



PRESS RELEASE

For immediate release: 3rd February 2014

St Paul's Churchyard prepared for next 150 years thanks to our partner the Berkshire Community Payback Team

On Saturday 18th January, the Community Payback Team joined forces once again with the St Paul's Churchyard Working Party to make the final push on the last of the advancing undergrowth to make St Paul's churchyard completely clear for the first time in many years.

Working on the first and third Saturdays in each month, the Community Payback Team have been coming to St Paul's to work with our Churchyard Working Party volunteers for five months now.

Andy Clark, for St Paul's said, "We are enormously grateful for the support we have received from the Community Payback Team in clearing the churchyard. We observe that many more people are now coming into the yard to maintain family graves and genealogy enthusiasts are now able to access many more graves searching for ancestors." He added, "More recently, partnership work has included general church maintenance projects such as spring cleaning in the church vestry and nave, building new children's furniture as well as draining the crypt, clearing gutters and, after all the rain, digging trenches to drain the yard."

In expressing his thanks, the Rector, Fr Richard Lamey said, "There is always so much to do in maintaining a Grade II* listed building. The Church and churchyard are



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looking amazing. It is a huge bonus to have a group of skilled people with such energy, commitment and willingness to be involved in the life of the church. I can always see immediately see where work has been done and it has been a super effort by everyone concerned.”

The working party is supported by another group of volunteers who provide and serve refreshments during coffee and lunch breaks. If anyone would like to volunteer to work along-side us, whether to serve refreshments, make cakes or to join our working party on the first and third Saturday of each month, you would be most welcome. Sometimes, due to holidays, days/dates may be subject to change, so it is always best to check with the Parish Office to confirm that it is going ahead, or for further information, call 0118 979 2122.

<ENDS>

Notes to Editors:

Please see email attachments for additional files (as well as a copy of this Press Release) listed below:

- 3 x St Paul's logos in black & white [1] and colour [2] (.jpg files)
- Logo guidelines for use (.pdf)
- *18-01-14 Churchyard Working Party Planting Blubs.jpg*
[Photo credit: Andy Clark]
- *18-01-14 Churchyard Working Party clearing the Car Park to the Parish Rooms.jpg*
[Photo credit: Andy Clark]



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- *18-01-14 Churchyard Working Party Coffee Break with clear view through the yard.jpg*
[Photo credit: Andy Clark]
- *18-01-14 Churchyard Working Party Lunch break.jpg*
[Photo credit: Andy Clark]
- *18-01-14 Churchyard Working Party chat over coffee.jpg*
[Photo credit: Andy Clark]

Background:

St Paul's Churchyard was maintained by a group of dedicated volunteers who turned out in all weathers to do their best to beat back the rampant vegetation that would spring up in between each monthly visit. In between these visits, other volunteers would come and keep the footprint of the church mown as often as possible during the week and at weekends.

Sometime ago, the monthly visits were increased to twice-monthly in an effort to keep on top of the mowing during the spring and summer months throughout the yard and this pattern has more or less been maintained since then but the size of the yard meant that it was impossible with a few volunteers, to complete all the churchyard in one go, so there was always a patch to be dealt with 'next time.'

Through a chance conversation between local historian and volunteer, Jim Bell, and a member of the Community Payback Team working nearby, an offer was made for a Team to visit St Paul's to support the Churchyard Working Party. This was quickly accepted and over the next couple of months St Paul's and the Community Payback Team worked side by side to begin clearing the overgrown areas and keep on top of the areas already conquered. The effect was immediate; people got a good feeling about having done a good job and everyone could see the benefits of working together. After nearly five months, the churchyard is now clear to the boundary



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which offers new perspectives of the church - a right and fitting start to its 150th Anniversary celebrations.

Background to the Church

St Paul's Church was built by John Walter III, entirely at his own expense, during 1862-1864. It was consecrated by Bishop Samuel Wilberforce, Bishop of Oxford, on 23rd July 1864. Almost all of the basic fabric of the church dates from the middle of Queen Victoria's reign, and is a product of that one period. It was built 'in the Decorated style of the 14th and 15th centuries' by Henry Woodyer. It is a Grade II* listed building – English Heritage (1951).

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The Parish of Wokingham St Paul

St Nicholas, Emmbrook † St Paul, Wokingham † Woosehill Community Church
