

St Nicholas Church, Great Wilbraham

Working together to be a Christian Community of Worship, Welcome and Care

Deanery of Fordham and Quy, Diocese of Ely
Parochial Church Council
Annual Report & Financial Statements
For the year ended 31st December 2020



Benefice Lockdown Quilt organised by parish assistant Rob Hawkins

Parochial Church Council 2020

The following served as members of the PCC:

Incumbent: The Revd Alice Goodman

Assistant curate: Father Miles Pateman

Licensed Lay Minister: Steve Mashford

Churchwarden: Lorna Carr

Treasurer: Jeremy Barnett

PCC Secretary: Lorna Carr

Representative on the Deanery Synod: Steve Mashford

Elected members: Gillian Humphrey, Allan Painter, Diana Raikes,
Judy Hanmer, John Beadsmoore

2020 proved to be a year like no other. The Coronavirus, Covid 19, swept across the whole world causing many deaths and our normal way of life stopped to help prevent its spread. Church services had to move to the computer either by live streaming or meeting by a method known as zoom – where people were connected by video on computers from their own homes. The ministry team, lead by our vicar Alice, had to work hard to adapt to a new way of reaching the church and wider local community. Meetings all had to be held via linked computers and the usual celebrations could not go ahead. Weddings were cancelled and funerals were greatly restricted. This report will reflect the unprecedented situation this and all churches found themselves in.

BACKGROUND

The Parochial Church Council is responsible for promoting the whole mission of the Anglican Church within the Parish of Great Wilbraham, encompassing all pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical aspects of the work of the Church. It is part of a Plurality with St Vigor's, Fulbourn, St John the Evangelist, Little Wilbraham and St George's, Six Mile Bottom. The PCC has maintenance responsibilities for the church building and churchyard area.

Members of the PCC are either ex officio or elected by the Annual Parochial Church Meeting (APCM) in accordance with the Church Representation Rules. The PCC meets at least 4 times a year but also operates through a number of groups or committees, which meet as required during the year, often as a result of issues raised at PCC meetings. These include the Standing Committee, (the only committee required by law with the power to transact the business of the PCC between its meetings, subject to any directions given by the PCC), a Fabric Committee, which is working together to organise structural repairs and general maintenance and a Worship Group which works with Steve Mashford to run the Come and Join services. Committee reports are included in the Appendices

Update

St. Nicholas' Church has had to be very creative this year to still serve the local community and strive to be a source of comfort when normal life stopped.

Rev'd Alice Goodman continues as our vicar with Father Miles Pateman assistant curate.



We were very pleased that Steve Mashford our Licensed Lay Minister's health improved and he was able to take up his duties once again. Rex Buckley, a retired Vicar who has moved to the area helps the team when able. We retain two ordinands, Funmilayo Vaughan and Graham Dunn. Together they work hard to cover the many responsibilities required by the four parishes across the benefice; especially challenging this year.

Our parish assistant, Rob Hawkins left to train to be a vicar. He has been such an integral part of church life and will be missed by us all. His position was filled by Natalie Lealand.

Mothering Sunday 22nd March 2020 proved to be the day on which attended church services throughout the country ceased. The APCM was postponed.

As the year panned out and the way the virus was affecting the general public changed, the church had to respond quickly carrying out risk assessments regularly. There have been periods when the church could be open for private prayer and even a time in the autumn when services in church restarted – albeit with people keeping distanced from each other and only the vicar taking communion. The church bells have now been silent for a year! Lots of material has had to move online. So weekly sheets, children's activities etc have appeared via email. We continued to deliver a small number of paper versions to people who do not use the computer.



The normal pattern of services stopped and it took a little while for an alternative to be organised. The benefice acted as one. Live streaming and zoomed services were organised. On Sundays matins were via zoom at 8am, Holy Communion streamed at 11am (unfortunately streaming is not possible from St. Nicholas' due to poor mobile phone reception). For a while during the summer Steve Mashford organised Come and Join as an outdoor service and it was greatly appreciated and very well attended. Wednesday

morning Wee Worship (Iona style) has continued mostly via zoom.

Rob organised Chat in the Churchyard over the summer which happened fortnightly as well as the Lockdown Quilt (pictured on the front of the report). The ministry team phoned those isolated and encouraged us all to try and keep in touch this way. We were never able to restart Wednesday Church, much to our disappointment. Wilbraham School had to comply with strict small groups only of village children mixing. However in order to keep in touch with our Wednesday Church families, Natalie organised bags of activities for Advent and Easter which were taken round and given in person to the children at home.



Harvest was celebrated by a very generous collection of gifts for Jimmy's Night Shelter collected mainly through the school. There was a very well attended joint All Souls service held at St. John's Little Wilbraham during the period when a small choir was permitted. The Lessons and Carols Christmas service was organised by Father Miles and due to clever technology many households from around the world joined together to hear the traditional Christmas readings, as well as poems and sing carols – words appearing on screen. Christmas day saw a small congregation meet for communion at 9.30am with a choir of 6. The best we could do in the circumstances.

Weddings were mostly postponed as those allowed to attend was severely restricted. A number of village funerals occurred over the last year and while only 30 were allowed in church we were extremely grateful to Tony, Neil and Andy Goryn who organised a sound system so additional people could sit or stand well spaced apart in the churchyard.

St. Nicholas' took part again in the Wilbrahams' Winter Wonder Walk. During Advent a different house, church, or business had a window display for walkers to visit. This was organised by the school PTFA in aid of Jimmy's Night Shelter. Thank you to Nick and Frances Toovey who helped turn the church porch into a nativity scene. Community choir members sang in church as children walked past on their way home from school on 16th December. The event was very popular this year when travel was restricted, community centres, cafes and pubs closed. People found joy in their locality seeing friends out walking in the village and surrounding countryside.

Close links with Great Wilbraham School have been maintained as much as possible with regular recorded services from Alice and Father Miles, who has also continued as school governor. Mothering Sunday posies were made and taken into school so each child could take one home- with some left over for the staff.



Churchyard

The church yard is being maintained by a group of volunteers organised by Tony Ryan. Areas of longer grass were left to encourage more wildlife and a wild flower survey completed which shows many varieties of wild flower are flourishing in the areas left unmown.

Judy Hanmer continues to keep the flower bed next to the church porch looking beautiful all year round.

There is now only one burial plot remaining in addition to the cremation spaces. The church yard is visited frequently, as can be seen by the fresh flowers left regularly; over 100 graves had wreaths or flowers placed on them again at Christmas.

We have had the church open on a daily basis from 9am to about 6pm whenever government guidelines have allowed - thanks to a small team of volunteers.

Cleaning the church and ensuring there are flowers present, continues to be organised on a rota basis by volunteers for which we are very grateful.

LOOKING FORWARD TO 2021/22

We are optimistic that with a vaccine programme being rolled out across the country church life may be able to return to normal soon. We have missed singing - Gill playing the organ and Nigel playing the guitar. We have missed chatting after the service with coffee and cake. We have missed christenings and weddings. We are looking forward to hearing the church bells ring out across the recreation ground again. This year we are hoping to be able to make the church building a more welcoming space by putting in an efficient heating system - postponed from last year due to the restrictions caused by the pandemic. We plan as a result to have more social events take place in church and are

hoping to form a social events committee. We are always looking for more people willing to give a little of their time to support the different areas of work done by the church in this village.

We are also saying goodbye to Father Miles as he takes up his post as Team Vicar in Port Talbot. We will miss him in so many ways - his sense of humour, beautiful singing voice, his choice of millinery, his care and compassion and of course Poppy (his dog). We thank him for his time with us and wish him well in his future life.

APPENDICES

Safeguarding children and vulnerable adults

As a benefice we have adopted a new policy showing we are committed to valuing, listening to and respecting children, young people and vulnerable adults. This includes safe recruitment, supervision, training and DBS checks where applicable.

This policy is available in Twelve and each church.

Parish Assistant

Natalie took over the role of Parish Assistant in September 2020, and was grateful to spend a week working alongside the outgoing Parish Assistant - Rob Hawkins - who was able to tell her more about the day-to-day responsibilities that are part of the role. Due to the pandemic, Natalie has unfortunately been unable to carry out a lot of the in-person work that would usually take up a large amount of her time. This means that she is yet to go into school to conduct assemblies, or to run 'Happy Sad Club'. We have also been unable to recommence Wednesday Church.

In place of in-person assemblies, the clergy have filmed an occasional assembly or service. Natalie has been a part of these, writing and leading prayers, playing the ukulele, and assisting Fr Miles in his storytelling. In response to Lorna's desire to reach out to the children and families of the Wilbrahams, Natalie created 30 Advent bags in December, which were delivered to some of our Wednesday Church children, and other families. She has recently created Lent/Easter bags. Both sets of bags have contained a booklet, written by Natalie, explaining the major days, or stories, which belong to that period of time within the Church calendar. She has also included craft materials and instructions - in the latest bags, a wooden Easter morning scene for the children to decorate, and instructions for making a paper palm cross, among other things.

Alongside children's ministry, Natalie has also been happy to join in with 'Wee Worship' on Wednesday mornings - at first in person at St Nicholas', and latterly on Zoom. The most memorable service of her time here so far has been the Wilbrahams' All Souls service, held at St John's - she writes 'it was lovely to see so many people, and obviously moving to have time in the middle of the pandemic for people to remember those who have died'.

The Parish Assistant job also involves administrative tasks. Natalie composes the weekly sheet for the benefice, responds to wedding enquiries and more general emails, and creates publicity materials for events.

Come and Join....

In September we celebrated the 7th birthday of our 'Come and Join.....' Worship services take place on the 1st Sunday of the month at St Nicholas Great Wilbraham at 9.30 in church. But this year our service in August and September took place outside due to the

restrictions in place with the Covid pandemic. So we were able to worship without having to wear masks. Also singing was not allowed so we listened to songs/hymns via a wireless speaker and an iPhone. We enjoyed the glorious sunshine and blue sky together with sound of birds singing. In October we were able to return to the church building for a Harvest Service around the font, with everyone socially distanced and safe. In the church there was a large collection of food collected for 'Jimmy's Night Shelter' in Cambridge. In our service we were able to say Thank You to Our Farmers for their work in producing the food we eat.

'Come and Join' was still able to take place in church in December the Advent theme was 'the voice of the messengers'. Our last service was in January and the theme for Epiphany was 'What can I give him'. Then there was another lock down, and we are now looking forward to celebrating 'Come and Join' again on Palm Sunday when we can worship again in person.

This service is led by Steve Mashford our Licensed Lay Minister and all are welcome to 'Come and join' our worship on the first Sunday of the month at 9.30.

Deanery Synod

Our Rural Dean Sue Giles retired in 2020 and David Cleugh was appointed in her place. Due to covid there were no meetings. We look forward to being able to meet together again in 2021, and also to discover where God will lead us in the coming year, and to share what we are celebrating, what are our challenges and what our hopes. Our Deanery continues to keep in mind the Diocesan vision: 'living ELY 2025.'

Twelve

Based in Fulbourn, Twelve continues to be an excellent centre for administration,



communication and outreach across the benefice and provides office space for our parish assistant. Unfortunately it has had to remain closed for long periods this year due to government restrictions. When open it acts as a centre for community communication, displaying posters and flyers for future events. In a normal year Twelve hosts community events in addition to providing space for joint church

meetings and groups. Alice holds her vestry hour here on Saturday mornings from 10-11 o'clock. The centre is manned by volunteers and sells greetings cards, second-hand books and jigsaws in addition to running the Twelve Green Bottle plastic reducing scheme. Aimed opening times are: Monday 1.30-4.30pm, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday 9.30am - 4.30pm, Saturday 9.30am - 12.30pm. There is a constant search for more volunteers to help maintain these hours.

Facts and figures 2020

The ability to hold services in 2020 was interrupted twice in 2020 by the Covid 19 lockdowns. We were able to follow our established pattern of services up to 16 March. Services restarted on 2 August but were interrupted again from 2 November to 5 December when we were able to restart our services including our Christmas Day communion service attended by 25 adults and 5 children. Weekly services on Facebook and zoom were initiated shortly after the start of the first lockdown and are continuing when we cannot meet in church.

Our mid-week service at 9.15am on Wednesday mornings has continued as a mixture of services in church, in the church porch and on zoom with, on average, four people

attending. Our Wednesday after school service had to finish from 19 March and we are hopeful we will be able to restart it later in 2021. Up to March it continued to be well supported by 11 children and 10 adults, on average.

During the year there were one baptism, two weddings, and five funerals and thanksgiving services. One service was held for Great Wilbraham Primary School before the lockdown restrictions intervened. There are 34 church members on the St Nicholas Electoral Roll.

The main points on the church finances in 2020, which are detailed in the Annual Accounts, are:

- We started the year with General Funds of £220 and ended with £712.
 - We are grateful to church members for their financial support. £11,575 was donated in the year including Gift Aid tax recoveries and collections. Fees from weddings and funerals totalled £4,190 of which £1,117 was paid on to the Diocese.
 - As in previous years, we balanced our General Funds by using £3,000 from the income from our investment property.
 - We paid the Ministry Share of £11,184, insurance of £2,727, the joint expenses due to St Vigor's, Fulbourn and other costs totalling £2,390.
 - We made two donations to charities-Christian Aid £500 and the Great Wilbraham Anne Ward and Benstead Charities £500.
- In addition to monetary support, donations of food and household items were given to Jimmy's Night Shelter.

- A total of £2,163 was spent on repairs and refurbishments reflecting the costs of the items summarised in the Fabric Committee report.

At 31 December 2020, we held funds of £23,821 in our Building Fund, including a donation of £5,000 for our heating project. In addition, we held £2,236 in trust for the Bell Ringers Fund.

During the year we have acquired a debit card machine which can be used as an alternative to putting cash into the collection plate. In addition, we signed up for the national Parish Giving Scheme which is an alternative to using a standing order payment into the church bank account. It can provide a number of benefits for the ease of administering the monthly accounts.

Investment property-5 Benstead End, Great Wilbraham

The property was let to mid March at a commercial rent. The tenants left at the same time lockdown started although the two events were not connected. Due to the longer term uncertainties, it was decided to accept a lower rent to ensure that an income stream continued. The property was re-let from 1 July 2020 for a twelve month period. In total the rental income in 2020 was £9,508. The total costs in the year were £2,154. In addition, the rent deposit was transferred to the Deposit Protection Scheme.

We continue to be grateful to Graham Clarke for his management of the property, free of charge, throughout the year.

2020 Annual Report of the Fabric Committee for St. Nicholas, Great Wilbraham

Last year we were able to report on the great progress we had made on improving the fabric of the Church. This year the situation has been very different due to the severe restrictions brought about by the pandemic.

A major feature of the year was the review of the five-yearly report on the condition of the fabric of the building – The Quinquennial Inspection Report (QIR 2015) and the completion of QIR 2020, both undertaken by Nigel Walker of Archangel on behalf of the Diocese. We were commended on the work we had completed on delivering the major works identified in the QIR 2015. QIR 2020 concerns itself mainly with bits and pieces, plus three projects that we initiated ourselves over recent years. These were:

Heating: UK Power has confirmed that our electricity power supply is sufficient to supply the proposed new heating system. Accordingly, Lorna Carr has presented a Faculty (Permission to Proceed) to the Diocese and we have been told the process will take some time. The contractor, Chris Dunphy of ChurchEcoMiser is aware of the situation and is keen to proceed as soon as we have the approval of the Diocese and the pandemic permits.

In 2017, when the ivy was removed, we identified that the church wall facing Church Street was in poor repair and to help us fund this work we secured a grant of £5000 from Wadlow Farm Trust. In the event, the matter became urgent and Chris Hanson did the work himself free of charge. The grant was returned to the Trust. With this in mind, we have applied to Wadlow Farm for a further grant of £5000 to cover the gap in paying for the new £35,000 heating system and the available funds from the Church and the St Nicholas Trust.

Damp in the Church: A meeting has been held with the architects and Steve Drake, the electrician, on a way of removing the damp from the kitchen and toilet areas using extractor fans. We await his quotation, but this may require District Council planning permission. We have a rough estimate for the cost of a French Drain around the Tower area which we believe to be a significant primary source of damp. These proposals are full of contingencies and although we have no funds for any of it at the moment, we should probably get a proper quotation to see what funding lies ahead of us.

Fabric Committee Membership: Chris Hanson has already resigned from the Fabric Committee and we take this opportunity to thank him for the huge contribution he has made over the years. John Beadsmoore is retiring as Chairman of The Fabric Committee having overseen the completion of works on QIR 2015 and initiating the heating plan and the longer-term damp proofing project.

John Beadsmoore

Great Wilbraham Guild of Change Ringers - Annual Report -2020

Although no ringing has taken place in the Tower for many months there has been activity both in the Tower and with the Tower's Ringers since the first lockdown.

The bells have been well looked after by Paul Lambton in his role as Steeple Keeper. He has performed regular inspections of the Tower and assisted when Taylors carried out their inspection in October. Outside of the Tower he has worked with our suppliers to maintain our ancillary ringing equipment and continues to work with the PCC in matters concerned with the upkeep of the bells.

Outside of the Tower, from April 2020, we have been holding weekly online Tower practices using special ringing software called "Ringing Room" and the new normal of Zoom for video and voice interaction. We have been greatly supported by ringers joining

the practices from outside of the Tower and a special mention of Louise Dobson's and Martin Kitson's contribution should be made. This allows us to continue learning the technicalities of ringing and to reinforce all those important skills we need when ringing, short of those needed for pulling a rope! We expect that when we do return to ringing in the Tower, and we have regained the strength in our arms and our hands have hardened again, we will be better ringers than when we stopped in March 2020. Lastly, I would like to mention that we rang tributes to Captain Sir Tom Moore using Ringing Room and this has recently been published in the magazine Ringing World.

So, although the bells have been silent, we have been keeping the bells ready, and our skills honed, for when we can return to the Tower and can celebrate our return to ringing.

The St Nicholas Great Wilbraham Trust Chairman's Report for 2020/21

The St Nicholas Great Wilbraham Trust is currently made up by four local trustees (with one vacancy), the incumbent vicar, a co-opted member from the village, plus two members of the PCC (Warden & Treasurer) who attend by special invitation. It is with great sadness that we record that during the year we lost Richard Wright, one of our longest standing trustees. His kindness & generosity will be much missed by the trust and all the villagers in Great Wilbraham and beyond. His place as a trustee has been taken by Alex Wright his son, who has kindly offered to follow in his father's footsteps.

The trust's purpose is to "raise money for the preservation repair maintenance improvement upkeep beautification and restoration of the church and of any monument fitting fixture stained glass organ or bell in the church but excluding the church yard adjoining the church....and the monies shall be given to the PCC to spend on works specified by the trustees...".

Over the past twelve months, the trust donated to the PCC a sum of £11,712 towards the cost of re-rendering the external north face of the transept wall, which was been recommended as an urgent requirement by the church's architect in his quinquennial report (scheduled to be re-surveyed in November 2020).

The fundraising activities were severely limited by Covid restrictions to: raising money at Saturday Village Local Farm Markets and encouraging Gift Aid contributions towards both the general fund and the Legacy Capital Fund.

As at 31 December 2020 the general fund amounted to a sum of 18,985.16 and the Legacy Capital Fund (comprising income bearing investments in stocks & shares) is valued at the time of writing at £218,911.24 The target for this fund remains at £1M (ALL the capital must be protected in perpetuity), to produce a target income of £50,000 pa. To date, the income generated by the Legacy Fund has amounted to £16,708.63

For further information on how to contribute most efficiently, please call our treasurer, Tony Ryan, initially on 01223 880593 or email to lyansan@btinternet.com

Graham Clarke, chairman

Monday 8 March 2021