

St Edwards Report to Parish Council May 2018

The current phase of work on the Church should be completed by the end of the month, this has included major work to the lead roof on the North Aisle and the Vestry and replacement of the lead gulleys over the organ chamber. The replacement of all the Gutters and Downpipes with New Cast Iron ones that fit properly. The digging of new drains on the northern and western sides of the church with new rodable drains, the replacement of most of the paths with new paths with supported edges and the replacement of four of the stone crosses on the roof which have been missing for several years.

We now have a church which is at least watertight and should, over the next year, dry out. Once that year has passed we will at least be able to re-decorate the walls inside that have deteriorated through damp penetration in the North Aisle and the Vestry.

All this work has of course come at a cost, mostly funded by the Listed Places of Worship fund and Viridor Credits but it has cost St Edwards somewhere near £10,000 as their part of the work and has left us very short of funds. Luckily last August we launched the St Edwards 100 club which has been well supported with at the last count 120 members. We are continuing the monthly Family Fun Bingo sessions in the Church Hall which are still well attended have proved to be profitable. We have been able to rent out desk space in the Sunday School to two people which also helps the funds and helps to preserve the fabric of the building, Our Gift Aid Day this year raised a record sum of almost £2000 for the church. Of course we are always trying to find new ways to raise funds as it is proving difficult to raise the ever increasing cost of running the church.

We are very grateful to the Parish Council for their donation to help with the upkeep of the churchyard, in 2013 the upkeep was £625.50, last year it was £828.50, talking to our groundsman this is due to the weather and the length of the seasons, the grass seems to need cutting more often and the season is longer, we are looking at ways of making this cheaper, by getting a contract for the six churches etc. but as yet this has not happened, of course if the Parish Council could increase their grant we would be eternally grateful.

I would also like to report that the Congregation at St Edwards is slowly but steadily increasing and is now one of the largest in all the six polden wheel churches.