

St Denis' church and churchyard / nature reserve

Update for 16 March 2021 meeting of
Hatley Parish Council

St Denis' church

Progress on Phase Two of the renovations to St Denis' church

In early February a footbridge across from Sebastian Kindersley's land into the churchyard, to enable equipment and materials to be moved into the church, was put in place and a portable toilet erected. Thanks to Sebastian for clearing space for these.

Spare flints from the chancel were moved by Lodge, the main contractor, to the north-west corner of the churchyard and placed on a wooden pallet enclosed on three sides. These will be kept until the Friends of Friendless Churches (FoFC) decides what to do with them.

The spare ex-chimney stonework and shorter pieces of wood are being stored in the vestry. The longer pieces of wood have been moved to the font end, along with the spare roof ridge tiles and pieces of old plain glass – again pending FoFC's long term intentions.

All the grids over the windows (including the east window) have been removed and taken away by Lodge.

The blue display boards were taken down by Peter Mann and are now stored in the bar in the village hall. They are available for use within the parish.

David Sear, FoFC's glazier, visited the church on 15 February to measure up the new windows for the chancel (south and north walls only). The style will be as the new windows in the nave but will incorporate the fragments of coloured glass from the old east window given to the FoFC. He is not expected to install them until late March.

Work proper on phase two of the refurbishment of St Denis' began in earnest in the last week of February with the installation of scaffolding inside the chancel and then the conservationists from Hurst, the contractor appointed by the FoFC, began the (slow) process of returning the plasterwork to how it was after William Butterfield completed his restoration work in 1874.

The main porch door remains open when the restorers are on site.

It has been agreed with the grant provider that the work can be finalised after the end of March.

Thanks to Peter Mann and Joyce Denby for liaising with the contractors and the FoFC.

More / ...

St Denis' churchyard / local nature reserve

A survey of the plants in the churchyard was carried out by Dr Jonathan Shanklin, the county's botanical recorder, on 4 July 2020. He recorded 143 species.

[The listing has been added to the Hatley website.](#)

Members of the Cambridge Flora Group plan to visit the nature reserve to survey the flora on 30 March, Covid-19 rules permitting. Lucy Wilson, the Wildlife Trust's Conservation Officer who replaced Siân Williams, hopes to join this group if there are fewer than six people; otherwise she will visit soon after to meet local volunteers and give advice on management.

Unfortunately it has not been possible (following the visit of Eden Tree Specialists) to arrange for the felling of the dead elm on the southern hedgerow or the possible removal of the two diseased horse chestnut trees before the nesting season.

Sebastian has kindly pruned many elm branches in the southern hedgerow that were overhanging the grassland.

Nicola Jenkins / 16 March 2021