



NEVERN CHURCH ST BRYNACH

YR EGLWYS
YNG NGHYMRU



THE CHURCH
IN WALES



Dear Benefactor and Friends,

We wrote to you earlier this year to update you on the restoration project of Nevern Church Tower and Bells and to thank you for your most generous financial contribution.



We pointed out at the time that these were not the easiest of times to be embarking on a major construction project. That the project had expanded from modest beginnings and that by the end of the year not only would we have totally restored our Norman Tower, but that Nevern Church would be only the seventh church in Wales to have a peal of ten bells.

We won't repeat what we told you at length about the proposed configuration of the new bells, where they came from and the generosity of The Keltek Trust and Goodwick Church, amongst others.

We did however point out that when we removed the old bell frames and beams from the tower much more restoration work was needed than originally anticipated, and that the project at that point was going to cost considerably more than had been budgeted.

However, at the time of our last letter we put our faith in God and our very own Saint Brynach. We signed a fixed price contract with Islwyn Pugh of Merthyr Tydfil when we were still much stretched financially, and despite all sorts of dire warnings about church closures and COVID19 restrictions. We felt it was vital to "get on with it", and that is what we did.

Our faith was justified.

We needed to raise another £60,000. Thanks to the efforts of Rev. John Powell we somewhat unexpectedly received £25,000 from CADW, and then a further £15,000 from The National Churches Trust. We sold commemorative names on the Bells which raised the handsome sum of £12,000 and collected an additional sum of £8,000 in donations. Most recently, we received a further commitment of £3,000 from the Barron Bell Trust.

Costs have risen yet again. Whilst the scaffolding was still up it was decided to make good other parts of the church roof and guttering, which was in great need of repair. In the event an initial project estimated to cost just over £271,000, is projected to end up costing around £405,000!

Hopefully our church St Brynach will not need more restoration in our generation.

At the time of writing this letter, the project is about a month behind schedule and we still have a deficit of £12,000.

Cash flow problems - mostly caused by the conditionality of various grants not being paid until the project is complete have been ameliorated by the receipt of a Covid19 Loan of £50,000 from Lloyds Bank. The majority of this loan will be repaid out of money we will receive from grants as soon as the project is finished. The loan is interest free for a year so we should have time, with everybody's help, to raise the money needed to repay any deficit.

Now that we are in a position to see that the end is in sight..., we anticipate that you will be very pleased with the final results. We can't wait to show it to you, as soon as we are able.

The new Tower roof is finished, the pointing inside and outside completed. For the first time in many years, the inside of the Tower is dry and welcoming with new floors installed. The Vestry refurbishment is done. The electrical wiring is renewed and reorganised. Most of the scaffolding is down. The Bell floor awaits its bells.





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The whole of The Tower and Bells committee have never stopped working on this project and when not working have been on their knees praying! The committee consists of myself, Gwyneth Hayward (Deputy Chairman), Jane Heard (Treasurer), Maggie Campbell (Secretary), Hywel Davies (Chairman of The Building Committee), Peter Lochery (Church Project Manager), Rev. John Powell (Fund raiser), Peter Heard (Chairman of Nevern Church Bell Ringers & Web Site), Ceri Philips and Jo Bowen, organisers extraordinaire of events and Stephen Watkins (Focal Minister).



We said in the previous update that we would not single out individuals however this time we must, in particular the Rev John Powell our money raiser, Jane Heard our treasurer and those members of our Works Committee who have supervised the building works on a daily basis - Lt Colonel Hywel Davies and Peter Lochery. They have had to deal with multiple challenges including new roosts for the multiple species of bats that make St Brynach their home! We picked the right contractor in Islwyn Pugh – and we must also thank them for their excellent work.

When the bells are returned from the bell founder, they will be christened by the Rev John Powell in a Covid19 restricted service - date yet to be determined. The timing of any of this can't be determined exactly at present, mostly because of COVID. However, we hope to provide an opportunity so that everyone can come to see and touch the bells and give them their blessing in a safe and regulated environment, before they are hoisted into their permanent home in The Tower.

We are very pleased that the new ringing floor is framed by the arch at the end of The Nave, which we think will be a spectacular feature of Nevern Church. Television monitors yet to be purchased will show the bells themselves as they peal. One of these will be positioned on the Ringing Floor and another at the back of The Nave.

As stated earlier, God and St Brynach have been looking after this project. Let's pray that they continue through the last final challenges.

Goodness knows when we will be able to celebrate full completion with a proper service with a full church and bell ringing, hopefully soon. We have pencilled in sometime in May. You will of course all be invited.

When the call comes, please reserve the day.

Despite all this encouraging news for which we should all be very proud it must be clear by now that we yet again need your help to raise more money. I hope you don't mind if we enclose the appeal documents again.

More importantly, Jo Bowen is planning another Summer Ball. The last Bowen Bell Ball was great fun and a huge success. Please could you let Jo know as soon as possible if you would like to book a table. We have already received firm bookings for 5 tables of 10.

Duncan Fitzwilliams.
Chairman

Maggie Campbell.
Secretary

