



**THE FRIENDS OF ST. MARY'S CHURCH HADLEIGH.**  
**c/o The Hadleigh Deanery Office at St. Mary's Church**  
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**Re-launch and Appeal for funds for essential works of repair and maintenance.**

The Friends of St Mary's Church Hadleigh are appealing for funds for essential works of repair and maintenance to the Church, one of Hadleigh's iconic Grade I listed buildings.

First it may help if we offer a little clarification concerning the relative roles of the Parochial Church Council (the PCC) of St. Mary's on the one hand and the Friends of St. Mary's on the other. The PCC with the Dean as Rector are responsible for the running of the Church, its services and its development. The Church is also the base for the Porch Project, a fairly recent initiative. The Friends are solely and simply tasked with raising funds to help preserve the architectural heritage of the Church and the Deanery Tower i.e. funding for repair and maintenance but **NOT** improvements/alterations.

The Friends are a Charity constituted by Trust Deed dated 15<sup>th</sup>. May 1984. One of the chief motivators behind its formation and for many years its operation was John Bloomfield of whom many of you will have heard and perhaps met. Sadly, he died on 8<sup>th</sup>. August 2014 but we are anxious to carry on his good work and to try to build upon it. It goes without saying that the Friends work in close conjunction with the PCC who are answerable to the diocese for work to the Church. It will not come as an enormous surprise to you if I add that one of the chief justifications for the existence of the Friends is to provide a tax efficient vehicle for the raising of funds.

Those of you to whom this leaflet is principally directed will probably either live or work in Hadleigh (or both). If so you may already be aware of what follows but if not, or if you have no immediate association with the town, then please consider what follows because it seems to the writer that Hadleigh has in the past seriously undersold itself. Truth be told, it is very special. There are complete books devoted to Hadleigh and its history. For example, did you know:-

1. Over 92% of the buildings in the High Street are listed. Other local thoroughfares are also very well endowed, Angel St., George St., Benton St., Duke St., Market Place, Church St., Queen St., and that does not exhaust the list.

2. Hadleigh featured in the list of 51 out of 324 towns designated by the survey of 1964 conducted by the Council of British Archaeology as being of special importance. The list of 51 were regarded as "so splendid and so precious that ultimate responsibility for them should be a national concern". The three Grade 1 buildings clustered around the Churchyard (The Church, The Deanery Tower, and The Guildhall) reinforce this impression.

3. Hadleigh's origins certainly go back to the time of King Guthrum whose royal town it was. He had an interesting life, mixing it with King Alfred, being converted to Christianity and thus saving his life. He died in Hadleigh in 890 and was buried here, although the exact location is not yet known.

4. A Saxon Church was built in Hadleigh ((c.878-890) and remains have been discovered in the churchyard to the south of the present porch.

5 In 991, Eardorman Byrhtnoth of Essex whose family held extensive East Anglian lands marched against new marauders from across the North Sea, lost his life but bequeathed in his will, inter alia, Hadleigh and Monks Eleigh to the Priory of Canterbury Cathedral, in consequence of which Hadleigh

long (until 1838, when such things were abolished) enjoyed a special relationship with Canterbury as an Ecclesiastical Peculiar.

6. Two local clerics were martyred in the time of Queen Mary 1. Rowland Taylor was burnt at the stake on Aldham Common. His curate Richard Yeoman suffered the same fate at Norwich, some time later.

7. Two Hadleighans, John Boise, and especially John Overall participated in the new translations which led to the King James Bible.

8. 1833. The then Rector, Hugh James Rose hosted The Hadleigh Conference which might be said to have started the Tractarian Movement, a high church revival within the Church of England, subsequently known as The Oxford Movement.

Hadleigh is closely associated with events which mattered – nationally, even internationally (the King James Bible is one of the most significant books ever published, anywhere).

Perhaps this is enough (but it is certainly not all) to establish Hadleigh's historical significance and that is without even mentioning its long association with the wool trade. In the medieval period it was one of the most important commercial centres in the entire country. The Church itself is one of the largest and most significant in Suffolk, with a long and turbulent history.

Notwithstanding this sort of historical background, Hadleigh remains modest and does not push itself. However when it comes to preserving its heritage, the writer feels that it needs to be more forceful.

There follows brief detail of outstanding works of repair and maintenance to the Church which have already been identified. Much has already been done but it pales into insignificance against that which is outstanding. The details which follow are gleaned from the 2015 Quinquennial Inspection Report which divides its recommendations into categories; A. urgent, B. within 12 months, C. within 18-24 months and D. within 5 years. Each of these four sections is shown in two parts, repair works with guesstimated costs and maintenance which is uncosted. Category A is ignored here because these items have been or will be dealt with and fortunately the costs are manageable. Category B is another matter; repairs up to £185,000, maintenance uncosted (see above) but extensive and presumably expensive. Category C, repairs up to £456,000, albeit with fewer maintenance items but still with significant cost implications.

It is stressed that these works are for repair and maintenance and do not include anything by way of significant improvement or alteration which would of course be outside the remit of the Friends under their Trust Deed.

It is perhaps appropriate to add here a short paragraph concerning The Deanery Tower in respect of which The Friends are also authorised to give help. Major work is current at the time of writing to make good flood damage some time ago. This is being undertaken at the expense of the Diocese, it is understood.

Now we come to the nitty gritty. How can you help? I sense that you have guessed already. Cash donations, corporate or individual membership. Fortunately these can usually be tax efficient. It is understood that corporate donors can deduct gross donations for Corporation Tax purposes; individual tax payer donors can sign a GiftAid form to enable The Friends to recover tax paid. Please however take professional advice on your particular position if in any doubt. Donations can be one off or regular on a periodic basis. Membership of The Friends is also available and if this is taken up, there will be access to regular updates about progress of work to the Church. We hope to have some form of permanent record of supporters.

In conclusion, thank you for taking the time to read this. If you would find it helpful, one of us would be happy to visit you for a discussion. However we hope you feel proud to be part of such a historically significant place and will want to join us in trying to preserve one of its most important elements. We invite your help.

John Hunt,  
Chairman,  
The Friends of St. Mary's Church Hadleigh.