



# St Peter's Church

## East Blatchington, Seaford

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ANNUAL REPORT OF THE PAROCHIAL  
CHURCH COUNCIL  
for the year ended 31 December 2021

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*Also*

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Church of St. Peter, Belgrave Road, Seaford

Rector:

Revd Arwen Folkes,  
The Rectory, 86 Belgrave Road  
Seaford, BN25 2HE

Registered Charity number 1173506

## PARISH OF EAST BLATCHINGTON

### **Meeting of Parishioners to elect Churchwardens and Annual Parochial Church Meeting in St. Peter's Church, Belgrave Road, Seaford and live-streamed on Sunday 8th May 2022 at 2.00pm**

#### AGENDAS

##### Meeting of Parishioners to elect Churchwardens

1. Apologies
2. Minutes of the 2021 Meeting (provided on page 12)
3. Nomination and election of Churchwardens

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##### Annual Parochial Church Meeting

1. Apologies
2. Minutes of the 2021 Meeting (provided on page 12)
3. Matters arising from those Minutes.
4. To receive from the Parochial Church Council and be free to discuss: -
  - 4a) A report on the numbers entered on the Electoral Roll
  - 4b) An Annual Report on the proceedings of the Parochial Church Council and the activities of the Parish in general, including the report from the Chair of the PCC
  - 4c) The independently examined Financial Statements of the Parochial Church Council for the year ended 31st December 2021 and the Treasurer's report.
  - 4d) A report on the building and fabric of the Church of the Parish.
  - 4e) A report on Safeguarding.
  - 4f) A report on the proceedings of the Lewes and Seaford Deanery Synod.
  - 4g) A report on Health and Safety.
5. To receive a report from: The Pastoral Team  
The Choir  
The Mothers' Union  
The EBB Church Café and Little Fishes

Owing to the pandemic there are no activities to report from:

- The East Blatchington Lectures

6. To elect up to 3 representatives to the Deanery Synod
7. To elect up to 6 representatives of the Laity to the Parochial Church Council.
8. To appoint an independent examiner to the accounts.
9. To consider any other matters of the Parochial or general church interest.

*Christine Cooke, PCC Secretary*

## Administration Information.

The Parochial Church Council (PCC) is a charity and is registered with the Charity Commission. Registered Charity Number 1173506.

During the relevant period the following served as members of the PCC:

Rector	The Revd. Arwen Folkes ( <i>Chair</i> )
Assistant Curate	The Revd. Joe Padfield
Churchwardens:	Ms Juliet Mitton ( <i>Vice Chair</i> ) Mrs Geraldine Hedgecock
Licensed Reader:	Mrs Kay Blackburn ( <i>Deanery Synod Representative</i> )
Lay Representatives:	
Elected Members:	Mr Chris Reynolds ( <i>Treasurer</i> ) Mrs Ann Lloyd-James Mrs Debbie Phipps ( <i>Electoral Roll and Health and Safety Officer</i> ) Mrs Daphne Dempster ( <i>Safeguarding Officer</i> ) Mrs Susan Drader Mrs Barbara Prendergast Mrs Tina Bacon Mrs Jill Morgan Mrs Maggie Chitty ( <i>Deanery Synod Representative</i> ) Ms Christa Ovenden Mrs Susan Williams Mrs Jacqueline Head Mrs Linda Stratford Mrs Christine Cooke ( <i>Secretary</i> )

## Structure, Governance and Management

The PCC is a corporate body established by the Church of England. It operates under the Parochial Church Council (Powers) Measure 1956 as amended. Membership of the PCC is determined under the Church Representation Rules (contained in Schedule 3 to the Synodical Government Measure 1969 as amended) and consists of certain ex-officio members namely the Rector, the Churchwardens, members of the Deanery Diocesan or General Synods, and such Licensed Readers as the Annual Meeting may decide: and of the 12 lay members of the church who are elected at the Annual Parochial Church Meeting (APCM). The PCC also has the power to co-opt members not exceeding one-fifth of the total number of elected members of the council or two persons whichever is greater. Members of the Electoral Roll are warmly encouraged to stand for election to the PCC and we try to ensure a balance of skills and experience where possible.

## Objectives and Activities

The primary objective of St. Peter's PCC is the promotion of the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to the doctrines and practices of the Church of England. Under the terms of the Parochial Church (Powers) Measure 1956, as amended by the Synodical Government Measure 1969, the PCC has the duty to co-operate with the Rector "in promoting in the parish the whole mission of the church, pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical". In planning its activities, the PCC has given due regard to the Charity Commission's public benefit guidance as is shown in the following reports.

## Location and Historical Background

The ecclesiastical parish of East Blatchington - St. Peter - in the County of East Sussex, lies within the Diocese and Jurisdiction of the Lord Bishop of Chichester, the Archdeaconry of Brighton & Lewes and the Deanery of Lewes and Seaford.

The parish serves the western side of the town of Seaford. In 2008 the parish became a United Benefice with the adjacent parish of St. Andrew, Bishopstone.

The parish church of St. Peter, East Blatchington, dates from the twelfth century, and is situated centrally within the area defined by the parish boundaries. From this centre of worship is carried out a ministry of spiritual, sacramental, pastoral and missionary work in accordance with the statutory obligations laid upon the Church of England as the church established by law in this realm. The parish church is subject to the faculty jurisdiction of the Consistory Court of the Diocese of Chichester, and the inspecting architect appointed by the Parochial Church Council is Mr. Tim Wells of John D Clark and Partners, Eastbourne.

Apart from the burial of cremated remains, the churchyard is closed and Lewes District Council is responsible for maintaining the ground.

All correspondence should be sent in the first instance to The Rectory, 86 Belgrave Road, Seaford, East Sussex, BN25 2HE. [rector@ebbchurches.org.uk](mailto:rector@ebbchurches.org.uk)

Adjacent to the church is a flint and brick building known as the Chapel Rooms, a fully equipped hall used socially by both the church and community. This building does not come under faculty jurisdiction; however, it has been inspected by the appointed architect.

### The Parish Clergy

The Reverend Arwen Folkes was licensed as Rector on 22nd March 2019. She is housed in The Rectory, 86 Belgrave Road, Seaford, East Sussex BN25 2HE. The freehold of the property is vested in the Chichester Diocesan Board of Finance who are also responsible for maintaining the property on the incumbent's behalf. The internal decorations continue to be the responsibility of the PCC.

The Reverend Joe Padfield was licensed as our Assistant Curate on 26<sup>th</sup> June 2021. The parish benefits from the ministry of the Revd. Eric Pollard, Revd. John Harrington and Revd. Chris Collison, retired priests holding the bishop's permission to officiate and Reader, Mrs. Kay Blackburn. We are grateful to Mr George Rix for continuing to lead evening prayer on many occasions. We enjoy the support of an excellent pastoral team from within the congregation. The parish value all their work and thanks them warmly for their goodwill and willingness to volunteer for duties. We are richly blessed to benefit from their commitment and gifts.

Under the Pastoral Scheme, the two parishes in the united benefice remain distinct. The Revd. Trevor Smyth, House for Duty Priest at St. Andrew's Bishopstone retired in November 2021 and his replacement is yet to be appointed. However, it is good to note the coming together of both parishes in providing opportunities for children and young people and their parents to come together to learn about and grow in faith and in employing a Benefice Administrator.

### 4a) Electoral Roll

The electoral roll currently stands at 110 names. At the time of this report the revision is continuing but to date there has been 3 additions and 4 removals. This means that under the Church Representation Rules the number of representatives who can stand for election for the PCC remains at 12 people.

*Mrs Debbie Phipps Electoral Roll Officer.*

#### 4b) Proceedings of the Parochial Church Council

Since the Annual Meeting on 18th April 2021 the PCC has met on 6 occasions in church.

Amongst the items considered and discussed were:

- approval of the Financial Statements for 2021.
- The restructuring and remit of the PCC sub-committees.
- reports from the PCC sub-committees.
- ensuring that the Parish Vision and Mission Statement remains at the forefront of our activities through the approval and adoption of a new Mission Action Plan.
- A paper on diversity and inclusion – agreed ideas, included in the MAP.
- approval of the appointment of a Benefice Admin. Assistant, part-time from January 2022.
- The relaxation of Covid restrictions, following government and church guidance in such matters as, social distancing, the compulsory wearing of masks, the receiving of the bread only at Eucharist services, the phased reintroduction of singing by the choir and congregation and revision of the stewarding and cleaning of the church.
- prayer and worship during the pandemic, both in church and online.
- an application for a Mission Funding grant (successful) for a part-time Children and Families worker.

The Standing Committee of the PCC has met on 6 occasions since the last APCM in the Chapel Rooms and once on Zoom.

The names of 111 parishioners were recorded on the electoral roll for the parish that was presented to the Annual Parochial Church Meeting 2021.

All are welcome to attend services in St. Peter's; for much of the year these were spasmodic because of the pandemic, but at the end of 2021 they were fully restored in church and will be live streamed to our online congregation for the foreseeable future.

*Christine Cooke Secretary to the PCC*

#### Report from the Rector, chair of the PCC

In the year of 2021 the church of St Peter the Apostle has continued to adjust and cope with the demands of the pandemic. In contrast to 2020, worship has been continually offered albeit in various forms to ensure the safety of our congregations and adherence to the guidelines. We have been pleased to see the gradual recovery of our fuller worship with the return of singing, the removal of social distancing, and our gratitude to be a church community once more. We continue to provide an extra Eucharist service on Saturday at 5.30pm to meet the needs of our congregation. I thank the congregation for their patience and Coryn Roberts (organist) and Angela Chalkley in particular for their patience and flexibility around the musical life of our worship. I thank George Rix, Linda Stratford, Neville Chalkley, those who've cleaned the church, closed the door, wiped down the pews, stewarded the door. The pandemic overall has been made much less challenging by the faithful diligence of our churchwardens Geraldine Hedgecock and Juliet Mitton who have themselves been assisted by this great number of wonderful parishioners, by the Health and Safety skills of Debbie Phipps and the kindness of so many people.

In June we welcomed Fr Joe Padfield as our Assistant Curate and thank him for his emerging ministry amongst us. Father Trevor returned, from his long sick leave to active ministry in August 2021 and we were greatly blessed by his pastoral presence for three months until his retirement to Devon in November 2021 which was marked by a very well attended service and a wonderful leaving party in

Bishopstone. This meant that we ended our year in vacancy for the House of Duty post based in Bishopstone and so our combined Benefice ministry has been covered by the Rector, ably supported by The Assistant Curate, Benefice Reader, and retired clergy who continue to help cover the ministry at both benefice churches.

Even though we have managed to keep in touch with our community (through Christine's Cooke's Cross Keys delivered by so many of you!) it was a great joy to hold our first post-pandemic community and social events with the wonderful Plant Sale in May, Craft Fair in June and Pet Service at Blatchington Pond in September. Our 2021 income was significantly affected by the reduction in full fundraising that we would normally undertake but we give thanks that our donations and Parish Giving Scheme, and good performance of our financial investments means that our loss wasn't as great as it might have been. Jacqueline Head has looked after the re-opening of the Chapel Rooms which has built up in a wonderful way and regained the community presence that we missed so very much during the pandemic. My thanks goes to everyone involved with our 2021 events and I look forward to the development of further events in 2022 given that we have seen such an encouraging response to St Peter's.

St Peter's continues to welcome new parishioners who have either moved to the area, found us online or heard about us by word of mouth. Welcoming new people has been coupled with welcoming back some, though not yet all, of our usual church members and we continue to find ways to integrate our somewhat fragmented church community. We were thrilled to see Cafe Church launch and thrive in 2021, culminating in a wonderful confirmation service at which we confirmed 5 young people, 5 adults, received one adult into the Church of England and one young person into communion. To see the church full of all ages and backgrounds for such a joyous occasion in October, was a true blessing. 2021 also saw us work to try and get Little Fishes off the ground for our baptism families, this work has begun well but slightly hampered by pandemic outbreaks. I am grateful to Anne Colli-son for her excellent and calm lay leadership in the CYF area and we look forward to developing this with the Mission funding awarded to our benefice for this area of ministry.

Our Pastoral life has been busy and demanding with the rising need and the work of rebuilding our teams. Fr Joe, Fr Eric and Kay Blackburn have exercised incredible diligence and support in this vital side of our work. I also thank Geraldine for her continuing concern for our Care Homes which has again been intermittent due to the pandemic. The welcoming of a placement student has resulted in Carly Taylor joining our team and staying with St Peter's as she discerns her vocation.

The year of 2021 has seen us prayerfully and creatively discern the direction and vocation of this church. Our new Mission Action Plan, which focuses on the openness of our parish, will guide us in taking the parish into her next chapter. Within the Benefice we have been able to identify areas of shared ministry between us and St Andrew's. This has led to the development of collaborative working on areas such as Children, Young People, Pastoral Outreach, Admin functions, and we are now studying together very regularly. We continue to discern and develop this shared approach to these aspects of ministry. Within our PCC we have developed new sub-committees which are finding their feet. I am very grateful to the excellent standing committee of the PCC who have worked so well with me over the year and on behalf of the PCC to transact the business of the PCC and I am so thankful for all that we have achieved.

Considering the state of things at the end of 2020, it is remarkable how much of our common life we have been able to recover. I am in awe of the sheer number of people who have contributed to the rebuilding of our common life and recovery of our church community. I simply haven't been able to name them all here, but I do thank each and every one of you.

*Rev'd Arwen Folkes (MA) Chair of East Blatchington PCC*  
Rector of the United Benefice of East Blatchington & Bishopstone

4c) The independently examined Financial Statements of the Parochial Church Council for the year ended 31st December 2021 and the Treasurer's report.

This year saw a little more normality returning to church life, particularly from July onwards. Total income was 14% higher than the previous year at £98,521 but still well below pre-Covid levels seen in 2019 (£103,179).

Running costs have been well controlled but there has been a need to expend quite considerable sums on Repairs & Replacements (£13,748 – including a new boiler, LED lighting and repairs to the stonework and this figure includes the associated Architects Fees.

An investment into new chairs for the Nave (£2,911) has been made, the payment is showing as a Payment in Advance within the accounts as the new chairs had not been delivered before the year end.

There is an overall shortfall in the year between income and outgoings of £9,277 (shortfall £11,742 - 2020).

The value of our stock market investments has increased during the year by £49,235 thus producing an overall surplus of £39,957.

#### Income

Planned Giving continues to be the mainstay of our support and is up again by another 5% to £42,641. Further tax relief income relating to the period of £7,951 (Planned Giving and Gift Aid) will be received in the new year. Total income tax recovered was slightly up at £12,075. In the second part of the year we could re-instate some fundraising activities, the Craft Fair raised £1,300, Book sales £442, Plant Sale £1,230 and other small donations £50, making a total of £3,022 (£1,498 - 2020). Six months of Chapel rooms lettings brought in £5,795 (£5,141 -2020) and we also received a legacy of £4,578 (recorded within Voluntary Income).

#### Expenditure

Total expenditure was £107,798. It was necessary to spend considerable sums on Repairs & Replacements. The large spend items were a New boiler in Church £4,299: Repairs to Stonework £2,263: New LED lighting in Church for efficiency and economy reasons £3,378: New chairs for Nave £2,911: Associated architects and faculty fees £3,808.

There has been a good control of the costs that are within our remit, but some of the above has meant Church running expenses were £15,891 (£11,767) and Upkeep of Services £8,288 (£5,060) and Cost of Hall trading slightly up at £7,138 (£6,494).

#### Reserves

We started the year with £108,219 on Deposit with CCLA. It has been necessary to withdraw £20,000 to fund R & R activity but we have received £10,341 in interest and income from stock market investments, so at 31 December 2021 these deposits stood at £98,560.

#### Longer Term Investments

These are stock market funds managed on our behalf by CCLA. On 1st January 2021 the book value was £344,212. Despite the difficult economic climate this figure had risen to £393,446 on 31st December 2021.

#### Conclusion

The PCC is truly grateful for the wonderful financial support it has received from across the parish with donations big and small, but our efforts to carry out all our regular activities and achieve a surplus have once again been thwarted by the pandemic. The shortfall is less than in the previous year, which is encouraging, and we have absorbed the loss. We are working on a reserves policy, and as it can be seen the PCC is in a stable financial position to carry out its mission objectives.

*Chris Reynolds, Treasurer*

#### 4d) Churchwardens' Report 2021

##### Building and Fabric

The new church heating boiler was installed in August and new LED lighting in church. We are grateful to Nick Linsell for seeing these project through. The PCC has approved quotes to improve the boiler room steps (for safety) and to renew guttering in 2022. The planned work on the nave reordering will go ahead in 2022 too. Once cleaning regulations were relaxed, we were able to enjoy the beautiful and comfortable new blue pew cushions made for the church by Daphne Dempster, Linda Stratford, Barbara Prendergast and Penny Reynolds during the pandemic.

In June someone reversed into the fence in the Chapel Rooms car park damaging the fence of our neighbours living in Chapel Close. After an initial plan to get a local company to replace the damaged panel, Arwen engaged Shane Somani as our handyman, and he quickly made a repair at very little cost. Chris Reynolds put some reflective strips in place to hopefully prevent it happening again.

##### Churchyard

The benches in the churchyard have seen it become place for local people and visitors to sit, talk, listen to the birds, admire the trees and flowers and reflect etc. Donations have allowed two more benches to be added and another is planned in the new memorial garden which is a work in progress opposite the porch in memory of those who have died from Covid. Nick Linsell continues to care for the churchyard.

There have been various routine maintenance works ably managed by Juliet.

My grateful thanks to all the people who have stewarded our services over the year, dealing calmly and proficiently with the restrictions imposed on us by Covid, whilst providing a warm welcome to all. I would also like to thank those who have acted as sidespeople in the past and found the extraordinary events of the last couple of years have interrupted their role, if they find they are still not ready to resume, we will thank them by name in the next edition of Cross Keys. In the first full PCC meeting that we hold in 2022 we will appoint sidespeople.

My thanks go especially to Juliet for her good-humoured friendship and guidance in my first year as churchwarden.

*Geraldine Hedgecock*

##### Other matters:

At the beginning of the year the Church had to close because of Covid. Thankfully by March we were able to open again for private prayer. I was very grateful for all the volunteers who came forward on a daily to basis to clean and then lock up the church.

Your support was very much appreciated as this cleaning continued until July when some of the Covid restrictions were lifted and we could reduce the daily cleaning to the stewards cleaning just before the 5.30 service on Saturdays and after the 10.00 on Sundays. We now have a small team who lock up the Church at 4.00pm whenever required and many thanks to this team for their support as well as Neville Chalkley who opens the Church up every morning. Again, 'thank you' to all involved for your commitment and support over this period which has been really appreciated.

*Juliet Mitton*

The Churchwardens wish to thank the Rector, PCC and everyone in the parish for their help and support during the year.

#### 4e Safeguarding

All DBS checks are up-to-date and there are no incidents to report.



I am standing down as safeguarding officer and handing over to Carly Taylor this month. I would ask for your help and support in this role by being mindful of any children or adults who may be vulnerable in our Church community and by telling Carly of any concerns you have about them. Safeguarding arrangements are on the front page of the Parish's website.

If you take part in any activity that you think may require you to hold a DBS certificate then please let Carly know.

*Daphne Dempster, Parish Safeguarding Office*

#### 4f) The Deanery Synod

We are members of the Lewes and Seaford Deanery Synod. The following are members of the elected **Standing Committee**:-

Rural Dean, The Revd James Hollingsworth; Lay Chair, Sharon Philips; Treasurer, Maria Greco; Assistant Rural Dean, The Revd Arwen Folkes; Michelle Boyes, Janet Matthews, The Revd Martin Miller and the Revd Stephen Stukes.

This year both our Rector, Arwen and Assistant Curate, Joe Padfield were elected to serve on the **Diocesan Synod** as House of Clergy reps.

Ian Rothery was warmly thanked for his contributions as Lay Chair for many years.

The Deanery Synod meets 3 x per year and this year meetings were held on zoom initially and at the final meeting in November 34 attended in person and 24 on zoom.

**Mission action plans** from all the parishes in the Deanery will be considered to form a Deanery Action Plan.

**Finance.** At each meeting we receive a full financial report – for example at the meeting on 8<sup>th</sup> November it was reported that we pay about three vicar's worth less than we need. The diocesan Secretary gave us information about the budget. The parish share drop in 2020 had been significant and the expenditure in the budget for 2022 is about £5 million pounds higher than in 2021. For example, the cost of a two year safeguarding exercise comes to an end this year and will mean a drop in the safeguarding budget, but it is hard to keep Parish Ministry costs down to the historic 3%.

The first meeting for 2022 was fixed for 23<sup>rd</sup> February 2022 and has taken place.

*Kay Blackburn and Maggie Chitty, Deanery Synod members representing St. Peter's for the year 2021*

#### 4g) Health and Safety.

Covid has continued to feature highly in the work of the H&S Team and updated Risk Assessments have been completed. All these have been based on the national guidance and rules and guidance from the Church of England website.

Work continues for the boiler house steps to be enclosed. New risk assessments have been completed for the pet service, carols by the pond and the ramp in the church.

As we continue to open up after Covid and to provide support for those with individual responsibilities it was agreed that a new committee would be created. This is called the Chapel Rooms, Health & Safety and Safeguarding Committee and has met on 2 occasions since its inception. We aim to meet between PCC dates so that we can feed back or take forward actions that have arisen. We are researching whether it is possible to upload the documents to a central cloud folder to assist with access so that if people are planning to carry out activities or have concerns, they can review whether these have already been covered.

The 2 dead trees in the churchyard, one of which was brought down in high winds had already been identified and reported to Lewes District Council. We continue to push for a resolution to this, the bulging flint wall facing Blatchington Hill and the uneven paving stones from the Council.

There is still some work to be finalised from the review of the fire extinguishers in the Chapel Rooms and this is being taken forward by the newly formed committee. A H&S and Fire Risk Assessment review was completed on 23/1/22 and the actions are being taken forward by the committee. The Equalities Act review will be completed shortly as we waited until the Nave re-ordering works had been completed.

*Debbie Phipps H&S Officer*

#### 5) Pastoral Team Report

This report should be read in the context of the ongoing Corona Virus Pandemic. During this year our dedicated pastoral team continued their ministry with sensitivity and care. The telephone tree was used extensively at the beginning of the year, but as restrictions were eased it became less rigid and more flexible. Relationships developed during this period have continued. We were able to open the church for private prayer and a prayer line established in the churchyard was well used. On line services continued to be an invaluable way of enabling people to keep in touch and be included in worship. At the beginning of this year the 'Faith at Home Booklet', put together by a small team, was delivered to 30 people who we thought might appreciate such a resource, and indeed the feedback was very positive.

During this year I stepped down from my ministry to the care homes and Geraldine Hedgecock took over the organisation of 'prayer and praise'. Other members of the pastoral team take Holy Communion. As the pandemic continues, all the ministry to the Care Homes is exercised within the protocols of the individual care homes and is strictly adhered to as well as the recommended protocols of the Church of England. In the Autumn, at the time of my annual review, I decided that it was time to stand down from the leadership of the pastoral team and Fr Joe took over the lead of the team and has done a magnificent job. We continue to always prayerfully consider how we can reach out pastorally to those in need, and it must be said that many of our parishioners who are not formally part of the team, continue to be remarkably caring and compassionate in a way that we would, of course, hope a Christian Community to be. Thanks to all involved.

*Kay Blackburn*

#### Report on The Choir

During these unprecedented times until August no singing was allowed in church. Since then, the choir has guided the music through what has still been a challenging time. Many people have volunteered to help out in the choir and have done St Peter's proud. We strengthen the hymns with descants to add colour and unity as a choir to accompany the congregation. Highlights of the year have been with singing the Kontakion and Magnificat. This has been an unusual time and the choir have held together steadfast despite all of what we have endured in our lives. The choir is working on a new mass setting called the Kilcreggan Mass which is a Celtic influenced sound which we are sure everybody will enjoy singing.

Our goals as a choir have been delayed somewhat. However, with the changing times we hope to enrich our services with new and interesting music.

A big thank you to everyone who takes part and enjoys singing with St. Peter's choir.

*Coryn Roberts, Organist*

#### Report on East Blatchington Mothers' Union

Our first Meeting after Covid was on 10 August 2021 when we all gathered in Kay's garden for our Mary Sumner Day Service and celebration of tea in the garden, with cakes and a raffle. A beautiful day. This was followed on 14 September by Kay speaking of Angels in Art with slides, which was a stunning presentation. We held a Mothers' Union Eucharist on 18 September with Arwen in Church. In October Geraldine gave a fascinating talk about her time in a Convent and in November Juliet told us about her time in the Wrens, which was very informative. We all followed the prayers for 16 days of Activism against Gender Based Violence from 25 November until 10 December, the highlight being the Mothers' Union Global Day Holy Communion Service at St Peter's Church on 27 November led

by Bishop Will of Lewes. We were joined by Denton and Seaford and other Mothers' Unions in the Lewes District. This began with 3 minutes of silence. It was a beautiful Service followed by tea in the Hall.

On 14 December St Peter's held our Mothers' Union Advent Service in the afternoon, followed by tea, and our neighbouring branches were again invited.

*Marilyn Haydon*

#### Report on EBB Church Café and Little Fishes

Explore, Believe and Belong are all core aims of the young people's group that started in 2021. Six girls, between 10 & 14 years, initially showed an interest in exploring confirmation and the group was born in June as a way of encouraging them to grow in their faith, in fellowship with each other and to find their place within the Church.

Through a variety of games, activities and worship sessions – in a variety of places including the beach, where Fr. Joe got a soaking, and the Church, where the young people dressed up in the vestments – the group has grown stronger and bonded together. Parents joined us for some sessions, sharing and learning alongside their children.

The group meets once a month, after school, and then aims to join in with the Saturday evening Mass. A favourite session was held in September when we made, and ate, bread together. A plaited roll was kept for the Saturday Mass which became a teaching Eucharist just prior to their confirmation. It was so lovely to have the congregation, young and old, gathered around the altar. In October five of the young people were confirmed, by Bishop Will, and another chose to be received into communion before confirmation.

Having kept the group intentionally small while preparing them for confirmation everyone agreed they wanted to open the doors, gently, to welcome others in to share what they had. By the time of our Christmas party two more had joined us. The young people are excited about what the future holds, particularly as the Parish looks to employ a Children, Youth and Family worker.

#### Little Fishes

Little Fishes is a new initiative to reach out to the youngest members of the Church – those who have been brought for baptism both at St. Peter's and St. Andrew's. The hope is that it will be a fun, God space for young children and might also provide their parents with some ideas and encouragement of how to nurture the faith in their children.

We met for the first time in November, on a Sunday afternoon, for a Stay and Play welcome session with toys, songs and stories. We intend to meet on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday afternoon of each month but unfortunately Covid 19 restrictions prevented us meeting in December.

Two wonderful discoveries were made in our first Little Fishes. The first being the joy of youngsters from our Café Church group helping out – and being adored by the little ones – and the second the wonder of using bubbles for our prayers! Please pray for the young families who are often a hidden part of our church family.

*Anne Collison*

**Minutes of Meeting of Parishioners to elect Churchwardens and Annual Parochial Church Meeting in St. Peter's Church, Belgrave Road, Seaford and live-streamed on Sunday 18th April 2021 at 2.00pm**

There were 17 attendees in church and 8 who joined via Zoom

Revd Arwen Folkes welcomed all attendees and opened with a prayer.

**Minutes of Meeting of Parishioners to elect Churchwardens**

1. Apologies were received from Fr. Trevor Smyth, Barbara Prendergast, Christa Ovenden and Moira MacMillan.

2. Minutes of the meeting held on 25th October 2020 were approved with no matters arising.

3. Nomination and election of Churchwardens.

Nick Linsell is stepping down and the rector said how grateful we all are for the time and commitment he has given over ten years. Nine years of 'ordinary' time is an achievement, but this final year of pandemic has seen an increase in decisions and paperwork.

Although handing the churchwarden role to another, Nick has kindly offered to continue supporting us with the building and fabric work.

The Rector extended her thanks again to him and to his wife Margaret and presented him with a card with gift inside and some plants for the garden.

Addressing the meeting, Nick said how the last 10 years had seen ups and downs, mainly ups but the Pandemic being a down. The best 'up' being the appointment of our present rector. He expressed his thanks for all the great support he has had, mentioning in particular; Neville Chalkley, George Rix and Kay Blackburn.

It has been lovely to be with friends and to continue to be so.

Nominations:

Juliet Mitton was proposed by Daphne Dempster and seconded by Linda Stratfield.

Geraldine Hedgecock was proposed by Valerie Skues and seconded by Beryl Henfield.

Both were duly elected.

Arwen welcomed them and thanked them for being prepared to stand.

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**Annual Parochial Church Meeting**

1. Apologies were received from Fr. Trevor Smyth, Barbara Prendergast, Christa Ovenden and Moira MacMillan.

2. Minutes of the meeting held on 25th October 2020 were approved.

3. No matters were arising from those minutes.

4. To receive from the Parochial Church Council and be free to discuss:-

4a) A report on the numbers entered on the Electoral Roll

Since the numbers presented in the written report for 2020 there have been 8 additions and 5 removals giving us an increase to 111, it is wonderful to see an increase. This means that under the Church Representation Rules the number of representatives who can stand for election for the PCC continues at the increased figure of 12 people.

*Mrs Debbie Phipps Electoral Roll Officer.*

*There were no questions, and the report was unanimously accepted*

The Rector thanked Debbie and she welcomed those who have joined; we pray with them for those whom we have lost.

4b) An Annual Report on the proceedings of the Parochial Church Council and the activities of the Parish in general, including the report from the Chair of the PCC

Everything that has been achieved is amazing, we have done the best we can in difficult circumstances and Arwen expressed her thanks. As a registered charity we have demonstrated that we meet our charitable purpose.

*Arwen Folkes Rector*

*Geraldine Hedgecock PCC Secretary*

*There were no questions and the report was unanimously accepted*

4c) The independently examined Financial Statements of the Parochial Church Council for the year ended 31st December 2020 and the Treasurer's report.

A copy of the report has been available on the website and Chris hoped people had had a look. He has nothing to add except to say that he tries to keep reports as short and simple as possible. Any questions please contact him and he will do his best to answer. It is remarkable that we ended the year the same as we started with a shortfall of approximately £1,500 and this is in great part thanks to generous extra donations received, thank you.

There were good profits from long-term investments, but we have to bear in mind that this income is restricted funds and so how we can spend it is limited. The month-by-month income is un-restricted and more useful.

We look ahead to a brighter future if we keep away a 3rd wave of Covid and we can start to raise funds and break even.

*Chris Reynolds Treasurer*

*Question:* Sylvia Wardle said that people have made donations and not received an acknowledgement, not necessarily seeking thanks but confirmation.

Arwen expressed profound apologies and said she will look at improving the process undergone to ensure this is rectified. Chris gave assurances that he keeps a note.

The rector thanked Chris, we are a lot less anxious than we might have been. She pointed out that we are in a far stronger position than many parishes for which we are very grateful.

*The report was unanimously accepted*

4d) Report on the fabric, good and ornaments of the Church of the Parish.

Nave re-ordering to allow access for wheelchairs, as this will involve the removal of 3 pews and further disruption this work has been suspended whilst we are restricted by Covid regulations.

Boiler Room Steps. Planning notice has been put up and quotations received. Nick has met the Planning Officer for Lewes District Council who will take the proposal forward. PCC need to agree on preferred quotation at their next meeting.

Porch Area Drainage, Polegate Roofing have made a temporary repair to the gutter, we need to assess if this has worked when we next have heavy rainfall before taking more permanent action as we don't want to spend money unless it is necessary.

Chapel Rooms Roof. A problem has arisen since the written report and it is mainly with the flat roof where water is seeping into the internal wall in the main hall. My thoughts are we concentrate on getting the flat roof re-felted first and defer any work on the pitched roof and monitor any further decay before making any further commitments.

Church Lighting. The electrician has submitted a quotation for changing to LED lighting which would be a big saving in time, there are 2 scaffolding options. This needs to be discussed with the PCC. Due to the restriction on numbers in the church we may have to go with using a scaffold tower rather than full scaffolding.

Church Boiler. At the time of writing the boiler services have just been carried out. The church boiler has a leak in the heat exchanger and it is recommended that the boiler needs replacing as soon as possible. It is still in use but will continue to leak and will in the near future have to be turned off. The plumber will send a report to be passed on to the PCC and architect. The Boiler is 10 years old, further details will follow.

*Nick Linsell, Churchwarden*

*Question:* Valerie Skues suggested an area of remembrance be created in the church grounds for those lost in the pandemic, with the area that has been cleared of trees in mind.

Nick thought this was a good idea and Arwen said it would be taken to the standing committee.

Valerie also thought it appropriate that mention was made of Helen Lander, we remember the anniversary of her death this week and it was her legacy that allowed us to buy the Chapel Rooms.

Arwen said the two new benches have been a real addition to the church yard. The corner one was donated in memory of Rod Partlett by his family and the single one was donated by Lindi Curtis who sadly passed away on 8th April this year. She thanked Nick. *There were no further questions and the report was unanimously accepted*

4e) A report on Safeguarding. Since the submitted report nothing new has happened. The Diocese are reviewing essential training requirements and we are waiting to hear on this. We have fully complied with the Past Cases Review 2 being run in all Church of England Diocese.

*Daphne Dempster, Safeguarding Officer*

*There were no questions and the report was unanimously accepted*

4f) A report on the proceedings of the Lewes and Seaford Deanery Synod.

There were no meetings between the last APCM and the end of 2020.

*Kay Blackburn, Deanery Synod representative*

Arwen added that this year the vicar of St. Leonards, Revd James Hollingsworth has been appointed as Rural Dean and she as Assistant Rural Dean. A chair and secretary are presently being sought. Maggie Chitty continues to represent our PCC as well as Kay.

4g) A report on Health and Safety.

There is little to add to the written report. It has been her busiest year with the necessary compliances with the Church of England and Chichester Diocese Covid H&S risk assessments.

*Debbie Phipps, H&S Officer*

Arwen thanked Debbie for her oversight of safety, help and guidance over the many forms that had to be completed.

*There were no questions and the report was unanimously accepted*

5. A report on the Pastoral Team.

Kay Blackburn was attending on Zoom and had submitted a written report, Arwen presented this on her behalf. She thanked everyone for all the work undertaken with special mention of the phone network and the prolific delivery of items. She thanked Kay for her oversight.

*There were no questions and the report was unanimously accepted*

Owing to the pandemic there are no activities to report from:

- The Choir
- The Mother's Union
- The East Blatchington Lectures

6. To elect up to 2 representatives to the Deanery Synod. We are entitled to have a total of 4 representatives and so there are two vacancies, there were no candidates. Arwen invited any that might be interested to let us know.

7. To elect up to 3 representatives of the Laity to the Parochial Church Council. Christine Cooke was nominated by Valerie Skues and seconded by Debbie Phipps. Debbie Phipps was nominated by Geraldine Hedgecock and seconded by George Rix. Christina Bacon was nominated by Sylvia Wardle and seconded by Daphne Dempster. All were duly elected.

8. To appoint an independent examiner to the accounts. Proposal was made that Michele Spencer continue in this role and she was duly elected.

9. To consider any other matters of the Parochial or general church interest and Rector's address

Given that it has only been six months since our last APCM, I am not going to take up too much of your time this afternoon. It is clear, from the reports that we have received at this meeting that this past year has been an extraordinary one and I stand here hugely grateful for the generosity, patience and kindness that we have experienced as a church. It has been bumpy and we have done our best to ride through the bumps and rise to the challenges that have been presented to us. We have learnt much, we have evolved a little, and we have discovered much about what makes us tick and what we have to offer.

This address comes as we stand at this rather interesting crossing in the life of this parish. We have moved out of crisis and into a period of trying to adjust into whatever lies ahead of us. There is recovery and rebuilding ahead of us, there are works that we need to do on our building, there is the integration of existing and new faces in our church community, and there are God given opportunities and challenges for us to embrace. There is a careful process ahead of us that will require all the fruits of the Spirit - love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, ... but particularly faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. The prayer life that we have established over this past year is incredible and will be the thing that sustains us as we move forward.

Change is always hard at the best of times, but a change that has been imposed on us without notice or autonomy is even harder. So, as the PCC gets to grips with all that lies ahead, as we let go of what has been lost, find again the things we love, and welcome the things that God has brought into our vision, I pray that we will do all of this gently and with kindness, patience and peace.

No fireworks in this Rector's address, just a steady hand and a humble walk into the future that God is setting before us. The reports put before the PCC have shown the way in which everyone has pulled together over this past year and shown extraordinary and necessary faith and compassion. My particular thanks must be with Nick, Juliet and Julia as the churchwardens, Chris and Geraldine as treasurer and secretary, with Kay and the pastoral team for their telephone support and deliveries,



with the delivering, cleaning, serving and stewarding teams. I warmly welcome and thank those who have stepped forward to newly contribute to the life of this church.

I am full of immense gratitude for the generous support shown by so many of you over this past year and I am confident that we will emerge stronger as we recover our common life and embrace the future that God has ordained for us. Please continue to keep this church and this parish in your prayers.

Our parish has received a civic award for our role in Seaford Voluntary Emergency Team which served the town during the pandemic.

*Revd Arwen Folkes*

AOB  
Valerie Skues thanked Arwen for her leadership, dedication and courage and all who have supported her. There was applause in response.

The Rector closed with The Grace.