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# Wonersh with Blackheath Parochial Church Council

# Agenda of the Annual Meeting of Parishioners and the Annual Parochial Church Meeting

# Monday 24th April 2023

## A. Annual Meeting of Parishioners Chair- Vicar-David

## 1. Minutes of the Annual Meeting of Parishioners held on 11th April 2022

For approval as a true record.

## 2. Election of Church Wardens

## 3. Thanks

## B. Annual Parochial Church Meeting Chair-Vicar-David

## 1. Opening Reading and prayer

## 2. Apologies for Absence

## 3. Minutes of the Annual Meeting held on 28th April 2021 Pg. 4-6

For approval as a true record.

## 4. Matters Arising

**5. Vicar’s Report Pg. 7**

## 6. Churchwardens’ Reports: Wonersh and Blackheath Pg. 8-10

## 7. Annual Report and Financial Statements of the PCC for 2022

## 8. Children and Families Work Pg. 10

**9. Safeguarding Pg. 11**

**10. Buildings Report Pg. 12-13**

## 11. Electoral Roll Report Pg. 13

## 12. Deanery Synod Report Pg. 13-14

## 13. Reports from some Church Groups Pg. 14-19

* Midweek Service
* Pastoral Care
* Vicarage
* Caleb
* Connect Groups
* Sustainability
* Mission Partnership
* Bell Ringers

**14. Wonersh and Shamley Green School Pg. 19**

**15. Open the Book Pg. 19-20**

## 16. List of Wardens and Sidespeople Pg. 20

## 17. Election of PCC (and Deanery Synod) Members

## 18. Appointment of Independent Examiner

## 19. Any other business

Minutes of the Annual Meeting of Parishioners and the Annual Parochial Church Meeting

held on

Monday 11th April 2022

Chair: Rev David Peters (DP)

Clerk: Clive Couzens (Hon. Sec., PCC) (CC)

DP welcomed everyone to the meeting and outlined how it would be conducted.

**Annual Meeting of Parishioners**

1. The minutes of the 2021 meeting were approved as a true record.
2. All three churchwardens were eligible for re-election and were standing again. In the absence of any other candidates Patricia Allen, Alex Vinall and Martin Keech were elected.

**Annual Parochial Church Meeting**

1. **Opening Worship**

DP welcomed everyone to the meeting, including those attending online (it was noted that 14 devices were logged on to the meeting), and read from Joshua 1, noting God’s call to be strong and courageous. He expressed thanks to the wardens, Liz Hayley and to many others involved in the running of services.

1. **Apologies for absence**

Apologies for absence had been received from Darren Alford, Patricia Allen and Christine Sweeting.

1. **Minutes**

The minutes of the 2021 meeting were approved as a true record of the meeting.

1. **Matters arising**

There were no matters arising.

1. **Vicar’s report**

This had been published previously and was taken as read. DP expressed further thanks to Karen, other clergy, the PCC and all those involved in the running of the church.

DP went on to speak about St Martin’s in Blackheath, that it was part of his heart and part of our future. He noted that it was a place of tradition, of care, and of openness to the new.

Turning to Wonersh he thanked Bryan Boswell for the development of livestreaming, to Martin Keech and Thiew Tan for their efforts on the buildings and gardens, and to Nick and Sarah Jo Gray and Charlie Wakefield for their work on the finances. DP noted the sense of warmth and love in all our services.

There were three themes for the future. Firstly, to reach into the community; there had already been four requests for baptisms deriving from Chatterbox, and we should build on this. Secondly, we should develop our threshold spaces – our homes, the Vicarage, Messy Church, Book Club etc. Finally, we should develop our services to be appropriate in their style and timing etc.

1. **Churchwardens’ reports**

These had been published previously and were taken as read.

1. **Finance report**

The Treasurer’s report had been published previously and was accepted. Nick Gray confirmed that the accounts had been signed, and that the change of examiners (with the same individual examiner) had been approved. He explained his joint role with Sarah Jo and the segregation of duties that applied.

NG highlighted certain aspects of the accounts as follows.

The valuation of Springfield had increased by £40,000. £70,000 had been spent on various projects, and the fabric fund would need to be built up again over the next few years. Church giving is down slightly, with 45 contributing through the Parish Giving Scheme. The P&L showed a loss of £6,000 (vs £5,000 in 2020). £16,900 had been allocated for outward giving.

He thanked the church’s employees (Heather, Sarah and Jaz) for the contributions.

Overall he felt that the church’s accounts were in a very good situation.

1. **Youth and Children’s Work**

This report had been published previously and was taken as read.

A question was raised about where the church would be investing in its ministry. DP advised that a restricted legacy had been left for the purpose of youth and children’s work, and hoped that this would form part of the role of the anticipated new ordained assistant.

At this point further questions were raised from the floor about the sound system and audibility in church in general. DP agreed that these were points well made, and advised that professional help would be sought; much of the current equipment was out of date and ill-matched. In response to a point about the use of the pulpit, or lack thereof, DP felt that there was much better engagement with the congregation when speaking from the nave.

1. **Safeguarding**

This report had been published previously and was taken as read. DP thanked Catherine Keech for her work as Parish Safeguarding Officer.

1. **Buildings report**

This had been published previously and was taken as read. Nikki Cooke raised the dilapidated state of the shed at Lawnsmead. DP advised that this was on the agenda of works to be carried out.

1. **Electoral Roll**

St. John the Baptist, Wonersh 161 (168)

St. Martin’s, Blackheath 39 (42)

Total 200 (210)

1. **Activities of PCC**

The report had been published previously and was taken as read.

1. **Deanery Synod report**

The report had been published previously and was taken as read.

1. **Reports from various church groups**

The reports had been published previously and were taken as read.

1. **List of wardens and sidespeople**

This list had been published and was noted.

1. **Election of PCC and Deanery Synod members**

Liz Lister was elected to the PCC. There were no other candidates for PCC or Deanery Synod.

1. **Appointment of Independent Examiner**

Nick Gray proposed, and CC seconded, the reappointment of CN Barnard FCA of *new company name* as Independent Examiner. This was passed unanimously.

1. **Any Other Business**

There being no other business, DP closed the meeting in prayer.

**Annual Parochial Church Meeting 24th April 2023**

**Vicar**

Reporting on a full year in the life of a church is difficult, there is so much to consider, so many people who are involved and deserve to be thanked, and looking forward, so much that we would wish to achieve. Let me therefore concentrate on where the focus of the church has been and the people that have worked at making it happen.

The Christian life is relationship, firstly with God and then each other. This has continued to be impacted by the outfall from the Coronavirus which has affected church attendance, our need for and relationship with technology, and our aim to rebuild community. The two key words in our vocabulary have therefore been hospitality and community. In order to achieve this focus we have tried to build teams, host community events, provide access both physically and online, and to discern where God is leading us, through our services.

The staff team has been blessed with the employment of Jan Durrant as the Parish Administrator who has updated many of our processes and is currently in the process of redesigning our office system and we will then update the website. We are also grateful to Nick Gray for steering our finances so ably during the year.

Our children’s ministry has long been a core activity and after a bumpy period, was wonderfully stabilised by Charlotte Vinall, and is now being developed by the new Children’s Leader, Clare Hepworth. It has been remarkable to see the timing and provision of God and our children are now excited to be part of both Chatterbox on Thursdays, and the weekly Sunday group.

Our mid-week provision for the retired is also strong with a range of individuals involved in serving a warm and vibrant community. This has been helped through regular ‘mini-breaks’ and the numerous events and occasions offering hospitality using the vicarage. The vicarage is increasingly coming to life with meals, concerts, meetings, courses, garden parties and administration throughout the week. Thanks to Liz Hayley for making this possible.

There are opportunities to grow each of these aspects of our church life and we are working to involve individuals to take these aims forward, and to be responsible for future growth.

Our Christian life is ultimately about living out the call of God and this has been exampled through so much of our reach in to the community, through the magazine, our visits, events, pastoral care and of course, through our hosting the Ukrainian families that have come in to our midst. Seeing love in action has impacted our church more than we could have imagined and is a beacon of what we are as a church.

From here, we need to continue to build these bridges in to our villages, offering hospitality first in our homes and in our village lanes because how we welcome, support, share and love our neighbour in the street will dictate who comes to our church and finds the love of God for themselves.

A final vote of thanks to the churchwardens in St John’s, Alex and Martin for their endless patience, support and encouragement and especially to Patricia who has been involved in so much to enable St Martin’s to serve the village of Blackheath, we are indebted to her and David for their tireless work and wish them some rest as they step down from their current roles.

I pray that God continues to guide us in the year ahead and that we will be open to God’s voice, that we might follow where God is leading.

David Peters April 2023

**Wonersh Wardens April 2023**

It is only when you get a chance to formally review the previous 12 months, that is possible to appreciate the myriad of changes, hard work and initiatives that have quietly but steadily been taking place around us.

One of the warden’s roles is to submit the annual Statistics for Mission to the Church of England (our church’s attendance figures). This year, it was a real pleasure to see the graphs reflect a significant uplift in church attendance for the first time in two years. Most notably, for the first time in over 10 years we have had the largest numbers of congregants leaving the church, but also the largest numbers of new congregants joining us. In many ways Covid has re-set St John’s, Wonersh and we are a changed community to the one that existed in 2020.

God’s hand is clearly at work amongst us and the vision of hospitality that David and Marion brought with them continues to bear fruit and is well embedded in our culture, making pathways into our village community. Without repeating details of the reports you are about to read, the welcome atmosphere and warm, home from home, venue of the vicarage continues to bless so many people. As we approach our third year of its present use, we are becoming ever more aware of how it can used to benefit an even wider range of people who live locally. Alongside this, our PCC has approved many changes that allow St John’s to host events with ease, such as; purchasing a card reader, the recently installed sound and vision system, user friendly gazebos, new signage, information boards and churchyard garden design to name but a few. We are well placed for the year ahead to respond to where God is calling us to serve all who live around us.

We have been particularly blessed with two new faces that have joined our staff team (and indeed congregation) in the past year. Jan Durrant became our parish administrator in July 2022 and it is hard to imagine life without her as she has made such a positive impact on us all. Not long after Clare Hepworth and her husband Jeremy started attending St John’s last Autumn, Clare felt called to offer us her abundant gifts and we have had the recent joy of appointing her as our new Family and Children’s Leader, much to the immense delight of all our families and Chatterbox volunteers.

Church life would not flourish without those who serve on the PCC and those who selflessly fulfil the countless roles that make our church the vibrant hub that it is. We thank each one of you and pray you are blessed in the full richness that you serve us with from week to week.

With every best wish,

Alex and Martin April 2023

**Blackheath Church Warden**

Since last spring, some members of Blackheath community have welcomed Ukrainians into their homes and with the Vicarage now being used as a community hub the Parish has been able to offer them weekly hospitality and a chance to improve their English.

At the start of Lent last year and leading up to Easter, we re-introduced a **Parish** **Ash Wednesday** **Service** and Vicar David organized a series of pictures and reflections in St Martin’s based on the ‘**Stations of the Cross’**. This was very well received and a few came back to visit it a second time. There was a similar exhibition this Lent at Blackheath with 15 contemporary images with reflections and prayers.

2022 saw a Village Street Party to mark the **Queen’s Platinum Jubilee** during which the church doors were opened wide to reveal Jubilee floral displays and there was a wonderful red, white and blue arch of flowers over the west door. This was then followed the next day, 5 June, by a special Celebration Church Service with refreshments afterwards. However, it was only a few months later that the church was a place for reflection following the death of Queen Elizabeth ll. At the Harvest Choral Evensong, we took time to remember the remarkable life and devoted service of Queen Elizabeth to the nation, Commonwealth and Church. It was also a time to remember Her Majesty’s unwavering Christian faith. A faith that underpinned her long life.

The annual village **Giving Day** organized by the church in the Autumn generated yet another magnificent response for donations to support Vaughan House and the homeless of Guildford, and the Surrey Hills Hygiene Bank. The two charities were delighted with this show of support.

Numbers at the **Remembrance Service** at the Memorial on the Heath were down for some unknown reason but as always it was a moving way to remember how much we owe to others who sacrifice their lives in times of war, and to reflect on our current world problems.

To start the season of Advent, there was a very memorable **Advent Meditation** organized and led by Alex Jones and the evening finished with prosecco and mince pies in the church. It was good to see so many there from across the Parish. There was a significant increase from the previous year in those attending the **Carol Service** on 4 Decemberwith 115 in all but we are not quite back to pre-Covid numbers yet.

The **Blackheath District Church Council** has been meeting in the church vestry rather than in the church itself over the colder winter months in order to save energy and cost. Under discussion has been the **Parish Needs Process**, which replaces the Church Development Plan, and looks at the needs of the Parish - what should be its focus, what are the priorities, and what action should be taken? The Archdeacon of Surrey, Paul Davies, came in October for his three-yearly **Archdeacon’s Visitation** where he not only checked the Parish records but also discussed the Wonersh/Blackheath Needs Process. Paul Davies complimented the Vicar and Parish on the priorities chosen and the work achieved so far. Other matters discussed by the DCC have included Outward Giving and Mission Partners, the Parish Cemetery and re-branding in the Parish – which resulted in a new church sign.

The Blackheath Home Group, now re-named the **Connect Group**, is ever popular and continues to meet twice monthly in people’s homes. The current course it is studying explores what it means to follow Jesus in a complex and divided world. The Connect Groups from the whole Parish are now also meeting together for worship, prayer, and to discover more about the groups and how they can share together.

After 18 years, Amelia Taylor has stepped down as the person heading up the **Church Care** **Team** and we are extremely grateful to her for her hard work and the support she has given the community, particularly during the challenging times of the Covid pandemic. Penny Kirkwood has kindly agreed to take over.

Our ever-popular **Church Coffee Mornings** have continued and are much looked forward to by many in Blackheath and increasingly by those across the Parish. We have held four since the last APCM. Thank you to Carmina Harlow and her team for organizing these.

St Martin’s continues to be open every day and a steady stream of **visitors** has been coming to view the beauty and enjoy the peace of this special building. It is good to meet some of them and be able to explain the history behind the building, the current life of the church within the Parish and to show round the occasional tour group. The church will be open for the **Blackheath May Fair** on Monday 1 May, with a Quiz for children, and be marking the **King’s Coronation** on Sunday 7 May.

This year I am stepping down as **Churchwarden** after eight years and would like to thank all those who have supported me in this role and in particular our wonderful clergy team, and my husband, David, for his tremendous work, often behind the scenes, as Buildings Manager, Treasurer and my predecessor as Churchwarden. He too is taking a step back from some of these duties after nearly 20 years. I look forward to supporting the new Churchwarden and the church in whatever way I can.

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank the **Church Choir, Christmas Choir, Church Carol Singers** and our **Organists** for their hard work and dedication. Music plays an important part in the life of St Martin’s and its worship and I look forward to continuing to help in this area. We were delighted last year to learn that our young organist from St Catherine’s School, who plays for our morning services, has been awarded an organ scholarship to Oriel College Oxford. We are also equally delighted that Ginny Browne hopes to go on playing for our services when she is not at university.

Finally, my heartfelt thanks go to the many people who support St Martin’s in so many different ways, over 30 in all(!) and to Vicar David who heads our Parish and to those who so faithfully lead us in worship.

*In the last year there has been one Thanksgiving Service for a Marriage, one Funeral, one Wedding and one Baptism.*

Patricia Allen April 2023

**Children and Families**

As we will have noticed following the pandemic, families have been slow to return to church or have found alternative places of worship during this period. It was hoped that by re-instating regular activities for children these families would return over time. Sadly, this has been more difficult than we imagined and our experience has been similar to much of the Church of England across the country as young people’s attendance at church has waned. In our particular case, the teenage children all moved to a point of leaving home over these 2-3 years and so we are now effectively focussing upon children’s ministry, while attempting to build a bridge to new families in the area.

We have, therefore, focussed upon the Chatterbox community and have provided regular ‘social events’ for them and tried to introduce Messy Church. This was only partially successful and so we have stepped back, to build deeper relationships before re-introducing other church related activities in due course.

Our full time children and families leader left in the Summer of 2022 but in God’s timing, Charlotte Vinall offered to look after the children at Chatterbox and on Sunday mornings until she left for Sandhurst. The church family are grateful to her for stabilising this ministry and for providing a strong platform for re-growth. During this time, Chatterbox further increased in popularity and Sunday’s became more established.

We have, again in God’s timing, now been joined by Clare Hepworth on a part time basis. She has already established a new pattern to Chatterbox, developing good relationships with all of the parents/carers and children present and has taken our Sunday Kids Church to another level. Clare has further plans to reach out in to this community and so the final word must be hers:

In the six weeks I’ve been working as the children and families worker, I’ve been privileged to meet parents who are open and hungry to build deeper, more meaningful relationships. A constant has been mums seeking reassurance as to whether they are ‘doing the right thing’ by their children in a whole host of different ways. This has increased my conviction that it is right to invest time and efforts getting alongside parents, but especially mothers, in the early days of their parenting journey. To this end I am setting up a group called ‘Mums, bumps and babies’ based directly on an excellent model set up at my previous church and with their blessing. This is to start at the beginning of next term and to run as a café in the vicarage on a Monday morning. Its focus is on building relationships, and its role is to love and cherish new mothers in the community by offering them a safe space to receive our support and our Christian love in action.

Personally I bring to this my roles as both sleep coach and postnatal doula, and my interest in attachment and secure parenting. My hope is that others in the church might embrace the vision and join me on Team, to offer hugs, chat and cake to our mums.

David Peters and Clare Hepworth April 2023

**Safeguarding Wonersh and Blackheath (April 2023)**

The PCC and the incumbent have a duty of care to ensure the protection of the vulnerable in their church community although the outworkings of the ethos of safeguarding are included in every part of our ministry. This report covers a 12 month period since the last APCM and safeguarding continues to be a priority at Wonersh and Blackheath.

Since the last APCM, one potential safeguarding issue has been reported and discussed with the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser, Jackie Broadfoot. The issue was followed up appropriately and has now been resolved.

All safeguarding training is up to date for existing PCC members, Children’s helpers and existing Connect group leaders. Our new Children’s leader and new PCC and Connect Group leaders will be completing training shortly.

The updated Diocesan Safeguarding Training Pathway is shown below for information:



In early 2022 the Diocese introduced the Parish Dashboard scheme for all parishes which is designed to make church safeguarding ‘simpler, clearer and more transparent’. It also enables both us and the Diocese to keep track of safeguarding in our church and removes the requirement to send in the Statement of Safeguarding policy, Safeguarding and Confidential Audits. The Dashboard needs to be regularly reviewed and at present is over 60% complete.

During the year, according to Diocesan requirements, a policy statement on the recruitment of ex-offenders was brought to the PCC for approval and will be reviewed every three years.

DBS checks have been renewed as appropriate and DBS checks for all Churchwardens and PCC members have been completed.

Safeguarding details with key contacts are displayed at both churches, Lawnsmead hall, the Vicarage and on the front page of the church website. They include contact details for the Parish Safeguarding officer and the Diocesan Safety Adviser, Jackie Broadfoot.

Safeguarding continues to be an agenda item at all PCC meetings. I am grateful to Alex Vinall as PCC safeguarding lead and to Jan Durrant, the DBS validator, who ensures that all DBS applications are up to date.

Catherine Keech   
Parish Safeguarding Officer 24 April 2023

**Buildings**

**St John’s Churchyard**

Following demolition of a section of the churchyard wall by a fallen tree it has now been rebuilt complete with a lean to match the existing! The owners of Wonersh House very kindly provided a new bird feeder to replace the one damaged by the tree and a large bag of bird food.

A lectern sign has been installed in the churchyard which will contain details of forthcoming events and development of the churchyard. Four new benches have been installed in the churchyard. Three multi-stem trees have been planted as part of the Queen’s Green Canopy initiative to mark the Platinum Jubilee and also to mark the coronation of King Charles III in May. The trees will provide all year round interest with blossom in the spring, autumn colour and fruit for animals and birds.

The wall surrounding the churchyard on the western side and adjacent to the vicarage have been surveyed by the Parish Council and deemed to be at risk of collapse hence the rope currently in place to prevent people approaching the wall. They are currently considering how best to repair the wall and it seems probable that this will entail cutting down the 4 Birch trees in the vicarage garden adjacent to the wall.

**AV upgrade**

The AV system has been updated with a new camera, screen, projector, sound desk, laptop and equipment to make livestreaming simple. As a result it is hoped more people will be able to operate the equipment.

**Vicarage**

The dormer windows at the front of the property have now been replaced. Moss has been removed from the roof and the gutters and downpipes cleaned. This should stop the previous problem with water pouring onto the path outside the vicarage when it rained due to a blocked downpipe. Quotes are being obtained by the Diocese to replace the conservatory roof.

**Blackheath Cemetery**

During the past year a number of issues have needed to be addressed. Following a complaint that a grave was being obscured by the branches of a fir tree next to the chapel arrangements were made for its removal. Some asbestos roof sheets were fly-tipped at the bottom end of the car park at the cemetery and as it was on church property we had to pay for their safe removal. A new bench has been installed overlooking graves in the extension area.

**Swift boxes**

In August installation of the swift nesting boxes was completed. We now have 10 boxes in the belltower and 2 under the eaves at the back as planned. A caller will be installed shortly to attract passing swifts to the boxes.

**Water leak**

A water leak outside the main entrance was detected and repaired which also meant a new toilet was installed. Some internal redecoration was also required where the water had caused efflorescence.

**Signage**

The signs at the entrance to St John’s have been moved so they are in a more prominent position and new vinyls applied with the new banner to the signs at Lawnsmead and St Martin’s. An interpretation board describing the history of the church will shortly be installed on the wall adjacent to the drive so that it can be read while looking at the church.

**St John’s rainwater goods**

The rainwater goods at St John’s have now been checked, repaired and repainted.

**Lawnsmead**

The exterior of Lawnsmead has now been painted in Stiffkey Blue to match the colour of all the church signage and a new fire door to the rear of the building has been installed.

Following the oven fire during an Age Concern lunch on October 24th it was replaced with a similar model and the installation upgraded to comply with current regulations.

**PV Panels**

A survey of the roof has been completed which showed that the nave roof would be capable of supporting the number of PV panels proposed. The main issue is the state of the tiles and what damage will be caused during the fitting of the panels. The tiles are reaching the end of their useful life so it might be better to replace them now rather than have to remove all the panels if they were to be replaced at any point in the next 25 years (the life of the panels). Discussions are ongoing between the surveyor, our architect and Elite Renewables as to the best way forward.

**Buildings Committee**

The Buildings committee is to be re-formed with a broader remit. This will not just include current maintenance but consider how all our buildings can best be used in the future as our needs change and increase. If you are interested in being a member of this group or have questions please let me know.

Martin Keech April 2023

**Electoral Roll 2023**

Electoral Roll figures as at 26th March 2023 (Figures for 2022 in brackets):

St. John the Baptist Church, Wonersh **167** (161)

St. Martin's Church, Blackheath  **40** (39)

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**Total 207** (200)

**Wonersh: 3.7 % increase from electoral roll figures of 2022**. There were fourteen additions, There have been two deaths, two people moved, two people asked for their names to be removed and two transferred to the Blackheath roll.

**Blackheath: 2.6 % increase from electoral roll figures of 2022**. Two people transferred from the Wonersh roll and one name was removed.

**This results in an increase of 3.5% in the parish as a whole.**

Rosie Couzens

Electoral Roll Officer April 2023

**Deanery Synod 2022/23**

*Since the last Annual Parochial Church Meeting, Cranleigh Deanery has held, two Synod Meetings (in July and November 2022), a Vision Day and a Deanery Action Meeting. The February 2023 Synod Meeting was postponed.*

The ***Vision Day*** at the end of **April 2022** was an introduction to the new *Parish Needs Process* - outlining the process itself and giving parishes an opportunity in groups to consider what were the challenges and opportunities and what priorities these might lead to under the headings of Ministry and Mission. Parish groups then discussed plans and specific action points to develop their areas of priority and consider who might lead them.

At the **July 2022 Meeting**, the Synod received an update from the Area Dean, Canon Roy Woodhams, on the *Parish Needs Process (PNP).* The *PNP* was moving ahead and incumbents’ meetings with Diocesan Mission enablers were taking place, or had been booked in. The process would be coming to a conclusion in the Autumn with the Archdeacon’s Visitations.

This was then followed by presentations on ‘*The Climate Change* *Challenge*’ from Net Zero & Eco Church by Alison Moulden, the Diocesan Environmental Officer, and from the Tillingbourne Earth Group, given by Christian Staunskjaer. A questions and answer session raised a number of interesting points from Synod members and the Revd Sarah Hutton finished by challenging each parish to come back to the November meeting with one positive achievement (or more!).

The **November Synod Meeting** started with a roundup from Parishes on Eco-Church. Most Parishes had completed the national Church of England tool for churches to record their energy use and calculate carbon emissions (‘Caring for God’s Creation’). This forms part of the on-line Annual Parish Returns. Parishes reported on initiatives that had taken place since the last meeting and Wonersh reported on an eco-link, a silver award, re-wilding the churchyard, installing solar panels, cutting down on paper use and registering as a community warm space. Making churchyards organic and re-wilding were a common thread.

There then followed a presentation by Archdeacon Paul Davies on ‘Clergy well-being’. Archdeacon Paul spoke about his own experience of well-being and how this formed part of his vocation to a Diocesan role. He went on to say that, over the years well-being has become an increasing problem – and one that is not restricted to clergy. It’s an issue that should concern the whole people of God and there will be many in our congregations who will be affected. The Church of England is aware of the problem and wants to approach it more strategically. It is recognized that there has been a real increase in the number of clergy needing to take time off for all sorts of health-related reasons. The pressure of work has had a big impact in the Diocese and we need to think about the kind of life to which God calls us. To achieve well-being there must be a partnership and care. He went on to say that the Guildford Diocesan covenant is based on 5 rules of Benedict: Prayer, Work, Study, Hospitality and Recreation.

The Archdeacon then asked groups to discuss:

* What would be the one change that the Diocese can make to help with well-being?
* What one change in the parish would have the most impact?
* What one change can you make yourself? (clergy)

Archdeacon Paul commented that these are complex scenarios – people are all different; parishes are different, and have different challenges. Well-being is also different at various stages of life.

On **2 February 2023** there was a **Deanery Action Meeting** at which Bishop Andrew spoke as well as Archdeacon Paul; Richard Lloyd, Head of the Diocesan Mission Enabler Team; and Roy Woodhams, Area Dean. There was coffee, prayer, song and then reflection on the development of the Parish Needs process and where we now are with the process and the consultancy support offered by the Diocese. There was then time for facilitated sessions with other parishes. All parishes in the Deanery were represented.

March 2023

Patricia Allen, Deanery Synod Representative.

**Reports from some Church Groups:**

**The Midweek Service**

The midweek service on Thursday mornings continues to fill a real need for worship and fellowship amongst the older members of our church. The variety of services - communion, morning worship and Discovery (a more informal service with discussion and held in the Selwyn Room) seems to be appreciated. We regularly have between 20 and 25 in attendance, and lifts are offered to those who need them. There is a family atmosphere with the time of sharing over coffee an important component of our time together.

During the year we have had several special occasions or services. Mini breaks with activities and a light lunch were enjoyed in August and before Christmas. Our thanks to Marion Peters for organising them and to Liz Hayley and Ann Beresford for the inspiring and uplifting concerts. We have also held two Songs of Praise when members of the congregation have chosen a favourite hymn and told us why they chose it. These have been well attended and have drawn in a few people who do not regularly attend. On Remembrance Day children from two classes at Wonersh and Shamley Green School came to share with us, and in December we joined Chatterbox parents and children for a short carol service in church.

There are so many who help to make Thursdays so special and meaningful. Our thanks go to David, the ministry team and Mary Blowers, to Paula and Larry for their generosity and thoughtfulness shown in so many ways, to Chris for playing for us, to those who provide and serve refreshments, and to all who contribute in any way to the services.

Mary Blowers and Liz Tilley April 2023

**Pastoral Care**

*A Healthy Christian Community is one in which people know that they are loved, visitors are welcome and young and old alike are valued and feel safe. The care that we offer, both at times of crisis and in everyday life is an active proclamation of God’s love in Christ and for all the world.*

As was proposed last year, a small Pastoral Care team has been set up, that meets regularly to pray for and help alleviate the spiritual, mental and physical needs of those in our care.

Any request is treated in complete confidence and is met by one of the team visiting and supporting in whatever way is possible. The Home Communions have continued as the clergy members provide a monthly home service and we remain open to further requests.

We are also grateful for those providing specific areas of care, including Bereavement support, children and families, the mid-week service team and all those that provide practical help such as lifts and shopping.

As a church, we have also tried to develop our thinking around our care for all humanity of whatever colour, gender, sexuality and age and in particular this has been aided by our engagement with the C of E course, ‘Living in Love and Faith’, which has now been held twice.

David Peters April 2023

**Vicarage**

Many of you have asked me the question ‘do you enjoy living at the Vicarage’, or ‘how are you getting on living at the Vicarage’? Well, there are various replies but the predominant one is that it is a real privilege. My favourite times are when the house or garden is filled with people - especially seeing new friendships being made, or new faces appear from the village, and Wednesday mornings with the Ukrainians is always a joy. My other favourite time is when everyone has gone home and the house is completely quiet! It’s also a great pleasure to have the Church Office here - I love seeing Jan, Clare and David for a cuppa and a chat.

There have been many events here over the past year; including brunches, book clubs, dinners, drinks, afternoon teas, musical coffee morning, choir practice, committee meetings, concerts, - and nearly all of these have been initiated by me, Marion or David. I would encourage and challenge you all to adopt a new attitude - this is YOUR house, and we would love to hear YOUR initiatives and ideas!! I would be thrilled if someone approached me and asked to bring some neighbours to dinner, and am very happy to create events aimed at specific people; but YOU need to provide the people. Neighbours, friends at the pub or the village shop, people you meet on dog walks etc., all can be welcomed here at the Vicarage - please come and chat to me or email me, and I would love the rest of 2023 to be full or YOUR proposals. Yes I am very busy with my professional day-to-day job, but I promise to always make time to discuss any suggestions you’d like to make. Doing things together is a lot of fun, and it is what David & Marion’s vision is for this place - building Community, building a sense of Family and feeling connected.

Alternatively, particularly if you’re a local Wonersh resident - feel free to invite me round to meet YOUR friends and neighbours; then I can reciprocate later!

Above all, THANK YOU for all your help, support, prayer, and encouragement. David & Marion have said they could not fulfil this vision without me, but I cannot do it without all of YOU. The list of jobs here is endless; from cutting the grass to emptying the dishwasher to going shopping to laying the table to emailing Teams to folding napkins to moving furniture to stacking chairs…………… This is OUR home - it’s not my home, it’s not David & Marion’s home, it belongs to all of us and I would love to welcome more and more of you here in the coming months. Please come and treat it as such - I’m very happy to sit back and be waited on!

With love and gratitude, Liz x April 2023

**Caleb Group (2023)**

In recent times the Caleb group has become more or less a walking group for retired people, with approximately four walks each year.

This year there were three walks. The one in the spring enjoyed a walk round part of Thursley Common ending up with lunch at the Three Horseshoes in Thursley. In the summer, on a very hot day, we went to Petworth, starting in Petworth Park and continuing through the delightful village of Upperton before an enjoyable lunch at the Stonemason’s Inn. The final walk (at the end of September) was at Billingshurst, starting and finishing at the Six Bells, and going through some varied countryside just outside the town.

I am indebted to Christine Sweeting for planning and leading most of the walks, and to Ann Clover for arranging all the lunches with the relevant pubs.

I have now stepped down from leading the group but I am delighted to say it continues to function, and is now known as the *Church Walking Group*. Catherine Keech is doing all the admin and Christine and Ann, together with Lynne Hanes and Martin Keech, will be planning and leading the walks. The next walk is on May 5th, so do contact Catherine if you would like to join the group and receive the emails that explain what’s going on.

James Cooke April 2023

**Connect Groups**

*A group of Christians or faith explorers who meet regularly to share life and grow in faith together.*

This year saw the refresh of our small group network, launched with its re-naming as Connect Groups. The aim of these groups is to make a connection with God, connection between each other and a connection to our neighbour (in the widest sense), to invite others in to share in our small group life and in the church represented by the people of God.

Our groups have been introduced to the four ‘W’s’ as a means of leading an evening – Welcome, Worship, Word and Witness. We have followed a variety of home grown and pre-printed material and re-organised the groups, dividing some as they grow, merging others and setting up some new groups in addition.

We have also held our first ‘Making Connections’ evening as all groups come together to hear, share and learn from each other and further meetings will be held each term to build on this pattern. There is always space for more and we will continue to develop this network as the church grows and demand for connectivity with it.

David Peters April 2023

**Sustainability March 2023**

We are delighted that we continue to hold the Silver Eco Church award – an award scheme run by Christian charity A Rocha to equip churches to care for God’s world in various areas and to recognise churches that are making progress.

In June 2022 we held a service focused on sustainability and how each of us can play our part in different ways. Thiew Tan inspired the congregation with an update on the churchyard (more below!), Anne Heine-Carmichael shared about her experiences of engaging with the online Creation Care tool to reduce her environmental footprint, and Jane Boswell spoke about the impact of the accelerating climate crisis on the poorest people.

A few weeks later, we hosted a sustainability stall at Wonersh village fete, at which Will Gardner’s carbon footprint game proved very popular and a great way of entertaining children and adults alike while educating them about the often-unexpected impacts of everyday activities. Many thanks to everyone who helped out. We also invited Cranleigh plastic-free shop For Earth’s Sake to sell their ever-popular spinach and feta pies and to raise awareness of how we can all do our bit by reducing plastic.

As part of our efforts to improve the sustainability of our church building, we are still exploring the possibility of installing Solar PV panels on the south-facing side of the church roof. The PCC is supportive, but it will require approval from several authorities. A roof survey has now taken place and we are awaiting the report. Assuming it is favourable, we then intend to apply for planning permission.

Work is ongoing to manage the churchyard to promote biodiversity and provide a haven for the community. The majority of the churchyard is now mown just once a year to allow wildflowers to develop and to encourage biodiversity. An area close to the main entrance to the church has been sown with native wildflower seeds which will be supplemented with wildflower plugs in the spring. Two new flower beds have been created close to the vicarage drive with plantings to encourage bees and butterflies, and swift boxes have been installed in the belltower and under the eaves at the back of the church. Many thanks to Thiew Tan and Martin Keech in particular for their work on this project.

Looking forward, after leading the sustainability work at Wonersh for the last seven years, Jane Boswell and Charlie Wakefield have decided it’s time to step down from this role, although we are both happy to contribute to discrete sustainability projects in the future. For the time being, therefore, the sustainability agenda will be overseen by the PCC, with specific projects being overseen by named individuals. Please do get in touch with David if you’ve got any ideas or would like to be involved in any way.

Jane Boswell and Charlie Wakefield March 2023

**Mission Partnerships Committee Report**

The Mission Partnerships Committee membership has changed a little in recent months. We say a very grateful farewell to Jane Boswell and Nick Bamber both of whom have brought so much to the group for so long -thank you for your time and commitment to our mission partnerships! And we are delighted to welcome Anne Heine-Carmichael and Alice Bounsall- Hughes who have just joined the committee. We are looking forward to having you on board!

This has been quite a busy year for us.

Having reviewed our principles for mission partnerships early in 2022 we decided to conduct a review of our 6 core Mission Partners in the autumn of 2022. The purpose of the review was to prayerfully consider whether we wished to continue the partnership, reflecting on whether each partnership feels like a good fit with where we currently are as a church. Following this review we now intend to have a rolling schedule whereby each year we review one partner. When we confirm each partnership, we do so for a period of 3 years following which we will review.

We have invested considerable time into the review process with the aim that all our partners felt included, heard and respected as we worked with them to look at where our partnerships are. Wonersh and Shamley Green School was not reviewed as we consider it a partner which should continue de facto. We used the 5 Marks of Mission as a foundational criteria in the review – aiming to have a balanced mix across each of the 5 Marks.

The result of this review is as follows:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| YMCA Downslink Group | Maintain the partnership and review at the end of 2023  Sharpen the focus of our support specifically towards the Chaplaincy work of the YMCA as this is the explicitly Christian outreach element of the organisation’s work and explore opportunities for greater participation from people as volunteers. |
| Mim Friday and Viva | Maintain the partnership and review at the end of 2024  There are untapped opportunities to connect with the work of Mim and CRANE in Uganda, particularly with the 10th anniversary of the education project which we have been very connected with since it started. |
| Tearfund | Maintain and review in 2025  There are a wealth of resources we could make more use of from Tearfund and we feel we can be more intentional about this. |
| Ema and Viorel Tulpans | Draw our partnership to a close  We will give our 2023 financial gift to the Tulpans with the aim of drawing our partnership to an end at the end of 2023. |
| Charlotte R and World Horizons | Draw our partnership to a close  We will give our 2023 financial gift to the Charlotte with the aim of drawing our partnership to an end at the end of 2023. There are new opportunities being explored for Charlotte to take on a role directly with the church, which is the subject of other updates to the APCM. We are excited to support Charlotte with a transition into a slightly different focus with her work in Wonersh. |

If anyone wishes more information on these decisions please don’t hesitate to be in touch with any of the mission partnership committee members and we will happily discuss with you. If anyone wishes to continue private and personal financial support for either Charlotte or Ema and Viorel, please feel free to get in touch with them directly to discuss this, we would be delighted to connect you if you need a connection for that conversation.

The outcome of the review is that we will therefore have the potential of finding two new partnerships towards the end of 2023. We will communicate with the church about how people can make suggestions and the process by which we will explore new partnerships in due course.

We have started more regular Mission Sundays and are learning as we go about how to make best use of these - all feedback on how you are finding these is welcome!

Thanks to everyone in the church for your ongoing prayer and financial support of our partners, we are certain that they are warmly appreciated.

Caroline Stearman

**Bell Ringers 2022/23**

We have just five active ringers, one of whom lives part time in Devon so is often away at weekends. Five ringers for eight bells is clearly inadequate as a ringer can only ring one bell at a time. We have had no new volunteers join our band over the last year despite running a recruitment programme including inviting people to watch ringing on the heritage open day at the church. We would be pleased to welcome more new ringers to join our band at any time. It takes a long time and a lot of determination to become a proficient ringer but it is a very rewarding activity and we would love to teach anyone who is willing to make that commitment. We have in Wonersh a magnificent tuneful peal of eight bells to ring to the glory of God and to call people to church each Sunday. Please encourage others to join our band. Ringing really is both enjoyable and challenging.

We have rung for most Sunday services over the past year, albeit only on four or five of our eight bells. However when ringers were away for any reason or sick we have not rung for service.

In addition to calling worshippers to services bells are traditionally rung to celebrate personal and national events. We joined in the national half-muffled ringing to mark the death of Queen Elizabeth II and look forward to ringing to celebrate the coronation of King Charles III in May. With assistance from ringers from other local towers we hope to attempt a full peal (5000 changes taking about 3 hours continuous ringing) to mark the first coronation that most people will have witnessed in the UK.

There is a long tradition within bell ringing circles that any ringer is welcomed into any other tower in the country to ring their bells. We have hosted four bands at Wonersh over the last year including ringers from Leicestershire and Nottingham.

Stephen Darvill March 2023

**Wonersh and Shamley Green School**

As Vicar, I have the honour and privilege to be a Governor of our local school and to take assemblies every other week. We have also enjoyed the pupils joining us in church for their Remembrance service and a special musical production, called ‘iSing Pop’.

The school continues to be a place of learning within a friendly, supportive and Christian environment. Assemblies follow the Diocesan framework, have a Christian focus and ‘Open The Book’ also take an assembly for the younger children once a week.

The organisation, administration and leadership of the school is exceptional and I pray that the upcoming Ofsted inspection, (anticipated any moment), will be rigorous but fair and that the vision and commitment from the teachers and children alike will be recognised. Thank you to all those from the church who commit time and energy in to making this school a place of safety, support and fun for all the children that attend.

David Peters April 2023

**Open The Book Team & Assemblies**

Bible Stories continue to be brought to life each week through the “Open the Book” presentations. Team members go into Wonersh & Shamley Green School on Thursdays and into Bramley Infants School on Fridays. We are a diverse group of 14 people from churches in Bramley, Grafham, Shamley Green, St. Joseph’s Guildford and Wonersh, but all have a passion to share God’s Word with the children and all much enjoy the experience and fellowship too. People commit to whichever weeks they can manage – a commitment including the rehearsal late on the relevant Monday afternoon for just over an hour.

The assemblies we present fit in with the schools’ assembly programmes for each term and, within the context of the worship, comprise dramatization of a Bible Story (in simple costumes, with interesting props), reflection, prayer and a song. “Open the Book” encourages interaction with the children and it is very evident that they engage really well with the whole presentation, often expressing amazing insights, questions, thoughts and prayers. Furthermore they remember the stories and truths extremely well for the future.

We are so blessed to have this team – with fellowship among the members, learning from each other, lots of fun and the opportunity to visit these schools, where we are so welcomed. ***It really is a very exciting ministry, where God is definitely at work and we’d love to encourage others to join us!*** With a few members having to step down or reduce their involvement for various reasons in the months ahead, we are praying for others to join the team. You don’t need to be a professional actor – we are not! On the other hand, we wouldn’t turn you away if you were! If this is something you feel called to do, or you would like to find out more about it, please see and speak to Patsy Kettle or me. You might like to come and watch a story presentation. Even if you cannot take part, do give thanks to God with us for the privilege of being part of the spiritual journeys of “our” children and pray that we might be inspired by the Holy Spirit, as we prepare and present the assemblies.

I leave the final words to the children, who were talking about OtB with a teacher recently….

***From 4 and 5 year olds: "I like it when we hear stories from the actors. Their costumes help me look and listen!"***

***"I have learnt lots about things Jesus did."***

***"I like the songs when we have actions."***

***"I like listening to the stories from God and Jesus!"***

***6 and 7 year olds: "The actors make it much more interesting than a normal assembly! I love it when I'm chosen to help with the acting."***

***"Sometimes we hear a story in RE lessons and we are really good at it because we've remembered it from Open the Book."***

***And an 8 year old remarked that she likes coming, because it makes her feel more confident to 'teach' (lead) class worship back in class!***(God preparing a future vicar?!)

Nicky Cooke  April 2023

**List of Wardens and Sidespeople 2023**

**Wardens**

Alexandra Vinall

Martin Keech

Darren Alford – Deputy

Helen Shepard – Deputy

Anne Heine-Carmichael – Deputy

**Sidespeople**

**8am**

John Nolan

David Hutchinson

Martin Maybrey

**10 am**

Rosie Couzens

Clive Couzens

Sarah Jo Gray

Nicky Cooke

Catherine Keech

Jan Durrant

Deidre Glynn-Jones

Jeremy Marks

Christine Sweeting