

# The Parish of Bishopstone with Stratford Tony

## Annual Report and Accounts of the Parochial Church Council for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> December 2017

### Objectives and Activities

The Parochial Church Council (PCC) has the responsibility of co-operating with the incumbent in promoting in the ecclesiastical parish the whole mission of the Church, pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical. It also has responsibilities for the maintenance of the church building.

### Achievements and Performance

The year began with PCCs being asked to decide on future arrangements for 'governance'. It was decided that, for the time being, this PCC should continue under the current arrangements. However, it was agreed to investigate the possibilities of working informally with other PCCs and sharing best practice. The way in which Broad Chalke had been so open and willing to share their church during the Bishopstone building works had been very encouraging and there was a good relationship between the two churches.

Mrs Sally Leaver stepped down after three years as church warden and was replaced by Mr George Brutton. We thank her for her dedication to the work of the church. The PCC thanks the Revd Jenny Taylor for her continuing ministry, encouragement and support in the Parish.

**Worship** Regular services would not be possible without the much appreciated support from Team and regular visiting clergy, Licensed Lay Minister and our Lay Worship Leader, Sally Leaver. The overall workload of the clergy increased considerably for the final eight months of the year following the departure of the Revd Rick Williams. The contribution of Mrs Olive Moody and the Bishopstone Singers at 'special' services continues to be valued.

A donation in memory of Mrs Jo Sexton enabled the purchase of a new crib set which was displayed most effectively under the Nave Altar.

There were the usual attendance fluctuations at the major festivals, often affected by families being away or being visited, reversing the previous year's trend with an increase at Christmas services and a fall at Easter. The annual Stratford Tony Choral Evensong was well attended with the Bishop of Salisbury preaching followed by tea provided by Mrs Lucinda Cookson.

There were 6 Baptisms, 2 Weddings, and 4 Funerals.

The organ had its annual tuning. We are grateful to Dr Richard Seal for overseeing this and for playing at services.

**Mission and Outreach** Our Team Vicar and Lay Pastoral Assistants, Sally Leaver and Sheila Nell, continue to support our village community. The monthly Tea Party for those who live alone continues. The link with the Mothers and Toddlers Group continues to adapt to changing needs.

The 'Montgomery Coal Charity' continues to be a valuable source of funding for individual pastoral support in the Village. 2017 Mission Giving was: £350 each to the Valerie Taylor Trust and the Chris Brown Day Centre, £50 to Wiltshire Historic Churches Trust and £100 to Treasure Hunters. In addition, a successful Sunday Tea Party raised £805 for the Bikes for Cueibet Lent Appeal.

The PCC places great importance on the role of STaB as the monthly parish magazine and values the Parish Council's financial support and the work of Mr Nick Meade as Editor. Discussions were held with the Editor on ways of ensuring a stable future for STaB with a new approach to editing, production and financing through advertising. Changes are ongoing and it is hoped that readers will see a magazine which is more representative of and responsive to the needs of the community.

### Fabric

The church was closed in January and February for the installation of under-pew heating, the removal of four overhead heaters, complete rewiring, new audio wiring, new light switches and extra sockets and redecoration. During this work rotten floorboards and joists in the NW corner were also found and replaced. We are grateful to Norman Barter for efficiently managing this project. We are also grateful to our friends in Broad Chalke for hosting services during this period.

The Church Car Park was levelled, small trees removed from the churchyard and the cremated remains area levelled. These and other regular items of maintenance could not happen without the generosity of finance and time of a small number of individuals.

The PCC were very grateful to receive from a Sarum Arts Society team led by Mrs Anne Stutchbury, a bound volume, listing the findings of their five years of detailed recording of the interior of our church.

### Financial Review

The 2017 general fund income continued at a similar level to 2016, albeit with a small increase in fees from weddings and funerals. However, expenditure was higher due to one-off amounts in relation to the new under-pew heating. Overall a deficit of £19,854 was recorded (2016: deficit of £3,549). This was funded out of the PCC's

reserves, including one of its endowment funds which was liquidated with the approval of the Diocesan Board of Finance. The Friends recorded net expenditure for the year of £23,461 (2016: net income of £7,931) as a result of significant amounts spent on work to the fabric of the church building including re-wiring and re-decoration. A full breakdown of all income and expenditure is available in the Financial Statements which have been reviewed by our Independent Examiner.

The PCC and the Friends having spent much their reserves on works to the church in recent years – and, in the case of the PCC, in continuing its mission activities - the cash funds held at 31 December 2017 are very reduced.

As mentioned last year, the PCC will now need to consider cutting back on expenditure where possible with a view to reducing its annual deficit.

### **Reserves Policy**

It is the policy of the PCC to maintain, where possible, a balance on our unrestricted funds which equates to one year's running costs to cover any emergencies that may arise, particularly bearing in mind the significant costs that can be incurred when work is required to the church building.

**Electoral Roll** 66 members.

### **Structure, Governance and Management**

Members of the PCC are either ex-officio, elected by the Annual Parochial Church Meeting, or co-opted in accordance with the Church Representation Rules. The PCC met formally five times during the year.

### **Administrative Information**

The Parish of Bishopstone and Stratford Tony is part of the Chalke Valley Team Ministry in the Chalke Deanery, Diocese of Salisbury. The Team address is  
c/o The Chalke Valley Team Office, The Hub, Broad Chalke SP5 5EH.

The PCC is a charity excepted from registration with the Charity Commission. PCC members (trustees) who have served during the period of this report are:

#### **Ex Officio:**

Team Rector: The Revd Catherine Blundell  
Team Vicar: The Revd Jenny Taylor (Chairman)  
Churchwardens: Mr George Brutton (from 27 April 2017)  
Mrs Sarah Seal  
Mrs Sally Leaver (until 27 April 2017)  
Deanery Synod: Mr Geoffrey Taylor (also PCC Secretary & Team Council)  
Major James Thompson

#### **Elected:**

Mrs Margaret Barter  
Mrs Margaret Furnston  
Mr Nicholas Gooch (Treasurer)  
Mrs Sally Leaver (from 27 April 2017)  
Mrs Sheila Nell (also Team Council)

**ERO:** Mrs Anne Stutchbury

**Approved by the PCC and signed on their behalf by the Revd Jenny Taylor**



**PCC Chairman**

**Team Report** (full report on Team Website: [www.chalkevalleychurches.org](http://www.chalkevalleychurches.org))

**Mission** Our children's activities up and down the Benefice are an important element of our church life. Treasure Hunters, Open the Book and Collective Worship are all actively contributing to our children's Christian faith. Revd Jenny Taylor is a governor at Longford and Coombe Bissett schools and Revd Catherine Blundell at Broad Chalke where they visit regularly to teach, lead worship and to care pastorally for the children and staff. In addition several lay people make a significant contribution as foundation governors.

**Pastoral** Revd Jenny Taylor continues to lead our nine Lay Pastoral Assistants in their important ministry on behalf of the church which is much appreciated in our parishes.

**Safeguarding** Safeguarding is a single term for all the policies used to protect the health, well-being and rights of individuals so that all people, not just children, can live free from abuse, harm and neglect. PCCs have agreed the Child Protection, Safer Recruiting and Health & Safety policies approved by the Team Council, thereby reducing the workload on individual PCCs.

**Team Administrator** Following the departure of Mrs Helen Atkinson in August 2017, Mrs Emily Broomhead was appointed Team Administrator and has already made her mark with the weekly bulletins and lightening the administrative workload of the clergy.

### **Deanery Synod Report**

Only two meetings were held in 2017 as the November meeting was cancelled due to a combination of the main speaker, Gill Ford of the Children's Society, being ill and a bout of bad weather.

The main topic of the March meeting was a presentation on the Church of England report 'Setting God's People Free' by General Synod Member, Christine Corteen. The danger of a 'one size fits all' approach to such reports became clear when there seemed to be a lack of understanding of the rural context and challenges faced by dioceses such as Salisbury. There was a lively exchange of views about the role of the clergy and laity in the rural church, caused partly by misunderstandings about the findings of the report.

The June meeting was the first meeting of the newly elected synod for the three year period 2017-2020. To mark this, the meeting took the form of the Eucharist in Semley School at which the President and Preacher was the Bishop of Salisbury. After six years, Geoff Taylor stood down as Deanery Lay Chair and Sara Willan was elected to replace him.