



Friends' Newsletter

Friends of St. James'
Church, Wigmore

Autumn 2026

Friends News Round-Up

Welcome to the Autumn issue of the newsletter and a photo of the church, recently coloured, dating from 1902.

On to the news... The expected closure of St. James' as a place of worship was confirmed and came into effect on 1st August. The responsibility for the building has now officially passed into the hands of the Hereford Diocesan Board of Finance upon whom it is now incumbent to find an alternative use for the building. How long that process will take is anyone's guess but the hope is that eventually the ownership of the building will pass to the Churches Conservation Trust. More on this on page 3.

While the future of the building takes its course, the Friends of St. James' have completed this year's season of events in the church with a history talk in June and two concerts in August. More about this on page 2.



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FRIENDS OF
ST. JAMES' CHURCH,
WIGMORE
AGM
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING



SATURDAY
31st OCTOBER
AT 11.00AM

All members and supporters are warmly invited to attend.

Come and hear about our work over the past year and our plans for the future.

We look forward to welcoming you.

Supporting our historic church for future generations

There is another event lined up and that's our Annual AGM.

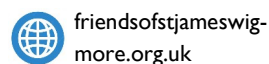
An agenda for the event will be published nearer the time but one item will certainly be plans for next year.

So, if you would like to come along to the meeting please have a think about the types of events you would like to see in the church next year so that you can share your ideas with us.

As this AGM is later than previous years remember to wrap up warmly!

Find out more about The Friends Group:

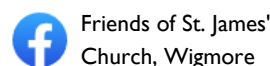
On our Website:



or scan the code below



On our Facebook Group:



Our 2026 Season of Events

Our season of events in St. James' Church is once again complete for another year. As usual we tried to present a mix of events - talks on local birdlife and the battle of Mortimers Cross - followed by two musical events - a return visit from the Ludlow Concert Band and a concert by the Ludlow Male Voice Choir.

We were very pleased with the success of the events with attendance being the best so far since we began hosting events in 2023.

It's a pleasure to host David Redmayne conducting the Ludlow Concert Band (right) and they didn't disappoint, treating the audience to a range of pieces from classical to pop when they visited us at the beginning of August.

And our very own Friends Trustee, Lesley Pollacco was playing in the band.

Finally, for the 2026 season, the Ludlow Male Voice Choir visited us (below) and gave a thoroughly entertaining and rousing performance to round off our offering for this year.



The Trustees had representation here too with Steve Pollacco being a member of the choir.



We are very grateful to our speakers and performers this year and very grateful also to the people who turned out to support us at these events.

We are always looking for suggestions for events, whether they are talks, music or anything else so please get in touch if you have any thoughts on events we can host next year.

Church Closure News

As already mentioned, the closure of St. James' as a regular place of worship came into effect on 1st August.

The “local” parish church for parishioners in Wigmore has now become Aymestrey.

However, dispensation has been given to the Friends of St. James' for us to continue with our activities and events in the church building. We will retain keys for the building to open and close it each day and continue to welcome visitors, whether they are tourists or locals. We will schedule a new season of events for 2027 and will continue to welcome visiting bell ringers.

A condition of the Diocese's insurance for the church to continue to be “open” in the sense above is that six religious services of some kind are conducted each year. In a meeting with representatives of the church, the Rural Dean committed to working with the rector of the newly created Benefice of Mortimers Cross to ensure this condition was met.

As soon as any further information is received we will ensure it is passed on.

Swift / Bat Survey

We had the annual bat and swift survey at St. James' church in mid-June.

All four swift nesting boxes were found to be in use and there were a further three nesting sites identified under the eaves of the church.

Unfortunately, there was less positive news about the bats whose numbers seem to have halved in the last 10 years. The reason for this is unclear.



Infrastructure Work

The Friends have now agreed a contract with a local cleaner to come into the church on a regular basis to clean.

This is particularly helpful in preparation for our events but we hope it will generally improve the presentation of the building for visitors at any time.

With regard to the electronic "Payaz" donation kiosk in the church, the local church council offered this to the Friends as they were giving up the responsibility for the church. We accepted their offer and so future donations through the machine will go to the Friends to support our activities.

We have also installed a new information board beside that machine promoting the aims and activities of the Friends.

Next Improvement Project

In various places around the church there are A3 boards presenting information about different aspects of the building. The boards look rather dated and a bit tatty so we are intending to replace them with new ones in the next month or so.

We will also be re-drafting the material presented and replacing the images shown on the boards.

Look out for an update either online or in the next newsletter.

Help Still Needed...

We are still looking for volunteers to go on the rota for unlocking/locking the church each day and for assisting at our events (setting up and clearing down). If you can offer some time, do let us know via any of the contact methods below.

Membership Update

We are currently updating our records with regards to membership of the Friends of St. James' Church. We realise we do not have contact details for everyone and we are endeavouring to ensure our records are as complete as possible with due regard to data protection.

Please contact Steve Pollacco at **steve.pollacco@hotmail.com** if you wish to renew your membership once your current one expires.

You'll be pleased to know we are keeping the cost the same at £10 for individuals and £17 for couples. Thank you for continuing as a Friend of St James' Church Wigmore.

Contact Us

Message via our Facebook Group page:



Friends of St. James' Church, Wigmore

Message via the Contact page on our website:



friendsofstjameswigmore.org.uk

Email to the address below:



admin@friendsofstjameswigmore.org.uk

Please contact us via any of these methods with feedback or suggestions and ideas for going forward.

