

CHURCHYARD REPORT

The mowing rota was circulated early in 2021 and the mowing team and those that trim the difficult to mow areas worked hard last year ensuring the grass was kept under control. The mowing team was joined by George and Hugh Campbell as part of George's DofE award. In the 6 months George was with us, he and his Dad undertook the following tasks: painting the Lych Gate with a mix of linseed oil and turps substitute to preserve the wood, mowing the East Area every two weeks, clearing a rubbish pile at the end of the churchyard and building a bug hotel (wood pile) to encourage the insects and we thank him and his Dad for their hard work. We are also delighted that George and Hugh have joined the mowing team for 2022. A change has also been made to the mowing areas to reduce the largest area (South Side) to a more manageable size.

The monthly work parties were very successful last year and only one was rained off during 2021 so thank you to those who spent time weeding, bramble clearing (a never ending job!), planting, and generally helping with the maintenance of the churchyard. We also have helpers who work under their own steam weeding and clearing around the graves and the edges of the churchyard and we thank them for their dedication too. Throughout the winter months when the work parties cease Norman has continued to keep the ashes area trimmed and clear and this work has greatly enhanced the appearance of the memorials in this area.

We have published the work party dates for 2022 and they are up on the church porch notice board and have been advertised in the church magazine and the green news sheet. This year we have changed the Friday work party for one on a Saturday and we hope to see others join us that cannot do so in the week. So, for 2022 the dates are the 2nd Tuesday of the month and the 4th Saturday of the month from 2.00pm.

As part of our Quinquennial Report requirements Rachel and Linda carried out a grave stone survey in March 2021 which identified headstones that have stability issues. We are pleased to report that we had no grave stones that required immediate intervention in 2021. A report was drawn up of headstones of concern with photos. A further survey will be undertaken in 2022.

The flower seeds that were sown in situ in the Autumn of 2020 and the seeds that members of the congregation and the Send community germinated and grew on in early 2021 were planted out as plug plants in the spring. In the summer months, dotted through the area at the back of the church were glimpses of cornflower, poppy, daisy, and many other colourful flowers and gave us a brief view of what we could achieve in time. Bulbs were also planted and small groups of daffodils have sprung up this year. Clearing the ground has also encouraged the snow drops this spring and many more have popped up this year. We have also planted some perennials flowers like the ox eye daisy that have root systems under the grass to help supplement the wild flowers that self seed. We intend to expand on this work and continue in 2022 to build the flower meadow at the back of the church.

In the Autumn of 2021 Tony took on the task for raising the tree canopy in the vicinity of the church to allow people to walk across the north side of the church and around the south side without ducking. We had a number of gravestones that were gradually disappearing into low growing yew and fir. A lot of chopping and sawing ensued and we currently have a few piles of branches and twigs awaiting disposal. After putting out a few notices about free wood we have managed to get rid of all the larger branches. The rest of the smaller branches and twigs will either be taken away or burnt.

Thank you to everyone who volunteers to work in the churchyard. The amount of time that is freely given is much appreciated. Rachel and I look forward to working with you in the churchyard this coming year.

Linda & Rachel April 2022