



Friends of St George and St Mary's, Church Gresley

NEWSLETTER NO 2, AUGUST 2023

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FUN FUNDRAISING WITH PET PARTIES!

Our heartfelt thanks go to Greg Paul and Melissa Martin of **Pet Parties Ltd** (email:

petpartiesltd@outlook.com), for donating their time on 8th August. Everyone had an amazing time. Thank you to all of you who came and supported our fundraising for the repair and reopening of the church building. It was really delightful to meet you all. Watch our Facebook page for a future chance to see more of Pet Parties pets. It was also great to welcome Greg and Melissa as keen members of our team.



Cream Tea

Gresley Church Community Centre
Saturday 2nd September,
Anytime between 3-5pm,
Cost - £5

Raising funds towards the repair and reopening
of St George & St Mary's, Church Gresley

Organised by the Friends of St George and St Mary's

To book, please contact friendsofstgeorgeandstmarys@gmail.com
Places are limited!

LOCAL SCAFFOLDING COMPANY DONATES SAFE PASSAGE INTO THE BUILDING

A very generous local scaffolding company has created covered ways into two important church entrances. **All Counties Scaffolding** of Stanton has carried out this safety work free of charge. There are still restrictions in place but this means we now have safe access for contractors and others. Also it has had an amazing effect on the insurance premiums for this currently empty building, reducing them by over 60%! This will significantly reduce the burden on the church's finances until everyone can once again use the building.

THE 'FRIENDS' GROUP SEES ITS WAY – AND WELCOMES A NEW ADVISOR

It has been amazing and we are so thankful to receive so much support and offers of help



since the present group began this journey back in the middle of May.

Our team seems to

expand on a weekly basis at the moment! A very significant boost came on 9th

August when our group met **Allan Randall**. Allan is a heritage consultant who lives locally and has over twenty years experience advising historic buildings projects all over the UK, including many churches such as ours. Some of his previous projects include The Midland Railway Roundhouse in Derby, Ampthill Great Park, St Helens Ashby, Willesden Jewish Cemetery, and Heckington Windmill.



A safe passage into the Tower door

Before he met with us, he had read the church's previous bids to the National Lottery Heritage Fund (NLHF) and offered to lead us through our next approach. He was very positive about our chances of success, saying that the project had a lot going for it. He encouraged us to widen our approach as "heritage is as much to do with people as with buildings". Before the meeting ended each team member had their allotted area of research to contribute to the next NLHF bid. Allan will be working closely with our team member Moira who is a project manager. Suddenly we have more focus and know how to proceed.

Another newcomer at our meeting was **District Councillor, Alan Haynes**. All three district councillors have been vocal in their support since we launched our present drive. Alan has ideas about enlisting the support of local businesses, and is putting us in touch with someone who could act as a finance director.

THE PROJECT TIMETABLE – REALISTIC EXPECTATIONS

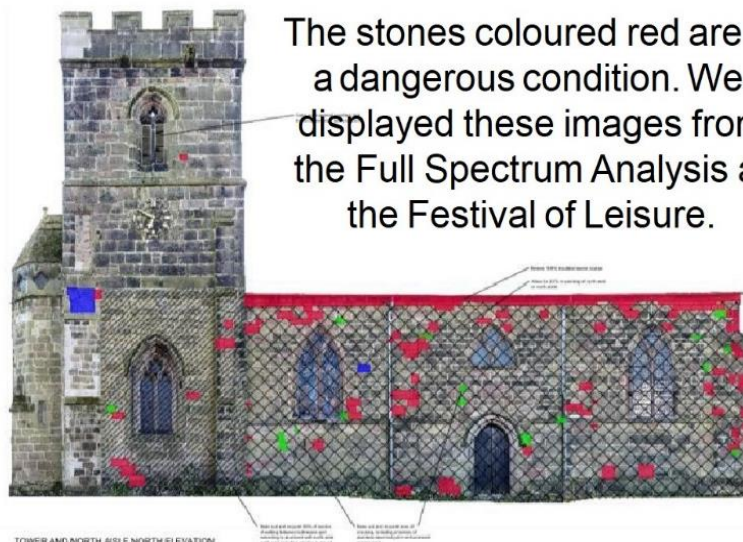
We hope to be ready to begin our **next bid early in 2024** – there's quite a lot of work to do before then and many of the team actually have jobs, family, and all kinds of other commitments. (You know what they say, "When you want something done, ask a busy person!") After that there could be up to five years until the project reaches completion. But we're on our way! We're going to need resilience and stamina!



WHERE DOES THE MONEY GO?!

Some people may recall previous appeals for repair to St George and St Mary's. Back in 2010, repairs were urgently needed to cope with serious cracks in the walls due to earth movement and tree roots. The Lottery stumped up £16,000 and the local church had to raise around £20,000 for the necessary work, mainly to the tower. At that time, and in subsequent years, the general state of the stonework has given concern, and in 2019 the **National Lottery Heritage Fund gave an initial grant of £8,600** to establish the extent of the problem and attract quotations for the work required. That is what started our current project. At the Festival of

A COLOUR-CODED NIGHTMARE!

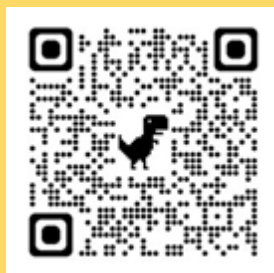


Leisure in June we displayed the amazing images produced by the resulting '**Full Spectrum Analysis**', which graded almost every stone in the structure. One of the key images is shown above revealing the dangerous condition at the roof line, especially at the front of the building. It is since then that the Church has been making further bids, hopefully soon successfully, to the National Lottery Heritage Fund for the money to cover the major work required. The photo shows some of the eroded stones. Some damage is just cosmetic, other is so weakening the structure that it is dangerous.



TELL US YOUR FAMILY'S HISTORY IN GRESLEY!

**Friends of St George
and St Mary's
Questionnaire**



As we mentioned on our Facebook page, we are appealing for **local people to provide memories of the area**, their old photos, local items, old documents, letters, keepsakes and so on. Bring your items to our '**Memories Day**' on Sat 21st October at Gresley Church Community Centre. We are hoping to stage an **exhibition of local history** by the Friends group and other local history interest groups. Above all we want you to bring things in to be photographed, scanned etc. to show the stories of local lives, local work and business. Did your family member work in a local industry or business, or in service? Whatever your personal or family story, as long as it sheds light on local life in the Gresleys we want to hear from you. **Watch our Facebook page for more details.**

MAKE A NOTE ON YOUR CALENDAR!

CHRISTMAS FAYRE



18th NOVEMBER



**with SANTA'S
GROTTO
LOTS OF STALLS
GET YOUR
CHRISTMAS
PRESENTS HERE!**

HOW YOU CAN HELP

If you have not already done so, please complete our online questionnaire and petition. Also please share our news on your social media to spread awareness of what is happening. All offers of help via the Facebook page or email (see below).

To donate to our project, either with a one-off gift or monthly amount, please go to our Just Giving page. Either click on this link <https://checkout.justgiving.com/xwfzez9awn> or if you are reading a print version of the newsletter, go to justgiving.com and search 'St George and St Mary's'. Many thanks for your support.

HOW TO CONTACT THE FRIENDS OF ST GEORGE AND ST MARY'S

Follow us on Facebook @ **Friends of St George and St Mary's**

Or Email: friendsofstgeorgeandstmarys@gmail.com