

ST MARY THE VIRGIN RIVERHEAD WITH DUNTON GREEN CHURCHWARDENS REPORT - 2018/19

This year the maintenance of St. Mary's has mainly been in catch up mode. As mentioned in our report last year we were fortunate that, after our last Quinquennial Inspection in 2016, our late architect Chris Rayner had supplied us with a schedule of work for us to follow. During the year, when the weather allowed, we have been following the schedule, and our builders have completed most of the maintenance items listed as 'urgent' or 'advisable within two years'. There are still some outstanding tasks ahead of us, but we are confident that the building is in a sound state going forward.

Although not on the Quinquennial list we have also replaced all the lights in the nave with LED fittings which are, of course, more economical to run and give a much clearer and cleaner light. So much so that it became immediately evident that the chancel lights are very inadequate. Our Victorian forerunners did not have to give a great deal of attention to the matter of health and safety when maintaining such high lights, but we are having a great deal of trouble finding the right sort of equipment which will enable the electricians to reach the very high and awkwardly positioned fittings without risk to life or limb. If anyone knows of a steeple jack please let us know!

The Three Parish Review is continuing on it's way, and is following a proposal that all three parishes have approved for further consultation. This involves a team ministry with incumbents in each parish committed to working across all three parishes. It is hoped that the proposal will be put forward for consultation shortly.

Amongst all the various events during the year the most important, of course, was the commemoration of the end of the 1st World War 100 years ago. The church and the Parish Council worked together to produce a truly effective and affecting tribute, with the display of poppies and the tea party in the Village Hall. Many thanks to all those who worked so hard to make it such a memorable occasion.

As always the Churchwardens are very grateful to the many people who work often unseen behind the scenes. In the past we have tried to name everyone who has helped us, but it is far too easy to leave some one out so please consider yourselves very gratefully thanked! We will make a few exceptions however. John and Margaret Curtis who look after the churchyard and oversee the Garden of Remembrance, and Robert McLintock who has continued his valuable work with the Fabric Committee, where his knowledge and expertise are always invaluable, as well as his management of the website, which he manages in his usual calm and efficient way. Geoff Holland has as usual paid tireless attention to the wellbeing of the church clock. However, despite his diligence it managed to let him down during this year, but thankfully was eventually coaxed back into service. Even the bell has had an overhaul, so all is well again!

Kathryn Woodward has continued to undertake regular cleaning during the year, but Margaret Holman has kindly taken over the painstaking duty of managing the hall bookings and calendar, for which we are eternally grateful. Thanks to them and to Margaret Nicholas for their efficient work in looking after the hall.

Diane Williams stands down as Churchwarden this year after two stints of 5 years (with a break of one year in the middle!). Her guidance will not be lost to us as, however, she will continue as Assistant Churchwarden during the coming year.

Lastly, and certainly not least, we have said a reluctant goodbye to our lovely vicar Martin and his equally lovely wife Maggie. We have been lucky to have them with us for nearly 7 years, and we wish them both a happy and healthy retirement.

Churchwardens
March 2019