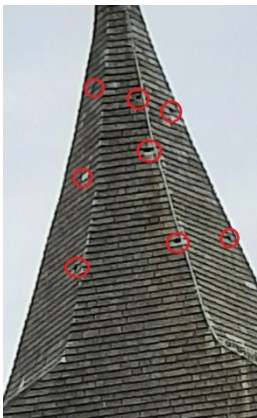


St Martin's Spire

Those of you who were in Church on Easter Sunday saw a presentation about the Spire. For those who weren't, please read on.

As many of you know, St Martin's Church was built in the 12th Century. The tower and spire were added around 100 years later so the spire, in particular, has been a feature of our village for around 800 years and remains a landmark that can be seen for miles.



The construction of the spire is such that there is an internal wooden framework that supports wooden planks which, in turn carry the wooden shingles that we see from the outside. In normal circumstances the wooden shingles have a limited lifespan of, perhaps, 50 years. Unfortunately the current shingles have had their lives shortened by the local parakeets, which have made a number of holes in the shingles. You'll see from the picture that there are quite a number of holes, and that is just looking from one side. Those holes mean that the roof is no longer watertight

Looking up inside the spire you'd expect to see only darkness, but the holes are such that there's quite a lot of light inside. Already we are seeing accumulation of 'bird waste' which is not desirable. The ingress of water and, possibly, vermin has created a situation where remedial action is essential to protect the structural integrity of the spire.



A specialist Architect has been appointed to develop a scheme of works to repair the spire. This will involve both erecting scaffolding around the tower and spire and employing specialised builders. While the specialist builders are on site and the scaffolding is there, some incidental stonework repairs will be undertaken. Given the need to firm up the architect's scheme of works, obtain estimates and the permissions needed to undertake work on a listed building we are hoping to undertake the work in 2024.

At this stage we don't have a firm estimate of cost, but the best current guesstimate is around £150k, including some contingency. We shall, of course, need to fundraise for this, but that will be the subject of a later article!

Steve McCann
St Martin's Church