

# Friends of St Michael's Church, Brent Knoll



## NEWSLETTER No 6 May 2019

Welcome to newsletter number 6 for the Friends of St Michael's Church. This is a very important newsletter. First, there are a number of major developments that will take place this year and, second, these developments will provide Friends with an opportunity to participate and actively support St Michael's Church. We shall finally be able to get to grips with **Quinquennial** (QQ) repair and maintenance work (churches are inspected on a 5-year cycle by an architect and defects are identified that require remedial work - our QQ inspection was in 2015). Normally we would expect to be able to cover the costs of repair work from a combination of revenue and appropriate use of our savings. However, this year we shall have to set up a significant **Appeal** to raise funds for our work. This means that the process of budgeting is particularly important in 2019. Budgeting must start from a firm base, and the **financial statement of St Michael's Church accounts for 2018** is presented below. Major work does not mean that we stop fundraising and the usual fundraising events will continue, together with some extra events to support the Appeal.

By the time this newsletter appears a considerable amount of planning will already have been done, and what will follow is the result of this work. But QQ work is not the only development to report and several **other projects are scheduled for this year**. These are listed below. Finally, the most important repair we shall be doing is to the church roof. There has been much discussion about what is needed to keep the lead roof(s) on St Michael's in a state of good repair. On the final page of the newsletter there is a **brief article that takes a historical perspective on the use of lead in Church Roofs, and ties this in with our intended work**.

*Ged Keele, Co-ordinator, St Michael's Church Friends*

### **Quinquennial work and an Appeal**

The Parish of Three Saints is now embarking on a series of major church repairs and developments. St Mary's, in East Brent, and St. Christopher's, in Lympham, are both doing QQ work. They are also intending to build toilet and refreshment facilities. In effect this will bring them into line with St. Michael's. Doing QQ work only means that we have a project that is restricted in scope but is not necessarily "simple". We shall be applying for grants to complete the work and this creates some difficulties over scheduling the different

components of the project. When QQ work is complete we shall have an opportunity to consider undertaking some re-ordering work in the north aisle and in the south porch.

What work will be included in our QQ project? The main item will be to re-lead the north aisle roof at an estimated cost of £40-50k. We also have masonry and window repairs to undertake, which are likely to cost in the region of £5k. The boiler is in urgent need of repair and we have taken the decision to replace it at a cost of £8.5k. The replacement will be technically more efficient and, if we are able to manage the heating better through improved thermostatic control, we will hope to reduce heating costs. Architects fees will add around £5-7k to the overall project cost.

With a building cost spend of around £53.5k we intend to obtain grants to cover around 70% of this work (£37.5k) leaving us to cover around £21.5k from our own resources. If we are able to raise £10k from an appeal, we will have to draw on our capital for the remainder to balance our cash flow. I believe that £10k is an achievable target for an appeal. Furthermore, it will leave us with a proportion of our capital intact at the end of the year. This is important because, as I explain below, the income from our investment is substantial.

## Fundraising activities

We have set up an overall theme of *Save our Church Roof*. This is not the lead roof but the unique medieval carved roof underneath. Under this banner we will be asking people to give individual contributions; approaching local organisations and business to sponsor a section of the roof; and holding fundraising events.

## Other work on the church and churchyard

- Clock Face renewal – David Filmer and Tony Hill are organising a project to renovate the clock face. They are hoping that the project can be completed this summer. This is an exciting opportunity to restore an important part of the church. I look forward to an account of the project's progress at the Annual Meeting
- Refurbishment of the Symes Tomb – George Brown is keen to restore the inscription on this 18<sup>th</sup> C table tomb. We are working with him and the Parish Council to replace the current panels on the tomb.
- Building a new path to the Remembrance Garden – Mike Smith has plans, and more importantly finance, to take a new path to the Remembrance Garden. He is waiting for planning permission from Sedgemoor DC.

## Planned events

**Annual Meeting of Friends** - This will be held on **Wed 15<sup>th</sup> May at St Michael's Church at 7pm**. It will provide an opportunity for Friends to review the proposed plans for Quinquennial work and the Appeal to cover the costs of this work. As it will be held in St Michael's Church, we will also take the opportunity to look at possible ways in which plans to re-order the north aisle and south porch could be carried forward. Free refreshments will be available.

The **Brent Knoll Village Fete on Sat 9<sup>th</sup> June 2pm** - We are very fortunate to be receiving a portion of the profits again this year. As usual there will be **Plant and Cake Stalls**. If you have any plants that you can bring to the event for sale, **please bring them sensibly potted and labelled to the stall before 12 noon**. Margaret Smith is doing the Cake Stall and would also appreciate cakes delivered to the stall on the morning of the Fete.

## St Michael's Church accounts for 2018

As in past years there are two statements of account. The first is strictly related to the running costs of St Michael's (income and expenditure) and the second is a statement of balances for the year ends. My reason for presenting the income and expenditure in this way is to concentrate on the running costs of our church. The balances now cover only two accounts, the Parish Heritage (TPoTS) bank account and the St Michael's Trust shares. This is due to the fact that the old St Michael's Trust Santander Account has now been reduced to zero by the transfer of Funds to the St Michael's Parish Heritage Account.

### Statement of income and expenditure for 2018 (2017 incl. for comparison - in grey)

|   | Income        | Expenditure   | Income       | Expenditure  |
|---|---------------|---------------|--------------|--------------|
| Donations, collections and grants               | 5,159         |               | 2,465        |              |
| Friends membership                              | 915           |               | 1,005        |              |
| Interest on shares                              | 1,336         |               | 1,318        |              |
| Fundraising                                     | 3,596         |               | 3,102        |              |
| Legacy  | 3,500         |               | 2,000        |              |
| Gift aid  |               |               | 80           |              |
| Running costs (inc Insurance)                   |               | 3,536         |              | 2,510        |
| Heat and light                                  |               | 4,916         |              | 1,891        |
| Maintenance and repairs                         |               | 697           |              | 145          |
| Other   |               | 900           |              | 60           |
| Churchyard maintenance (paid by Brent Knoll PC) |               | (3500)        |              | (3500)       |
|   |               |               |              |              |
| <b>TOTAL</b>                                    | <b>14,506</b> | <b>13,549</b> | <b>9,102</b> | <b>8,965</b> |

The first point to make is that compared to 2017 we have had a relatively poor year in some respects. You can see that our running costs are significantly higher. This is partly explained by the fact that there was a rebate on our utility bills in 2017 and this year's figures are "real". The account remains inflated by the fact that we have had a further £3.5k legacy that has not yet been spent. Furthermore, we have received grant funding for work that has yet to be done. On a positive note our income from membership subscriptions and from our investment continues to yield around £2k each year, and last year we received a very welcome fundraising boost from the village fete that is organised by the Parish Hall. This year has been more expensive than 2017 but the £900 item under other was for tree felling work that we hope will not recur.

| <b>BALANCES at 31/12/2017</b> | <b>BALANCES at 31/12/2018</b> |
|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| TPoTS Bank - 13,258           | TPoTS Bank – 18,317           |
| Trust Shares - 30,709         | Shares – 28,000               |
| <b>TOTAL 43,967</b>           | <b>TOTAL 46,317</b>           |

Taken overall, we appear to have another surplus this year, but I have already pointed to income from a legacy and grant that has inflated our income. Please also note that our shares have declined in value by 9% over the year. **If anyone wishes to query this presentation of accounts, please contact me in the first instance. If I cannot answer the query I will refer to Jim Hanmer, the Parish Treasurer.**

# Church roofs and lead

The Romans began using lead in buildings in Britain, mostly for piping water. After the Romans left early Christian churches were roofed using thatch. In the early middle ages cathedrals began to use lead and parish churches continued using thatch but added tiles, made either of stone or wood, to the mix of roofing materials. Gradually, as the country areas became richer, parish churches were able to use lead for their roofs.

“Lead’s chief characteristics are durability and malleability. The ease with which it can be melted, cast, jointed and decorated makes it very suitable for use in roofing”. Lead roofs can last a long time and are well-known for outliving the life-span of buildings with little to no drop in performance after 200 years. However, poorly laid roofs, or those exposed to the elements, particularly direct sunlight which heats the roof and causes excessive expansion and contraction, may deteriorate well before that time.

“The basic principle of good architectural conservation is to preserve as much of the original fabric as possible by only undertaking work that is essential to a building’s survival. Where fabric has deteriorated, effective and honest repair should be the first consideration. Replacement is the last resort.”

<http://www.buildingconservation.com/articles/churchleadwork/churchleadwork.htm>

<https://www.roundhayroofing.co.uk/when-should-lead-roofing-be-replaced/>

## Other options for replacing lead roofing

There are alternatives to using lead for church roofs. For example, a stainless steel alloy may be used. However, this is only 30% cheaper. Furthermore, for Grade 1 listed buildings, both planning consent and permission from the Diocese is required. This may be granted if the roof is not visible from ground level. Otherwise permission will not be granted.

## History of St Michael’s roofs

Our church has eight separate lead roofs; tower, south nave, north nave, north aisle, south porch (2) and vestry (2). Each roof has a date stamp with the builder’s mark on it.

- South nave (2010)
- North aisle (**1925 – leaking intermittently – repair attempted 2010 with no change – there is evidence of some deterioration**)
- North nave, south porch and vestry (1877)
- Tower roof (uncertain age but recent leak was repaired in 2015 and repair is holding)

During the past months we have discussed various options with our architect. Initially we considered further repairs to the N aisle roof but rejected this on the grounds that, in his opinion, replacement was likely to be required in 5-10 years. There was the possibility that we could include the N nave roof in the QQ work, and the advantage here would have been a saving on scaffolding costs. If it becomes necessary to repair the N nave roof in the next few years we will obviously miss out on this opportunity.

**Management of financial risk has influenced the final decision to restrict re-leading to the N aisle roof. Not only will we have to raise less money in our Appeal, but we also intend to have some capital left after the work is done. This will provide us with some continuing income from our investment and leave a capital balance that could be used later.**