



Friends of St Nicholas Chapel, from left: Roger Edwards, Muriel Brindle, Bryan Howling, Brian Chase, Adrian Parker and Kate Parker show some of the roof wood that has been replaced

Picture: ADAM FAIRBROTHER MLNF11AF10276 www.photostoday.co.uk To order, please call 01553 817335

Repairs have church supporters beaming

CONSERVATION work has begun on Lynn's St Nicholas' Chapel with the vital replacement of a centre roof beam.

Secretary of the Friends of St Nicholas' Chapel, Adrian Parker, said: "This particular beam is something we had been concerned about for several years.

"It could be found above the organ and several times we could see bits of wood and dust falling from there."

The beam was inspected by the Church's Conservation Trust who found that the quality of the wood was less than satisfactory.

At this point, the expected

minor repairs quickly escalated into a major rescue when it was found to be an earlier repair that had failed.

The Trust found that it had been affected by water over the years which had left it full of holes.

Mr Parker added: "It looked remarkably like a bath sponge which worried the trust enough to immediately support it with double the amount of scaffolding."

The rafter was made up of around 10 feet of timber

which could only be replaced by a similar quality wood to match the other original beams.

After months of searching for the perfect replacement wood, a 12-year-old piece of dried oak was found.

It was sent quickly to be sawed, carved and shaped by the team at Baker's of Danbury before being settled back into place in the Chapel.

Pressing deadlines for the College of West Anglia graduation meant a lot of hard work and overtime for the craftsmen, who made sure that the work was completed in time.

Mr Parker said: "This work has been an indicator for us

of how much restoration has yet to be done on our roof. We've been fending off leaks for years and it's clear that a very big job looms ahead."

Plans are currently in hand for further repairs on the church.

It is hoped that next year work can begin on the toilets, heating and roof.

Friends of St Nicholas Chapel and the Church Conservation Trust are in the early stages of applying for a grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund.

Mr Parker said: "It's a very exciting time for us to be seeing and helping the church as it moves into the next stage of its life."

by **LUCY RUTHNUM**