



Friends' Newsletter

Friends of St. James'
Church, Wigmore

Summer 2026

Friends News Round-Up

Welcome to the Summer issue of the newsletter.

The long-awaited news of progress regarding the closure of St. James' as a place of worship has finally arrived. It was confirmed at the end of April that a couple of objections to the scheme had been withdrawn and that it will now be brought into effect by the Commissioners of the Church of England once they have completed their internal processes.

The timeline for this remains uncertain but following the implementation of the scheme the responsibility for the building and its subsequent fate will then reside with the Diocesan Board of Finance.

There is more on this on page 3.

In the meantime the Friends of St. James' have begun this year's season of events in the church.

The first event was a lovely talk on the birdlife of North Herefordshire by Mike Wheeler, who is a very entertaining speaker.

This was held towards the end of April and was very well attended. So, from the ticket sale takings we were able to cover our costs and make a donation to the wildlife group which Mike manages.

There is more about our upcoming events on page 2.

In other news, in April a booklet on the history of Wigmore was published which is free for residents of Wigmore to collect from the village shop or at events at both the church and the village hall and if non-residents would like a copy we are more than happy to accept a donation.

On page 3 there is more about how this project came about.



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Find out more about The Friends Group:


On our Website:

 friendsofstjameswigmore.org.uk

or scan the code below



On our Facebook Group:

 Friends of St. James' Church, Wigmore

Our 2026 Season of Events

The Trustees of the Friends have now begun hosting a season of events in St. James' Church this year. As mentioned already, our first event was a great success and we have plenty more scheduled for this summer. For each event the doors will open at 6.30pm and the event will begin at 7pm. Refreshments will be included in the ticket price for each event .

Saturday 13th June - The Battle of Mortimer's Cross - 1461 - What we know and what we think we know

Tickets: £10 on the door (£8 for Friends Members)

It's always good to learn more about our local history so we are looking forward to this illustrated talk by Ian Maddox, Regional Chairman of the Marches and West Midlands Region of the Battlefields Trust.

The presentation will cover the main protagonists at the battle and the findings, or lack of them, from the research project that was carried out between 2016 and 2022.



Saturday 1st August - An Evening with the Ludlow Concert Band



Tickets: £10 on the door (£8 for Friends Members)

The Ludlow Concert Band has been entertaining audiences in the Marches for years. They play a variety of genres, from stirring marches, through classical favourites and old-time swing numbers to pop anthems.

The LCB performed at the very first of our Friends' events two years ago and they sounded awesome in the old church, so we are delighted to welcome them back.

Friday 14th August - Ludlow Male Voice Choir

Tickets: £10 on the door (£8 for Friends Members)

For the last 20 years Ludlow Male Voice Choir has grown to become a vibrant part of our local area's musical landscape.

The LMVC is a traditional male voice choir, led by musical director Darren Clarke, a professional tenor.

Their repertoire ranges from hymns through opera classics, and songs from popular musicals to pop. We are sure with the wonderful acoustics of the old church they will sound great.

Church Closure News

As already mentioned, the closure of St. James' as a place of worship is now proceeding. Concomitant to that, work has already begun by Sarah Girling who is overseeing this process on behalf of the Diocese, together with the local Parochial Church Council (PCC), to determine what items of value will be removed. Initially, that will be the communion silver and the church registers and records.

Together with the PCC, Sarah will then start the process of identifying anything in the building (a) that is on loan or (b) that is a memorial, so that they can consult the appropriate people – the owner, or the family members of someone memorialised – as to their wishes regarding the item or memorial.

Informally we have been told that even though the process is underway we can expect progress to be slow. All we can do is await further updates from the Diocese and we will pass those on as and when we receive them.

Our preferred outcome, as communicated to the Diocese, remains for the church to be taken on by the Churches Conservation Trust or a similar charitable body with the building kept open for both community events and for the occasional service.

We are hopeful that if we can demonstrate that the church has an active Friends group then this will be seen as a positive for any organisation looking to take on responsibility for the building.

Wigmore History Booklet

After we installed the interpretation boards in the south aisle of the church it became apparent that we had far more material than we could sensibly present and so it was suggested that a booklet be created about the history of the village, castle, church and the personalities who have shaped that history over the years.

We wanted to be able to offer this free to residents of Wigmore but there was no way the Friends could cover the printing costs of the booklets. At that point the Harley Charity stepped in to cover the entirety of the printing costs and we are very grateful to Edward Harley and the other trustees of the Harley Charity for facilitating this.



We commissioned Leominster-based company Orphans Press to do the printing and they have done an excellent job.

The booklets are available at Wigmore village shop and at events held at the village hall and at the church. So far the feedback we have received about the booklet has been very positive.

Who says you can't get something for nothing...

Churchyard News

We have finally refurbished the rickety old bench that sits beside the path in the churchyard. This was in a rather parlous state so the Friends purchased new oak slats from Whitney Sawmills near Hay-on-Wye, dismantled the old bench, resprayed the wrought iron and reassembled it with the new wood and fastenings.

Our thanks go to Jill Ireland and Brentlee Wakeford for their help with this project.



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.

