

The Parish of Stoke St Mary (with Thurlbear)

In the Seven Sowers Benefice

**(United Benefice of Beercrocombe, with Curry Mallet,
Hatch Beauchamp, Orchard Portman, Staple Fitzpaine,
Stoke St Mary (with Thurlbear) and West Hatch)**

Annual Report and Financial Statements of the Parochial Church Council

For the year ended 31st December 2019

Incumbent

The Benefice is currently in vacancy

Bank

Lloyds Bank
31 Fore Street
Taunton
TA1 1HN

Independent Examiner

Peter Hounsell
33 Home Orchard
Hatch Beauchamp
Taunton
TA3 6TG

The Parish of Stoke St Mary (with Thurlbear) – Annual Report for the Year 2019

Introduction

The ecclesiastical parish of Stoke St Mary (with Thurlbear) contains two parish churches, namely the church of St Mary the Virgin, Stoke St Mary, and the redundant church of St Thomas, Thurlbear. The two churches are located in the centre of their respective villages.

The parish forms part of the Seven Sowers Benefice, comprising the parishes of Beercrocombe with Curry Mallet, Hatch Beauchamp, Orchard Portman, Staple Fitzpaine, Stoke St Mary (with Thurlbear) and West Hatch. The parish is part of the Deanery of Ilminster, which in turn is part of the Diocese of Bath and Wells within the Church of England.

The Parochial Church Council (PCC) is a charity excepted from registration with the Charity Commissioners.

The Benefice has been in vacancy throughout the year.

During 2019 the PCC continued to support the Ministry Team in promoting the whole mission of the church – pastoral, social, evangelistic and ecumenical – within the ecclesiastical parish. The Revd Christabel Ager served in the Benefice as Associate Minister and the Revd Stephen Jones as Associate Vicar, throughout the year. The Ministry Team further comprises the licensed lay readers Brian Crudge and Sue McKen and ordinand Phil Albrow. Clive Hayward is Reader Emeritus. Holly Stevens, the Children's, Schools and Families Worker, commenced maternity leave in February and her post was backfilled for the remainder of the year by Julie Kimber and Ruth Tucker on a shared basis.

The PCC is responsible for the care and maintenance of the Grade II* listed church building in Stoke St Mary and the surrounding churchyard. It is also responsible for the churchyard of St Thomas's Church, Thurlbear, where the church building itself is maintained by the Churches Conservation Trust.

The service rota, which ran throughout 2019, provides for a service in St Mary's on three Sundays each month as follows: first Sunday: 8.30 am BCP Communion; second Sunday: 10.00 am Parish Communion; fourth Sunday: 10.00 am Worship-for-All. On the third Sunday and, where appropriate, on fifth Sundays a United Benefice Service was held; the third Sunday service being held always at West Hatch and the fifth Sunday service alternating between Orchard Portman and Beercrocombe.

Membership

The method of appointment of PCC members is set out in the Church Representation rules. Members are elected at the Annual Parochial Church Meeting. All Church attendees are encouraged to register on the Electoral Roll and to stand for election to the PCC.

PCC members who served from 1st January 2019 until the date on which this report was approved were:

<i>Incumbent:</i>	Vacant	
<i>Associate Ministers:</i>	The Revd Christabel Ager The Revd Stephen Jones	
<i>Churchwardens:</i>	John Pugh Colin Clarke	<i>(Treasurer)</i>
<i>Deanery Synod Representative:</i>	Tom Mayberry	<i>(ex-officio)</i>
<i>Elected Members:</i>	Brian Crudge Elizabeth Fothergill Roger Millard Peter Renshaw Graham Salter Roger Smith	<i>(Lay Reader)</i> <i>(Vice Chairman)</i>

John Pugh served as acting secretary throughout the year.

Church Attendance

At the time of the Annual Parochial Church Meeting in 2019 there were 39 parishioners on the Electoral Roll. The weekly attendance at services varied from a minimum of about 8 at an 8.30 a.m. service up to 30 or more at other regular services. The Easter and Christmas services again proved very popular.

Sidesmen and Sideswomen

Sidesmen and Sideswomen are appointed for the year and are organised by Peter Renshaw. In 2019 they were Rosemary Burgess, Colin Clarke, Tom Mayberry, John Pugh, Peter Renshaw, Roger Smith and Rachel Woolvin.

Other Roles

Other members of the congregation provide essential support to the work and worship of St Mary's Church by serving as bell ringers (Tower Captain: Rachel Drew), flower arrangers and cleaners, and by serving on the coffee-making rota. The Sacristan is Rachel Woolvin and the church architect is Annie Evans. The principal organist to St Mary's is David Bidgood.

Review of the Year

The Benefice has been in vacancy since the beginning of November 2018. During the early part of 2019, the Churchwardens across the Benefice worked with their PCCs to define what characteristics we were seeking in a new incumbent. Surveys of both church attendees and the wider community helped to frame this definition. Through collaboration we drafted our Parish Profile, setting out the attributes and challenges of the Benefice, as well as the advert for placing in the Church Times and on the Diocese website. The advertising campaign was commenced in March and repeated in September and December but, to date, it has drawn no candidates. Whilst this is naturally disappointing, we have been greatly encouraged by the fact that we have been able to maintain a full pattern of services and that attendance at those services has not diminished. This is entirely attributable to the industry of our Ministry Team, to whom we are immensely grateful.

We held two prayer mornings in Thurlbear Church in May and July offering moments of quiet reflection and silent prayer, and an opportunity to focus on our search for a new incumbent.

During the summer, the local community was immensely saddened to hear of the deaths of Charles Clark and John Vile, both of whom have been huge supporters of St Mary's over very many years.

The PCC held four meetings during 2019, covering a wide and varied range of subjects. Roger Millard chaired the first of these meetings and Peter Renshaw the remainder.

The Benefice Development Plan, which is the blueprint of everything we do, is tabled at every meeting of the PCC and was particularly relevant this year. It played a central role this year in informing the content of the Benefice Profile.

As noted in the 2018 report, the Children's, Schools and Families Worker, Holly Stevens, started her maternity leave at the end of February. Her role was taken on, for the duration of her absence, on a job-share basis by Julie Kimber and Ruth Tucker. They adapted quickly to their new roles and we were able to ensure that our full children's and families' programme continued without a break. This included 'Open the Book' and Stoke Tots (both of which are centred around Thurlbear School), and Messy Church, based at Hatch Beauchamp Village Hall and run as a Benefice activity. They also organised a very successful holiday club run over two days at Thurlbear School.

The PCC always takes a close interest in Thurlbear School, a Voluntary Aided Church of England establishment, and was pleased to hear very positive reports throughout the year. The school continues to run at full capacity.

A Benefice activity which has traditionally taken place in the summer – prayer visiting, aimed at providing solace to those in need of help – was organised again, with Stoke St Mary being the focus this year. The visits were well received.

Many activities are run on a Benefice basis and the monthly lunch held in the Village Hall at West Hatch on the third Sunday of each month is another good example. This was organised throughout 2019 by a team from St Mary's.

In addition to the normal monthly service pattern, there were also the special services held at the times of the major festivals, at Easter time, Advent and Christmas, as well as the Remembrance Day service. The sunrise service on Easter morning held outside the West Hatch Scout Hut and the Advent Carol Service in a candle-lit St Thomas's Church were notably atmospheric; St Mary's was absolutely packed out for the Crib Service on Christmas Eve afternoon. Throughout the year many and varied styles of service were presented to receptive congregations and we are indebted to the Ministry Team for making this possible.

The border between fundraising and outreach events can be rather blurred. The highly successful 100 Club, now in its third year, falls squarely within the former, whilst the Christmas Bazaar addresses both

objectives. The Community Teas - held in the private house adjacent to the church - offer a vital bridge between the church and the wider community and make a sound contribution to church funds.

The church architect carried out her quinquennial survey during the summer. Her report highlighted remedial work required over the next five years and action was taken to put this in hand. None of the issues identified were of a major nature.

PCC funds again received a significant contribution from the Benefice Magazine, which succeeds in raising money primarily through the sale of advertising space. Its contribution to informing the wider community about events related to the church is a vital medium of communication.

Financial Review

Total receipts on the General Fund were £23,332; total payments on that fund were £19,657, which included a transfer to the Community, Mission and Charitable Fund of £1,833. The income in the year was boosted by a significant legacy, the contribution from the Benefice Magazine and from the fund-raising activities as detailed at Note 5 in the accounts. The largest item of expenditure (£14,256) was the Parish Share, paid to the Diocese, which enables it to provide the parish with clergy and support services; charitable and other donations (including our contribution to funding the Children's Worker) amounted to £1,896.

The unrestricted funds (comprising the General Fund and the Community, Mission and Charitable Fund) had an excess of receipts over payments in the year of £3,612.

The Fabric Fund had net receipts in the year of £1,240 and net outgoings of £569. The balance on this fund at the year-end stood at £30,021.

Reserves Policy

The PCC has had a policy of maintaining a balance on unrestricted funds, if possible, equating to approximately six months' unrestricted payments. This policy was aimed at covering any unforeseen emergency situations that may arise. At 31st December 2019, the balance on the General Fund of £8,813 equated to 164 days of payments, a material improvement on the 102 days reported last year. The PCC are conscious that the improvement in this ratio is attributable to one-off receipts and that the long-term trend needs to be addressed.

It is the strategy of the PCC to invest the monetary assets of long-term funds, including the Fabric Fund, in deposits with the Church of England Deposit Fund. Surplus monetary assets, which may be required at shorter notice, are held with Lloyds Bank on current and deposit accounts, as appropriate.

John Pugh
(Churchwarden and Acting Secretary)

8 January, 2020

Independent Examiner's Report to the PCC of Stoke St Mary Parish Church For the Year Ended 31 December 2019

I report on the accounts of the PCC for the year ended 31 December 2019 which are set out on pages 1 to 10.

Respective responsibilities of trustees and examiner

The PCC are the trustees of the charity and are responsible for the preparation of the accounts. The charity's trustees consider that an audit is not required for this year under section 144(2) of the Charities Act 2011 (the Charities Act) and that an independent examination is needed.

It is my responsibility to:

- examine the accounts under section 145 of the Charities Act;
- to follow the procedures laid down in the general Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Charities Act; and
- to state whether particular matters have come to my attention.

Basis of independent examiner's report

My examination was carried out in accordance with the general Directions given by the Charity Commission. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and seeking explanations from you as trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit and consequently no opinion is given as to whether the accounts present a 'true and fair view' and the report is limited to those matters set out in the statement below.

Independent examiner's statement

In connection with my examination, no matter has come to my attention which gives me reasonable cause to believe that, in any material respect,

- the accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the Charities Act; or
- the accounts do not accord with the accounting records.

I have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Peter Hounsell
33 Home Orchard
Hatch Beauchamp
Taunton. TA3 6TG

7 March 2020

Stoke St Mary PCC

Receipts & Payments

For the Year Ended 31 December 2019

GENERAL FUND (Unrestricted Fund)

	Notes	2019 £	2018 £
RECEIPTS			
Service Collections		3,952	3,891
Regular giving through bank		6,590	7,225
Income tax recovered	3	2,616	2,746
Donations	4	6,204	698
Benefice magazine surplus		1,113	1,298
Fees (Weddings etc.)		1,219	597
Events	5	1,616	1,354
Bank Interest		22	11
Total Receipts		23,332	17,820
PAYMENTS			
Parish Share (net of discount for monthly payment of £43; 2018 - £42)		(14,256)	(14,001)
Clergy Expenses		(1,722)	(1,341)
Organist Fees		(490)	(105)
Organ Maintenance		(100)	(100)
Heat & Light		(573)	(430)
Insurance		(510)	(510)
Transferred to Community, Mission and Charitable Fund		(1,833)	(1,782)
Sundry	8	(173)	(200)
Total Payments		(19,657)	(18,469)
Excess/(Deficit) of Receipts over Payments		3,675	(649)
Fund balance at 1 January 2019		5,138	5,787
Fund balance at 31 December 2019	9	8,813	5,138

COMMUNITY, MISSION AND CHARITABLE FUND (Designated Fund)

This Fund was established in 2004 following the decision of the PCC to tithe General Fund income.

		£	£
RECEIPTS			
Transferred from General Fund		1,833	1,782
PAYMENTS			
Charity: Various charitable causes	6	(1,146)	(1,235)
Community: Children's Worker funding	7	(750)	(769)
Deficit of Receipts over Payments		(63)	(222)
Fund balance at 1 January 2019		1,353	1,575
Fund balance at 31 December 2019	9	1,290	1,353

Stoke St Mary PCC

Receipts & Payments

For the Year Ended 31 December 2019

CHURCHYARD FUND (Part Restricted Fund)

	Notes	2019 £	2018 £
RECEIPTS			
TDBC Grant - Stoke St. Mary		600	-
TDBC Grant - Thurlbear		260	260
Donations, burial fees etc.		311	290
		<u>1,171</u>	<u>550</u>
PAYMENTS			
Stoke St. Mary: Grass Cutting		(794)	(581)
Thurlbear: Grass Cutting		(350)	(350)
		<u>(1,144)</u>	<u>(931)</u>
Excess/(Deficit) of Receipts over Payments		27	(381)
Fund balance at 1 January 2019		339	720
Fund balance at 31 December 2019	9	<u>366</u>	<u>339</u>

At 31 December 2019 and 2018, all the funds carried forward were Designated Funds.

FABRIC FUND (Restricted Fund)

		£	£
RECEIPTS			
Donations and related Gift Aid recovered		1,000	-
Bank Interest		240	158
		<u>1,240</u>	<u>158</u>
PAYMENTS			
Quinquennial survey: Architect's fees		(397)	-
Fire safety survey		(118)	-
Lightening conductor survey and related works		(54)	(86)
Quinquennial electrical survey		-	(540)
		<u>671</u>	<u>(468)</u>
Excess/(Deficit) of Receipts over Payments		671	(468)
Fund balance at 1 January 2019		29,350	29,818
Fund balance at 31 December 2019	9	<u>30,021</u>	<u>29,350</u>

Stoke St Mary PCC

Statement of Assets and Liabilities As at 31 December 2019

	Notes	2019 £	2018 £
ASSETS			
Cash funds			
Lloyds Bank current account		2,897	1,850
Lloyds Bank deposit account		193	193
CCLA deposit account - General Account		5,205	2,182
CCLA deposit account - Fabric Account		32,195	31,955
Cash in Hand		-	-
Monetary assets	9	40,490	36,180
Debtors and prepayments (General Fund, unless stated otherwise)			
Clergy expenses paid in advance		250	250
Income tax recoverable (estimated)		2,109	1,945
Burial ground grant - St Mary's (Churchyard Fund)		300	600
Other monetary assets		2,659	2,795
LIABILITIES			
Creditors and Accruals (General Fund, unless stated otherwise)			
Clergy expenses		264	100
Organist's fees		-	70
Bath & Wells Diocese - 4th quarter fees		-	-
		264	170

The above Statement of Assets and Liabilities and the associated Receipts and Payments Accounts, including the notes on the following two pages, were approved by the Parochial Church Council on 8 January 2020 and are signed on its behalf by the Churchwarden and the Treasurer.

Colin Clarke

John Pugh

Stoke St Mary PCC

Notes to the Financial Statements

For the Year Ended 31 December 2019

1. Presentation of financial information

The financial statements of the PCC have been prepared in accordance with the Church Accounting Regulations 2006 using the Receipts and Payments basis.

2. Accounting policies

The financial statements include monetary transactions, assets and liabilities for which the PCC can be held responsible. They do not include the accounts of other Church groups that owe an affiliation to another body nor those that are informal gatherings of Church members.

Receipts are included as received and expenditure when irrevocably paid.

Restricted funds must be used for the purpose for which the money was given or donated.

General funds represent unrestricted money that can be used for the general charitable purposes of the PCC.

Designated funds represent unrestricted money that has been earmarked for a specific purpose by the PCC. This money may be undesignated at any time.

The origin and purpose of each fund within the fund classification are given beneath the title of each fund.

3. Income tax recovered

A claim for recovery of income tax under the Gift Aid scheme may be made at any time during the year and the receipts from two claims were received in 2019 covering the periods from 6 April to 31 December 2018 and from 1 January to 5 April 2019. A claim for the period to 31 December 2019 will be submitted in 2020 and this is shown in these accounts as a receivable amount in the "Statement of assets and liabilities".

	2019	2018
4. Donations received	£	£
Legacy	5,000	-
Gift Aided donations	1,022	203
Non-Gift Aided donations	182	495
Income from donations	6,204	698
5. Events	£	£
100 Club	590	545
Christmas Bazaar (2018: sale of Cook Books)	409	126
Summer Fayre	354	-
Community teas	220	199
Harvest Supper (2018: Somerset Songsters)	43	48
Guitar Concert	-	291
Safari Supper	-	145
Income from events	1,616	1,354
6. Donations to charitable causes	£	£
Thurlbear School Leavers' Bibles	330	387
Children's Society	269	166
Grass Roots Rwanda (formerley David Dale Shyogwe Trust)	250	250
Royal British Legion	104	198
Churches Conservation Trust	98	234
DEC East Africa Cyclone Appeal	95	-
Donations to charitable causes	1,146	1,235

Stoke St Mary PCC

Notes to the Financial Statements (continued) For the Year Ended 31 December 2019

7. Funding for Children's, Schools and Families Worker Project

Funding is being provided by the churches in the Benefice towards the cost of a part-time Children's, Schools and Families Worker. Contributions made have been charged to the Community, Mission and Charitable Fund. Funding is channelled through the Benefice charity, The Seven Sowers Charitable Trust.

	2019	2018
	£	£
8. Sundry payments		
Church Copyright Licence	78	76
Stationery	66	-
Bath & Wells Change Ringers	15	15
Village Hall Hire	14	-
Fire safety check	-	109
Total sundry payments	173	200

9. Funds

Fund balances at 31 December 2019 were as follows:

	£	£
General Fund (Unrestricted)	8,813	5,138
Designated funds:		
Community Mission & Charitable Fund	1,290	1,353
Restricted funds:		
Churchyard Fund	366	339
Fabric Fund	30,021	29,350
Monetary assets carried forward	40,490	36,180

Reconciliation of movements in funds

	Monetary assets brought forward	Receipts/ (payments) in the year	Monetary assets carried forward
	£	£	£
General Fund	5,138	3,675	8,813
Community Mission & Charitable Fund	1,353	(63)	1,290
Churchyard Fund	339	27	366
Fabric Fund	29,350	671	30,021
	36,180	4,310	40,490