

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

**ANNUAL REPORT**

**AND**

**FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**

**OF THE**

**PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL**

**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER  
2021**

**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 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 2021 the following served as members of Chilbolton PCC.

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

**Electoral Roll**

There were 51 names on the Electoral Roll.

**Sunday Attendance**

With services now being held on alternate weeks the estimated attendance for each service was 13 adults.

## ACTIVITIES OF THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL IN 2021

Chilbolton PCC normally meet five times during the year but with Covid-19 the January meeting was cancelled. The remaining four meetings had 100% attendance. The PCC is divided into five sub committees, which meet between PCC meetings. The sub committees may co-opt parishioners to serve.

### 1. FINANCE

In 2021 the General Fund was in deficit by £3,489. Except for the Christmas lunch/raffle there was no fund-raising, so the main sources of income for this fund were Standing Orders of £13,115 (compared with £13,995 in 2020), collections at services of £1,461 (£1,225), Gift Aid of £3,816 (£5,843), fees of £1,435 (£593) and the customary Parish Council grant of £600.

The collection at the Harvest service was £180 (£210) and this amount was sent to Andover Crisis Centre along with some food donations. In addition, following the Charitable Donations Committee recommendation, £350 was given to Karis Kids, £250 to Andover Food Bank, £250 to BOAZ, £250 to Cruse, £150 to Andover Young Carers and £200 to the Brecknock Hospice. These make the total donations £1,689, almost identical to last year.

Benefice administration costs were £5,290 - down by £249 on 2020. The £11,385 paid to the Diocese was only half the requested amount in order to keep the balance in the General Fund above the mandated minimum level of £25,000.

Our organists all played gratis during 2021 which was very much appreciated. There were also lower electricity and water costs.

The General Fund stood at £27,594 at the end of the year, having fallen by £3,489.

The Building Fund rose to £4,563 in 2021, having received £2,593 in donations (largely Gift Aided) plus a £1,500 transfer from the Joint Fund. The main item of expenditure was £1,380 for repairs to the clock.

The Legacy Fund stands at £4,913, hardly changed on the year.

The Joint Fund currently stands at £6,270 which is ample to cover half a year's printing (and other costs) before the summer's advertising revenue is received. In 2021 that revenue rose from £8,000 to £9,000 as a result of the economic recovery. During the year the magazine committee approved a transfer of £1,500 to Wherwell and the same amount to Chilbolton's Building Fund.

The Organ Fund stood at £1,024 after the cost of a routine service. The Flower Fund has £55 and the Choir Fund £344 (having received some wedding fees).

Total reserves amount to £46,154 (little changed on the year), including outstanding tax claims of £1,391. Most of the monies are in the CBF deposit account earning 0.2% interest at the end of 2021.

### 2. SOCIAL

In 2021 the activities of the Social Committee were curtailed due to the Covid-19. The Auction of Promises organised for April was postponed until October and then cancelled due to the uncertain covid restrictions. The annual fete also did not go ahead neither did the concert by the Bexley Phoenix Choir nor the Harvest lunch. A decision was also taken not to have a Christmas Fair.

In the middle of December arrangements were made to host a Christmas meal for 23 people in the village hall. The guests from Chilbolton and Wherwell were socially distanced in the main hall and were treated to a traditional Christmas lunch, a visit from Father Christmas and the entertainment was provided by Bob Dixon who gave a demonstration of the playing of hand bells and then encouraged the guests to join together to play carols.

In 2022 the Social Committee is hopeful to organise and host the events which were cancelled in 2021.

### **3. FABRIC AND HOUSEKEEPING**

#### Churchyard Benches

Diocesan approval has been received for the installation of two new benches in the churchyard, one to be sited opposite the Garden of Remembrance, the other near the church porch. Both are privately funded as memorials to departed family members.

An existing bench located alongside the pathway between the lych gate and church porch is no longer in a serviceable condition. The family of the person to whom it was dedicated will be providing a replacement.

#### Dampness in the Servery Cupboards

This was first noticed when various items of fabric were found to be mouldy. The church architect carried out an inspection and recommended improvement to ventilation of the space between the backs of the cupboards and the wall. A series of holes have been drilled and small cover grilles fitted on the worktops together with modifications to the front boards beneath the cupboards. The effectiveness of this work will be checked over the coming months and further measures may be necessary.

### Repairs to Tower Clock Hammer

The Cumbria Clock Company has completed repairs which were delayed on financial considerations, from when the damage first occurred in 2019. The work consisted of straightening the damaged clock hammer together with improvement to the tying off arrangement to the hammer.

### Mowing of Churchyard

2021 was the second year for certain parts of the churchyard to be managed as wildflower areas.

## **4. WORSHIP AND EDUCATION**

During 2021 services continued to be disrupted by Covid-19. On 6 January 2021 England entered a third national lockdown and churches were once again closed. Recorded services were placed online for Epiphany, Candlemas, Ash Wednesday and Palm Sunday. Mothering Sunday was also online and was beautifully led by the children of Sparsholt Primary School and their families. The Benefice Lent course was well attended via Zoom. During Holy Week Palm crosses were distributed by Parish Visitors to the housebound of the village and were greatly appreciated. Additional Palm crosses were placed in the church porch for people to collect.

In April lockdown rules were gradually lifted. Churches were able to open with social distancing, face coverings, the use of hand sanitiser and separate service sheets. Attendance at services needed to be booked via the Benefice Office. At Eucharistic services communicants were only able to receive the bread. As restrictions lifted it was possible to hold a Good Friday service outside in the churchyard, taken by Reverend Jax, and this was followed on Easter morning by a joyful Eucharistic service in the church.

Other special services during the year were able to go ahead. At Harvest Festival the church was beautifully decorated and the congregation was invited to bring non-perishable food. The offerings and collection were donated to Andover Crisis Centre and were very gratefully received.

Throughout the year congregational numbers have been lower than before the pandemic and Christmas was no exception. Our spirits were cheered by a Christmas tree lit up outside the church, kindly donated by the Painter family.

Tuesday Morning Prayer on Zoom which began in May 2020 as a response to the pandemic has continued to be well received by parishioners across the Benefice.

Chilbolton Homegroup has continued online during lockdown and held in members' homes once restrictions eased.

A 'thank you' to Reverend Jax for her encouragement and tireless ministry to the Benefice during what has been another challenging year.

## **5. CHOIR**

The choir has now been able to sing at services in Chilbolton. The wearing of masks has been adhered to during services but when singing the choir has been able to remove them. It has been important to ensure required distancing was met and choir members have their allocated positions.

There have been some weddings but the choir was only able to sing at one during the year. Some were cancelled due to Covid-19. Hopefully 2022 will see a different position.

It would be most encouraging to attract new members to the choir.

## **6. RESIDENTIAL CARE HOMES**

During the course of this past year Residential Care Homes have continued to work against the odds in protecting their vulnerable residents and staff from the ravages of Coronavirus. Families have struggled with the emotional toll of not being able to see their loved ones and the carers and staff have been a lifeline between beloved residents and the outside world. In large part, external visitors have been unable to maintain physical contact as new Covid-19 strains have forced Homes to close their doors. Instead we have been keeping the flame of fellowship burning with regular prayer, telephone calls, emails and messages - particularly to individual residents, but also to the staff, who have found our pastoral outreach and prayers an invaluable support.

Often I have been able to visit people and maintain end of life care only by standing outside bedroom doors. In these moments where touch and closeness are impossible to achieve, the sense of presence, of voice and of prayer have carried us through. Happily towards the end of the year, booked visits became permissible once more. It was an emotional experience to be reunited with residents again face to face. It was gratifying to see their beautiful faces, to be touched by their stoic resilience and to acknowledge the impact of our prayers in the spiritual life of those we serve.

## **8. PARISH VISITORS**

During 2021 parish visitors continued the important work of supporting the vulnerable, sick, lonely and bereaved in our parish communities within the confines of ongoing Coronavirus pandemic restrictions. Their contact in person, by telephone and social messaging has been an invaluable pastoral and spiritual connection and Reverend Jax had received many messages of thanks and support for their work across the year, both from those being visited and their families and neighbours. Our prayers are with each Parish Visitor as they carry a message of God's love to those in need, deepening the bond of fellowship and faith between our worshipping communities.

Anna Cockram stood down as Parish Visitor Administrator. Our thanks to her for the invaluable and faithful work she undertook. This role has been absorbed into the work of the Benefice Office as a duplication of effort was identified between Anna and the Office in disseminating information flows back and forth. Our thanks to Caroline, as ever.

This comes with Reverend Jax's thanks before God for all our Parish Visitors and with the assurance of her prayers for each of you and those to whom you minister.

Should anyone reading this feel a call to become a Parish Visitor please contact Reverend Jax on 07761 055228.

## 9. 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 (when allowed)
- (vi) organising fund raising activities
- (vii) opening and closing the church
- (viii) winding the clock.

Your support is invaluable to us. THANK YOU.