

St Catherine's Ringshall
Parochial Church Council

Lacey Luther
Ringshall Parish Council
Broad View Farm
Lower Farm Road
Ringshall
IP14 2JF

Tigh Beag
Lower Farm Road
Ringshall
Nr Stowmarket
Suffolk
IP14 2JE

5 December 2022

Dear Lacey,

St Catherine's Church, Ringshall

Thank you for your letter of 30 November 2022. I appreciate your including the copy of the relevant legislation.

It is disappointing that the Parish Council feels unable to grant us the £600, but I acknowledge that it must be guided and bound by legislation.

From a purely emotive point of view and as a resident of the village, it disturbs me that a body such as the Parish Council, which exists only for the purpose of looking after the welfare of the village, appears to not have concern for the continued existence of the most important building in the village. I accept that religion is not supported by the majority of the population, but I think the church's existence would be supported by the vast majority. It cannot be denied that nearly 1,000 years of history and the country's heritage is contained within that building and its demise would be a very sad loss.

But from a practical point of view, I note that the NALC guidance suggests there is no consensus on this issue and accepts that there can be discretion. I realise that responsibility for such discretion would fall on members of the Council, but I would ask what would be the real consequence of making the grant, measured alongside the church's importance and in its facilitation of the major events in villagers' lives. It is also the location of many War Graves.

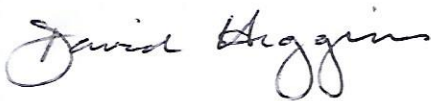
Admittedly, £600 is not a make or break figure, but the majority of the church's outgoings are of a legal requirement and not discretionary. Within the current financial climate, we are likely to struggle. But so be it.

As a possible solution to this difficulty, we do have a small "Fabric Fund" designed as a rainy day safety net to cover fabric emergencies. This money can only be legally used for this purpose. Would the Council be prepared to make a donation to this Fund? I would be prepared to make a separate declaration that the donation would only be used for that purpose and to notify the Council when and how so used.

Our bank account details are -

Barclays, Sort No.20-82-75, Account No. 10750476

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "David Higgins". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'D' and a long, sweeping tail.

David Higgins
Treasurer
Ringshall Parochial Church Council