

**PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF
ST. MARY THE VIRGIN CHURCH, GREAT BRICKHILL**

**Annual Report and Accounts
for the year ended 31st. December, 2014**

**St. Mary The Virgin Church,
Lower Way
Great Brickhill
Bucks.
MK17 9AB**

Bankers:

**Barclays Bank PLC
Leighton Buzzard Branch
The Aylesbury Group
34 Market Square
Aylesbury
Bucks.
HP20 1TT**

Independent Examiner:

**Mr. D. Beatty
Roxburgh House
Pound Hill
Great Brickhill
Milton Keynes
MK17 9AS**

Church Architect:

**Mr. B. Deacon Dip Arch R.I.B.A.
Bruce Deacon Ltd
8 East End Lane
Wilden
Bedfordshire
MK44 2QN**

Report Of The Parochial Church Council (PCC) Year ended 31st. December, 2014

MEMBERS OF THE PCC

The following persons served as members of the PCC during 2014:-

The Reverend John Waller (Chairman)

Christine Agambar (Church Warden)

Valerie Beardmore-Baldwin (Church Warden) (Deanery Synod Rep. until 29/4/14)

Deanery Synod Representative:-

Jeremy Hopkinson (Elected 29/4/14) (Licensed Lay Minister; PCC Vice-Chairman)

Clare Amies (elected 29/4/14) (Deanery Synod Rep. until 29/4/14)

Simon Bennett

Phillipa Cook (Secretary)

David Duncombe

Angela Northen (elected 29/4/14)

Margretta Smith (elected 29/4/14)

Julia Turner

Joy Wilson

Neil Cook continued in the role of Treasurer, co-opted to the P.C.C., 5/6/14

N.B. The maximum number of lay representatives on the P.C.C. is 9, as per the prescribed formula for Electoral Rolls of 51 to 100.

OBJECTS AND CONSTITUTION OF THE PCC

The object of the P.C.C. of St. Mary the Virgin Church, Great Brickhill, is to further the work of the Church of England in the parish of Great Brickhill. The Council is constituted under the Parochial Church Councils (Powers) Measure 1956 and as amended by the 1969 Measure, and is required to co-operate with the minister in promoting in the parish the whole mission of the Church, pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical.

At the Annual Parochial Church Meeting in 2004 provision was made for the annual appointment of representatives on the P.C.C. All members of the church electoral roll are entitled to vote and stand for election. There is also provision for the co-option of members of the P.C.C., and the incumbent is ex-officio a member and the Chairman. The Wardens and Deanery Synod Representatives are also ex-officio members of the P.C.C.

ELECTORAL ROLL AND CHURCH ATTENDANCE

Membership of the electoral roll is open to any lay person who is baptised, over sixteen years of age and has signed a declaration that he or she is a member of the Church of England and is either (a). resident in the parish, or (b). has habitually attended worship in the parish during a period of six months prior to enrolment.

At the start of the year there were 51 people on the Electoral Roll. No-one joined the Electoral Roll during the year; there were no deaths and one moved away. Hence the number of Electors at the end of the year decreased to 50, twelve of whom are not resident within the parish.

The “usual Sunday attendance for Normal Services” during the year to 31/12/14 was 25 (in 2013 the attendance was 25). There were several special services held throughout the year which attract a larger congregation than for a normal Sunday, e.g. Songs of Praise, Family Service with Baptism – these figures are not included in the calculation for the “usual Sunday attendance for Normal Services”.

REVIEW OF THE YEAR

The Reverend John Waller continues as Rector and takes the majority of the Services throughout the Benefice. Every other month visiting clergy take the Prayer Book Holy Communion service on the first Sunday.

Following an extensive period of consultation a new Sunday service pattern came into effect in March. The Rector now takes two Sunday services a week across the Benefice - a Holy Communion Service at 9am and a Family Service at 11am.

There is a two hour gap between the earlier and the later morning services and all the morning services are at either 9am or 11am. The third Sunday of the month in Great Brickhill is used as an opportunity to hold a variety of different services. The new pattern of services continued for the rest of this year. A review took place in the form of a survey at the end of the year with possible further changes taking place in March.

There were two Lent courses held in the village – the evening sessions studying “The Bible Course” were particularly successful and the group continued to meet on a monthly basis. Monthly Prayer for Healing meetings are held at The Rectory.

Various fund-raising activities were held throughout the year, including the Plant Fayre, Bike Ride and Christmas Fair.

Deanery Synod:

The Deanery Synod met on four occasions through the year. There were presentations on two charities, the Outlook Trust and Novi Most, and the Street Pastors in Leighton Buzzard. Members of the synod again joined with three other synods in having a “stall” at the Bucks County Show. We have incumbents in Wing and Ivinghoe (Revs. Helen Barnes and Adrian Manning) but there is a vacancy for the Mursley benefice.

From April Jeremy Hopkinson is the Deanery Synod representative for Great Brickhill.

Music and Choir:

The organ continues to be played by various organists on a weekly basis. Christopher Grey from Midland Organ Hele & Company has the contract to maintain the organ.

Jerry Breslin holds weekly Benefice Choir practices on a Monday evening at Great Brickhill and the choir goes from strength to strength. In December they recorded a very successful CD, music by Tallis, Mozart, Handel, Bach et al.

Bell ringing practice takes place on a Wednesday evening and the bells are rung before most services. David Middleton continues in the role of Tower Captain and organizes a team of ringers for weddings and funerals as required.

High Ash School:

High Ash is a Church of England school and the Christian ethos is central. There are three Foundation Governors at the school, appointed by the Oxford Diocese:- Reverend John Waller, Mrs Juliet Bennett and appointed during the year, Mrs Claire Pincott.

The School gather four times throughout the year for worship in the church. The PCC were pleased to give financial help with their annual curriculum week. All the children worked with PopUK, a vibrant singing and recording project which involved every child in the school working towards recording a CD. The climax of the week was a concert performed in front of a full church on an evening in June.

Midweek Groups and Charitable Giving:

Weekly groups continue such as the Monday Drop-In and Thursday Group.

Support continues for the "Link for Hope" Shoe Box appeal and the annual Macmillan Coffee Morning, which raised £1,172.

The charities supported by our Outside Giving are:- National Churches Trust and Bucks. Historic Churches Trust. This year's Christian Aid House-to-House Collection in Great Brickhill raised a total of £800. The sum of £426 was sent to the Poppy Appeal from the Remembrance Sunday collection in Church. The Christmas Card Tree and collection at the Charity Evensong in December raised £660 for The DEC Ebola Crisis Appeal. The sponsored Bike Ride raised £69.

The total of disbursements to charitable causes during the year was in excess of £3,725. This represents approximately 10.1% of the Income Received (excluding Assignables) for the year.

Church Rota and Communications:

Information is increasingly sent out by e-mail and the website is updated to provide all the up to date information regarding services and activities. A weekly Pew Sheet is produced for all services and the schedule of Services and other items of news are sent each month for inclusion in the Parish Newsletter. There are over 80 people who take a turn on the various rotas and a coffee morning is held at the beginning of the year to say thank you to them all.

Children and Youth:

The Family Services are very well attended. The Lady Chapel is used very successfully to hold activities for the children during the service.

Marco Loxley, the Youth Leader, continues to organise the Youth Café on Friday evenings. Around 40 children regularly attend these sessions, which were held at High Ash but transferred to the Parish Hall at the end of the year.

REVIEW OF THE ACCOUNTS

The format of the Accounts has been changed to a Receipts and Payments basis to fall in line with most other churches and to avoid the onerous regulations that apply to accruals accounts.

The Church had a deficit of £432 for the year giving a balance in Unrestricted Funds of £9,128. The figure for Covenants and Gift Aid Donations is significantly down compared to last year. The total Expenditure for the year was in line with the figure for 2013. The amount of Outside Giving was £500, the same as for 2013.

Payment of the Parish Share:

This year the P.C.C. paid its Parish Share of £21,724 in full - this has been the same amount for the last two years. The Parish Share for 2015 will be £22,267.

Restricted Items:

As well as general income the P.C.C. has received donations which are restricted as to their use, the money having been given for specific purposes. Under the Charities Act accounting regulations, the restricted funds have to be identified separately in the main accounts. The P.C.C. is able to confirm that it holds sufficient and appropriate assets to meet the conditions of expenditure of all restricted funds. Details of the balances of funds and the assets which are held to represent those funds are contained in the Balance Sheet.

The total for Restricted Funds at the end of the year was £82,597. The Restricted Fund for a project to support the bells came to the end of its term – in accordance with the terms laid down when the Project was set up, the funds remaining at the end of the Project (£156) have been allocated to the related fund for the renovation of the church organ. The Restricted Fund for the Youth Café also came to an end during the year – there was a nil balance when the fund came to an end.

PROJECT ST. MARY 2000

The position with regard to the project to provide additional facilities for our church:-

The Diocesan Advisory Committee (DAC) were asked to give an objective comparative evaluation of the two existing and contrasting plans:

- Option A, the new plans for a small extension with some of the facilities within the existing church building
- Option B, the old plans that included a meeting room and all facilities in an extension.

They considered this request at their July meeting – below is an extract from their minutes:_"Concerning the options submitted to the committee, the DAC agreed that it could not recommend the large parish hall outlined in option B. This is because it was considered that the scale was inappropriate for the site, and made poor use of the existing church envelope given that it could house some of the desired functions more than adequately.

It was agreed that the committee would continue to recommend the small WC extension proposed in option A, and seen by the delegation that visited in 2013."

Also, given the differences between the original and new plans, the PCC took the advice of the Oxford Diocesan Registrar and the Charity Commission regarding donations given for the new Facilities section of St Mary 2000 under the older Option B scheme. Donors were contacted about the latest plans and offered their money back if they felt unable to continue to support the new scheme. Money was returned to those who did not feel able to give their support to the amended plan.

As a result of the responses from these bodies the PCC is now in a position to progress plans for the additional facilities. A Bulletin was distributed in October and it is the intention to provide regular information bulletins, as and when there is something to report.