

Updated April 2026

ASK Friends

(Friends of **All Saints Church, Kenton**)

Patrons: The Earl and Countess of Devon



Photo: Hugh Scudder

*"Don't it always seem to go; you don't
know what you've got till it's gone"*

Joni Mitchell

Who are ASK Friends?

All Saints Kenton Friends (ASK Friends) is a community organisation which formed in September 2020 to support the conservation, maintenance, and improvement of the fabric and fittings of All Saints Church.

The Background

Kenton church was closed to the public in October 2019 due to fallen plaster from the south aisle ceiling. The north aisle ceiling also had cracks which needed repairing to make the church safe at a cost of around £50,000. At that time, there were insufficient funds to repair and re-open the church.

A village meeting was held about the future of the church, and ASK Friends was formed. The community made significant donations to enable repairs both to the South and North aisle ceilings and roof. The church re-opened for Easter Sunday 2021.

The Two Aspects to the Life of the Church

- 1) The spiritual life of the church is led by the Rev. Julia Hocking who was appointed Curate to Kenton in September 2023. She assists Reverend Vanessa Petridge who is based in Exminster. The congregation is small.
- 2) The building itself: the church is a large grade 1 listed building which requires a huge amount of money to maintain.

Who pays for the building maintenance?

The church building is owned by the C of E, but the maintenance of the building is the responsibility of the PCC (Parochial Church Council) who are considered stewards. To merit a resident minister, the congregation of Kenton has to contribute to the diocese "Common Fund" – around £14,000 annually, plus major costs for insurance and energy.

When ASK Friends formed in 2020, the financial burden had become too great for the small congregation and there was a real risk that without support, the church would fall into disrepair and close for ever. During Covid 19, the situation became compounded as the church was unable to hold services or fundraise.

Why was ASK Friends Formed?

In September 2020, ASK Friends was formed to spearhead a campaign to save the church. Many people in Kenton care deeply about the church building which has stood for centuries at the very heart of our village. Of great architectural interest and visited by people from all over the world, it represents our heritage. Regardless of religious belief, we need to preserve it for generations to come. ASK Friends is not a religious group.

Who are the trustees?

The three trustees are a mixture of people of faith, no faith and those in between. We share a love of the building and its place in our local community: Robert Rand (Chair), Julia Cox (Treasurer) and David Guthrie.

What is ASK Friends Trying to Do?

Initially, our aim was to support the PCC to raise funds to repair the building so that the church could reopen. We are now working with the PCC to prioritise the maintenance work for the church building. We would also like to develop it as a community space for a whole variety of activities and events, in addition to Sunday worship.

Can Anyone Join Ask Friends?

We want as many people in the village as possible to get involved - please join us! We now have charity (CIO) status which means that Gift Aid can be claimed on donations. Fill in the form at the end of this leaflet or join via our website. £5.00 (individual) or £10 (household) per year, payable in May.

How Will We Raise the Money?

One of our sources of funding will be through grant applications. However, money is also raised through various fundraising activities within the church (eg quizzes, art talks, concerts) and we will of course welcome donations, no matter how small.

How Can You Help?

There will be many ways to get involved: become an ASK Friend, raise awareness, fundraise, help the churchyard team, donate, tell us your ideas...

Members receive regular bulletins about what we are doing. We want this to be something with which the whole village can get involved.

Contact Us

email: askfriendsgroupkenton@gmail.com Website: www.askfriends.org.uk

Like us on Facebook: ASK Friends Group, Kenton / Follow us on Twitter @ASK FriendsGroup

Registered Charity number: 1203305

Membership Form ASK Friends

Please deliver/post this form with cash/cheque (£5 individual/£10 household) to ASK Friends, 9 St Annes, Kenton, Exeter, Devon EX6 8LJ or pay online: ASK FRIENDS (Business Acct) Sort Code 30-98-97 Acct No 68019662

Name: _____

Address: _____

Postcode: _____ Email: _____

Telephone _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

GIFT AID DECLARATION - Boost your donation by 25p of Gift Aid for every £1 you donate for past, present & future donations In order to Gift Aid your donation you must tick the box below: I am a UK taxpayer and understand that if I pay less Income Tax and/or Capital Gains Tax than the amount of Gift Aid claimed on all my donations in that tax year it is my responsibility to pay any difference.

I want to Gift Aid this donation and any donations I make in the future or have made in the past 4 years to: ASK Friends.

Please notify ASK Friends if you: want to cancel this declaration change your name or home address no longer pay sufficient tax on your income and/or capital gains. If you pay Income Tax at the higher or additional rate and want to receive the additional tax relief due to you, you must include all your Gift Aid donations on your Self Assessment tax return or ask HM Revenue and Customs to adjust your tax code. Gift Aid is reclaimed by the charity from the tax you pay for the current tax year. Your address is needed to identify you as a current UK taxpayer.