

Report to the Parish Council re St Osmunds Church

St Osmund's Church has remained open throughout the year but restrictions remained in place re masks and the taking of communion. During the year 31 services were held with an average congregation of 16.8. Melbury Samford had three services instead of four due to Covid infection with an average congregation of 13. The Electoral Roll was 38 made up of 26 residents and 12 non-residents.

During the year the Church received a very generous legacy of £400,000 from the late Peggy MacQuire to whom we are most grateful. These funds are either invested or on deposit. This will enable the PCC to undertake necessary repairs to the church and to plan for the future.

During the year the Diocesan architect undertook the quinquennial inspection and his report listed a number of repairs needed to the fabric of the church. In addition the leaking chancel roof needs to be repaired and the batons replaced. The necessary DAC approvals for both are in progress. A list of possible future projects has been produced to be carried out over the next few years including the extension to the vestry and provision of a toilet. The latter is in the early planning stage.

The churchyard has been maintained with the environment in mind resulting in areas being left for wildflowers and grasses. During the year it was necessary to cut down the large cypress tree on the south side as its proximity to both the vicarage and the church was dangerous.

The PCC are extremely grateful to donors and all the volunteers who care for the fabric of the church, maintain the churchyard, assist in the services, undertake official roles and arrange flowers throughout the year. Without them the church would not be able to continue. However their number are dwindling and more volunteers are needed whether a church goer or not. All that is needed is a regard for the church and a desire for it to continue as a focal point for the village.

The village raised £855 for Ride and Stride in aid of Dorset Historic Churches. At the moment there is no one prepared to take on the role of organising for 2022.

The monthly delivery of Chimes again relies on volunteers and there is a need for someone to take over its organisation.