

FRIENDS OF ST MICHAEL'S, MERE

STRATEGY - 2025

Charity Number: 281604

Charitable Objects: *"The preservation, repair and maintenance of the fabric and furnishing of the Church of St Michael the Archangel, Mere, and to promote its use as a place of public worship. AND to promote the appreciation of the Church of St Michael as a building of architectural and historical interest"*

TIME LIMIT and REVIEW

This strategy is intended to be in place for 3* years

However, it should be reviewed annually for updates or refinements

PURPOSE OF THIS STRATEGY DOCUMENT

To set out the priorities of the Committee in order to continue modernising the work of the Friends and improve the offering to the Membership or the wider Community in Mere.

This Strategy document will help the Committee set out its ambitions for the next three years; to conduct its business; to allow any member or interested person to understand the work of the Friends, and ultimately to fulfil the objects of our Charity;

At any point this Strategy document can be used to ask the questions; what is the Friends currently working towards AND To what extent has the Friends achieved their ambitions?

1.FUNDING AIMS

Principle

Develop better understanding and communication with the PCC and fabric committee about the funding aims and priorities for St Michael's church.

Action 1

Reports (verbal or written) from the two Church wardens and Vicar will be a regular Agenda item for meetings of the Committee. The Committee will be given the Quinquennial report and other relevant documents as appropriate.

Action 2

The Committee will develop and keep under review a list of fundraising aims for the next three years

2. DEVELOPMENT OF MEMBERSHIP AND PUBLICITY

Action 1

We will develop and communicate a ‘package’ of benefits of membership, including advance notice of events, early booking for events, members’ social event, Annual newsletter and the AGM meeting.

Action 2

We will enhance the offering and information available on the website, for both members and the general public, including user-friendly links to the Tower Stories Website and The Church of St Michaels’ website. We will merge the Tower Stories Website with the Friends Website at the conclusion of the project in June 2025.

Action 3

We will work to increase the number of members –currently the target is 10 new members each year, and host a Friends membership and information desk at every Friends event.

3. ANNUAL PROGRAMME OF EVENTS/fundraising activities

Principles:

We will strive to create a varied annual programme which will appeal to a wide range of ages and tastes in order to involve many people in Mere in the preservation and appreciation of the Church at the heart of the Community.

We will build on the relationships between the Friends and the wider community by the Tower Stories Programme to create future projects; the individuals who have been part of the Tower Stories Steering group, Mere School, the Mere Museum, The Town Council.

We will explore the possibilities of sponsorship to enhance the fundraising success. We must be more commercial in our approach, and more confident in our ability to ask for money.

ACTION 1

We will produce an annual programme of fundraising events, the first to run immediately on from the end of the Tower Stories in the Summer of 2025 (see below); with the aim of advertising in June and commencing in September.

Action 2

The 2025/6 Annual programme of events AND planned fundraising activities will be an explicit transition from the end of the Tower Stories Project (June 2025) and develop the potential fundraising opportunities of Jane Borodale’s work, Richard Nye’s Anthem, Steve Hawkins’ photographs, The Star of Bethlehem, and the Solstice installation.

Action 3

We will create a standardised method for organising events;

Each event will have a budget pre-agreed by the committee, a marketing and

communication strategy, and will incorporate appropriate membership benefits and utilise an efficient and cost-effective ticketing system. Sponsorship possibilities will be explored.

4. COMPLIANCE

Action 1

We will urgently implement relevant and appropriate safeguarding policy and training scheme.

Action 2

We will urgently consider and decide whether the Friends Constitution needs to be (or can be) amended to allow trading to take place permanently as part of its fundraising activities. If so, we will take all necessary steps to achieve this.

Action 3

We will urgently review and apply Charity Commission Guidance on internal financial controls

5. GOVERNANCE

Action 1.

We will identify each year what Committee members need to be recruited to fulfil the offices, and what particular expertise is required.

Action 2

We will work to identify and encourage potential new and successor Committee members and other people who may be interested in helping the Friends' activities (including possible co-option to the committee where appropriate and desirable).

6. OTHER PRIORITIES/IMPROVEMENTS

Action 1

We will acquire a 'Sum Up' terminal or similar for donations or payments at events

Action 2

We will research whether the Friends should acquire an alcohol licence for future events, and if appropriate, identify and promote the training of a licensee.

Adopted February 2025