



St Mary's Church Wargrave

With Knowl Hill

PARISH REPORTS

For the Year

2019

ANNUAL PARISH MEETING and ANNUAL PAROCHIAL MEETING

To be held in St Mary's Church Centre, Wargrave
on

**Date to be decided
at 11.00 a.m.**

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Wargrave with Knowl Hill APCM – to be confirmed

AGENDA

1. Opening Prayers
2. Apologies for absence
3. Minutes of the Annual Parochial Church Meeting held on April 7th 2019
4. Vicar's Report; 2019 Highlights and 2020 Priorities
5. The Electoral Roll
6. Financial Report and election of the Auditor
7. Parish Reports
8. Elections and Appointments:
 - Deanery Synod Election
 - PCC Election
 - Appointment of Sidesmen
9. CoG's Reports
10. Other Reports
 - Mission Team Report
 - Eco Church Report
11. St. Mary's Church Centre Project update
12. Any other notified business
13. Prayers

MINUTES OF THE MEETING FOR THE ELECTION OF CHURCHWARDENS, AND THE ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING OF THE PARISH OF WARGRAVE WITH KNOWL HILL HELD ON SUNDAY 7th APRIL 2019 IN ST. MARY'S CHURCH AT 11.00 A.M.

About 71 members of the congregation were present.

Meeting for Election of Churchwardens

Helen Gradon and Peter Mayes had previously been proposed and seconded for Wargrave, and Sandra Baker for Knowl Hill. There being no other nominations, the three above named were unanimously declared elected as Churchwardens.

The Vicar thanked the retiring Churchwardens for Wargrave, Christine Walker and Bob Austen, and the re-elected Churchwarden for Knowl Hill, Sandra Baker, for all their work in supporting the life of the church.

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1. **The Annual Parochial Church Meeting** commenced with readings from 2 Corinthians 2:15-16 and a short talk on being the "aroma of Christ among those who are being saved and those who are perishing", followed by prayer.
 2. **Apologies**
Apologies for absence were received from Jane Austen, Mike Buckland, Dick Bush, Sean Carradine, Peter & Annette Dart, Gavin Dunbar, Jon Edgell, Julia Freeman, Sue Griffiths, Sue Mayes, Chris & Helen Perry, Jimmie & Serena Remnant, Anne Whittaker, David Williams, Sue Witney.
 3. **Minutes of Annual Parochial Church Meeting 16th April 2018**
The minutes of last year's meeting were reviewed and agreed *nem con*.
 4. **Vicar's Report**
The Vicar's report is included in the published Parish Reports document, page 8. The importance of our APCM was highlighted as being an opportunity to collectively reflect on our ministry as a Church over the past year and to look ahead to the challenges and opportunities ahead of us.
There were no questions and the report was received *nem con*.
 5. **Electoral Roll**
Richard Lloyd, the Electoral Roll Officer, informed the meeting that there were now 264 members on the combined electoral roll (Wargrave, 232, Knowl Hill 32). This represented an increase of 3 on the number on the roll in 2017.
As the Electoral Roll will be renewed from scratch in 2019, members of the Churches' congregations are encouraged to apply to join the Roll – as the Vicar uses it as the basis for his daily prayer for the Parish.
 6. **Financial Report for the year 2017**
Jane Wills gave an overview of the Parish finances for 2017 – the accounts had been distributed beforehand and on the website - a copy of her presentation is also available there, as well as her Annual Report included with the Parish Reports document, page 7.
The general day-to-day activities of the Church showed a strong surplus of £44,656, compared to the surplus of £18,298 in 2016, mainly as a result of the continuity of the income stream from our Church family.
The 21C Project fund raising had resulted in £414,000 now in hand, needing a further £50,000 to complete the new Annex.
The accounts were accepted *nem con*.

The appointment of Paul Worthington as our Independent Examiner, proposed by Robert Austen and seconded by Salome Laschinger, was approved *nem con*.
 7. **Parish Reports**
The statutory parish report, which is bound with the accounts, gives a full account of the membership of the PCC and an overview of its work during the year.
Reports of the activities and plans of the Churchwardens and the Deanery Synod were also included in the Parish Reports document.
There were no questions and the report was received *nem con*.

8. Elections and Appointments

Election of Deanery Synod Representatives

As a result of the ordination of Steve Turville and the sad death of Dave Manning only 3 representatives for the Parish remain and continue for one more year

Sue Griffiths Richard Lloyd Sheila Williams

As there were no further nominations the Reverend John Cook proposed that any candidates wishing to fill the 2 remaining representative places should speak to him after the meeting.

Election of Parochial Church Council (16 lay members for Wargrave, and 2 for Knowl Hill)

With only 13 Nomination Papers received for Wargrave and 1 Nomination Paper for Knowl Hill it was agreed that Co-Options should take place at the May PCC meeting.

Wargrave:

Mike Buckland	Linda Carradine	Michael Carver	Doug Clark	Andy Ferguson
Verna Houghton	Andrew Imlay	Karen Lloyd	Peter Mayes	Haydn Selwyn-Jones
Lesley Turville	Jane Wills	Sue Witney		

Knowl Hill and Warren Row:

Bill Haines

The election of the above was approved *nem con*.

Appointment of Sidesmen

Wargrave:

Bob Austen	Tessa Baird	Chris Bookless	Michael Carver	John Coombes
Gavin Dunbar	Julia Freeman	Brenda Keast	Guy Laschinger	Barbara Lloyd
Sue Mackenzie	Peter Mayes	Sue Mayes	Lesley McClure-	Fisher
Neill Pitcher	Marion Pope	Michael Pope	Lloyd Scrivener	Margaret Snell
Angela Thomas	Christine Walker	Tony Wilson	Ann Woodward	Tony Moul

Approved *nem con*.

Knowl Hill and Warren Row:

Valerie Charlton Brian Griffin Jim Hadden

Approved *nem con*.

9. Strategy Team Reports

The reports of the St Mary's Outreach Team and Support Team and the Knowl Hill Strategy Team are included in the published Parish Reports document; the work of these teams and their regular undertaking of detailed topics on behalf of the PCC were noted.

There were no questions and the reports were received *nem con*.

10. Ministry Team Reports

The reports of the eight Ministry Teams had been included in the published Parish Reports document; the work of these teams and their regular undertaking of detailed topics on behalf of the PCC were noted. There followed some discussion and explanation of topics addressed within these reports.

There were no questions and the reports were received *nem con*

11. St Mary's 21C Accommodation Project

Nick Rule presented a brief, but positive, overview on the progress of the project with an expected snagging and completion date of November.

With regard to the Budget, Nick Rule advised that the build contract was running to budget, but, with some overrun on the excavation and the anticipated costs of specialist archaeology, the planned contingency in the budget had now been expended. The budget will be closely monitored during fit out design and specification for adjustments if required.

In answer to a question regarding where in the Churchyard internment of the recovered remains will be made, the Rev. John Cook advised that the right site will be found within the Churchyard.

12. Any other business

12.1. Christine Walker gave a brief summary of the work that had been done to meet the requirements of the new GDPR Legislation and introduced Jayne Tolley, who was giving strong support in the work being carried out.

12.2. Richard Lloyd gave a quick run through of the new Church Website.

12.3. John Fryer raised a question regarding the tree stump that had been left on Mill Green and was advised that the necessary stump grinding would be taking place shortly.

13. Prayer

There being no further business, the Vicar closed the meeting at 9.25 pm with prayer.

Haydn Selwyn-Jones

Hon Secretary to the PCC

VICAR'S REPORT

As I write this year's report we are mid Covid-19 isolation. This report, however, gives a brief overview of 2019.

Several years ago, the PCC took the decision to direct in our decisions and priorities, under God, by 7 characteristics of a healthy church. These 'healthy' markers depict a church that:

- Is energized by faith
- Has an outward-looking focus
- Seeks to find out what God wants
- Faces the cost of change and growth
- Operates as a community
- Makes room for all
- Does a few things and does them well

I still have these pinned up in my study. The PCC have again endeavoured to have these constantly in mind in our discussions and decision-making. They help as a bench mark by which to measure progress as best we can.

So as we look back over the past year what is there to be grateful to the Lord for?

You might think this is strange, but I am grateful for the growing 'fringe' at church. The local church should always have a fringe. Not having that fringe could lead to us become inward-looking and introspective; becoming a holy huddle with a ghetto mentality.

We have a healthy fringe: those who are investigating and enquiring about the Christian faith. The Church of England claims to be an 'open church', to welcome all and everyone to our services. This is why not all our services are Holy Communion, which is intended for those who are committed in their faith. This has brought people in who would not otherwise join us on a Sunday.

As in many churches though, we also have an unhealthy fringe: those who think of themselves as Christians and may claim very definitely to be a member of one of our churches ...on the church electoral roll etc but whose commitment it transpires is very superficial. We need to help such to grasp the gospel properly.

Of course, as our churches meet it is apparent they cannot survive long without a core of those who are committed to prayer, to the study of God's Word, to regularly meeting together in order to support and love one another. There has been numerical growth in our home groups and new leaders have emerged from within these groups. The Digging Deeper events and the Big Question meetings helped our Christian understanding and challenged us to develop Christian minds.

We are blessed to have increasing links with young families. Sunday Club's core has grown and the Tuesday Group for our teenagers continues to be highly valued. Our second Holiday Club reached an increasing number of more families with the good news of Jesus. (At a meeting in London of the General Synod this year statistics were offered to indicate the challenge we face in teaching young people the good news of the gospel. In particular that :36% of Church of England churches have no-one under the age of 16 present at Sunday services; a further 29% have less than 5 children or young people under the age of 16 present; only 30 churches have more than 100 children/young people under the age of 16 in church on Sunday). However, we need to realize the challenge we face in teaching children and young people. We must not lose this focus. We are struggling to keep young people in church once they reach the secondary school years. This is a challenge across the country but we do need to keep in mind,

to pray for and to find ways of reaching these young people for Christ. As the Apostle Paul writes *'how can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard?'* (Romans 10:14)

Just as importantly, we have seen people in their later years dipping their toes in, coming to faith and actively participating in church life. Welcome Café continues to flourish as well as pastoral care to the older members of our community.

There are too many things to mention as we look back but include the Festival Service, with James Shone as our guest speaker and Remembrance Sunday with Hugh Barne speaking so powerfully to the breadth of ages. Christmas services were all different and larger than ever as we incorporated last year's feedback and so benefitted from various improvements. The guest wreath making event filled both church and church centre. From this people on the fringe have been drawn in, as from other spheres of ministry. I hope and pray we will all be bolder in inviting friends to church events designed for those wondering about the meaning of life.

The Church Centre was opened by Theresa May MP on October 20. This was a joyful occasion. And I was particularly thrilled to see church family of all ages standing alongside the former Prime Minister. There are now very few days when it is not used for church activities and meetings, as well as providing a place of more general hospitality. The provision of a larger kitchen than we first envisaged has been of great benefit. I will only mention one person linked to this as countless of you gave, prayed, worked to help us reach this climax; that is Nick Rule. We are all indebted to Nick, our architect, for his constant careful work and attention to detail.

It has been a privilege for us all to have been served this last year by Sandra Baker, Helen Gradon and Peter Mayes as Churchwardens. Kim Moul has cheerfully and efficiently helped the parish office to function, amidst the inevitable disruption caused with our building works. Thank you to you all. Kim is stepping down at the end of the month. We will be looking to mark her service appropriately when we can gather again.

I cannot adequately express my deep thanks to Andy, Hugh and Steve for their constant commitment to the ministry here.... and particularly for making up for my many weaknesses. They had a heavier burden whilst I was on a three-month sabbatical, and in doing so gave me the opportunity to step back. That period was immensely helpful spiritually as well as being a great blessing to us as a family. Six months on and I am conscious that I haven't yet fed back to you about the sabbatical. Camilla and I look forward to doing that when we can finally meet together.

Finally, it is a joy to partner in the gospel with you across the parish. I am ever grateful for the servant heartedness of so many of you.

John R M Cook

PARISH STATISTICS 2019

	2019	2018	2017	2016	2015	2014	2013
Communicants for the year St. Mary's	4529	4930	4836	3891	4089	4182	4029
Communicants for the year St. Peter's & St. Paul's	132	151	260	162	252		387
Baptisms	5	14	23	16	5	26	23
Thanksgiving for birth	0	0	0	1	-	1	-
Funerals/Memorial Services/Cremations/Ashes	31	15	27	36	30	31	32
Weddings	5	9	6	5	7	8	10
Services of Blessing for Marriage	0		3	1	-	2	3
Confirmations	0	12	0	1	-	4	-
Thanksgiving for Marriage	0	0	1	2	-	-	-

TREASURER'S REPORT

2019 was a challenging year in some ways. As prefaced in my Annual Report in 2018, we expected a small surplus on general activities, and this was indeed the case in 2019, helped in no small way it being a Festival year. However, this was offset by an overrun on the final costs of the St Mary's Church Centre (SMCC) which required a transfer of £55K funds from the general reserve to cover expenditure not covered by the fundraising.

The movement on general funds is generated by separating out the normal recurring activities of the church – with income generated from stewardship, collections, donations and fund-raising etc - and the total costs of the day to day administration and ministry of the church, and the maintenance of its properties and churchyards.

Each year we examine our costs and implement whatever savings we can, but unfortunately income levels are often beyond our control. As these are an important element of our on-going operations, it is vital that we do as much as possible to maximise income as well as minimising costs. The main influences on the income levels for 2019 were as follows:-

- Stewardship income (excluding gift aid tax recovered) ended the year at £97,444 a decrease of over 10% over the 2018 total of £108,456. Whilst this income is testament to the generosity of our parishioners, the decline in such income over the prior year is a little concerning given the generally rising costs across all expenditure headings.
- Gift aid recovery was slightly below the previous year
- Church collections were similar to 2018.
- Fund raising for the general fund centred mostly on the Festival, and brought in £23,254 compared with £2,532 last year due to 2018. Festival event profits added around £5,000 to the surplus for the year.
- Fees from weddings and funerals (retained by the PCC) were similar to 2018.
- The parish magazine continues to flourish and brought in revenue of £8,000 compared to £7,000 in 2018.
- Room rental – the opening of the SMCC has given additional opportunities for room rental, and although this is limited at present there have still been a number of events (such as post funeral gatherings) which have contributed around £2,000 to the running costs of the new building.
- We received £5,000 additional unrestricted donations and legacies in the year,
- Dividend income was around £1,190 less than 2018, mainly due to the decision to use the trust fund from the sale of the Woodclyffe Hall towards the capital costs of the SMCC which was approved by the relevant Trustees as an appropriate use of this capital. These investments were sold in 2018 and the proceeds used to help fund the SMCC construction.

Overall, total income from 'normal' activities (being unrestricted funds and endowment funds per the annual accounts) was £216,070 which represents an increase of around £19,500 over the previous year.

Total unrestricted costs at £196,282 were around £13,000 higher than last year with a number of major influences causing this increase in expenditure. The main changes are listed below:-

- Ministry costs – these were reduced from prior year. This 'heading' includes activities of the youth groups as well as the parish share, clergy expenses and music costs. The cost of youth services fell in particular due to there being no paid youth worker during 2019 (2018 costs for this were around £7,000).
- Fundraising costs including Festival events costs – these were around £18,000 in 2019, mainly due to the cost of the Festival Events, (food, drink, orchestra and flowers being the main costs)
- General building repairs – these have been much higher in 2019 (by around £7,000) with major projects being carried out on the boiler in St Marys, new noticeboards, guttering repairs and other work.
- Churchyard and Cemetery and Mill Green expenses – the level of work carried out in the year was less and much of this was covered by specific (restricted) donations).

- Office expenses – costs in 2018 included the balance of the cost of the new website. These savings have been partly offset by some additional costs incurred in the moving of the office space to the vestry, and associated works to allow it to function (IT, heating etc).
- Mission giving - this has increased over 2018. It is governed by a formulae agreed many years ago, and is based on a proportion of certain income types in the year. As these include fundraising, in a Festival year the Mission amount tends to be higher.
- Heating, lighting, water and insurance – these have increased by £2800 over prior year This is due both to the additional costs incurred due to the Festival, and also the increased cost of running the SMCC.
- Parish share – there was a £2,600 fall in our allocated Parish Share to in the year.

Although the general and endowment fund had a surplus on 'normal activities' in the year, the transfer to cover the shortfall in restricted funds for the SMCC resulted in a net reduction of the general reserves at the end of 2019 of around £36,200. This leaves unrestricted funds of £95,244 at the end of the year compared to £131,443 at the end of 2018.

Total restricted funds were £57,823 at the end of 2019 compared to £75,591 at the end of 2018.

The main movements are as follows:-

- St Peter's fabric fund – this is the restricted fund for the work to renovate St Peter's. The balance on this fund increased by over £20,000 in the year, due mainly to a grant award and other fundraising activity.
- 21C project – the SMCC was finally opened in 2019, and the balance on the fund at the start of the year of £38,400 was utilised in the completion of these works. As mentioned earlier in this commentary, the actual expenditure was greater than the fundraising balance (partly due to the enhanced archaeological work costs) and therefore the PCC approved a final transfer from the general reserve to cover the excess expenditure in the year.

The capital in the Endowment funds is not available for use, and the moment on this balance represents the change in investment value of the underlying funds over the year. Given the events of the past few weeks, I suspect much of this gain has been lost again!

A draft budget has been prepared for the new financial year. This initially showed a break even position for the 2020 year. This recognises that the current trend of the reduction in stewardship income (caused by changing circumstances of many donors) has continued so that this source of income is still falling. This is an understandable movement over time, but given the critical nature of this type of income to the funding of the church operations, we need to ensure reductions in the current base of stewardship income is offset by new or increased giving from those who are still able and willing to give, and from new contributions.

The initial budget for 2020 also contained estimates for collection and other giving including yellow envelopes at services – in these current challenging circumstances this income has dropped significantly, with collection and yellow envelopes having stopped completely in mid-March. I recognise the efforts of some of the usual envelope donors to set up new standing orders, but it is acknowledged that 2020 will be a very challenging year given the impact of the current crisis.

In order to try to mitigate some of this, the PCC have been grateful to Sean Sutcliffe who has agreed to head a new giving campaign to try to offset the impact of the trend in declining income. Whilst his plans have been put on hold due to the Covid 19 impact, I am sure he will return to this in the latter part of the year when we are able to return to some semblance of normality.

My thanks to Richard Lloyd for administering the gift-aid system, Andrew Imlay and Sean Sutcliffe for their efforts on stewardship and to Kim for her help in the office.

Jane Wills

ST MARY'S CHURCHWARDEN REPORT

The year has seen the consolidation of working practices within the COG organisation established in 2018 and the development of activity focussed within the new Church Centre. In January work outstanding included installation of the copper roof security system, the re-siting of tombstones displaced by construction work, landscaping of the memorial garden and, of course, the necessary "snagging". The formal opening ceremony was delayed until October to enable our MP, the former Prime Minister Theresa May, to attend.

The APCM in April saw the retirement of Christine Walker, who had given invaluable service as Churchwarden over an extended period, and Bob Austen, who had filled the breach for one year in her support. In absence of volunteers Helen Gradon and Peter Mayes offered their services strictly to fulfil constitutional requirements and perform the role as Bishop's representatives in the parish. In principle the COG organisation should have covered the breadth of overall tasks embodied in the churchwardens' duties. There was however a hiatus in coordination of the pre-Christmas programme of events and with respect to coverage of reports, records and statistics spurred by the erstwhile rural dean's inspection. The churchwardens dealt with any problems but were not always comfortable with their situation.

Concerning the fabric of the church, the quinquennial inspection held in April did not, thankfully, reveal any surprises. The repair programme should be achievable within the next four years and the PCC is most grateful for support already promised by the Wargrave Heritage Trust to cover the first priority, re-oiling of the North and South porches, already programmed for June. Aside from a severe breakdown to the Nave heating boiler in January the only other unexpected expense involved damage to a number of the church and Hannen Room locks when a vindictive vagrant superglued them. From Spring 2018 he had haunted the Church, accepted its hospitality and was well treated by the clergy and many in the congregation. However, his presence often un-nerved grave-side visitors and his belligerent and threatening behaviour necessitated, on police advice, his being warned off.

Over 2019 the church maintained a strong congregation, a buoyant young families and children's following and increased activities serving the older generation all due, with-out doubt, to the strengths of the present clergy team. With financial concerns being addressed but yet to be resolved next year offers us challenges. The corona virus problem is already shifting the balance on which our society is based and will undoubtedly place very high demands upon our energies, our budget and our faith.

Peter Mayes and Helen Gradon

DEANERY SYNOD REPORT

The Sonning Deanery Synod comprises representatives of 14 Parishes (covering 24 church congregations) in the local area. Representatives are drawn from the Clergy in each Parish and elected Lay Representatives. These total over 80, though the average Synod meeting is rarely over 50. For the Parish of Wargrave and Knowl Hill the Lay Members are Sue Griffiths, Richard Lloyd and Sheila Williams (with two vacancies), whose 3-year stint finishes at the next APCM in 2020. Synod Meetings are held 4 or 5 times a year at locations around the Deanery and are chaired alternately by the Area Dean Rev Richard Lamey, and the Lay Chair John Smith. Our Church Centre hosted the November meeting this year – the first time we have been able to provide the facility for many years. During 2019, meetings were also held in Twyford, St. Paul's Wokingham, and Owlsmoor.

The Deanery maintains a Website at <https://sonningdeanery.com/> which includes a regular Prayer Diary, notices and reports of Deanery projects and events, and links to the Diocesan Synod meetings to which the Deanery sends 8 representatives. Deanery Synod members will be able to vote for General Synod members in 2020 (5-year stints).

The year was marked by the appointment of Olivia Graham, formerly the Archdeacon of Berkshire, as our new Area Bishop, and her consecration in November. She addressed the Sonning Deanery Day in December on her vision for her Area.

The start of each meeting has a special focus. In June there is a Communion Service which focuses the attention of the members of Synod on their responsibilities and group identity. At the March meeting (which had coincided with one of our own PCC meetings and so was not attended by our Parish representatives), Synod held a full discussion on issues within the Church of England of Human Sexuality. The Diocese, in common with much of the rest of the Church of England, has launched an LGBT+ Chaplaincy team. Group discussions on this topic concentrated on listening kindly to each other and to explore things that might not have been thought of before.

The Deanery Plan, which had been drafted late in 2018 underwent further discussion and editing, and finally was approved in June this year. It has four main strands of consideration and training – Personal Discipleship, the impact of new housing developments within the Deanery area, sharing between parishes the opportunities for training in practical matters, and strengthening the growth of relationships between parishes and among Synod members. It is expected that the Plan will remain as a focus for Deanery and individual Parish developments over the next two years, after which it will need reviewing and renewing as circumstances change.

The September meeting concentrated on the development of Discipleship – discussion groups were devoted to sharing experiences and exploring ways in which congregations can become more involved with their local communities. It was clear from the output from this that parishes in the Deanery differ significantly in their makeup and the ability of their members to interact with those around them.

The November meeting began with the Revd Bob Simmonds, who is Senior Chaplain for the Royal Berkshire Foundation Trust, speaking about the work of the various members of the Chaplaincy team given the wide range of patients from different religious backgrounds – or none. He sees their role as being “Compassionate Companions” who only get involved in talking on spiritual aspects when specifically asked for this. Another topic was on the biblical basis for our responsibility for the Environment.

Richard Lloyd

PCC REPORT

(In order to avoid duplication of information, this is a shortened version of the formal report which is published with the Annual Accounts)

After the Annual Meeting held on 7th April 2019, the following served as members of the PCC (“K” denotes a person elected by the parishioners of St Peter’s Knowl Hill, “W” a person elected by the parishioners of St Mary’s Wargrave)

Incumbent: The Revd John Cook
(Chairman)

Curates: The Revd Hugh Barne
The Revd Stephen Turville

Churchwardens:

K Mrs Sandra Baker
W Mrs Helen Gradon
W Mr Peter Mayes

Elected Members:

W Mr Robert Austen
W Mrs Amanda Bayley
W Mr Mike Buckland
W Mrs Linda Carradine
W Mr Michael Carver
W Mr Doug Clark
W Mrs Rosie Creedon
W Mr Andy Ferguson
W Mr Andrew Imlay
K Mrs Karen Larkins
W Mrs Karen Lloyd
W Mr Haydn Selwyn Jones
W Mrs Lesley Turville
W Mrs Jane Wills (*PCC Treasurer*)
W Mrs Susan Witney
W Mrs Sarah Whiteside

Representatives on the Deanery Synod:

W Mrs Susan Griffiths
W Mr Richard Lloyd
W Mrs Sheila Williams (*PCC Secretary*)

(Mr Imrie and Mr Selwyn Jones resigned from the PCC later in 2019)

The PCC met 5 times during the year with an average attendance of 82%. Committees, Ministry and CoGs Teams met between meetings, and their reports were received by the full PCC. Any recommendations were then discussed and acted upon.

COGs Teams cover Ministry Areas as follows:

Gathering	Focusing on our time together to learn from God’s word, pray and worship
Nurturing	Helping people to develop their faith
Caring	Helping people through life events – Baptisms, Weddings and Funerals as well as home and hospital visits, and community service
Celebrating	Not only in our weekly worship but in our fellowship & social events together
Reaching	All about making connections with the community
Supporting	All admin and resource areas of our functioning Church
Stewarding	Caring for our Church buildings, cemetery and land
Communicating	Activities, events and news within our Church and with our wider community

The Mission Team organising support for Local, National and Overseas Mission and **The Eco-Church Team** are both standalone teams.

Sheila Williams
PCC Secretary

REACHING CoG REPORT

The Reaching CoG is all about making connections with the community in order to bear witness to the gospel message and to draw people into the family of the church.

Butterflies - Butterflies has continued to be an encouraging context for fruitful connections with young families. Families connected to Butterflies will often engage with other church activities (WLTDO, Messy Church, Holiday Club, Wreath Making) and Sunday services once established at Butterflies.

Who let the Dads out? - after a trial period in 2018 WLTDO now meets monthly on the second Saturday of every month at 8.45am in the Church Centre. Some of the Dad's attending are from within the church family whilst many wouldn't typically attend church.

Messy Church - after a trial period Messy Church also meets monthly and on the second Sunday of non-summer months from 4pm in the Church Centre. Attendance continues to fluctuate but there have been several encouragements and we continue to make contact with new families.

Schools - Reaching activity continues in several schools. This includes Collective Worship, involvement in RE lessons, speaking at special events and building relationships with staff.

Holiday Club - in part a 'nurturing' activity, Holiday Club is also an important opportunity to make and strengthen connections in the wider village community. The trial run in 2018 was deemed successful, and 2019 showed signs of the event growing in its impact. The feasibility of a 2020 Holiday Club is currently being investigated.

Other events - Stand alone events continue to provide opportunities for inviting people to church to engage with the gospel message. These include the annual wreath making events, evening 'Important Questions' events, children's party and festival events.

Looking ahead

Alpha - After the review of last year's January attendance at CE, and much discussion in various forums it was decided that we would try changing to Alpha as our Christmas 'follow-up' this year in case a change of offer might bring in a different set of people.

Seeking increasing levels of lay leadership and involvement will be a key consideration within this CoG. Many of the initiatives are currently reliant on just a few and so an increased volunteer base is essential, however teams continue to build steadily.

Hugh Barne

NURTURING CoG

NURTURINGHELPING PEOPLE DEVELOP THEIR FAITH.

HOMEGROUPS: There are nine thriving homegroups in St Mary's Church.

Meeting on different days/times throughout the week. Something for everyone. All groups have very healthy numbers!

DIGGING DEEPER:— We have had several Friday evenings/Saturday morning talks including visiting speakers.

We were blessed with new style services for Ash Wednesday and Maundy Thursday. Followed by the Lent Course. They were all very inspiring and well received.

The Bereavement service was very well attended and really enveloped all who came, both the regulars and those recently bereaved.

Linda Caradine

GATHERING CoG REPORT

The Gathering CoG is concerned with church services at St Mary's, when we gather together to worship as the family of God. Much of its work is to support the ongoing weekly Sunday morning services, and also to plan the 'special occasion' services throughout the year. A small team meets occasionally to discuss, review and develop our provision. A huge number of volunteers carry out a variety of roles: the sides people on the welcome desk, those who read the Bible passages, intercessors, the music group, Pathfinder and Sunday Club leaders, AV operators, bell ringers, the coffee/refreshments team, those who administer the chalice, those who lead, serve, preach and preside at the services, and of course the people who attend services, adding their prayers and singing to the worship of God. So firstly, a big thank-you to everyone involved in this ministry.

Some of the 'special' occasions over the past year include:

- In Lent, creative services on Ash Wednesday and Maundy Thursday, as well as the usual Good Friday walk of witness and hour at the cross. A new event on Good Friday was a trip to listen to Handel's Messiah at the Royal Albert Hall.
- The Wargrave Festival service in the marquee, with an inspiring guest speaker, James Shone.
- A Sunday morning service in September to 'launch' the church's activities over the next 12 months, with presentations about the various CoGs and an opportunity for people to consider which areas of ministry God might be calling them to.
- A new young people's singing group gathered to prepare music for special occasions, starting with the Harvest service, and then the 4pm Christmas Eve service.
- A Sunday morning service in October followed by the official opening of the Church Centre by our MP, the Rt Hon. Teresa May.
- The usual Remembrance Day service, which was filled to overflowing.
- A busy time at Christmas with a variety of services, including the Sunday evening carol service, the Seniors' carol service, Christmas Eve services at 4pm, 6pm and 11.15pm, as well as the 8am and 10am Christmas morning services. The attendance across all these services was over 1400, with record attendances at the 4pm and 6pm Christmas Eve services.

It has been a busy year. As we move on through 2020, if you think God might be calling you to become more involved in any of the roles in this CoG, have a word with the clergy, or with anyone in the many teams of volunteers.

Rosemary Creedon

CARING CoG REPORT

The remit of the Caring CoG includes Bereavement visits, Home/Hospital visits, Home Communion, BWF Follow up/ Anniversaries, Welcome Café and Trust work (Almshouses, Woodclyffe Hostel, Piggott Trust). We are not social services or counsellors.

The Caring Cog has continued to consolidate through 2019. Linda Caradine handed over the Co-ordinators role to Steve Turville after the APCM.

- 6 people receive regular Home Communion, plus weekly services at The Mount.
- There are good links with Elizabeth Court, where there is a monthly Holy Communion Service, and occasional memorial services for residents.
- The weekly Welcome Café has a usual attendance of 14 (occasionally 20!) and attracts regulars from outside of the St Mary's family, which has been very encouraging, and even welcomed passing 'tourists'.
- Andy Ferguson's role as a chaplain at the RBH is priceless as it means our people in hospital can have regular chaplain's visits.
- We had a focus on end of life care towards the end of 2019. The GraveTalk morning in October was attended by 40 people and received very good feedback on a: the opportunity to talk about death, dying and funerals, b: the expert input from Dr Mark Puddy, solicitor Hilary Buckle and funeral minister Andy Ferguson, and c: the quality of St Marys Church Centre as a venue. A second GraveTalk was planned for April 2020 but this was cancelled due to Covid19.
- Related to GraveTalk, we also organised a Bereavement Awareness Training Day in November, run by Care for the Family. This was attended by 20 people who personally paid £15 for the course which also received very good feedback.
- Attendance at the Seniors Carol Service was a bit down on last year, but attracted 40+ and very much appreciated by those who attend, with special thank yous to the ladies who baked and decorated the Centre so beautifully.
- Members of the congregation help each other all the time on an informal basis (often through the Home Group network), which is to be encouraged and applauded.

Rev Steve Turville

STEWARDSHIP CoG REPORT

Vision - for our parish to give glory to God in the way we manage the land, buildings and resources that He has entrusted to our care

How we get there - maintain a beautiful church and surroundings; balance biodiversity with tidiness; use money, energy, water and paper responsibly; recycling of food waste; avoidance of single-use plastic; reuse and recycle where possible; provision of recycling bin in Church Centre; trialling of greener methods of cleaning; new bike racks at St Mary's; apply for an Eco Church award to help us keep on track in an accountable manner

Our approach has been to identify roles and responsibilities clearly, leave alone what works well, and inform the Vicar and PCC of new developments and challenges.

2019 milestones:

- Establishment of a mapped "Let it Grow Zone" on north side of St Mary's churchyard; wild flowers sown in north west corner
- A new Garden of Remembrance in the chalk-pit cemetery, seeded with grass coming through
- Free Bat Conservation Trust inspection to be arranged prior to re-oiling of north & south porches in Quinquennial report
- Reptile surveys at St Mary's and St Peter's, April to September
- Participation with other local churches in "Christians Together on Climate" conference in November @ St Laurence Church, Reading
- Attainment of award levels in four of five Eco Church categories – our buildings remain our challenge
- To help us address this, application for energy audits with Diocesan subsidy, at St Mary's and St Peter's

Roles & Responsibilities

Stewarding Coordinator

- Eco Church
- Church Maintenance
- Church Centre Management
- Church heating issues
- Church lighting
- Churchyard maintenance
- Churchyard Grass Cutting rota
- Mill Green maintenance
- Mill Green Grass Cutters rota
- Cemetery
- Church Cleaning rota
- Church Centre cleaning
- Hannen cleaning rota
- Brass Cleaning
- Flowers
- Church linen
- Verger Rota
- Candle oils
- Flag raising

Mike Buckland

Mike Buckland (*impacts all CoGs*)

Peter Mayes
Christine Walker
Christine Walker
vacancy
Peter Mayes
Bob Austen
Peter Mayes
Bill Bookless
Peter Mayes
June Knox
Christine Walker
Cynthia Coombes
Sheila Williams
Sheila Williams
Helen Gradon
Bob Austen
Rosie Creedon
Churchwarden -> Lloyd Scrivener

Mike Buckland

CELEBRATING CoG

The role of the Celebrating CoG is to celebrate not only in weekly worship but in fellowship together. Rambles and social events are organised by a variety of different people to keep everyone involved as a Church family.

2019 was a Wargrave Village Festival year and the Church organised a number of events which were very successful and demonstrated our outreach mission to great effect:

Brass on the Grass in Wargrave Court
Classical Evening in St Mary's Church
Festival Folk Club in the Church Centre
Butterflies in the Church Centre
Festival Welcome Café in the Church Centre
Flower Festival in St Mary's Church
End of Festival Service in the Festival Marquee
Family Barbecue in the Festival Marquee

In July 2019 we launched the Family Group which invites everyone in the Church family to enjoy a monthly social evening, organised by teams on a rota. The range of activities is far reaching and always great fun!

Throughout the year we enjoyed a programme of 'Rambles with Bob' which take place on the 4th Sunday of the month after the 10.30 Service. We break for the winter but there was a New Year's Day ramble in the morning to clear the cobwebs!

Peter Dart's Trip to the Royal Albert Hall for the Messiah on Good Friday and the Annual Concert in Church in November have proved to be very popular inclusions in our Church calendar.

If you feel that you would like to become involved in planning and organising events, please contact me.

Bob Austen
0118 940 3038
austenrobert@hotmail.com

SUPPORTING CoG REPORT

This COG underscores everything that the church does, including administration, finance, funding, general data protection, health & safety and safeguarding.

When Christine Walker stood down from the role in April, as no one came forward to take on this responsibility, I took it on on an interim basis.

Throughout 2019 Jane Wills continued the excellent management of our finances. We covered all our costs in 2019 and made a small surplus and plans were put in place for a stewardship drive in 2020.

The office has gone through considerable disruption as it has been relocated to the former vestry. Further work needs to be done to bring this work space up to standard and make the work space comfortable.

We changed IT support providers to Accordis from Waltham St Lawrence who have proved very helpful in resolving issues and identifying opportunities, resulting in moving our computer storage into the cloud.

Safeguarding is a hot topic within the Church of England and Lesley Turville has been efficient in ensuring everyone who is involved with children and vulnerable adults has attended appropriate training and keeps an up to date log of those authorised to undertake various ministries.

Andy Ferguson

COMMUNICATING CoG REPORT

The communicating CoG covers 10 areas, each with an individual or team managing it.

The Parish Magazine

This was published 10 times in the year. There is a big team involved under the editorship of Bob Austen. Each edition had 40 A5 pages and for the first time we experimented with putting all the advertisements together (14 pages) and classified the section 'Directory'. Generally this has proved successful with readers and advertisers.

Thanks go to the team including the contributors, distribution manager, advertising manager, production assistant and distributors.

Thanks also to our advertisers, the magazine made a surplus of £2,000 in 2019.

The Website

Richard Lloyd faithfully maintains this valuable resource which we try to keep as fresh as possible. New photographs were incorporated in the homepage and more are always welcome.

The Database

The database is linked to the website and now has over 250 registered members covered by GDPR regulations. Richard also manages this.

Audiovisual Equipment

The team of Doug Clarke, David Williams, Chris Perry, George Cook & Richard Lloyd manage this each Sunday. Generally we get it right although occasionally we seem to have a gremlin in the system. Graham Trolley has been very helpful in providing expert advice and support to fix issues we have encountered.

Service Sheets

These have been produced by Kim Moul & Lisa Herbert throughout the year to a high standard.

Notice Sheets

Weekly Notice Sheets were produced by Kim Moul & Annette Greathead. The move to Mailchimp and electronic distribution has been delayed to 2020.

Social Media

Grace Barne relinquished her responsibility for Facebook & Twitter when she gave birth to Isaac and this was taken over by Hugh. Richard Lloyd sends out Newsflashes and the plan to change the format to Mailchimp has also been delayed to 2020.

Posters

In 2019 the notice board at the entrance to Mill Green was replaced as the old board, made from wood, was rotting. The replacement metal board fits in well with the surroundings and has a larger space for posters. New signs were produced for the Parish Office and Church Centre.

The notice boards at the back of the church have been maintained by the COG leaders throughout the year (some better than others!)

Posters for events have been produced throughout the year by Kim Moul and Hugh Barne.

The Wargrave News

At least a one page 'St Mary's' contribution has been sent to this village publication for each edition (and if we've forgotten the copy date we've been gently prompted by the Editors).

Public Relations

The only issue that needed to be managed in 2019 was the disruption caused by a homeless person camping in the churchyard. This was proactively managed to maintain the church's reputation for keeping people safe while caring for the poor.

THANK YOU TO EVERYONE WHO HELPED MAKE THE COMMUNICATING CoG A
SUCCESS IN 2019

Andy Ferguson

SAFEGUARDING REPORT

There have been no safeguarding incidents this year.

There have been two safeguarding procedural information requests

Actions taken this year:

- All PCC members have been DBS checked in line with new guidance: no portage of checks is allowed
- All PCC have undertaken C0 or C1 training as required
- C1 training was run by the Diocese in the Church Centre and was attended by about 20 people.
- All workers with children and vulnerable adults have been DBS checked and trained.
- An action plan has been written following Diocesan guidance
- All electronic records are up to date.
- All clergy are trained to C3 and S2 level.

Lesley Turville
Safeguarding officer

KNOWL HILL STRATEGY TEAM REPORT

St Peter's and St Paul's

Currently the Strategy Group meets approximately once a month and consists of Valda Hadden, Jill Hendry, Lesley Bell, Karen Larkins, Tracy Bird, Christopher Westacott and Sandra Baker. Hilary Buckle is also a member although unable to attend meetings. John Cook, Steve Turville and Hugh Barne attend as and when available. Churchwardens are Sandra Baker for St Peter's and Jill Hendry at St Paul's.

Services

Regular services at St Peter's throughout the year have been Village Praise on the first Sunday of the month at 10.30am and Holy Communion at 9.15am on the third Sunday of the month together with Celebration Services eg: Easter, Harvest and Christmas etc. A Communion Service continues to be held at St Paul's at 9.15am on every second Sunday of the month. Unfortunately the later timed Village Praise services have not yet had the effect of encouraging greater attendance despite being well advertised. A decision was taken at the end of the year to begin both services at St Peter's at 10.30am renaming them as All Age Family Services which would be themed and delivered in a simpler liturgical style with upbeat hymns and songs. Screens would be used in a bid to attract younger members of the community. The school holds regular weekly services. The church family at St Peter's greatly appreciates the efforts of the clergy and their support to bring the good news of the gospel to the wider community in Knowl Hill.

Project

The work on the St Peter's renovation project has continued throughout the year thanks to the retention of the services of Nick Rule. The Faculty has now been submitted for consideration by the Diocese and their comments are awaited. Fundraising continues so that work can commence once the Faculty has been granted. Unfortunately the one remaining boiler broke down just before Christmas and a decision has been taken to install two boilers to prevent deterioration of the fabric of the building.

S. Baker