

## Friends of St. Nicholas Church Report for 2023 -2024.

I think if we were thinking of a title for the year 2023, it would have to be the year of the Bees!!

There had been co-existence between the church and the bees for a year. Unfortunately, this became impossible when the bees swarmed inside the church, we then had to take action to exterminate the bees which, after several attempts, was successfully completed. It was an exceedingly difficult time. We had to relocate one wedding to St Georges but eventually ,with a family who wanted to be married in the church's aid, was solved. We were very grateful for their help.

After all that excitement we were happy that there were no other surprises.

The usual PAT tests on the electrical equipment took place in conjunction with St. Georges and all was ok.

We must thank Mike Clements and David Parry for mowing the churchyard.

Also, Steve of Ashwood Trees who is going to sort out the flowerbeds and general tidying ready for the new season. Unfortunately, the Explorer Scouts were not able to help us out this year, we did miss them.

We have again joined with the owners of the Old Vicarage as there is another Ash that needs felling. They have organised the work and it will take place next week.

Inside the church, we must thank Debs Brazier for organising the flowers in the church.

they are much appreciated by all who use the church.

The Preservation Trust has been opening the church once a month on a Saturday in the summer months.

There have been a few visitors , most of whom have links with the church though family weddings ,funerals and Christenings, or just happened to be passing by.

We also have visitors to the graveyard who are looking for their relatives that are buried there. We have now added a map of the churchyard and names of those who are buried there as a helpful reference.

The Bellringers ring regularly at Sunday services and special occasions. As well as the regular ringers ,there have now two new members who are learning the art of ringing. The group also maintain and fund all the necessary maintenance of the bells. We are extremely fortunate to have such a band of ringers.

We have still been able to continue an 8 .00 am service during the interregnum and are very grateful to all who come and take these services for us. We still have a regular attendance of around a dozen people who do appreciate this quiet early service.

Finally, and most importantly, I would like to thank all those people who happily give up their time to help us keep the church in the condition it is today. All those who clean the church and read regularly at services. This makes such a difference, Thank you.

Life goes on and St Nicholas Church still has an important job to do within the local community.

Helen Smith

Chairman of the Friends of St. Nicholas Church