

How the Church can be helped?

We would not have this church and the building of St Michael's without the centuries of help that has been provided from the village.

The original church built in Norman times would have been built on funds given to, or taken in tithes by, monks and men in the locality supported by the Lords of the manor. The Cartwright's re-building in the early 18th century was achieved with the skills of the village craftsman, such as the Seccull family as stonemasons, and by the general labour of its menfolk. Help, some paid for by small wages in the case of the graves and the churchyard, was then organised by the wardens and the rectors.

It made sense for nearly everyone to be involved in some way because until the early 20th century St Michael's was the focus of village meetings and decisions¹ about village life. Sunday attendances were high as well until the First World War but other weekday meetings occurred to make decisions about what was to be grown in the fields and how the various allotments were distributed, and who needed help in the form of charity (the provision of loaves of bread). Many that were able at some point in their life had a role, or brought their skill and labour to the need. In addition the main events that still occur today – May Day, the Fete, the Flower and Vegetable Show all had to be organised for the enjoyment of all in the village.

And so it goes on today. Villagers provide all sorts of help and all are volunteers – only some go to some of the church services – but the vast majority just help because they see the church as part of community life and a church building which needs to be looked after for both respect of the past and a need to preserve it for the future just as it has been for us.

Today the church needs volunteers

- To help with the community network so the church knows when new households join the village

¹ The Village Hall was built in 1928

- To help the community network, and reach the rector, when sadness or bereavement affects one of the village households
- to help distribute the monthly Newsletter which is produced by the church covering not only the services for the month but also all the PC news and the village club activities – the major means of village communication (hard copy and digital)
- to help with the flower roster so St Michael's Church looks lovely and reflects our rural/village life
- to help with the monthly Church cleaning – an hour or two of dusting and vacuuming (depending on the numbers involved) and a coffee or tea to share the news
- to help dragging the bins down to the end of Church Walk for the weekly bin man collection
- to help in the churchyard from time to time – with grass cutting in the summer and leaf clearing in the winter
- to help with the clock and carillon – to keep them chiming
- to help with the Fete....in many ways – preparation, running stalls and games, making cakes and produce, growing plants, giving and collecting bottles, organising the raffle, coordinating the main activities (like the Fun Dog Show), helping at the entrance, moving the tables and the chairs, supporting the car parking efforts.....and many others.....but not least by backing up the 80 and 90 year olds who still do it year after year!

And, of course, the church needs your [financial support](#), because without it broadly being there from the many households in the village it is a tough ask for those who just go to church for services to provide the necessary funds to meet the income requirements. The Fete is massive contributor – and many people support that – and so are the occasional concerts. But regular giving is the foundation.