



## Parish of St James' Wetherby and Linton Annual Report 2021

### A Message from Brendan

As these are different times, and it has not been that long since our last Annual Parochial Church Meeting (19 November 2020), this report is a bit different, and rather shorter than usual.

COVID-19 lockdowns and restrictions have altered much of what we have been able to do as a church, but not why we do it. We are here to share with our community, and indeed the whole world, the life-changing love of God in Jesus Christ. This is what St James' has been attempting to continue to do.

### Worship

For four of the six months since our last Annual Meeting we have not held in-person worship in church. During the November lockdown public worship was not permitted. In the January - March period, in common with most other churches, we judged our safest and most responsible course of action regrettably was to suspend public worship. During these times worship, thanks to the fantastic work of our tech team, has been held online. We usually gather 50-60 households who watch live and over the week collect 350-400 views of the service.

It was, of course, so good to be able to worship together in church during December and Christmas. As I write, we are preparing for our return on Easter Day. Nothing can replace physically meeting together as God's people. Even though social-distancing restricts what we can do, it is still good being together. We owe a debt of thanks to Jean Heaton and Bob Greene, our Churchwardens, and to Steve Taylor our Health and Safety Officer, for all their work in helping us to gather as safely as we can.

Music is such an important part of worship. We have acutely felt the pain of not been able to sing in church together. Our musicians have responded valiantly, and are to be thanked for doing so. I am grateful to Michael Payne, our Director of Music, who is working out how best we can worship musically.

### Digital Mission

Thanks to the incredible generosity of many people we have been able to invest significantly in equipment to enable us to reach people beyond our doors with the Good News of Jesus. Without this investment we would not have been able to broadcast worship from church. During this time, we have been brilliantly served by Ed Taylor and James Cresswell who have meticulously and tirelessly steered us through this technical labyrinth. This is a very significant development in the mission of St James'.

### Groups

Some groups have been unable to meet, others have been able to meet on Zoom. The Book Group, house groups, and Lent groups have met. The leaders of these groups are now much more familiar with the intricacies of Zoom than they ever felt they would be. Well done everyone. Jesus' model of teaching was to gather groups to learn together. Such meeting is the context where we learn from one another what it means to follow Jesus.

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## Prayer

It has been great that during all this time the work of the church has been supported by the beating heart of prayer. Again, on Zoom, each weekday at 9.00am Morning Prayer is prayed, and then at 6.00pm we have been joining together in the Archbishops' call to pray for our nation. I am grateful to the Reverend Janet Cox for diligently hosting this each day.

The church has been open for individual private prayer during all this time. This has been hugely valued by people as they have found the church building to be a place of meeting with God. Our thanks are due to all our welcomers who make this happen.

## Pastoral Care

During these months the pastoral care of the church has continued in quiet and in quite remarkable ways. A team of people has been keeping in touch with 60 people via the telephone. Christmas gift bags and Lent Resources have been distributed, and the distribution of Easter gifts is planned. Such care is truly inspirational. I thank Lorna Taylor, Val Lumsden and their team for this fantastic effort.

## Conclusion

I wanted to keep this brief. It has been difficult for me to do so. There is much more I could have, and would have liked, to say. I hope you get the picture that the church has not been closed. Far from it, thanks be to God, the church is alive and active.

Thank you for your support.

I hope that you can join us for our Annual Meetings 7.30pm Thursday 29 April on Zoom.

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87993007646?pwd=MGVRWDhEMlprQIBua09adldoZ2RiUT09>

Meeting ID: 879 9300 7646 Passcode: 318528

*The Reverend Canon Brendan Giblin  
Priest in Charge*

## OUR ONGOING PRAYER

God of Mission,  
Who alone brings growth to your Church,  
Send your Holy Spirit to give vision to our planning,  
Wisdom to our planning, wisdom to our actions,  
and power to our witness.  
Help St James' Church to grow in numbers,  
in spiritual commitment to you,  
and in service to our local community,  
through Jesus Christ our Lord.  
Amen

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## PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL MEMBERSHIP 2020/21

<b>Clergy:</b>	Rev Brendan Giblin (Chair of PCC, Standing Committee)	3/3
<b>Churchwardens:</b>	Jean Heaton** (Vice Chair of PCC, Joint Chair of Finance and Chair Communications Committee)	3/3
	Bob Greene (Joint Chair of Finance and Chair Joint Personnel)	3/3
<b>Readers</b>	Lorna Taylor	3/3
	David York (Chair of Worship Committee)	3/3
<b>Deanery Lay Representatives:</b>	Elaine Hainsworth (Deputy Churchwarden)	3/3
	Val Lumsden	3/3
	Robert Haskins	3/3
	Rosie Rooke	3/3
<b>Diocesan Lay Representative:</b>	Robert Haskins	3/3
<b>Elected Members:</b>		
• <b>Retiring 2021</b>	Emma Beddoe (Deputy Churchwarden)	2/3
	Lynda Breene	0/3
	Stephanie Kemp*	3/3
	Sheila Mirczuk*	
	Rosie Rooke	3/3
• <b>Retiring 2021</b>	Alan Grimes * (Chair of Property Committee)	3/3
	Helen Harper*	1/3
	Karen Tatham	1/3
	Sue Taylor * (Deputy Churchwarden)	3/3
	Kathryn Wenn	3/3
• <b>Retiring 2022</b>	Jackie Taylor	3/3
	Gina Voller (PCC Secretary)	3/3
	Marilyn Smith* (Safeguarding Officer)	3/3
<b>Co-opted Members:</b>	David Bewell	3/3

### Notes:

Numbers indicate how many meetings were attended out of the possible total.

\*Indicates ineligible for re-election as an elected PCC member under the parish 'six year' rule.

\*\*Indicates ineligible for re-election as a Churchwarden under the Churchwardens Measure.

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## PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL (PCC) REPORT

Since the last APCM in November 2020, the PCC have met 3 times and the Standing committee has also met 3 times. Because of COVID-19 restrictions, it has been difficult for the five sub-committees (Finance, Property, Worship & Nurture, Communications, and Joint Personnel) to meet but where they have, they have reported to the PCC. It is anticipated that as the restrictions ease the committees will re-start. There are currently 13 elected members, one co-opted member, a Diocesan Synod rep, four Deanery Synod reps and two Licensed Lay Readers on the PCC. With Clergy and Churchwardens, we are a group of 22.

As well as dealing with the normal business of St James' concerning finance, buildings, health and safety, we have spent significant time in discussion on the implementation of the COVID-19 rules and complying with the Government restrictions in order to make public worship as safe as possible. Alongside this, we have also reviewed the replacement of our Children's and Young People's and Family Worker.

*Gina Voller, PCC Secretary*

## FINANCIAL REPORT

### **Unrestricted Funds (General and Unrestricted Designated Barleyfields Fund)**

It is stating the obvious but 2020 was a year like no other so it is difficult to compare 2020 with 2019 but the following are the key notable areas:

- Standing Order donations held up well (£68,440 compared to £63,299 in 2019). This increase went part way towards offsetting the following:
- reduction in other voluntary giving (envelopes, cash and general fund donations), £24,497 compared with £38,081 in 2019.
- Additionally, there was a knock-on effect on tax recovered which was down £1,345 in 2020.
- Other areas of starkly reduced income were wedding and funeral fees, £5,311, and
- Church and Crypt lettings £2,355
- Rental income from Barleyfields was down £1,078 compared to 2019 because of a vacant period between tenants.

The above normal activities, in isolation, resulted in reduced income of £18,532 compared with 2019 but the unrestricted fund gross balances actually increased by £9,040 in 2020 due to positive factors and reduced expenditure initiatives.

- PCC received a legacy of £5,000 to the General Fund.
- PCC received £6,640 in Coronavirus Job Retention Grants from the Government.
- Voluntary Reduction in staff working hours, £414
- Church closure resulted in Utility savings of £1,047 and a Local Authority Discretionary Grant of £1,154 was received
- With the prior knowledge, and agreement, of the Diocese £98,790 only was paid in Parish Share compared to £107,152 in 2019; a reduction of £8,362
- Ministry costs £3,778
- Barleyfields spending was up £3,323 due to required refurbishment work.

The above amounts to savings of £10,278 and in addition there is the legacy of £5,000 and grants totalling £7,794 i.e. £23,073

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There are of course, other areas where the restrictions imposed by COVID-19 had reduced activities generating income and costs, but these are individual amounts minor compared to the above.

The General Fund on 31<sup>st</sup> December was £315,267, including the Barleyfields property at £270,000, and £4,372 in the Unrestricted Designated Barleyfields Fund.

## **Worship Support in Wetherby Fund – Restricted Fund**

Excluding grants (see below) donations into the Worship Fund in 2020 totalled £2,958 compared with £2,682 in 2019 which included a legacy of £1,000. Without the Christmas Bazaar and a reduced income from the Sunday Morning Service refreshment other income was down £2,047 on 2019. Excluding non-recurring grants (see below) therefore, other income was down £1,770.

With the Church closed to services for much of the year service and music costs were lower in 2020 by £1,457 excluding salaries.

The biggest cost to Fund is the Musical Directors salary, but this was substantially offset in 2020 by the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme (CJRS) grant of £3,085.

The net result was a deficit in the fund of £641 (2019 -£3,237) leaving a balance of £2,128. While this is low projected income includes a donation of £6,000 and CJRS grants totalling which will continue to end September, albeit at a reducing level.

## **Mission Support in Wetherby Fund – Restricted Fund**

This fund also suffered from the reduced activities because of the COVID 19 restrictions.

However, the fund benefitted from a legacy for £5,000 and £4,098 under CJRS. Salary costs were also substantially down with the Youth Worker resigning in March

The net result was that the fund made a surplus over the year of £3,708 compared with £3,443 in 2019 and as at the 31<sup>st</sup> December stood at £19,675.

## **Audio Visual and Digital Mission Funds – Restricted Funds**

Income into the Audio-Visual Fund suffered from reduced numbers of weddings and funerals. Even so, the fund made a surplus of £55 over the year. As at 31<sup>st</sup> December the fund had a balance of £1,488, made up of a computer valued at £391 and bank £1,097.

With Gift Aid £10,005 was raised for the Digital Mission Fund and although there was spending of £2,076 there is further spending planned for early 2021.

The balance of the Digital Mission Fund on 31<sup>st</sup> December stood at £7,928 which is made up of a computer valued at £1,456 and bank £6,472

## **Electoral Roll Report as at 27<sup>th</sup> April 2021**

<b>27<sup>th</sup> April 2021</b>	234 on Roll	155F	79M	18 outside Parish
<b>2019 APCM</b>	247 on Roll	162F	85M	22 outside Parish

Verbal Report will be given.

*Robert Greene, Joint Chair Finance Committee*

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## REPORT ON THE FABRIC, GOODS AND ORNAMENTS OF ST JAMES' CHURCH

The Property Committee, because of the COVID 19 pandemic only managed one committee meeting during the year with Alan Grimes continuing in the chair.

The Quinquennial Inspection was undertaken in November being brought forward by 12 months due to the retirement of our Inspecting Surveyor

Other work undertaken included:

- All testing of electrical equipment was completed on schedule and annual testing of the tower Lightning Protection System was completed.
- The Church Health and Safety policy, Risk assessment and Fire Risk assessments have all been reviewed and updated.
- Testing of electrical equipment was completed on schedule and annual testing of the tower Lightning Protection System was completed.
- 53 Barleyfields Road. The tenants left after 10 years in residence and a new tenant took up residence in November

As part of the Church of England target of achieving Net Zero Carbon by 2030 St James has applied for funding from the Rural Community Energy Fund (RCEF). This is a government fund supporting rural communities to develop renewable energy projects. The aim being to reduce/eliminate our reliance on carbon producing fossil fuels

*Alan Grimes, Chair Property Committee*

## DIOCESAN SYNOD

With the pandemic, only two Synods were held in 2020, in September and November, both via zoom. The meetings worked better, in my view, than physical assembly. More people attend (no long journeys) and more feel able to express their opinions.

Jonathan Wood is the new Diocesan Secretary – a breath of fresh air.

The Leeds Diocesan Board of Finance has been reconstituted, with all Synod members acting as 'members' of the company. There was a deficit forecast for 2020 of £2m (on a turnover of £20m).

Triennial elections are coming up. The size of the Synod has been reduced from 100 to 70 in both houses (clergy and laity).

Initiatives include 'Wellsprings Together' Rhythm of Life' 'Living in Love and Faith'. And a covenant for the wellbeing of clergy.

I have been appointed to the Diocesan Advisory Committee for the Care of Churches (advising the Chancellor, Archdeacons and parishes on architecture, archaeology, art and history and all changes to buildings), and to its Environmental sub-committee. I am also a member of the Diocesan Patronage Board.

*Robert Haskins, Deanery Synod Representative*



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## DEANERY SYNOD

The Harrogate Deanery Synod representatives were Rev. Brendan Giblin, Elaine Hainsworth, Rosemary Rooke, Robert Haskins and Val Lumsden.

The Deanery Synod exists to further the mission and ministry of the Church and to build relationships between neighbouring parishes. The synod takes decisions about issues involving our deanery and these may then be taken to the diocesan synod if necessary.

**As a result of the Covid 19 Lockdowns there were only two meetings held during the year, both of which were held via Zoom.**

### 1<sup>st</sup> December 2020 - MAIN SPEAKER: Jonathan Wood, Diocesan Secretary/Chief Executive

By way of introduction, Jonathan spoke about having been in post since March, meaning that he was only able to spend 4 days in the diocesan office before the 1<sup>st</sup> lockdown began, and the challenges this had brought. He identified 3 priorities he had focused on since then:

- **Supporting parishes** through the pandemic with the aim of helping ministry to flourish even in these difficult times.
- **Finance** – he spoke of how he had thought a lot of the hard work had been done in putting diocesan finances in order over the last few years, and how the pandemic had changed everything and how it had led to a significant drop in diocesan income and hence a significant deficit was expected for this year. A re-thinking of some priorities had taken place as a result.
- **Diocesan Strategy** – he shared on screen a diagram which outlined the diocesan strategy



- Goal 1: Thriving as a distinctive diocese whose culture is shaped by a shared vision and values .....
- Goal 2: Reimagining ministry .....
- Goal 3: Nurturing lay discipleship.....
- Goal 4: Building leadership pathways .....
- Goal 5: Growing young people as Christians .....

He said an important part of his role was to make the strategy more reality-driven and therefore achievable in the light of the radical shift in circumstances from 2019 when the strategy was drawn up compared to now.

He then invited questions, (abridged questions/answers below)

- Robert Haskins, Wetherby, asked whether or not the diocese was 'top heavy' and if savings could be made. Jonathan replied that the entirety of share payments made by parishes were spent on clergy salaries and housing.
- Rev John Smith commented that it was legitimate as progress on implementing the diocesan strategy had slowed. Jonathan agreed saying 2020 was not the year for planning new things and that hopefully this would now take place in 2021.
- Rev Dr Alan Garrow asked how the diocesan strategy might relate to the national strategy document, and how parishes might relate to both. Jonathan acknowledged the need not to have competing visions and the need to build on our common ground which essentially was being a Christ-centred, Jesus shaped church which was indeed simpler, bolder, humbler, younger and more diverse. He said he was of the view that the diocesan vision sat comfortably within the national vision and was also of the view that vision could not be imposed from the top; nevertheless a national vision should help give focus and direction.



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- Rev John Smith asked how the diocese might help parishes get back onto a sound financial footing after the pandemic. Jonathan's answer was that he and the central staff would keep asking, 'How can we help?' and then do what they could.

## **Diocesan Rhythm of Life initiative**

The area dean drew our attention to the diocesan Rhythm of Life initiative, which is about joining together in a shared rule of life – he led the meeting through the web pages from the diocesan learning platform <https://learning.leeds.anglican.org/rol/> and encouraged parishes and people to use and publicise this resource.

**Cut in foreign aid** John Smith introduced the subject of the recently announced cut in foreign aid. Synod agreed that the lay chair, Justin Brett, should write to our various local MPs on our behalf expressing our opposition to the cuts and asking that they be reconsidered. (This has been done)

## **Good news from the Deanery**

A video was shown about the work of the youth interns at Kairos Network church. Ben Askew introduced the two interns, Freya and Ethan and said how the programme was part of the New Wine Discipleship year. He encouraged any other churches who were interested in joining the programme to contact him for more details.

## **15 February 2021 Chair – Justin Brett**

Main Topics: Training – Lay Training Officers Marion Russell & Julia Robertson spoke to us about some of the many, newly launched, exciting training opportunities available across the Diocese of Leeds, ranging from regular worship to one-off events right through to more sustained courses, all offered by Leeds School of Ministry. Full details can be found by visiting the Digital Learning Platform at <https://www.leeds.anglican.org/lay-training/courses>.

## **Reflections & Feedback on the past year in small group breakout rooms**

It has been recognized that in many parishes more people are 'attending' a virtual Sunday Service than ever attended church in person before lockdown. This also seems to be the case with the various Zoom Prayer gatherings, such as Morning Prayer, Prayer for the Nation. There also seems to have been a good take up of the on-line 'Rhythm of Life Lent Course'. Some Parishes have also held the Online Alpha Course, which again has proved popular.

Book Clubs, Bible Study groups, Virtual coffee times, Virtual Bingo and Virtual Quiz nights, have been established within the Deanery churches and all seem very popular.

Many, if not all, of the Deanery churches appear to have set up small groups to ensure their congregations and wider communities have been contacted, helped to feel connected and informed of relevant information needed in these strange times.

These are just a few examples of how the use of modern technology and the good old-fashioned use of the telephone and 'note writing' is enabling churches to keep in touch and also spread the Good News.

*Val Lumsden, Deanery Synod Representative*

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## WORSHIP GROUP

The Worship Group leads the congregation in our sung Worship @11am.

Sadly, due to the pandemic and Lockdown 3, from January and up until Easter Day we were unable to have any live singing in church. At the time of writing the Worship Group is allowed to play and sing (although no wind instruments are allowed) following strict social distancing guidelines. We are really looking forward to the congregation being able to join us in song again when the restrictions are lifted.

We have an extremely committed core of singers and instrumentalists. Many thanks to Emma Beddoe, Liz Foxwell and Lorna Taylor for their continued dedication and faithfulness to the group. We are also very grateful to Miriam Giblin who plays her guitar when she is home from university.

The Worship Group is small in number at the moment. We would welcome any instrumentalists or singers. Instrumentalists would ideally be about Grade 3 standard or above as some of the music is hard to navigate. We enjoy playing a variety of contemporary worship songs.

*Suzannah Giblin*

## PASTORAL CARE AND WORSHIP IN THE COMMUNITY

As we all know one of the church's main areas of ministry is pastoral care but the usual ways of undertaking this ministry have been significantly affected by COVID-19 and the usual route of face-to-face visiting has not been possible in most situations, so we have had to adapt very quickly and find new ways to keep in touch and to offer care where and when it is needed. And thanks to a bank of volunteers we have been able to do this

Initially there was a great need for people who could shop, pickup prescriptions etc. This need has reduced as more and more people are now shopping online and many are having medicines delivered. However, as time has gone on, we are aware that many people are feeling really disconnected, and the individual needs have changed significantly at different times during lockdown, for example the number of people needing a bit of extra support fluctuates depending on whether we have public worship or not. We have now identified a list of around 65 people who are not on-line or don't use email, who sadly, when church is closed, miss out on joining worship on-line or even receiving Brendan's regular updates. Thanks to another team of around 20 volunteers committed to keeping regular contact as part of the 'Telephone Contacts Team', we are able to keep this group of people in the loop. It's great to hear about new friendships being formed across the various age groups and congregations at church. The people on the 'Practical Help Team' and 'Telephone Contacts team' also feedback any other areas where individuals may need help or if there are any concerns. We have had a few seasonal initiatives during lockdown which we hope helped those people who find it difficult to come to church or to access on-line worship, to feel connected in the life of the church.

- Church was open at harvest but we distributed around 30 bags containing homemade jam, marmalade, chutney, plants, butterflies, and harvest prayers to those we knew of who couldn't come to church.
- During Advent we distributed Advent Prayer/Reflections and Candles to 50 people who were not able to join us on line or in church.
- At Christmas we made up 50 bags of various Christmas goodies, made or donated by volunteers together with the C of E booklet, Comfort and Joy' Christmas Card.
- During Lent we provided a booklet of reflections, prayers and readings based on the Diocesan material 'Rhythm of Life, the material which we are also using in our St James Lent Groups.

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- For Easter we delivered 62 bags which included a palm cross, Easter Prayers, Easter cards made by children, hand-made Easter crosses and forget-me-knots, Chocolate Bunnies, daffodils, a big thank you to all who provided the contents. In order to keep the Covid-19 risk factor down to a minimum we can only use a small team of people to deliver and we hope these visits bring as much joy to the recipients as they do to us.
- We are also in regular contact with the Activities Managers at the various Care Homes in Wetherby, and most of them receive Brendan's Weekly Update and are able to join our services via Facebook or Zoom and also, we can now provide the Services on DVD.

None of the above would happen without the help of the many people who shop, pick-up prescriptions, make regular telephone calls, knit, crochet, give lifts to hospital and doctor's appointments, etc., all of which is underpinned by prayer, which we can all do and without which nothing would happen.

The list and needs are constantly changing, but the aim remains the same -" that Just because folk are out of sight, we don't want anyone to feel out of mind", so, if you are reading this and you, or anyone you know, needs a bit of practical support or just someone to have a regular chat with, please do let us know.

**Bereavement Support Team** – the team offers post-funeral visits to support bereaved families.

**Annual Service of Service** – this service takes place each December and sees Church members out in Wetherby litter picking, offering prayer, delivering gifts or singing.

*Lorna Taylor and Val Lumsden*

## NOVEL CONVERSATIONS

### **St James' Book Group**

We have continued to meet during the past year on the first Tuesday of the month by moving our meetings onto Zoom. Our numbers have fluctuated between 5 and 10 and it has been great to see each other. We have had some interesting discussions mainly about the books.

We have even welcomed two new members recently. As you can see by the list below, we have covered a variety of genres. It is always good when you discover a new author or enjoy a book which is totally different to what you would normally read and listening to others often helps appreciate the bits we have missed ourselves.

If you feel tempted to join us, you would be most welcome and here are the books which we have chosen to read over the next three months. Just contact David or myself by phone or email and we will make sure we send you the Zoom link. An opportunity to try us out without leaving home!

May 4<sup>th</sup> – Remarkable Creatures by Tracy Chevalier

June 2<sup>nd</sup> – The Cleaner of Chartres by Salley Vickers

July 6<sup>th</sup> – The Watchmaker of Filigree Street by Natasha Pulley

*David and Sandra York*

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## WETHERBY ST JAMES CHURCH CENTRE TRUST (WSJCCT)

The Property Committee, because of the COVID 19 pandemic only managed one committee meeting during the year with Alan Grimes continuing in the chair. The Committee is responsible for the maintenance and upkeep of the Church Centre, Church Room and the Old School Kitchen buildings. The Committee undertook the following work in 2020

- All testing of electrical equipment was completed on schedule.
- The WSJCCT Health and Safety policy, Risk assessment and Fire Risk assessments have all been reviewed and updated.

Room occupancy was low due to the COVID 19 pandemic.

*Alan Grimes, (Property Committee Chair)*

## CHURCHES TOGETHER IN WETHERBY, LINTON AND COLLINGHAM

Churches Together draws together representatives from all the churches in Wetherby and some of the surrounding district. St James' is represented by Brendan, Val Lumsden, Nic Sheppard, and replacing Derek Taylor this year, Rosie Rooke. Since November the group has met together via Zoom on 3 occasions and communicates between meetings via email. It has been useful to keep one another abreast of what has been possible through our churches during the pandemic and lockdowns. Whilst we had to forgo some of the traditional Christmas activities and meeting together for the Annual Joint Service many activities took place were supported well. These included:

- Christmas Appeal organised by The Salvation Army in partnership with the local churches and Food Bank
- Christmas banners displayed throughout the town
- Financial contribution towards YOI Christmas gift bag in partnership with In2Out
- Christmas Day doorstep visits in partnership with WiSE
- Appointed representative to the Better Wetherby Partnership continued to advise
- Providing a weekly 'Point of View' for Wetherby News
- Providing a weekly 'Thought for the Day' on Tempo FM which was either by telephone or pre-recorded
- Ecumenical prayers provided by email
- Annual Meeting and Service during the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity via Zoom.

*Nic Sheppard*