



**St Mary's Annual Parochial Church Meeting  
15 April 2024**

## CONTENTS

<b>SUBJECT</b>	<b>PAGES</b>
1. Agenda	2
2. Minutes of the last APCM on 13 April 2024 for approval	3 to 5
3. Electoral Roll	6
4. Vicars' Reports	7 to 9
5. Financial Review for 2023	10
Income and Expenditure sheet	11 to 12
Independent Examiner's Statement	13
6. Churchwardens' and Fabric Reports	14
7. Deanery Synod Report	15
8. Safeguarding Report	16
9. Other Reports on 2023 activities, including Music, Social and Fundraising, Families	17 to 19



## **A G E N D A**

For St Mary's, South Baddesley  
ANNUAL PARISH AND PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETINGS  
**Monday 15 April 2024 at 7 pm in the Church**

### **I MEETING OF PARISHONERS TO ELECT CHURCH WARDEN**

Re-election of Ms Pat Mennie  
Retirement of Mr Andy Ward

### **II ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING**

(open to those on St Mary's Church Electoral Roll)

1. Opening Prayer
2. Apologies for Absence
3. Approval of Minutes of the last APCM on 13 April 2023 ([pages 3-5 in your pack](#))
4. Matters arising
5. Introduction
6. Reports ([please see pages 6 to 18 in your document pack](#))
  - 6.1 Electoral Roll as at 31 March 2024
  - 6.2 Vicars' Reports by Rev'ds Simon Newham and Terence Handley MacMath
  - 6.3. Financial Review
  - 6.2 Treasurer's Financial Statement for 2023, with 2023 Income and Expenditure and the Independent Examiners Statement
  - 6.3 Churchwardens' Report incl. Fabric
  - 6.4 Deanery Synod Report
  - 6.5 Safeguarding Report
  - 6.6 Other Reports
7. Elections
  - 7.3 PCC Members
  - 7.4 Deanery Synod Representative
8. Appointment of the Independent Examiner
9. Any Other Business
10. Closing Prayer



## **Minutes of the Annual Parish and Parochial Church Meetings held on Thursday 13 April 2023, commencing 7.00 pm**

**Present:** Joss Covell, Rob Covell, Leo Gibb, Pamela Hughes, Lynda Leen, Pat Mennie, Simon Newham (Chair), Maureen Ward, Andy Ward, Nicholas Walford, Gordon Wynne.

### **ANNUAL PARISH MEETING**

**Election of Church Wardens** The re-elections of Pat Mennie and Andy Ward were, respectively, proposed by Leo, seconded by Joss, and proposed by Lynda and seconded by Pat. Andy and Pat's re-elections were accepted unanimously by all present.

Pat's work in updating St Mary's **Log and Terrier** was gratefully received by all and files for each were available at the meeting.

Simon thanked Pat and Andy for the huge amount of work they have done in the last year, particularly following Richard Elliott's retirement in June 2022. He thanked them for standing again as churchwardens.

The Annual Parish meeting was then declared closed.

### **ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING ("APCM")**

1. Simon (Chair) opened the meeting with a prayer.
2. **Apologies** for absence were received from Simon Stocker and Penny Dent.
3. **Minutes of the last APCM** The minutes of the APCM of 26 April 2022 were accepted by all and will be signed by the Chair, subject to an amendment of two surnames of those present. **Action Chair/Secretary**
4. **Matters Arising** None.
5. **Reports** Reports copies had been available for reading several days before the APCM. Simon asked for comments for each of the reports:

Vicar's Report - There were no questions or comments for this.

Treasurer's Financial Review, 2022 Annual Accounts, and the Independent Examiner's Statement. Simon thanked Pat for her very clear presentation of the accounts.

Fabric and Churchwarden's Reports – There were no questions or comments.

Simon appealed for help with practical jobs needed to support and manage the Fabric activity of the church. He asked those present to make known any willing volunteers.

**Action All**



Deanery Synod Report – There were no questions or comments for this.

Safeguarding Report: (by Nicolas Walford, Parish Safeguarding Officer (PSO))

Lynda thanked Nick for all his work and support in leading and facilitating St Mary's Safeguarding commitments. Everyone echoed her gratitude.

Music Report Pat thanked Leo for all her work in leading such quality of music at St Mary's.

Social Activities and Fundraising: Simon highlighted the need for more volunteers to help with St Mary's fundraising and social activities, including the annual Fete at Pylewell.

He confirmed Pat's decision, given at the March PCC meeting, to stand down after this year from the role of managing and co-ordinating the annual Fete.

On the subject of St Mary's being a venue for meetings outside the church, Leo raised a request from the Norleywood and District Society, who would like St Mary's to be the venue for their future annual meetings. This request was unanimously accepted and Leo will respond to the NWDS. **Action Leo.**

Cleaning Report: Lynda agreed to forward names of volunteers to Leo for the cleaning rota. **Action Lynda.**

Electoral Roll: This currently stands at 55; 7 fewer than previous year due to 4 deaths and 3 parish moves. Whilst anyone can apply to be on the parish electoral roll at any time, Simon confirmed 2025 would be the year in which the Electoral Roll must be redone completely. Lynda, as St Mary's PCC ER Officer will lead the formal process in 2025. **Action Lynda**

### **Vicar's Statement**

Before moving to the next item of Elections, Simon thanked everyone for all the work that has been done this year, following Richard's retirement, and for making it such a lively church community.

He spoke of three main areas of focus for the year ahead:

1. The appointment of a new parish priest for St Mary's and St John's – Simon confirmed that interview dates had been set for 5 and 6 July 2023 and he would be joined on the interview panel by 2 representatives from each of the churches.
2. Wider sharing of tasks and involvement - Echoing his appeals for volunteers earlier in the meeting, Simon stressed the need to share out more of the practical tasks required for the day-to-day functioning of the church. He asked everyone to think about how to draw other people in to take an active part. **Action All**
3. The work of Mel Osborne, Children and Families Worker – Simon said the focus here would be on how - as a team across the 3 parishes of South Baddesley, Boldre and Brockenhurst - to "do church" with the families Mel has contacted through the school children she is working with. **Action: All for further thought and development.**



In response to 3., Pat said that Geoffrey Gee's legacy to St Mary's is being used to help fund Mel Osborne's role as Children and Families worker for the 3 parishes.

Rob Covell, in response to Simon's appeal for the wider sharing of tasks and involvement, raised the question of how we could "recruit" young members of our congregation to help with tasks. Everyone recognised they would be a valuable resource. **Action all - for further thought and development**

Pam added that taking on a practical task allowed those involved to feel part of the church.

Simon felt that the forthcoming (Generous June) Stewardship Campaign would be an opportunity to seek, not just financial support, but practical involvement as discussed above.

## 6. Elections

### 6.1 PCC Members

This APCM marks Joss Covell's formal resignation from the PCC. Simon said a "huge thank you" to Joss, who has been a joyful presence with unfailing commitment to the St Mary's PCC team over many years.

Pam Hughes is standing for election to the PCC and her written application, proposed by Pat Mennie, second by Lynda Leen, was unanimously accepted.

Simon confirmed the following St Mary's PCC roles:

Vice Chair: Pat Mennie

Electoral Roll Officer: Lynda Leen

Treasurer: Pat Mennie

Deanery Synod Rep: (shared) Leo Gibb and Pam Hughes

PCC Secretary: Rachel Prophet

He also confirmed the Parish Safeguarding Officer (PSO) role held by Nicholas Walford

**6.2 Deanery Synod Representative** In the election of this, it was agreed the role would be shared between Leo Gibb and Pam Hughes.

**7. Appointment of the Independent Examiner** Pat advised that John Graves has agreed to continue to act as St Mary's independent examiner and wished to record thanks to John. All were in favour.

**8. Any other business:** The date of the next APCM was set for Wednesday 10 April 2024.

**9. Closing – an opportunity for special thanks** Simon took this moment to say, on behalf of everyone, heartfelt thanks to Gordon (Wynne). He presented Gordon with a gift voucher a small token of huge gratitude to Gordon; a loving presence, at the heart our church.

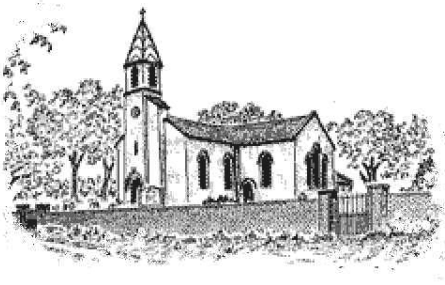
**10. The meeting ended with The Grace and closed at 7.28 pm**



## ELECTORAL ROLL

As at 31 March 2024

ARMES	Anthony	LEE	Jill
ATKINSON	Bernard John	LEEN	Lynda
ATKINSON	Christine Mary Jessie	MARTEN	Andrew
BLAKEMORE	Pauline	MARTEN	Elizabeth
BRIDGLAND	Abigail Philippa	MENNIE	Patricia Anne
BROWN	Valerie Ann	OLDFIELD	Richard
BURT	Andrew Russell	PELLOW	Felicity Ruth
CANTRELL	Edward Godfrey (Ted)	PETERS	Samantha
CANTRELL	Elsbeth Ann Grant (Beth)	PODGER	Kevin
CARLO	James Henry	PODGER	Lindsay
COCKERAM	Patricia Jane	SMITH	Rachel
CODLING	David John	SMITH	Mahala
CODLING	Valerie Eunice	SMITH	Nathan
COOK	Mary Caroline	STEVENS	Emma
COVELL	Jocelyn Mary	STOCKER	Alicia Pamela Anne
DOHERTY	Harold Ian	STOCKER	Simon John
		VAN DEN	
DRODGE	Geoffrey	BOGAERDE	Rupert
EASTERBROK	Karen	VERNON	Elizabeth Jean
EVANS	Simon John	WALSH	Michael Francis
FISSLER	Gillian	WALSH	Valerie
			Andrew Leonard
GIBB	Leonora Eva	WARD	Henry
GRAVES	Diana Mary	WARD	Maureen Emily
GRAVES	John Michael	WHITE	Yvonne Patricia
GREGORY	Maurice	WYNNE	Anne Margaret
GRUBER	Anne Gillian	WALFORD	Nicholas James
HARDY	Roger	WALFORD	Sandra Rosalind
HARDY	Tena Suzanne	WATKINS	Jane Anne
HARTWELL	Elizabeth Jane Perdita		
HEAD	Richard John Patrick		
HEAD	Susan		
HAVERY	Rebecca		
HELYER	David		
HELYER	Mahala		
HUGHES	Pamela Margaret		
JAKES	Marion Diana Rosemary		
KNIGHT	Sally Ann		



## **VICARS' REPORTS**

### **Vicar's Report by Reverend Simon Newham**

Following Andrew's departure from Boldre at the beginning of 2023 much time in the early part of the year was spent working out what role we would be advertising for in the Parish Profile we were putting together. Leo and Pat put a great deal of thought, prayer and effort into doing this and a great deal of thanks goes to them for all their hard work.

Until a replacement for Richard was to be found more of the day-to-day responsibilities fell on Pat, Andy, Rachel, Gordon, Linda, Iain and myself with the support of the PCC – thank you to all of you who worked so hard during this 'in-between' period.

An excellent Parish Profile was eventually produced and Terence and Paul came to join us in September – they both come with their unique gifts that they are so generously using in the service of St Mary's and the wider community.

Mel continues to use her considerable gifts in South Baddesley Primary School, building links with both children and parents and seeking to raise the profile of St Mary's in their daily life. The Tea and Toast initiative being just one example of the ways in which this relationship is being built. Our admin teams continue to work more closely together in support of one another and we also continue to do wedding and baptism preparation together – receiving very positive feedback from those who take part.

Particular highlights of the year for me have been the Palm Sunday service with a donkey; the Good Friday Tenebrae service; the Fete; the occasional social lunch; the Christingle service; and, of course, working with the committed and dedicated team that is St Mary's - thank you for a good year in which you have made me feel particularly welcomed and valued.



### **Team Vicar's Report** **by Reverend Terence Handley MacMath**

By the time the APCM comes, I shall have been in post for six months. My licensing service was very exciting, graciously led by Bishop Debbie – one of the last services she took in the diocese, full of friendly, new and very welcoming faces. Since then, I've been getting to know a new-to-me geography, demographic, flora, fauna - and a widely scattered congregation.

It has been an eventful half-year, with the sad loss of Rob Covell, Pete Leen, Derek Smith. Andy's illness, incessant floods and Covid contributed to the difficulties. But there have been some encouraging times when we have worshipped together. We had a happy time at the Harvest Festival and lunch, which was very well attended, and a friendly visit by the local organizer of the Ukraine support group, together with some bemused but very willing Ukrainians. They admitted that they were stunned (but pleased) to participate in a Eucharist led by a woman, because this is not yet possible in the Orthodox Churches. There have been some beautiful services of Evensong with people from both St Mary's and St John's coming together to worship, led by singers from both churches. I also remember the service on Remembrance Sunday with great pleasure.

I have enjoyed a few contacts with South Baddesley School, though sadly, these have ended, visiting Pylewell Park and getting to know the new managers of KidsLoveNature nursery. Initiating an after-school, in-church session for parents and children at South Baddesley seemed a promising way to encourage families into the church, and it was a pleasure to get to know Mel Osborne and Maureen Ward better through that work, but with Maureen's need to care for Andy and falling numbers through the winter, we have had to close these sessions down. The project to create a shared church-oriented choir for the primary school children at St John's and St Mary's has not succeeded - yet. I also had hoped to provide continuity to build up a congregation of families by offering an all-age service on the first Sunday in each month, but again, this was not a success.

The immense, generous support of retired clergy and the curate in Brockenhurst – Iain Morrison, Tony Foulger, Felicity Boot, Gordon Wynne, Richard Elliott and Stephen Beckett – and the monthly Evensong sermons with Simon Newham have ensured that the regular, varied pattern of worship has been continued without interruption. Lynda Leen and her friend Sam have volunteered to lead the Family Service on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of each month, and have done on three or four occasions. Richard has also very generously taken the weddings and funerals for very many of his old parishioners, who appreciate that pastoral continuity. Gordon and Anne Wynne are a very much-loved presence at St Mary's, again, maintaining continuity and stability. Pat Mennie's amazing efficiency as warden, treasurer, designing and getting out publicity, and all the maintenance has been a *sine qua non*. Lynda has been extraordinary in her energy and commitment, and contagious enthusiasm for getting things done, and Leo Gibb is the sort of Director of Music who is a joy to work with. Rachel Prophet's wise and efficient support is also one of the important contributions to St Mary's parish life. I'm proud of the way St Mary's offers such a diverse range of worship, without fuss, and attracts an eclectic, committed congregation, mostly from beyond the parish boundary.



I continue to make friendships where I can, and to offer pastoral support and prayers. It seems a positive development that the weekly pew sheet I produce now has only one edition for the whole benefice, sharing information more widely. This is one example of the positive developments from sharing a priest again with Boldre. I will also continue to take as much responsibility as I can for the running of the parish and encouraging its members in the exercise of their gifts for leading worship, informal pastoral care, and maintaining the church and its churchyard.



## **TREASURER'S REPORT by Pat Mennie**

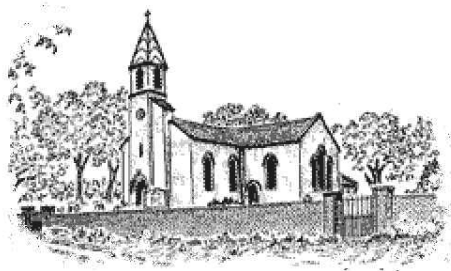
### **FINANCIAL REVIEW OF 2023**

The financial statement of the PCC for the year ending 31<sup>st</sup> December 2023 is as shown and accounts were independently examined by John Graves, Chartered Accountant, (to whom we are indebted again this year).

Financially, 2023 was again tighter than the previous year because we saw a further 7% drop in giving (planned collections, donations and weekly collections). Also, an extra £2,000 was spent on the churchyard for necessary boundary work. Despite managing to keep many of our costs down in running the church (albeit our buildings insurance had increased another 10%) we were not able to fulfil our expected monthly Parish Share (CMF) to the Diocese and thus the PCC reluctantly asked to pay less in 2023. Even so the total of £21,419 is two thirds of our entire income. This includes another very successful Fete making a profit of nearly £6,000. Our in-year balance however is still negative. **In brief: our income was £32,613 and expenditure £33,511.**

We are fortunate to have two legacies, Kitcher and Gee, which contribute respectively to the costs of churchyard maintenance and to our children/family worker, based at our local school. We also applied for and were successful in receiving a £1000 grant towards our energy costs. We continue to receive support from the Ken Allen Trust for which we are very grateful.

As can be seen from the bottom of the Income and Expenditure sheet attached, we are fortunate from previous years to have built up a reasonable amount in our general deposit (unrestricted) and buildings funds (restricted). The Kitcher Investment and Gee Family Account cannot be used for any other purpose.



### St Mary's Income and Expenditure Accounts to 31 December 2023

Income		To 31 Dec 2023	To 31 Dec 2022
1.	Planned Giving	14,758	14,475
2.	Collections & donations	2,459	4,448
3.	Gift Aid recovered	3,894	4,173
4.	Legacies	-	-
5.	Bridge magazine	620	600
6.	Funds raised	8,629	8,076
7.	Interest & dividends	854	145
8.	Fees (funerals & weddings)	899	2,096
9.	Other income (Boldre PC grant)	500	-
TOTAL INCOME		32,613	34,013
Expenditure			
10.	Donations/Grants to charities	-548	-1,395
11.	Mission & Evangelism incl. C&F Worker	-2,744	-410
12.	Parish Share/CMF	-21,419	-19,069
13.	Clergy Expenses	-150	-122
14.	Church Running Expenses	-3,491	-2,321
15.	Churchyard Maintenance	-3,335	-2,302
16.	Cost of raising funds	-2,409	-2,303
17.	Support costs	-800	-1,200
18.	Admin costs	-299	-50
19.	Other – Insurance	-1,924	-1,961
20.	Repairs to church buildings	0	-32,425
Expenditure Sub-total		- 37,119	-63,558
IN YEAR BALANCE		-4,506	-29,545
21.	Transfer from Deposit Accounts	3,608	31,100
TOTAL EXPENDITURE		-33,511	-32,458
FINAL BALANCE		-898	1,555
		=====	=====



Accounts		31 Dec 2023	Notes	1 Jan 2023
A.	Current	10,488		12,241
B.	General Deposit	22,861		22,007
C.	Kitcher Interest 19	26	(Tr 1,150 to current for Chyrd maint)	
D.	Buildings Fund	63,588	Repayment of £20k by Ken Allen Trust	41,453
E.	Kitcher Investment	39,471	Variable by stock investment	36,077
F.	Gee Family Account	13,175	Tr 2,508 to Current account for C&F Wrkr	15,097



**Independent Examiner's Report to the members/trustees of St Mary's, South Baddesley  
Parochial Church Council (PCC)**

I report on the attached accounts of the PCC for the year ended 31 December 2023.

**Respective responsibilities of the Trustees and Independent Examiner**

As the members of the PCC you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts; you consider that an audit is not required for this year under section 144(2) of the Charities Act 2011 (the 2011 Act) and that an independent examination is needed.

It is my responsibility to

- examine the accounts under section 145 of the 2011 Act
- follow the procedures laid down in the General Directions given by the Charity Commissioners in section 145(5)(b) of the 2011 Act; and
- state whether particular matters have come to my attention

**Basis of Independent Examiner's Statement**

My examination was carried out in accordance with the General Directions given by the Charity Commission. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the PCC and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and seeking explanations from you as trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit, and consequently I do not express an audit opinion on the view given by the accounts.

**Independent Examiner's Statement**

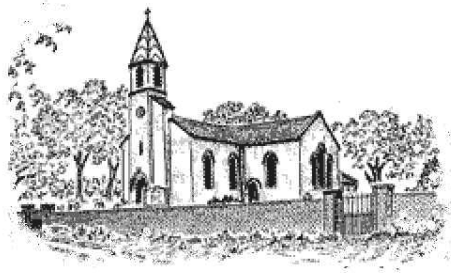
In connection with my examination, no matters have come to my attention

- 1) which give me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the requirements
  - to keep accounting records in accordance with section 130 of the 2011 Act; or
  - to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records have not been met; or
- 2) to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

J M Graves FCA

13<sup>th</sup> March 2024

Heatherlea House  
Main Road, East End  
Lymington  
Hampshire SO41 5ST



## **CHURCHWARDENS', INCLUDING FABRICS, REPORT by Pat Mennie**

### **Churchwardens' Report**

Again 2023 has been a very busy year for your churchwardens especially as we have had no Assistant Priest for the first 9 months of 2023 as Revd. Richard Elliott retired at the end of June 2022. We have maintained our regular pattern of services especially with the help of Revd. Gordon Wynne, which has been very important and we were pleased to receive a visit by the Bishop of Southampton who undertook a confirmation of 3 of our younger members of the congregation on 3 September.

Also led by Bishop Debbie we welcomed on 23 September our new Assistant Priest, Revd. Terence Handley MacMath shared with Boldre.

### **Fabric Report**

We have been pleased to have a warm church for 2023 after installation of the heating system in December 2022. Overall this has importantly maintained a good dry building and as a congregation we have had a warm church to welcome us in the cold months.

The churchyard boundaries have had some extensive work through heavy pruning back of branches and bushes by Sterling Garden Services.

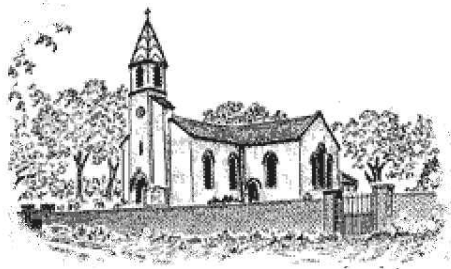
The faculty process and National Park Planning was used to prepare the felling of a large dead oak tree in the churchyard, which finally took place in March 2024.



## **DEANERY SYNOD REPORT**

In 2023, Deanery Synod representatives have attended the seasonal meetings and reported back to the PCC on issues discussed and information received.

Meetings during 2023 have provided interest and information and allow St Mary's representatives to hear about initiatives in churches within the Deanery and to have the opportunity to raise issues and comment on activities.



## **SAFEGUARDING REPORT 2023-2024**

The St Mary's PCC has complied with the duty under section 5 of the Safeguarding and Clergy Discipline Measure 2016 (duty to have due regard to House of Bishops' guidance on safeguarding children and vulnerable adults).

2 DBS certificates have been processed in the year.

1 PCC member completed their Basics Safeguarding Awareness module, 3 completed their Foundation Pathway training and 3 completed their Domestic Abuse Awareness course. PCC members are aware of their commitment to completing the safeguarding training required by the Church of England.

Safeguarding training for Church Welcomers is currently being planned.

Safeguarding is a Standing Item on every PCC agenda.

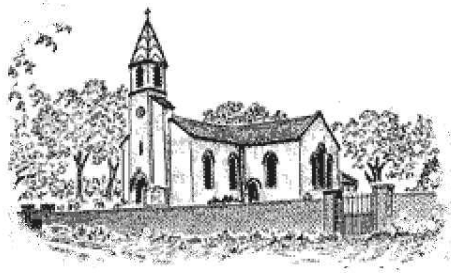
No safeguarding issues have been raised this year.

A Dashboard introduced by the Diocese in 2022 is working well and is a useful tool in maintaining an up to date overview of safeguarding performance throughout the year against the Diocesan Safeguarding template.

Those who are kind enough to volunteer for roles within the church are asked to complete some simple safeguarding training. They are also requested to apply for a DBS certificate, which can be done online. The first stage is for the Benefice Administrator to provide the volunteer with the basic information to enable the volunteer to start the application process. The second stage is for the identity documents used by the volunteer to be verified by the Parish Safeguarding Officer (PSO), usually by a quick meeting in the Benefice Office.

Your PSO is constantly reminded of the importance of safeguarding. It is stressed to him that everyone should know what to do if they have a safeguarding concern of any kind. That concern should be shared in the first instance with the PSO on [safeguarding@boldrechurch.com](mailto:safeguarding@boldrechurch.com) who will escalate it to the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser (DSA). If the concern is an emergency or there is a risk of immediate harm, the police must be alerted as well as Social Services. A report will then need to be written and emailed to the DSA who will manage the response.

***Nicholas Walford, Parish Safeguarding Officer (PSO)***



## OTHER REPORTS



### St Mary's Music 2023 – 2024

Most of us feel that music is an integral and important part of worship. It continues at St Mary's, and is in most ways simply traditional. We have a substantial SATB choir at Evensong once a month, with regular practices taking place in the hour before the service. We very much appreciate the choristers from St John's and singers from local choirs who often choose to join us. We are able to offer a choir for weddings and funerals, often sourcing and rehearsing chosen pieces at short notice.

The organist would love to hear requests for favourite hymns and anthems – we love variety, but also a reminder of old favourites. Last year's Palm Sunday **Songs of Praise** service was most enjoyable, with parishioners choosing their favourite hymns and speaking briefly about them. We anticipate organising another 'Songs of Praise' service later in the year. [Get your request in now!](#)

As I write, we are planning an **Easter Celebration Evensong** in collaboration with St John's musicians.

We are always looking for recruits to our choir – [please spread the word](#). Just drop in to a choir practice and hear what fun we have!

Our outdoor Christmas Eve service was a resounding success. More than 150 attendees, old and young, sang their hearts out in the open air. Hot drinks and mince pies were enjoyed after the service; the atmosphere was warm and celebratory, never mind the gusting wind! We were particularly pleased to welcome visitors from Lymington and even further afield, who came out to join us in our carol singing.

We were lucky enough to host the elite choir 'Amyrillis' who sang for us in February. Cake and 'bubbly' were served after the concert, which was greatly enjoyed. The choir raised over £500 for the St Mary's flower fund. Hopefully, they will want to come again, perhaps in the autumn.

**Leo Gibb (LG)**  
(01590 626603)  
leogibb@btinternet.com

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## Cleaning Report 2023 - 2024

Not the most popular part of church life! But oh so necessary.....

Our cleaner Sarah still gives the church a thorough clean once a month and volunteers Hoover the blue carpet on a regular, rota basis. We are lucky enough to have new volunteers for some brass cleaning, and also some pew polishing. Thank you so much!

There are still many small cleaning jobs that need doing – [if you have a spare hour once a month](#), or just feel like having a 'one off' tidy (especially of out of date paperwork) [please let me know](#).

Many thanks to Lynda Leen who gave the kitchen a well needed spring clean last month. She transformed it! Now we just need an area of splash-back tiling fixed to the wall beside the dishwasher. Any offers? With the small space we have at our disposal, de-cluttering regularly is very much needed. I promise to sort out the music cupboard this year.....

There is a good supply of cleaning materials in the cupboard just beyond the kitchen, so feel free to lend a hand. Kitchen roll, toilet rolls and paper towels often need replenishing. A big thank you to those who remember and donate these items.

An even bigger thank you goes to our faithful teams of coffee/tea makers who refresh us after services, often supplying biscuits, cakes or scones. The clearing up happens as if by magic – but we all know that fairies don't exist.

Let us all be aware of the need to keep our church clean and tidy. We are open to visitors at all times.

**LG.**

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## **Social Activities and Fundraising (Fete)**

As per 2022, apart from the very excellent money raised in the loose change jar evident at the end of Pam Hughes' pew at the conclusion of Sunday services, the only fundraiser in 2023 was the Annual Church Fete at Pylewell. This is still a firm favourite for locals and visitors alike. The 2023 Fete raised over £6,000 (nearly £400 more than 2022) and again special mention to the tea tent raising approximately £900 on the day. All stalls and raffles did very well and it continues to be an excellent opportunity for St Mary's outreach. Also most notably is the number of sponsors and adverts gained by John Graves amounting to nearly £2000 and all excellently displayed by Mahala Smith in the beautiful fete programme. The day is particularly enjoyable for its dog show, musical entertainment (Musk) and children's races all set in the beautiful grounds of Pylewell.

***Pat Mennie (PM)***

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## **Children and Families**

It was with great joy we witnessed the confirmations of Elizabeth, Sophie and Oscar by Bishop Debbie in September 2023.

A family, recently new to our congregation, has remarked on how much they have felt welcomed. As all our families and young people continue to grow in their faith, we look forward to being part of their spiritual journey.

***Lynda Leen (LL)***