



THE CHURCHES CONSERVATION TRUST
All Saint's Alton Priors. Residents meeting. 10/08/15

Attending: Stephen Hepworth, Ruth Hepworth, Charles Reiss, Ben Owen, Louisa Owen, Shirley Burrow, Peter...?, David Carson, Muriel Balston, Deborah Larkey, David Cooper, Neil Rushton (CCT Conservation Project Manager), Colin Shearer (CCT Regional Director), Ed McGregor (CCT Volunteering Officer)

Apologies: Maggie Faultless

Background:

Following the theft of lead from the nave roof on the evening of the 6th July, the CCT called a meeting of local interested people to discuss a plan for repairing the roof and minimising the risk of future theft.

Following introductions to the group, some background on the CCT, and a re-cap on the incident and work carried out so far, Dr Neil Rushton explained that he was hopeful that the CCT could apply for funds from the Local Places of Worship (LPofW) scheme, which the CCT has secured funds for other roof repairs from previously. He is confident we will have the money for a new roof by early spring 2016, but unfortunately this will mean a winter without any lead.

Neil explained that it would be quite useful for the CCT to try to build a profile of the thieves in order to mitigate future thefts.

David Cooper gave a description of the theft (captured in the Heritage Crime Incident form). A neighbour heard a power tool at 11.30 pm on the evening of the 6th. Any track marks from vehicles would have been lost in the marks from the previous weekends Music for Awhile festival. He suspects that the piece of broken off downpipe was used as a form to roll the lead around and carry it from the field on foot.

David Carson pointed out that there was damage to the churchyard hedge near the chancel, suggesting that a van had perhaps backed into it. He also pointed out the CCTV is trained on the south side of the church from the Old Priory. It was suggested that Sir Roy Anderson who lives at the Old Priory might be able to improve the visibility of the church in his CCT set-up.

ACTION: One of the residents to speak to Sir Roy Anderson about this?

The question was raised if the lead could be replaced by another cheaper material. Neil explained that Historic England would object to this as the roof is too visible. Lead is the only option though it would be protected with a battery powered roof alarm – as has been fitted successfully at many other churches. No objections were raised to this approach.

David Carson suggested that the east gate to the field could be padlocked to improve security in the future.

ACTION: Residents to look into fitting a padlock to the east gate to the field.

The damage to the nave window caused during the theft will be fixed on the next regular maintenance visit in Autumn.

Ed McGregor suggested that demonstrating local volunteer led activity at the church might help with the LPofW application. There is already great support through the Music For Awhile festival, David Cooper regularly checking the church and David Carson running guided tours. It was also highlighted that the Bishop of Ramsbury visited on a sponsored walk recently. Ed stated that his priority volunteer role at the church would be someone to help design a concise



THE CHURCHES CONSERVATION TRUST

"walk around guide" for the church, to supplement the old style guidebook (currently out of print).

ACTION: Ed to circulate Volunteer role description to be advertised with help of locals.

Summary

Residents seemed pleased with the news that the CCT would be working to secure funds from LPofW scheme to replace the lead and secure it with a roof alarm in future. It was generally conceded that residents have fundraising fatigue following the appeal for the work on St Mary's Saxon church at Alton Barnes.