



St James
Hampton Hill

Annual Parochial
Church Meeting 2021

Reports
for 2020



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Ark Playgroup Team

The Ark met as usual for the Spring term in 2020 but had to close for the rest of the year because of Covid-19 restrictions. We hope to resume in the autumn

Debbie Nunn

Bell-ringing Team

Regular bellringing was limited to the occasions when the church was open in 2020. The Covid-19 restrictions around social distancing also meant that the bells had to be rung by a single person, with the exception being where two bellringers live together. There were very few weddings, which also reduced the call on ringers. We look forward to a time when those restrictions are lifted, and all of our ringers can return to herald services.

Susan Horner

Charity Support Team

2020 was a highly unusual and difficult year. Charities everywhere suffered from the double-whammy of increased demand for their goods and services whilst at the same time having reduced income; but it wasn't all grim news and St James's saw some good stories come out of the difficult Covid-19 background.

In some cases, it was as though our charity supporters were trying to make up for being helpless and fighting back by giving more and so making a positive difference.

Our Lent appeal raised £2,662 compared to £2,013 in 2019, this speaks for itself. Most of this went to our CMS partners, David and Shelley Stokes, in Argentina, as well as the London Diocesan ALMA appeal, *Wheels for Climate Change Emergencies*. (ALMA supports the Church of England's work in Angola and Mozambique). Other benefactors were Milo hospital (St Luke's, Tanzania) and the London Churches Refugee Fund.

Despite the difficult financial situation for the church the PCC yet again approved £1,500 for Welcare and Bishop Wand School.

Another really interesting story was our Harvest appeal for the Upper Room where we donated £1,402, up from £605 in 2019. The food and other items donated, including from local schools, was way up on last year. The Upper Room have been at the forefront of supporting those affected by the pandemic and early on were fighting hard to get back to providing hot meals to the poor and homeless.

Inevitably with many church events not run in 2020, especially St James's Day weekend, including the raffle and auction, and a reduction in large personal donations, the total income for the team was down. In all it totalled £6,894 (excluding Christian Aid and the Children's Society, traditionally separate from church accounts), compared to £10,048 in 2019. But not a bad effort considering.

2021 will see David and Shelley Stokes retire from their work in Argentina, and we are hoping to establish a new partnership with a parish in Mozambique through ALMA. Being able to support charities like Welcare and The Upper Room, most affected by the pandemic, showed we could help where it really mattered. With God's help we can continue making a positive difference.

Dennis Wilmot

Children and Families

The COVID year has stifled the development we had hoped for our work with Children and Families. The first lockdown immediately stymied *Experience Easter* and *Mothering Sunday* (2020). Our *Together at Eleven All -Age* service has not met in the building since then. The *Easter Messy Church* was cancelled and has yet to restart. Similarly, *Shell Seekers* was rested, and to some extent was reconfigured onto Zoom. Dani resigned in June as our Children and Families' Worker so that she could return home with Scott, at the end of his course. We were unable to run any 'public' carol services with children in mind, and the online offering in no way matched the congregations we would normally see.

Nevertheless, we have regrouped and done what we could. Our weekly *Together* service has continued through the year on Zoom and linked up regularly with a group of families. The service is slightly shorter and includes a pre-recorded Bible story (read by a number of people). Of course, it is not as practical to include crafts as when we met in church. Not being able to sing in church is a significant obstacle to returning.

When the lockdown began Dani started to offer something for our young people on Zoom each week. She has very generously continued this monthly, although she is now in the US.

Working with schools has also proved difficult – through the year and at Christmas. Nevertheless, Derek has provided recorded assemblies at the key moments for Carlisle Infants, Hampton Hill Juniors, Jack and Jill and LEH Juniors.

He was recorded for inclusion in the LEH Christmas Concert. (After four years he is stepping down from being a full governor at CIS and HHJS).

We are exploring various options for recruiting a new Children and Families' worker for the autumn.

It is perhaps worth saying that our story is typical of many churches.

Derek Winterburn

Church Flower Team

The Flower Team had a much quieter year. The first lockdown occurred in Lent and we were unable to dress the church for Easter. When services were allowed back in church, without a congregation, we ensured that flowers were placed where they could be seen on camera. The Team were delighted to return in force, but socially distanced, for Easter 2021, delivering a blaze of colour to the church.

Coryn Robinson

Churches Together Around Hampton

When I took over the chair of CTAH I believed that the group was at a crossroads and that it needed some reshaping. However, it very soon became clear that other forces would determine the immediate future.

COVID-19 restrictions have meant that the church leaders have only met together on Zoom, and there have been no wider gatherings.

However, I think it is fair to say that the leaders have grown closer as we have met together more often and having less 'business' have shared and prayed together more deeply.

Through the year we have welcomed two new clergy : Rev Kan Yun (Hampton Mission Partnership [Methodist /Baptist] and Rev Donna Williams (All Saints).

The local team put together the World Day of Prayer service in March, on Zoom.

A Sunday (after church) lunch picnic is being planned for everyone on Sunday 22 August

Derek Winterburn

Churchwarden's Report

This report is much shorter than usual because the last year's, much delayed APCM was held in October. The year has passed remarkably quickly considering how little interaction there has been amongst us all, except at Zoom meetings or using the telephone. We have all become used to lockdown and services online.

Our church and the hall have not been used much this past year. We have had a couple of months when we were able to have services in the church and we now hope our use of the buildings can gradually return to normal.

The nursery has continued to use the hall. The only major problem over the year there has been the dishwasher. It began leaking badly, making a fair amount of work for nursery staff. However, all is now well – we have purchased a standard domestic dishwasher with a quick cycle. Things will be easier when we return to enjoying coffee together after services.

The garden around the church has been kept in good order and we have Ros and John as well as Lou and Bryan to thank for this. Thank you all.

We have not been able to do any of our usual volunteering this past year. The people to thank include the Finance Team, and especially Carol Bailey for all the work she does in keeping the books up to date. Thanks also to Jenny Breeden who kept an eye on the church linen, Lesley Mortimer for any serving, the flower arrangers for Christmas and Easter, Thom for his organ playing and recording everything he could get the choir to sing.

The church cleaning team made sure the church looked presentable over the periods when we could have live services. The Parish Visitors have been kept at work and some of you may have had phone calls from them.

Carol and the Finance Team have met on Zoom and we are grateful to those who kept up their giving or maybe became regular givers. There is also the Spire Team; Janet Nunn and her assistants have made it possible for us to be kept up to date with church affairs, while Prill has kept our website up to date and interesting. Thank you also to Nick, who, although furloughed at the start of the pandemic, has helped to stream the services every week.

Our biggest thank you must go to the clergy. Derek, Jacky, Julian, and Sylvie. They have all given us something to think about in their sermons, as well as sharing their friendship and participation in organised events on Zoom.

I am sure you would all agree that we have been extremely lucky to have a vicar who knows how to use the internet. Nick and Thom have also helped with broadcasting the services. The choir has enjoyed practising with Thom, and he coerced us all into singing on our own and sending him our efforts which have sounded rather good each Sunday. Thank you also to those who led our prayers or did a reading each Sunday.

Where would we be without Zoom? So many people have used it for communicating and in many instances, there has been a better attendance than usual at our meetings. No one has had to leave the warmth of the house!

We are now in a position where we are all hoping things will return to normal. But what will our 'normal' be? I think we all have a duty to do our best to make it as rewarding as it was 13 months ago. We have maybe learnt how to pray better, how to support each other and, in my case, certainly more patience.

I mentioned Dani and Scott at our last AGM. Their baby girl is due on 23 September. Her name will be Thekla Phoebe, both Biblical names. Thekla was a strong woman in the early church and Phoebe was a deacon.

Finally, thank you to all of you who have volunteered in some way. I do hope no one feels they have been left out. We are a big family here at St James's as we all play our part. Being a churchwarden makes you realise how many people take on small tasks to make the whole team successful. Our ministry team has done such a good job over the past year. We are fortunate to have all of them - their readings of the Gospel, plus sermons, and participation in worship. I am sure you would agree with me that our worship has been enriched by them all. Top of the list is Derek; where would we have been without him? They say there's always a woman in the background so thank you to Sandra who has given Derek the help he needs. We must also say thank you to Alan who is always there for Jacky.

I have had a wonderful four years and it would not have been as enjoyable if any one of you had not been there to help me. Many thanks and I hope we will all go forward together.

Gwynneth Lloyd

Churchyard Team

Owing to the various Covid restrictions over the past year churchyard maintenance activities have been limited and there has been no group activity or meeting of the Gardening Club during this period.

However, an early 2020 spring meeting was held with Continental Landscapes, the Council's subcontractors for churchyard maintenance, to plan the grass cutting, brush and bramble clearance and hedge cutting. This was carried out in good measure as and when required and conservation of flowering plants and wildlife habitats were all considered.

Untended brush on the east side of the churchyard was all cut back as were brambles along the path from the lych gate and the long Park Road perimeter holly hedge was cut in late summer. The War Memorial lawn and surrounds were cut and tidied for Remembrance Sunday.

Volunteer activity was carried out by individuals, keeping in touch by telephone and email. The lawn in the new north west garden was periodically mown as required and the new garden flower planting and weeding and plants maintenance there and along the new west-front shrubbery was well maintained with spent annuals cleared in the autumn and a thorough weeding and digging over carried out in early spring.

It is hoped to reconvene the Gardening Club once current restrictions safely allow.

Saplings were kept cut back throughout the churchyard and the Garden of Remembrance has been tended on a regular basis and the usual weekly litter clearance continued. Memorial roses and young trees were watered during dry spells.

Immediately prior to Remembrance Sunday the war graves throughout the churchyard were tidied and a wooden poppy cross placed on each grave. The War Memorial was brushed down and the sand in the pots for individual crosses was dressed. It is to be noted that the War Memorial has become stained and will need to be professionally treated in due course to remove the dark grey which has discoloured most of the stonework. After the memorial wreaths were laid, the wreaths were secured on a wire band to prevent them from blowing away in the wind.

Contact has been made with the Senior Parks Officer to establish who the new arboricultural officer is so that the churchyard tree maintenance can continue and,

it is hoped this will include the replacement of the Canadian sugar maple by the Canadian War Grave which had died and needed to be felled.

There was only one interment of ashes in the Garden of Remembrance plus one burial into a family grave plot during this period.

Ros Daly

Connections

Connections fell victim to the pandemic in 2020, but we hope to resume sessions in the autumn.

Coryn Robinson

Hampton Deanery Synod

Due to the pandemic the new Deanery Synod met only twice in the past year, on both occasions via Zoom. The **first meeting** took place on 23 November 2020 chaired by the Area Dean, Rev Tim Garrett, vicar of Holy Trinity, Twickenham. The main item on the agenda was 'Diocesan Vision 2030'.

The Bishop of Kensington shared the emerging thoughts in the Diocese around the 2030 Vision, the aim of which is 'For every Londoner to encounter the love of God in Christ'. He outlined the new context in which we were now operating, a time of suffering, mourning and re-imagining. He stated that the parish was at the centre of the Vision and the Diocese was examining how it could better resource and support parishes for mission and ministry. He explained how the Vision was underpinned by Ambitions (Confident Discipleship, Compassionate Communities, Creative Growth); Priorities (Younger People, Safer Churches, Racial Diversity) and Resources (People, Buildings, Finance). The Bishop would be devising a Kensington Area plan based on Deanery and parish responses to the proposals.

The **second meeting** was held on 23 February 2021.

Tony Dixon (Treasurer) updated members on the current position with Common Fund pledges for 2021. In 2020 Hampton Deanery had only managed to pay 89% of the Common Fund request and the situation in 2021 looked even worse. Offers were down 15% overall. Ten of the 15 parishes were planning to contribute less than the average annual cost of clergy stipend and housing. The Diocese had dipped into reserves to pay stipends and running costs in 2020 and would do so again in 2021, if necessary, but the situation was not sustainable in the long term. As the

pandemic recedes, parishes were urged to try to bring 'giving' back to pre-Covid levels.

Rev Canon Miles Baker, Area Director of Ministry, Kensington, gave a short presentation on the future of vocations. The situation in the Diocese overall was very encouraging. There were 63 ordinands currently in training from the Kensington Area alone. He outlined the likely changes to the discernment process in 2021, which would focus on a candidate's **potential** rather than evidence of what they had already achieved to meet the relevant criteria.

Rev Chris Kennedy outlined the progress of the **Activate** initiative, a Deanery Mission project focusing on sports and activities. At the previous Synod meeting we had been informed that the parish of St Peter and St Paul, Teddington, had been divided between St Mary with St Alban, Teddington and St Michael and St George, Fulwell, and a mission hub created in the St Peter and St Paul buildings in central Teddington. Due to the pandemic, it had not been easy for collective sports activities to take place and so the emphasis to date had been on providing virtual exercise classes, particularly aimed at people referred by social prescribers. See: <https://www.activatechurch.org.uk/>

The Area Dean introduced new clergy to the Synod: Rev Canon John Kafwanka Kaoma, St Augustine's, Whitton; Rev Debs Wignall, St Richard's, Hanworth; Rev Donna Williams, All Saints, Hampton.

Both meetings had been interesting and thought-provoking and brought members up-to-date with developments locally, in the diocese and the wider Church. A full report of each meeting is available from the Secretary to the PCC.

Lesley Mortimer

Hampton Fund

(Formerly the Hampton Fuel Allotment Charity)

How Hampton Fund helps local people and charities

Hampton Fund, which dates back to 1811, provides financial support to individuals and families on low income to help with the costs of gas and electricity. It also provides grants to local voluntary sector organisations which offer services and activities to people in need.

The Charity's area of benefit covers the following six 'parishes' within Richmond: *Hampton, Hampton Hill, Hampton Wick, Teddington, Twickenham and Whitton.*

Impact of the Covid-19 pandemic

As we are all only too aware, the global impact of the Covid-19 pandemic has been huge, and it affected Hampton Fund in a number of ways. *First*, the office in Hampton High Street had to be closed, which meant its staff had to rely on Zoom and other information technology to communicate with one another, the trustees and its clients. *Second*, the pandemic had a big financial impact on many of the local charities who were unable to fund-raise in the ways they had in the past. And *third*, it had a dramatic impact on the market value of Hampton Fund itself. Fortunately, the Fund had sufficient resources to be able to support the extra demands placed on it during 2020 by way of increased grants. In addition, a large proportion of the Fund's stockmarket losses have since been recovered.

Financial awards in the year to 30 June 2020

(1) Fuel and other grants to families

For many years now, Hampton Fund has supported families who are in work but on low income. During the financial year ending 30 June 2020, 1,591 people benefitted from fuel grants to the value of £770,650. The grant money is sent to the relevant fuel company, to be credited to their customer's account.

To qualify for help with your gas and electricity costs, one or more of the following conditions must apply:

- You work part time or are on a low wage
- You receive state benefits
- You receive help with your rent or council tax
- You live in one of the six areas of benefit listed above.

In addition, during the year ending 30 June 2020, households on low income benefitted from essential white goods and furniture to the value of £53,325. The Charity also awarded school journey grants amounting to £1,298 and school uniform grants of £1,000.

(2) Community grants

Hampton Fund also awarded 73 community grants to the value of £1,130,550. This supported the work of the charity sector, providing a range of services and activities for local people in need.

During the year ending 30 June 2020, many charities benefitted from a capital grant including:

- Spear Housing Association - £40,000

- Richmond Crossroads Care (via 3 grants) - £71,000
- Home-Start Richmond, Kingston and Hounslow - £35,000
- Kick London - £8,000
- LVA Trust - £26,500
- Linden Hall Community Centre (via 2 grants) - £26,500
- Richmond Advice & Information on Disability (RAID) (via 3 grants) - £64,000
- The People Hive - £15,000
- Orange Tree Theatre - £12,000
- Princess Alice Hospice - £20,000
- Richmond Borough Mind - £40,600
- Age UK Richmond (via 3 grants) - £106,200

How Hampton Fund is run

The Charity is run by a board of up to 12 Trustees comprising:

- The permanent ex-officio Trustee is the serving Vicar of St Mary's Hampton.
- Three Trustees are nominated by the Parish Church Councils of All Saints, St Mary's and St James (currently Clive Beaumont) – all in Hampton.
- Three are nominated by the London Borough of Richmond upon Thames.
- Up to five Trustees are co-opted from the local community on the basis of the skills and experience required by the Charity.

In addition, the Charity has four employees:

David White - Director

Carole Swinburne - Grants Manager

Jan Webb - Community Grants Manager

Sheila Pryde - Administrator

St James's application to Hampton Fund in 2018

In 2018 St James made an application to Hampton Fund for half the cost of the Fitz Wygram Hall refurbishment, but this was turned down because of the size of our reserves at that time. We understand that they will look sympathetically at a future application when we have spent more of our legacy.

Place-based giving scheme – *oneRichmond*

oneRichmond is what is known as a place-based giving scheme and is currently a collaborative venture between Hampton Fund and Richmond Parish Lands Charity. In due course, it is hoped that other community stakeholders will also be

involved to help unlock additional financial and other resources to provide assistance to those in need in the Borough.

History of the Charity

Hampton Fuel Allotment Charity was established by an Act of Parliament in 1811, when land owned by King George III in the ancient town of Hampton was donated to the parish of St Mary's Church. The land was rented out, and the money used to buy fuel for the poor of the parish.

By the mid-1980s the Charity's income had significantly reduced. However, the Trustees made the decision to sell land owned by the Charity. In 1989 St Clare's Nursery was sold to Sainsbury's for £21.6m. The sale significantly revived the fortunes of the Charity. The money was invested, with the income providing support to those in need. The Charity has since been able to extend the area of benefit beyond Hampton residents to Twickenham, Teddington and Whitton. The Fund was valued at around £58m as at 31 December 2020.

More information

Website: www.hamptonfund.co.uk

Contact details: Hampton Fund, 15 High Street, Hampton, TW12 2SA.

Tel: 020 8941 7866.

The office is located near the river, almost opposite the Jolly Coopers pub. During Covid times, please phone us on the above number.

Clive Beaumont, Trustee

Hampton Parochial Charities

There are three closely coordinated charities that St James's has the right to nominate a trustee to: Hampton Parochial Charity (Jubilee House Almshouse and Relief in Need Grants), School of Industry (Grants for young people in education), Hampton War Memorial (further almshouses accommodation). Anne Pietsch is our nominated trustee, Dr David Wile and Rev Derek Winterburn are co-opted trustees. Derek is also the chair.

The trustees meet quarterly. The charities are administered by Clerk & Housing Manager Nikki Hall. Obviously, this has been a difficult year with the residents being even more dependent on Nikki and the part-time caretaker as many of them were 'shielding' or being very cautious. Until January the virus was kept at bay.

However, since then most of the residents have had it (and the caretaker). One died and one was unable to return to their flat.

Despite the flats being 'desirable' both in facilities and location (Ashley Road, Hampton) it has been hard to fill some vacant ones, and the trustees (led by Anne) are investigating broadening the terms of the charity's deeds so that other people to apply, who cannot now.

Derek Winterburn

Life Groups

Last Lent the COVID lock-down interrupted the joint Lent Course we were sharing with All Saints '*Finding a Voice: The King's Speech*'.

After Easter, being more confident about using Zoom, a group gathered to work through Pete Grieg's 'Prayer Course'. Taking the Lord's Prayer line by line, Grieg developed a particular aspect of prayer for investigation. The course material made plentiful suggestions about how to pray.

In the Autumn / Winter a group read through the Screwtape Letters by CS Lewis in a 'book club' style, taking three chapters a week. Set in the time of the Blitz there were interesting parallels with the situations we were experiencing.

We also ran an online Alpha Course on Zoom.

This Lent we took the York Course 'Caring for Creation'. Listening to interviews and using the breakout rooms in Zoom we were challenged to think practically about the impact our lives make on the environment and consider changing. The course prepares us for the relaunch of Eco-Church in the summer.

Derek Winterburn

Music and Worship

St. James's Players, our church band, have not been able to meet during the pandemic.

The choir has worked tirelessly throughout the year to support worship in the changing environment – they had provided recorded music from the very beginning of the first lockdown, and if anything, the efforts have increased as time has gone by.

Choir practices have been largely held online; where the regulations permit then a hybrid model, with an online and an in-person element, has been used. And the choir have also been recording and submitting their vocal lines for the hymns and other service music, on a weekly basis.

The experience of singing choral music alone is an odd one, and not always comfortable – but many of us have discovered unsuspected reserves of musicianship and vocal quality. Some very fine voices have shone out, where previously they were concealed in the general homogeneous texture.

We've taken the opportunity to explore the repertoire, identifying styles and methods for successful rehearsal and recording prior to the service in these unusual conditions.

During this we've expanded our own repertoire, introducing plainsong hymns to the Christmas carol service and subsequently, as well as works by Stanford, Gounod, Purcell, Parry and Shephard new to us, and revisiting Wesley, Mozart, Elgar, Handel, and Rutter.

This wealth of new material has led us, for online services, to develop the idea of a choral voluntary – sung music before the service, rather than organ alone. As in previous years, we've benefitted from being joined by semi-regular guests from other choirs and from further afield – as far afield as Cardiff and even Clapham, this year.

I thank the whole choir for their work; and I must pay particular tribute to Martin Hinckley and to Jane Newman who've been most generous with their advice, encouragement, and thoughtful consideration even of the more outlandish schemes I've suggested over the last year.

Thom Stanbury

Parish Visitors' Team

The Parish Visitors this year have been critical in keeping the church family together through the three lockdowns.

The team met in March last year and agreed to facilitate any practical help that was needed if for example someone was sick or shielding. A number of people were

helped in this way, but through good neighbourliness and the action of the statutory authorities it did not become a major concern here.

The team also divided the congregation between them and ensured that everyone was contacted one way or another between the more frequent meetings the team undertook. So by and large we were able to have a general sense of how people were managing (with the various configurations of lockdowns, and online church) and any causes for concern.

Derek Winterburn

Parochial Church Council

This was Derek's fourth full year as vicar, and it was inevitably dominated by the impact Covid-19 had on church life.

The PCC had 20 members, including the vicar (chair), curate and one churchwarden, and three Deanery Synod representatives, who sat as ex-officio members. It met seven times and attendance averaged 16 people or 85%. PCC members are trustees of St James's, which is a registered charity, and can serve a maximum of two consecutive three-year terms of office without a break, either starting or standing down after the Annual Parochial Church Meeting, usually held in April. Only churchwardens must stand for re-election every year. They can serve a maximum of six consecutive years without a break.

Pre-Covid, the year began much as any other, with our annual away day in January. The focus was what St James's was doing to grow the church in outreach, mission and evangelism – effectively our Mission Action Plan. (The PCC had previously agreed to a 5% growth target, which equalled 24 adults).

Derek presented a flow chart showing initiatives from 2017-2020 and where these had been successful, they were continued.

Our outreach included regular publication of the *Spire*, an up-to-date website and active use of Social Media as well as distribution of *You're Invited* events leaflet to prioritised homes.

The church continued to encourage people to see St James's as theirs by providing services at Laurel Dene, welcoming children and carers to the Ark playgroup, opening our doors to older people at *Connections* and inviting people to attend St James's Open Day, presenting popular films for families and adults through the

Pop-Up Cinema, as well as being a valued venue for concerts - pop and classical, and offering Choral Evensong regularly. Growth could also come from Alpha courses each autumn.

Activity around children would now include Messy Church, running monthly from February, and extending the Holiday Club in the summer to a full week, possibly involving Thom and a junior choir. We would continue to work with local schools and run the *Experience Easter* and *Experience Christmas* workshops again.

Finance remained a concern. Despite increased giving a £24,000 deficit was forecast. Derek, Gwynneth and Dawn met Mary Spredbury, the Diocese's Area Financial Advisor, to discuss our situation. Mary did not consider our costs to be grossly high, but our fundraising for the church was low. Our contribution to the Common Fund, however, was high and we could consider reducing it. Derek proposed that we separated our fundraising for the church from fundraising for our charities by creating a separate team to come up with ideas.

Dawn has calculated that getting to break even was achievable if everyone in planned giving now gave (on average) an extra £10 a month this year and increased it by the same amount for the following four years.

The PPC's plan to refurbish the church moved a step closer. The meeting approved the removal of our existing pews to be replaced by flexible seating - with a mix of chairs and benches the preferred option.

In March, it was reported that our new collection plates with a card reader were generating their first payments. The Churchyard Team were pressing ahead with plans to enhance the area. The Rose Garden (where people could buy a rose as a memorial to loved ones) was steadily growing, a wildflower meadow was to be sown, and a maple was being replaced by the Canadian graves.

April's meeting became the first to be held on the Zoom platform using new powers issued by the Bishop of London. The early impact of Covid-19 on our finances emerged as hall rental income was turned off, with the exception of the nursery school. The Parish Administrator was furloughed, and hall cleaning was stopped.

Although the Quiz Night to raise money for the Lent Appeal was cancelled, everyone who had bought a ticket agreed to treat it as a donation, enabling additional Gift Aid. Before the lockdown we had held two amazing Messy Churches with about 70 people across both. Extraordinarily, no one from the first session

came back for the second, but there were positive reasons for this! This represented exactly what we had hoped for: bringing new people into church. It was tragic that this work has had to go on hold.

Derek took to Facebook in the vicarage to enable some form of Sunday worship to continue. He was also producing a weekday podcast, *Time to Pray*. Dani produced two stories each week for the children, which she has posted on our Facebook page, along with Zoom hook-ups for the youth group.

When the PCC met again in July the finances were a little clearer. General collections were down, as were white envelopes (regular givers) and blue envelopes (ad hoc giving). Income from regular Planned Giving by direct debit or standing orders was holding up fairly well. Rental income remained down. Following Church of England advice, churches were not charging for funerals during the peak coronavirus period (fees would resume in September), weddings had also been affected (we picked up some, while others were delayed).

Investment income had held up remarkably well. While income was down, we had also cut our costs. Nick remained on furlough, we were not paying for hall cleaning (the nursery, as the only user, were doing this themselves), and the *Spire* magazine had not been printed for three issues, saving over £1000.

The main thrust of Derek's report was about getting 'back to church'. Using the two-metre rule St James's new capacity was 28-30 people. A booking system had been set up. Sunday services would resume in church from 2 August. Only one church locally had opened on the first Sunday in July when public services were allowed by the government.

Services would be streamed live on Facebook for others. Nick had trained to use the system; no singing was allowed in church. Thom had put together the individual voices of choir members, which they recorded and sent to him. This would be broadcast in church for people to listen to.

Sadly, Dani, our Children & Families' Worker, had returned to the US with Scott, who having completed his doctorate at St Mary's University, had been unable to find work in the UK.

By September Derek had conducted a survey to get feedback from both people attending services, and those watching at home. Those at home felt less well-served, and he was introducing the weekly psalm for everyone to read during the service. Attendance was picking up, and we would provide additional places by using some seating in the north aisle. Many people attending the services were staying

afterwards for a socially-distanced chat in the courtyard – allowed at the time – while the good weather held. Permission had now been given for churches to hold their annual meetings on Zoom. Ours would be in October.

In November (following our APCM), we welcomed three new members and three returning members. Gwynneth returned for a third year as sole churchwarden. She was sworn into office by Derek using powers conferred on him by the area archdeacon. Finance was little changed, with spending down almost as much as income.

Our traditional Christmas services, with large congregations, would not be possible this year. As part of our efforts to tackle the deficit, the PCC agreed to cut our Common Fund contribution for 2021 to £89,460. We would still be a net contributor (105%) and it would save us £12,000. Perhaps surprisingly, our Harvest service in October had raised more money than the previous year; we had collected more food too.

*Nick Bagge
PCC Secretary*

Properties Team

Responsibility

The Properties Team has the responsibility to the PCC for the maintenance, upkeep and care of the church, the hall, the vicarage, the garage, the shed and all other structures; apart from the moveable items that are the legal responsibility of the churchwardens. The churchyard is maintained by the London Borough of Richmond upon Thames, overseen by the Team.

The Church - Summary State & Quinquennial Survey

The church building is considered to be in generally good order. The latest Quinquennial Survey was conducted in August 2017. Whilst the architect reported favourably on the general fabric and regular maintenance of the Church the survey listed 9 items in Category 1 (Items of utmost urgency) and 29 items in Category II (Essential within 2 years). All Category 1 items have now been completed. Work has continued on Category II items with 20 items now complete, 3 items relate to ongoing monitoring, 3 items will be addressed as part of the Re-ordering programme and a further 2 should also be considered in the context of the Re-ordering programme.

Routine Maintenance and Works

With the church closed for a significant part of the year because of government restrictions associated with Covid-19 little maintenance work has been conducted

in the period. Notwithstanding this, heating, electrical services, fire appliances, lighting, the clock, the bells, the lightning conductor, and the drains all have regular professional inspections that have been done when access was permitted. All records of inspections and certificates are recorded and filed in the Church Logbook held in the church office.

As stated above, maintenance activities have been limited during the reporting period. In line with our agreed policy of only replacing light bulbs when they fail, a number in the chandeliers and globes have been replaced. In all cases, the failed bulbs have been replaced with more efficient LED equivalents. A repair has been made to a bell rope that failed; the rope will be replaced in due course.

One of the pistons governing the use of Bell 6 in the clock's quarterly chimes malfunctioned that required the intervention of Smiths, the clock smiths. The piston will need to be replaced but this is being deferred on cost grounds, unless pre-empted by a further failure. The railings in the car park were painted, completing the work on external boundaries.

Whilst the paintwork on the brick walls remains in a poor state of repair because of the earlier ingress of water, particularly in the south aisle and chancel, redecoration is being deferred to spread both the cost and disruption and is now expected to be completed as part of the Re-ordering programme when the building will be closed for an extended period. Damp within the external fabric of the church remains a concern and is the subject of regular monitoring.

Although scheduled to be completed between 21 March-4 April 2020, the annual spring clean of the church was ultimately cancelled because of its extended closure. The 2021 spring clean is being deferred until restrictions on church access are lifted; the current expectation is to complete it in readiness for St James' Day. Because it was able to be conducted in as safe manner, the annual leaf-sweep and gutter clearance was undertaken on 12 December 2020.

Church Roof

The state of the church roof is the subject of ongoing monitoring particularly with respect to minor repairs effected in previous reporting periods. Whilst there continues to be minor ingress of water during periods of heavy rain it is not considered sufficient to warrant major investment in complete refurbishment that would not guarantee resolution of the intermittent problems. The roof is monitored by CCTV at all times.

Church Hall

Water ingress in a cupboard was traced to a gutter blocked by leaves. Having been cleaned, a regular quarterly inspection/clearance of the gutters has been instigated to reduce the likelihood of future recurrences caused by a fundamental design flaw in the construction of the gutter.

Membership

The committee meets four times a year, with routine work being undertaken as required outside these meetings. **With an average age of members well over 60, the Team needs to recruit new, younger members**, particularly those with an interest in the maintenance of old buildings, some special knowledge or expertise, and anyone with enthusiasm. If you feel that you could contribute, please contact me via the church office.

*Bryan Basdell
Chair, Properties Team*

Safeguarding Team

[Jane Newman announced in 2019 that she was retiring from the position of Church Safeguarding Officer (CSO) after many years in various safeguarding positions at St James's. Annalea Gratton, a teacher with considerable safeguarding knowledge, was due to take over at the Annual Meeting in April 2019. Then, the pandemic struck and our APCM was delayed until the autumn. The handover took place during the summer.]

It has been an unusual start to my time as safeguarding officer and I continue to get to know the role fully. No safeguarding issues have been raised this year. Recently, the Diocesan Safeguarding Team suggested the idea of a focus group for Church Safeguarding Officers for which I have attended the first group, albeit virtually!

I have completed my e-training level 1 and 2 for the safeguarding of children and level 1 and 2 for vulnerable adults. Although I am a designated Safeguarding Lead in my place of work I continue to search for training (ably supported by Nick) to complete my level 3 run by the diocese. In conversation with the diocesan safeguarding team, they have acknowledged the need for further Saturday training. Although many of the PCC have completed safeguarding training, we are aware of the need for refresher training for which I am currently in conversation with the diocese, and we are hopeful for more e-training being offered.

*Annalea Gratton
Church Safeguarding Officer*

3rd Hampton Hill Scouts' Group

It will come as little surprise to learn that Covid-19 has had quite a marked effect on our ability to run over the past year. With precious little face-to-face activity, we couldn't go on camp and pretty much all regular activities ceased.

Thanks to the now ubiquitous Zoom platform, the leaders at 3rd Hampton Hill Scout Group adapted their programmes and all sections managed to keep things running and at points during the year, when restrictions allowed, we were able to meet outdoors in limited numbers.

Zoom isn't for everyone however, Beavers being particularly challenging to deliver online and all credit to that tremendous team of Richard, Jane and Laura, who kept things running. The effect of the pandemic could be seen when we completed our annual census in January. Scouting in Richmond as a whole shrunk by around 10% overall.

Our group remains strong, however, backed up by the Group Executive Committee, Young Leaders, and adult helpers and just prior to the pandemic we opened our new Explorers section, Peake Explorers, named after the UK astronaut Tim Peake, for our 14-18-years-olds, therefore providing continuity for our members when they move on from Scouts. Credit to Kate and Matt for doing this whilst keeping Wednesday Cubs running.

In normal times the Group meets at our headquarters at the George Stanley Hall, adjacent to the Recreation Ground in School Road Avenue and comprises: a single Colony of Beavers for 6-8-year-olds on a Friday evening, two packs of Cubs for 8-10-year-olds (meetings held on Monday and Wednesday evenings), two Scout troops for 10-14-year-old (meetings held on Tuesday and Friday evenings), and Peake Explorers.

Between the sections we had about 100 children taking part in activities every week and we are looking forward to the easing of restrictions after Easter 2021, enabling a return to face-to-face Scouting. At this point we really must call out the fortitude and determination of our leadership team, all volunteers who have continued to provide quality Scouting despite the restrictions, especially considering the increased risk they placed themselves in at times as a result.

Change brings change though and the observant amongst you (and those with exceptionally good memories) may have noticed that we are reduced to just a single Beaver Colony. Our intention is to re-open the second Colony when conditions are

right. We also have change in our Cub section as Matt & Kate transfer fully to Explorer leadership and Wend (who has led Monday Cubs) taking on new opportunities within the group after Easter, meaning we need to recruit new leaders.

The pandemic has stretched everyone, and harassed parents are taking a break from home schooling as their children return to school, not an ideal time to be trying to recruit volunteers. Recruitment is an ongoing activity in any Scout group, but we are reaching a point of crisis in the group as we have been without a secretary for our six weekly Executive meetings for over a year, resulting in the remaining volunteers wearing multiple hats - anything but ideal.

Here's a list of where we need help. The priority is Cub leadership as although we're keeping Monday Cubs open and Wednesday Cubs has one new leader in Maggie, unless we can recruit new Cub leaders during the summer, we will be forced to close one Cub pack. This would have a really heavy impact on the group as a whole.

We need:

- Three Cub Leaders
- New Beaver Leaders
- Executive secretary

Volunteering has so many benefits, from fulfilment and learning new skills, to increased social activity and friendship, and most importantly in these challenging times, it is great for your mental health. Just Google the benefits of volunteering or [see this site](#) for more information.

Each Cub pack has a team of helpers in place, there's ongoing support within the group still and we have a great training programme to equip you with all you need to be a great leader; you even get a free uniform!

To contact our group in the first instance please contact our Assistant Group Scout Leader, Paul Fitchett on: vacancies3hh@btinternet.com or call him on 077 7764 6958

Paul Fitchett

Servers' Team

To comply with social distancing, Servers have not used since March 2020. They look forward to their return when restrictions allow.

Lesley Mortimer

Spire Team

Membership: Janet Nunn – Chair and Editor
Nick Bagge – Design and Sub-editor
Rev Derek Winterburn
Susan Horner – Proof-reader and Distribution
Dennis Wilmot – Distribution new areas
Prill Hinckley – Regular articles

Because of Covid-19 we were unable to print the usual number of copies of the *Spire* and distribute them locally. We did, however, still produce all nine issues, but during the first lockdown they were distributed electronically via our website, or by email. We did print a small number of copies in-house to send to people who wouldn't otherwise be able to read the editions.

We were unable to run our annual appeal as the majority of the money comes from readers of paper copied, but equally we were not spending money on printing. Our printers, Paul and Julie Venn, had been very supportive and we kept in regular touch with them.

We are a small, dedicated team and met by Zoom each month to compile issues or, when we have a double issue, to plan for the year ahead. Nick Bagge continues to produce such excellent layouts and contributors are always impressed when they send him the typewritten copy and within a few days receive it back, laid out with photos and headlines that 'bring it to life'. We also updated our guidelines for articles so that people know what they are letting themselves in for.

We were very grateful to all those who willingly provided articles or offered to write on a subject that inspired them. We particularly thanked Canon Julian Reindorp for continuing with his *Opinion* column, delivering so promptly each issue. Dennis Wilmot, who chairs the Charities We Support Team, organised the Charity Box each issue.

It was a challenging year, particularly when we were unable to print, and/or distribute copies locally, including to shops in the High Street but, nevertheless, we enjoyed our work producing a balanced, good quality and interesting magazine for both parishioners and the local community and we look forward to getting back to something closer to normal in 2021.

Janet Nunn

Sunday Kitchen Team

Refreshments fell victim to Covid-19 in March 2020. We look forward to a return when restrictions are eased.

Gwynneth Lloyd

The Good Guys

The men's group fell victim to Covid-19 in March 2020. We look forward to a return when restrictions are eased.

Nick Bagge

Welcome Team

Like other volunteers, the stop-start year placed restrictions on the Team. Nevertheless, we have been on duty throughout the time the church has been open, providing a calm and reassuring welcome and directing parishioners to designated seats while maintaining social distancing.

I request that the APCM appoint as Welcomers for the year 2021-2022:

Wendy Baker	Ria Beaumont
Clive Beaumont	Alan Cammidge
Christopher Carson	Ann Collins
Susan Horner	Gwynneth Lloyd
Moya Meredith-Smith	Ann Peterken
Anne Rowett	Pip Rowett
Penny Sewell	Martin Symons
Janet Taylor	Dennis Wilmot
Elizabeth Wilmot	Jenny Wright

Thank you to all members of the team who play a vital role in the life of the church and contribute to the experience of all who worship here.

We would like to invite newcomers to the team. If you are interested to know more about the Welcoming role, please speak to me or to a member of the clergy.

Janet Taylor