

HOW DO I GET INVOLVED?

Yes, I would like to help!

I am interested in assisting St Thomas' Church to maintain its ancient building by becoming a Member of the 'Friends of St Thomas' Church' (FROST).

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

E-MAIL: _____

TELEPHONE: _____

Type of Membership:-

(Please indicate preference)

- | | | |
|--|---------------|------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Annual | £15pa minimum | £ <input type="text"/> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Family Annual | £25pa minimum | £ <input type="text"/> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Senior Citizen Annual (60+) | £10pa minimum | £ <input type="text"/> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Life Membership | £100 minimum | £ <input type="text"/> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Additional one-off donation | | £ <input type="text"/> |

Payments can be made by cheque (payable to 'St Thomas Bedhampton Friends') or cash.

Gift Aid Declaration *(If applicable / delete if not)*

I would like the above donation/subscription to be treated as a Gift Aid donation.

Signed:

Date:

NOTES:- All donations from eligible UK taxpayers will attract gift aid refunds from HM Revenue & Customs. This means that the Friends will receive an extra 25p for every pound you give. To qualify for Gift Aid you must pay an amount of income/Capital Gains Tax, at least equal to the tax that the charity reclaims on your donations in the tax year.

If in the future your circumstances change and you no longer pay tax on your income or Capital Gains Tax equal to the tax that the charity reclaims, you can cancel your declaration.

If you pay tax at the higher rate you can claim further tax relief in your Self Assessment Tax Return.

Please notify the Membership Secretary if your circumstances or address changes.

**Please complete and return to the Parish Office at:
The Rectory, Bidbury Lane, Bedhampton, Havant, PO9 3JG**

IN SUMMARY

By joining the 'Friends of St Thomas' Church' you could help to secure the building and the heritage of our community by making an annual subscription.

What will the benefits of membership be?

- * The opportunity to help preserve the fabric of an historic building and its beautiful environment
- * A regular newsletter and invitations to social events

'What sort of things could I do?'

- * Support us financially by joining the 'Friends' group
- * Help with additional donations for repairs, appeals and special projects
- * Use your practical skills for: grass cutting, grounds maintenance, cleaning etc.
- * Another way to help 'The Friends' would be to include a legacy bequest in your Will or add a codicil to an existing Will (please ask for details).

Any donation, large or small, will be most welcome.

Would you like to discuss it further?

Then please contact either Eileen Newman on 023 9278 7689 or Jean O'Farrell on 023 9245 0873.

We will be very happy to hear from you.



St Thomas

**BEDHAMPTON
PARISH**



St Nicholas

BECOME A FRIEND OF ST THOMAS' CHURCH



The ancient Norman church of St Thomas, Bedhampton, Havant



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ST THOMAS' – A BRIEF HISTORY

The Norman beginnings

The present church of St Thomas dates from the 12th century, traditionally put as 1132. The chancel arch and lower parts of the south and west walls are the only remaining parts of this building. However, we know that a church existed on the site at least as far back as 1086 as it is recorded in the Domesday Book under the land of St Peter, Winchester. The entry states "*Hugh de Port holds Betametone of the Abbey... There (is) a church ...*" The church was of a very simple design in which the chancel and nave were continuous.

Victorian restoration

By 1868 the church was "*nothing more or less than a disgrace, (where) the floor was unsafe and the place neither wind nor water tight*" (Hampshire Telegraph, 29th December 1869). A subscription list was prepared and money was pledged by local parishioners and by others outside the parish.

In June 1869 the Church was closed and work began on the restoration. This included the installation of gas lighting and the funding of the painted glass window over the altar by the sons-in-law of Mr Openshaw Kay of 'The Elms' in the village. Following the upsurge in Anglicanism during the 19th century and the increase in the population generally, the church was extended in 1878 when the north wall of the church was demolished and extended, creating space for further pews.

20th century changes

More recent changes included the relocation of the organ, a reedos, removal of the pulpit canopy and the introduction of an audio system. In 1993 an extension was added to the north, housing a new Parish room, vestry, kitchen and toilets.

The churchyard

Two large veteran yew trees dominate the churchyard where burials have taken place long before the first records dating from 1688. In 1997 a Garden of Remembrance was created for the interment of cremated remains, as there was no further space for burials. An old Celtic cross from another part of the churchyard was erected in its centre.

Many glimpses of history can be discovered within the churchyard; the monuments, old and new, offering a lasting memorial to those servants of God who lie within its ancient walls.

LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

Recent restoration work

In 2005 the stonework on the front of the Chancel arch was exposed to its original state, showing the typical Norman dogtooth and lozenge mouldings.

Inspired by the success of this, the rest of the stonework in the Chancel was stripped of more than a century's paint, the walls were repaired and repainted and a new carpet was laid in 2007.



The result has been dramatic – and the improvements, some of which have been made possible by private donations, thus reducing the burden on church funds – will last for many years to come.

What next?

Our next task is to restore the nave (the main body of the church) – to remove flaking paint, restore the stonework of the pillars and the window arches and renew the lighting. Some of the leaded windows need repairing, as does the roof and some of the external stonework. The total cost is estimated to be in the region of £50,000.

If we are to care for our building whilst still continuing to fund our pastoral work in the community, we need your support. Can you help us?

A 'FRIENDS' GROUP FOR ST THOMAS'

Why do we need a 'Friends' group?

Over the centuries St Thomas' Church has been, and remains today, the centre of Christian worship in Bedhampton; providing a place for the prayers of the community both corporate and private, rejoicing in new life with the baptism of children, celebrating marriage and committing loved ones to the eternal presence of God.



However St Thomas' also belongs to the whole community, including all who live and work in the area.

We always welcome new members to our congregations – but also those who seek a quiet moment for private prayer, or to soak up the history and sense of continuity with generations past, simply from being inside this ancient building. Many people who may not regularly attend services nevertheless wish to see the church and churchyard well maintained and preserved for future generations.

Yet, although our forebears made great sacrifices to ensure that this lovely building in the quiet centre of old Bedhampton has been entrusted to us today, the task of handing it on is not an easy one – as inevitably, caring for any historic building means that costs are high.

The "Friends of St Thomas' Church" is intended to harness the support of all those who appreciate the importance of this building and who want to do something to help.

How to become a 'Friend' of St Thomas' Church

The formal establishment of the Friends group, as a properly constituted and accountable charitable organisation, was agreed by the Parochial Church Council in February 2009.

The principles are clear: the group's purpose will be to support the maintenance and enhancement of the fabric and grounds of the building both by membership subscription, individual donation and / or practical work.

Monies collected will be held in a restricted fund only in support of the objectives defined above. Benefits of membership will include regular newsletters, social events etc.