



The Friends of St Peter and All Hallows Church West Huntspill

Newsletter No.15 Spring 2023

Dear Friends,

Following David Hill's retirement as Chairman of the Friends of St. Peter & All Hallows Church it has fallen to me, as deputy chairman, to cover the chairmanship until the next AGM when an election of the new Chairman will take place. For those of you who do not know me, my name is Michael Hopkins and I spent my early years in West Huntspill where my mother was the sub-postmistress. I subsequently returned and lived at Ilex House for a number of years. Both my parents and my grandparents are buried in the churchyard and my sister Ann Hopwood lives in the village. I have, therefore, close associations both with the church and the village. I currently live in Enmore with my wife Denise and we frequently visit the Monday morning café. If you haven't been you really should. It is wonderful atmosphere and you will receive a warm welcome.

The Friends organisation is relatively new and has a membership of around one hundred members. It is governed by The Friends' Council made up of Chairman, Secretary, Treasurer and Membership Secretary together with four elected members and two members nominated by the PCC. Sadly, we recently lost a member of the council, Carole Baker, who died after a long illness. Although Carole had only joined the Council in 2022 she gave her full support and energy to the work of the Friends. She will be missed for her good nature and positivity with which she approached any tasks.

At a recent meeting two new members were co-opted to bring the Council to its full complement. Any member of the Friends can attend and vote at the AGM which this year will be held in the Church on Saturday 12th August at 11.00am. We hope as many as possible will attend – the Annual Report will be circulated in advance of the meeting. Please do come along – tea, coffee and cake will be provided.

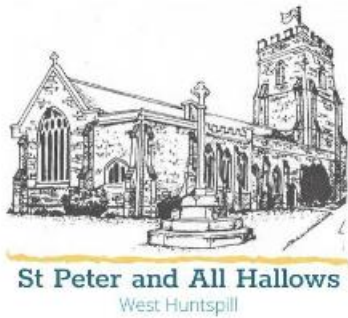
So as we look ahead to this year and beyond in our support of the maintenance of St. Peter and All Hallows, we will seek to grow our membership. If you are able to encourage a friend, neighbour or relative to join The Friends that will ensure a sound future for the organisation. At the same time it will enable us to provide funding for our next project. Look out for further information in the coming months and how you might be able to help. As ever, your support is important and we are grateful for both your past generosity and for whatever you may be able to offer in the future.

A number of events have been planned for 2023 and are referred to in the newsletter. Please do come to these events whenever you can. A great deal of work goes into the organisation and it does encourage the event organisers when they are well supported. It also gives an opportunity to meet with other Friends.

Many organisations benefit from legacies. If you would like to consider leaving a gift to The Friends of St. Peter and All Hallows West Huntspill in your Will please contact the Treasurer Anne Paul. She will be happy to discuss the process and provide the necessary details to discuss with your legal advisor. This is a very positive way of ensuring your contribution to the work of the Friends lasts beyond your lifetime. Previous generations have ensured that our village church still stands today and it now rests with our generation to ensure that it remains in good order for the future generations. It is a wonderful building and deserves to be preserved. The recent preservation and improvement works are a testament to how much the building is loved.

I wish you a warm and pleasant Spring as we look forward to longer days, increasing warmth from the sun and the renewal of our gardens as they prepare for the summer ahead. I hope to see you at some of our events. With my very best wishes

Michael
(Acting Chairman)



AN UPDATE ON THE NATIONAL LOTTERY HERITAGE PROJECT TO RESTORE THE TOWER

From David Lemon, Project co-ordinator

Work on the Tower is now nearing completion. Three and a half tons of loose stone and cement pointing was removed, and a plan identifying the stone that needed to be replaced and what could be repaired with deep pack pointing and shelter coating was developed.

During the annual Car Show people in small groups were invited up the scaffolding to see the work being done, and, after Christmas, children from West Huntspill Primary School also visited the Church to see and get an understanding of the work being done on the tower.

Large stainless steel tie bars were put through the walls of the parapet to hold the tower square and together. The large stainless nuts, bolt end and huge washers can be seen from the ground. Cintec anchors were set into the buttresses in November and January, so that they were once again helping to support the tower. As the stone repairs and replacement was finished on each stage of the tower, it was signed off and slowly the scaffolding was struck section by section, the top was removed in December and it was all down by the beginning of March. The tower is looking so much better now, and there is no falling stonework, so all the protective fencing has also now gone, and the footpath is again open

By the time you read this the main contractors will have left the site and all the restoration and reordering will be complete. The inside of the main part of Church will have been repainted.

The next stage is to develop the 'interpretation', which will illustrate and tell the story of the history of the Church, Village and surrounding area, as well as inform about the local wildlife and ecology. A history group is being formed to do the research with much help from John Lamb's albums and knowledge of the Church and area. We hope this will be extensive, useful and an interesting addition to anyone's visit to the Church. It is our intention to also add detailed Churchyard records to all this. This will be on the much expanded touch screen TV as well as on wall hangings, in leaflets and a book, forming a Heritage Hub.

The Huntspill Hub Cafe on Monday mornings continues to thrive with between 40 and 50 attending most Monday mornings. The honesty cafe continues to attract people, even in the winter, with people visiting graves and walking dogs (dogs are welcome in the Church), all pleased to pop in for a self-service hot drink and the use of the toilets. We are hoping that as the weather improves numbers will increase.

Local Clubs and Societies are hoping to use the space, and we have a photography course planned for April run by WEA. The Huntspill Art Group are planning an exhibition in the summer. Talks are planned every month through the summer.

The Huntspill Hub is developing well with many more activities at the planning stage, it is so nice to see the building being used more.

David Lemon

SAVE THE DATE – FUTURE EVENTS

10th June – Barn Dance in the Balliol Hall with The Bridgwater Folk Dance Band and their Caller.

Drinks and refreshments will be available to purchase.

Entrance tickets £10 – available now.

For tickets please contact Ann on 01278 773804 or Janet by text 07840072351
Members can also purchase tickets via the **Member Ticket Store** on our website
<https://friendsofspaahc.org>

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### **16th September – Concert by Richard Lennox in St Peter and All Hallows Church.**

Back by popular demand, we are delighted to announce Richard's return to West Huntspill. Further details to follow. Look out for emails from us or check the Events page on the website.

Tickets £12 – available shortly

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9th December – A Christmas Concert in the Church with music provided By The King Alfred's Concert Band

Further details to follow.

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As usual we are planning to have a table with donated goods for sale and also a draw for a hamper at the following village events:

**Saturday 1<sup>st</sup> July – West Huntspill Summer Fete in the Church Grounds**

**Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> September – West Huntspill Classic and Vintage Vehicle Show**

**Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> November – Christmas Fayre at the Balliol Hall**

*Please let us know if you would be willing to give up an hour or two of your time to attend one of the tables.*

## Round up of recent activities

On 18TH March a **Table Top Sale** was held by the Church in the Balliol Hall. The Friends contributed for a table selling donated new and nearly new items. After the cost of the table, £68 was raised for our funds.

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On 31st March , we held an evening of **Skittles at the Orchard**, for the third time. As before, it was well attended and over 30 people enjoyed the evening. A big thanks must go to Mark Saunders who once again conducted the proceedings and kept the troublemakers in check.

Even though the cost of providing the buffet has understandably increased, the evening still added nearly £200 to the funds.

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### Want to contact us?

Telephone the Membership Secretary, Janet Hill on 07840 072351 or email: [hello@friendsofspaahc.org](mailto:hello@friendsofspaahc.org)

Friends' Council Members:

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|----------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Acting Chairman: Michael Hopkins | Secretary: Christine Stephens  |
| Membership Secretary: Janet Hill | Treasurer: Anne Paul           |
| Elected Member: David Holmes     | Elected Member: Ann Hopwood    |
| PCC Nominee1: Geoff Bryant       | PCC Nominee 2: Bronwen Wright  |
| Co-opted Member: Dave Paul       | Co-opted Member: Adele Stevens |

See our website: <https://friendsofspaahc.org> for the latest news, new membership, renewals and ticket purchases. Follow us on Facebook  for news.