

**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
2022**

**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 2022 the following served as members of Chilbolton PCC.

Incumbent	Reverend Jax Machin
Churchwarden	Vacant
Deanery Synod Representatives	Mrs Wendy Fakes Mr Colin Sheath
Elected Members	Mr Neil Bowen Mrs Wendy Fakes (PCC Secretary) Mr Andrew Kent (PCC Chairman) Mrs Lesley Kent Mrs Carole Marits (from January 2022)
	Mrs Charlotte Nash Mrs Janie Painter (from July 2022) 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 22 adults and two children.

ACTIVITIES OF THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL IN 2022

Chilbolton PCC met five times during the year with an average attendance of 86%. 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 2022 the General Fund was in deficit by £324 and ended the year at £27,270 which is above the mandated minimum reserve requirement for this fund (£25,000).

The largest source of income was a net £17,329 from fund-raising (largely the fete and Auction of Promises). This item was only £200 in 2021 because of Covid. £12,075 was received from standing orders (down by £1,040) and £4,838 came from Gift Aid (up by £1,022). Collections at services were £2,182 (up £721), fees were £890 (down £545) and grants were £1,600 (up £1,000 because of an energy grant from the Church of England, via the Diocese).

The increase in electricity costs from £700 to £968 in 2022 was due entirely to higher usage. The electricity contract expired on 31 October and the new, six-month tariff will more than double costs despite being mitigated by a government subsidy.

Total charitable donations were £1,925 (up by £236) and Benefice administration costs were £4,773 (down by £517, solely because of a reduction in Chilbolton's share from 20.8% to 17.8%).

Churchyard maintenance costs have returned to earlier levels after the end of the wilding experiment in 2021.

£24,496 was paid to the Diocese in 2022. This was the full CMF amount requested and it is anticipated that we shall be able to pay at least 75% of our 2023 quota of just under £24,000.

The Building Fund rose by £2,592 to £7,155 in 2022, having received transfers of £1,250 from the Joint Fund and £4,000 from the General Fund (the latter in anticipation of costs resulting from the Quinquennial inspection). The largest items of expenditure were £1,260 for tree works, £742 for the quinquennial survey (most of which was reimbursed by the Diocese) and £480 for scaffolding.

The Joint Fund stands at £5,938 which is ample to cover half a year's printing costs before the 2023 summer's advertising revenue arrives. That revenue amounted to £8,965 in 2022, similar to 2021. £1,250 was paid to Wherwell PCC and the same amount was transferred to our Building Fund. Printing costs have remained stable for many years but are expected to rise from July.

The Legacy Fund stands at £4,966 - hardly changed on the year. The Organ Fund has £834, the Flower Fund £141 and the Choir Fund £348.

Total reserves at the year-end were £48,255, including outstanding tax claims of £1,523. Over £37,000 of the reserves is held in the CBF deposit account earning 3.2% interest.

2. **SOCIAL**

Thankfully 2022 saw the return to normal activities for the social committee. Over the year volunteers have provided refreshments in the church following the service and after special events which have been very well received.

In a break from tradition we did not have a supper on Maundy Thursday instead a Lent Soup lunch was held in the church which was well attended.

The Auction of Promises was held in April, a year late. It proved to be an entertaining and fun evening raising much needed funds for the church. Our thanks go to those who organised it and those who helped on the night and especially to David Smith, the Auctioneer.

June saw the annual fete at Down End. Our thanks go to Nigel and Jeannie Goodeve-Docker for the use of their garden, to Jennie Pope for organising it, to the many people who ran the stalls, and to all the people who before the day erected marquees and after the event took them all down and packed things away.

In September it was good to have the Harvest lunch back in the diary. This took the form of a buffet lunch and was held in the village hall.

The annual Christmas lunch took place in the middle of December in the village hall. Twenty-three invited guests had a two course seasonal meal. Entertainment was in the form of a quiz, carol singing and the surprise visit from Father Christmas.

All these events would not be possible without the volunteers who organise, cook, set out tables, man stalls and give of their time to make these events successful for the church and village community.

3. **FABRIC AND HOUSEKEEPING**

In March storm force winds caused considerable damage to the cedar tree near the church tower. A very large limb was wrenched away from near the top of the tree and landed against the wall of the chancel. It would have dropped some 30 metres and travelled sideways a similar distance which gives some idea of the force of the wind. Fortunately no damage was done to the church building. A large quantity of debris fell around the base of the tree. Temporary fencing was erected to keep people away from the possibility of more branches falling. Urgent safety work was sanctioned by the Tree Officer of Test Valley Borough Council and this was carried out by Merritt Tree Specialists of Winchester. All work was carried out safely with no damage to the building.

In April a letter was received from Gary Seymour advising closure of his architectural practice. However he was happy to continue in an informal capacity for the next four to five years as he had a particular interest in our church with its Grade I Listed status. This was acceptable to the Parochial Church Council, also for to him to carry out the 2022 Quinquennial Inspection. His findings were that much good work had been done to address items identified in the previous inspection.

Two new benches have been installed in the churchyard, one opposite the Garden of Remembrance, the other by the entrance porch. The existing bench halfway along the main path has been replaced.

Minor maintenance work has been done to the servery including measures to improve cupboard ventilation.

The wooden surround to the tower clock face had shown signs of movement most probably due to the record breaking hot summer temperatures. Remedial work has been completed.

4. WORSHIP AND EDUCATION

The year 2022 saw two marvellous celebrations to commemorate the Platinum Jubilee of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II. The first took place on 6 February to mark Her Majesty's accession to the throne and the second was held on 5 June, the Platinum Jubilee weekend. Both were led by Andrew Kent in his role of Deputy Lieutenant and were well attended and greatly appreciated. The service in June was followed by refreshments and glasses were raised to toast Her Majesty.

Sadly, on 8 September Her Majesty died and the country went into a time of national mourning. The church was open for private prayer, a photograph of the Queen was placed on the altar with suggested prayers for visitors to use. Reverend Jax led a moving benefice service at Crawley.

March was the turn of Chilbolton to host the World Day of Prayer which took place on 4 March and was led by Charlotte Nash, LLM. The service had been put together over a period of four years by the women of England, Wales and Northern Ireland and the theme was 'Hope'. To put the service into context, on 24 February the world had woken up to the news that Russia had invaded Ukraine and between February 24 and 4 March over a million people escaped as refugees mainly into Poland. In the service the Bible readings reflected on the Jews in the time of Isaiah who had been taken into exile from Jerusalem to Babylon. In our minds we drew the parallel of what is currently happening in Ukraine. The service offered us the opportunity to pray for Ukrainians who have lost homes, whose families are being torn apart and who are fleeing for their lives as refugees. This service was timely, relevant, prophetic even. The group of women who wrote it had begun their preparation in 2018. No-one could have known or even dreamt of what would be happening in the world on this day in March 2022.

As part of the service we were encouraged to hand out seeds to plant as seeds of hope. The seeds were sunflower seeds. Over refreshments everyone commented how moving and relevant they had found the service. It was only then many of us learnt that the sunflower is the national flower of Ukraine. We pray that God will watch over the people and the country of Ukraine.

Other special services that took place during the year were Mothering Sunday, Easter, Harvest Festival, the Airborne Forces service with veterans from WW2 at Stonefield Park, Holy Communion service with REME in October, All Souls, a meditation for Advent Sunday, Carol Service, the Crib Service which was joint with Wherwell and Christmas Day.

Very sadly, Reverend Jax suffered an accident at the beginning of December. We wish her well for her recovery. Services in December were ably covered by lay leaders and Registry priests.

Following the Pandemic and lockdowns of 2020 and 2021 it has been a joy to see services resume and the congregation begin to grow during the year.

Chilbolton homegroup took a break from Easter but is on track to resume meetings in 2023. Tuesday Morning Prayer on Zoom continues to run with good attendances.

Grateful thanks are extended to Reverend Jax and Caroline McAulay and to worship leaders who work to make services run smoothly.

5. **CHOIR**

There were five regular members who sang at the services. In the event of special services, eg Christmas, there were another six members who could be called upon.

There have been no requests for the choir to sing at weddings in 2022.

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

6. **RESIDENTIAL CARE HOMES**

Reverend Jax was invited back into the care homes to offer a regular Holy Communion service from: Signature - April, Flowerdown - July and Westholme - October. Several of the services had to be cancelled at the last moment as the homes had another round of Covid-19 but Reverend Jax was able to take some of these services and once Karen Markiewicz (the Littleton Anna Chaplain) started in September she accompanied her to the homes as often as possible. After Reverend Jax's accident, Karen took the Christmas services and has since led lay-services in the Care Homes on a monthly basis.

7. PARISH VISITORS

The parish visitor (PV) team has continued to work across the benefice under the leadership of Reverend Jax. The team is always open to new ways of working and to update and refresh how it works.

Face to face visiting had to be suspended during the height of the Covid-19 outbreak when support was being offered through telephone contact and online support. With restrictions having been lifted the PV teams have continued to combine those remote forms of contact with the more traditional approach to support, while recognising the need to take account of anyone in a vulnerable group. However it has to be appreciated that even now Covid infections have been occurring.

In Chilbolton the PV team consisted of Lesley Kent, Charlotte Nash and Colin Sheath. Here in Chilbolton the PV resourcing has been organised and deployed by Reverend Jax.

As part of the ongoing support for and outreach to our communities, the PV team works and plans to continue supporting communities wherever it can.

8. 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.