



The Parish of Pangbourne with Tidmarsh and Sulham
St James | St Laurence | St Nicholas

2020 ANNUAL REPORT AND ACCOUNTS

of the Parochial Church Council
for the Parish of Pangbourne with Tidmarsh and Sulham



Sharing God's love with the people we serve

We have undertaken to share the
Common Vision of Oxford Diocese
'To become more Christlike for the sake of God's world'

TOWARDS A COMMON VISION



Patrons

St James the Less, Pangbourne
St Laurence, Tidmarsh
St Nicholas Sulham

Church Society Trust
Bishop of Reading
Henry Scutt

PCC Membership and Objectives

The PCC is registered with the Charity Commission (No. 1127943), made up of elected and ex- officio PCC members of St James the Less, St Laurence and St Nicholas (in accordance with the Church Representation rules).

Banks

- HSBC Plc, Broad Street, Reading.
- CCLA Investment Management Ltd, 85 Queen Victoria Street, London EC4V 4ET

Independent Examiner

- Mr D W Norris, The Grange, North Street, Theale, Reading, RG7 5EX

Insurance

- Trinitas Church Insurance, Spectrum Building, 7th Floor, 55 Blythswood Street, Glasgow, G2 7AT

Statement of Intent

The Parochial Church Council (PCC) of Pangbourne with Tidmarsh and Sulham (PTS) consults and co-operates with the Incumbent **‘in promoting the whole mission of the Church in this parish, pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical.’**

Parochial Church Council

Church Wardens	Julia Sheppard Jill Palfrey (Deanery Synod Rep)	Elected Members	Wilma Grant (PCC Lay Chair and Deanery Synod Rep) Heather Thorne 2018 - 2021
Treasurer	Stephen Billyeald		Jacky Rix-Brown 2018 - 2021
Secretary	Helen Hopwood		Penny Billyeald 2019 - 2022
Chair	Rector - Vacancy		Vanessa Saunders 2020 – 2023 Vacancy

Business of the Parochial Church Council 2020

The PCC met five times and the Standing Committee two times and six times via email.

A Report on Changes in the Electoral Roll

In 2020 there were 140 members. The revised roll in April 2021 has **139** members.
4 people came off and 3 people joined

Vanessa Saunders, Electoral Roll Officer

PCC Committees Finance, Buildings, St James, St Laurence, St Nicholas

PCC Groups Environment, Communications

We thank all the committee and group members for all they have contributed, and continue to offer, to the life of the church community in PTS.

PCC Policies in 2020

- Prevention and Safeguarding Policy Updated annually
- Pastoral Visiting Policy
- Health and Safety
- Food Hygiene
- Data Protection
- Safer Recruitment
- Payment of Staff
- Tithing and Charitable Giving
- Collections
- Reserves and Investments

A Review of 2020

No-one can dispute that 2020 was a year to remember, internationally, nationally and locally. Certainly, in the parish it has been a year of mixed blessings, not just because of the coronavirus pandemic but also because of changes in our team.

The start of the year was unremarkable with an unchanged service pattern and our much-valued team of clergy and laity pulling their weight as ever. However, March changed all of our lives. By 23rd March all places of worship were closed and no services were to be held. This led to an explosion of services using different media and during the course of the year expertise in broadcasting and technology grew rapidly. Our skills in this parish to Zoom and live stream services and ‘social’ coffee and chat events have helped many of us feel that we are in touch with our parish friends.



In June churches were able to reopen for private prayer and, following a deep clean and with necessary equipment and signs in place, St James was reopened on 19th June. This involved much preparation and also the continued commitment of volunteers who are still locking and cleaning the building on a rota basis. St Laurence and St Nicholas remained locked. Services did not resume in church until July.

Although on the return to lockdown in November places of worship were permitted to stay open the decision was made by the PCC and the Ministry Team to continue most of our worship via Zoom or live streaming. In December we returned to some services in St James with a limited congregation but as Christmas approached the decision was made to not have congregations for our Christmas services. It was with regret that this was decided but it was felt that to be cautious was to be wise.

Aside from the pandemic, it was with sadness that we learnt that our Rector was to leave our parish for a House for Duty post in Warwickshire. Although we learnt this officially on 1st May there were many uncertainties over the actual date when Heather and Philip would move due to the coronavirus restrictions. Once the situation became clearer the moving date was set for September. Sadly, although tentative plans had been made, we were not able to hold even an outdoor service to say farewell and God speed so a presentation was made at the end of a Zoom service at the beginning of August. It is with our love, thanks and good wishes that Heather and Philip have started another chapter of ministry.

Official notice of the vacancy was given to the Wardens and PCC in September and the hope of us all is that this vacancy will be filled during 2021.

Regrettably some of our activities have not happened at all in 2020. Fund raising has ground to a halt, Tuesday Tea Club was put on hold and Noah's Ark only happened occasionally using Zoom. Many of our parishioners volunteered to help those isolating or unable to get out in our villages and were instrumental in setting up systems to co-ordinate volunteers and those in need. Attempts have been made, hopefully largely successfully, to keep in touch with those who may be on their own or struggling with health or loneliness.

At Harvest a distanced food collection took place in the porch of St James and the generosity was amazing. This collection of food, tins and packets, and toiletries was delivered to Readifood.



A limited number of Christmas trees at St James were decorated and lit, with local organisations and residents contributing stars for decorations. The star was on the top of the tower and the Nativity scene was under the wooden altar and the large stable was under the East window outside. It was felt important to show that the church was still here and alive and telling the Christmas story at what was a difficult time for many. There were also Christmas lights at St Nicholas.

So, we look forward to 2021 – a new incumbent, a vaccination freeing us from some of the restrictions, an opening of all three church buildings and normal services being resumed. Meanwhile, our gratitude goes to everyone on the Ministry Team, on the PCC and every member of our church family that has contributed to a very difficult year. You are all loved and appreciated.

Churchwardens

A Report on the Activities of the Parish in 2020

Parish Vision

A united parish with three churches reaching out to all in our community and beyond as a Christian witness.

Parish Mission

To offer a warm welcome, fellowship and a caring environment to families and worshippers of all ages. To actively grow our church family by encouraging people to learn more about what it means to be a follower of Christ and to continue to serve those in our local and wider community through discipleship and love.

Parish Action Plan

- Focus on ways to increase our engagement with children and families.
- Encourage and enable church members to grow their relationship with Christ through personal discipleship.
- Raise our profile in the community and strengthen our links with local schools, groups, organisations and individuals in all three villages.
- Develop our use of digital technology to further our mission.
- Improve access to our churches for all.

Church Administrator

Vanessa Saunders is employed as the parish administrator and has continued to work from home during the COVID pandemic.

Safeguarding

Parish Safeguarding Officer - Jill Palfrey

Verifier - Vanessa Saunders

Safer recruiting is in place for volunteers and ministry team and group leaders are made aware of the legislation concerning records of Pastoral encounters and asked to comply with the Pastoral Visiting Policy for all licensed clergy and authorised lay ministers working in the parish. It is a requirement that all PCC members complete a Basic Awareness Training course.

The Safeguarding Officer has oversight for DBS checks and the issuing of all associated forms. The Safeguarding Policy is reviewed and approved annually by the PCC and a signed copy is sent to the Diocese as per the requirements. A 'Promoting a Safer Church' poster is displayed with contact details and safeguarding arrangements clearly visible on the parish website. Jill Palfrey continues to be the Safeguarding Officer and Vanessa Saunders continues as Verifier.

Health and Safety

The PCC is mindful of the risks associated with its various activities, particularly during the pandemic where they have been able to continue and all guidance from the Government, the Church of England, the Diocese and our insurers have been followed. Our thanks go to Len Palfrey, Jill Palfrey and Julia Sheppard for our Health and Safety Policy and for the many risk assessments carried out in 2020. The PCC has particular regard to the child protection and vulnerable adult's requirements at all times.

Insurance

During 2020, our insurance provider was changed to Trinitas Insurance making a saving on the premium paid. The three churches are covered by one policy. The insurers were kept informed of our church closures and, as required by them, all three church buildings and churchyards, whether locked or open, have been checked on a regular basis and the power switched off in St Laurence and St Nicholas. For the reopening of St James in June and subsequently, all guidance has been followed and risk assessments carried out, using the templates provided.

Mission Partners and Charities Supported in 2020

The Charities we supported in 2020 were as follows:

For our Tithe

- **Local** - PACT
- **National** – Church Urban Fund
- **International** - USPG (United Society Partners in the Gospel)

We also donated to

- Plan International
- Royal County of Berkshire Churches Trust
- Christian Aid
- Readifood with food donations during Harvest.



Christian Aid

The parish was unable to be active during Christian Aid Week in 2020 due to the first lockdown. Christian Aid Week was publicised on the parish website and in other communications, asking those reading to make a donation directly to Christian Aid. Before lockdown it had been possible to have three Lent Lunches and the donations received from these of £188 was sent to the charity.

Jill Palfrey

Services and Worship in PTS

Our heartfelt thanks go to the lay members of the Ministry Team:

Julia Sheppard, Wilma Grant, Jill Palfrey and Heather Thorne, Mark Littledale, Vanessa Saunders

and to our retired priests with Permission to Officiate:

Rev Barry Ashdown, Rev Tony Naden, Rev Jean Rothery and Rev Brian Tims

Permission to administer the chalice in Communion in 2020 was held by:

Len Palfrey, Hugh Richardson, Jennifer Nutt, Julia Sheppard, Cherry East, Martin Holliday, Helen Hopwood, Heather Thorne, and Jill Palfrey.

Thank you to those who have taken part in staffing our parish worship.

Occasional Offices

- **1 Infant Baptisms**
Our thanks go to Mike and Meg Orr for Baptism service ministry
- **2 Weddings**
- **13 Funerals** took place in the parish and at the crematoria

A special service for those recently bereaved was held at All Souls Tide in St James.

Deanery Synod

A service of Holy Communion lead by Bishop Olivia was held in March (before lockdown) in St James for the Deanery Chapter at the invitation of the then Area Dean, our Rector.

The Deanery Synod meeting due to held in March was postponed indefinitely due to the pandemic. However, the Bradfield Deanery Mission document 2020 was circulated to all the parishes in the Deanery. A Zoom meeting of Synod was held in June but neither of your Synod members were able to attend although the Rector was present. This was followed by circulation of the Bradfield Deanery Mission Audit 2020 to all PCC members.

At the end of June Rev Heather stood down as Area Dean and Rev David Archer was appointed to that position. The Final version of the Deanery Strategy was circulated to Synod at the end of August. A Zoom meeting of Deanery Synod took place in October which was largely a chance for introductions and updates on how parishes were coping with the changes due to coronavirus but also included comments on the Strategy document and a briefing on the financial situation. This last item is very important, particularly in these uncertain times for all charities including churches, as the deanery try very hard to support any parishes that think they may be unable to meet their parish share.

Jill Palfrey and Wilma Grant, Deanery Synod Representatives

All Churches Together

With the restrictions and curtailments of Church activities as a result of the COVID19 pandemic there has been no opportunity for ACT to organise the usual liaison and ecumenical activities which fall within our remit. Our parish has been represented on the committee by Tony Naden and Dilys Rogers, and Tony has continued as Chairman, with Jacky Rix-Brown of our PCC as Secretary. One meeting was held in church and two Zoom committee meetings and an AGM. were held which had little content beyond setting a date for the next meeting to see if things would be any better, and they weren't.

One service we offered during the period in the late summer and early autumn was to set up a page on Facebook where we tabulated when our participating churches had buildings open for prayer or bookable services open to live participants, and this site has continued to be used to pool information about such activities as have continues, online or however.

It was resolved to at least try to continue our 30-or-so-year tradition of an ecumenical service on the evening of Advent Sunday, which meant preparing the service as a YouTube video premiering on November 29th. At 6.00 p.m. It was possible to get contributions from all the eight churches (from four parishes) and Douai Abbey and Pangbourne College Falklands Memorial Chapel, with both the buildings being features and members of the congregations contributing to the worship in song, speaking, reading and symbolic action.

Tony Naden, All Churches Together Chairman

Music and Singing

During 2020 the singing group met during January and February on Wednesday evenings 7-8pm at St James. Sadly, due to the Covid-19 pandemic singers have been able to sing in church only a few times during the year since then when restrictions allowed.

Thank you to Wilma Grant, Music co-ordinator and musicians Henry Killender, Ellie Thorne and Mark Littledale and Tiffany Ebrey who played for services early in the year and to all singers who helped lead our worship.

During the year hymns were recorded and used in Zoom and live streamed services.

Wilma Grant, Music Co-ordinator

Noah's Ark

After two months of enjoying Noah's Ark every Friday morning the pandemic called a halt to our meeting in person. Regular WhatsApp contact was kept with our Noah's Ark families and from September 2020 we have held a monthly Zoom Noah's Ark. We are very aware of the need to meet again in person as soon as we are able. There are lots of new parents and new babies to meet and to encourage back into church. Since Rev Heather left, Jill and Vanessa with support from Tony and Julia, have led this monthly Zoom but our aim and our need is to recruit a younger leader.

Led by Jill Palfrey and Vanessa Saunders

4th Tuesday Tea Club

Co-ordinators Jean Rothery, Jill Palfrey, Cherry East

We started 2020 with all members and helpers looking forward to another year of club meetings, but Shrove Tuesday on 25th February 2020 was to be our last coming together for the year. We had enjoyed a fun 'Pancake' party, which is always enjoyed, when the Pandemic tightened, and the Government put us all into 'Lockdown'.

The club leaders updated our attendance list and letters were delivered to all members and helpers, notifying them, and reassuring them that we would maintain contact.

Each member was contacted individually by phone to ensure that they had someone to shop for them, and a band of helpers kept in touch with occasional phone calls.

At Christmas we delivered cards and small gifts to each member.

Most of the members appeared stoical and except for loneliness and a need to talk when they had the opportunity, they maintained 'a good wartime spirit!'

Reverend Jean Rothery

Bell Ringing Report



At the start of 2020 we had nine experienced ringers who rang regularly for Sunday services, weddings and on practice night. We also had two improvers and three learners who were all progressing nicely. Our practices were always well attended and attracted regular visitors from other towers who liked to join in our fun and challenging sessions.

Lockdown in March meant an instant cessation of all bell ringing.

When lockdown eased in August and services recommenced in church, we followed the strict guidelines of hand sanitising, mask wearing, social distancing and increased ventilation and managed to ring for 15 minutes before a few of the services. From comments received this was much appreciated. The return to lockdown put a stop to even that limited amount of ringing.

We were not totally idle, however, we were able to toll the tenor after the Remembrance Day service at the War Memorial, one blow for every name on the memorial.

Some of us have been meeting online, using Zoom and a program called Ringing Room, developed since the start of the pandemic especially for the purpose of allowing people to practise their ringing. We have met on Thursday evening, our normal practice night to keep our brains active and maintain/develop our ringing skills in preparation for the time that we can return to the tower and ring "proper" bells.

Len Palfrey, Tower Captain

Flower Arranging

Pauline Jones ensured that, when possible, during the year there were floral decorations in St James church. Activity was curtailed during from March and once the first Lockdown started, we stopped all arrangements.

When we started to live-stream services from St James an arrangement was placed by the altar. Thanks to all those who contributed wreaths and displays for the following special occasions:

- All Souls wreath - was kindly made by Dilys Roger.
- Advent Wreath - made by Lorraine Ashdown
- Christmas window displays by Rachel Littledale
- Altar arrangements for Christmas by Sarah Rasmussen

Regarding sustainability, Pauline replaced our oasis with biodegradable foam - it is proving to be just as useful to use as the artificial Oasis. Lockdown has meant we used mostly foliage and flowers from our gardens and maybe an odd supermarket bunch of flowers here and there. Christmas was an opportunity to recycle all our old "bling" with a bit of refreshed spray paint. So, all in all, we have reduced our carbon footprint - one of the "up" sides of the pandemic!

Sarah Rasmussen

Local Schools

Our Foundation Governors at Englefield Church of England School are Julia Sheppard and Paula Fenwicke.

Due to the pandemic, it was not possible for Englefield Primary, Pangbourne Primary or Pangbourne College to make their usual education visits to St James. Sadly, Pangbourne Primary were unable to have their annual carol service.

Fabrics Goods and Ornaments Report

During 2020, as far as possible, all routine maintenance was carried out. It was possible to have PAT testing and organ tuning at St James, gutters were cleared at St Laurence and St Nicholas and fire extinguisher maintenance and renewal at all three churches. A catch-up programme for those matters that were not possible whilst the buildings were closed will be instituted for 2021.

After some considerable time, a Faculty was obtained for the replacement of the stolen lead at St Nicholas. Unfortunately, by the time this happened it was the beginning of March and the contractor informed us the specified tiles were hard to obtain. By the time of lockdown on 23rd March it was unclear if these tiles were with the contractor but he was unable to commence the work in any event. In spite of repeated attempts, as work was permitted to recommence, we were unable to re-establish contact with this contractor and the decision was made by the Standing Committee to obtain a quote from an alternative contractor, particularly as the roof was vulnerable to the weather, the temporary tarpaulin having shredded and blown away. The new contractor immediately came and effected a temporary repair and, once he had obtained the correct tiles, in August carried out a very satisfactory permanent replacement with tiles of the stolen lead.

The attempted theft of lead from St Laurence caused some damage but it was possible to repair the damage and this was carried out in March before lockdown.

Reports on the roof of both St Nicholas and St James indicate that it will be necessary to carry out major work on both in the near future which will involve large expenditure. There is also an ongoing problem with the boilers at St James where, due to the age of the boilers, it is getting increasingly difficult to obtain spare parts when required. This too may involve a large sum to be found.

All three churchyards continued to be maintained through the year. Outdoor exercise and the possibility to socially distance enabled our volunteers to put in many hours. We are extraordinarily grateful for their efforts.



Buildings Committee Report for 2020

The Buildings Committee did not meet during 2020.

Len Palfrey, Chairman

The Environment Group

The Environment Committee has not met since November 2019 as a result of COVID 19 and because the team has been unable to use Zoom for meetings as not all our members have that facility.

At the time of the first lockdown in March 2020 we were in the middle of our Lent course, 'Climate Change and the Purposes of God', produced by Operation Noah. Five people had elected to do the course and we had just reached, 'what is God asking of me?' when we found ourselves unable to meet.

We were running a Carbon Footprint Calculation project throughout Lent and ten households responded with the following results. Eight of the households comprised two people and two households related to the carbon footprint of one person.

On average our households totalled 10.47 tonnes of CO₂ and other greenhouse gas emissions per year compared with the UK national average of 14.1, the US average of 17.6, the average of Mozambique of 0.3 and the World average of 4.4.

We will produce a more specific analysis for when we are able to come together in our churches.

Sadly, we have not been able to provide our monthly recycling service through the pandemic. Martin Holliday who oversees this service has also had two operations throughout this period and we wish him a good recovery.

PAWS, Pangbourne and Whitchurch Sustainability group which grew out of our Church Environment group has continued to run a busy programme and this year is focussing on tree planting which I hope we as a Parish will be able to join in with in the Autumn of this coming year to coincide with COP 26 in November.

We hope to continue with our Parish Eco Church initiatives as soon as we can meet socially again.

Heather Thorne

Green Gym Report 2020

The first Covid-19 lockdown was already in place before Green Gym recommenced at St James the Less in March 2020. The regular participants were consulted and we all agreed that we could work in the church yard as part of our permitted regular exercise. We also agreed that we could work as a group on first Thursdays and third Saturdays provided that we maintained good social distancing, which is the norm anyway! Furthermore, several of our members work in the churchyard at times and on days of their own choosing.

During the year we managed to keep on top of grass cutting, weeding and hedge trimming to maintain our beautiful, peaceful space. Where we can we avoid mowing until perennial plants have flowered, seeded and died back. We try to work on the basis that a weed is only a plant growing in the wrong place. Blue alkanet is, perhaps, the one exception.

We were very sorry to say good bye to Philip and Heather in August. Philip was very supportive of Green Gym and one of the principal organisers, he is missed. Anyone is welcome to join us on Green Gym days just turn up and we will find you a job!

Len Palfrey

St James, St Laurence and St Nicholas Committees did not meet during 2020.

Parish Meeting held via Zoom and email.

The PCC held a Parish Meeting on 29th November 2020 via Zoom and email. The meeting was led by Rhodri Bowen, Bradfield Parish Development Advisor, and its purpose was to give parishioners a voice on the following:

- What do we do well and want to build on?
- What does this say about how we understand our purpose?
- What do we feel might need to be different?
 - Children. Youth and families
 - Church Community and buildings
 - Community
 - Personal Ministry
 - Communication and Technology
- Are we as we were? What have we added?
- What could we do differently?

Those parishioners who were unable to attend were invited to provide input prior to the meeting. This meeting resulted in clear and decisive guidance on how the Parish would like to move forward and the qualities we seek in our next incumbent. The PCC met to discuss the outcome of this meeting and appointed a team to write the parish profile.

The PCC would like to thank Rhodri Bowen for leading the meeting and supporting our parish during the vacancy, the Parish Profile Group (Vanessa Saunders, Mark Littledale and Ellie Thorne). The PCC would also like to thank the parishioners for their valuable contributions in developing our parish mission and vision.

Helen Hopwood, PCC Secretary

Finance Committee Report for 2020

The Finance Committee comprised The Rector, Treasurer, Jill Palfrey, Gill Haggarty, Julia Bion

The committee considered several matters during 2020 and made recommendations to the PCC. Subjects for discussion included:

- 2019 Financial Statements & Report
- 2020 budget
- 2021 draft budget
- Reporting financial results to the PCC during the year
- Recommending to the PCC that we do not allow Unrestricted Reserves to reduce by more than 25% in any year in order to conserve our reserves, even if this means withholding certain payments
- Recommending to the PCC the amount of Unrestricted Funds to be made available for tithing

Stephen Billyeald, Treasurer

Treasurer's Report on 2018 Statement of Financial Activities

Unrestricted Funds

The **deficit** on ordinary activities of **£15.8k** compares with a surplus of £2.2k in 2019. Planned giving through standing orders and the Parish Giving Scheme held up well; inevitably loose plate and donations via envelopes were severely reduced as a result of the covid pandemic. Therefore donations to unrestricted funds were £11k lower than in 2019. Weddings, funerals and fund-raising events were almost non-existent and therefore income from these sources was £16k lower than in 2019. As a result of tight control on costs expenditure in 2020 was £10k lower than in 2019.

We continue to invest our reserves in CBF funds managed by CCLA who specialise in managing charitable funds and are recommended by the Church of England. Our Unrestricted Funds benefited from an **investment gain of £7.4k** in spite of difficult market conditions.

Unrestricted Reserves at 31st December 2020 were **£53,387**.

Restricted Funds

These are funds which have been donated for specific purposes. The main income was £1.7k from interest on investments and we spent £6k, mainly on church and churchyard maintenance.

Endowment Funds

These are funds which have been donated, usually for a specific purpose, the capital of which must be maintained and we can only use the income arising from investment. Income across all Endowment Funds was £2.8k from investments and we spent £4.1k, mainly on church and churchyard maintenance at St James and St Laurence (no Endowment Funds relate to St Nicholas).

Balance Sheet

We have £53k of **Unrestricted Funds**, £50k of **Restricted Funds** and £12k of **Endowment Income Funds** in the bank and invested in CBF Church of England funds.

Stephen Billyeald, Treasurer