

CHURCHWARDENS' REPORT PARISH AGM 2019

1. Quinquennial Inspection. A quinquennial inspection of the church structure was carried out by the diocesan architects in May last year and in their subsequent report it was stated that "St Laurence's Church is in good condition, and clearly well loved, maintained and looked after". The main concern was that some areas of the church are damp and that the gutters were regularly cleaned and any leaks repaired as and when they arise. The report gave a list of points for action and those listed as urgent have all been addressed A E Griffin and Son Builders. They were:

- a. Removal of vegetation from roof and repair of slates.
- b. Removal of moss from roofs.
- c. Unblocking of hopper in downpipe on south face of tower.

There is also a prioritised list of repair work to be carried out over the year and within the quinquennial period. This is being addressed with our builders and on a self-help basis where feasible.

2. Leaks in the chancel roof. During the winter there have been leaks in the chancel roof, one over the eastern end of the north aisle and the other where the chancel roof meets the wall of the tower above the centre rearmost row of pews. Both leaks have been addressed by the builders and their repairs seem to have been effective.

3. Electrical Inspection. A full electrical inspection of the church was carried out in October last year. There were several recommendations for action which have all been rectified by our electrician.

4. Safety Inspection of Heaters. A full safety inspection of the church heaters was carried out in October last year and a safety certificate issued.

5. Gift of a Communion Chalice. The PCC is very grateful to the Parish Council of Affpuddle and Turnerspudde for the generous gift of a new communion chalice. The donation of a second chalice gives greater flexibility when there is a larger congregation as the only other reserve chalice is extremely valuable, kept in the safekeeping of the County Museum and is not therefore immediately available for use without prior notice.

6. Inventory Check. A complete check has been made of the church inventory and all items have been identified. Nine of the most valuable items of silver are held for us by the Dorset County Museum.

7. Churchyard.

a. Construction of a Toilet. Progress over the course of the year has been slow. It was decided that a toilet adjoining the church building would be unacceptable as it would involve removing a window that was restored at very considerable expense some 30 years ago. It was decided therefore after some deliberation that a composting toilet of wooden construction would be planned in the area next to the existing potting shed close to the boundary of the churchyard to the south east of the church porch. This is the site that was proposed by the conservation officer for Purbeck District. An initial plan drafted by John Stark and Crickmay Partnership was considered unacceptable as it did not meet the PCC's requirement for a simple wooden structure. Plans are now being drawn up by Philip Hughes Architects, who are also approved by the Diocese, for a wooden structure in keeping with its setting in the churchyard and we await these plans. We will then move towards gaining a faculty from the Diocese and planning permission from Dorset County Council.

b. Hire of a Portaloo. Pending the construction of a permanent church toilet the PCC have decided that there must be a temporary toilet (portaloo) available in the churchyard for use at major church services and events such as the flower festival, weddings and funerals. Having experimented with a long term hire agreement in the second half of last year we have now decided only hire in a portaloo as and when deemed necessary. When deployed, the portaloo is positioned behind the gas tank near the small gate at the eastern end of the Peace Garden. This has led to objections from some local residents. The local authority supports our right to position a temporary toilet as and when we deem it necessary. We very much regret this state of affairs and do not wish it to continue any longer than necessary. This all adds greater urgency in the need to get on with the construction of a permanent toilet.

c. Churchyard Gates. New churchyard gates were installed in May last year. The gates are a gift of the Kidston family to whom we are extremely grateful. The gates are of high quality, well seasoned English Oak, are weathering very well indeed and are a great enhancement to the church and its surroundings.

d. Churchyard Paths.

(1) Path in the main Churchyard. We are very grateful to Mr Moriarty and a team of supporters for their excellent work in restoring the pathway in the main churchyard between the gate and the porch.

(2) Pathways in the Peace Garden. The pathways in the peace garden are a growing cause for concern. The paths are becoming increasingly uneven due to subsidence into the underlying ground. Warning notices were put in position last summer and we have taken the advice of Richard Griffin regarding possible repairs. The essential problem is that the foundations to the existing paving are inadequate for the task. Any repairs will need the complete reconstruction of the pathways involving properly engineered foundations. This applies whether the paths are paved or laid with gravel. The stairs by the gas tank also require re-levelling. Richard Griffin has advised that any temporary repairs to a particular section of the path will inevitably lead to a ripple effect along the path and be of very limited effectiveness. There is a number of options available which range from complete reconstruction, which will be prohibitively expensive, to laying part of the pathway to gravel, lifting the remaining paving and sowing the former pathway with grass. None of these options is cheap.

e. Mowing. We continue to be very grateful to the large team of parishioners who give up their time and energy over the year to mow the churchyard. I am particularly grateful to Mr Parker for his tireless work in keeping an eye on the maintenance of the mowers.

d. Installation of Commonwealth War Graves Commission (CWGC) Sign. As part of a national project a Commonwealth War Graves Commission sign indicating the presence of war graves in the churchyard was placed at the entrance to the churchyard at the end of last year to mark the 100th anniversary of the end of the First World War. The upkeep of the sign will be the permanent responsibility of the Commission.

f. Spring Churchyard Tidy-Up. This will take place on Saturday 27th April (with Saturday 4 May as a fall-back date).

8. Safeguarding. Effective safeguarding is a high priority for the PCC and we are very grateful to Penny Haigh for her work as safeguarding officer to maintain oversight of this issue within the

Parish and to keep the PCC up to date on developments in legislation as necessary. All members of the PCC have now attended the Church of England's Safeguarding foundation training course. The safeguarding policy is updated annually and will be signed at the end of this meeting.

a. Post Cases Review. Under the direction of the Diocese of Salisbury there has been a requirement for all Parish Churchwardens and Parish Safeguarding Officers within the Diocese to carry out a Past Cases Review into any incidences of misconduct by clergy and church officers towards children and adults at risk. This check has gone back as far as 1950 and has involved checking PCC records and also consultation with individuals that have lived in the Parish for many years. No such incidents of misconduct have been discovered.

9. Health and Safety. Reviewed and updated in February 2019. The Policy Statement will be signed at this meeting.

10. Retirement of Canon Charles Masheder. A special Benefice service was held in the church on Sunday 27th January to mark the retirement of Charles Masheder as Priest in Charge at this Benefice and in particular this Parish. To mark his retirement Charles and his wife were presented with an original watercolour of the church painted by local artist Paul Matthews. It was a day of sadness marking the departure of Charles and his wife to begin a new life but it was also a day of celebration and thanksgiving for the wonderful work that Charles carried out in the Parish during his incumbency. Charles was a man of outstanding gifts as a priest and his ministry was marked by genuine warmth and sincerity in everything that he did. We all miss him and his wife very much indeed.

11. New Benefice of West Purbeck. Following a period of consultation the Parishes of Affpuddle with Turnerspuddle and Bere Regis have been incorporated with the Parish of Wool into the new Benefice of West Purbeck with the Reverend Carol Langford as incumbent of the Benefice assisted by Jenny Alidina and Judy Hunt as Associate Priests and also in due course a new Associate Priest who will be resident in the Vicarage at Bere Regis. The post has just been advertised in the Church Times and a new profile covering both this Parish and Bere Regis has been circulated with it. It is hoped that the new Associate Priest will be in post before the end of the year and hopefully before the end of September. A service to celebrate the creation of the new Benefice was held in the Church of the Holyrood at Wool on Wednesday 13th March with the Right Reverend Karen Gorham, Bishop of Sherborne, in attendance.

12. Organist.

a. Ivor Mullins, who has been the organist at St Laurence's Affpuddle since 1954 has informed us that he wishes to retire as organist with immediate effect. Ivor had a bad fall in early November and is now living in a care home in Wimborne. We are planning an event and a presentation to be held at his care home as soon as possible to thank Ivor for his long and loyal service to our church.

b. Richard Hall has agreed to become the organist at St Laurence's Affpuddle with immediate effect. Richard's services as organist are in much demand and we will need to be flexible in order to allow him to meet his many other commitments. In principle Richard will play at the 10am services on the second and fourth Sundays of the month. Carol Langford has told us that Paul Martin, the organist at Bere Regis can play for us at our 10am services on the first Sunday of the month and hopefully also when there is a fifth Sunday Benefice service.

13. Events/Fund Raising in the year to date.

- a. Organ Recital. An organ recital by Charles Harrison, Organist and Master of the Choristers at Chichester Cathedral, was held in the church on Saturday 14th April. The recital was well attended and raised over £755 which went towards the project to construct a church lavatory.
- b. Church Fete The Church Fete was held once at Cruck Cottage Briantspuddle on Saturday 11th August thanks to the generosity of Chips Badcock. The fete was well attended and despite poor weather for the second half of the afternoon raised £1229.45. Our thanks go out as ever to the army of helpers who set up and ran the stalls, served the teas and in particular to Geoff Sagar for once again loaning and putting up two large tents from his tent hire business free of charge.
- c. Ride and Stride. Sandy Moriarty took part in the annual ride and stride in support of the Dorset Historic Churches Trust which took place on Saturday 8th September and raised £275 which was greatly appreciated by us all.
- d. Harvest Lunch. The annual Harvest Lunch was held in the village Hall at Briantspuddle on Sunday 14th October and raised over £300. We are once again very grateful to all those who helped to set up the hall, prepare and serve the food and not least to wash up afterwards.
- e. Gift Day. The Annual Gift Day was held on Saturday 3rd November and with the vicar occupying his usual position outside the Village Hall in Briantspuddle. The response from the community was very generous indeed and £1048 was raised.
- f. Remembrance Sunday. Remembrance Sunday last year marked the 100th anniversary of the end of the First World War. There was a service in the church at 9am which included an act of remembrance at the Peace Shrine. There followed a Parish Act of Remembrance at the Bladen Valley War Memorial at 11am and wreaths were laid by representatives of a variety of organisations from across the community.

14. Planned Events/Fund Raising in the forthcoming Year..

- a. Flower Festival. A flower festival will be held in the church from Friday 31st May until Sunday 2nd June inclusive.
- b. Church Fete. The Annual Church Fete will be held at Cruck Cottage Briantspuddle on Saturday 10 August 2019.
- c. Gift Day. The Annual Gift Day will be held on 2 Nov 2019.
- d. Harvest Lunch. The annual Harvest Lunch will be held in Briantspuddle Village Hall on Sunday 13th October.
- e. Remembrance Sunday. The procedure followed for Remembrance Sunday last year proved very popular and was well attended event. It is hoped that a similar act of remembrance involving the entire community can be held on Remembrance Sunday this year which falls on 10th November.
- f. Carol Service 2019. Date to be arranged.

g. Seed Money. Chris Parker's Seed Money fund raising project will be reactivated in the coming year with a mass dog walk as the initial event. Dates will follow.

15. Thankyou.

a. Firstly we are all very grateful to everyone who has made our transition into the new Benefice of West Purbeck run so smoothly and in particular to Carol Langford for her leadership in pulling the parishes together and her conscientious tact and efficiency in ensuring that the changeover has gone so well. You should note that we are not in an interregnum but a component part of a new benefice awaiting the appointment of a new associate priest to be resident in Bere Regis Vicarage.

b. Secondly, Liz and I would like to thank everyone here and beyond the church for all that they have done over the past year to help in our work in keeping things going. The list of tasks is enormous and we could not manage without you all. Liz and I are both very grateful to you for all that you do. Thank you.