

# APCM Meeting

## AGENDA

### Meeting of Parishioners (Vestry Meeting)

1. Prayer
2. Minutes of Meeting (*from Previous year*)
3. Election of Churchwardens
4. Prayer for new Churchwardens

### Annual General Meeting

1. Apologies for absence
2. Minutes of Meeting (*from Previous year*)
3. Matters Arising
4. Reports -
  - Electoral Roll - (*written by the electoral roll officer, with a copy available for inspection at the meeting*)
  - Churchwardens – (*Report on the proceedings of the PCC and the parish in general*)
  - Fabric - (*on the good and ornaments of the Church written by the Church Wardens*)
  - Treasurer – (*this must be independently audited and published for at least 7 days - including a Sunday service before the mtg*)
  - SGPN Report
  - Governor's report
  - Deanery Synod (*Report on the proceedings of the Deanery synod written by the Deanery synod representative*)
  - Safeguarding Report
  - Rev'd Harriet's Report:
5. Elections:
  - Deanery Synod Rep – (*elected for a 3yr term, 1 if electoral roll is less than 50 2 if up to 100*)
  - Election of PCC Members – (*upto 6 if electoral roll is less than 50, 9 if 50-100, 12 if 100-200*)
  - Ex-officio Rev'd Harriet Orridge (Chair), Churchwardens, Deanery Synod Rep
6. Appointment of Independent Examiner
7. Safeguarding review of Policy,
8. Parishioners' Questions
9. Date of next APCM

### PCC mtg following the APCM:

1. Apologies for absence
2. Election of PCC officers
  1. Lay-Vice Chair
  2. Treasurer
  3. Secretary
  4. Electoral Roll Officer
  5. Safeguarding officer (local independent person)
3. Signing of "Fit and Proper" declaration by all PCC members (including CW's, Deanery synod reps etc)
4. Dates of PCC mtgs for the coming year (please bring diaries)

# Minutes of Long Bennington 2020 APCM

## APCM Meeting Held 25<sup>th</sup> October 2020

**Present in Church:** Revd Harriet Orridge, Jane Taylor, Jeanne Day, Phil Owen, Hilda Owen, Shirley Dalton, Beryl Holmes, David Andrews

**Present via Zoom:** Jean Higgs, Jill Froggatt, Helen Durham, Walter Hughes, Sylvia Andrews, Jane Cowley, Maureen Prothero, Joy Jordan.

Harriet welcomed everyone and opened with prayers. Thanks were expressed to David Andrews for enabling the zoom facility.

## St Swithun's Vestry Meeting held 25th October 2020

Minutes of last year's Vestry meeting were read out by Harriet. They were proposed as true and accurate by Jane Cowley and seconded by Phil Owen.

Jill Froggatt stood down as Churchwarden and Susan Anderson had already resigned earlier in the year. There were no new nominations for churchwardens. Harriet explained that the PCC is looking at ways to delegate the churchwarden/verger duties and Jill is updating the job descriptions to distribute so that people might volunteer to do parts of the role. In addition, the diocese re-structure due to take place next year may affect the churchwarden role.

## APCM

Apologies: Jeanne Lambert

Minutes of last year's meeting were made available and Harriet asked if they were a true and accurate record. Walter Hughes proposed and Jeanne Day seconded. There were no matters arising.

## **Electoral Roll**

The new roll prepared this year stands at 49. Phil said that he knew of people who would like to be added and that he would ensure that they complete an application form.

## **Church Warden's Report/St Swithun's Fabric Report 2019**

March saw us moving into the village hall for regular services and all events that would otherwise have been held in church (most of which had to be cancelled). This was so that the Heritage Lottery Fund could repair and stabilise the movement of the north wall (caused by water damage due to the drainage system) and repair the Chancel roof. This was initially meant to be until June/July time, but the discovery of Death Watch Beetle in the rafters of the Chancel meant that this had to be extended to October. We were therefore able to return to a new and improved church for our Harvest service on 3rd October. Our thanks have to go to Phil Owen and David Andrews, working closely with our architect, Carl Andrews. They undertook most of the paperwork and consultations required on a voluntary basis and we owe them a great debt of gratitude. The small gift of a meal out at Whitakers for them and their wives has been given (and enjoyed, by all accounts) to show our appreciation for their efforts.

## **Regular Opening of Church**

Due to the closure of the church for building work between March and October, we were unable to keep the church open for visitors, as it was a building site and unsafe to do so. We plan to re-open the church to visitors during the spring/summer of 2020.

## **Organ Repair.**

Improvements to the organ continued with the addition of an Apple i-pad app. This enables us to record the organist playing and play it back so that organ music can be played in the absence of an organist. Due to illness, we lost our regular organ player for most of the year so this facility will be very useful.

## **Clock.**

A major overhaul was undertaken at the end of 2018. This was initially successful for a while but then the clock became slow. This was caused by finding bird nests behind the clock face, these have now been removed and the clock is operating correctly. However the clock face needs to be removed from the tower to complete the work and this has been scheduled for the spring of 2020. The PCC applied to be put forward as 'Community Champions' with the local Coop and received £600 to do the necessary repairs.

## **Heating**

A major overhaul of the heating system was undertaken in September 2019 resulting in a more effective and cost efficient heating system. We have also installed a new heating programmer, which enables us to set the heating to a minimum temperature of 10 degrees. (We were advised that we should keep the church at a minimum temperature at all times as it is better for the walls and also makes it easier to heat the church for services/events). The winter of 2019 saw a return to a warm church, that has been commented on by visiting priests (as Harriet has been off sick since October, there were a few). We have continued to have a warm welcome into church for the duration of the winter, for the first time, much to our relief.

## **Lighting**

The lights in the nave and chancel have been upgraded to the new type LED (light emitting diode) lights providing more illumination, longer life of the bulbs and uses less energy.

## **Flooring**

Malcolm Starr has replaced the timber flooring in some areas and plans to do the area near the piano in early 2020.

## **Removals/Spring Clean**

A group of volunteers helped to move and pack away all the valuables in church ready for the builders to commence their work in March, our thanks to them for a hard day's work. Volunteers also did a major 'spring clean' just before our return in October and our thanks to Hilda and Phil Owen for organising and participating in this.

## **New Carpet**

We used the opportunity of the move to have a think about re-organising the back of the church and to have a clear out. As a consequence, we have created more space to the right of the door for browsing our information leaflets and notice board. A new carpet was also bought for this area. A new children's area was created in the corner opposite the entrance, with new children's furniture, toys and a new carpet and bookcase. The 'welcome' area was also re-designed to make it more user-friendly for both welcomer and people coming into church, with a major clear-out of the cupboards both here and in the upper room, creating much needed space. Thank you to Phil and Hilda for sourcing and donating the two new carpets and for paying for the other new carpet in the Chancel from the proceeds of a sponsored bike ride.

## **Audio and TV Screens**

These systems have required constant attention to ensure they are operating correctly. The TV screens are now over eight years old and the microphone systems are nearly twenty-five years old. Problems have been resolved with buzzing on the speakers due to electrical interference for the LED lights, feedback and drop out from the microphones and picture flashing on and off from the screens, thanks to David Andrews.

## **Heritage Lottery Project.**

2019 saw the completion of all the work on the church caused by poor drainage of rainwater over many years and the failure of the chancel lead roof. This work was funded by a major grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund together with grants from other organisations. The church was closed for over half a year and the work was focused on stabilising and protecting the main church buildings, removal of the death-watch beetle infested wood in the chancel roof added to the work and increased the costs, and replacing them

with new rafters will ensure that the area is now well ventilated and stable again. Putting a new roof covering in place will ensure that the chancel roof is watertight for many years to come. The stained glass windows have been protected with a polycarbonate layer to provide weatherproofing. Various masonry repairs have been made to remove cracks in the walls. The new larger gutters and downpipes, together with the new underground drainage channels will ensure that the rainwater is effectively drained from the church. The inside of the nave and the porch entrance have been redecorated so that the church looks presentable again. As part of the HLF project the church launched the INFO-Point system and the Long Bennington Heritage Trail. This provides an interactive method of learning about the church and the history of the village using a mobile phone. Users connect to the Info-Point Wi-Fi signal and access the information with the browser on their phone.

The current completed work is not the end of the necessary repairs as once the church walls have stabilised from the seasonal movement caused by the weather a more permanent solution in about two to three years will need to be made.

#### **Future short-term essential work needed.**

Repairs to church floor  
Decoration of the chancel

#### **Longer Term Desirable Work Projects.**

Upgrade the church media system.  
Upgrade the church heating system.  
Installation of disabled access lift at the church main door.

Jill Froggatt  
Church Warden

David Andrews  
Assistant Churchwarden for Fabric

#### **Treasurer's Report (year-ending 31 December 2019)**

The following report was given by Jane Cowley:

I am pleased to present the Receipts and Payments Account for St Swithuns Church, which has been independently examined as required by the church Accounting Regulations 1997.

This October, I am reporting that the PCC accounts show an overall deficit of £3696 in the payments and receipts for the year ending 31 December 2019. However, the current account year-end balance was a healthy £5221.

The following points should be noted in considering the above figures:

#### **Receipts:**

- **Voluntary income** (£23,799) was around £2000 lower than the previous year due to reductions across all types of giving. The tax rebate in 2019 was accordingly slightly less than in 2018.

**Fund raising** provided £8391, which was around £2000 more than in 2018. This wonderful amount is due to the great efforts of all involved with the Radcliffe choir event, Santa's Sleigh collection, tree lighting refreshments profits, tea n chat meet ups, Ride & Stride collection, coffee morning/hat sales, cream tea & notelet sales, Marie Curie collection from tea n chat and the harvest supper. Thanks are due to all those involved in the organisation of these enjoyable events, as well as those who contributed and participated.

- **Charitable & Ancillary Trading** includes church fees, such as for funerals, weddings, for which the PCC received significantly less money (£2242) than the previous year for such services. The PCC are grateful to the Parish Council for giving £300 towards the disabled access.

- **Restricted income** reflects the money received from the HLF account to cover SMART water payment, additional insurance and £14,688 was also transferred from the HLF fund back to the PCC to part pay a loan, once HLF project funds allowed.
  - Other restricted income includes £73,000 transferred from church trust funds mainly as a result of Ch Fabric Slack fund shares being sold as well as the balances from the Vicar & Churchwardens' Trust and Chancel Trust funds (into which dividends are paid) being transferred to the PCC account. Such money was then used for the HLF project to part-fund major repairs to stabilise the north aisle and east chancel walls and repair the chancel roof as well as for the completion of payment of the full Parish Share at the end of the year.
  - Further elements of restricted income included £159 collected to pay expenses for first aid and New Wine courses, £2946 from the other churches for clergy/Parish Administrator expenses, £18 from war graves commission and £97 fund raising income forwarded to Foston church.

### Payments:

- The **Parish Share, of £24,000** was paid on time.
- **Upkeep of church and services** is lower overall than last year.
  - The main reason is because of reduced the major repair works that needed to be paid for in 2019, which included organ work, Network Archaeology costs, costs, footpath and kitchen light costs.
  - The upkeep of services includes the purchase of a chair stacking rack in memory of Jack Holmes.
  - Fund-raising and administration includes purchase of an iPad for Davina. However, the fund-raising and administration costs are significantly lower in 2019, because in 2018 there was the purchase of Armistice display items, fliers (part reimbursed), tea 'n chat outing and website expenses (subsequently covered by the HLF account).
  - The clergy expenses are reduced, but this is somewhat dependent on how many months each covers. Parish Administrator costs are higher, but half of these costs were covered by the Transformational Fund grant.
  - The churchyard expenses were higher due to hedge trimming and additional maintenance being needed since Gordon Scott and other volunteers are no longer tending the God's Acre.
- **Grants** given to charities and other organisations were slightly higher than in 2018 and included donations to Long Bennington School with Year 6 Bibles, Women's World Day of Prayer, Marie Curie (raised at Tea n Chat), as well as the Santa's sleigh share of collected money for the Rotary Club and Preschool.
- **Restricted payments** include payments made from money which has been received into the PCC account specifically to make these payments e.g. fees from occasional services, which include payments for vergers and organists; money from other churches to pay their share of clergy expenses and the war graves payment.
  - The 'restricted' payments of £80,463 comprises - £74,966.75 to the HLF St Swithun's Project Fund, plus £4906.07 of payments to out vicar for expenses, which were later recouped from the other churches in our group, £97.20 fund raising proceeds owed to another church in our group, £425.47 paid out of profits for our harvest supper expenses, £50 wedding deposit refund and £18 paid to our war graves gardener – to whom we are very grateful.

The Trust Fund accounts have also been summarised and audited. These can be reviewed at the APCM.

Once again, on behalf of the PCC, I would like to sincerely thank Mr Stephen Peck, Accountant, for freely giving of his valuable time and effort in auditing and verifying our Year-2019 accounts.

On behalf of the PCC I should also like to record our thanks to all those who have contributed and helped in any way towards our finances. Accounts for Year ending 31/12/19 Appendix 1.

Jane Cowley. Treasurer

## **Parish Magazine Accounts**

Jill reported that we have lost some major advertisers this year and therefore we are no longer breaking even. Thanks were expressed to Joy Jordan for taking over from Shirley as the main distribution point and also all the people who volunteered to distribute the magazine. Thanks also to Davina for continuing to Edit and collate. The accounts had been verified by Steve Peck.

## **Foundation Governor Report to Foston/Long Bennington**

This report covers the period January to December 2019 for Long Bennington Church of England Academy. New terminology has now been introduced to governing bodies, with Governors now being formally known as Trustees.

The Trustee Body (TB) saw minor changes in 2019. A new Vice Chair and Clerk were appointed due to end of tenure as well as a new Trustee with a legal background being co-opted as the skills audit highlighted this gap on the team. A further gap in accounting and finance experience has been identified, and future Parent Trustees will be sought with this skillset in early 2020.

Ofsted inspected the school in February 2019, which resulted in a 'GOOD' outcome, an inspection which was well overdue with the previous one happening in 2008. All staff should be commended on their contribution in achieving this result. One area of scrutiny was the progress of pupils as they moved from Key Stage 1 to Key Stage 2, as their progress did not always follow a consistent trajectory. However, the report highlighted that the school has made excellent progress in the wider curriculum, a key focus in the education sector.

This period saw the departure of Mrs. Rebecca King as Head teacher and the arrival of Mr. David Nicholson into the post in April 2019. David has quickly got to know the school and the staff, and positive impacts have been quickly evidenced.

The Trustees spent a huge amount of time during this period exploring options for joining a multi-academy trust (MAT), as it has been apparent for some time that the school cannot continue long-term as a stand-alone academy. The options for Long Bennington are very limited. As a Church of England Academy, we must join a trust which is predominantly Church of England schools. Furthermore, the Diocese of Lincoln mandates that Lincolnshire C of E schools must join a MAT in Lincolnshire. Currently there is only one trust which meets these criteria: Lincoln Anglican Academy Trust (LAAT). However, the Trustees felt that the LAAT does not operate in a way that will benefit Long Bennington. It appears to be over-capacity already and does not have the resources to offer benefits to joining academies. Added to this, two schools in Grantham were being taken out of the LAAT and placed into another trust as the schools were failing and the LAAT has not been able to improve them. The Trustees explored this other trust, the Archway Learning Trust based in Nottinghamshire, and identified that its vision and values were closely aligned to ours. Their ambition to develop a hub in Grantham would benefit us, and likewise our school and staff would benefit them – a good partnership. Following many months of discussion however, the Diocese refused to allow Long Bennington to join a trust based in a different Diocese. The Diocese called a meeting in September 2019 calling all C of E schools in the diocese to outline their strategic plan for MATs in the area. To-date this has not progressed and LB remains a stand-alone academy. Options continue to be discussed amongst schools as there are many academies in similar situations to us.

Pupil numbers have remained high for the school, which is crucial to keep income levels stable; this does include encouraging pupils from out-of-catchment areas. The academic year 2018/19 finished with 261 pupils and this increased to 264 in September 2019. Despite this, the budgeting process remains tight, and the Trustees have a strong focus on identifying how the school can be sustained in the current climate of financial squeeze. The joining of a MAT is becoming more urgent, not less.

The school continues to deliver excellent learning outputs, as well as excellent standards in positive behaviour and attendance. Areas identified through the Ofsted report have been acted on and are evident through all year groups. There is an environment which nurtures inclusivity and supportiveness, balanced with a healthy dose of competition and lots of fun!

I hope this report provides an appropriate balance of information for the PCCs - please do contact me if there is anything specific you would like to understand.

*Lucy Bliss*  
*Foundation Governor*

*September 2020*

### **Deanery Synod Report**

There were 3 Loveden Deanery Synod Meetings in 2019, and the central theme of discussions was similar to the previous year: payment of the Parish Share and the delivery of the Church's Ministry within the Deanery. In late 2019 the Diocese advised that it would probably need to review its Business Model in the coming year. Against this background the Deanery Synod decided to set-up a Study Group to identify a deliverable and affordable way-ahead for the Loveden Deanery, in terms of: Clergy numbers, the role of those involved in Lay Ministry, and the viability of some Parish Churches. However, after only three meetings the Group's work was overtaken by Bishop David's presentation to the Diocesan Synod in mid-July 2020, which proposed a major restructuring of all the Diocese's functions, ranging from Asset Management to Clergy Numbers. Following a subsequent detailed consultation exercise, Bishop David hopes to give a clear signal of the way ahead for the Diocese before the end of the year (2020); at parish level, this is likely to result in fewer clergy and a change in the way the Parish Share is determined. Other significant topics considered by the Deanery Synod team over the last year have included Deanery Admin Support and Safeguarding Requirements and Training.

**Hilda Owen.**

### **Group Safeguarding Report**

Wonderfully, to the best of my knowledge (please remember I was off from Oct 19 to June 20) there have been no safeguarding incidents to report. Irene our safeguarding officer has been included in the PCC minutes, and has had the opportunity to join and/or raise questions at PCC mtgs where she has felt it appropriate. The Safeguarding dashboard has now gone digital, which will help going forward. The Safeguarding team at Lincoln Diocese as part of the Safeguarding review, asked if there were any Past Cases locally, so that they could check they had been dealt with thoroughly, and if not respond appropriately. Again thankfully, there were not any locally that the safeguarding officer or PCC members knew of. Our thanks to Irene for all her work over the years, as she is stepping down from being our safeguarding officer.

### **Vicar's report for APCM 2019**

My thanks must first go to everyone who kept the churches going whilst I was on sick leave, whether you led services, carried out pastoral visits, or just helped keep things ticking along. Thank you. This report of course is for the APCM that should have been held in April 2020, and as such will focus on 2019. So let us cast our minds back to 2019 and begin by thinking about what happened.

**Allington:** Open the Book assemblies continued, with Jenny Stuart from Sedgebrook joining the team. We look forward to having Marian back on the team once she is better. The assemblies are great fun and much enjoyed by the children, who love taking part in the stories. Messy Church continued with a small regular turnout. Over the summer we decided to move into the school, thus saving on village hall hire. Becoming a weekly after school club meant a large increase in the number of children regularly joining us. This though also had a big effect on my diary, having to prepare the story and craft ideas each week. Church

renovation plans continued slowly at the start of the year. However, with help from John Manterfield their grant applications picked up the pace considerably. Grants were found to cover the cost of the Q1 urgent repair works, and these were carried out in the second half of July 2020.

**Foston:** Foston had another steady year. Their monthly coffee morning continued to be well attended and much appreciated within the village. As was the Remembrance Sunday evening service with the uniformed groups. Sadly the proposed other uniformed group services did not happen. This is something we are looking at revisiting. Possibly with a Christingle around Christmas?

**Long Bennington:** St Swithun's 2019 was dominated by the church repairs. A massive thank you to Phil and David for all the work they put into securing funding and overseeing the Chancel repair and drainage works. Sadly once the roof was off, the extent of the damage to the wall plates was far more than anticipated and the church had to find an extra £50,000. However thankfully the money was found and the repairs completed in time for a lovely service led by Bishop Nicholas and the Rural Dean Tony Tucker at the end of November. Equally, my thanks to everyone who helped whilst we held services in the village hall. Sylvia and Peter Bates continued to help with weekly assemblies in Long Bennington school. In April 2019 David Nicholson replaced Becky King as head teacher. He has settled in well and is keen to continue and grow the relationship with the church. At Christmas KS1 children had a special service in the Methodist Chapel. Relationships with the Methodists continued as we held again four joint services, though these were largely held in the Chapel due to our ongoing building works. These included their covenant service at the beginning of the year and the Remembrance Sunday service in November. Our weekly coffee mornings and monthly afternoon teas continue to enjoy wonderful support, thank you to everyone who helps at them, including all the bakers of the delicious cakes and scones. Relationships with Long Bennington School have continued to grow, especially with the arrival of their new head teacher Mr David Nicholson. He is keen to develop services in church further as we go forward following our building work. Once again, we purchased Bibles for all school leaders and I visited the Yr6's before they left. My thanks to Peter Bates and Sylvia who have been helping with school assemblies, including the Lord's Prayer and teaching the students how to pray it in sign language.

**Sedgebrook:** 2019 was a very sad year for St Lawrence as Geoff our Treasurer, following a second bout of Pneumonia, was ill for most of the year, passing away shortly before Christmas. The church community continued to work hard to raise the desperately needed funds and its profile within the village. The summer monthly Afternoon Teas were again a success, bringing people into the church from the village. The Scarecrow competition for the Heritage weekend at the beginning of September received several visitors. The nursery got involved making a Gruffalo scarecrow for inside church. Hopefully, these links can continue to be developed, possibly with church members visiting the nursery on a regular basis using "Diddy Disciples" material.

**The Saxonwell group:** The group decided not to continue the iKnow subscription, as the uptake hadn't been very good, which is a huge shame as it would have helped our ability to communicate with people about what is going on within the group. However, the new website is much easier to operate and Davina continues to work behind the scenes, keeping it up to date with important news and articles. Should you have anything you would like to add to the website please do contact her. She continues to be a wonderful asset to the group looking after lots of the paperwork.

**Safeguarding:** This continues to be a massive area of importance, and we all need to continue to play our part ensuring that everyone is kept safe. Thankfully, our four local independent people have not notified me of any issues in the last year. However, we must not be complacent. Recently I attended training regarding Domestic abuse, and was shocked at its prevalence and hiddenness. Consequently, I would encourage everyone to educate themselves however they can. For information regarding training and how

to spot the signs of domestic abuse, please follow these links: <https://www.lincoln.anglican.org/News/spaces-available-on-three-domestic-abuse-training-courses>. If you believe that you are in an abusive situation, please know that you are not alone, and you can find support here: <https://edanlincs.org.uk/drop-ins-and-service-user-groups/>

**House Groups:** House groups have continued to across the group by a variety of leaders, my thanks to all of them especially to Sylvia and Helen who took over whilst I was poorly. During the course of the year they covered a wider range of topics including looking at the upcoming lectionary readings.

**Going forward:** as church, we are called to be the Good News, to share the love of God with the world. We have the greatest gift ever given to mankind, and it is too precious not to share. The Gospel is life changing so let us reach out and share it with others. 2020 has been dominated by the CoVid 19 global pandemic, and as a group of churches we have had to learn to adapt, with services going online. I am looking forward to when we can return to singing in church and sharing the Peace without having to be socially distanced. However as the media has repeatedly said, going forward there will be a “new normal”. As we look forward towards 2021 what would we as a Christian community like that “new normal” to be? I would like a world where we all work together for the good of the whole world, rather than just looking after ourselves. A world free from poverty, both here in the UK and across the world, a world where there is justice for all not just those who can afford it. A world where nature is respected, and enjoyed rather than abused for our own needs. The question then becomes what things can we do as individuals and together to build that vision, because the time to start building is now, as the world recovers.

Heavenly Father we thank you for all the gifts you have given us, help us to use them to build your kingdom of Love, Justice and Peace. Amen.

God bless

Harriet

### **PCC Meeting**

#### **Elections**

**Deanery Synod** Hilda Owen & Shirley Dalton to continue.

**Safeguarding Officer** Vacancy

#### **PCC**

Rev'd Harriet Orridge (Chair)

Vacancy for Lay Chair

Jane Cowley (Treasurer)

Jill Froggatt (Secretary & Electoral Roll Officer)

Shirley Dalton (Deanery Synod)

Hilda Owen (Deanery Synod)

Phil Owen

David Andrews

Helen Durham

Joy Jordan

Jeanne Day

#### **Appointment of Independent Examiner**

Jane said she would ask Steve Peck if he was willing to continue and confirm. Jill mentioned that he now receives free advertising in the parish magazine as a thank you for his services.

#### **Review of Safeguarding Policy**

Harriet read out the Statement of Principles. It was agreed that these principles be adopted, proposed by Phil Owen and seconded by Walter Hughes.

### **Any Other Business**

Beryl Holmes praised the people who had kept the church going through Harriet's illness and the Covid19 restrictions. Also, she thanked the people who volunteered for the churchyard clear-up day on 26<sup>th</sup> September and those that organised this. Phil Owen added thanks to Mr Fearn for offering to dispose of the debris.

Jane Cowley expressed thanks to David Andrews and Phil Owen for all the work they did related to to HLF Project.

### **Next Year's APCM Date**

Sunday 25th April 2020 was agreed.

The meeting closed in Prayer with The Grace.

## 2020 REPORTS - Electoral Role

No	Title	Surname	Christian Names
1	Ms	Ablewhite	Sheila
2	Mrs	Adams	Irene
3	Mr	Adams	Stewart
4	Mr	Anderson	Graham John
5	Mrs	Anderson	Susan Margaret
6	Mrs	Andrews	Sylvia Mary
7	Mr	Andrews	David Howard
8	Mrs	Baggaley	Gay
9	Mrs	Bates	Lesley Barbara
10	Mrs	Bowes	Jean
11	Mrs	Brown	Nicola Beverley
12		Chessum	Isobel Louise
13	Mr	Clarke	David Alan
14	Mrs	Clarke	Patricia Ruth
15	Dr	Cowley	Elizabeth Jane
16	Mrs	Cunningham	Alison
17	Mrs	Dalton	Shirley Maud Mary
18	Mr	Dawkins	Gareth William
19	Mrs	Day	Jeanne
20	Mr	Douglass	Alan
21	Mr	Dring	George Francis
22	Ms	Dunwoodie	Linda Ferguson
23	Ms	Durham	Helen Margaret
24	Mrs	Foster	Carol
25	Mr	Foster	David
26	Mr	Froggatt	Darrell Anthony
27	Mrs	Froggatt	Jill Elizabeth
28	Mrs	Hamblett	Mary
29	Mrs	Higgs	Jean
30	Mrs	Holmes	Beryl Edith
31	Miss	Holmes	Deborah Jane
32	Mr	Hughes	Walter Frederick
33	Mrs	Humby-Jones	Brigitte
34	Mrs	Jordan	Joy Glenys
35	Mrs	Lambert	Jeanne Hilary
36	Miss	Lane	Joan
37	Mr	Orridge	John
38	Mrs	Orridge	Harriet
39	Mr	Owen	Philip Stuart
40	Mrs	Owen	Hilda
41	Mrs	Prothero	Maureen Avril
42	Mrs	Reeves	Linda M
43	Mrs	Saul	Alma Edna C
44	Mrs	Spicer	Jean
45	Mr	Swan	Robert Murray
46	Mrs	Swan	Angela Susan
47	Mrs	Taylor	Jane

48	Mr	Thornton	Alan Douglas
49	Mrs	Thornton	Margaret Yule
50	Mrs	Thrush	Adele
51	Mrs	Tivey	Mary Elsie
53	Mr	Winter	John William
54	Mrs	Winter	Margaret Elaine
55	Mr	Wood	Paul
The final Electoral Roll count stands at	55 people		
The number of households represented is	42		

## Churchwardens & Fabric Report

2020 was a particularly challenging year for St. Swithun's as for all other churches. Unlike many other churches, however, the Saxonwell Group started the year by having to find Ministers to take services, as Harriet, our Vicar, was still sick.

We were lucky that we had Communion's taken by, the Archdeacon of Boston, The Ven. Dr. Justine Allen Chapman, the Revd. Canon Tony Tucker, our Rural Dean, and the Revd. June Freshney. John Orridge and Sylvia Andrews took the Morning Worship services on intervening Sundays. Our last service in church under normal circumstances was on 15th March. Since that time we have had services online, both Communion and Morning Worship, every Sunday at 10.30 led by Harriet.

The church has been opened for Wednesday Private Prayer when allowed by the Government/ Church. Thanks to every member of the congregation, and especially the PCC for being prepared to make changes at short-notice, arrange for socially distanced Christmas Carol Services, and for their help and support during these difficult days.

### Fabric Report

After the extensive repairs made to the Church in 2019, it was hoped that 2020 would prove a less challenging and less expensive year, from the fabric perspective. This proved not to be the case.

South Aisle Roof Repair. In February of 2020 the western end of the South Aisle Roof developed a major leak. The area was one that had received numerous minor repairs over the last 30 years, most recently in 2019. Another minor repair was quickly undertaken the following month, but due to Covid restrictions a full and extensive permanent repair had to wait until August 2020. This repair was undertaken by Pinnacle Construction at a cost of £14,180.00 (excluding VAT which was reclaimed); the cost being largely met from PCC Trust Funds.

**Old Churchyard.** For almost 30 years the Old Churchyard had been maintained as a God's Acre by a team of volunteers, who finally stopped undertaking the task in 2018. By early 2020 most of the churchyard had become overgrown, so the PCC decided to undertake a major ground clearance and tree-pollarding programme, which was completed by the end of last year; some of this work was done by volunteers and the Parish Council made a donation of £300 towards the cost of the work. The churchyard will be kept clear and tidy, with perhaps a small God's Acre established in the south-east corner. Work will also take place in 2021 to repair and re-stain the 10 benches. Finally, the Lych Gate was re-stained in early summer 2020.

**New Churchyard.** The usual grass and hedge cutting was done in the New Churchyard in 2020.

**Church Insurance.** In June 2020 the PCC decided to move the Church Insurance from Ecclesiastical Insurance to Trinitas Insurance, a company backed by Aviva. The move will save the PCC around £1,000 per year.

**HLF Mandated Inspections.** The HLF mandated inspections to both the South Aisle and Chancel Walls, and the New Drainage System, were all carried out as required.

**Heating System Maintenance.** Following the major work on the Heating System in 2019, a regular annual servicing was undertaken in September 2020.

**Repair to Toilet Internal Wall.** The west end wall in the toilet requires a repair, but this is not considered urgent work. The PCC has decided to wait until Covid Restrictions on internal access to the Church are removed before commissioning the work. The anticipated for the wall repair is £500.

**Deep Clean of the Church.** To meet Government Covid Requirements the Church was deep cleaned before it re-opened in the summer 2020, after closure due to the first Covid wave. Deep cleaning was also undertaken in early December before the Christmas Services and a number of funerals took place.

Finally, the Quinquennial, due in 2021, has been arranged for 14th April.

Sylvia Andrews  
Churchwarden.

Phil Owen  
Fabric Committee

## **Treasurers Report (Accounts attached separately)**

### **Treasurer's Report for year-ending 31 December 2020**

I am pleased to present the Receipts and Payments Account for St Swithuns Church, which has been independently examined as required by the church Accounting Regulations 1997.

The accounts are presented in the format familiar to the PCC, but have also been submitted using the Parish Accounts Report V1 form. This provides a summary of the total Assets and Liabilities at the end of 2020. These are:

#### **Cash funds:**

- Long Bennington PCC current account (£1705), Deposit Funds – Vicar & Churchwardens' Trust, Chancel Trust (£2201) and Heritage Lottery Fund current account (£56).
- (In the PCC current account there are ring-fenced funds comprising: bell-ringing fund (£290), Goddard money (£280), Flower Fund (£200) and Disabled Access (£500).)

#### **Investment Assets:**

- Investment fund shares at end 2020 market value (£68,613)

The following points should be noted in considering the above figures:

### **Receipts:**

- **Voluntary income for the PCC Account** (£19,534) was more than £4000 lower than the previous year due to reductions in cash collections and donations – affected by the closure of church services due to the Covid-19 pandemic.  
**Fund raising** was also reduced, but still amounted to £4053. Thanks are due to all those involved in the organisation, contribution and participation of the Quiz, Cycle Ride, notelet sales, Tea ‘n Chat and Santa’s Sleigh. We are also grateful for the Community Champions cheque for £608 received from the Co-op.
- **Charitable & Ancillary Trading** includes church fees, such as for funerals, weddings, for which the PCC received £5476, more than the previous year for such services. The PCC are grateful to the Parish Council for giving £300.
- **Income/charity collection specifically received** includes £15038 transferred from church trust funds mainly as a result of the Ch Fabric Slack fund shares being sold (needed for roof repairs). £1350 was also paid in from the HLF account plus a £1500 VAT repayment.

### **Payments:**

- The **Parish Share, of £15,000** was paid in 2020 – an amount agreed by the PCC. £2000 was used from the Vicar & Churchwardens’ Trust to pay this.
- **Upkeep of church and services** was higher than 2019, mainly due to greater churchyard expenses (to tidy and remove trees etc.) and building works, including church roof repairs as well as wall monitoring.
- **Grants** given to charities and other organisations were similar to 2019 with Year 6 Bibles given to LB School leavers and the Santa’s sleigh shares of collected money for the Rotary Club and Preschool.
- **Payments (from specific income received)** includes payments for vergers, organists and services; money paid on behalf of churches to pay their share of clergy expenses (subsequently received from them) and a wedding fee reimbursement due to the pandemic.

Alongside the Long Bennington PCC current account, the trust funds (share investments and the Vicar and Churchwardens’ Trust plus Chancel Trust – into both of which share dividends go) and the HLF accounts, have also been summarised and audited.

Once again, on behalf of the PCC, I would like to sincerely thank Mr Stephen Peck, Accountant, for freely giving of his valuable time and effort in auditing and verifying our Year-2020 accounts (see his summary on the next page). I should also like to record our thanks also to all those who have contributed and helped in any way towards our finances.

Jane Cowley

### **SGPN Report**

On March 23<sup>rd</sup> we went into the first lockdown, so although the April magazine was finished, it had to be rewritten as everyone wanted to change their articles and there was also an urgent requirement to add all the things that each village were doing to assist vulnerable and shielding people.

The magazine was uploaded to ISSU and linked from the Saxonwell facebook page; it was also linked from the Long Bennington Residents facebook page, Allington facebook page and Allington Store facebook page alongside our own website. It was emailed to all those we had an email

address for and it was added to all the local WhatsApp groups. In addition to this, we printed 200 copies that were split between the villages. This happened for the April and May issues as many of our distributors were shielding.

During the second lockdown, we were able to produce hard copies throughout. Many thanks to our distributors and a big thank you to Joy Jordan, who has taken over from Shirley Dalton as central distribution centre. Also, thank you to Shirley for allowing us to use her home for this in previous years. We have had an offer of help with distribution from the Rotary Club, which is very welcome and may allow smaller rounds.

Please refer to the accounts for our financial position. Getting enough advertising to cover printing, editor and publication costs is a continuing battle each year. Many advertisers are choosing to use social media and other digital forms of advertising. We have dwindling donations, as we still have the problem of where donations can be made. We did get a £500 donation from LB parish council and smaller donations from two of the three other villages, which were a huge help. However, if we hadn't had two months with no printing costs due to the lockdown, our outgoings would be higher than our income and if this trend continues, we will need to look at alternative ways to finance the magazine to keep it going.

**Jill Froggatt**  
**SGPN Treasurer**

SAXONWELL GROUP PARISH NEWS

STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS FOR 2020

**INCOME**

OPENING BALANCE	£6,500.95
MAGAZINE ADVERTS FOR 2020	£5282.00
DONATIONS	£1411.50
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£13,194.45</b>

**EXPENDITURE**

PRINTER/EDITOR/PUBLICATION SERVICES	£5,224.00
ADVANCE FOR FEB	£500.00
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£5,724.00</b>

TOTAL INCOME	£13,194.45
LESS TOTAL EXPENDITURE	£5,724.00
<b>CLOSING BALANCE FOR YEAR</b>	<b>£7,470.45</b>

**SAXONWELL GROUP PARISH NEWS BALANCE SHEET**

**JANUARY 1ST – DECEMBER 31ST 2020**

<b>OPENING BALANCE</b>	<b>£6,500.95</b>	
<b>INCOME</b>		
MAGAZINE ADVERTS	£5,282.00	
DONATIONS	£1,411.50	_____
		<b>£13,194.45</b>
<b>EXPENDITURE</b>		
PRINTING	£5,224.00	
ADVANCE ( paid in Feb)	£500.00	
	_____	
	<b>£5,724.00</b>	
BANK BALANCE AS AT 31/12/20	£8,164.45	
(LESS 2021 PAYMENTS)	(£694.00)	
	_____	
<b>CLOSING BALANCE</b>	<b>£7,470.45</b>	
		_____
		<b>£13,194.45</b>

## **Governor's Report**

### **Foundation Trustee Report to Foston/Long Bennington APCM 2021**

This report covers the period January to December 2020 for Long Bennington Church of England Academy, possibly one of the strangest 12 month periods for schools in their history due to the Coronavirus global pandemic. The impact of the pandemic resulted in many of the school initiatives being put on hold to cope with the requirement for online and distant learning.

The Trustee Body (TB) saw only minor changes in 2020 with the addition of two new Parent Governors. One of these is an accountant, so filling the skills gap in accounting and finance experience previously identified. Structures within the Trustee Body changed slightly to achieve more full Trustee Meetings over the course of the year, with the introduction of an annual cycle of curriculum monitoring meetings and an Audit Committee who have the accountability for internal scrutiny. These replace the previous committees of Curriculum & Pupils and Finance & Personnel.

David Nicholson reached his one-year tenure as Head Teacher in April 2020, and it is clear that he has embedded a collaborative and motivated team ethic in the staff he has developed over his time at the school. He has achieved a strong leadership structure in the school, ensuring that the staff step up their level of accountability. There has been a focus on long term plans to deliver the level of pupil progress required from the 2019 Ofsted report. However much of 2020 was devoted to developing distant learning techniques due to the pandemic lockdown and children having to be educated from home.

The Head Teacher and his staff provided an excellent level of support and learning to the pupils during their online learning, as well as supporting vulnerable children and children of key workers in school during the lockdown period (up to a maximum of 20 on a daily basis). As schools returned in May 2020, Long Bennington staff enabled all children to return for a limited period before the summer holidays, not just the years recommended by the Government (Reception, Yr1 and Yr6).

It is clear that there are longer lasting impacts on the progress of pupils with the disruptive year. Whilst children were able to attend school for the remainder of 2020, their bubbles were disrupted at times with positive tests. The staff have identified key groups requiring additional support and this is very much in hand. Our huge thanks and appreciation goes to all the staff for their unwavering commitment and contribution to keeping the school running to such a high standard through this very strange year.

Pupil numbers have remained stable for the school which is crucial to keep income levels constant. Numbers on roll in September 2020 were 263, comparable with the previous year. Despite this, the budgeting process remains tight, and the Trustees have a strong focus on identifying how the school can be sustained in the current climate of financial squeeze. The joining of a MAT continues to be a high priority, although little progress has been made this year with the interruption of the pandemic.

My term of Foundation Governor is due to end in March 2021, when I will step down from the Trustee Body. It has been a pleasure and an honour to support this fabulous school in its development and achievements over the past six years, and I am confident that the structures and people put in place over that period will continue delivering excellent learning results for all children who attend the school going forward.

I hope this report provides an appropriate balance of information for the PCCs - please do contact me if there is anything specific you would like to understand.

## **Deanery Synod Report**

Due to the constraints of Government Covid Regulations Deanery Synod Meetings have been conducted on Zoom since the last APCM.

The main focus of discussion over the period has been on the future organisation of the Diocese of Lincoln, and the affect that any changes would have on our Deanery and its parishes. Indeed, Deanery Synod members agreed that whilst there has been significant higher-level debate and consultation on the way-ahead for the Diocese, there had been little liaison with the Deanery or its PCCs. Further, it was noted the Diocese has yet to provide any clear information or proposals for re-organisation.

In general Synod members did not think that, at this stage, more discussion would lead to progress; rather it was felt that it would merely delay the inevitable changes to come. At the most recent Deanery meeting last December, Synod members unanimously agreed that what is needed to permit further discussion on the future is a firm set of options/proposals from the Diocese; these should detail Lincoln's vision of the future and must provide answers to 4 key questions:

- How many stipendiary clergy will the Diocese have in the future?
- How will the clergy deliver their ministry in the future: by a modified version of the current Parish Priest System, or through new Area Ministry Teams?
- How will the Diocese be organised: retention of the current Deanery system, or the creation of enlarged Deanery-type areas with 3 levels of Churches (Principle Church/Designated Support Churches/Other Churches, many of these semi-closed)?
- What is the Covenant System, and how will it work?

Only with answers to these questions will our Deanery and its PCC's be able to plan for the future.

The December meeting concluded with an agreement that it was pointless for the Deanery Synod to meet again until the Rural Dean has received answers to the above questions.

## **Safeguarding Report**

Having recently taken on the role of Safeguarding Officer for St. Swithuns, Long Bennington parish church, there have been no incidents to report.

I have recently completed the two online courses, as instructed, and will be attended the final course C2, online on March 16<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> 2021 respectively.

**H D Durham**

## **Flower Report**

Due to the church being closed due to Covid restrictions, there have been no flowers in church over the past year. The exception being Christmas, when the Church and porch were decorated for the Carol services, along with the beautiful Christmas tree and Nativity scene, presenting a warm festive welcome for all who attended the services.

**Beryl Holmes.**

## **Vicar's Report**

Firstly thank you for all your help and support over the last eight years. As I look back over our time together I am struck by the amount of things we have done together.

Establishing a pastoral care group, 3 Stewardship campaigns (the pandemic has shown the importance of encouraging people to give by direct debit), laying a new church path at Long Bennington and the major repair work to the chancel roof and north wall, along with Messy Easter and Messy Church in Allington.

This last year has been an interesting one! 2020 saw life in the UK shut down under CoVid 19 restrictions. We were locked out of our churches for several months, however we simply moved to worshipping online, via zoom and on Facebook. Every weekday morning a group gathers for morning prayer, praying for the world, our country, and local communities. We have rallied round and cared for one another, phoning each other regularly for a chat, and learning other ways to keep in touch. Individuals have reached out with love getting involved in the number of community groups which have sprung up.

Equally looking forward, as the CoVid pandemic eases, life will be different, not least because Tony as rural dean will be overseeing 9 villages on 3 days a week, plus the proposed diocesan changes reducing clergy numbers from nearly 150 down to 100 across the whole diocese. This will mean looking at how as a group, we join with Claypole in sharing resources and worship.

There will be a real opportunity to serve our communities, to help bring people back together, to help people rebuild their lives. This summer as we return to normality, many of us will want to visit friends and family and places that we haven't seen possibly in over a year. We all need to take time to pause and recover.

As a church we are called to share God's love with the world, and this involves seeing people, listening to their stories, and helping them, beginning with where they are. Re-establishing our coffee mornings and afternoon teas, providing spaces where people can meet and share their stories will be important. Listening will help us support them, and to discern a way forward.

Come September, hopefully, we will be significantly on the way back to normal life. However that for most people won't look like life in 2019, life has changed dramatically, some working from home, whilst others initially furloughed and now unemployed. How do we help and support them? Can we increase our support of the local food banks, or set up a local branch of Christians Against Poverty, helping people out of debt. Throughout the summer we should be asking the question "how CoVid has affected our communities?" Both in the short term, and it's longer lasting affects in terms of our economy. This will allow us come September, as people rebuild their lives, to be there to support them, thereby embodying our mission statement:

"Together we exist to share Christ's love in our community with joyful hope, compassion and service to all"