – I am asking around to see if there is interest in following up a suggestion from Diana Cook (via Rebecca Neale, Wildlife Trust) concerning a Churchyard Conservation Award which we might pursue as a Benefice – [details on their website](#).

Hilary Young

Parish Priest for the parish of Gamlingay with Hatley St George and East Hatley

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* After writing this report, I learned St Denis' church will be open on 10th, 11th and 12th of September for the annual Heritage Open Days festival.