



Friends of St Leonards
PRESERVING OUR CHURCH FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS

Membership Details

and application form



Can you imagine Flamstead without St Leonard's?

St Leonard's is our parish church. It is at the heart of village life, serving the whole community. After 900 years it is under threat, needing immediate work to repair stonework and to prevent damp destroying important mediaeval wall paintings.

Join the Friends now to protect our heritage

The Friends of St Leonard's are dedicated to preserving and maintaining the fabric of the ancient Grade I listed building and its surroundings.

Without your help, St Leonard's will not survive

If you want your children and grand-children to benefit from living in a traditional village, please support our work by becoming a Friend yourself.



What we do: *why the friends are needed*

The Friends of St Leonard's Flamstead is a charitable trust dedicated to preserving and maintaining the fabric of the ancient Grade I listed church that has stood at the heart of the village for nearly 900 years.

Such an old building requires frequent attention just to keep it weather-proof. Much of the historic fabric is crumbling and needs restoring by specialist craftsmen.



A close-up of a clerestory window on the South side showing behind the glass reinforced plastic facade.

Our immediate goal is to raise £200,000 to complete the restoration of the clerestory windows and their surrounding walls. Damp has penetrated over the years and threatens the important 13th and 15th century wall paintings below. These paintings can only be restored when the damp has been eliminated.

£200,000 is a very large sum for a small community to raise, particularly as it coincides with a downturn in the economy and a drying up of funds available from grant-making bodies.



A rare and important mediaeval wall painting, threatened by the damp coming through the windows.

Many other parts of the church also need restoration. The sacristy, adjoining the chancel, has badly eroded stonework and rotted woodwork. The exterior stonework of many of the windows on the north side is badly eroded.

Much of the internal stonework is crumbling and affected by damp, particularly at the west end.

By joining the Friends and supporting us, you will help to ensure that St Leonard's and its churchyard survives for the benefit of future generations.



The stonework on many of the aisle windows is also badly eroded.

Become a friend: *the benefits of membership*

Our aim as the Friends of St Leonard's is to preserve the church building and its surroundings, not just for the benefit of church goers but for the whole community. Other organizations are responsible for the day to day running of church activities.

Friends are welcome from all religions or none, to share a respect for tradition, architecture, and contemporary village life.



The Friends raise funds in a number of ways:

- the annual membership subscription
- fundraising events
- individual donations and bequests.

The Friends were founded in 1995 and have supported restoration projects such as the restoration of the tower and the overhaul of the roof. Since 2004 we have raised £140,000.



How to Join

To become a friend, cut off and complete the membership application form and send it to the Treasurer, whose address and phone number are shown on the form.

Benefits of Membership

By joining the Friends you will play an important part in the preservation of our church and its churchyard .

You will also have the opportunity to participate in many of the social and fundraising events we hold.

St Leonard's adds character and atmosphere to our village. It is a great treasure and, for many, the biggest single factor making Flamstead such a desirable place to live, enriching our lives in many different ways.



Did you know? *10 facts about the church and its churchyard*

1. St Leonard's church is nearly 900 years old.
2. The building of the current church started in 1120 with a tower and chancel, but these were in fact additions to an earlier Saxon chapel built around 825.
3. The current structure dates from many different periods with a variety of architectural styles: a Norman tower, 14th century chancel, windows in several different styles, and a 15th century nave roof.
4. The church is dedicated to the 6th century St Leonard of Noblac, who became a hermit in Limoges Forest.
5. It is claimed the people wanted the church dedicated to Christina of Markyate, who was hidden in Flamstead for two years from 1115. However, she was never canonized, so instead it was dedicated to the Saint whose feast day fell on her birthday.
6. According to Pevsner's Buildings of England, the wall paintings are the most important in the county apart from those in St Albans Cathedral.
7. Many wall paintings were uncovered in 1930, but some not until 1973/4 and one as recently as 1990. They include a Christ in Majesty seated upon a rainbow (1350), the Apostles (C13), and six figures: with three skeletons representing the dead mocking the three representing the living (C15).
8. The tower contains a clock chamber with a peal of six bells, five are inscribed "Thomas Chandler made me in 1664", the sixth is dated 1729. They have been described as "the sweetest peal in Hertfordshire".
9. The large churchyard is a haven for wildlife and supports many different trees and other plants.
10. The church and its churchyard provide a year round peaceful haven for villagers and visitors alike. Part of the churchyard acts as the centre of the Flamstead Scarecrow Festival, attracting thousands of visitors each year.

**Help keep the heart of
Flamstead alive**

*The village has looked after its church
for nearly 900 years – let's make sure
our generation continues that tradition.*