

20th February 2022

Dear Friends,

I hope that this letter finds you all safe and well having weathered another unfortunate Covid-affected year. When I mentioned the light at the end of the tunnel last year, I was not aware of quite how long the tunnel was going to be!

Over the last year very little has been done regarding the renovation of the main structure of All Saints church. Before making any decisions on any further restoration works, the PCC has been waiting for the Quinquennial report, the survey for which took place in August 2021. The good news was that the report did not find anything of significance that was not already known about. The disappointing thing is the degree to which the estimates for the cost of the repairs have gone up. Some repair work, however, was carried out in the form of plastering and repainting the south aisle. The next phase of restoration is currently proposed to be the repair of the nave parapets, after which it is planned that the nave will be redecorated.

Over the last year Morston PCC ran a very successful fundraising programme for the restoration of the 19th century tympanum. Private donations and grants covered the entire cost of the project. The painstaking work was carried out by the conservators of the Kiffy Stainer-Hutchins studio in August to October last year. The results are spectacular and can be seen in the photograph below, showing the partly restored unicorn.

In the 2020/21 financial year we raised just over £18,600, which, as expected, was significantly lower than in previous years due to the inability to run our usual fundraising events because of the pandemic. However, although we have stopped our annual book sale, we still collect books and the Metcalfes sort and sell these on-line or at specialist book auctions. This raised just under £14,000. Although that figure represents two years' worth of sales, this is a tremendous boost to a charity of our size. So, if any of you are sorting your old books and are planning to part with any of them, please consider donating them to the Friends of Morston Church.

Since my last letter things have returned more or less to normal. We managed to hold the AGM in Morston Village Hall in June. Forty-one people were hugely entertained by an excellent talk given by Charlie Ward at the Shovell dinner at The Anchor in October. Thank you so much to Charlie and Helen for making the evening such a success.

Earlier this month we held the annual Morston Quiz after a year's break. To give us more space and allow us to maintain social distancing, we held the quiz in Blakeney village hall. Unfortunately, two teams had to drop out at a late stage due to team members catching Covid, but we were very happy to welcome one new team and the return of a team that had not been involved for a few years. We were very pleased that the event raised just under £1,200. A big thank you goes to all who helped and in particular, Jill Tibbetts, who organised the dinner and spent most of the evening washing up!

This year's AGM is scheduled for Saturday 18th June at 6:30pm at Morston village hall.

The Shovell dinner will be held on Saturday 15th October with a speaker and talk still to be decided. Tickets will be available from Peter Tibbetts at West Acre, Morston (01263-741082). Further details will be sent out nearer the time.

Although things are improving, the past couple of years have been a difficult time for charities. For this reason, the committee is acutely aware that the members of the "Friends of Morston Church" are such an important cornerstone to our charity. Thank you all so much for your continued support and we hope and pray that you stay safe and well and we look forward to seeing you at the AGM or the Shovell Dinner later in the year.

Yours sincerely,

Peter Tibbetts  
Chair