

Ex-PM May says country 'will get through' Brexit at church

Erin
Lyons

elyons@nqo.com

THERESA May has confidently predicted the country will 'get through' Brexit on a visit to the Oxfordshire church where her dad served as vicar during her childhood.

The former Prime Minister was speaking on Saturday at a community day organised by St Mary the Virgin Church in Wheatley to launch an appeal to raise £600,000 for a major refurbishment of the 162-year-old building.

Mrs May, who attended the event with her husband Philip and is a patron of the church, shared memories of her time in the village and of her father Revd Hubert Brasier's role in the community.

She recalled how her mother had once been looking for a pie dish to make lunch only to discover her husband had used it in one of his lively sermons. Mrs May, who was also married at St Mary's in 1980, added: "It is great to see this project doing so well because if you think about it in times past the church has been the centre of village communities."

She also revealed her father had been keen for his young daughter not to be actively seen to be promoting political views as he was 'the vicar for everyone' but Mrs May added: "I think I've made up for it since."

The Conservative MP for Maidenhead, who was replaced by Boris Johnson as leader of her party in July after failing to get her Brexit deal with the EU through Parliament, was unable to escape the issue on her visit.



Theresa May with Revd Nigel Hawkes at St Mary's Church in Wheatley, and, below, Mrs May addresses the congregation. Pictures: Ed

CONNECTION: MP is patron of St Mary the Virgin Church where her dad was vicar during her childhood

Jean Gould, 86, said she was a 'staunch supporter' of Mrs May and, as she shook hands with the MP, lamented the 'stupid men' who had voted against the Withdrawal Agreement three times.

Mrs May smiled and commented only: "We'll get through. We'll still get through it."

Mrs Gould, who has lived in Wheatley since the 1960s, said she remembered her mother being impressed with Mrs May's mother Zai-dee when they met and that she had followed the political career of Theresa May for years.

Revd Nigel Hawkes said Mrs May had been 'very generous with her time' and that the church had used her attendance as a way to showcase to as many people as possible what they had planned.

He said since the church started fundraising earlier this month they had already raised around £150,000, with another £25,000 raised at the Saturday event. Improvements are set to include underfloor heating, better lighting and a community meeting room. To see the plans or to donate visit revivalatstmarys.org.

