



St Laurence's Church, Corringham Diocese of Lincoln

Report to Corringham Civil Parish Annual Meeting 16th of May 2023



PDJ Howitt-Cowan

Churchwarden & PCC Secretary

The Church continues to be a Community Resource witnessing to the Christian faith as it has done for well over 1, 000 years. It is older than the British Monarchy! And the Church has been blessed with volunteers prepared to give up their quality time to clean the church, polish and brass clean as well as clean the silver throughout the past year and the Church is indebted to the group. The Church is in good heart and has an active and committed Parochial Church Council willing to work with the Church School and the Village Hall to promote Community spirit and service to the church and civil parish. The Church still struggles financially to be sustainable and last year was greatly blessed with anonymous benefactions. On the whole, the church building is pretty sound except for a section on the lead roof on the North West Aisle which is letting in water ingress and the cost of addressing that is in the region of £6k to £7k to repair.

Bell Tower:

This has been re carpeted thanks to an anonymous donor and in the process of preparing for the new carpet, the boiler chamber under the tower was revealed.

The bells have been out of action for several years however an expert in bells came forward and with the assistance of Paul Summers the Captain of the Tower, the bells are now in working order at no cost to the church.

There is an active team on bell ringers which meets on Thursday afternoons for practice.

As a result of the bells being in working order, several teams of bell ringers have visited and two teams are due this year one as early as the 20th of May.

The bells rang out for the late Queen's Platinum as they did recently for the King's Coronation on 6th of May.

Hand Bells:

The church possesses a fine set of hand bells and Messingham Church bell ringers visited the Craft Club yesterday to put willing members through their paces as some have shown a willingness to learn the art of hand bell ringing.

Armistice 2022:

At Corringham this has always been observed on the 11th of the 11th despite the innovation of Remembrance Sunday. This was well attended, including senior members of the school and included music and the last post. The Rector officiated. Wreaths were laid by a representative of the Parish Council.

Christmastide 2022:

The Church held a Carol Service and this was by candlelight and this was followed up by Holy Communion on Christmas Eve also by candlelight and both services had additional lighting from the oil lamps which had been cleaned and put into working order. Both services were well supported.

Easter - the Eucharist was celebrated on Easter Saturday. There was an Easter Garden on display.

West Lindsey Churches Festival:

This attracted a lot of visitors and last year the church offered, after a great deal of research, a guided tour of the Church yard as well as a display of the church silver and the visitors were given a talk about the pieces held by the church. The oldest silver plate is 17c made at the Restoration of the Monarchy. The Church organ was also at the service of musicians to play. The Church's bier has also on display along with facsimiles of Church records for family historians to pore over. The Church also boasts of fine catering which always attracts the regular visitor to the Church for lunch or light refreshment.

Church School Governor:

After several years of a vacancy, the PCC has appointed Mrs Trish Hardwick as Church Governor who on completion of induction training will assume her place on the Governing Body.

The School has celebrated Harvest, Christmas and Easter in the Church.

Church Lighting:

The South and North Aisles have now received LED lighting through an anonymous donor.

Platinum Celebrations:

It was suggested on retrieving the lych gates out of storage, that they were re hung, however they were well past their 'sell by date'. The Lych gate is Grade 2 Listed and subject to restrictions after reference to the Conservation Officer. The Church is permitted to commission a new set of gates in oak to the original design and this was eventually costed at over £2k by an antique furniture restorer and found to be far too prohibitive to the church authorities. The original gates are now housed in the church. The Parish Council had offered to defray costs for the re hanging of the original gates which was appreciated but not pursued in the light of the cost.

The Coronation of King Charles III:

The Church porch was decorated with bunting and a special flag raised the Union Flag with the Royal Coat of Arms emblazoned over it. There was a Coronation service on the Sunday before the Coronation.

Discovery of Newsletters 1881 – 86:

These were discovered at Eastertide in a box. They consisted of a bundle of newsletters spanning the ministry of Canon Westbrooke and of great interest about the Church restoration during 1882-84 and of the village. The Church warden with the Vicar controlled both the Ashwin Charity and the administration of the Allotments both of which were later transferred to the Parish Council.

Social Events in 2023:

The Church held a Harvest Supper in the autumn which was well attended with a successful Quiz for entertainment

The Churchwarden gave a power point presentation on the title, *Who are these Becketts?*

The Laming Family kindly allowed a Snow drop guided Walk in February into the grounds of the former Somerby Hall which was well supported

2024:

Plans will be drawn up to mark two events in 2024 namely;

First the Tercentenary of the founding of the William Ashwin Charity 29th of May 1724 which was originally invested in the Church from 1724 to 1970's, the best part of 250 years

Secondly, it will be 140 years since Bodley & Garner refurbished and restored the Church 1882 -84 as we enjoy it today. The Church was re opened on 6th of May 1884.

Next March 2024, the Rev Canon P Wain is due to retire after 13 years as the vicar of the Parish. At this present time it is uncertain how or by whom the Parish will be served.

A new Bishop of Lincoln is due to be appointed sometime this year.

Flag Pole:

The church now has a permanent flag pole in the church yard and flies various flags Union Flag, Lincolnshire flag, St Andrew's, St Georges and the flag of Ukraine; both flag pole and flags were anonymously donated.

Parochial Church Council PCC:

Met in April and re elected P Howitt-Cowan as Churchwarden [now in his 10th year]

Adele elected Deputy Warden [but this title does not carry legal obligation for the church and its fabric which is the responsibility of the Churchwarden]

Treasurer Trish Hardwick

PCC Secretary P Howitt-Cowan

Captain of the Tower Mr Paul Summers

Corringham Deanery Synod representative and Lay Chair, representative at Diocesan Synod and magazine correspondent – The Churchwarden

Quinquennial:

Is due sometime this year

PDJ Howitt- Cowan 10/05/2023 revised 16/05/23