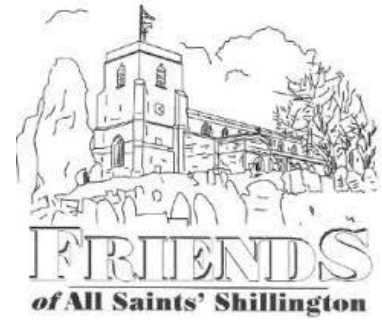


# SUMMER NEWSLETTER 2024

## Events and Progress with projects



Dear Friends,

This is my first newsletter as Chairman of the Friends and I would like to start by paying tribute to Peter Lambert for all that he has done for the Friends over many years. He and Maggie will be much missed by the Friends and by the village. We wish them all the very best for the future and hope that they will pay the occasional visit back to Shillington.

So, who am I then? My wife Cheryl and I moved from Hitchin to Shillington in March 2020. Ten days later we went into full lockdown, so it was a rather odd way to start life in a new community. Once the world started to come alive again, we were both very keen to involve ourselves in village life. Cheryl volunteers at the school and is also on the Friends committee. I am part of the Streetwatch team, edit the village websites and am beginning my long apprenticeship as a bellringer. My background is in the Museum world, so I am also enjoying cataloguing the wonderful village photographic archive, more and more of which is now available online via the Village Hub Website <https://shillington-hub.org.uk/> Some of you will have met our rescue dog, Finn the lurcher, who joined us in January 2023. Some of you may even have seen my verses on the village Facebook page!

Initially, I was rather reluctant to take over from Peter as chairman, but the excellence of the committee and the loyal support of the Friends membership and of the village more generally finally persuaded me. Peter has left the committee and the charity in a very good state. However, the rapidly increasing costs of building work allied to a cost-of-living crisis affecting many people means that we cannot be complacent about maintaining our capacity to take proper care of All Saints'.

I see it as my role to continue Peter's good work and also to look at new ways we can generate income both for the essential maintenance work and the improvements to the Church we would like to undertake.

Many of you will have seen the **repairs to the churchyard wall** which have been completed over the last couple of years. We hope to complete a further section late this year. The next project, however, is to the church itself, with **work due to begin on the north door** later this month. The door arch is very badly eroded and in urgent need of attention. I will be updating the Friends' website with before, during and after photos so that everyone can see exactly how the vital funds are being spent.

So, on to events. We started the year with a very successful **skittles event**. It was another sold out event, proving its continuing popularity, and was enjoyed by all.

We then had a very enjoyable **AGM**, the highlight of which was an enthralling and inspiring talk by Andrew Elliman. It turns out that cycling down Church Street on a penny farthing bicycle, whilst 'exciting' enough for most mortals, is as nothing compared with his many other exploits. Andrew has promised to give a full version of his talk as a fundraiser for the Friends. The date and venue are tbc at the moment, but once I have the details I will let you all know and would strongly encourage people to come along and hear a truly remarkable story.

**Next up is Shillingfest on Saturday the 29<sup>th</sup> of June.** We plan to have a much larger presence this year. As well as our 'traditional' raffle, there will be a Tin Can Alley and a Human Fruit Machine! I appreciate that

many people are already involved in activities during the day, but if anybody is free to help out at one of our stalls and/or could supply a raffle prize, I would be delighted to hear from you.

**Sunday Teas** are already going strong and will continue each Sunday from 3pm to 5pm until the end of September. Huge thanks to all bakers, helpers and all who come and enjoy Sunday afternoons there. It is a useful income stream but, more importantly, a great place to meet up and keep the church busy and active.

We then have a **Teddy Bear Hunt on the 8<sup>th</sup> of September** and the welcome return of **Joy to the World on the weekend of the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> of October**. If anybody is interested in getting involved in JTTW, please contact Joy on [jcmr@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:jcmr@hotmail.co.uk)

Finally, I'd like to finish with a piece of very positive news. Vicki and Phillip at **The Crown** have adopted us as their Charity of the Year. For several years they have been supporting good causes through their two pubs: The Crown and the Chequers at Westoning. They have arranged a busy programme of fundraising events throughout the year. There are monthly Quiz Nights and Breakfasts, a Dog Show and a Dog Walk. In excess of £1,500 has been raised already and, I'm delighted to say, our Finn won 'best pawshake' and came second in biscuit catching at the Dog Show!

I look forward to seeing as many of you as possible at our events and at the events at the Crown. Thank you all for your loyal and valued support for our wonderful 'Church on the Hill'.

With best wishes,

*Andy Gibbs*

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Chairman, Friends of All Saints

Registered Charity No. 1060329

Friends' website: - <https://foas-shillington.org.uk/friends-newsletters/>