

Wardle Society
200 Wardle Road
Wardle
Rochdale
OL12 9JB

10th September 2009

Dear Sir

St James' Graveyard

In reply to ex local resident Brian Taylor's letter in the Observer of the 9/9/2009, I would to point out that residents, Wardle Society and local Councillors have all been concerned about the issue of the Church and churchyard for many years. When the church was made redundant about 12 years ago there were meetings and leaflets distributed about what to do with a building which is in a very prominent part of the conservation area. There were suggestions that it should be demolished completely, demolished but the spire kept or sold for development as housing, this last was eventually decided on and the building was duly sold after a few years.

There followed years of problems such as the developer going bankrupt and the whole situation having to be started again, eventually someone was found who completed the development. In the meanwhile there was disagreement as to who was responsible for the churchyards upkeep, Wardle Society has been involved in trying to get this sorted out as you rightly say it has caused distress to those who have family graves there. The church thought the developers were responsible, they thought as it was a graveyard still in use that it was the local churches. Currently one of our local Councillors Ashley Dearnley has held meetings with those who may be able to clear it soon. However our concerns are that we will be faced with exactly the same situation next year and would like to see the situation resolved as to whose the responsibility it is for maintenance in the foreseeable future.

Yours sincerely

Jane Rickards
Chair Wardle Society