The Digger Comes

Week 5 – report of work for disabled access, toilet and kitchen 4th April – 8th April

This week has seen real progress outside of the church. The following has been achieved within the last week:

✔ A digger and dumper truck arrived on site and work started by removing the old tree stump.



✔ Soil and clay were dug out of the left bank, adjacent to the north entrance steps and deposited temporarily in the church field.

✔ The stone steps were loosened and gently transported to rest in the church field until the site is ready to reposition

them.



✔ Using a laser, the levels for the ramp were set out prior to construction work. The radius for the ramp was marked out taking into consideration the low walls on each side of the path. At this point, whilst driving in a peg to support the shuttering, Will
discovered yet another drain! This one ran in the direction of Church Farmhouse and was damp, suggesting it is still operational. The covering stones were carefully replaced after inspection and recorded by camera.



✔ A line was set up to mark the gentle slope of the disabled ramp, and surprised us that the gradient was finally recorded at only 1 in 25, where 1 in 12 is the maximum slope. Two horizontal landings were included because there has to be one at the
start of the ramp, and the regulations dictate that a resting place must be included every five metres, hence we have included another halfway up the slope.





✔ Shuttering was set up to form a framework into which concrete will later be poured for the foundations of the low walls. More concrete will be poured behind the low walls to underpin the existing stone wall above. The existing

foundations for the church wall are minimal!

✔ The hole under the font was filled-in and re-tiled using four redundant original tiles from the back of the toilet and secured with lime mortar and grouting. The residual cement mortar that was used to fix the font in place will be removed with
brick acid.



✔ Time was spent discussing and designing the plumbing system for the toilet and kitchen and the effect this will have on the studwork and plasterboard behind the toilet. A small cupboard will be included to allow access to the water stop tap. Similarly, the hole in the toilet floor was filled in and re-tiled using lime mortar.



✔ Derek carefully removed the hinges on the internal arched door with the help of an impact driver. It was decided to fit a new lock and door handles once the door is rehung to open in the opposite direction into the church.

✔ Derek, with John in his workshop have made good progress during the week, cutting the oak tongue and groove and gluing together the first of four new gates. Work also continued

cutting the mortise and tenon joints on the second gate.





✔ Jon and John collected three sheets of oak faced board at the end of the week, that will be used to clad the outside of

the toilet cubicle.

The main entrance to the north of the church remains closed until further notice, due to ground works for the new re-designed disabled ramp.

Access to the church and grounds will be possible via the west entrance adjacent to the Old Parsonage, as well as through the two small footpath gates.

John Pinch
9 April 2022

Progress inside and out

Week 4 – report of work for disabled access, toilet and kitchen

This week has seen progress both inside and outside of the church. The following has been achieved within the last week:

✔ A connection to the existing water pipe was made in the trench outside, by first isolating the supply at the stop tap in the road.

✔ A new stop tap was positioned where the blue water pipe emerged through the hole in the wall, and above ground level in the toilet area.

✔ An inspection chamber was concreted and installed in the trench above the gas pipe. The ground was filled in around it, leaving just the lid of the inspection chamber visible. The trench arch will be eventually excavated from this position

for a
length of 15 metres downhill, passing under the gravel path towards the yew tree. A mechanical digger will be used.



✔ The associated pipes and bends from the back of the toilet and basins was arranged in the corner of the toilet area. Type 1 (gravel) was tipped in the hole with some of the original spoil to a level 100mm below finished inside floor level. Limecrete will be laid to bring the final level up to 25mm below floor level to enable the floor tiles to be relocated.



✔ Following a second visit from the archaeologist on Monday, more bone specimens were inspected as well as the ancient trench that was discovered in the lift well at the end of last week. Seemingly, it is of no great significance, and so the ground in the lift area continued to be excavated to a depth of 30cm below the existing threshold tiled floor level and tube covered with a geotextile fabric. More Type 1 was then barrowed and tipped in bringing the level up to 21cm below

final
floor level. The gravel was compacted with a vibrating plate, before covering with 12 cm of limecrete.



✔ The walls and ceiling of the toilet cubicle were clad with two layers of plasterboard, but the cavity left for the electrician to do a first fit of the wires and trunking that will happen on 13 April.



✔ The font is to be repositioned adjacent to the column by the new kitchen. The holy water from the font usually exits down into the ground after a christening. However, to save digging a new hole in the church floor, it has been decided to close off the plug hole in the font and insert a bowl for holding the christening water. Following the service, the water will be scattered in the church grounds.

✔ Derek, with John in his workshop have made good progress during the week, where they are making a new set of oak gates for the re-designed north entrance.







The main entrance to the north of the church will be closed from Tuesday, 5th April until further notice, due to ground works starting for the new re-designed disabled ramp.

Access to the church and grounds will be possible via the west entrance adjacent to the Old Parsonage, as well as the two small footpath gates.

John Pinch
2 April 2022

Paws against ponds

#pawsagainstponds Campaign

During April, ***Froglife*** is running the ***#pawsagainstponds*** campaign! Britain is a nation of dog lovers, there are over 12 million in the UK and here in Stinchcombe we love our furry friends, many residents dog owners. However, dogs swimming in ponds can have negative impacts on wildlife. ***Froglife*** wants to focus on reducing this and raising awareness of the issue.

Keeping dogs out of Ponds

Keeping dogs out of ponds used by amphibians for breeding is important for three reasons:

- Dogs swimming and paddling in ponds can stir up sediment, blocking out valuable sunlight for aquatic plants and spawn/tadpole development.
- Trampling spawn, tadpoles and froglets/toadlets
- Spot-on flea treatments can have a devastating impact on aquatic ecosystems. If dogs go into ponds shortly after treatment, the powerful pesticides can kill the insect life within the pond. You can find further information on the **British Veterinary Association's** webpage ***here.***

There can also be negative impacts on dogs including:

- Illness and risk of death from blue-green algae. Please read the British Veterinary Association's article on the subject (with advice on what you can do to prevent your dog from becoming ill) ***here***
- Injuries from hidden hazards below the water
- Infections from existing cuts and injuries or ones sustained whilst in the water

If you see a pond that is well planted and appears to be a designated wildlife habitat, try to keep your dogs away or even better, on a lead, particularly in spring when amphibians

will be breeding and in the summer when young amphibians will be leaving their ponds for terrestrial habitats.

Ashlea Mawby at Froglife

Excavations and Finds

Week 3 – report of work for disabled access, toilet and kitchen

Although work has been confined mainly to the inside of the church, we have made significant progress during this third week. The following has been achieved:

✔ With the help of Derek, the pair of us cut some of the mortise and tenon joints that will form the pair of new oak gates for the north entrance.



✔ The font was moved to a temporary position by jacking it up and inserting steel rollers beneath. A 12” square hole was revealed beneath and we have shown the archaeologist the discovery. Some of the stones that were used to fill the void were interesting. One piece, in particular looked like it was carved to form a boss from a vaulted ceiling. Another couple of pieces of stone were dressed and showed signs of soot. My

theory is that the roof of the parvis room might have once been stone vaulted before replacing it with a wooden structure and covered in lead. There is still a short chimney stack, indicating that a fireplace was part of the east wall. I believe the small stones we found under the font were redundant parts from this refurbishment. Russell and Roger worked on cleaning up the tiles after moving the font.



✔ Richard Cherrington, the archaeologist also inspected the shallow hole in the corner of the toilet area. Having removed some of the floor tiles and excavated to a depth of approximately .5 metre prior to his arrival, the dig revealed a large flat stone. Whilst Richard monitored the continuation of the dig, we were disappointed to find nothing of any significance beneath.
Digging finally ceased at a depth of 1.2M.

✔ Will, and his two employees Jon and Doug, used machinery to remove the ceramic tiles and limecrete that I laid on the rubble floor over twenty years ago when myself and a team of villagers removed the seven short pews by the bell tower.

Fortunately, limecrete is not as difficult to remove as the much harder concrete might have been. An area approximately 3M x 1.4M was dug by hand and the spoil tipped on the grass on the right of the north front approach steps. One or two small pieces of bone were discovered as well as remnants of cut and faced stone that had been previously used for one reason or another.



Digging to a depth of 30cm below existing porch floor level, Will discovered a small flat cut piece of stone. Upon lifting the stone, he discovered a stone trench, or culvert of approximately 25cm square cross-section. Knowing that the porch is the oldest remaining part of the church, and that the floor level of the main section of the church was raised, this culvert would have been just below ground level. However, it is more interesting that it continues on a curve, passing beneath the steps up to the belfry. Hence, it must be rather old. Richard, the archaeologist is anxious to inspect this discovery when he visits again next Monday.





✔ The investigatory trench to locate the water pipe on the south side of the church also served to accommodate the large diamond drilling machine that was needed to drill two holes through the south wall. Confirming my suspicions, the trench finally exposed a water pipe at a depth of over 90cm, having first revealed the gas pipe and a very large clay drain of approximately

20cm diameter. I believe this pipe carries the water from the two downpipes from the south wall gutter to an eventual soak away, somewhere else in the graveyard.

On Friday, the drilling company drilled the two holes through the wall from outside. The first hole is at an external depth of 30cm below ground level to pierce the inside face of the 75cm thick wall in the toilet area, some 1.3M below inside floor level to facilitate the soil pipe for the toilet and basin wastes. This hole will also accommodate the new water pipe, having first connected it to the existing blue water pipe outside, under the gas pipe. A second hole, 12.5cm diameter, was drilled approximately 2M high in the same area for the extractor fan.
Altogether, a very satisfying exercise…
John Pinch



Dursley Rugby Club News – April 22

VOLUNTEERS DIG DEEP FOR DURSLEY RUGBY CLUB

Maroon shirts, green fingers and golden sunshine graced Dursley Rugby Club for their tree planting day

Sunday 20th March saw volunteers from across Dursley Rugby Club turn out to help plant 2,620 trees around the perimeter of the club's new training pitch. Over 300 meters of hedgerow was planted on the day with expert help from the ***Wotton Climate Action Group*** and the hard work of players past and present, parents, grandparents, siblings, friends and even a few dogs from the Rugby, Cricket and Running clubs. Some volunteers were on site for over 6 hours, and areas of rocky ground, along with the need for careful planting and protection of each sapling, meant it was difficult work. Angus McCubbin, the event organiser, said *"I am so proud of the dedication shown by all of our volunteers and it has been lovely to see so many different sections from the club represented in this effort. We have made fantastic progress today and this hedgerow will make a huge difference to both the club, our neighbours and the local wildlife".*

The remaining 100 metres of hedgerow was completed by other groups of club volunteers over the past few days. And now, during the warm weather, all the new plants will be diligently watered to keep them healthy. Dursley Rugby Club visitors can now look forward to seeing the trees grow and the hedge develop around the new training pitch.

The new trees were donated by ***Woodland Trust*** and

Gloucestershire Council, with oak, elder, cherry, birch, rowan, hawthorn and hazel included in the mix to give variety to suit the local environment. The new hedge will provide an important source of food and refuge for birds, insects and small mammals and strengthen the club's existing conservation efforts. The new trees on site will also contribute to the fight against climate change. Estimates suggest that these 2,620 trees alone could remove as much as 26,200 kilograms of carbon from the air each year.

While the planting is now completed, ***Dursley Rugby Club*** are continuing to offer its friends and supporters the chance to sponsor each of the new trees with a personal message or dedication. These messages will be attached to the trees and become part of the hedge, forming a living monument to the sponsors and the loved ones they have dedicated their messages to. The money raised from these sponsorships will be placed into the club's development fund and reinvested in future projects, including the installation of solar panels. Any interested parties should contact the club for details at DRFChedge@outlook.com

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Stinchcombe Platinum Jubilee Celebrations

Join us as Stinchcombe celebrates the Queens Platinum Jubilee

What’s On

All at the Village Hall unless otherwise noted

Thursday 2nd June

- 10am to 12pm
  - **Children’s Playtime** – Please register for places at children’s entertainment.
  - Punch & Judy,
  - Teddy Bears picnic,
  - Home made Queen’s Platinum
  - Crown Competition
- 6pm to 8.30pm
  - **Hog Roast and salad** – £10 each
  - Pudding competition
  - Cash bar 6pm to 11pm
- 8.30pm
  - **Toast to the Queen**
- 9.45pm
  - **Lighting of the Beacon** at the Village Green – on the Hill

Saturday 4th June

- 2pm to 4pm
  - Family Fun
  - Fun and games for all ages
- 4pm to 6pm
  - Afternoon Tea – £5 each

Sunday 5th June

- 6pm
  - Thanksgiving Evensong at the church, followed by cheese & wine

To Register and for Info

- ***Facebook Group:***
    - Stinchcombe Jubilee 2022
- Children's entertainments:
    - Margaret Wannell – 01453 546200
- Hog roast tickets and Pudding Competition:
    - Dave Clare – 01453 519571 or d.clare007@btinternet.com
- Afternoon Tea:
    - Margaret Wannell – 01453 546200
- Or through any committee member of the Village Hall or Parish Council

Please register for places at children's entertainment, Buy tickets for Hog Roast £10 and for the Afternoon Tea £5, and enter the Jubilee Pudding competition.

Support for Ukrainian Refugees in the UK

OPORA

OPORA aim to provide emergency and long-term support to Ukrainians and their families looking to rebuild their lives in safety, having fled the war. They fund accommodation and travel, help refugees navigate the immigration system and are identifying structural ways to create employment and self-employment opportunities.

They have an ***online platform*** to allow sponsors registered

under the UK Government scheme to connect directly with Ukrainians looking for help:

HUSH

Help for Ukraine Support Hub (HUSH) is a local (Berkeley, Wotton, Dursley) hub for sharing information, publicising fundraising or other efforts and most importantly creating a support network. ***They have organised a public meeting on 28th March (see poster).*** There is also a private Facebook group https://www.facebook.com/groups/hushbv/