

**EARL STONHAM WITH STONHAM PARVA PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL
ANNUAL REPORT 2018**

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PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL
ANNUAL REPORT 2018**

The Parochial Church Council (PCC) of the above presents the Annual Report for the year 2018. The report has been prepared in accordance with the Charities Act of 1993.

LEGAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

St Mary's Church, Earl Stonham with Stonham Parva.

Correspondence address: The Rectory, The Street, Stonham Aspal, Stowmarket IP14 6AQ

Telephone: (01449) 711684

email address: revphilippayne@btinternet.com

The PCC is a charity exempt from registration with the Charity Commission.

The Sunday School Trust administers funds originating from the sale of the village school, which are used for the purposes of Christian Education within the parish of Earl Stonham. It is separate from the PCC with the Rector and the Churchwardens as trustees.

Bank: *Santander UK plc.*

Independent Examiner: *Chris Oliver*

Address: *1, Meadow View, Needham Market IP6 8RH*

PCC OFFICERS AND MEMBERS AS OF APRIL 2018

Revd Philip Payne (Priest in charge)*
Barbara Gallagher (Assistant Priest, left September 2018)
Ian Gallagher (Churchwarden, left September 2018)
Mr Henry Stanford (Reader)*
Mrs Jane Porph (Elder and Churchwarden)*
Mrs Diane Hurt (Lay Vice chair)
Mrs Maggie Podd (Deanery Synod rep)*
Mrs Frankie Wicks (Lay Minister and Deanery Synod rep)*
Mr John Jones (Treasurer)
Mrs Annie Skinner
Mrs Caroline Shield (Secretary)
Mr Mark Parry (Churchwarden elected October 2018)*
Mr Mike Dawe
Mrs Christine Edgar (Reader, retired during 2018)
Mr Gerald Stedman (Elder retired during 2018)

**ex officio*

COMMITTEES

The PCC has the following sub-committees:

Fabric Committee: John Jones, Mike Dawe, Mark Parry

Standing Committee: Revd. Philip Payne, Jane Porch, Mark Parry, John Jones, Caroline Shield, Diane Hurt

Social Committee: Frankie Wicks, Diane Hurt, Annie Skinner, Caroline Shield

THE PARISH TEAM

Priest in Charge: Revd Philip Payne

(01449) 711684

Lay Minister: Mrs Frankie Wicks

(01449) 711222

Reader: Mr Henry Stanford

(01449) 711742

Churchwarden and Elder: Mrs Jane Porch

(01449) 711210

Churchwarden: Mr Mark Parry

(01449) 711816

Secretary: Mrs Caroline Shield

(01449) 711584

SECRETARY'S REPORT

The PCC has 12 members (ex officio and elected) and the electoral roll had 52 names on it for 2018.

The PCC has met 9 times in the year, in addition to the Annual Vestry Meeting and the Annual Parochial Meeting, which was held on Wednesday 11th April 2018.

Discussions at PCC Meetings included: Safeguarding, coffee & cake in the village hall, Quinquennial report, Lighting in church, Growing in God, Worship Themes, New signs, GDPR, Grapevine magazine, Armistice day, Mission and Pastoral Measure 2011. *Caroline Shield*

INCUMBENTS REPORT – PARISHES OF NORTH BOSMERE

The structure of our group of 8 parishes remains unchanged. However, in late December we were advised that the Proposed Reorganization was now being staffed by the Church Commissioners and the draft scheme is out to consultation. Assuming that the scheme goes ahead, at a date in 2019 yet to be confirmed, the 8 parishes should be formally constituted as a single, 8-parish legal Benefice.

Ministry Team. In September 2018 Rev Barbara Gallagher left to take up an appointment in Peterborough Diocese.

Worship. The pattern of worship remained broadly unaltered across the 8 parishes for 2018. Special services continue to attract additional interest, especially when supported by personal invitations and/or additional publicity. The departure of Rev Barbara necessitated a review of weekly patterns of worship. Apart from Christmas, the resulting changes were introduced for 2019.

Schools. Parish clergy continue to visit both schools (Creeping St Mary and Stonham Aspal) to conduct assemblies and provide other support. Both schools hold acts of worship in their respective parish churches at least once per term whilst I, as incumbent, sit on the governing bodies of both schools

Buildings. Our buildings remain an important community resource. The focus of that resource varies from village to village. For one the church is a social hub, for another a palace of quiet contemplation, for another it is the church hall which provide the hub. For all our communities the building provides, albeit at different ways, a spiritual focal point both for family stepping points for family and community activates (such as for baptisms, weddings and funerals) and for community celebrations (such as Christmas, Harvest and Remembrance). The challenge that faces us all is linking this focus for the special event with the ongoing round of worship and fellowship in a way that builds and sustains community.

On a practical basis, maintaining 8 listed medieval places of worship remains a daunting and never-ending task. Detail reports on individual buildings, as required, will be given by the church warden or other designated person on an individual parish basis. Broadly speaking our buildings are sound at present, though all require work of some sort. I would like to pay tribute to all who contribute to the maintenance and upkeep of the buildings, recognizing that many contributions of time, expertise and money come from members of the wider community who would not count themselves as regular worshippers. This is just one example of the connection between the Sunday worshipping community and the wider community of which we are a part.

Statistics. Inevitable in any report I just note that in 2018, across our 8 parishes we hosted 8 baptisms, 7 weddings, and 30 funerals.

Rev'd Philip Payne
Priest-in-Charge

SAFEGUARDING

Safeguarding continues to be on the PCC Agenda for every meeting with prominent notices with contact details displayed in the Church and the Parish Room.

During the year almost all the members of the PCC have completed their basic training and those with specific roles have attended appropriate courses.

Frankie Wicks has continued as Safeguarding Officer and keeps a record of training done. Ian Gallagher has been replaced by Mark Parry as Churchwarden. Barbara Gallagher is no longer a licensed/accredited minister in this parish and Christine Edgar has retired.

Safeguarding in your parish – who's who?

The Incumbent/priest in charge Rev Philip Payne 01449 711684

The churchwardens Mark Parry 01449 711816 Jane Porch 01449 711809

The Parish Safeguarding Officers Mrs Frankie Wicks 01449 711222

The team of licensed/accredited ministers Mr Henry Stanford 01449 711742 Mrs Frankie Wicks 01449 711222

Mrs Jane Porch 01449 711809 Mr Mark Parry 01449 711816

Hall managers and bookers Mrs Frankie Wicks 01449 711222

Who will you talk to if you observe or are told about Safeguarding concerns?

Any of the above

In case of emergency where harm may come 999

Concerns of harm

Suffolk County Council Customer First 0808 8004005

Suffolk Police 101/ 01473 613500

If against a member of the clergy, to the Diocesan Bishop Diocesan Safeguarding Advisor 01638 718939

NSPCC 0808 800 5000

Childline 0800 1111

Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre 0808 1000 900 <http://ceop.police.uk/>

Women's Aid and Refuge Crisis National Helpline 0808 2000 247

Frankie Wicks

Safeguarding officer

FABRIC REPORT

2018 was a year of transition as we said goodbye to Ian and Barbara Gallagher. As well as being a Churchwarden, Ian was largely responsible for looking after the fabric of our church, so huge thanks to him for all he has done and the strong position he leaves us in. He spent a large amount of time and effort handing over to me as I shadowed him, both on fabric and Churchwarden duties, so I hope to be able to continue Ian's good work in both fields.

After receiving quotes for replacing the lighting we decided on a simpler approach of repairing and upgrading the existing fittings to take modern LED bulbs. Thanks to Tony Fowler's expertise and application in sourcing components and modifying the fittings this was achieved by just ourselves and with no disruption to the fabric. Ladder support was ably provided by John Jones and Mike Dawe. The highlight, quite literally, for me was a powered ascension to the very high points of the crossing with Tony, followed by a victory lap driving the hired scissor lift along the nave and down the church path. We now have a fully lit church for the first time for some time. Huge thanks to Tony Fowler without which this simply would not have been possible. The new LED bulbs should also decrease future maintenance.

There have been no other repairs carried out. There is a cracked pane in one of the nave leaded lights and a recommended craftsman has provided a quote for repair.

There was an issue with the roof alarm and our apologies go to any of our neighbours who may have been disturbed. The physical problem was resolved by the alarm company. An overflowing gutter and downpipe was noted during one nocturnal visit and clearing this is in hand.

MYGroup continues to carry out an annual check and clean of the roof, guttering and drains.

The annual inventory check was carried out once more and the inventory updated.

The churchyard has been kept tidy by means of working parties and individuals, particularly John Bull, all of whom have given kindly of their time. His efforts have been in part rewarded with a newer mower to drive, as the old one failed beyond economic repair. It would be helpful if all users of the churchyard ensure they place their refuse in the correct, clearly labelled bins.

Large thanks continue to be due to John Jones and Tony Fowler for the considerable time and effort they have put into helping maintain the church building, the Parish Room and the churchyard.

It remains a matter of concern that Stonham Parva is not able to be used for our occasional services nor receive visitors due to a roof problem. We hope the Churches Conservation Trust will be able to repair it soon so everyone can continue to enjoy this special place. Pending restitution we have taken advantage of the hiatus to use the A frame noticeboard purchased by the PCC for Stonham Parva to display services for Earl Stonham.

Mark Parry
Churchwarden

THE CHURCH IN THE VILLAGE COMMUNITY

2018 was a year of changes in our Church and these were felt by the community.

The most obvious change was that Ian and Barbara Gallagher moved to Northamptonshire so that Barbara could take up a post as Priest-in-charge of Weedon and adjacent parishes with House-for-Duty. They left in late August.

At the same time Christine Edgar retired as Reader after more than 20 years service. Gerald Stedman retired as an Elder earlier in the year after special presentations.

Mark Parry became churchwarden following Ian Gallagher's move. Jane Porch continued as the other Warden.

The service marking the Gallagher's move and Christine's retirement brought a large congregation and was followed by a shared afternoon tea served in church. This went so well that we celebrated Harvest Festival similarly with a shared lunch also in church. People enjoyed both and felt more at home in the building and with friends old and new.

Another special occasion was the long-awaited laying and dedication of a stone in the churchyard 'In memory of babies with no known grave. Each one is precious in God's sight.' This happened appropriately on Mothering Sunday.

Our annual Day of Prayer was held in Stonham Parva Church as there was a bell-ringing event at Earl Stonham Church that day. Sadly a beam fell from the roof at Stonham Parva Church later in the year and the carol service there had to be cancelled. We wait for the Churches Conservation Trust to repair this but the building has to remain closed until then.

We continued to serve the community by doing 'Coffee and Cake' in the Village Hall regularly and take our turns producing Library Lunches. Both are much appreciated. There is also much Church involvement in events raising money for the refurbishment of the Village Hall. These included a huge Hullabaloo as well as many Pub Nights and Quizzes. We certainly cannot be described as a 'holy huddle down the hill' as was the case in the past.

Frankie Wicks

ST MARY'S BELLS REPORT

I regret to say very little has happened this past year owing to having only two ringers in the band at the present time. We try to ring for the festivals and weddings with the help of ringers from other towers.

Margaret Cherry

DEANERY SYNOD REPORT

We continued to be represented by Maggie Podd and Frankie Wicks and Rev Philip Payne. John Jones was serving as Deanery Organiser.

There were two speakers at the January Synod meeting. The first was Sue Vincent of the Alzheimer's Society. She summarised the work of the Alzheimer's Society. Everyone present was encouraged to register online or complete a postcard to become a Dementia Friend. The second was a presentation by Craig Hutton, Diocesan Safeguarding Trainer and Training Coordinator. Craig spoke about changes to Safeguarding regulations and the need for all people who have roles within the church to undertake training.

The May meeting was held at our Parish Room. Maureen Reynel MBE from FIND (Families in Need) gave a very interesting and moving talk about how FIND was set up and the work that it does within our Deanery and beyond. FIND relies on donations and on average distributes 70 food parcels via the Food Bank every week.

October Talk by Jenny Seggar, Spiritual Director and Sarah Lock, Lay Director from Cursillo. Small groups of Christians meet across the Diocese to encourage and support each other through prayer, study and action.

In November Bosmere and Stowmarket Deaneries hosted a Growing in God Roadshow at Trinity Church School, Stowmarket, which was attended by Rev Philip Payne, Henry Stanford and Maggie Podd.

As Deanery organiser, John Jones continued to report on financial shortfalls for the Deanery and Diocese. We had updates from the Diocesan and General Synods.

Maggie Podd
Deanery Synod rep

TREASURER'S REPORT

In 2018 we achieved a surplus of £1,884 on our Unrestricted Funds, despite incurring unexpectedly high maintenance costs and paying an additional voluntary contribution of £1,000 on top of our agreed Centenary Share. This was accomplished thanks to a once-only boost to our Gift Aid tax recovery, owing to timing changes resulting from the introduction of the Parish Giving Scheme.

At the start of the year we implemented the Parish Giving Scheme and the majority of our monthly standing order donors have moved over to the new system. As well as reclaiming and paying to us the Gift Aid tax every month rather than annually, it makes my work easier and has the added advantage that donors can opt for annual RPI increases if they wish.

Expenses in total came to £28,000, in line with our budget. Maintenance costs were more than we anticipated, thanks to a large bill for replacing two roof alarm sensors but these were offset by small savings under a number of other headings.

Unrestricted reserves at the year end amounted to £21,800. Our budget for 2019 envisages a deficit, but, if all goes according to plan, reserves should still be around £20,000 at the end of the year. This is more than we need to hold, but the Fabric Fund balance is quite low at £4,800 and if significant repairs are needed we may have to fund them partly from Unrestricted Funds.

During the year we purchased a new mower for the churchyard at a cost of £4,425. This was partly funded by part-exchanging the old machine for £1,000, a generous donation of £1,000 and a grant of £1,050 (covering the last three years) from the Parish Council. We are going to write off the new machine over seven years, charging £632 per annum to the Churchyard Fund.

The Designated Fund, of £2,300 from the Atherton Bequest, was created to be used for enhancements to the church fabric or furnishings. So far none of this has been spent.

Collections for charities were held monthly throughout the year and an impressive total of £5,073 was raised. The collections are planned at the start of each year and we try to achieve a balance between church-based and secular charities, and between home and overseas.

I should like to express my heartfelt thanks to everyone who has again been so generous, supporting both our charity collections and the church's running costs, thus making the Treasurer's job easy and free from anxiety.

John Jones
Treasurer