

St Firmins Church Report for the Parish Council meeting 18/05/2022 I am sending my apologies as I have another AGM to attend as Treasurer this evening and the Rector Carolyn Bailey sends her apologies as she is also at another meeting this evening.

St Firmin's Church, is an important and ancient building, it is the centre for Church of England Worship in our village. With a lot of work being carried out over the years it is in a very good state of repair and is a lovely welcoming space to enjoy. Unfortunately due to its position on the outskirts of the village we are not able to keep it open on a daily basis.

Following covid our congregations, with the exception of 3 people, have all returned to worshipping in the church, we have also been pleased to welcome several new members. We have this month returned to offering full communion, which in Covid times was not possible. Our weekly online services were reduced to monthly services in the past few months, and from this month have discontinued, although a weekly sermon is being posted online which is being followed by a regular number of people.

In the churchyard we have started to work on improving the biodiversity. The churchyard is a place of peace and tranquillity full of wildflowers and birdsong, a wonderful place to just sit and enjoy nature. The grassland is important as an example of what would once have been common in the area and includes some now less common species. We were pleased to find the cuckoo flower, which is less than common, growing in several places in the churchyard. We have taped off several areas, which won't be mown this year, in order that we can ascertain the different species that are growing there. We have put up more bird boxes and in two areas close to the building, where there are seats, we are planting a herb garden and a garden with good pollinating plants to attract insects, these areas will show plants that can be grown in the garden to help nature, they will be lovely places to sit when they are established. Observations are being recorded and regularly posted to the St Firmin's Thurlby Churchyard Facebook page and we hope to have a website soon too. There are also reports going in the Village Link – all this to explain what are doing in the churchyard and to encourage others to join in either in the churchyard or in their own gardens.

The path on the south side of the church has been resurfaced, with thanks to the Causeway Charity for funding this, and the cremated remains area has been expanded. The rotten post in the memorial area has been replaced thanks to the parish council.

Last year we asked that artificial flowers be removed as soon as possible. We are pleased to say that the churchyard is now free of artificial flowers and the churchyard looks so much better for it. We now have a green bin as well as the black and grey bin, and we ask that people do not contaminate the compost heap with plastic wrappers, rings and other artificial items etc.

Mary Trumble

Churchwarden St Firmin's Church, Thurlby.