

CHRIST CHURCH Highbury



EVALUATION

of the

Spire and Heritage Project

and the launch of

Highbury HERITAGE

a new audiovisual resource for the local community

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THE SPIRE AND HERITAGE PROJECT

Christ Church Spire and Heritage project was part funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) to repair and conserve the disintegrating stonework of the Christ Church spire and to develop and deliver the Highbury Heritage community engagement project.

Christ Church Highbury is the parish church in the parish of Christ Church with St John and St Saviour, in the Diocese of London. The church was completed and consecrated in 1848 to the design of the architect Thomas Allom. Constructed in Bath stone, it was originally built in a cruciform shape with short chancel, transepts and nave.

The church is a Grade II listed building within a conservation area in Highbury, Islington, north London. The community space in the church is well used, generating income for the church and involving people of all ages from the wider community.

The need for urgent repairs was set out in the report of the spire inspection undertaken in March 2014 as part of the ongoing programme to address the recommendations of the Quinquennial Review. The stonework sections below the pinnacle were in very poor condition, mainly due to corrosion of the original Victorian iron cramps which hold the stonework together. The repairs were successfully completed in December 2016

The Spire and Heritage project was funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) Grants for Places of Worship programme, awarded in December 2015 following a successful development stage.

Other income included a grant from Cloudesley, a financial contribution from Christ Church and fundraising activities including ‘sponsor a stone’.

Enthusiastic community engagement is a major factor in the successful delivery of Highbury Heritage, a volunteer run project.

Volunteers received training to develop their skills, researched local archives for images and information, filmed and narrated stories, and created an extensive high quality digital resource.

Everyone is welcome to explore the history and heritage of Highbury using our interactive touchscreen in the church Visitor Centre at Christ Church Highbury. Through the key themes of Christ Church Highbury, leisure and entertainment, Highbury people, names and places, remembrance and the legacy of war, and community and schools, Highbury Heritage gives the viewer a virtual tour the history and heritage of the local area.

Following the celebratory launch event in July in 2017, user satisfaction shows that over 90% of visitors have learned more about our local heritage.



WHAT WE AIMED TO ACHIEVE - SPIRE REPAIRS AND CONSERVATION

In this section we set out the aims of the Spire and Heritage project in undertaking spire repairs and conservation and in delivering a community engagement project. We show why we had to undertake the project and the difference we expected it to make.

We planned for volunteers to manage and deliver the community engagement project. Specifically, we also suggested that the church would need to improve social media and electronic communication and that there would be benefit in adopting a volunteer engagement policy and in appointing a volunteer coordinator.

SPIRE REPAIRS AND CONSERVATION

Urgent work was required to repair the spire.

In the Quinquennial Review the architect had identified inspection of the spire as a priority, as significant vertical cracks and some erosion to joints were visible. Corrosion had resulted in expansion of the original iron cramps and consequently cracks had developed in the stonework. We commissioned an inspection of the spire by a company using specialist steeplejack equipment in order to gain the necessary access for a full survey. This survey produced by Rodells Ltd generated a detailed photographic record showing the defects and provided information on the urgent action required for safety reasons. To minimise immediate risks to the general public, loose masonry was removed and safety fencing installed around the base of the bell tower

Preparations were put in place for the scaffolding to be erected in February 2016 for the start of a 7-month period of work to repair and conserve crumbling stonework on the 35 metre high spire.

Repairs to the spire would involve repairing the eroded stonework and replacing the original iron cramps with non-ferrous materials, making the spire safe.

It was clear to our PCC (ie the Parochial Church Council of Christ Church Highbury) that realising the plans for spire repairs and conservation would be essential and have a significant long-term benefit for the fabric of the church and the continued existence of an iconic 170-year old Highbury landmark. The local community fully supported the plans to undertake the repair works.

We also aimed to improve public access to our Grade II church building by ensuring a fully accessible entrance directly into the worship space where the Highbury Heritage resource would be sited.

**‘A wonderful project and beautiful spire’
commented a visitor**

A COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT PROJECT

From our survey (Highbury Heritage - A project to help save the crumbling spire at Christ Church), conducted in early 2015 of over 100 people from the local community, there was overwhelming agreement that local people should have the opportunity learn about the history of Highbury (Appendix 1)

For example, 94% of respondents believed that regular open days would be important or useful. Further, 83% indicated they would like to have a new public Highbury heritage visitor centre, with an audiovisual display about the heritage of Highbury. 96% believed that community history capturing memories of life in Highbury would be important or useful. To be a valuable resource for all, the heritage project should appeal to those from other faith and non-faith groups and engage with people from disadvantaged communities.

We thus came to the conclusion that the Highbury Heritage project offered the best opportunity for engaging the local community with our heritage.

We took particular note of key factors that discouraged people from visiting Christ Church:

- 'Doors not always open'
- 'Don't know when the church is open to the public'
- 'No visitor information available'

Building on the output of the survey, we planned to undertake a project that would enable more people and a wider range of people to engage with the heritage and history of the Parish of Christ Church Highbury with St John and St Saviour.

School pupils, teachers and community groups would be consulted to help create and deliver a digitised heritage 'exhibition'. We planned to work with three schools.

This new interactive heritage resource would encourage more people to visit Christ Church Highbury and explore its history and the heritage of the local area. The new visitor centre would be open to casual visitors and groups for 80 days a year, on Mondays – Saturdays. We planned to attract 1200 visitors per annum.

Volunteers with appropriate expertise had offered to help and we had identified the areas where additional training would be required, including archival research, digitising documents and photos and guiding visitors. We expected over 50 volunteers to be involved in the project and we planned to train 30 volunteers.

Specifically, we proposed seven top level activities under the umbrella of developing and delivering the audiovisual resource.

**'Really loved the filming at all the local shopkeepers!',
noted a visitor**

PROJECT MANAGEMENT

We describe project management as it happened, through the work of the two committees with delegated authority, the timetable and the mitigation of risk.

As planned, the project was managed by volunteers; there was no paid staff involvement.

Two committees operated with delegated authority from PCC, overseeing the work of the volunteers

- The Spire and Heritage Steering Committee
- The Highbury Heritage Team

The day-to-day liaison with the stonemasons, architect and other contractors was undertaken by the Church Warden, Michelle Paton, on behalf of the Spire and Heritage Steering Committee.

The day-to-day project management was undertaken by Evelyn Thomas, liaising with the two Church Wardens, volunteers, community groups and HLF.

Risks associated with the spire and heritage project had been identified in the application to HLF. Outlined below, the risks and their mitigation were regularly reviewed by the Spire and Heritage Committee and addressed as they materialised.

**‘Splendid work!’,
comment from a visitor**

SPIRE AND HERITAGE STEERING COMMITTEE

The Spire and Heritage Steering Committee was established by the PCC

- to oversee the spire repairs, delivery of the heritage project, work to enhance access to the church visitor centre, the reporting to HLF with detailed expenditures
- to be responsible for change/change control
- to organise publicity for the HLF funding

Five members were appointed to the Steering Committee: Rev Jonathan Brewster (Vicar) as chair, Hinnerk Fahrenkamp (Church Treasurer), Janet Gilbert and Michelle Paton (Church Wardens) and Evelyn Thomas (Project Coordinator).

The Steering Committee met six times between April 2016 and November 2016. After the completion of the stoneworks in November 2016, the Steering Group met only once. There was a general feeling that, as the visible activity had been completed and the scaffolding had come down from the spire, the project had been completed. By then, three members of the Steering Committee were heavily committed with other responsibilities. Two members subsequently left their roles in the church: in April 2017 the Treasurer resigned suddenly and in July 2017 the Vicar moved to take up a new appointment at St Paul's Cathedral. Janet Gilbert took on the role of Christ Church Treasurer on a temporary basis. The absence of a functioning Steering Committee left a vacuum at a time when delays were causing some uncertainty in the schedule.

At its meetings the Committee's discussions focussed on extensions to the timeline, increasing costs, requirements for fundraising, opportunities for publicity, and mitigation of risk. Four risks had been identified:

- During spire repairs unforeseen problems are encountered, potentially resulting in increased works for Stage 2 ie delivery
- Not recruiting and retaining enough volunteers to ensure smooth delivery of the project
- Some aspects of the heritage digitisation project are delayed and not completed by our intended completion and launch date
- A key responsible person is unavoidably prevented from continuing in the role

The potential for unforeseen problems in the condition of the stonework to require additional works and result in increased costs had been identified as a low risk but with high impact. A 10% contingency had accordingly been factored in to the budget. However, in April 2016, it was clear this amount would be insufficient.

The Committee therefore in September identified one additional risk, a significant increase in costs, to be mitigated by significant additional fundraising efforts and financial underwriting.

Not recruiting and retaining enough volunteers to ensure smooth delivery of the project was initially considered a low risk with medium impact. The Steering Committee meeting April 2016 indicated that appointment of deputies for key volunteers and to address potential retention problems would be considered. However, deputies were not appointed. Consequently, for periods of time, the absence of key people and lack of volunteers contributed significantly to delays in decision making and in progressing the heritage activities.

The risk that some aspects of the heritage digitisation project would be delayed and not completed by our intended completion and launch date was initially considered a medium risk with medium impact. Despite starting as early as possible to seek input to the heritage work, significant delays did materialise, partly because the commitment did not always extend for the life of the project and partly because we had not recruited enough people with the necessary expertise.

Whilst the Committee at times suggested possible opportunities for publicity using social media, in practice there was limited volunteer resource to pursue these.

**‘Very interesting content and beautifully done!’
noted a visitor**

Highbury Heritage Team

The Highbury Heritage Team was established by PCC

- to manage
 - the design and production of the Highbury Heritage digitisation project
 - the filming and digital display design
 - liaison with schools and community groups
- to identify archive material
- to organise publicity for Highbury Heritage project
- to organise collection of evaluation data

Team members appointed early in 2016 were: Janet Gilbert as chair, John Gilbert, Sarah Potter, Simon Protheroe, Steph Rogers, Natalie Russell, Nicola Duncan, Evelyn Thomas, with Catherine Bennett co-opted to help with communication. Richard O'Brien was involved on an *ad hoc* basis to help in the later stages after several Team members had ceased to be involved in the project.

The Team had been expected to meet once a month, whilst working primarily by email. Meetings were held in February, June and July 2016 but only two people turned up to the planned August 2016 meeting. In July 2016 Simon Protheroe provided technical guidance which enabled work to progress on the topics for the heritage resource, including the optimal method for developing narrated stories illustrated by historical images.

At its meetings, the Team discussed arrangements for training, community engagement, engagement with schools and publicity. However, due to lack of volunteer help, a number of actions were not followed up, or were delayed.

Almost every Team member experienced unexpected issues preventing them from fully engaging with the Team for extended periods of time: for example work problems, illness, injury, family issues or other personal problems. Consequently, there was a communication gap and the Team ceased to function from August 2016.

Despite the absence of Team support, individual volunteers continued to develop the Highbury Heritage resource, engaging on an *ad hoc* basis with volunteers in the wider community.

'Really pleased with the result. The team has worked really hard and the results are brilliant!' commented a member of PCC

TIMETABLE

The original Spire and Heritage project timetable envisaged the spire repairs and conservation work being completed in September 2016. The contractors began the planning phase in January, as scheduled, and the scaffolding was erected during February. However, at the first Spire and Heritage Steering Committee meeting in April, the church warden flagged up likely delays as a result of unexpected deterioration of the corbels. The scaffolding was finally down and the church garden cleared up the week before Christmas 2016, three months late.

Work on the Highbury Heritage audiovisual project started in January 2016 and was originally scheduled for completion in December 2016. In practice, though the work started on time, the 12-month schedule for the approved purposes was too short for such an ambitious project, managed by a small group of volunteers.

Training in oral history recording, archive research, cataloguing and guiding visitors was provided for volunteers as scheduled; other training was delayed or not pursued.

Some professional filming was undertaken by June 2016. However, it soon became clear that there would be difficulties and delays in securing the services of a cameraman who could work to our limited budget at the times required. Also, with the reduced volunteer involvement by the autumn of 2016, the filming sessions took longer than expected to plan and direct. Fortunately, through personal contacts, in the autumn two young cameramen with links to the local community offered to help.

Engagement with schools progressed more slowly than planned.

Researching and obtaining high resolution digitised images relating to Christ Church and the other topics of the heritage resource went well, with the support of Islington Local History Centre, though the process was slower than planned due to lack of volunteer support.

With only minimal volunteer involvement, there were delays in setting up the recordings of the narrations of the 'stories' we wanted to tell. This in turn led to delays in the technical work of uploading the films, images and narrations to the audiovisual resource.

When the heritage resource was launched on 4 July 2017 a small percentage of the extensive content had been uploaded. Considerable work, more time consuming than anticipated, was required to convert the material to a high quality finished product.

As a consequence of the delays during 2016, HLF had approved an extension to the original grant deadline of 31 March. During 2017, following further delays, the completion date was extended to 31 October 2017.

**'The quality of the material presented is exceptionally interesting',
remarked a member of PCC**

ACHIEVEMENTS

Project Delivery outlines what happened during the 22 months of the Spire and Heritage project.

Here we summarise our achievements under the following eight activity headings, as outlined in our plans for the Spire and Heritage project, and indicate the difference our achievements made.

- Spire repairs and conservation of stonework
- An accessible new visitor centre
- Designing and scripting Highbury Heritage
- Engaging with local community groups and schools
- Recruitment and training of volunteers
- Recording and presenting oral stories
- Retrieving information from archive repositories
- Developing publicity materials, signposting and launch
- Ensuring a sustainable heritage resource

Appendix 2 shows some images captured while the spire was clad in scaffolding and netting.

Appendix 3 shows some images taken during the work to research and deliver Highbury Heritage.

**‘Brilliant information!’,
commented a visitor to Highbury Heritage**

SPIRE REPAIRS AND CONSERVATION OF STONEMWORK

The spire repairs and conservation of stonework was undertaken during 2016 by DBR (London) stonemasons, with Canonbury resident Katherine Worthington working on some of the more intricate carvings. Robert Lombardelli Partnership Surveyors and Ellis & Moore Consulting Engineers were engaged and the work was overseen by Nicholas Weedon of HMDW Architects as the lead professional adviser. Planning for the erection of scaffolding commenced in January 2016, shortly after we received news of our successful delivery stage application for the HLF grant. The scaffolding was erected in February with a minor delay in the schedule.

Monthly site meetings took place, attended by the Church Wardens, Janet Gilbert and Michelle Paton, whose diary notes appear in Appendix 4. By the second meeting, a masonry survey showed extensive and serious damage to the corbels caused by corroded iron cramps, requiring repairs not included in the original scope. Repairs to these corbels would require an additional 28 large stones and 50 smaller stones. By April the work was already behind schedule.

The first stones, Bath stone to match the original stonework, arrived in May. By the end of May the cost estimate had increased by over 10%, not including the costs of the new corbels. More carved elements were required than originally scheduled and the number of required repairs had increased to 245 plus the new corbels. Some savings would have to be found. At the same time, the weathervane was noted to be in a poor decorative state. PCC agreed to underwrite the costs of re-gilding the weathervane and replacing the corbels while additional funding was sought.

A six-week delay during July/August was caused by the wait for the additional stone to be delivered. However, in the meantime, some pointing work was carried out.

In September, insertion of new corbels began and work started to take down the scaffolding around the weathervane and pinnacle higher up. A further cost estimate was provided, showing some savings had been found.

The work to the corbels was completed by early November and the scaffolding was down and removed by early December, with the church garden finally tidied up and returned to full public access just in time for Christmas 2016. The time over run was 4 months and the final costs showed an increase of almost 20% over the original estimate. Snagging is to be addressed by the end of November 2017.

Without the HLF, we would not have known how or where to start searching for funds to pay for the urgent repairs to the disintegrating and dangerous stonework. To save our spire and ensure the continued existence of our iconic Highbury landmark, the HLF-funded spire and heritage project was essential.

**‘A very good evening!’
commented a guest at the celebration of the spire repairs**

AN ACCESSIBLE NEW VISITOR CENTRE

We responded to the concerns about access to the church building that had been expressed during our public consultation. Through our access improvements, we have made a significant difference

- New external signage on a large board provides information to casual visitors on opening times of the visitor centre, explicitly stating that everyone is welcome to explore the history and heritage of the area through the Highbury Heritage interactive touchscreen display. The external signage acknowledges HLF, Appendix 5.
- At the doorway adjacent to the bus terminus and the clocktower, a new wheelchair ramp is available to give direct access to the worship space and the visitor centre.
- When the visitor centre is open, a new A-frame board is positioned outside encouraging and welcoming visitors.

The Highbury Heritage resource is accessible on a touchscreen mounted on a wall adjacent to the accessible entrance to the visitor centre in a corner of the worship area of the church. Faculty permission to mount the touchscreen on the wall was approved by the Diocesan Advisory Committee.

As well as welcoming casual visitors, we are encouraging schools and local community groups to arrange special events at a mutually convenient time.

From the external signage, the local community can learn about the opening hours and the opportunity for special openings and group bookings.

The improved access to the church is of benefit to the congregation, to the general public attending meetings and activities in the church and to those coming to the Highbury Heritage visitor centre.

Subtitles on videos enhance the experience for hearing impaired people, while the excellent sound quality of the narrations and oral histories is valuable for visually impaired people.

**‘It is such a super resource and a real gift to the community!’
added a PCC member**

DESIGNING AND SCRIPTING HIGHBURY HERITAGE

Inspiration for the Highbury Heritage audiovisual resource was taken from the heritage posters and booklet created for the church by Deborah Hedgecock and Ann Marsh in the 1990s. We reviewed the wealth of information in these printed resources and searched archive repositories for original copies of the many images we found there.

Early in the planning stages, the outline design of the digital exhibition was created. This early design, addressing six Highbury themes, is the one that we continued to work with and implement in the finished product. There are six top level themes

- Christ Church Highbury with St Saviour and St John
- Highbury people
- Highbury names and places
- Remembrance and legacy of war
- Leisure and entertainment
- Schools and community

For the purposes of developing the resource, we saw Highbury as roughly the area covered by Islington's Highbury East and Highbury West wards, from Finsbury Park Mosque down to Highbury and Islington station and from Holloway Road over to Highbury Quadrant.

We embraced suggestions from individuals and community groups for a huge variety of topics, including streets, plaques, architecture, sport, war memorials, notable residents, green spaces, bomb damage, Highbury Barn pleasure gardens, the number 19 bus and much more.

Having researched the availability of images, we moved to the next step - how to script the stories that would link the images and who would do this. We also had to consider the maximum length for an illustrated story or film, taking account of the likely attention span of the average viewer. With guidance from one of our cameramen, we decided on four minutes as the maximum duration, though it was very difficult at times to keep within this limit.

Volunteers found their enthusiasm for a topic grew with the amount of obscure information and historical facts they uncovered; it is possible that the average viewer may be less fascinated by such details.

We appreciated the support and expertise of our cameramen, Joseph Henshaw, Giacomo Esposito and Harry Collins who filmed patiently in all weathers and conditions, whether hot, cold, windy, noisy, up a ladder, up the scaffolding, and often at very short notice.

We are grateful to the community contacts who helpfully invited us to include videos they had made on relevant topics.

Eventually we found we had created enough material to provide the heritage resource with

- ❖ Over 40 new short videos
- ❖ More than 20 illustrated narrated stories
- ❖ Narrated soundbites on more than 40 Highbury streets, illustrated by images old and new
- ❖ Illustrated soundbites on over 25 local people
- ❖ 12 oral histories
- ❖ 8 existing films

**‘Lovely stuff! Beautifully produced and very interesting!’
said a visitor at the launch of Highbury Heritage**

RECRUITMENT AND TRAINING OF VOLUNTEERS

Over 50 volunteers had expressed interest in working on the spire and heritage project. We provided formal training sessions and we enabled volunteers to develop their skills.

- In the planning stage, volunteers with the relevant expertise were appointed to provide archive research advice, technical advice, community engagement support, communications support, schools liaison and project coordination
- In March 2016, Islington Local History Centre (ILHC) provided training at Christ Church for four volunteers in cataloguing the church archives
- Later in March, ILHC provided training for eight volunteers in researching the archives at the History Centre
- A group of four volunteers also visited London Metropolitan Archives (LMA) in March to learn about researching the Christ Church archives stored at the LMA
- Two volunteers attended a one-day British Library training course in April on 'Introduction to Oral History'
- In May and June 2016, volunteers were trained in using an audio recording machine for use with oral histories, narrated stories and the sound for videos
- Towards the end of the project in 2017, ten volunteers were recruited for training in guiding visitors to the Highbury Heritage visitor centre

With guidance, volunteers also developed skills in the following:

- Photo digitisation
- Presenting to camera
- Scripting stories
- Recording video interviews
- Narrating audio stories
- Photography
- Digital display creation
- Website design
- Interviewing for video presentation

A volunteer, a Clerkenwell and Islington Guide, devised a virtual architectural tour of Highbury streets, learning some helpful techniques from our cameraman while presenting to camera.

We interviewed one volunteer on his thoughts as he climbed the scaffolding, watching the stonemasons at work close up and admiring the amazing view from the level of the weathervane, 35 metres above Highbury.

**'I found directing video and audio recording the most exciting',
commented a volunteer**

Feedback from volunteers who received training shows that all are planning to continue to use these skills, either within the context of the ongoing Highbury Heritage project, for example as a member of the visitor centre welcoming team, or in other volunteer activities.

Throughout the 22 months of the Spire and Heritage project, over 100 volunteers were involved, contributing considerable expertise and local knowledge to the creation and delivery of the Highbury Heritage resource, as well as liaising with the contractors repairing the spire, generating publicity, fundraising, financial management, and reporting to HLF.

Although the role of a volunteer coordinator had been envisaged, no appointment was made, giving the project coordinator responsibility for overseeing most of the volunteer engagement.

‘Further historical research, involving archiving and scanning, presentation and publishing results for a public audience’ – the plans of a volunteer to use his skills

RECORDING AND PRESENTING ORAL STORIES

In April 2016, two volunteers attended the one-day British Library training course 'Introduction to Oral History'. Together with three other volunteers with experience of oral history work, they interviewed 12 volunteers and recorded material for inclusion in the heritage resource.

Prior to the interviews, the required documentation and permissions were prepared and discussed with interviewees and, where appropriate, relatives. The interviewers were trained in use of the recording equipment and informed about contacts for downloading the recordings for safe storage.

The oldest interviewee had just celebrated her 90th birthday at the time of the interview. Having lived in the Highbury area since she was born, she contributed valuable information on key episodes in the history of Christ Church as well as the former St John's church prior to amalgamation with Christ Church in 1978.

One interviewee had been a member of the former St Saviour's church prior to the parish being united with Christ Church in 1980.

The longest journey was a round trip of 250 miles to an interviewee who had been involved in restructuring and refurbishing the internal church spaces in the 1970s-1980s.

By involving older members through the oral history activity, we enabled a wider range of people to engage with the project – including some people who otherwise could not have been involved.

Older members of the local community had a unique opportunity to tell their stories. A valuable resource of audio memories exists for the future, securely stored and readily accessible.

Visually impaired visitors, as well as school pupils and the general public, have access to the Highbury Heritage audio memories.

Members of the congregation volunteered to be filmed, presenting memories of why they had come to Highbury and to Christ Church. Being interviewed on camera was a new experience for all involved.

**'The training received for the audio recording and interviewing was of tremendous benefit and was at a professional level',
says a volunteer.**

RETRIEVING INFORMATION FROM ARCHIVE REPOSITORIES

Success in retrieving a wealth of fascinating information from archive repositories underpins the impressive output of the Highbury Heritage project.

Volunteers researched documents, images and artefacts in the following archives and other sources. Local people, learning about our project, offered to help or volunteered the help of a community group with which they were associated. In this way news of our heritage project spread by word of mouth and enthused and inspired people and community groups in the wider community.

- We learned that the London Metropolitan Archive holds the archives of Christ Church Highbury, as well as those of the former parishes of St John's church and St Saviour's church which are now amalgamated with Christ Church. We evaluated boxes of items for information relevant to Highbury Heritage and digitised some 50 items help develop inform our heritage resource. We also retrieved information on St John's Highbury Vale Primary School from the London Metropolitan Archive.
- Islington Local History Centre, with its wide range of resources on the history of the borough, provided helpful access to images, maps, books and newspaper cuttings. We sourced about 150 digital images.
- At Christ Church we found an interesting collection of documents and photographs, though the official church archives are at the London Metropolitan Archive. Three photographs in poor condition were re-framed using appropriate materials. We catalogued some 21 folders of documentation, generating a detailed spreadsheet of the contents, indicating the type and condition of the item and where appropriate suggestions for improving conservation. We digitised 30 items for the heritage resource.
- From Historic England, an expensive source in comparison to others, we purchased one special photograph, together with the licence to use it.
- Though not an archive, the very informative Heritage posters at Christ Church Highbury, created for the church in the 1990s by Deborah Hedgecock and Ann Marsh, provided detailed historical information and photos, giving us guidance on topics

Community support was a vital factor in obtaining access to a wide variety of images and information about schools. Volunteers from Drayton Park School sourced historical images and documents to illustrate the narrated histories of the school. Further filming and images were sourced through the School's community art department. Highbury Fields School provided access to historical items from the original Highbury Hill House building, permitting a volunteer to photograph them for the resource. The author of a book about the School gave us a free copy. Volunteer

archivists at Channing School provided help with identifying information and images about a notable local resident.

Through our network of contacts, a volunteer from the Friends of Gillespie Park provided access to historical images and other materials stored at the Ecology Centre; some 20 items were selected.

Volunteers from the church and the wider community also searched their personal collections and provided images, documents and books that would help to inform the content of the six Highbury Heritage themes. One volunteer provided access to his personal postcard collection and researched and digitised 50 images relevant to the Highbury Heritage themes. An older volunteer kindly gave us her entire collection of books and leaflets on local history. Another volunteer helpfully took a photo, from inside her house, of the historic stained glass on her front door.

As a result of the collaborative efforts of volunteers from the congregation and the local community, archive documentation from a range of sources was digitised and is accessible through a single ‘one-stop’ Highbury Heritage resource.

Appendix 3 shows volunteers engaged in training sessions or other activities during the creation and delivery of Highbury Heritage.

**‘A great heritage project. Well done!’
said a visitor to Highbury Heritage**

ENGAGING WITH COMMUNITY GROUPS AND SCHOOLS

Engagement with local community groups and educational institutions is one of the successes of the Highbury Heritage project.

The hugely enthusiastic contributions from local community groups and schools resulted in a wide variety of videos and narrated stories, made possible through the following activities:

- Filming at St John’s Primary School during a special event with Arsenal in the Community marking the opening of the School’s new football pitch
- Channing School making available their archives on Matilda and Emily Sharpe, sisters who founded the School
- A volunteer from Drayton Park School providing historic images and narrating the history of the school and the lifeboat in the playground
- Filming at Morris Community Art at Drayton Park School
- Eclectic Voices and Highbury Young Singers permitting filming of a concert
- A video interview at Finsbury Park Mosque
- A volunteer from Gillespie Park and Ecology Centre sourcing historical material and narrating the story of the pond redevelopment
- Filming interviews with Highbury Barn traders
- A video interview with the minister at Highbury Baptist Church
- Access to historical information published by Highbury Community Association
- A video interview with the chairman of Highbury Fields Association
- Invitations to photograph historical material in Highbury Fields School and to interview the head teacher
- London Metropolitan University providing historical images and associated audio narrations
- Filming and a video interview at New Park Day Centre
- Filming and video interviews during the summer party at Olden Garden
- Permission to take photos during the 150th anniversary celebration event at St John’s Highbury Vale School
- Narration by a group of St John’s school pupils of the history of the school - in a recording studio, with parental tuition and leadership

... and many more community supported activities.

During development of Highbury Heritage, engagement with schools was successful though not in the manner originally envisaged. We planned initially to engage with one primary school, St John’s Highbury Vale, historically linked with Christ Church, and two secondary schools, Highbury Fields School and Highbury Grove School. With this aim, a schools liaison volunteer offered to lead the engagement efforts. However, it seemed difficult to engage officially with the schools on matters that might not be integral to the curricula. Likewise, the concept of the schools developing their own heritage topic for inclusion in the resource didn’t bear fruit.

Although the material on the resource is not, as originally planned, targeted at supporting specific areas of school curricula, we believe that groups of school pupils will benefit from being able to access the digitised heritage resource. Their group visits require prior reservation and liaison between teachers and volunteers, in order effectively to plan a visit that meets their needs.

Young visitors, parents and teachers have access to a useful and convenient resource on local heritage.

Engagement with community groups considerably exceeded our original targets.

‘There is a very wide variety of material. It will appeal to a broad group of both local residents and visitors to the area’, wrote a PCC member

DEVELOPING PUBLICITY MATERIALS, SIGNPOSTING AND LAUNCH

During the project, from January 2016 to October 2017, volunteers developed publicity materials, reaching the wider community as well as members of the congregation. The Highbury Heritage resource was publicised before and after the launch celebration and the new Visitor Centre is signposted.

- In February 2016, the *Newsletter* of the Highbury Community Association, distributed to its 1000 members and uploaded to its publicly available website, celebrated the award of the HLF grant.
- Articles and interviews were published in our local newspapers, the *Islington Gazette* and *Islington Tribune*
- A Virgin Money Giving campaign page was dedicated to raising funds for the spire repairs
- Two new pages on the church website feature the spire repairs and the Highbury Heritage visitor centre
- A new Highbury Heritage website provides more extensive information on progress with the project
- During 2016-17 the weekly church notice sheets, featuring the project and giving updates about volunteer engagement and fundraising activities, were circulated to the 300 members of the congregation and posted on the church website
- New external signage publicises the opening times of the Highbury Heritage visitor centre
- A new Highbury Heritage 'A board' is positioned at the entrance to the church when the visitor centre is open
- Two pull-up banners, Appendix 6, are positioned in the Visitor Centre, illustrating and informing on the topics included in the Highbury Heritage resource,
- A newly designed Highbury Heritage logo is reproduced on promotional materials, including bags, pens, keyrings, notebooks
- A publicity leaflet in Visitor Centre highlights the Highbury Heritage themes accessible through the audiovisual resource
- A print run of 5000 Highbury Heritage publicity leaflets is available for community distribution, Appendix 7
- The church Facebook page mentioned Highbury Heritage
- A permanent HLF acknowledgement board is positioned in the Highbury Heritage visitor centre

Through the above activities and the launch of Highbury Heritage, local people and a wide range of people have been informed about the Highbury Heritage project and opportunities for viewing the audiovisual resource.

THE LAUNCH OF Highbury HERITAGE

Publicity for the launch of the Highbury Heritage resource on 4 July 2017 attracted some 40 participants from the local community and community groups as well as the congregation. HLF was also invited.

The celebration and Highbury Heritage launch was led by the Rev Jonathan Brewster, welcoming representatives of community groups, volunteers, friends and families who had been involved during the project. He expressed the appreciation of Christ Church to all those who had generously donated to the spire repairs fund and those who had contributed to the creation of the audiovisual heritage resource, including Julie Melrose of Islington Local History Centre.

Fascinating presentations were given on Highbury's history. Melanie Griffiths, Director of Cloudesley, spoke about the legacy of Tudor yeoman Richard Cloudesley and the celebrations during 2017 to mark the 500th anniversary of his bequest to Islington which now benefits local churches and residents facing ill health and poverty. Peter Fisher, Archive Project Manager at London Metropolitan University, spoke about the musical and theatrical entertainment that took place in the spectacular hall in the university building in Holloway Road for over a century.

An article celebrating the spire repairs and the launch of Highbury Heritage was published in the Highbury Community Association *Newsletter* – see Appendix 8.

The views and comments of visitors to Highbury Heritage at the launch event in July and at special group events in October, expressed through the Highbury Heritage visitor satisfaction survey, are summarised in Appendix 9.

‘It’s fantastic to see the spire completely restored!’, the Rev Jonathan Brewster told the *Islington Tribune* when the scaffolding came down. ‘We have done our bit to protect it for future generations.’

THE FUTURE - ENSURING A SUSTAINABLE HERITAGE RESOURCE

Highbury Heritage is a permanent resource and, most importantly, it is a sustainable accessible living resource. Comprising videos with audio, narrated stories with illustrations, and oral histories, Highbury Heritage is designed to be easily amended and updated in future years.

The new Highbury Heritage visitor centre in the church has the flexibility to house occasional temporary exhibitions showcasing documentation relating to and complementing the digital resource.

In ensuring the resource is sustainable, we have taken account of the HLF guidance 'Using digital technology in heritage projects'. Accordingly, with reference to safe storage

- The source material is being indexed and the audio recordings (and audio tracks for video material) are being transcribed in order to make them searchable for accessibility.
- The video material being produced is encoded in MPEG-4 format, which offers a good balance between open standards and ease of use.
- The video material is stored in Google Cloud Storage. This decision will be reviewed periodically so that, in the unlikely event of Google ceasing to offer cloud services within the lifetime of the project, the content can be moved to another cloud service of a similar scale, such as Amazon Web Services or Microsoft Azure.
- The source code for the application developed to display and navigate the content on the touchscreen is stored on the leading code management platform (GitHub) and will be clearly documented in case changes are needed in future.

To ensure Highbury Heritage is of interest to new and returning visitors over the next five years, we will continue to seek feedback and implement suggestions from viewers.

Each year of the project, from November 2017, new information and resources will be incorporated and occasional temporary exhibitions and special events will be held. Volunteers will carry out the activities and Christ Church will bear the running costs.

In fact, building on the interest generated during the creation of Highbury Heritage, suggestions are already coming from the local community for additional activities to be worked on, as and when volunteer resources become available.

'If the Heritage Team would like me to talk about having lived in Highbury for 50+ years, I'd be very happy to', wrote a volunteer

A new Highbury Heritage Team, reporting to the Community Engagement Team at the church, is responsible for managing, maintaining and sustaining the output of the project and any supplementary materials and events, with associated publicity.

In the light of our experience with delivering the project, we will review the risks identified in the original Spire and Heritage delivery application. PCC, with advice from the Quinquennial architect and church wardens, will review the risk of further damage to the spire stonework and ensure regular maintenance checks and quick remedial action. PCC, with input from the church wardens, will review the risk of theft of or damage to the touchscreen and ensure appropriate security and insurance is in place. With input from the Community Engagement Team and the Highbury Heritage Team, PCC will review the likelihood and potential impact of risk that volunteers lose interest and are not available to maintain the outcomes of Highbury Heritage. Efforts to mitigate this risk will be made through regular updates to the church and local community about the volunteering opportunities available to support the continuing needs of the project.

Our digital Highbury Heritage resource will be usable for five years from November 2017. Visitors will be able to return to view the enhanced and expanded Highbury Heritage; entry is free. We expect 1200 visitors per annum.

The content of the Highbury Heritage resource will be available for a further five years free of charge and will continue to be available for use by others, as required under the terms of our HLF grant, while taking account of any permission and licence restrictions for specific images.

We are more than happy to share our knowledge and experience with other groups planning similar heritage projects, whether via the Diocese or HLF or other contacts.

**‘With even more to come, I look forward to revisiting’,
added a visitor**

SUMMARY OF OUTCOMES

Highbury Heritage is an extremely ambitious project for a volunteer-run activity. For various reasons, developing the resource content took considerably longer than originally intended. Nevertheless, the outcomes for heritage, communities and people are as planned, even considerably exceeding the original aims in scope.

As a result of the project, people and community groups have the opportunity to view a wealth of historical information now digitised and conveniently accessible in a single resource.

➤ **The spire is preserved for future generations**

Following successful completion of the repairs, the spire is structurally stable, the stonework is not in danger of falling, and the new non-ferrous cramps are not susceptible to corrosion. The original 1848 spire designed by Thomas Allom is preserved for future generations and the vista of the spire as a local landmark at the top of Highbury Fields is retained for the people of Highbury.

➤ **The church has improved public access, welcoming increasing visitor numbers**

Christ Church has improved public access. The doorway giving direct access to the worship space has new wheelchair access.

New signage provides information on opening times of the visitor centre in the worship space, encouraging and welcoming visitors with the information that an interactive exhibition on Highbury Heritage is available inside.

Casual visitor numbers will increase and we aim to keep a record of numbers, inviting visitors to sign a visitor book. Use of the touchscreen is measured by tracking software, identifying which items have been viewed.

➤ **People volunteered time**

Through volunteering with the project, retired and older people interacted with people from the wider community, contributing oral memories, scripting stories, providing photos and researching archives.

From the calculation of volunteer time given to the development and delivery of Highbury Heritage, it seems we have involved volunteers in the amazing total of 350 days' worth of volunteering; and this is most probably a conservative calculation.

SUMMARY OF OUTCOMES

➤ **People developed skills**

Through formal training courses and informal training sessions, volunteers developed skills and put them into practice during the creation and delivery of the Highbury Heritage audiovisual resource.

Feedback from volunteers who received training shows that they will continue to use these skills in a variety of other aspects of their lives, for example

- ❖ **'I have already started researching my own family history**
- ❖ **'I am working on a heritage project which has involved me in archival research'**
- ❖ **'Possibly use my skills in creating short filmed presentations at Islington Museum where I volunteer'**
- ❖ **'I anticipate at least one major heritage product emerging which would not have happened without having participated.'**

➤ **People learnt about heritage**

While putting these skills into practice during the 22-months of the project, volunteers have learnt about the heritage and history of Highbury. In researching in archives and other repositories, sourcing images or developing a script, for example, volunteers engaged with one or more of the topics included in the resource. About 100 volunteers have been involved.

Visitors to the Highbury Heritage audiovisual resource have the opportunity to increase their understanding and appreciation of the heritage of Christ Church Highbury and the wider Highbury area. They can learn from more than 100 items, including videos, illustrated stories with historical images and oral histories. In the visitors' survey, Appendix 9, over 90% of visitors said Highbury Heritage increased their knowledge of the heritage and history of Highbury.

- ❖ **'I got interested in the legacy of war, particularly World War 1.'**
- ❖ **'It's good to learn about where you live.'**

SUMMARY OF OUTCOMES

➤ **Heritage links exist with schools and the wider community**

Through enabling engagement with creating and developing one or more of the 100 items in the resource, Highbury Heritage has links with individuals, community groups and local schools.

Young people have been involved in narrating stories: primary school pupils from St John's Highbury Vale School benefited from the experience of narrating the School's history while in a recording studio.

The community's Friday Youth Group at Christ Church appreciated being one of the first groups to view the Highbury Heritage at a special event. Over 90% of this under-16s group think they could return to explore more of Highbury Heritage and may also encourage their friends and neighbours to visit.

➤ **Highbury Heritage is a sustainable, living resource**

Suggestions for new topics continue to come from the wider community, demonstrating the enthusiasm for making a contribution to Highbury Heritage. The resource will be regularly updated to include this new material and encourage repeat visits.

Continued user satisfaction and feedback help to measure our success.

**'The training and participation in the project has helped to upgrade my skills as well as consolidated my knowledge of my heritage',
commented a volunteer**

FUNDING AND FUNDRAISING

The Spire and Heritage project was part funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) Grants for Places of Worship programme, through a grant awarded in December 2015 following successful completion of the development stage.

In June 2016, following the news that we needed to fund unexpected major repairs to the corbels, we successfully applied for an emergency grant from Cloudesley.

Christ Church provided a contribution from reserves and individuals gave very generous donations to the spire repairs. Community groups and volunteers organised fundraising events and activities

- ❖ Eclectic Voices 'Songs for the Spire' concert in Christ Church, launching the fundraising effort in October 2015
- ❖ The Harley Singers concert 'In Heaven it is always autumn', in Christ Church in November 2016
- ❖ 'Auction of Promises for the spire', in Christ Church in May 2016, a magnificent and successful evening, for which volunteers donated auction lots, prepared and decorated the church, bought and served drinks and food, came along and joined in the fun, ran the auction, created a brilliant atmosphere, made outrageously generous bids, and stayed to clean up
- ❖ Highbury Community Association AGM
- ❖ St John's Highbury Vale School 150th anniversary celebrations
- ❖ The very successful 'Sponsor a stone' campaign, publicised by Teresa Dodgson's drawing of the spire divided into 100 'stones', each one being generously 'sponsored' for £100.
- ❖ Craft stalls, cake and book sales held throughout 2016 - 2017

The costs of VAT on the spire repairs were recovered by the church through grants from the Listed Places of Worship Scheme.

An element of volunteer involvement in lieu of cash contributions is promoted by HLF. We are pleased that volunteer support for our spire and heritage project is several times greater than the original project commitment worth £25,000.

One outcome of the fundraising Auction of Promises was a tour of the stoneworks at Christ Church Highbury in July 2016 for the successful bidder. Gum Newnham was filmed and photographed as he climbed the scaffolding on a sunny July day, watching the stonemasons at work and finally reaching the weathervane at the top – photos in Appendix 10.

'The view from the top is absolutely fantastic!', said Gum after he climbed up the scaffolding to the height of the weathervane

REVIEW AND LESSONS LEARNT

Here we summarise what worked well and what didn't work, and why. We summarise the lessons learnt from the Spire and Heritage project

UNDERPINNING THE SUCCESS OF OUR PROJECT

- Effective liaison with contractors on spire repairs, facilitated by the experience and commitment of our Church Warden Michelle
- Managing the unexpected, by securing additional fundraising to cover significant unexpected costs and developing the project in the absence of key people
- Extensive community engagement, with the inspirational Highbury Heritage project capturing the imagination of local people
- Varied and successful fundraising activities, involving groups of volunteers of all ages and engaging with the local community
- Exceptional support from a key volunteer with technical expertise, creating the digital display and uploading content considerably more complex and extensive than our original expectations

THINGS WE FOUND DIFFICULT

- Retaining enough volunteers with the necessary expertise and time
- Attracting volunteers with expertise to develop publicity materials for print or electronic media
- Finding ways to liaise with schools and develop curriculum-related materials
- The increasingly heavy workload for a few volunteers

SUMMARY OF LESSONS LEARNT

- Anyone can leave the project, at any time, even the Vicar and Treasurer
- Volunteers lead busy lives and the unexpected can happen in anyone's life, resulting in temporary or permanent absence from the project
- Personal contacts in the local community are the most effective in making things happen and in generating support
- It is easy to underestimate the time required to deliver a complex volunteer run project
- Effective publicity spans diverse media requiring very different skills and interests

THINGS WE MIGHT DO DIFFERENTLY NEXT TIME

- Appoint deputies for key volunteers
- Engage twice as many committed volunteers to fill committee/team positions
- Extend by 50% the preliminary estimate for the length of the project
- Ensure the project has a volunteer coordinator
- Engage more effectively through social media

'Loved it!'
commented a visitor to Highbury Heritage

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Special thanks are due to the following who made it possible to deliver the Spire and Heritage project.

- ❖ The Heritage Lottery Fund for their grant
- ❖ Cloudesley for their emergency grant
- ❖ Those who gave generously to the Spire Repairs Fund through ‘Sponsor a stone’ and in other ways
- ❖ Those who organised fundraising events and those who gave generously in connection with these events:
 - St John’s Highbury Vale School 150th anniversary celebrations
 - Eclectic Voices ‘Songs for the Spire’
 - The Harley Singers ‘In Heaven it is always autumn’
 - Auction of Promises for the spire
 - Highbury Community Association AGM
 - Craft stalls, cake and book sales
- ❖ Deborah Hedgecock and Ann Marsh whose heritage posters and booklet from the 1990s were the inspiration for the Highbury Heritage project
- ❖ Julie Melrose and staff at the Islington Local History Centre for their help with innumerable requests for images from their extensive archive
- ❖ The volunteers who were filmed and interviewed; those who researched, took photographs, filmed, wrote scripts and narrated; those who took training courses in archive research, cataloguing, oral history recording and guiding visitors; those who produced the final films and other outputs
- ❖ The Highbury Community Association and Islington Archaeology and History Society for use of information published in their newsletters

**‘ It’s fantastic – amazing work by all involved!’
said a visitor**

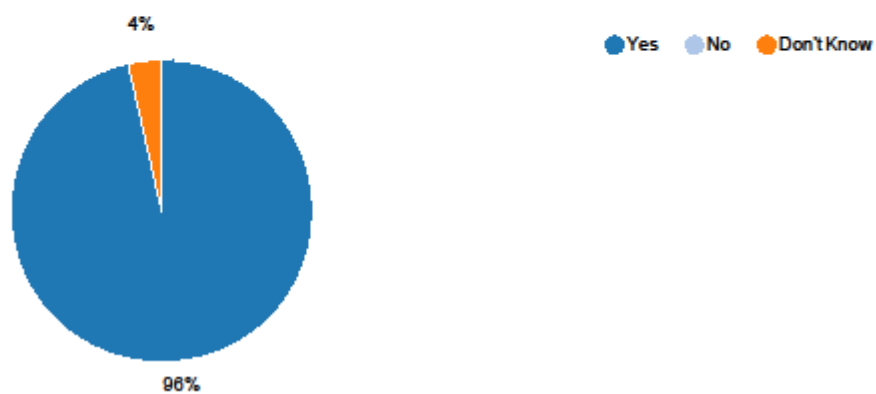
Page 1 of the summary of the 2015 Highbury Heritage Questionnaire; the full version of the report is available at <http://www.highburyheritage.net/heritage-project/>

Highbury Heritage

A project to help save the crumbling spire at Christ Church

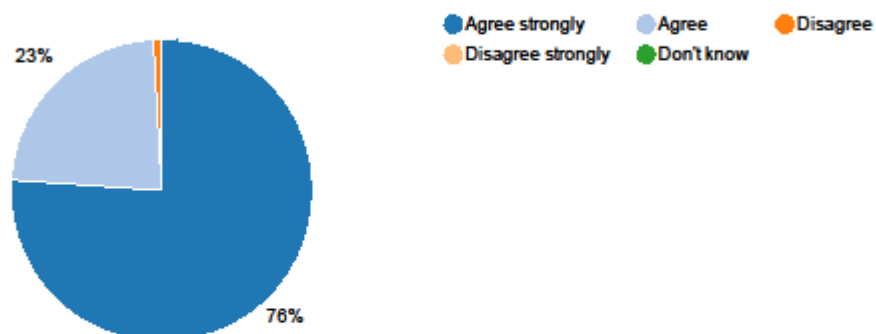
Many thanks to all those who responded to our survey, conducted between January and March 2015. We received a total of 113 submissions and the key results are summarised below.

Do you agree it is important to keep the spire at Christ Church?



We'd like to find out how much you agree/disagree with the following statements...

It is important that local people have the opportunity to learn about local history



The scaffolding goes up ... and comes down ten months later to reveal the glory of the repaired spire and shining weathervane above Christ Church



Scaffolding has arrived 10 February 2016



The HLF construction board is mounted 11 February 2016



Scaffolding climbs higher 19 February 2016



Spire is fully clad in scaffolding and netting in May 2016



The spire is still fully clad in scaffolding and netting in July 2016



Scaffolding behind the netting in July 2016



The gleaming weathervane and the spire emerge from the scaffolding in September 2016



The cleaned stonework and repaired spire look amazing 30 November 2016

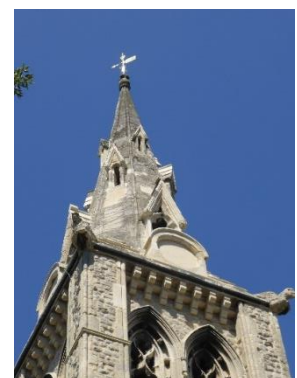


Night view of the tower and spire 4 December 2016



Finally all the scaffolding has gone on 5 December 2016

And the new corbels are clearly visible



Highbury Heritage activities and the new visitor centre



We found old boxes of historical documents at Christ Church



Cataloguing training at Christ Church



Research training at Islington Local History Centre



Research training at London Metropolitan Archives



Simon demonstrates the touchscreen at the celebration event for the spire repairs and launch of Highbury Heritage



Michelle and Janet put the Visitor Centre poster in the external notice board



External signage for Highbury Heritage Visitor Centre



New wheelchair ramp at entrance to Highbury Heritage visitor centre



HLF acknowledgement in the church adjacent to the touchscreen



HLF acknowledgement in the church



Banners illustrate the six Highbury Heritage themes

APPENDIX 4 – SPIRE REPAIRS – CHURCH WARDEN’S DIARY NOTES

SPIRE REPAIRS – CHURCH WARDEN’S DIARY NOTES

Spire repairs and conservation - Contractors' meetings - church warden's diary notes from Michelle	Comments and challenges
Pre- contract meeting 19/01/2016	
Completion date 3/8/16	Not met- eventually 11/16 due to unforeseen works
Contract Sum £ 183,545.00	Not met due to unforeseen works
Three phase four week erection of scaffolding.	Slight delay due to having to remove glass panes for poles to go through tower itself.
Insurance set up.	Had to be extended twice due to length of project extending. Additional costs
Site hoarding and facilities set up.	
Temporary electricity for external site and work	
Valuations set at monthly	
Neighbours notified of works.	No complaints through programme.
Meeting 1 2/3/16	
Detailed masonry survey scheduled for 16/3/16.	
Asked for photographic record of project.	Good photos taken.
Meeting 2 30/3/16	
Masonry survey show extensive damage to Corbels-	Not in original scope. Involves 28 large stones and approx. 50 smaller stones. Caused by corroding iron cramps.
Structural engineer to advise 13/4/16.	
North west side of church is the worst affected.	
Some stone orders delayed.	
Meeting 3 27/4/16	
Cutting out defective stone has commenced, schedule of items required beginning to be sent to quarry.	Behind schedule already at this point.
More stone work than originally thought	
Stone measurements.	
Cashflow forecast requested.	Costing variations are behind due to some of the stone sizes not being specified.
Meeting 4 25/5/16	
Costings for Corbels were too high, alternative methods for fixing are being sought.	Further delay to programme.
Original cost of works has gone up by £20,000 without the corbels, more carved elements than expected.	
First stone delivery next week.	
Estimated around 190 repairs.	Contract sum now £203,000
Weather vane mentioned as was in a poor decorative state, costings for re-gilding to be sought whilst scaffolding in-situ.	Not in original scope.

APPENDIX 4 – SPIRE REPAIRS – CHURCH WARDEN'S DIARY NOTES

Meeting 5 29/6/16	
Weatherwane £1,500	Extra cost
Four masons on site	
Corbels not expected to arrive for at least six weeks.	Further delay to programme.
Pointing suggested for ragstone below corbels.	Extra cost but could be done whilst waiting for corbel delivery.
Review of contract list to see what was not required.	Griffin does not need to be removed just pinned- saving a large cost.
Meeting 6 27/7/16	
Weatherwane cost increased.	
Corbel fixing agreed.	Extra scaffolding required.
Repairs to be marked up on site drawings.	
Six masons on site.	
Completion likely to be early October.	Trying to get programme to complete.
Checking priced document for any provisional sums omitted.	Could save costs.
Meeting 7 31/8/16	
Asked for estimate of increased fees for consultants .	Slight increase on to what was originally quoted.
Fewer masons on site.	
Corbels not yet delivered.	Further delays.
Striking of some scaffolding to begin.	
New contract sum.	£226,223 including corbels
Meeting 8 28/9/16	
Cost of new glazing	
Corbel replacement has begun.	
Scaffolding down from top of steeple.	
Minor works being completed as scaffolding comes down.	Effective use of time.
Completion in three weeks.	Two months late.
Look at Practical Completion date.	
Meeting 9 2/11/16	
Work to Corbels complete.	Account signed off with a year to pay retention fee as per contract, items for snagging will be assessed by Architect.
Rest of scaffolding to come down 14/11/16	
Cleaning down and small works to be carried out. Operative on site at all times.	
Revised sum of £228,500	Cost increase to cover extra time.
5% retention agreed	

Christ Church Highbury is home to the Highbury Heritage Visitor Centre. Everyone is welcome to come and explore.



Two pull up banners illustrate the six themes of Highbury Heritage.



HIGHBURY HERITAGE

Come and explore the history of Highbury through fascinating short films, stories, memories and images, all available at the touch of a button at the new Highbury Heritage Visitor Centre in Christ Church, N5.



Free entry!

Opening times

Mondays, Wednesdays & Thursdays (term-time)
9.30 to 11.30am and Sundays 12.15 to 1.00pm.

Group visits (day or evening) welcome by arrangement.

Entrance is opposite the clocktower through the glass doors of Christ Church, at the top of Highbury Fields / Highbury Hill.



Highbury Community News

highburycommunity.org | [@HighburyCA](https://twitter.com/HighburyCA) | facebook.com/highburycommunity

Highbury Heritage: an exciting new community resource, open to all

By JANET GILBERT

There were celebrations of a distinctly British kind in Highbury on July 4 this year, as Christ Church hosted an evening reception to mark the unveiling of Highbury Heritage, the new audiovisual community history and heritage project through which visitors can access videos and slide shows about Highbury's past and present.

Highbury Heritage was planned and developed as an essential adjunct to the recent extensive spire repair programme part funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund (see the October 2016 issue of Highbury Community News).

In 2014 a routine inspection revealed that the spire's original Victorian iron cramps dating from the church's construction in 1848 had rusted badly, resulting in extensive wind and water damage to the stonework of the spire and putting its stability at risk. Fortunately the eventual repair cost of £350,000 was funded by a generous grant of £206,000 from the Heritage Lottery Fund, a further emergency grant of £27,000 from Cloudesley, local fundraising activities, and volunteer support worth many tens of thousands of pounds.

In one of his last public meetings before his move later in July to a new post at St Paul's Cathedral, Christ Church vicar Rev Jonathan Brewster welcomed visitors from all over Islington to celebrate the successful completion of Christ Church's spire



and heritage project. There were lively presentations by Peter Fisher from London Metropolitan University (also a contributor to this newsletter) about the Great Hall at the Holloway Road campus, by Melanie Griffiths on the 500-year-old legacy of Richard Cloudesley in the borough, and by church wardens Michelle Paton and Janet Gilbert on the spire repairs and the development of Highbury Heritage.

Over canapés and drinks, visitors then had the opportunity to view a sample selection of videos on the touchscreen and to browse through a number of documents and artefacts from the church's own archives.

In a series of short films, narratives supported by old and new images, oral histories and brief memories, Highbury Heritage explores six major themes: Highbury names and places; leisure and entertainment; Highbury people; the legacy of war; schools and

community; and Christ Church Highbury.

A dedicated team of enthusiastic volunteers spent over twelve months interviewing local people, digging through the church's archives, conducting research at the Islington Local History Centre, London Metropolitan Archives, Arsenal and the Imperial War Museum, talking to local schools and community organisations, identifying relevant images, and finally writing and narrating the stories about different aspects of Highbury's fascinating history.

The result gives a delightfully eclectic but balanced view of how Highbury's development through the ages has shaped what it is today. Much of the filming was done by two young filmmakers with strong local connections: Joseph Henshaw, who

Continued on page 2...

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The full article is available at <http://www.highburycommunity.org/highbury-community-news.html>

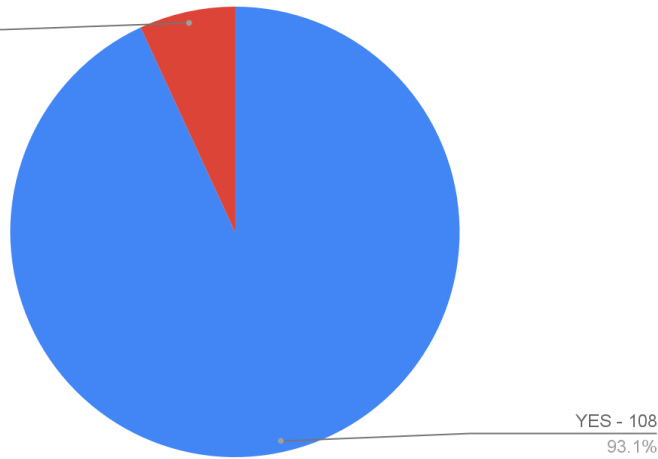
APPENDIX 9 -VISITOR SATISFACTION SURVEY REPORT

Many thanks to those who completed the visitor satisfaction questionnaire at special events in July and October 2017. We received a total of 116 completed forms.

The results are summarised below.

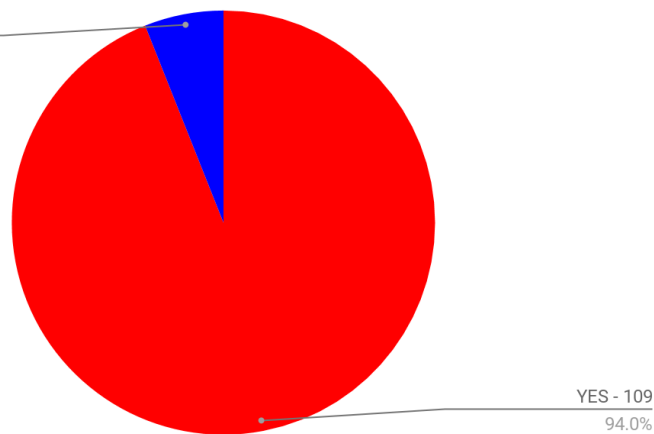
1) HAVE YOU VISITED CHRIST CHURCH BEFORE?

NO - 8
6.9%

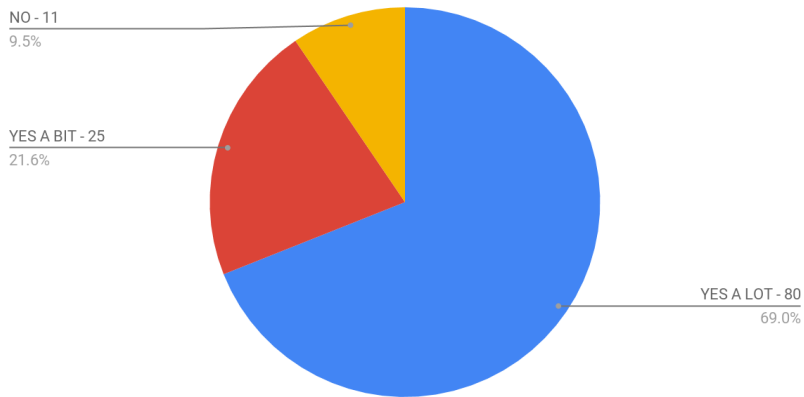


2) DID YOU VIEW INFORMATION ON THE Highbury Heritage Resource?

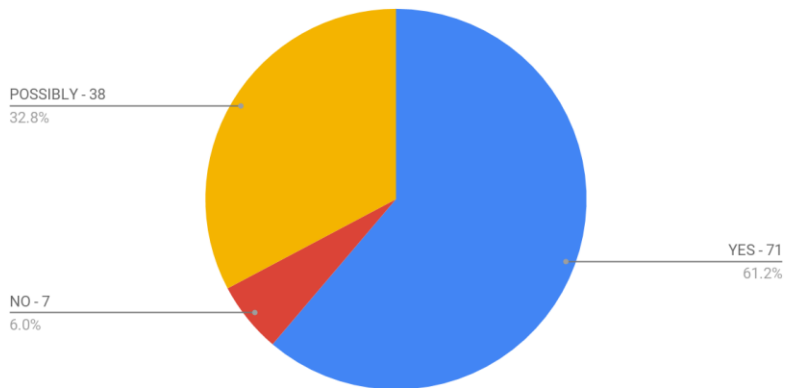
NO - 7
6.0%



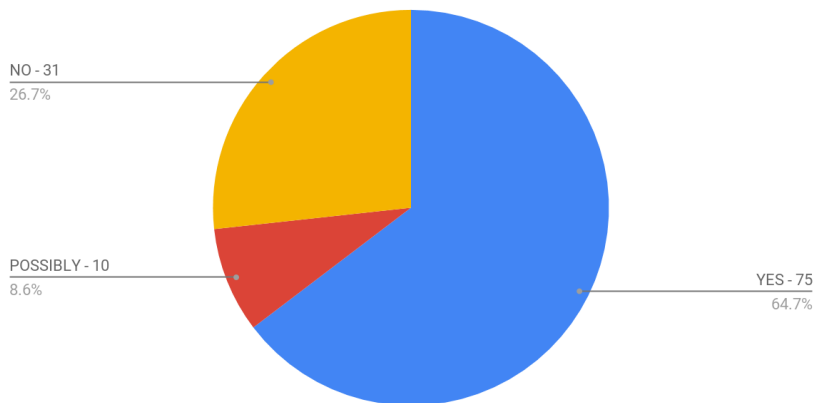
3) DID IT INCREASE YOUR KNOWLEDGE OF THE HERITAGE/ HISTORY OF HIGHBURY



4) WILL YOU RETURN TO EXPLORE MORE OF THE HIGHBURY HERITAGE?

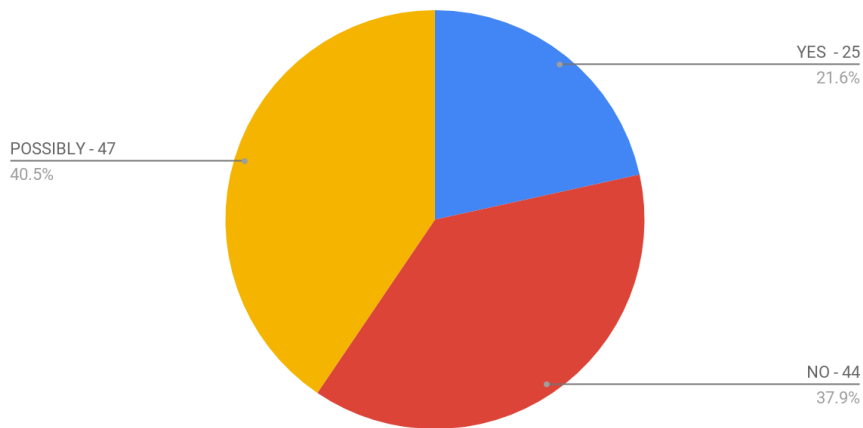


5) WILL YOU ENCOURAGE YOUR FRIENDS AND NEIGHBOURS TO VISIT

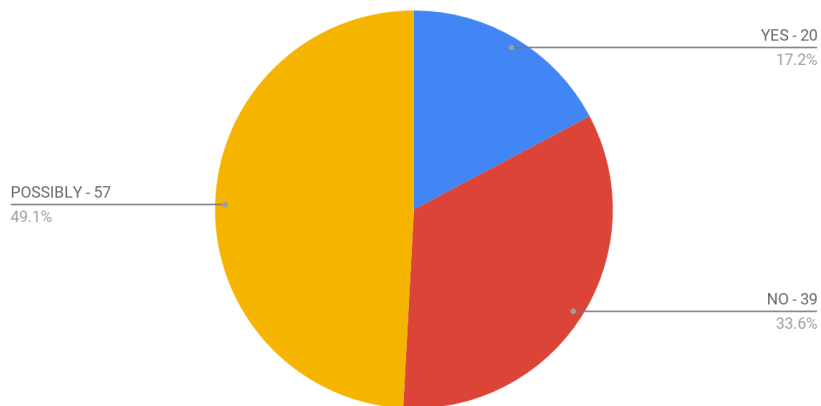


APPENDIX 9 -VISITOR SATISFACTION SURVEY REPORT

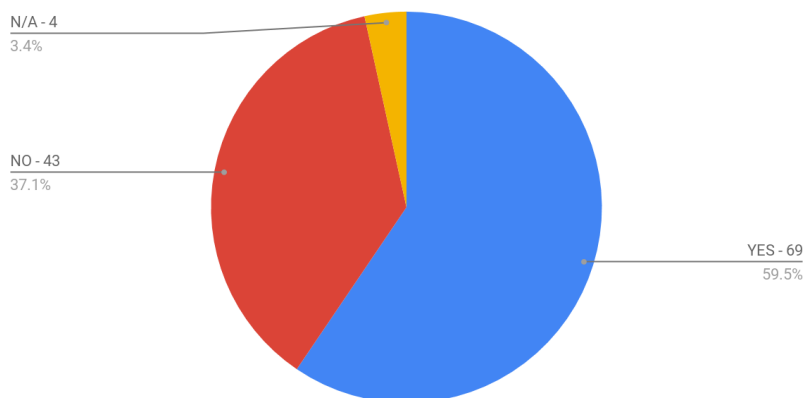
6) ARE YOU INTERESTED IN VOLUNTEERING TO HELP ON OPEN DAYS?



7) WOULD YOU LIKE TO CONTRIBUTE INFORMATION TO ADD TO THE RESOURCE?

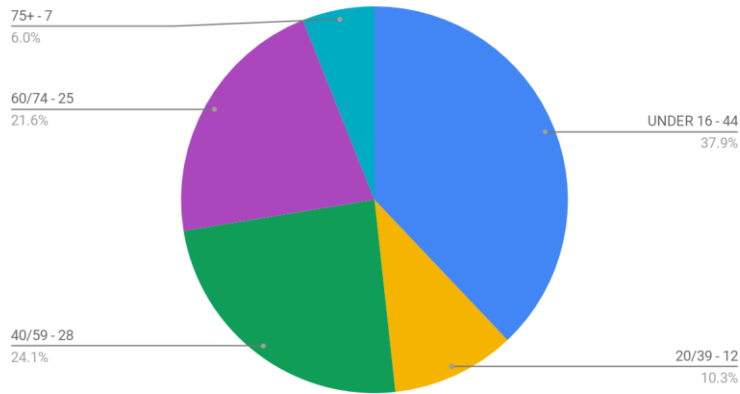


8) MAY WE CONTACT YOU TO INFORM YOU WHEN NEW MATERIAL IS ADDED

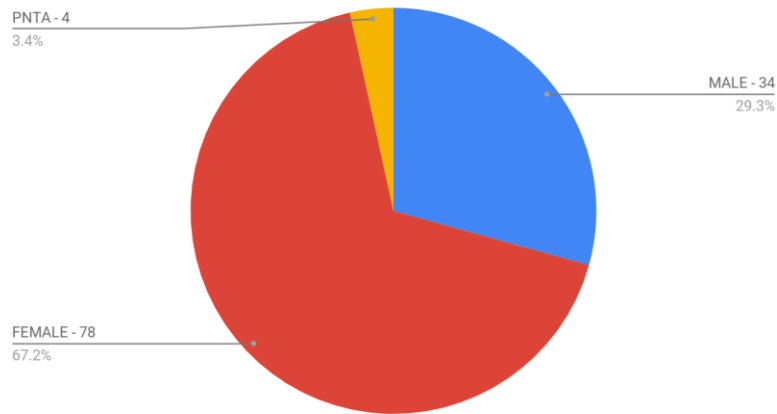


APPENDIX 9 -VISITOR SATISFACTION SURVEY REPORT

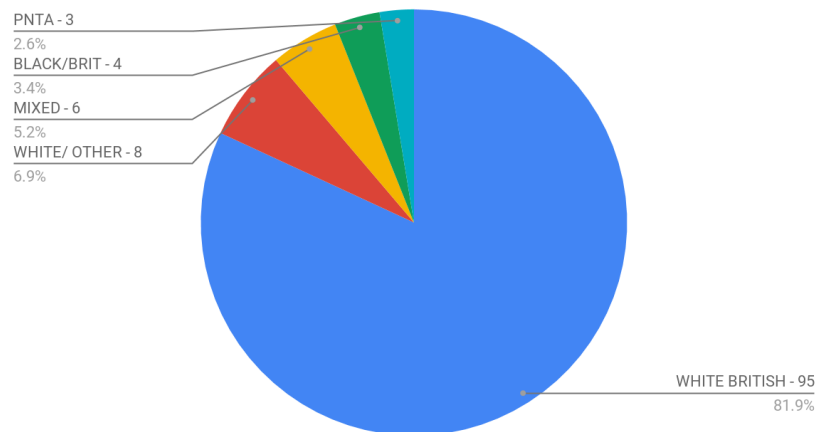
9) AGE



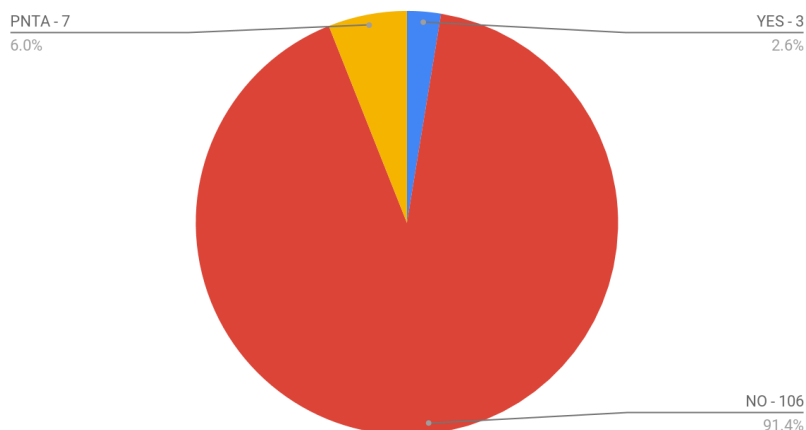
10) GENDER



11) ETHNICITY



12) DO YOU HAVE A DISABILITY?



PNTA : prefer not to answer

COMMENTS

- 👍 'Very interesting, lovely videos'
- 👍 'fantabulous, good work.'
- 👍 'Very interesting content and beautifully done.'
- 👍 'Splendid work!'
- 👍 'Lovely stuff, beautifully produced and very interesting.'
- 👍 'Well done. It was very good.'
- 👍 'Wonderful.'
- 👍 'A wonderful project and beautiful spire.'
- 👍 'A great heritage project. Well done!'
- 👍 'It's fantastic - amazing work by all involved.'
- 👍 'A very good evening.'
- 👍 'I got interested in the legacy of war, particularly ww1.'
- 👍 'Can the resource be available via a website?'
- 👍 'I loved the movie, it was really lovely.'
- 👍 'It's good to learn where you live'
- 👍 'Very good'
- 👍 'Loved it!'
- 👍 'I think there is a very wide variety of material'
- 👍 'Really pleased with the result'
- 👍 'It will appeal to a broad group of both local residents and visitors to the area'
- 👍 'The team has worked really hard and the results are brilliant!'
- 👍 'It is such a super resource and a real gift for the community'
- 👍 'Really loved the filming at all the local shopkeepers '
- 👍 'With even more to come, I look forward to revisiting '
- 👍 'Wonderful resource! '
- 👍 'Fantastic content'
- 👍 'The quality of the material presented is exceptionally interesting'
- 👍 'Brilliant information!'

**Climbing the scaffolding - a tour of the stoneworks at Christ Church Highbury
July 2016 for the successful bidder at the fundraising 'Auction of Promises'**



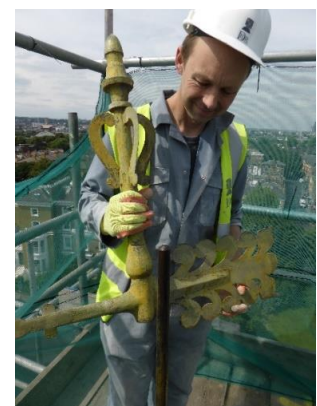
APPENDIX 10 – THE STONEMANWORKS – CLIMBING THE SCAFFOLDING



A stonemason holds a corroded iron clamp – the cause of the cracked stones



Gum Newnham, successful bidder at the 'Auction of Promises' for the 'promise' of a tour of the stoneworks, climbed the scaffolding at Christ Church Highbury in July 2016.
Photos by Evelyn Thomas



EVALUATION
of the
Spire and Heritage Project
and the launch of

HIGHBURY HERITAGE

a new audiovisual resource for the local community

HLF PROJECT REFERENCE NUMBER

GP-14-02828

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