

Report on Iken Church to the Annual Parish Meeting

13 May 2022

We are lucky that with the weather improving we are seeing visitors returning to Iken Church, all come to enjoy the peace, the spiritual, the setting – call it what you will- on offer. Rev. Giles, our Team Rector, has shown strong leadership and alternates our monthly service – down from two – with Rev. Robin Alderson whom many of you know from Snape. We have forged strong links with our sister church at Sudbourne through Audrey Rutherford, our friend, Iken resident and new member of the PCC and also Sudbourne's organist and churchwarden. For our second monthly service we attend Sudbourne and vice versa.

With the death of Nick Turner, the retirement of Colin as Treasurer and of Dominic Kilburn we have been fortunate in adding new members to the PCC in Jane Lonsdale, Stephen Kirby and Lesley Pratt. As *ex officio* member and person responsible for setting up and maintaining our new contactless giving facility we are grateful that Andrew Bell has joined our team.

After a fundraising push in 2020 and your incredible generosity we are slowly beginning to improve our finances following the pandemic. The church is particularly grateful to the following villagers who while not members of the PCC are a huge help ensuring the church is never without floral decoration, the noticeboard is always updated and that hedge cutting and parking respectively is sorted for us. Take a bow Sue Ash, Dominic Kilburn and John and Gunilla Hailes.

Flowers are provided by a fantastic group of willing ladies whose names are well-known to you. They are our friends and neighbours from all parts of the village – too numerous to mention by name. A couple of ladies have retired so we are looking for some more support but I stress that it doesn't have to be provided by ladies.

The annual cost of mowing is in excess of £1400 plus. Last year the Lorraine and Jeremy suggested it was unlawful for the Parish Council to contribute to our mowing costs. The item wasn't on the agenda, wasn't discussed and remains unminuted but it really wasn't an issue because there was no money in the PC kitty anyway. The PCC is extremely grateful to past councils for choosing to help us to maintain the churchyard despite being under no obligation to do so. The PCC hopes that a future parish council will once again recognise that while the church is not in the centre of the village it plays a central role in our community where a majority of villagers have held significant family milestones or regularly tend the graves of relatives. Indeed three of our current councillors will have had family weddings at Iken Church by the time we get to the 1st of August. The church is a resource and may be a resting place for many. As residents we are **guaranteed** a place.

Finally, I want to thank Loulou Cooke who has passed a big milestone as having served as churchwarden for thirty years. I wish to pay tribute to the hard work, dedication and commitment Loulou has shown over that time. I hope you will all agree with me that this is a huge achievement and something to be thankful for.

I am happy to take questions from the floor.

Annabel Chamberlain

13th May 2022