

## **St Denis' church and churchyard / nature reserve**

### **Update for 18 January 2022 meeting of Hatley Parish Council**

#### **St Denis' church**

The Friends of Friendless Churches (FoFC) was successful in obtaining a grant from the second round of the Government's Culture Recovery Fund – it has been put towards replastering the nave and other repairs (see the planning application detail below).

£56,288 (80% eligible costs) was awarded on 13 December. The work needs to be completed by 31 March 2022. Peter Mann has written a 'Good news' story about this on the Hatley website: [www.hatley.info/news\\_events/news/more-good-news-about-st-denis-church](http://www.hatley.info/news_events/news/more-good-news-about-st-denis-church).

When this phase of the renovations is completed, sometime in the spring 2022, it will be possible to open the church every day and, at some stage, hold events.

There are two planning applications involved:

- [21/03880/LBC](#) for 'repair and replastering of nave walls, repair reredos, sanctuary step and east window surround, minor roof repairs to resolve intermittent leaks and localised treatment of timber decay to roof' was approved (with listed building constraint) by SCDC on 19 October 2021.
- [21/03880/CONDA](#) was received and validated by SCDC on 7 January for 'Submission of details required by condition 3 (samples) of planning permission 21/03880/LBC'. The condition requires samples of stone and nave plaster/limewash are provided on site for inspection by SCDC's Conservation Officer and written approval by the SCDC. Samples will be available towards the end of January.

Lodge & Sons, the contractors, are beginning work on the church 19th January – Abbott, their scaffolding contractor, erected scaffolding inside the church on 17 and 18 January.

The Trustees of the FoFC asked for a high-resolution record of the nave walls to be made before the 'naked' field stone construction is replastered. Peter Mann is undertaking this task and is expertly taking detailed photographs of the walls. Having photographed the bottom third of the walls, he will be using Lodge's scaffolding to photograph the rest.

Separate funding is required for the installation of a new East window. Rachel Morley heard more good news – Simon Dammant has more pieces of stained glass from the original window.

#### **Book of Common Prayer, 1792**

We have heard that a resident in Gransden has the Common Prayer book for St Denis' church, published in 1792. We're hopeful that this might be returned to the church.

#### **A talk to be given to Wrestlingworth History Society**

Wrestlingworth History Society asked, via the Hatley website, whether someone could give a talk on the history of St Denis' church, the village's history and its links to the Castells and Downing families. Peter Mann has agreed to deliver a talk on 16 March 2023.

### **St Denis' in the news**

Following the visit from Max Willcock of Bournemouth News & Picture Service on 28 September, more articles have appeared about St Denis', mainly on the stained glass incorporated in the chancel window, in the *Daily Telegraph* and *Daily Express* on 3 January 2022 and *This Week* on 7 January.

The *Telegraph* article resulted in a concert classical guitarist offering to give a recital (but probably not until 2023 or 2024).

Thanks as always go to Peter Mann, for taking photographs of the walls, for liaising with the FoFC about the contractors, and for showing occasional visitors round the church, especially over Christmas.

### **St Denis' churchyard / local nature reserve**

The Interment of ashes of George Dixon in the family grave in the churchyard in August. George, Joyce Dixon's brother died on 10 March 2021.

Nicola Jenkins / 18 January 2022