

## **Annual PCC Report for the Stradishall Parish Council AGM 2023**

The local fundraising group and grant application group both started work in earnest during 2022 on behalf of what is now called the Stradishall Church Revitalisation Project. The sponsored roof tile appeal for the Chancel roof raised nearly £4,000 during the year, virtually all of which was gift aided which will generate another £1,000 in due course. Other events were organised, notably a talk by the actor Madhav Sharma, who lives locally, and the Harvest lunch which was revived for the first time since Covid struck. Madhav's talk raised nearly £1,400 and the Harvest lunch almost £2,000. Two villagers, Nick and Linda Burton took part in a sponsored run and raised over £1,100 towards the Project. In total therefore, over £10,000 was raised and a huge thank you goes to all those who helped to make these fundraising events so successful, and particularly to Philip Rous who has led this group.

Obviously, there were costs incurred, in particular the cost of erecting temporary snowboards each side of the Chancel roof to stop any further tiles falling to the ground and to enable the public footpath to reopen. Also, the Church Architects are now involved in drawing up a specification for the Chancel roof and a feasibility study for the possible use of the building as a Community Hub.

The grant giving group have been busy looking into possible sources of funding, as substantial grants are going to be needed to finance the project. It is hoped that a faculty will be granted by the Diocese in the near future to enable work to start on the Chancel roof. Unfortunately, in the last few days, tiles have begun to fall off the porch roof as well!

A village survey was undertaken and of those who responded the vast majority wanted the Church to be available for use as a Community facility. The question of a car park if the Church is to be used as a Community Hub has still to be resolved. A potential site has been identified and negotiations are ongoing with interested parties including the planning authorities.

Church services continued once every seven weeks, and included Easter Sunday, plus a short Remembrance Service and a very well attended Carol Service. Sadly only 6 villagers regularly attend Services, the rest of the congregation coming from other Churches in the Benefice. They do support us financially but naturally they donate mainly to their own Church. We have therefore struggled to pay our full Parish Share of £3,564 this year and now have no reserves left in our General fund. It was discovered that grant giving bodies would not look favourably if we have not paid our Share in full so this may well be a problem in the future with obtaining grants.

The PCC met on 6 occasions during the year, one being a brief meeting to approve a faculty application. Unfortunately, our new members last year have had to resign because of work and other commitments, but we have recently gained one further member so we now have 3 PCC members plus our Rector, Eve Bell.

A big thank you to all who have helped the Church in 2022 in whatever way and of course to the Parish Council for their continued financial support towards the Churchyard.

Jane and Robert Helliwell

PCC Secretary and Treasurer