

Church Wardens report to Debenham Parish Council 2008/2009

Our Rector- in-Charge Patrick provides a good and caring leadership to our parishes and his prolific visiting across the Benefice is very much appreciated and well regarded by the Benefice inhabitants.

This year has seen the death of several of our loyal supporters and parishioners. These people will be much missed especially, probably our longest serving member of the congregation, Mim Sparrow. She was a very devoted and loyal member of our church and very generously left a legacy to St Mary's of £15,000. We hope to do something special with this money in memory of Mim.

The last 12 months have been a very busy and expensive, but worthwhile, year for the church regarding repair and maintenance.

As most people are aware St Mary's church was awarded an English Heritage Grant in December 2007. This Grant was for replacement of the Parvis roof (The roof above the Galilee Porch – West entrance), replacement of the churchyard drainage system and for more exploratory work to establish the best course of action to correct the outward movement of the North aisle wall.

The work commenced at the end of October 2008 and was scheduled to last 16 weeks. The builders made reasonable progress, especially after a very cold snap, and the project should complete around April 2009.

In addition to the grant from English Heritage to support this project, we had to raise a large amount of money ourselves. We did this by applying for more grants and organising a door to door collection in Debenham. The result of the fundraising was:

Suffolk Historic Churches:	Grant £7,500
National Churches Trust:	Grant £2,500
Wolfson Foundation:	Grant £4,000
All Churches Trust Ltd:	Grant £500
Debenham House to House:	£5,076 (including Gift Aid).

A big thank you to all the Grant bodies and to Debenham villagers who have made this project possible and allowed St Mary's church to be preserved for future generations.

During June 2008 our Church Organ was cleaned, repaired and refurbished which required a complete dis-assembly and rebuild. It is now sounding and playing really well and should last many more years.

In March there was some minor repair work done to the church bells.

Once again our thanks to the Parish Council for arranging grass cutting in the churchyard and pruning of the trees on the East Boundary of the churchyard. The contractors continue to do a good and careful job. It is much appreciated by the P.C.C, villagers and visitors alike.

Church Warden : Peter Holme