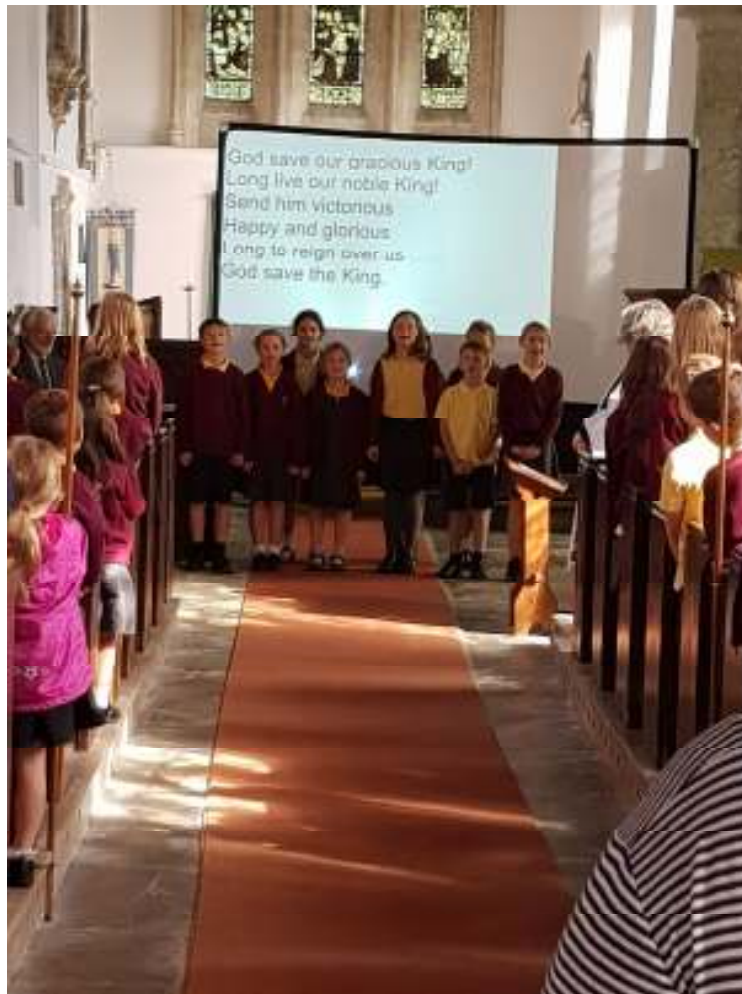


St Nicholas Church, Great Wilbraham

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 2022**



Parochial Church Council 2022

The following served as members of the PCC:

Incumbent: The Revd Alice Goodman

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, Jackie Beadsmoore

Benefice Safeguarding officer: Mary Kendall

2022 really saw church life beginning to get back to normal, with the church open daily. At St. Nicholas' we began to sing hymns without the wearing of masks and take communion normally. Some people have still been cautious and so numbers in church haven't quite recovered to pre-covid figures. It proved to be a strange year with great celebrations for the Platinum Jubilee of Queen Elizabeth II followed a few months later by her funeral. The church played a central role in remembering both events.

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, led by Rev Alice Goodman, continues to work hard in Great Wilbraham to show our Christian faith in action – reaching out to the local community. We were able to run our August coffee mornings, Bible study, a soup lunch - thank you Jackie and Di, and re-start Wednesday Church.



We are lucky that Steve Mashford continues as our Licensed Lay Minister.

Our Parish Assistant, Yin-An Chen, who worked hard in the parish for a year left in the autumn to be ordained at Lichfield Cathedral, a group of us went to the service to support him. We miss him and his partner, Tim, very much as they really embraced parish life, Tim taking on the unpaid role as manager of Twelve, the benefice office and drop in centre in Fulbourn. We held a benefice lunch at St. Nicholas' in order to say goodbye properly.

The Parish Assistant position was then split in half and we now have Sian Hornby, who looks after the clerical side of the job and Ben Davidson, who is the Pastoral Assistant. He has settled in very well and leads Wednesday Church and Bible study with enthusiasm. A group of us studied Revelations; it proved fascinating and provoked some lively discussions.

The normal pattern of services has now resumed. The first Sunday of the month Steve Mashford leads Come and Join, the third Sunday is Holy Communion both at 9.30am. Gill Humphrey plays the piano or organ and Nigel Start accompanies her on the guitar.

Wednesday morning Iona style morning prayers resumed in church and Wednesday Church returned twice monthly. Refreshments are served after Sunday services giving an opportunity to welcome newcomers properly as well as keeping in touch with regular attendees.

Thank you, as always, to Denise Jackson who supports Wednesday Church and everything else we do. The new heating has proved very useful at making the church warm and inviting but with the increase costs of electricity paying the bill for this will be an ongoing challenge.

Last year saw two large village weddings- always a joy, as well as three very well attended village funerals.

We held the normal Easter services - Walk of Witness from St. John's, Little Wilbraham to St. Nicholas on Good Friday, an Easter Garden service, Saturday and Easter Day Holy Communion with an Easter egg hunt.

St. Nicholas' put on a rather special flower festival for the Queen's Platinum Jubilee, older village residents thought it had been at least 30 years since the last one. There was a children's competition, and coffee morning. Many people came to see the displays. Then, sadly, a few months later, following the death of the Queen, a book of remembrance was available for people to sign and a special service was held where people could come and light a candle.

The community choir helped us celebrate Harvest and Christmas Eve, thank you Gill; both services were very well supported by the village with the church overflowing for the Christmas Eve service, when the village hand bells were also rung, the first time for a long while. Steve took a family service on Christmas Day which was also very well attended by village families.

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 Di Raikes, Kathleen Dawson, Ben Davidson, Helen Clarke and Rosie White who decorated the church porch with lights, stars and doves. Community choir members sang in church yard as children walked past on their way home from school and Ben ran activities in church. The event was very popular again.

Close links with Great Wilbraham School have been maintained with Alice and Ben resuming school assemblies and services in church. During one of the hottest days in the summer two classes used the church for their lessons as it was so beautifully cool! Ben has been able to re-start Happy Sad Club in school. Mothering



Sunday posies were made in school again with year 5/6 children - thank you, Di and Rosie.

Home Communion continues to be offered with Helen Clarke and Lorna Carr available for requests. Cleaning the church and keeping the flowers looking nice is done by volunteers on a rota basis and we are extremely grateful for this group of dedicated villagers.

Maintaining the clock and the condition of the bells is done by Paul Lambton, the Steeple Keeper and is greatly appreciated.



Essential repairs to the church building have been on going and are detailed in the Fabric Report in the appendices.



Churchyard

The churchyard is maintained by volunteers organised by Tony Ryan. We were awarded the Cambridgeshire Churchyard Conservation bronze award for the new management regime. It is hoped this will increase biodiversity by maintaining areas of longer grass, creating wood piles, installing a small pond etc. Members of the village environment group help with this. A special “thank you” to Judy Hanmer, who supported this initiative as well as planting a new herb garden and looking after the flower bed to the right of the porch.

The churchyard is full, although some investigations may be carried out. There are cremation spaces. The graves are visited frequently, as can be seen by the fresh flowers left regularly;

over 100 graves had wreaths or flowers placed on them again this year.

LOOKING FORWARD TO 2023/24

Churches all over the country face many challenges and St. Nicholas is no different. However, village churches have a special role in a rural community. They represent stability and continuity. In Great Wilbraham some of the village families have lived in the area for many generations – those who can somehow afford the rising cost of housing so close to Cambridge. The church is a unique building full of reminders of the past and family memories. It must also serve incomers and thrive to be relevant in the twenty first century. Sometimes it feels as though the hierarchy of the Church of England has lost touch and isn't supportive enough in this rapidly changing world.

There is always more to do than the small group of volunteers and the PCC has time for. We are lucky that other members of the congregation and wider community help when they can. The responsibility can seem a burden and so supporting each other across the benefice is essential. We would welcome and encourage anyone who felt they could offer their time or skills.

We are hoping to widen the use of the church by hosting concerts and theatre groups. The Spinning Wheel Theatre company is putting on a production of The Velveteen Rabbit in March and The Cantilena Choir used the church twice last year for its concerts.

St. Nicholas' is looking forward to continuing its responsibilities to the local Church of England School as well as working well with the Parish Council to serve the local community.

We are also looking forward to working with and supporting St. John's Little Wilbraham. One of the activities we will be continuing this year is running our “Wilbrahams' Churches Together stall at the local Food and Craft Market.

We are hoping to carry on the good work in the churchyard by putting up swift boxes under the church eaves, planting a hedge and perhaps going for the silver conservation award.

APPENDICES

Safeguarding children and vulnerable adults

As a benefice we have a 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. The policy is available in Twelve and in each church. Our Safeguarding Officer is Mary Kendall.

Pastoral Assistant and Parish Administrator

The previous Parish Assistant role was comprised of three roles: administrative work, pastoral work and children's work. This has now been split into two roles, Parish Administrator who does all the administration for the benefice and the Pastoral Assistant who covers the pastoral and children's work. The current Administrator is Sian Hornby, who officially started in the role in September 2022. The Pastoral Assistant is Ben Davidson, who also started in September. They both divide their time between Fulbourn and The Wilbrahams.

Ministries continue to recover in the aftermath of covid restrictions. Supported by volunteers who provide refreshments and music, Ben continues the running of Wednesday Church fortnightly, which regularly has an attendance of 4 children, sometimes more. Following a snack, children (who tend to be accompanied & supported by parents) take part in a craft activity and then proceed to the transept for Bible stories, songs and prayers.

Ben has also taken on the weekly Bible study/discussion group, which began in October 2022 with the book of Revelation, and, having completed this, recommenced in March with St Paul's Letter to the Romans. He sometimes joins the Wild Goose Worship group on Wednesdays and has supported occasional offices at St Nicholas'.

In addition, Ben maintains a good relationship with Great Wilbraham Primary School, where he offers weekly 'Happy-Sad Club' - conversational sessions with small groups of children aged 6-11 that encourage reflection on events and achievements and emotional responses to them and conclude with a brief time of prayer. Alongside Alice and Steve, he has also been involved with assemblies held both in the church and in the school.

Come and Join....

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. If you join us and there is a sketch/drama look out for one of our budding actors Nick, Nigel or Jeremy. Also after the service join us for a coffee, chat and a piece of cake. There is always something for you to takeaway from the service to remind you of the theme. Recently a small sachet of salt was given out to remember the theme of salt and light. For us not to lose our saltiness as disciples of Jesus Christ. We look forward welcoming you to 'Come and join' in 2023, and for you to share your story.

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

We now have a new Rural Dean Canon Rev Eleanor Williams from Burwell. There was only one meeting last year in September when Canon Andrew Read and Rev Peter Leech attended as guests from the Diocese, to talk about their roles in Mission & Ministry and Education. Currently all the Deaneries in the Diocese of Ely are looking and thinking about Ely 2025 and beyond. They are using a process based on Deanery Development Planning, which has been encouraged by Bishop Stephen and Bishop Dagmar to look at

areas of growth that require support. There was one matter of business in that a successor to the Deanery Treasurer was required who was wanting to retire in the next year.

Twelve



Based in Fulbourn, Twelve is the Benefice's centre for administration, communication and outreach and provides office space for our parish assistant. The centre sells greetings cards, second-hand books, games, jigsaws and assorted items that have been donated. It also sells eco-friendly, plastic free cleaning fluids (eg: washing up liquid and laundry liquid), toiletries and other household products in an initiative

known as Twelve Green Bottles.

Twelve is staffed by a team of volunteers. It also acts as a centre for community communication, displaying posters and flyers for future events and a collection point for subscriptions for The Mill (the Fulbourn Parish magazine), as well as a sale and distribution point.

Twelve's aimed opening times are: Monday 1.30-4.30pm, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday 9.30am - 4.30pm, Saturday 9.30am - 12.30pm.

Facts and figures 2022

Unlike 2020 and 2021 we were able to hold regular weekday and Sunday services throughout the year.

The average attendance at the first Sunday of the month Come & Join services held was 21 adults and children. At our Communion service on the third Sunday it was 14 adults.

More than 200 adults and 20 children attended our Christmas Eve and Day services.

Our mid-week service at 9.20am on Wednesday mornings has continued with, on average, four people attending. Our Wednesday after school service has been held every two weeks from January to June and then restarted in November attended, on average, by 13 adults and children.

During the year there were one baptism, three weddings, and five funerals. Four services were held for Great Wilbraham Primary School over the course of the year. An All Souls service was held on 2 November.

There are 41 church members on the St Nicholas Electoral Roll (2022-39).

The main points on the church finances in 2022, which are detailed in the Annual Accounts, are:

- We started the year with General Funds of £463 and ended with £6, having used £7,500 (2020-£5,000) from the rental income of 5 Benstead End to ensure we settled all our costs.
- We continue to be grateful to church members for their financial support. £12,525 was donated in the year including Gift Aid tax recoveries and collections. Fees from weddings and funerals totalled £4,348 of which £2,258 was paid on to the Diocese.
- We paid the Ministry Share of £10,915, insurance of £2,735, the joint expenses due to St Vigor's, Fulbourn and other costs totalling £2,304.
- The significant additional cost in 2022 was electricity as a consequence of the installation of the new heating system in 2021. The high cost of keeping the church at a minimum temperature over the winter resulted in a combined cost for heat, water and light of £5,296.
- We made two charitable donations from church funds-Support for the Ukrainian family who moved into the village at the end of 2022, £500, and the Great Wilbraham Anne Ward and Benstead Charities £750. Through the services and coffee mornings held during the year, we were able to raise funds for a number of charities including Christian

Aid, Jimmy's Night Shelter, Dementia UK, Cancer Research UK, and the Wood Green Animal Centre, plus the Gt Wilbraham Primary School, together totalling £762.

- In addition to monetary support, as part of our Harvest Festival outreach, generous donations of food and household items were given to Jimmy's Night Shelter, having been donated by the Wilbrahams community.
- General repairs and refurbishments totalled £2,340 including architect's fees.

At 31 December 2022, we held funds of £15,141 in our Building Fund to cover the costs of the stonework and window repairs as outlined in the Fabric Report. In addition, we continue to hold £2,236 in trust for the Bell Ringers Fund.

Investment property-5 Benstead End, Great Wilbraham

We continue to be grateful to Graham Clarke for his proactive management of our investment property in Benstead End at no cost to our church. In 2022 we had a change of tenant which meant extra work for Graham. During the period that the property was empty, Graham organised a program of repairs and improvements to maintain the quality of the property and ensure we can obtain the market rental value. The cost of the repairs and improvements totalled some £8,700 including the letting agents fees.

After allowing for these costs the net rent obtained in the year was some £8,900.

Fabric Committee report

As detailed in our report last year, the priority for 2022 has been undertaking the smaller repairs highlighted in the once every five years building review, the Quinquennial, prepared for us by our architects, Archangel, in 2020. The repairs fell into two categories, stonework, mainly on the exterior, and windows and glass.

Working with the architects, a specification of the work required was prepared and then quotes were invited. A quote of £15,000 was accepted from Spectrum Stone for the stonework repairs. Having obtained the Faculty (planning permission) the work was undertaken during December 2022 and January 2023. This repair work has been completed and approved by the architects. A generous grant of £10,000 was received from the St Nicholas Trust to cover the majority of the cost.

Similarly, a specification was prepared for the windows and glass repairs and quotations obtained. The planning permission Faculty has been given recently and it is anticipated that the work will be done in the next few months. The cost is anticipated to be around £10,000. The PCC has made provision for this cost.

We have discussed with the architect the further repair work which should be undertaken in 2023 and 2024, funds permitting. The current list of tasks is:

- Pointing repair work on the exterior of the south side of the Chancel-estimated cost £6,000;
- Repainting all the gutters and downpipes etc-estimated cost £17,000;
- Moss removal and installation of copper strips on the eaves of the Chancel-estimated cost £5,000;
- Two windows on the south side of the Nave to be repaired-estimated cost could be up to £18,000. It will be appreciated from the above summary that significant management work will be required over the next two years to progress these projects.

Great Wilbraham Guild of Change Ringers - Annual Report -2022

At St Nicholas' we are fortunate to have a spacious, well - lit bell floor from which to ring our six bells. The bells themselves are relatively light and straight-forward to ring: this

makes our Tower attractive to our resident "Band" and to visiting Bands who regularly come to St Nicholas'.

We are fortunate to have a pool of, currently, eight ringers drawn from Great and Little Wilbraham, Six Mile Bottom and from Bottisham, so that we can almost always assemble a full band to ring at Sunday services twice per month.

We practise for 90 minutes every Thursday evening with tuition from Louise Dobson: we are extremely grateful to her and to several experienced ringers who come to support us. We have one novice ringer who is about to "make the grade" and we would love to see some more absolute novices who can learn with us.

We do not take ourselves too seriously but, although we are mostly quite new to ringing, we are becoming more competent and are learning new sequences of call changes to extend our repertoire.

During the past year we were privileged to ring to participate in celebrating the late Queen's Diamond Jubilee and then to mark her death. In the coming year we look forward to the coronation of Charles iii when, with towers all over the country, we will "Ring for the King".

Finally, we are indebted to our Tower Captain Peter Sims for his leadership and to Paul Lambton who very diligently maintains our bells - and the church clock.

The St Nicholas Great Wilbraham Trust Chairman's Report for 2022/23

The St Nicholas Great Wilbraham Trust is made up by five local trustees and the incumbent vicar. Also, two officers of the PCC (Warden & Treasurer) attend by special invitation, to ensure a continuing strong link between the trust & the PCC.

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...".

During 2022 the trust agreed a donation to the PCC a sum of £10,000 put towards the cost of £13,963 for repairs to stonework both inside and outside the church.

The fundraising activities remained 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 2022 the trust's general fund amounted to a sum of £14,193 and the Legacy Capital Fund (comprising income bearing investments in stocks & shares) was valued at £228,323, a significant reduction it's value of £265,552 twelve months previously, but in line with negative global market sentiments resulting from the War in Ukraine and spiralling energy costs and inflation. The target for the Legacy Capital Fund has been re-set at £500,000 (ALL the capital must be protected in perpetuity), to produce a target income of £20,000 pa. Bearing in mind that over the past 12 years, the building has required in excess of £350,000s expenditure on repairs & improvements, which has averaged at a cost of almost £30,000 per year. So, even allowing for "one off" improvement costs such as the tower conversion (£135,000), our mission is to at least double the Legacy Capital Fund's existing protected capital to £500,000, in order to make sure that the building is preserved to a very high standard for all future generations. Over the calendar year 2022, the total income generated by the Legacy Capital Fund amounted to £10,251 (in 2021 it was £10,673).

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

Sunday 19th February 2023