

St Mary Magdalene, Ickleton
All reports for the APCM
Tuesday 21st May, 2024

Church Electoral Roll Report

There are currently 70 people on the Church Electoral Roll.

Mr Patrick Bloomfield and Mrs Jean Williams have sadly died during the past year.

The following people have added themselves to the Roll:

Mr Alastair Gale

Mrs Jamie Gale

Ms Anna Harcourt

Frances Payne

(Church Electoral Roll Officer)

PCC and Joint Hinkledux PCC Report

Since the APCM of 2023 there have been 3 ordinary meetings of Ickleton PCC. There have been no standing committee or extraordinary meetings. General housekeeping items were discussed including finance, fabric and maintenance. Throughout the year a significant focus has been laid on replacing stolen items and security of the church including discussions on the use of CCTV.

There have been regular updates on the applications for preservation of the wall paintings for the future.

Carolyn Meadows

(Secretary, ex-officio)

Since the last APCM, Hinkledux has held 2 joint meeting (18 Sept 2023, 22 Jan 2024)

Overview of 18 Sept 2023 Meeting:

News was shared from each church and there was a run through of what is available on the new website.

It was decided to have 3 joint meetings annually to continue building on togetherness and sharing experiences on the tasks all churches need to

do such as H&S, safeguarding etc. There are monthly key leaders meetings (CWs, CM and LS), family ministry meetings and then individual church meetings as required.

Buildings and H&S:

All churches are in need of checking and updating so we are sharing information with each other on how this proceeds.

We also took time to reflect on how we engage/work with each other, our Friends and neighbours

Overview of 22 Jan 2024:

Thanks was shared for growing attendance, local weddings, building work and community connections.

Security:

Sadly all 3 churches have been subject to thefts (multiple). Although CCTV will not prevent thefts, they may deter or at least lead to a better follow up outcome so all 3 churches are pursuing installation of cameras. Discussion of the CofE CCTV policy was had.

Finance:

Lydia presented a church finance 101 which explained where outgoings and income comes from

The discussion in parish groups was how do we raise and use church funds.

Carolyn Meadows
(Hinkledux Parish Administrator)

Finance Report

Financial report available upon request

Independent Examiner's Report to the Trustees of St Mary Magdalene Parochial Church Council

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the above church for the year ended 31st December 2023

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the trustees of the church trust you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements Charities Act 2011 ("the Act").

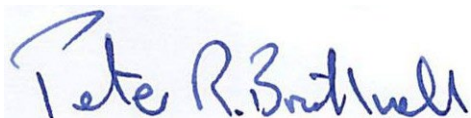
I report in respect of my examination of the trust's accounts carried out under s.145 of the Act and in carrying out my examination I have followed all the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under s.145(5)(b) of the Act.

Independent Examiner's Statement

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination giving me cause to believe that in any material respect:

1. accounting records were not kept in respect of the trust as required by s.130 of the Act; or
2. the accounts do not accord with those records.

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.



Peter R Bricknell, LLB.
Chestnuts Brookhampton St
Ickleton
CB101SP

15/05/2024

Churchwardens Report

It's been a privilege to serve as church warden over the last year- to work alongside our wonderful volunteers and our ministry team.

Whilst national reports seem to imply that church-going is in decline it seems that we are buckling the trend and its a joy to gather with those of different ages, newcomers and 'old hands', as well as our neighbours in Hinxton and Duxford. Thank you Lydia for your leadership and wisdom.

We appreciate your commitment to our communities

It is a great testament to our committed volunteers that the church is kept open, clean, warm and welcoming. A particular 'thank you' must go to Colin Hayes who, with David Lilley, locks and unlocks the doors daily. Colin has also spent an inordinate amount of time this year endeavouring to rationalise the heating systems. Thanks to his conscientious efforts both the boiler and electric radiators are now being prepared to serve us over future years.

How wonderful it is that the coffee morning team welcome visitors all through the year, that Susie Lober helps us connect with local families

in imaginative ways, that beautiful flowers continue to enhance the building and there is a growing band of bell ringers.

As ever we have had to face new challenges. Sadly we have been the victim of repeated thefts, including that of our audio system and silver, not to mention the sugar and fountain pen. The repercussions absorb much time and energy but we are determined to keep the church building open for both villagers and the many visitors. We are in process of installing CCTV as an added deterrent.

The challenge of keeping a medieval building in good condition remains a priority. We are well aware that the responsibility lies with us, the people of Ickleton. Inevitably most of the people who have loved and maintained the building are 'getting on a bit' - this includes our volunteers and the contractors. So it is reassuring and encouraging that they are sharing their knowledge and wisdom with the next generation. Although I am not sure that anyone can really supersede Derek Rule's instinct and expertise, we are in awe of all he is, and continues to do. Thank you Derek.

Our other challenge continues to be financial. I don't know how we would have survived the trials of our relationships with either Barclays or 'sum up' without the expertise and tenaciousness of Richard Herbert. Thank you Richard.

Thanks also to Glynis Hammond and her fundraising team who have made significant contributions over the years, we now need to find new ways to 'keep the lights on.' As ever the bulk of the burden is carried by our regular covenanters- what a contribution they make- as some leave us we need to continue to broaden the base of supporters.

One way of doing this will be the establishment of a FRIENDS OF ICKLETON church to enable those who love the building, but do not necessarily worship in it to contribute to the maintenance. Thanks to Linda Lester and Peter Bricknell who are in the process of setting this up. We look forward to working together over the next years.

Our big sadness was Patrick's sudden death, we remember his

commitment to maintaining the church for future generations with thankfulness, and our thoughts and prayers remain with his family.

Jenny Duke May 2024

Vicar's Report

Gently growing

We are gently growing in numbers, bucking the trend in village churches. But we're also growing in faith. We began the year with a confirmation service at Duxford and later there were four baptisms from our Tiddlers families. Then in the autumn, we ran our first *Making Sense of the Bible* course, an addition to our gatherings for prayer and study.

High points

As I look back over the year, there's so much to celebrate, but here are three things that really stand out. First, the beautiful moment when the swifts joined in the worship at the pet service in Ickleton. Then the community service to celebrate the opening of the new school buildings in Duxford. And right at the end of the year, Hinxton's fabulous village wedding.

Sad moments

The sudden death of former Ickleton church warden, Patrick Bloomfield, shocked and saddened us all. At his very moving funeral, taken by Canon Jessica Martin, we saw the extraordinary courage and grace shown by family and friends.

We've also faced some practical challenges as our churches have been subject to thefts and some vandalism.

Progress

We've made some great progress on other practical things, though, notably in 2023 starting (and nearly finishing) Duxford's roof project phase 1. This was enabled by some amazing fundraising, including our first Christmas Tree Festival. We've also had Friends groups emerging in Ickleton and Duxford.

Joint celebrations like the Rogation walk and service, as well as joint PCC meetings are gathering our three churches closer in friendship and fellowship.

We couldn't do and be all this without the dedication of so many committed and gifted volunteers. I am hugely grateful for the people who keep the show on the road in caring for our church buildings and churchyards, managing other practicalities like our finances and contributing to worship in so many ways. And to those people who keep us outward facing in our work with Duxford school, with young people, children and families and with older neighbours in our villages. To you all: thank you!

Rev Lydia Smith
(Vicar)

Additional Reports

Safeguarding April 2023 to March 2024

The PCC is committed to compliance with the Church of England's policy – Promoting a Safer Church. We have an appointed safeguarding officer – Glynis Hammond. As part of her role Glynis ensures we continue to make progress against the parish safeguarding action plan. We have a fully trained PCC and the appropriate policies and guidelines in place to enable us to recognise and respond to any concerns raised whilst always ensuring confidentiality for all involved.

Glynis Hammond
(Safeguarding Officer)

Deanery Synod

Rev Michael Wilcockson associate priest at Linton, continues in his role as Deanery Chair with Andrew Gore, also from Linton as lay chair.

Over the four meetings of year representatives from the 24 parishes in Granta Deanery received reports from Ely Diocesan synod and also General synod. Following the departure of Bishop Stephen they are in the process of appointing a new Bishop. They are streamlining 'back office' functions and moving into new offices on the outskirts of Ely.

Diocesan officers who have given us significant help include Geoffrey Hunter and the Buildings team as well as Holly Robinson who is helping us our grant applications. Richard has also had significant liaison with

the finance team through our logistical challenges.

A new deanery treasurer has been appointed and she explained that Ministry share for 2024 is expected to cover 94% of clergy costs for existing clergy and curates. Investment income normally covers the balance of direct clergy posts, 100% of the local support and office running costs but is not expected to contribute to the costs of education which is separately funded.

There has been a cross parish deanery consultation on the future of the parishes and a report has been published. Significant shared challenges include appointment of key officer including churchwardens and ageing populations, as well as the worry of maintaining ancient buildings.

Every deanery synod meeting is preceded by a talk. This year they included links with schools, opportunities for learning through an Ely online portal and a lent discussion on 'The Hardest Problem: God, Evil and Suffering'.

I lead a cross parish youth project which endeavours to support parishes in their ministry to families and children and young people as they face the challenge of growing up.

Jenny Duke
(Deanery Synod Representative)

Bell Ringing

We rang for the coronation last year.

During this year I met several groups of ringers, all of whom enjoyed our bells.

We were pleased that some of our ringing friends rang a quarter peal for our Golden Wedding anniversary on 13th April.

We have also allowed additional practices, firstly for Royston ringers until their bells were back in use, and more recently Duxford while their roof was being repaired.

David Lilley
(tower captain)

School Assemblies

During 2023 the Assemblies team (Jenny Duke, Mandy Jeffery, Jen Gatland and Lydia Smith) has gone from providing recorded assemblies to

leading in person collective worship. It was lovely to be in school again, after COVID and the school building project had prevented our being there.

In the academic year 2022-23 we covered many of the major Old Testament stories (Joseph, Moses, Esther, Ruth and more). For the academic year 2023-4 we have been focusing on the life of Jesus, using the *It's Jesus* resources from the Spinnaker Trust (a Christian schools' work organisation based in South-East London).

We also organised an Easter prayer spaces day for the upper school, which was held in St John's Church at the end of Spring term 2023 and welcomed children into St Peter's church for Easter, end of year and Christmas services.

Rev Lydia Smith

Fellowship Groups

Thursday Prayer Bible study and Fellowship group.

This group has been meeting weekly with regular members from all three churches. It started in lockdown when the meeting was held on zoom. Now members meet both in person, and for those who are unable to come in person, also on zoom. Normally there are a total of between 6 and 12 people meeting of whom, 1 to 4 joining on zoom. There is a pool of about 20 people who come from time to time. Activities consist of studying parts of the Bible, either as books, or as themes. There is discussion of issues that affect us all arising from these studies and prayer for personal need, the wider church and issues that currently concern members of the group. Studies are led in turn by each member of the group.

Prayer for our world in conflict on Fridays at Midday

These started with the Russian invasion of Ukraine in February 2022 and have continued ever since. When the Palestinians attacked Israel on October 7th and Israel responded, we widened the focus to prayer for other conflicts, of which there are many throughout the world. Normally each of the churches is represented with, on average, 4 to 6 people attending.

The Bible Course

At the end of last year and the beginning of this year, this 8 week course

was run in homes in Hinxton attended by women from Hinkledux churches. As second course has been run on Friday mornings in Duxford community centre. This started as the Hinkledux Lent course, finishing on the last Friday in April. It has generated both interest and enthusiasm. 14 attended the last course, both men and women. They were so enthusiastic that they have set up a WhatsApp group to keep in touch and are keen to meet again in a month as a follow up. There is a suggestion that another course is run later in the year, maybe based at Ickleton.

Derek Munday
(Lay Reader)

YouthInc

See Attached Spring Newsletter

Foundation Governors

It has been another busy year at the school with another year of changes. The most exciting was the completion of the building work of the key stage 1 area. Aside from a few teething issues expected from a new build, the new section of the building is such a beautiful and welcome addition to the development of the school. A new small hall, three purpose built classrooms and small room allocated for the nurture program and spacious corridors are now inhabited by the youngest pupils and the afterschool DX club. The beginning of a new academic year is always a special time but this year was extra special with an open day and to celebrate the opening of the new building. The day began with a short service and blessing of the new rooms. Previous members of staff and pupils returning to see the facilities created a vibrant and uplifting occasion which was a very positive start to the year.

As always in the teaching profession, there have been staffing changes but Duxford school is not unique in this. The most notable staff change is in the leadership of the school; Suzanne Blackburne-Maze and Sarah Medley have taken on a co-headship role. They complement each other extremely well, the change was barely noticed in most part because of

Suzanne and Sarah's professionalism, communication and shared vision for the school. It is obvious that both only have the best interests of the pupils in mind and work together to accomplish this.

Another change is the structure of the classes throughout all year groups. Due to a national falling birth rate the intake in reception was significantly different to the leavers of year 6. Funding to schools is given per pupil so this has had obvious ramifications. Each of the classes now has a combination of 2 academic year groups which gather in alternative groups for literacy and numeracy. This is common practice in many primary schools and the staff have done an amazing job at making sure the curriculum is mapped out from reception to year 6 to ensure a seamless transition. The pupils at Duxford primary school have adapted extremely well and continue to thrive in all they do.

With the hall accessible again, daily whole school Collective Worship has returned with a combination of teacher, church assembly team (Rev Lydia Smith, Jenny Duke, Jen Gatland and Mandy Jeffery) and pupil led sessions. Whilst there is a termly theme the overriding message is to maintain the Christian values of the school, the foundation being the bible verse 'Therefore encourage one another and build up each other' 1 Thessalonians 5:11. Foundation governor monitoring of Collective Worship recommenced last term with observation of each of the four different kinds of assembly. The Christian ethos was clearly evident in terms of theological content, ethical application, liturgical participation, and general attentiveness. This was pleasing to see and underlies the fact that the school's interpretation of 'Christian ethos' extends beyond behavioural practices. The children continue to be supportive of each other as is obvious when the whole school visited St Peter's church, Duxford for the Christingle and Easter services; the older children pair up with the younger ones taking care of them as they cross the road and chatting as they walk. It has been noticeable that the children are very comfortable coming to church now and conversations with staff and parents confirm that the children look forward to being in church. The regular visits made since lockdown have been a very positive change in the relationship with the church and school and Lydia collaborates closely

with Suzanne and Sarah to ensure our church community supports the school as much as they need us to.

It is without doubt that the wellbeing of the children and staff is paramount in all the school does. All children are included in this, however, the most vulnerable pupils are particularly nurtured, and the staff work tirelessly to ensure they have as much support as is available, which is a real challenge when limited services are becoming harder to access. The staff continue to have a supportive relationship with each other, and they are encouraged to look out for one another, and the leadership team have established an ethos of approachability. This is another example of how appropriate 1 Thessalonians 5:11 is at all levels of Duxford school. The wellbeing and safeguarding of the whole school is a standing item on every Governor meeting agenda and is a point of interest on the monitoring visits in school.

In addition to the academic curriculum the school has a wide range of clubs and activities to enrich the learning of the children, including theatre kids, art group, gardening/eco club, gymnastics, running, multisports, music lessons and a new choir starts this term. Year 5 have recently been on a residential to Burwell House and Year 6 will go away after they have completed SATs. Throughout the year many pupils have represented the school admirably at sports events and other inter-school challenges; the year 6 pupils won their heat for the Cambridgeshire English Challenge and will take part in the grand final later in the year. The older pupils sang, danced and entertained in a production of Jonah – A Fishy Tail whilst the younger pupils shone during their Nativity production in December. Each house, Hurricanes, Lancasters, Spitfires and Concordes, take turns in fundraising for their chosen local charity; there has been a Rudolf run for the Arthur Rank Hospice, a sponsored read to support the school's development of reading and a cake sale for HomeStart. The children are really enthusiastic about supporting the wider community, it is a true testament to the school that the AIMS (attentive, imaginative, motivated and spiritual) values are rooted in the children's chosen activities. The weekly newsletter, Airwaves, showcases all of the amazing things that happen in school and as usual there are just too many to mention in this

report! However, if you are interested to find out more the newsletter is available on the school website, www.duxford.cambs.sch.uk.

Being part of a school community is incredibly rewarding and important in preparing our children to be upstanding members of society, however it is relentlessly challenging, exhausting and at times it can be emotionally draining. Our teachers, teaching assistants and support staff deserve a huge amount of credit for all that they do in ensuring the children are academically supported and challenged whilst maintaining their safeguarding and wellbeing. It goes without saying that the biggest thank you must go to Suzanne and Sarah for overseeing the running of the school in such a positive and professional manner in what still are difficult times in education.

Carolyn Meadows and Andrew Jackson
(Foundation Governors)

Fabric/Building

After a lull during covid we have begun a series of repairs.

The Quinquennial inspection of March 2022 highlighted the areas of need which are working our way through. This included repairing a leak in the roof on the southern side of the building. Also electricians have reviewed and repaired most of the electrical circuits (the heating ones on the north side of the chancel are beyond repair). We have also discovered a significant leak in the heating pipework which needs specialist plumbing attention. Current estimates are that a repair could cost up to £10,000.

Our biggest challenge remains the restoration and repair of the wall paintings. We are currently in the process of updating quotations but anticipate that we will need to raise £250,000. Alongside local fundraising, which we have made a significant start to, we will need major grants. The Heritage Lottery Fund have just reissued their grant programme criteria and we are working with the Diocese to explore the best way to approach them.

Thanks to Colin Hayes, Derek Rule for their daily vigilance, and to Ian

Lester to joining the maintenance team- your skills are much appreciated.

Jenny Duke

Wall Paintings

Steady progress has been made this year. Our preferred restorer/conservator (Liz Hirst) has visited and suggested we use 3 environmental monitors to better inform the conservation process. These will be installed this summer. She will be preparing a revised quotation. Our Church Architect (Stephanie Norris) will be producing a revised specification for the additional work. This should allow progress on the Heritage grant.

Since our church also hosts a bat population we need to ensure that all works take account of their behaviour so we also are continuing using precious engagement with Bat experts, they will be doing a follow up survey and advising is the best way to proceed.

Another key strand of our grant application will be demonstrating that we intend to reach out to all visitors, Following a demonstration of an app for mobile phones we will begin to offer an addition to our guide book and begin to consult widen our access to this who visit alone, especially those who identify as neuro- diverse.

A recent significant donation puts us in a good position to demonstrate to the Heritage Fund (and other potential grantors) that we are committed to the project and showing an appropriate level monetary support.

Lewis Duke