

Peter wrote a meeting review that was published in the November issue of *Roundabout*. The objective was to encourage the police to forge closer links with WNH, to make us more effective for the police to use our direct communication link with residents for crime detection and prevention. The meeting was characterised by a very open and practical debate.

Sadly, we have yet to hear from Inspector Barker to progress the various initiatives we had discussed. We well appreciate the tremendous pressure on police resources and WNH had hoped to persuade the police to inform us of local crime information so that it could promptly disseminated using the WNH email network to benefit local crime detection and prevention. If successful, we will report back with our ambitious plans to expand and effectively relaunch WNH. If we are not able to forge closer links with the police, then I will reluctantly stand down from my leadership role.

In the meantime please keep vigilant, watching out for suspicious behaviour and reporting concerns to the police on 101, giving as much detail as possible. In addition, please ensure you do everything you can to keep yourselves, your property and community safe and secure.

Mervyn Greenhalgh

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## St Paul's Chancel Repair Project progress

It is already New Year 2018 and there has been a lot to celebrate at St Paul's Church, Woodhouse Eaves, in terms of the Chancel Repair Project.



Plastering over the vestry crack repairs and replaced lintel above the window.

The scaffolding, fencing and site offices disappeared from around the church chancel in mid-December, reflecting the progress made by the contractors with the chancel and vestry repairs. The building repairs, which were designed to arrest the subsidence of the chancel and restore the damaged areas of the walls and other structures, started last August. All involved were amazed as the contractors came off-site on 22nd December, just in time to allow the Christmas services to take place with the chancel in use!

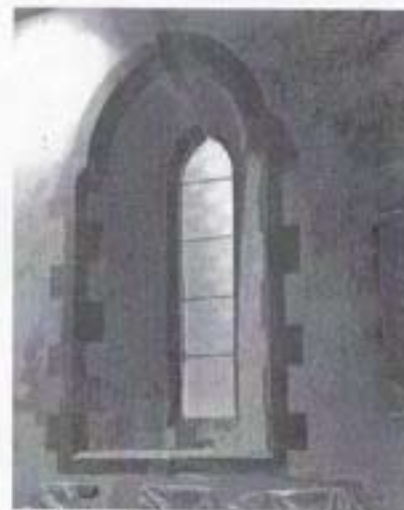
### Internal repairs

Internally, the protective 'tent' between the chancel and the body of the church was removed in early December. The luxuriant growth of mould on

the walls of the chancel and vestry, following copious water leakage as the drill went through the walls for the internal metal rod supports, had been dried out and scraped off. The cracks in the walls had metal wires laid across them to add support when they were re-mortared. An expert plasterer used lime plaster, like that originally used, to disguise the multiple sites where the walls had been repaired.

### External repairs

Externally, the pointing and securing of the stone and brick structures was completed in December. Three new bits of Staffordshire sandstone were hand-carved to replace defective stone and fill



The Hope window surround under repair with the mould scraped off the surrounds and the cracks being filled.

gaps in the stonework left by the subsidence around the window frame surrounding the Hope stained glass window that had been removed many years ago for its protection and replaced with plastic. The most severe chancel wall crack progressed across that alcove and caused such distortion that with the separating and twisting of the structure even the temporary plastic window eventually had to be replaced. The beautiful Hope window is now out of storage, repaired and ready to be reinstated very soon.



The end of one of the metal supporting rods in the chancel walls before it was sealed.

### New wheelchair-friendly ramp

The project is very grateful that the Heritage Lottery Fund approved its request to install a new oak and glass-clad ramp to enable access to the chancel for all, which has required its extension further into the nave of the church. The two original steps were brought forward with additional hand-carved Portland limestone sections to accommodate the increased width of



The 'canopy' put up to protect the body of the church from dust and dirt coming down at the end of the works.

the chancel frontage. The tiling of this enlarged area of chancel floor has been a challenge: the Whetstone tiles are not available in replica form, although one tile has a similar Minton replica, which will be used. Luckily, tiles from the original church were found when the carpet was lifted. The contractors lifted and cleaned over 1,500 tiles to relay on the new chancel floor! This process will be completed when the replica Minton tiles arrive from Ironbridge in the next month or two.

A really dramatic transformation was seen when the decorating team swept into the church and decorated the chancel and vestry, with the result that it is now hard to see that anything structural has happened in the chancel and vestry at all! You will have to come and see for yourself how many tell-tale signs still exist to show that the chancel was once slowly and dramatically

subsiding away from the body of the church. The next couple of months should see the repairs and ramp fully completed, resulting in a stabilised structure that will hopefully last for many generations to come.

### Heritage exhibition

The next phase of the project is the heritage exhibition, which will run from June for three months. This exhibition needs to be planned in detail, which is our first challenge of the new year. The displays, posters, banners and items for the exhibition need to be prepared using the well-researched and fascinating material produced by the heritage volunteers. The exhibition will also be a chance to display photographs of the church and its surroundings from the photographic competition. A whole host of new editing and

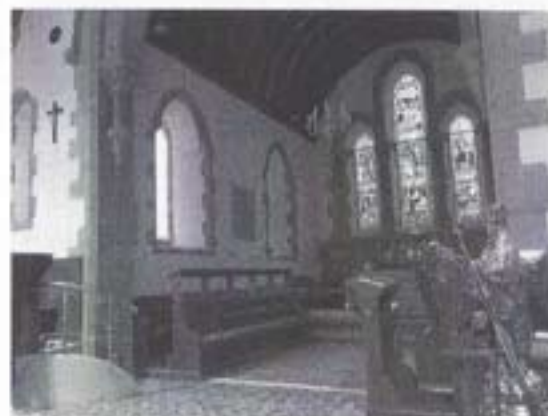


Work nearing completion in the chancel.

presentation skills will be learned by the project team as they work to produce the materials in a format for the public to enjoy, and to introduce everyone to the wonders of the history of this amazing church building and fantastic village!

Do come and see the changes for yourself and sample our hospitality (tea, coffee and cakes) when we have our next open afternoon; you will be warmly welcomed.

Sue Young



The chancel back in use and the work nearly finished.

### Fun and friendship

This is what the WI is all about! Fun and friendship – two very important aspects of life, which can make all the difference to how we feel.

This year is a special one for Woodhouse Eaves Women's Institute, as its first meeting was held in May 1918. More will be revealed in a later article about the founding members, the number of women who joined and what they got up to a hundred years ago.