

How can YOU help ?

By joining the 'Friends of Christ Church' you, together with other individuals and local businesses, will help to secure the building and the heritage of our community by making an annual subscription.

What are the Benefits of Membership ?

- Annual subscription entitles you to a 10% discount on one private Church Hall booking per year
- Life membership attracts a 10% discount on all private Church Hall bookings per year
- A regular newsletter and invitations to planned events
- The opportunity to help preserve the fabric of an historic building and its beautiful environment

Yes, I would like to become a friend of Christ Church

(Minimum Subscription shown)

- Annual Single Membership £15
- Annual Family Membership £25
- Life Membership £150

What sort of things could I Do?

- Support us financially by joining the Friends of Christ Church
- Help with additional donations for repairs, appeals and special projects
- Use your practical skills for:
 - Grounds maintenance eg:
 - Grass cutting
 - Leaf clearance
 - Building maintenance eg:
 - Painting
 - Cleaning
- Include the Church & grounds in your 'Neighbourhood Watch' scheme
- Another way to help "The Friends " is to include a legacy bequest in your Will or add a codicil to an existing Will (please ask for details)

The subscriptions are not fixed sums, but we have set a minimum. Any donation, large or small will be most welcome.



A membership enrolment form is enclosed

Christ Church The Parish of Portsmouth



Become a Friend of Christ Church

A Brief History of Christ Church

The hillside parish of Portsdown was created in 1870 to serve the people of Widley and Wymering also the troops stationed in the forts. The church was built and paid for by the Squire John Deverell of Purbrook Park House. It is built in the early Norman style complete with a tower at the west end, and built from Portland stone and headed black flint bedded in mortar. The flint was taken from the chalk on the hill.

It was originally intended that the troops should attend ordinary parochial Services, however in 1872 an entire regiment was stationed in the five forts and the Chaplain General placed an Army Chaplain in charge of the troops. The Secretary for War stipulated that the church would be used by the troops between 8am and 10:30am so as not to interfere with morning service for the Parish.

A large burial ground surrounds the church, and a portion of this is an official War Grave complete with Cenotaph with over two hundred graves from the two World Wars, the youngest casualty just sixteen. In the front of the churchyard the discerning observer will find the last resting place of Sgt Henry Gallagher, a veteran of the battle of Rorkes Drift. In conjunction with the Hampshire Wildlife Trust we have continued

to maintain a policy of environmental management of the whole site for the Flora and Fauna.

With the approaching climax of the Second World War in 1944, a second front was being planned for the invasion of France. General Dempsey was appointed Commander British Second Army responsible for managing the D-Day landings on the Beaches of Normandy. Dempsey, a devout Christian, determined to hold "The Knights Vigil" in Christ Church. The event was described as an "Eve Battle" Dedication Service attended by the Commander and all his staff and led by Rev John Steel (Chaplain 2nd Army).

At the conclusion of the war Dempsey and his Senior Staff returned to Christ Church on the 6th June 1948 to recall The Knights Vigil Service and to donate two stained-glass windows at the front of the Church. He continued to return every year on the anniversary of D-Day until 1965, and the service is still commemorated today.

An integral part of the Church site is a versatile Parish / Community hall for hire for a variety of events. We have three different spaces and a fully equipped kitchen. Tables and chairs are available to seat around 140 people. A full size badminton court is marked out in the main hall. The building has a Fire Safety approval for 400 people.

Will you become a Friend ?

Over the centuries Christ Church has been, and remains today, the centre of Christian worship in Widley providing a place for the prayers of the community both corporate and private, rejoicing in the new Birth at the baptism (of children), celebrating marriage and committing loved ones to the eternal presence of God.

Previous generations made great sacrifices and efforts to ensure that the Church building here in Widley has been maintained for us today. Will you therefore help share in the task of "handing it on" to our children and future generations in as good, if not better condition than we received it.? Christ Church belongs to the whole community, both those who live and work in it.

The doors are kept open as much as possible to allow easy access for those who want a quiet moment, perhaps in the chapel for prayer, or to soak up the history and sense of community from just being inside.

The "Friends of Christ Church" are a group of people who appreciate the importance of the building to the community and who want to conserve it for future generations.

Visit us online at

<http://www.christchurchportsdown.org>