

## 2024 Report from the Heritage Team by Peter Batey - Team Chairman

The Heritage Team organised a full programme of events in 2024, helping to celebrate the Church's 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary. Key features of this programme were a talk on the origins of Blundellsands in **March**, highlighting the role played over the years by St Nicholas' in serving the local community. In **May** the Team was pleased to welcome Leicester-based World War 1 military historian Peter Cousins whose presentation focused on the Christmas truce of 1914. His talks have become a regular feature in the heritage calendar and have proved extremely popular among local audiences. In **July** the Team hosted a presentation by the Crosby branch of the Royal Naval Association. The RNA adopted St. Nicholas' as its Church partner some time ago and it was fascinating to hear them speak about the naval history of Malta in World War 2.

In **September** the Team participated in the Heritage Open Days, a national initiative that provides an opportunity for the general public to view buildings that would normally not be accessible to them. Over two weekends, St. Nicholas' offered guided tours covering the main heritage features, as well as talks on architectural heritage and social history of Blundellsands and Brighton-le-Sands. An added attraction was an exhibition of the history St Nicholas' Primary School and its long-standing connections with the Church. St. Nicholas' has been a keen supporter of Heritage Open Days for many years and has welcomed the opportunity to develop productive links with other heritage groups in the area.

**Group tours** of the Church building have proved increasingly popular, and a more efficient way of using Team members' time. Pre-Covid, the Team had ambitious plans to open the Church at set times during the week but more recently this has proved difficult as volunteer guides have been harder to recruit and retain.

The Heritage Team itself always welcomes new members. The 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Church building has shown that we have much to be proud of. Attendance at heritage events has been extremely gratifying and augurs well for the future.