

Friends of St Michael and St Wulfad's Churchyard, Stone (CIO 1213874)

The First Annual Report - for the AGM on 6/8/2026

Background

The Friends of St Michael and St Wulfad's Churchyard, Stone CIO – No. 1213874 - is abbreviated here as '*The Churchyard CIO*'. It originated in concern about decay at the historic centre of our town. This included vandalism, drug trading and abuse, alcohol parties, child safeguarding worries, broken glass, littering, damage caused by excess grass car parking, and a progressive decay of heritage assets in the churchyard. Many of these issues were long term but worsening. The team at St Michael's Church, without a Rector, was fully occupied keeping the church functioning. Stafford Borough Council, with responsibility for the closed churchyard, had been unable to stop the drift. Volunteers whether individual or in teams were making valiant efforts (eg. litter picking). The churchyard, instead of appearing to visitors as a loved part of our town, was looking tired and at times threatening.

The Churchyard CIO

The repair of the Jervis Mausoleum has the potential to become a dramatic pointer towards a better churchyard. The Churchyard CIO was formed on 25th June 2025. The Constitution's Purposes are-

- (1) To preserve and maintain for the public benefit the mausoleum of Admiral John Jervis (Earl of St Vincent), and the historic churchyard of St Michael & St Wulfad's Church, Stone in which it is situated, together with art and monuments elsewhere in Stone that are connected to preserving the legacy of Admiral John Jervis for future generations.*
- (2) To advance the education of the public in the significance of Admiral John Jervis (Earl of St Vincent) nationally, by such means as the trustees shall from time to time determine.*

The Jervis Mausoleum Project

The Jervis Mausoleum was the initial focus for the *Churchyard CIO* whose trustees are Tim Gillow, Paul Evans, Philip Leason (founding Trustees), and the Revd Robert Icke (*ex officio* as Rector).

Mausoleum Decay

The assessment is that the stonework decay is largely due to water. Replacement of the roof and drainage at the footings are the priorities.

Mausoleum Ownership

Understanding ownership and securing agreement for the repair of the mausoleum was anticipated as a stumbling block. Ownership had become the default explanation for inertia. Stafford Borough Council was clear that it would neither lead the repair nor seek enforcement. The church had other priorities. Branches of the Jervis family were contacted in conversations, meetings and correspondence.

The pragmatic precedent from 1972 when the church led the repair has been useful.

Appeal Launch (9/10/2025)

The Admiral John Jervis appeal was launched with a lecture from Admiral Sir Trevor Soar KCB OBE DL on *Nelson & Jervis*. The TS Talent Sea Cadets played a prominent role in the event. The sell out evening at Crown Wharf Theatre had a waiting list for returns. The launch was useful for public engagement, acceptance of the role of the Churchyard CIO, and gaining wider understanding of the irreversible progressive decay of the mausoleum. Commercial sponsorship helped raise the profile of the Appeal.

Mausoleum Permissions and Repairs

Faculty is near complete for -

- (i) new roof in terne coat stainless steel
- (ii) dry drain and Breedon gravel around mausoleum
- (iii) wrought iron pivot window
- (iv) door security.

Mr Mark Parsons, recently retired conservation architect, acted *pro bono DG*.

Fundraising

Repair costs estimated at £80,000. A stepwise approach to repairs will be taken with roof first, then groundworks and door lock. If there are sufficient funds the window will be replaced.

The Churchyard CIO holds the funds through the Community Foundation. The current balance is £45,505.62. There is £15,000 outstanding from Stafford Borough Council. There is a Stage 2 application to The Pilgrim Trust which has a high chance for success.

Other Churchyard CIO Activities

Church Street Pillars

The pillars were misaligned. One of the pineapple finials was kept in the church flower room for over twenty years. After a request to Stafford Borough Council repairs were made.

Churchyard Parking

Excessive parking and using the churchyard as a short cut between Church Street and Lichfield Street has caused winter graveyard damage. Stafford BC has agreed to erect a removable cast iron bollard in the Church Street gateway as a starting point for reducing car nuisance.

Consultation is underway with the Highway Authority (SCC). St Michael's PCC has approved.

Church and Churchyard Leaflets

The church heritage leaflet has been updated to include the present day. Colour photos used.

The leaflet will be office printed until it has been fully tested.

Philip Leason is publishing articles in the Stone and Eccleshall Gazette on the churchyard.

St Wulfad's Fete

The fete on 25th July celebrates the churchyard. *Project for Stone Schools (P4SS)* will be publicised. Supporters will be recruited. Photographs are useful for funding applications.

Churchyard Visits

During the year there have been visits by several groups,

Navy Links

Links have been built with Admiral Sir Trevor Soar, Commander Bagot-Jewitt DL of the Sea Cadets, The Royal Naval Dockyard Museum at Chatham, HMS Collingwood, St Vincent Naval Association, and TS Talent Sea Cadets. There has also been contact with the Royal Marines.

Project for Stone Schools (P4SS)

The Churchyard CIO and St Michael's Church have formed a partnership for the *Project for Stone Schools (P4SS)*. The high-level aim is that every young person in Stone should visit the churchyard and church at least once in their school career. The partnership will create a schools room together with national curriculum coursework.

History Bites

From September P4SS is launching History Bites. This monthly Saturday meeting will be open to all. There will be a fifteen-minute talk followed by break out / questions / snack bites, etc. It is hoped that, with safeguarding in place, some talks can be given by senior pupils.

Heritage Lottery Fund Bid

P4SS is preparing a Heritage Lottery Fund bid to complete the Mausoleum Repair, for the schools room and national curriculum packages. Four pillars – Heritage, Community, Environment, Sustainability.

Churchyard CIO Future Aims 2027

Celebration

The completion of the Jervis Mausoleum repair will be celebrated on the weekend of 11/12 September 2027 for the anniversary of the Battle of Quebec where Captain John Jervis played a distinguished role.

Participation.

The Churchyard CIO will recruit Friends. We need experts (eg. website, digital comms, appeal, surveyor, handyman, teaching, historian, trees, nature, cook, etc) as well as enthusiastic amateurs – both are needed in our second year.

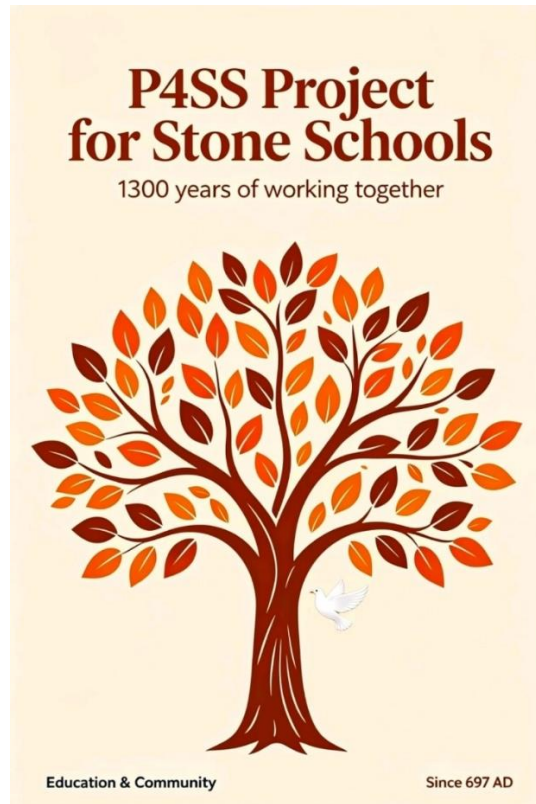
Recording

Map and record the churchyard (memorials, trees, nature, infrastructure and heritage).

<https://www.caringforgodsacre.org.uk/>

Heritage Plan

Informed planning follows recording. The Heritage Plan will be created in collaboration with Stafford Borough Council, the church, and other stakeholders. A successfully executed heritage plan could mark the completion of the work of this Churchyard CIO.



Friends of St Michael and St Wulfad's Churchyard, Stone (CIO 1213874)

Trustees Annual Accounts Report 2025-2026

The Friends of St Michael and St Wulfad's Churchyard, Stone (CIO 1213874) is abbreviated here as the Churchyard CIO which was set up on 25th June 2025. The Trustees Report to the Charity Commission should be made within 10 months of the end of the year - ie. before April 2027.

Expenditure

The Churchyard CIO has undertaken fundraising. Ticket money from the Crown Wharf Admiral Soar Lecture was paid net of expenses. The donation from Brampton Medical covered the cost of brochure printing. The Churchyard CIO has incurred no other expenses (zero).

Donations / Income

As of 24th June 2026 donations of £45,505.62 had been received.
In addition, £15,000 has been pledged by Stafford Borough Council.

Statement for Accounts

The Churchyard CIO does not hold a bank account. No cash is held on behalf of the Churchyard CIO. All funds are held by the Community Foundation for Staffordshire and Shropshire (1091628) in a managed fund. Where practical Gift Aid has been claimed.

The advice from the accountant at the Community Foundation is
'include it in a trustees report to show momentum, but it shouldn't be declared as income in the figures as it will be in ours as a managed fund'.

It is expected that these funds will be spent in 2026-27 on the Mausoleum Repair and associated Churchyard CIO Purposes in liaison with the church and the secured faculty permission.

14th July 2026