



**Warbleton**  
Parish  
Church

**Trustees' Annual Report**  
of  
**THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF  
ST MARY THE VIRGIN PARISH CHURCH,  
WARBLETON TN21 9BD**

**For the year ended 31 December 2019**

**Warbleton Parish Church, Church Hill, Warbleton, East Sussex, TN21 9BD.**

***Incumbent:* The Reverend Marc A. Lloyd, The Rectory, Rookery Lane,  
Rushlake Green, Heathfield, TN21 9QJ.**

***Independent Examiner:* Mr. Jonathan Gray, Glydes Farm,  
Ashburnham, TN33 9PB.**

## ***Our aims and purposes as a charity***

Warbleton Parochial Church Council (PCC) has the responsibility of cooperating with the incumbent, the Revd. Marc Lloyd, in promoting in the ecclesiastical parish, the whole mission of the Church, pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical, according to the doctrines and practices of the Church of England, and the provision of financial support to other organisations with similar objectives. The PCC is specifically responsible for the maintenance of the Church, Church Rooms and Churchyard.

The PCC's objectives are seeking to make disciples (evangelism), Christian nurture and teaching. In particular we have tried to have a focus on younger people and families, but also to provide practical support and care for people of all ages and needs within the Parish.

## ***What we planned to do to achieve our charitable objectives***

The PCC has considered the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit and in particular the specific guidance on 'charities for the advancement of religion'. We try to enable our church family to live out their faith as part of the wider community.

The PCC has complied with the duty under section 5 of the Safeguarding and Clergy Discipline Measure 2016, fully recognising its duty to have due regard to the House of Bishops' guidance on safeguarding children and vulnerable adults.

For 2019 we discussed and planned the following objectives to fulfil our aims:

- Enabling as many people as possible to worship at our church
- Reaching out to and enabling as many people as possible to become part of our parish community
- Teaching, baptising and nurturing new and existing believers
- Maintaining an overview of worship
- Considering how services can involve the many groups that live within the parish
- Putting faith into practice through prayer and scripture, music and sacrament, offering worship and prayer and learning about the Gospel in small group situations
- Assisting people from all walks of life to develop their knowledge of, and trust in, Jesus
- Provision of pastoral care for people living in the parish
- Financial support to missionary organisations
- Maintaining the fabric of the church building as an historic centre and focus of life in the village

## ***What we achieved and how we affected beneficiaries' lives***

### ***Attendance at worship***

The Church family welcomes those from both within and outside the parish boundary and it is our great pleasure to welcome people from all walks of life to take part in the life of the church. Voluntary attendance to worship the Lord Jesus Christ is a major demonstration of public benefit of our activities. We are keen to offer a range of services over the course of the year that our community find both beneficial and spiritually fulfilling.

The average weekly attendance at services across the whole year remains fairly stable at 41 with the number increasing on special days and festivals. It has been a great encouragement to welcome new people to Warbleton church.

The figures in brackets are included as a comparison from the 2018 statistics:

Easter Sunday	144 (95)
Marquee service	86 (130)
Harvest Festival	49 (52)
Remembrance Sunday	58 (92)
Crib Service	205 (123)
Carol Service	205 (127)
Christmas Eve Holy Communion	78 (65)
Christmas Day	80 (70)

There is a growing music group involved in our Sunday morning services, helping to enhance the worship of Our Lord. A recent comment received was: "It's a lovely music group that makes church more inclusive". A robed choir leads the singing for weddings and funerals on request.

As well as our regular services, we enable our community to celebrate and thank God at the milestones of the journey through life. In marriage public vows are exchanged with God's blessing and through funeral services friends and families express their grief and give thanks for the life which is now complete in this world and commend the person into God's keeping. During 2019 we celebrated the marriage of three couples in church, four funerals were held and one burial of cremated remains.

### ***Reaching out to and enabling as many people as possible to become part of our parish community***

As well as being good neighbours and friends and being involved in our community we attempt to provide points of contact or "pre-evangelistic" engagement for those who are perhaps not yet Christians.

*Breakfasts.* Both Ladies' and Men's Breakfasts have been held at White Birch Farm during 2019, with varied Christian Speakers from different walks of life. There are constant complaints at their absence in the intervening periods. They remain a good way of introducing outsiders to the Christian faith and way of life.

*Chaps Who Lunch.* This group meets regularly for friendship, fellowship and enjoying pub food, often visiting places of interest including steam trains and museums.

*Coffee and Company.* This weekly coffee morning continues to be enjoyed by many local residents and makes financial contributions to charity.

*Warble Art.* This is a community art group continuing to thrive with between eight and ten regular members. The aim is to have somewhere to meet with others who are learning and developing skills. We offer support and help to each other and invite the occasional visiting artist to teach us and introduce new ideas. Jo Hudson, a local artist ran a watercolour workshop before Christmas which was a wonderful opportunity and much appreciated by us all. There is a real sense of friendship, support and companionship which we all find valuable and we are also able to make a weekly financial contribution to the Church.

*Warbleton Walkers.* A small group of dogs and their humans enjoy walking and company on a monthly basis from March to October. This informal group enables anyone to meet with us and enjoy our company as well as being a gentle introduction into parish life if required.

*Warble Singers.* This is a community choir that meets weekly, members were encouraged to join in with Mothering Sunday, Christingle, the Carol and Crib services and Carols on the Green. Friendships are continuing to develop and there is a strong sense of commitment.

*Christmas craft evening.* 40 adults and a baby gathered in Warbleton Church Rooms and enjoyed mulled wine, delicious puddings and crafts with the opportunity to try new and interesting things. We also enjoyed a talk by Ali Bourne from All Saints Lindfield.

*Easter Egg Hunt.* This was enjoyed by children from the church clubs and local community.

Adults and children enjoyed the annual church BBQ in the summer, an evangelistic dinner with a lovely Thai meal was enjoyed and a quiz was held in Punnetts Town.

We reached out to the community by donating food to the local Food Bank at Harvest, following the Harvest service and the Marquee service in Ruslake Green, by having a presence at the local flower show and filling shoeboxes for Samaritan's Purse 'Operation Christmas Child' Shoebox Appeal.

### ***Teaching, baptising and nurturing new and existing believers and putting faith into practice***

We are committed to seeking to live in the light of and share the good news of Jesus Christ in faithfulness to the Scriptures and in prayerful dependence on the Holy Spirit. We want to know, love and follow Jesus. We believe we are called to care for, support and encourage one another as we grow in our discipleship.

We believe we are called to study in order to grow in our Christian faith and encourage involvement in appropriate study and discussion groups. Several house groups meet around the parish providing opportunities for discussion, teaching, prayer and fellowship including The Good Book Club, Ladies Home group, All Sorts Bible Club and the Topics group. Other occasions for learning together included a Lent

---

Course on the diocesan year of Vocation, which was led by the Revd. Marc Lloyd. A 'Churches Away Day' morning was held in October, our Speaker for the morning was The Revd. Rory Graham on the subject of following Jesus. Those attending took the opportunity to share communion and a picnic lunch together afterwards.

We look to the deepening of faith for all ages and alongside our services there is a programme for young people from birth to teenagers.

*The Youth Club* (TCWNN) is a supportive fellowship for a small but regular number of young people. They have become a sound group who offer support to each other. They have been involved in wrapping shoeboxes, decorating the church rooms for Christmas, supporting Sunday Club activities and readily contribute to the Bible study time.

*Sunday Club* had an average of five children attending during the last year and have continued to use the churchyard for games whenever possible. We began the year thinking about the Trinity, followed by a series called 'Dead or Alive, Jesus is King' in the weeks leading up to Easter. During the summer we looked at John's Gospel and the seven signs which prove Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God. In the autumn term, we decided to split the young people into two groups for the Bible teaching part of the session (Elijah followed by Elisha for September and October). On the Sundays up to Christmas, the older group looked at the Christmas prophecies in Isaiah and the younger group discovered the king of Christmas from Matthew's Gospel. We all enjoyed a great Christmas Party on 22<sup>nd</sup> December! It has been lovely to have such a great team helping with Sunday Club again this year as we join together to learn more about the Lord Jesus Christ from the Bible. It has also been good to share news of what's happened in the week and pray about any concerns and events we are looking forward to.

*Little Warblers Toddlers Group* had an average weekly attendance of 16 adults and 18 children. We have been able to welcome many new adults and children to the group. There is a mixture of adults – dads, mums, grandparents and child-carers. We continue to teach Bible Stories and songs at the end of each session. During the summer the mums arranged get togethers between themselves.

*All Sorts Bible Club* (ABC)'s Bible Study Group is aimed at reaching toddler-group mums and others, continues to run roughly once a fortnight. It has been exciting to see people engaging with the gospel. Feedback from one mum was: "Just wanted to let you know how fondly I think of your group... such a supportive, welcoming environment which is so needed when you are a new mum, I will always be grateful for the warm welcome I was consistently given."

*Warblers* after school Bible club ran till the end of June 2019 at Punnetts Town Community Primary School with an average of 12 children each week. We explored the Christian faith through Bible teaching, games and crafts. In term three, we looked at the Trinity and what the Bible says, using Bruce Ware's book 'Big Truths for Young Hearts' as a guide. As a lead up to Easter in term four, we explored Jesus' death and resurrection from the last chapters of Matthew's Gospel. After Easter, we had a mixture of teaching across the three children's groups, including The Lord's Prayer, the parables in Luke 15 and the seven signs in John's Gospel which prove that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God. At the end of June after 14 years, we had the last club session in school. This was followed by the older group enjoying an evening at White Birch Farm in July and being presented with their Bibles. For various reasons, it was decided to end the club in school and the way forward for outreach to families is currently being discussed by the PCC and those involved in young people's work at Warbleton church. A very big thank you to all those who helped at Warblers over all those many years!

### ***Maintaining an overview of worship***

We are committed to enabling as many people as possible to worship at our church and to become part of our parish community at Warbleton. We maintain an overview of worship throughout the parish and make suggestions on how our services can involve the many groups that live within our parish. Our services and worship put faith into practice through prayer and scripture, music and sacrament.

Monthly meetings to pray for the church and parishioners are held in the Rectory. Morning Prayer is held weekly on Mondays at Osborne House in Rushlake Green.

---

## ***Considering how services involve the many groups that live within the parish***

In addition to our regular services, events and activities, and our commitment to all who live in the parish, we continue to have a focus on ministry to children, young people and families through: monthly family service, Children's Sunday Club, the role of Foundation Governors at Dallington Church of England Primary School / Woodlands Federation, Little Warblers Toddler Group, All Sorts Bible Club Study Group, The Club With No Name Youth Club, Holiday Club and Summer Camp.

There are annual joint Benefice services held for Ash Wednesday, Maundy Thursday, Women's world day of prayer and the joint Benefice Marquee Service in July shared with the Heathfield Chapel congregation.

The monthly Parish magazine covers the activities of the three churches in the Benefice as well as serving the wider community by keeping our parishioners informed of upcoming services and events in the benefice. Most of our services, events and activities are also listed on our website: warbletonchurch.org.uk which also contains our monthly Benefice Magazine and weekly notice sheet.

The Sanctuary Guild provides a never-ending supply of beautiful flower arrangements as well as polishing the brass and keeping the communion table linen washed.

The Bell Ringers ring out every Sunday morning. The bells have been working well since they were rehung in 2014. A simulator has been purchased for teaching purposes, this enable the bells to be muffled therefore rung silently to reduce the disturbance to neighbours. We are grateful to Jill Sales for her teaching and our band of eight regular ringers plus David Bysouth, a learner well in to his 90s.

## ***Ecumenical Relationships***

The church is a member of Churches Together in Heathfield and The Sussex Gospel partnership. We joined together with the Heathfield Chapel for our annual Marquee service and afterwards we met and shared food and fellowship at our 'bring and share' lunch.

## ***Pastoral care***

Some members of our parish are unable to attend church due to sickness or age. Reverend Marc Lloyd has visited all church members who have requested it, to celebrate communion with them either at their homes or in hospital. Other members of the church also visit those who are house-bound or in hospital. One of our members dedicates themselves to the work for the Street Pastors in Heathfield.

## ***Financial support to missionary organisations***

Helping those in need is a demonstration of our faith and we continue to give approximately 10% of our normal income to mission outside the parish. There is a monthly focus for prayer and information on mission partners and agencies included in the Parish magazine. In 2019 we have supported the following missions:

Christian Solidarity Worldwide

Brickworks John & Poppy Spens (Uganda)

Latin American Mission Ken & Sue Vissers Overseas Mission Fellowship – the Pains

Scripture Union

Speak Life

Universities and Colleges Christian Fellowship: The Christian Union Movement

Church Pastoral Aid Society Danehill Venture Summer Camp

Bible Society

Ben Williamson (Crosslinks in S. Africa)

St. Matthew's School, Rwanda

Brighton and Hove City Mission

## ***Church Rooms***

During the week the church rooms are used for various meetings and clubs. The new heaters are now programmed and working effectively for the enjoyment of all who use the church rooms.

## ***Financial Review***

Donations and Legacies (unrestricted funds) received were £65,346 and are detailed in the Financial Report. It should be noted that Gift Aid tax recovery (£22,360) relates to income received from 2016-Sep 2019.

Our voluntary income from services (cash and envelopes), excluding tax recovered, increased by 20%. There were no legacies received in 2019.

The planned giving through standing orders increased by less than 1% from 2018. The Parish Giving Scheme was introduced late in 2019, and it is hoped that this will prove fruitful in 2020.

The PCC was grateful for various smaller donations, in particular the response to our annual Gift Day.

The PCC were pleased to support charitable and missionary organisations, to the sum of £4,653 during 2019.

Total unrestricted income was £85,172, with unrestricted expenditure of £81,888. Closing balance of all funds total £144,776.

## ***Sharing the Ministry Costs of the Diocese of Chichester***

The largest expenditure of the PCC was the sum of £40,808 paid to the diocese for our share of all churches' Parish Ministry Costs. This year the contribution increased by 5.15% on the previous year and the church is once again pleased to be meeting 100% of the costs allocated to this church.

The total relates directly to the housing, support, stipend and pension costs of the clergy of this parish, training of new ordinands, a contribution to national church funds and, shared costs of the Christian family throughout the whole diocese, including assistance towards the upkeep of churches less able to manage than ourselves.

## ***Maintaining the fabric of the church building***

We provide a building for people to enjoy enabling an appreciation of the church building in the history and archaeology of the area. Our church continues to be appreciated by our parishioners and many others, as a space where life events are celebrated with joy and thanksgiving. It is open daily to our community for private prayer, the entries in the visitors' book include: "Thank you for having this charming church open" and "Nice to see an active church".

During the last year we have undertaken a few maintenance jobs as recommended in the 2018 inspection including renewing the Smart water to the lead on the roof and a small wall maintenance job adjacent to the lych gate. We are progressing plans to remove three dangerous trees from the churchyard. All these works ensure the church is maintained to enable future generations to worship here and to enjoy it.

The next Quinquennial Inspection is due in 2023. There are some tasks that need completing before then, with regards to the previous Quinquennial Inspection.

The condition of the tower continues to be a cause for concern and a detailed report on its condition will be prepared by the architect. It is anticipated that, although routine repairs have been carried out regularly, there will be a need for further repairs.

The central heating has served us well but will need updating in the near future.

## ***Why we hold some money in reserve***

It is PCC policy to maintain a balance on the general unrestricted funds (excluding property) which equates to approximately three months' worth of unrestricted payments as contingency against unforeseen situations.

It is PCC policy to invest surplus general funds with the M&G Equities Investment Fund for Charities (Charifund), with quarterly dividend payments to our current account, as they are needed to pay day-to-day bills.

As well as holding the above general reserves, from time to time the PCC receives restricted legacies for expenditure on restricted purposes, defined by the donor. We aim to expend such money as soon as possible after receiving the legacy, depending on the specific objectives of the donor.

### ***Risk Management***

The PCC consider that the principal risks and uncertainties are:

- The need to fund unexpected costs associated with the church's listed building and surrounding churchyard.
- An unexpected fall in income, particularly given the dependence of the church on a limited number of major regular donors.
- How to provide facilities for the growth in children's and youth activities associated with the church.
- The requirement to find volunteers with the appropriate skills, time and commitment to support the ministry of the congregation.
- There is an above average interaction with older vulnerable people, and work continues with the community to attract people to our church, through community events and bible study opportunities.

The PCC seeks to manage these risks and uncertainties by regularly reviewing its Mission Action Plan and its plans for the use of the church building and church rooms.

The church maintains its properties to a high standard and carries out the priority items of a quinquennial review in a timely manner.

There is a continuing programme which emphasises God's generosity to the congregation and the need for the congregation to respond to that generosity in their own giving through time, talents and money.

Due to the above average exposure to vulnerable people, St Mary's follows diocesan guidance on these matters, the PCC receives and discusses regular reports and utilises the specialist skills and knowledge of people within the congregation.

### ***Structure, governance and management of the charity***

The Parochial Church Council (PCC) is registered with the Charity Commission as required by the Charities Act 2011. The governing document is the Parochial Church Councils (Powers) Measure 1956. Membership of the PCC is determined under the Church Representation Rules and consists of certain ex-officio members (the incumbent, the churchwardens and members of the Deanery Synod) and up to nine members of the church who are elected at the Annual Parochial Church Meeting (APCM).

Three members of the PCC sat on the deanery synod providing the PCC with an important link between the parish and the wider structure of the church.

All those who attend our services are encouraged to register on the Electoral Roll and consider standing for election to the PCC and we try to ensure a balance of skills and experience where possible. The PCC members are responsible for making decisions on all matters of general concern and importance to the parish including deciding on how the funds of the PCC are to be spent.

During the year the following served as members of the Parochial Church Council:

#### *Ex Officio members:*

Incumbent: The Revd. Marc Lloyd - Chairman

Reader: Sir Jeremy Cooke

Churchwardens: David Cleverley – Vice Chairman and Representative on Deanery Synod

Judith Hemsley

Vivian Bower – Representative on Deanery Synod

#### *Elected Members:*

Jane Atherden

Jennifer Gill

Gail Welford

Meryl Clark - Treasurer

Sue Holden

This Trustee's Annual Report was approved by the PCC and signed on their behalf by the Revd. Marc Lloyd,  
PCC Chairman

----- Date-----