

Roof repairs just the start at Redlingfield Church as new £200,000 fundraising target is set



2015 Heritage at Risk List. Redlingfield church. ANL-151021-153944005

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A significant milestone in the repairs of a north Suffolk church which has stood for more than 1,000 years will be marked with a double celebration this month.

St Andrew's Church in Redlingfield, which is on the Historic England's Heritage At Risk Register following a visit last year, had been "leaking like a sieve" for several years.

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Residents celebrate Redlingfield Church being awarded a £71,800 grant last year.

But a grant of £71,800 from the Government's Listed Places of Worship Roof Repair Fund and strong community support and fundraising events, including cake sales, swing dances and race nights raising more than £6,000 locally, have helped support the improvements.

Redlingfield Parish Council clerk Janet Norman-Philips said the work had taken more than a year to complete, at a cost of almost £94,000, but would ensure the church is watertight for the next few hundred years.

But Ms Norman-Philips said there was still work to do — with a new fundraising target of £200,000 having been set to make the church a community building for all in the next couple of years.

"It is an historic building, it has been there for more than 1,000 years and was mentioned in the Domesday Book, and the state it was in was really, really bad," she said.



We are really pleased that everybody has pulled together

Janet Norman-Philips, Redlingfield Parish Council clerk

"We are really pleased that everybody has pulled together."

It is hoped the church can be turned into a community building, as the village does not currently have a hall. The plan is to remove some of the pews to create more space, and install a kitchen, toilets, provide running water and heating, and fix the electronics.

Following donations of £35,000, two acres of land between Doorstep Green and the church are currently in the process of being purchased, allowing for future events such as car boots, as well as parking.

Further improvements hoped for Doorstep Green include wildlife gardens, more trees, and play equipment.

Central Suffolk and North Ipswich MP Dr Dan Poulter will visit the church on Saturday morning to inspect the work before attending the Summer Fayre and BBQ on Doorstep Green. It begins at 3pm and runs until midnight, featuring a family fun day with games, raffles, food and a licensed bars. The main BBQ begins at 6pm. Tickets are £6, which entitles people to three items from the BBQ. Tickets are available from the usual sellers, or by calling 01379 678835

On Sunday, July 31 at 11.15am, a celebratory benefice will be held at the church. The Rt Revd Martin Seeley, Bishop of St Edmundsbury and Ipswich will formally reopen St Andrews and celebrate the completion of the restoration work on the church roof.

For more see www.redlingfield.suffolk.gov.uk

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