

Haughley Church during 2023

The building: Our building was once again well-used this during 2023 for a great variety of church, fundraising and school events.

As in 2022, the building itself was carbon negative during 2023. This was due to the electricity generated by the solar panels on the South Aisle roof. Increases in the cost of electricity drove us to find some mechanism to make savings, and the main way this was achieved was to hold our monthly ecumenical service (URC and Anglican) in the Castle Room when the weather was very cold.

The churchyard: Many churchyard areas were left uncut during May and parts of June, though access to tended graves was again a priority. Haughley Church is close to “Gold status” in the UK section of the international A Rocha scheme “Caring for God’s Earth”, and biodiversity in the churchyard is an important goal in a location where the needs of agriculture can make biodiversity challenging.

Our cremation area was full by the end of 2022, and we built a further area for ashes, with the help of Robert Stiff, ready for 2023. At some stage we may need to re-bury (i.e. full burials of coffins) amongst older burials to the north and west of the church, and this will require obtaining permission to fully record, then remove older monuments. This needs full consultation during 2024.

Health and Safety: There have been no major Health and Safety issues during 2023. With regard to safeguarding, our PCC members are all trained in relation to the safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults; since safeguarding is a priority in the Church of England.

Post Office: There were only minor repairs to the Post Office during 2023. The Maxwell Charnley room is still underused compared pre-covid levels, but the “library” i.e. the bookshelf unit is getting more use. We may move towards a children’s bookshelf in the library. There have been art exhibitions throughout 2023. The first floor flat was occupied.

Foundation governors of Crawford’s school (Maria Walker & Revd. Paul Clarke):

The Christian ethos of the school has been maintained through the leadership of Jo Ling , who is a member of the church congregation, and PCC member Maria Walker. The school attends a 20-minute collective worship service on Monday or Wednesday afternoons at St Mary’s through the year, led by either Jo Ling or Revd. Paul Clarke.

Statement of Mission: We believe that the Church should be accessible and open when possible, and a safe place to be. We continue to make every effort to involve the whole community.

Financial Statement: During 2023, the church ran a deficit of about £1700.

Haughley Church, May 2024