

THE FRIENDS OF PERSHORE ABBEY



A LETTER FROM THE CHAIRMAN

Dear Friend of Pershore Abbey

The Abbey Needs Your Help!

Many Friends, who live locally, will be aware of the partial collapse of the St John's Chapel - just look at the crack (right). Please take a moment to review the situation and read the comments of the architect and the mayor, below.

An unusually dry summer and the inevitable march of time have seen the North East corner of the building, and in particular the St John Chapel, threatened with collapse. There has been a severe movement of the foundations and there is now large crack right through the height and thickness of the wall.

Urgent action has been taken and much time and effort has gone into finding a long term solution. The stone vaulted ceiling, which is in danger of collapse, is now supported by scaffolding. Two of the historic glass windows have been removed to prevent serious damage to them.

The Churchwardens have taken professional advice, and have met the appropriate Church and heritage bodies to agree the repair programme, which will have to include under-pinning of the walls. Such measures are only considered in extreme situations, and this is one of those situations. The advice of the experts is that the repairs must take place before this coming summer. The final cost is likely to exceed £100,000. Whilst we cannot guarantee that this will be the last problem we have it is certainly the most significant the Abbey seen for many years.



The Friends Committee has agreed that we, as Friends, will “underwrite” the cost to enable the work to go ahead urgently. *However, additional funding is essential to avoid making a serious hole in our reserves.* Pershore Abbey has been a place of worship and major landmark in the town for many hundreds of years. It has seen many changes and faced many challenges. It was partly demolished in the 16th Century and what remains was saved by local people who recognised its worth as a living building. Today the Abbey still stands as a magnificent reminder of man's skills

in creating a wonderful work of architecture and a working Parish church. It is still, after 700 years, an active place of worship and community service for the present generation. However, its future is threatened once again.

The Abbey members are playing their part by developing a plan to involve the wider community in the future of the Abbey. The aim is to align the Abbey more closely with the needs of the wider community, and thereby develop new funding streams. This letter is part of the approach to the wider community.

- There is an urgent need for your help. Please help us as much as you can.
- Would you make a donation?... Gift Aided if possible, a form is attached
- Can you invite just one friend or colleague to become a member? It costs just £15pa (£50 for a business) sent to PO Box 46, Pershore WR10 1YN.
- Would you organise and run a fund raising event?
- Are you connected with Charities or do you know of Charities which might be able to help us? Please let me know - my email address is below or PO Box above!
- Personality Lunch - These lunches, organised by Chris Hordern, have proved very popular to bring Friends together and as a pleasant Fundraising opportunity. The next one takes place on 13th June. Do join us! An application form is attached.

With my warmest thanks for your interest and support

David Williams-Thomas

David Williams-Thomas d.williams_thomas@btinternet.com

PS: The Abbey AGM -This will be held in St Andrews on Thursday April 26th at 7.30 pm. All Friends are welcome.

**A Message from
the Mayor of
Pershore,
Cllr John
Grantham**

"As Mayor of Pershore I am happy to commend this

approach by the Chairman of the Friends, asking for your help. The Abbey is the landmark, and **the most important single building in the town**. The town skyline is the Abbey. Without the Abbey, as a historic building and as a community asset, the town would be much the poorer. The Abbey is badly threatened by subsidence, & I join with David to encourage you to help however you can"



**A Message from the Diocesan
Architect, Robert Kilgour**

"I have been the Architect to Pershore Abbey since October 2005, and although we have had in that time, & will no doubt continue to have, major items of repair to deal with, **this is the largest and most threatening to the structure of the Abbey which has occurred in my time**.

Indeed it is the single largest cause of concern since the repair works undertaken by Sir George Gilbert Scott from 1862-5.

The St John Chapel has suffered cracking in the past, and repairs have been made, but I have needed to advise, in association with Clive Haywood Structural Engineer, in this present case that more substantial work should be done to secure the future. Underpinning is very expensive, and although one can never be sure as to how an ancient building will behave, it should provide a more long term solution. I do endorse David's appeal to you for whatever help you may be able to give."

