

March 30th,2024



Dear Electoral Roll Members

RE: DODBROOKE PARISH CHURCH: DRY ROT INFESTATION

I am writing to you on behalf of the PCC and Congregation of the Church of Thomas of Canterbury, Dodbroke, to highlight our current fund-raising appeal to combat the devastating damage which has occurred in the roof timbers and sanctuary walls of this ancient parish church.

During the last few months we have been aware of the presence of a **fruiting body** on the timber beams, and the surrounding plasterwork. Reports by 2 specialist companies have confirmed the presence of Dry Rot in the eaves of both the Sanctuary and the Chancel, marching relentlessly eastwards along the beams and under the plaster.

These reports have called for urgent and explicit action: the first stage of tackling the problem is to stop the water from getting into the timbers. A roofing contractor, recommended by our Church Architect, has been appointed to assess and carry out remedial work on lead replacement and repair to gutters and hoppers in the south-east corner of the roof. He will also inspect the roof timbers for any sign of Dry Rot. Only when the moisture levels in this part of the building are reduced, can further work be carried out.

For these reasons we are launching our '**Fight the Fungus**' appeal on Friday April 19th, in Dodbroke Church with a **Gift Day** event, between 2.00pm-4.00pm, and later 6.00pm-8.00pm.

This will be the first of many events in the coming months and years to raise awareness of the seriousness of this Dry Rot attack, and the need to raise at least some of the necessary finance for the restoration and redecoration of parts of the church, at an estimated cost of between £60,000.00 and £100,000.00. The church itself does have some financial reserves in the Church Repair Investment Fund. However these will not be sufficient to complete all the work which may well need to be undertaken to ensure the future sustainability of both the building itself and its presence in Dodbroke. Some grant-funding may be available, but we as a community need to show that we are 'doing something about it' ourselves.

Please accept this invitation to support our opening event, and the opportunity to 'see what the problems are' through our explanatory displays and our creative interpretations of *serpula lacrymans* (and other fungi!) It will also be a chance to enjoy a cream tea, or a glass of wine and a bite of cheese, to take part in a pencil-and-paper quiz, to listen to some music, hear about the mushroom growing industry....and even give us some ideas for our fundraising events in the future.

Thank you for reading this explanation, and hoping to see you on April 19th - Primrose Day!

Fundraising Coordinator - Chris S Stephens. csstephens@btinternet.com

124 Fore Street, Kingsbridge, Devon. TQ7 1AW