



Keith Phillips
On behalf of the PCC of St. Oswald's Church, Lower Peover.

**2019 AGM CHURCHWARDENS (IN ABSENTIA) REPORT
for the year April 2018-2019**

23rd April 2019

Dear Parishioners,

In the absence of churchwardens at St. Oswald's church during the period April 2018 to date, this is a brief overview on behalf of the PCC.

Of note, St. Oswald's church will enter a period of Interregnum with effect from Sunday, 7th July 2019.

Losses/Security

Inside the church there have been no known losses of church property during the last year. All our property, including artefacts held inside the church and all metal items outside, are marked with Smartwater® and registered with the relevant authorities (see later).

Insurance Claims

Excessive rainfall over the week ending 24th March 2019 resulted in the boiler room flooding and the heating circulation pump requiring replacement. Additional pipework was also needed to match the new pump feeds. Ecclesiastical Insurance authorised immediate replacements. £2,174. An internal automatic sump pump has now been ordered by an anonymous donor to stop future flooding of the boiler room.

Toilet/Sexton's Storeroom

Eventually officially opened for business on 6th August 2018. Much additional work has been completed over the year. Special thanks must go to Norman, Terrence and Ged for their support and help. Faulty exterior lighting was eventually fixed (hopefully) by the contractors and all now appears well. All monies now paid, and project completed.

Faculties in Progress:

Removal of rear two pews in the front right 'block' of pews, plus the re-direction of heating pipes has been successfully applied for. The works are being managed by Norman and Terrence and the contractors involved are Reclisia Ltd. (removal of pews) and Mellor Mottram (heating). Funds are already set aside, with a maximum caveat of £7,500. Estimated start date September 2019.

Insurance

We remain covered for an increased sum assured of £7.8m of building and contents cover, £5,000 cash (held inside or outside the church) and £10m public liability. An excess of £250 applies to all sections. The premium is paid in monthly instalments of £263.

Electrical Inspection

Our next full electrical inspection is due at or before 27th March 2020, the last one having been completed in March 2015.

Lightning Conductor

The Lightning Protection System inspection was completed in August 2017 by Omega Red Group Ltd. and the appropriate certificate issued. Ecclesiastical require these inspections roughly every four years, but no longer than five. So, August 2021 is anticipated.

Fire Risk Assessment

Our last Fire Risk Assessment was completed on 17th August 2015.

Fire Extinguishers

Our fire extinguishers were inspected in December 2017 and the appropriate certificate issued. The bell tower extinguisher has now been changed from powder to Co2.

Contents

As reported last year, the church silver remains in a secure place, fully insured to its value of £41,000. We are still looking into the installation of a further safe at The Vicarage to house these items. Insurance would not be compromised.

Boiler

The boiler was last serviced by Higgins Plumbing of Macclesfield in March 2018. Given the anticipated works to be completed by Mellor Mottram in September 2019 during the Pew Removal project, it is recommended that a full service is completed at that time when the system is drained. It was agreed by the PCC to also fully 'wash-through' the heating system.

Clock

Last serviced 21st May 2018 by Smiths of Derby. A new pre-paid 3-year contract was agreed 22nd March 2019. The cost is £601.20 inc VAT. Next service due July 2019.

Organ

The organ still throws up occasional problems which have been remedied by our new organ builders, Cartwright & Cartwright of Newcastle Under Lyme. The servicing cost is £190 (inclusive of VAT) and this occurs twice a year.

Quinquennial Inspection

This took place on 7th April 2016. Works still requiring attention is the brushing down and redecoration of timber framing to all elevations and inspection of the beech tree in the north-west corner of the churchyard. Otherwise, all is good with the fabric of the church.

Churchyard

We still appear to have a small problem with alterations in the form of irregular 'gardens' and stonework appearing on some of the graves. This is strictly prohibited and only leads to awkward discussions with relatives. We have roped-off an area of 16 horizontal gravestones in the south-west area of the churchyard which have collapsed inwards and may present a hazard should children play on or around them. Remedial action has been discussed and they will be re-positioned and made safe in due course.

Smartwater®

Last ordered and applied April 2016. Applications have a maximum 5-year effective usage period, although the bottle solution before application is only effective for 2 years. Therefore, recommend replacement solution approx. April 2020. Ref. No. CHU012/25785.

Churchwardens/Archdeacons Visitation Service

This year's service is being held at St. Mary's church, Bowdon on Monday, 20th May at 7.30 pm. Keith Phillips and Rodney Fowler have both accepted their nominations for the post, so please do come and attend.

Thanks

Thanks as always to Pamela, without whom the complex matter coordinating funerals would be so much less ably handled. Thanks also to the willing helpers who keep the church clean, dressed in the right altar cloths, bedecked with flowers and provide music for our services; to those providing coffee and refreshments week by week, to Terence for keeping the grounds tidy and presentable, and Norman for all the maintenance jobs that we all appreciate, but so often go unnoticed. Thanks too to all the fund-raising team who worked so hard during the last year. Apologies to anyone missed out.

There is much to do Parishioners. A period of Interregnum is likely to last for about twelve months, during which time we will enjoy the company and presence of those guided to lead us, whilst also praying for a suitable new Incumbent.

Keith Phillips.