



Landmark church needs £400,000 to pay for repairs to its crumbling roof

The congregation of an East Finchley church is launching a £400,000 fundraising campaign to pay for urgent roof repairs and protect the historic fabric of the building for future generations.

Repairs to the roof of All Saints' Church in Durham Road are planned to start in January 2019 and are expected to be completed by June of that year.

Fundraising is beginning in earnest now. The restoration bid has already received initial support from the Heritage Lottery Fund, including development funding of £34,800. It is hoped the church will be able to secure further backing from lottery money and win grants

from other bodies.

Conservation and more

As well as carrying out essential conservation work, the project aims to provide information on the church, its history and people, to the wider community. Educational material, specifically aimed at children's school visits, will be drawn up.

It is also proposed to complete research on the First World War casualties listed on the church's War Memorial

and to publish the results in a permanent format. There will be opportunities for members of the congregation to be involved in this exciting project and to learn new skills in the process.

Focal point

All Saints' is a landmark building and a focal point for the local community. It is used by local schools and groups for concerts, meetings and other events and, because of its superb acoustic, is regularly used by



The church's hammer beam roof and exterior need repairs

recording companies. It was the birthplace of the famous Finchley Children's Music Group and hosts the annual East Finchley Arts Festival every autumn.

the community of East Finchley for the past 125 years and it is good to know that we are a step closer to preserving it for the next 100 years."

Listed building

The church was built in two phases: the main part of the building from 1890-92 with the chancel being added in 1911-12. It was granted Grade II listed status by Historic England in 2011 in recognition of its high-quality stonework and detailing, notably the window tracery and panelling of the chancel and the very impressive hammer-beam roof.

Father Christopher Hardy, vicar of All Saints', said: "We are delighted that we have received this support, thanks to National Lottery players. The church has been at the centre of



Landmark: All Saints' Church is more than 125 years old



Fine tuning: The Archer Community Choir performing at All Saints' Church in Durham Road, N2.

Find harmony, join a choir

New members are welcome to join The Archer Community Choir which meets weekly and is open to any adult who wants to sing in a choir. An ear for music would be an advantage but you don't have to be able to read music.

The choir meets on Tuesday evenings at The Archer Academy, Eagans Close, N2, from 7pm to 9pm, and sings a range of light popular songs. Fees are approximately £75 per term (depending on numbers) but new members are welcome to try a free taster. For more details, email archercommunitychoir@gmail.com.

RICKY SAVAGE ...

"The voice of social irresponsibility"

That time of year again

Well, here we go again, time to celebrate true love, renew marriage vows and keep florists happy for another year. Not that anyone really knows who St Valentine actually was. According to the bloke who flogged me 12 roses last year he was an early Christian martyr whose death inspired an entire industry.

He claimed that St Valentine was a poor flower seller in third-century Rome who fell in love with a Vestal Virgin and gave her flowers for 12 days until he was arrested. Due to a uniquely Roman sense of humour he was executed by being drowned in rose petals. For years afterwards lovers would lay 12 roses on his grave in the hope of meeting their true love. I don't know if it worked for lovers, but it sure as hell did for florists.

Fast forward to the weird world of the Victorians and you start to get cards. And once you had the penny post anyone could annoy the person they fancied by sending them a piece of folded cardboard with 'love you for ever' scribbled inside. And, guess what, the person who came up with these is a kind of secular saint in America where the entire greetings card industry celebrates the millions of cards sent every year.

But why stop at cards, because this year is a very special year in the world of wasting money on Valentine's Day tat. Yes, folks, it is 150 years since those wonderful folks at Cadbury gave us the heart-shaped box of chocolates. And you can't get those on your phone, although someone, somewhere is working on it.

And that someone is probably in Japan, because they do things differently over there. In the land of the rising sun it's the woman who gives the man chocolates, and she has to wait another month before he returns the compliment. At least that keeps everyone guessing.

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