

Churchwardens' report

The period covered by this report starts from May 2019, which seems an awfully long time ago.

In June 2019 we agreed to change our church architect after many decades of working with Bartosch and Stokes. This followed some changes in direction at their partnership and a realisation by us that Cheltenham often was too distant to move things forward quickly. We appointed Conservation Architects in Abingdon, who have been very supportive so far.

During the autumn we fitted a new wall safe in a typical piece of team work between the two churchwardens. Neill purchased and modified the size of the safe, whereupon Rob arranged for it to be neatly fixed in place.

In August we agreed to remove the small yew tree in the south eastern corner of the old churchyard before it did further damage to the south boundary wall and burial plots. The work was done in January and repairs to the wall followed in the summer.

Throughout 2019 we discussed the outline plans for conversion of vestry, which Rob continued to coordinate with Church House and the architect.

By February of 2020 we had an agreed scheme and three quotations, of which we chose the lowest cost, with the recommendation of the architect who had worked with two of the companies before. Classic Builders did eventually deliver a cost effective and on budget conversion during the time that the church was closed. That was one of the blessings of the Coronavirus shutdown period.

Blenheim Stone Walling repaired not only the southern boundary wall of the old churchyard, but a part of the southern boundary wall of the new churchyard.

The churchyard continued to be maintained largely by Caroline with some help from her family and by Rob and Jenny.

The success of the streamed 'services at home' led us to invest in a broadband connection and this arrived just as the church was reopened in September.

We do still await Thames Water to connect the mains water. That has taken the longest time.

Particular thanks are due to my fellow churchwarden Rob, who has encouraged the many subcontractors to do what was required of them over the past year, with fantastic results.

Neill Brodey

Churchwarden