



All Saints Church, Earsham

Report for the Year 2023

The Grade 1 listed church of All Saint's plays an important role in the local community and is used by many within the local community. It is the oldest building in the village and it needs the concern and generosity of everyone to maintain it for future generations. The church building is well-kept and the fully equipped kitchen, meeting rooms and toilet are used by various village groups for meetings, the local school, craft group, children's birthday parties, wakes as well as local church and Benefice events such as the weekly bible study and weekly prayer meeting.

The weekly service pattern has remained the same as the previous year which is designed to reflect attendance and fit in with other churches within the Benefice. This means we only have one traditional service in the church each month which is on the 2nd Sunday of the month with a traditional style Holy Communion Service at 9:00am. At 10:30am every Sunday we have the Earsham Fresh Expression Cafe style service which has increased in numbers and meets in the church rooms. Our church membership is 22 with an average attendance of 18 on a Sunday.

We also celebrate the major festivals throughout the year including Mothering Sunday, Palm Sunday, Easter, Harvest, All Souls, Remembrance Sunday and Christmas. It was good to see the Christmas services back to pre-covid numbers with 195 people attending the Christingle and 117 over Christmas Eve/Day.

The church also continues to be used at significant life points by the community. During 2023 we celebrated in the church building: 1 wedding, 2 baptisms and 3 funerals with a further 1 funeral at the crematorium.

The parish graveyard is looked after by a paid gardener, though graves remain the responsibility of the family. What can be placed on graves is governed not the local church but by the National Churchyard Regulations and which bans fake flowers, railings or trinkets being left on the graves. For further information please see the regulations inside the church porch.

We have excellent links with the Earsham CE VA Primary School. The school provides a much appreciated termly display of RE work in the church whilst also visiting the church for a nativity play and several services as well as class visits. Members of the church ministry team lead a weekly assembly, as well as special assemblies at major points of the Christian calendar where parents are invited. Several church members enjoy being active school governors.

Local Churches receive no central financial funding from the Church of England or the Taxpayer and have to raise all costs locally. For 2023 our expenditure was £34,631 with an income of £35,985. Earsham church however is blessed by having a trust fund which brings in £20,000 a year while the final £15,000 we raise from sources such as fundraising, collections, standing orders, gift aid and fees. A huge thank you to all those who financially donated to Earsham Church last year. If you would like to donate regularly, this can be done online – google “*parish giving scheme Earsham*” or be picking up a paper giving form.

Our main expenditures include donations to charities of £714, our parish share which this year increased to £18,028, insurance of £1,849, heating (which went up massively), lighting, grounds and building maintenance, churchyard upkeep of £3,100, a contribution to the Benefice administrator's salary and other running expenses. The audited accounts are on display in the church porch.

During 2023, we have started to develop the piece of land next to the churchyard into a wildlife and reflection space. This will take a few years to complete as we see what wild flowers and plants become established. This space is for use by the community.

The major works for 2024 is work needed on the tower and spire. The woodpeckers have taken a liking to the wooden tiles of the tower and the some of the masonry on the tower is starting to deteriorate. WE are looking at a bill in the region of £40,000 so grants will need to be applied for.

The Rector is always available to be contacted and the church is here meet the spiritual needs and to serve the whole community of Earsham.

Revd Chris Hutton – Rector, Revd Barry and Revd Sue Cramp – Assistant Priests,
Brenda Rush and Zoe Sprake – Churchwardens