

**ST MARY-THE-LESS PARISH CHURCH
CHILBOLTON, SO20 6BQ**

ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2016

**Incumbent
Reverend Jax Machin**

Secretary
Mrs Wendy Fakes
Grafton
Village Street
Chilbolton
Stockbridge
Hampshire, SO20 6BE

**THE PARISH OF ST-MARY-THE-LESS, CHILBOLTON
IN THE DEANERY OF ANDOVER
AND THE DIOCESE OF WINCHESTER**

INTRODUCTION

The responsibility of the Chilbolton Parochial Church Council (PCC) is to cooperate with the Rector in promoting in the parish the whole mission of the church – pastoral, evangelistic and ecumenical.

MEMBERSHIP

Members of the PCC are either ex officio or elected by the Annual Parochial Church Meeting in accordance with the church Representation Rules.

During the year 2016 the following served as members of Chilbolton PCC.

Incumbent	Reverend Jax Machin	
Churchwarden	Vacant	
Deanery Synod Representatives	Mr Andrew Kent Mr Colin Sheath	
Elected Members	Mr Neil Bowen	
	Mrs Wendy Fakes	(PCC Secretary)
	Mr Andrew Kent	(PCC Chairman)
	Mrs Lesley Kent	
	Reverend Dave Mapes	
	Mrs Charlotte Nash	
	Mr Michael Payne	(PCC Treasurer)
	Mr Jolyon Pope	
	Mr Colin Sheath	
	Mr Lawrence Wild	

Electoral Roll

There were 74 names on the Electoral Roll.

Usual Sunday Attendance

The average Sunday attendance figure over the year was 28 (26 adults and two children).

ACTIVITIES OF THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL IN 2016

Chilbolton PCC met five times during the year with an average attendance of 90%. The PCC is divided into five sub committees, which meet between PCC meetings. The sub committees may co-opt parishioners to serve.

1. FINANCE

As a result of a significant rise in Standing Orders and some excellent fund raising the General Fund produced a surplus of £318 last year - similar to 2015. This was before the transfer of £1,000 to the Building Fund, necessary to prevent that fund going into the red. Gift Aid tax reclaimed for this fund was a record £5,755 and there is £1,302 to come from the Q4 claim. As in 2011, 2012 and 2015 all non-designated donations (and associated tax) were diverted to the Building Fund.

Fund raising during the year amounted to £13,951 gross, or £12,248 net, compared to a net £18,845 in 2015 (when the biennial Auction was held) and £9,087 in 2014. The 2016 Fete raised £10,382 (up by £482 on 2015 despite the adverse weather) and the Christmas Fair brought in £1,485 (up £555). Weddings and funerals produced fees of £1,713 (similar to 2015) and the Parish Council made its usual grant of £600 towards the costs of grass cutting.

Charitable and Outreach donations of £1,689 were made (up nearly £200). Ministry working expenses rose by £417 to £2,249 but the cost of visiting priests fell by £319 to £649. Churchyard maintenance costs (grass cutting and tree works), electricity bills and insurance costs were all similar to 2015.

The Parish Share (now called Common Mission Fund) paid to the Diocese was unchanged at £23,255 and will be in 2017. Because of staff changes, Benefice administrative costs rose by 12% to £5,095 but should be that much lower in 2017 for the same reason.

The General Fund stood at £26,059 at the end of 2016 and a surplus is forecast for 2017. We aim to keep a minimum balance of £25,000 in this fund.

The Building Fund has been virtually eliminated as a result of the work on the tower and the clock. Total building and repair costs were £25,335 in 2016, with a further £1,099 to be paid in 2017. Donations of over £6,600 were directed to this fund. A grant of £1,000 was received from the Allchurches Trust and tax worth £2,627 was reclaimed. There were also transfers of £7,000 from the Rector's Fund, £1,000 from the General Fund and £625 from the Joint Fund. However, over £4,000 will be received as a result of a VAT reclaim plus a further £2,000 from a promised grant from Hampshire and the Islands Historic Churches Trust.

The Rector/Churchwardens Fund was reduced to a mere £23 by the end of 2016 as a result of the £7,000 transfer to the Building Fund.

The Joint Fund (largely the magazine) increased by £653 to £5,451 following record advertising receipts of over £9,000. As approved by the magazine committee, there were transfers of £625 each to Wherwell Parochial Church Council and the Chilbolton Building Fund in 2016. The Joint Fund will gradually reduce over the coming months (because of printing costs) until the next round of advertising monies is received in the summer, and further transfers out can be expected in 2017.

The Organ Fund and Choir Fund hardly changed last year.

In summary, Parochial Church Council funds fell in cash terms by £13,453 to £33,521 during 2016, with a further net £6,430 owing (mainly from tax). The bulk of the money is in an instant access account currently earning 0.35% interest.

2. **LAYFIELD AND SILVA CHARITY**

Whilst not strictly part of Chilbolton Parochial Church Council's responsibilities, this Charity has as its trustees the Rector and two past or present PCC members (currently Lawrence Wild and Jane Brown). Moreover, the charitable awards can be viewed as part of the church's wider mission.

The aims of the charity are:

1. relieving either generally or individually persons resident in the parish of Chilbolton who are in conditions of need, hardship or distress;
2. assisting persons who have not attained the age of 25 years resident in the Parish of Chilbolton who are in need of financial assistance and who are preparing for, entering upon or engaged in any profession, trade, occupation or service. Otherwise promoting the education (including social and physical training) of such persons.

At the end of 2016 the fund stood at £807, having made no grants during that year. The Charity normally invites applications for awards every two years.

3. **SOCIAL**

All the events both locally and in the Benefice would not have been possible without people to organise them and then to people who on the day set up, make cakes, serve food, man the stalls, wash up, provide musical entertainment, etc so a big 'thank you' to all who contribute in so many ways to make these events happen and be so enjoyable.

In May instead of a house to house collection for Christian Aid it was decided to have a cream tea in the church. The weather was so nice that tables were set out in the churchyard. About 20 people came to enjoy the wonderful cakes and a substantial amount of money was raised for Christian Aid.

Towards the end of May saw the Benefice Trinity Sunday BBQ when Chilbolton's contribution was to provide the puddings for about 80 people.

The 25 June was a day of torrential downpours for the fete at Down End. Despite the weather the social committee managed to serve teas and sumptuous cakes from a marquee with a leaking roof, the barbecue managed to stay alight and the weather did not put off too many visitors. Thanks go to Jennie Pope for all her hard work in organising this event and to Nigel and Jeannie Goodeve-Docker for the use of their garden for the fete.

In the middle of September there was the Service of Remembrance for the Airborne Forces. This year it was held in the church and refreshments were served after the service.

Harvest Festival followed by Harvest Lunch in the village hall was also in September. About 40 people sat down to a two course buffet lunch.

Christmas was soon upon us and the Christmas Fair was held at the beginning of December in the village hall. It had stalls selling handmade cards, designer glassware, jewellery, cakes and lots of other gift ideas. Father Christmas was there to listen to the children's requests for presents and children had the opportunity to make craft items under the watchful eye of the Simply Sunday Team. The raffle table dipped under the weight of the Christmas Hamper, baskets of fruit, bottles of wine and other prizes and the bottle tombola was very popular. A big 'thank you' to Mary Gilbert who helped Lesley Kent to organise this event.

In the first week of December 25 people from Chilbolton and Wherwell sat down to a full Christmas lunch with all the trimmings in the Durnford Room of the village hall. Two people who had accepted the invitation but could not come on the day had their Christmas meal delivered to their door. The afternoon ended with carol singing and a visit from Father Christmas.

Every Sunday throughout the year people have kindly volunteered to be on the coffee rota to provide refreshments after the services.

4. FABRIC AND HOUSEKEEPING

Repairs to the bell chamber and spire were the main focus of attention during 2016. The architects invited tenders and in March the tender of Harpoint Builders was accepted. Work comprised the repair and redecoration of the bell chamber boarding, the strengthening of spire rafters, minor roof tile replacements, as well as the painting of gutters and downpipes.

There was however a delay in starting while the Treasurer investigated obtaining a grant from the Listed Places of Worship Repair Fund (second round). A grant was not forthcoming, though one was offered by the Hampshire and the Islands Historic Churches Trust (see Finance).

A decision was taken to utilise Harpoint`s scaffolding to obtain an easy means of access to the clock. This would allow lower costs for having the clock face restored, while at the same time the clock mechanism could be fully overhauled. The firm given the order was Smiths of Derby, experts in tower clocks.

When Harpoints started work on the bell chamber boarding it became clear that it was more practical to replace all the boarding rather than repair the rotten sections. In the event costs were not appreciably greater. During the progress of work, and also with the clock overhaul, there were quite a number of other issues to be resolved. These included a new hardwood frame around the clock face (fabricated locally by Stuart Hammett). So it was not until late in the year when Harpoints and Smiths completed their respective works - and the scaffolding (with its ugly protective metal sheeting!) removed.

However the end result of all the repairs and overhauls has definitely been worthwhile. As custodians of this Grade 1 Listed Building we can be pleased to now have a brighter and much more cared-for appearance for the church building.

5. WORSHIP AND EDUCATION

There were several special services in 2016. The official 90th birthday celebrations of Her Majesty the Queen took place in Chilbolton on 12 June and 80 people gathered in fine weather on Chilbolton Playing Fields where Reverend Jax led a service to celebrate the occasion. Music was provided by the Amesbury Town Band and the service was followed by a picnic and various village entertainments organised by Jane O'Boyle.

2016 was the turn of Chilbolton to host the service for the Women's World Day of Prayer on 4 March, which was a colourful service focusing on Cuba. At the end of June our annual service of Thanksgiving for the fete was held in the fete marquee at Down End. On 18 September the Airborne Forces Service, which had been so successful in 2015, took place in the church. Also in September there was Harvest Festival which this year included a baptism and turned out to be a lively service. REME continued to enjoy its annual visit in October. All these services and those at Christmas were well attended.

During Christian Aid week a series of mid week services took place around the Benefice to pray for the work of Christian Aid.

Monthly services have continued to follow the pattern of Evensong (first Sunday of the month), Morning Prayer (second Sunday), Holy Communion (third Sunday) and Family Service (fourth Sunday). Benefice services were held on the fifth Sunday. Services have been led by Reverend Jax and members of the Ministry Team; our thanks to them as they lead our worship each week.

Chilbolton Homegroup continued to meet fortnightly in members' homes for fellowship and interesting and lively discussion and prayer, usually accompanied by coffee and biscuits.

The Benefice Lent course followed the Diocese of Winchester's 'I Witness' Lent series. Based on the Acts of the Apostles and Luke's Gospel, the aim was to help us grow in confidence to witness the Gospel in all our walks of life. Four excellent speakers were invited and they shared personal stories of what God was doing in their very different work situations. The talks were well attended and informative. During Holy week Compline was held around the Benefice which provided a time for quiet reflection. On Maundy Thursday Reverend Jax and others went to 'Shoe Shine' outside the Abbots Mitre but the wet and cold weather drove them to find shoes to shine inside the pub - much to the delight of the bar staff and pub regulars. Reverend Jax also visited the pub one Saturday morning a month to engage with others outside the church - an ongoing arrangement.

6. **CHOIR**

Choir members came from Chilbolton and Andover. On average four members sang at regular services and there were others that could be called upon for special services.

There were no requests for weddings, however a special request was received for hymns at a baptism.

Visiting organists played on Sundays, namely Richard Morse, Deirdre Wratten and Patience Ritchie. Their help was very much appreciated. On occasions Michael Payne has also played.

During 2016 the choir has sung at Easter, Benefice Services, REME, Remembrance Day, the Carol Service and Christmas morning - all were well supported. Christmas midnight communion was at Wherwell in December to which the choir was not invited to take part.

All the churches sent their respective hymns to the choir leader. This has helped with the visiting organists so as to avoid repeating the hymns chosen by the other churches. The Benefice Office and the Clergy received hymn choices which had been welcomed. The congregation was also supportive of hymn selections.

At the moment it is not possible to get voices together to vary the choir pieces but work will continue on this.

7. **MIDDAY MUMS**

Once again the coffee morning, for those with babies and toddlers in the villages, has continued meeting monthly in Wherwell Village Hall. A fun time of singing has been introduced by Reverend Dave Mapes. The same team have been involved, namely Susan Ansell, Lesley Kent, Di Wild and Joyce and Michael Payne.

8. **SIMPLY SUNDAY**

In 2016 there were four Simply Sunday Tea @ 3 events which were held in the church. The most popular of these was the Mother's Day tea and the Christmas tea. The Mother's Day tea was a lovely afternoon spent with the children serving their mothers with a cream tea and gifts. For the Christmas tea the children decorated the Christmas tree with decorations that they had made. This event was as popular as last year and is a lovely tradition, attracting many families that take part in the Posada and creating a great way to welcome people to the church who do not normally attend.

Simply Sunday has also supported craft tables at Her Majesty the Queens 90th birthday celebrations as well as the Church fete and Christmas fair.

9. **PARISH VISITORS**

The parish visitor team has operated well across the Benefice during 2016 and has also been looking for ways to update and refresh both its skills and its resources. The team has delivered support throughout the year to good effect and will continue doing so in 2017.

In order to improve skills and resources Reverend Jax has developed a training programme which will be aimed at both current and newly recruited Parish Visitors. This will be implemented during 2017.

In Chilbolton the current team consists of Charlotte Nash and Colin Sheath.

10. **GENERAL**

Finally the PCC wishes to thank all the many volunteers who help with the running of the church – they are too many to name individually. Thank you to all who help with:

- (i) organising the various rota duties for services
- (ii) maintaining the churchyard
- (iii) cleaning the church
- (iv) displaying flowers in the church
- (v) providing refreshments for services
- (vi) organising the Church Fete and other fund raising activities
- (vii) opening and closing the church daily
- (viii) winding the clock.

Your support is invaluable to us. **THANK YOU.**