

New lighting and wiring will make St Mary's Church, Goldington fit for the future.

St. Mary's church in Goldington, one of Bedford's oldest churches is to update its electrical wiring and lighting. A routine inspection in 2019 showed that the electrical wiring was reaching the end of its life and for the church to continue to stand proud in the community a complete renewal would be required. The final cost is expected to be in excess of £34,000 and leave the wiring in good order for future generations.

The Church congregation have been hard at work raising the funds and enough was in place early in the year to enable the work to proceed. Originally planned to be finished by Easter the Covid-19 lockdown caused a delay and it is only now that the contractors have been able to start work. The Parochial Church Council is very grateful to all the charities that have offered grants, particularly the 'National Churches Trust' which is providing a grant of £8,500.

Claire Walker, Chief Executive of The National Churches Trust, said: "The UK's historic churches and chapels are a vital part of our national heritage. But to survive, many need to carry out urgent repairs and install modern facilities. The cost of this work is far beyond what most congregations can pay for themselves."

"I'm delighted that the St. Mary's Church, Goldington is being helped with a £8,500 National Churches Trust Grant. The work to update its electrical wiring and lighting will ensure that it can continue to serve local people for many years to come."

The first mention of St. Mary the Virgin parish church can be found in the documents concerning the foundation of Newnham Priory in 1166, being one of the churches gifted by Simon De Beauchamp. In 1228 the first vicar of the church was presented to his living by the Bishop of Lincoln. St Mary's became a simple parish church in 1541 when Newnham Priory was dissolved during the Reformation.

In 1837 the parish was transferred from Lincoln to the diocese of Ely and transferred again in 1914 when it became part of the diocese of St. Albans. During the 1950's Goldington saw a great expansion in housing and with it came an extension to the church and the building of the church hall. Through all these changes the church has remained at the heart of the community, standing on the small rise above Goldington Green. Goldington village itself was incorporated into Bedford Borough in 1934.

About the National Churches Trust

The National Churches Trust is the leading national independent charity concerned with the protection and welfare of churches, chapels and meeting houses throughout the United Kingdom. Key areas of work include:

- a) Providing grants for the repair, maintenance and modernisation of church buildings
- b) Acting as a catalyst to improve and bring more resources to the management of church buildings
- c) Promoting the value of church buildings to the community at large

Anyone can become a member for £30 a year and help support the Trust's work.

For more information visit www.nationalchurchestrust.org