

## **Parochial Church Council of St. Peter, Wrockwardine, Shropshire**

### **St. Peter's church**

The church, presumed to be of Saxon origin, has undergone many changes over the centuries, from the Norman / Early English remains of the 11<sup>th</sup> – 13<sup>th</sup> centuries, right through to the present day. Although no major changes to the structure have taken place over the last 150 years, constant repairs, especially to the roof and also the stone work, have been carried out.

The recent Quinquennial Inspection – March 2012, together with two more recent additional inspections (November 2013 & January 2014), do highlight the need for substantial solutions to the deterioration of the church fabric. The additional reports deal primarily with the condition of the fabric of the bell tower and roof (Nov 2013) and the access route to the tower (Jan 2014).

However, this is only part of the total projected restoration project we are thinking of at St. Peter's church, but the more pressing.

In addition we would like to deal, partly alongside this work to eliminate duplications of costs (scaffolding etc.), with:

- Changed access to bell ringing chamber - for health and safety reasons, but also to improve facilities for community activities
- rewiring of the electrical system – the current system cannot deal with the demand, leading to failure at inappropriate times (weddings, funeral)
- replacement of current under seat electrical heating, which is inadequate and very costly to run
- modernisation of clock, including electrification and refurbishment of clock faces
- ancillary roof repairs

In principal, the entire project has already been considered and “approved” by the DAC, Lichfield,

but for some of the work we are in the process of discussing specific details with the EH architects, so that we can draw up detailed plans and specifications.

The six bells are of varying age, two are believed to date from the 14<sup>th</sup> century, three further bells from the 17<sup>th</sup> century, whilst the most recent was erected in 1951. The bells are regularly rung, with a weekly practice, and, of course on special services at weddings, funerals or church festivals. The team of bell ringers consists of 8 persons, aged between 18 and 76 (av, 62 years). During the year there are several visits from bell ringing teams from other churches of the Diocese and even beyond. The existing access route for ringers, roof or bell maintenance inspectors or workmen is very cumbersome, especially so during increment weather conditions, as it leads from a dormer door on the vestry roof via

unprotected external steps on the chancel roof into the tower at clock level and then down on steep and narrow stairs into the bell ringing chamber.

Apart from the regular Services held during the week, the church is frequently used for special services, such as weddings, baptism and funerals. The choir and bell ringing groups meet on a weekly basis for their practice and bell ringing teams from around the region visit the church. The church is now also used for regular community coffee mornings, in term times weekly "Little Fishes" Sunday school and "baby and toddlers" mornings, frequent concerts and festivals, such as Harvest and Christmas. All these events are attended by members of the congregation as well as other persons from around the parish and other nearby villages. We now find that the church is used almost on a daily basis, for church activities and also secular community events.

Fundraising efforts within the congregation and also across the parish is discussed on a regular basis and also mentioned in the minutes of the PCC meetings.

So far this has been primarily in connection with our annual summer fete, frequent concerts held in the church, Christmas fairs and Christmas tree festival, as well as other events. It is now envisaged to set up "Friends of St. Peter" and possibly a dedicated website, so that we could also communicate better with past parishioners and their families.

Beyond that we have set up a group within the PCC to deal specifically with raising major funds from local and national bodies.