



St Peter's Church

East Blatchington, Seaford

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE PAROCHIAL
CHURCH COUNCIL
for the year ended 31 December 2022

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Church of St. Peter, Belgrave Road, East Blatchington, 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 30th April 2023 at 11.15am

AGENDAS

Meeting of Parishioners to elect Churchwardens

1. Apologies
2. Minutes of the 2022 Meeting (provided on page 12)
3. Nomination and election of Churchwardens

Annual Parochial Church Meeting

1. Apologies
2. Minutes of the 2022 Meeting (provided on page 16)
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 2022 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 Café Church and Little Fishes
 - The East Blatchington Lectures
6. To elect up to 4 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 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 (<i>Vice Chair</i>)
Churchwardens:	Ms Juliet Mitton Mrs Geraldine Hedgecock
Treasurer:	Mr Chris Reynolds
Licensed Reader:	Mrs Kay Blackburn (<i>Deanery Synod Representative</i>)
Deanery Synod Reps:	Mrs Maggie Chitty Mrs Jennifer Spicer
Lay Representatives:	
Elected Members:	Mrs Christine Cooke (<i>Secretary</i>) Mr Jeffrey Clarke Mrs Daphne Dempster Mrs Susan Drader Mrs Jacqueline Head Mrs Samukeliso Mavuka Ms Christa Ovenden Mrs Debbie Phipps (<i>Electoral Roll and Health and Safety Officer</i>) Ms Aileen Ricard Mrs Linda Stratford
Co-opted Members:	Mrs Carly Taylor (<i>Safeguarding Officer</i>) Mrs Christa Lindner (<i>Buildings Officer</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. Email: 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 26th June 2021 and licensed as priest on 11th June 2022. 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 occasions. We enjoy the support of an excellent pastoral team from within the congregation. The parish value all their work and thank 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 post of House for Duty Priest at St. Andrew's Bishopstone, vacant since November 2021, has been filled; the Revd. Elizabeth Jinks was appointed in November 2022. Her induction will take place in April 2023. The coming together of both parishes continues, 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. In December members of both PCCs met together for the first time for an enjoyable 'Bring and Share' Christmas lunch.

4a) Electoral Roll

The electoral roll currently stands at 116 names. At the time of this report the revision is continuing but to date there have been 4 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 Office

4b) Proceedings of the Parochial Church Council

Since the Annual Meeting on 8th May 2022 the PCC has met on six occasions in church and in the Upper Room.

Amongst the items considered and discussed were:

- The restructuring, remit and budget of the PCC sub-committees. The three set up this year: (OLPS) Outreach, Learning, Pastoral and Safeguarding, (BHS) Buildings, Health and Safety, and (FCSL) Fundraising, Charity and Social Life have worked very successfully.
- Reports from the PCC sub-committees.
- Regular budget forecast reports showing monthly income and expenditure throughout 2022.
- Approval of the Financial Statements for 2022.
- Ensuring that our Mission Action Plan remains at the forefront of our decisions and activities.
- The appointment of 14 sidespeople (previously called sidesmen)
- The decision to allow small memorial slabs for people whose ashes are buried in our churchyard.
- The decision to install a defibrillator on the outside wall of the Chapel Rooms.
- Resolutions to spend various amounts of money for Repairs and Replacements in the church and Chapel Rooms.
- The decision to go ahead with employing a part-time Children and Families worker, paid for with a Mission Funding grant.
- The appointment of new House for Duty priest at Bishopstone.

The Standing Committee of the PCC has met on 4 occasions since the last APCM in the Chapel Rooms.

The names of 116 parishioners were recorded on the electoral roll for the parish that was presented to the Annual Parochial Church Meeting 2022.

All are welcome to attend services in St. Peter's; they were fully restored in church in 2022 and will continue to 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

The year of 2022 has been another busy year during which the Parish of East Blatchington has continued to recover from the pandemic whilst also responding to new challenges in the wider community. New challenges have faced us in equal measure to new opportunities to serve.

Our United Benefice was much strengthened by the creation of a paid post for administrative support. This began in January and has fast become a vital role within our team liberating clergy from admin, coordinating our communications, managing events, and supporting our treasurers. I am grateful to both PCCs for funding this post and for the difference that it has made to our ministry. I would also like to make special thanks to Christine Cooke, Chris Reynolds, Geraldine Hedgecock, and Juliet Mitton for their tireless work as the executive officers of the PCC and making sure that we are able to lead the church and deal with the business of each day with efficiency and diligence.

The Church & our Team

The year also began with the works on the accessibility project being completed in our 'Lady Chapel' and the restoration of our statue with thanks to a generous donation. The project was completed by the gifting of the Driftwood Cross, created by local carpenter John Aimes with wood from the Seaford coastline and funded by Robin Yarnton. The completion of this work was held in celebration with Bishop Will coming to bless the new area.

Despite any initial reservations about removing these pews it has to be said that it has made an enormous impact on how we use the church itself. Small groups use the space almost daily regularly for prayer, study, and pastoral meetings. Within our main services we are now able to welcome children, families, people with pushchairs, wheelchairs, mobility scooters far more effectively. We were delighted with the works themselves which were completed to a high standard.

A significant change was made in how we manage and maintain our buildings this year with the creation of the 'Buildings Team' (to then become the 'Buildings Officer') as a delegated responsibility from the churchwardens. After openly advertising this role, we were pleased to welcome Christa Lindner who brought experience from her prior church in this regard. Taking over from Nick Linsell, Christa continues to develop an effective team and efficient schedule of works for the church. Our Quinquennial was conducted by Tim Wells in August and as a PCC we look to 2023 to plan and manage the recommendations from that. Nick Linsell continues to maintain our churchyard and thanks to the generous donations from within the church and his help, a beautiful circular bench has been placed in the newly cleared Memorial Garden facing the porch. This has been, as hoped, very well used, both for worship, contemplation, prayer and pastoral conversations.

In June it was wonderful to witness our Assistant Curate, Fr Joe Padfield, be made priest at All Saints, Hove and we have welcomed his increasingly growing ministry with us. Carly Taylor has also been a source of vital support with her taking on of the Parish Safeguarding Officer, as a lay pastoral assistant and then, in September, picking up the reins of the administrative assistant role. The strength of our team was made apparent during the time of my sickness in the summer. I thank everyone who held the team together in my absence and supported me in my return. My gratitude also goes to our PCC and Standing Committee, who have helped me enormously throughout the year with their commitment and wisdom.

Worship

We have continued to maintain a busy timetable of worship. This has been possible due to the shared ministry with our Assistant Curate, our Reader Kay Blackburn and our retired and PTO clergy. All of us are ably assisted and supported by George Rix and Linda Stratford, who lead our sacristy and server teams. Our readers, intercessors and stewards have meant that we are able to involve the wider church community. Our musical life has recovered fully with the growth in our choir, led by Angela Chalkley and Coryn Roberts. It is wonderful to see our church life recovered and to see that our services welcome people from across many different walks of life.

It is thanks to our tech team, now led by Danny Taylor, that we have been able to continue offering our worship online and I know this is greatly appreciated by those who find themselves still at home each week or occasionally. I think this is now embedded in the life of our church as a positive thing to have emerged from Covid-19.

We took the lead for the annual Walk of Witness on Good Friday, with Churches Together in Seaford, and led a new route which welcomed a great number of people. At Easter, just after the nave works were completed, it was a particular delight to see the residents of our local care home on one side, and children playing on the floor on the other side. The breadth of life in the worship of God.

In September we marked the very sad death of Queen Elizabeth II with the opening of a book of condolence. I remain delighted that we continue to keep our doors open every day of the year and that Morning Prayer, Breathing Space and the Rosary Group have become stable weekday expressions of our faith and witness.

Having appointed in November of this year, we look forward to welcoming our new Associate Vicar, The Rev'd Elizabeth Jinks, to join us in 2023, to receive her expression of faith in our worship, and the support that her ministry will provide to the Benefice team as a whole.

Having delivered a parish-wide invitation and communication, Christmas also saw us welcome a great many people to our indoor and outdoor services and we thank God for the opportunity to do so.

Ministry & Outreach

Our church found themselves again in the middle of a crisis and with a calling to respond. Spearheading 'Seaford for Ukraine', the people of St Peter's were actively and energetically involved in the local response to 'Homes for Ukraine'. This involved the setting up of a Ukrainian café in the centre of town, providing a peer support network for hosts, overseeing safeguarding, managing volunteers both inside and outside the church, fundraising to enable the resourcing of refugees as they arrived and the provision of English lessons. As Rector I was proud that we so readily used our resources and skills to meet this challenge and thank the many people who were involved; our ecumenical partners, our public sector partnerships, our PCC members, our church congregation and especially Carly Taylor and Fr Joe Padfield. St Peter's once again fulfilled her mission to be open and responsive to the needs in the community.

Partnership working is also what enabled us to support the launch of the Forget-me-Knot memory cafe which continues to meet every Friday in the Chapel Rooms, meeting the needs of carers and members of the community who struggle with memory issues. Seafriends are the managing partner who take care of this space and we provide our room free for their use and it is supported by a number of trained volunteers, many of whom comes from our church community.

Under the careful eye of Geraldine Hedgecock, Fr Joe Padfield and the many involved volunteers, I am pleased that we have now recovered our ministry to Care Homes and Home Communion in our parish. This is such a rewarding and vital ministry, and it is very good to have witnessed its gentle recovery over the year.

The launch of our 'Bible Study Group' in May this year has provided a space of reflection and engagement with the Holy Scriptures. Aably led by Aileen Rickard, Jeff Clarke and Carly Taylor, I am delighted that we now have this as part of our life together. Our commitment to learning together has also been seen in good attendance at our Lent and Advent courses, and the very well-attended 'St Peter's Seminar'.

Thanks to a generous donation of books from Kay Blackburn and others, Flora Schofield has catalogued them all and enabled us to launch a parish library for use by anyone who wishes to read further.

A successful plant sale and book sale took place in 2022, organised by Nick and Margaret Linsell to whom we are very grateful. We also recovered the East Blatchington lecture tradition and at all of these events we were pleased to welcome people from across our community. We are focused on fully recovering our pre-COVID outreach and fundraising life in 2023.

Our children and young people ministry has continued with stability and growth through Little Fishes and our 'Café Church' was renamed 'Lighthouse' towards the end of this year. We welcome families from across both parishes and this is an excellent form of joined up ministry. We have trialled an age inclusive service named 'Kairos' on a Saturday evening at 5.30pm. These groups are exciting, and we hope to build upon their growth in the coming year. I have continued in my role as governor of Seaford Primary School, and we have welcomed many children on school visits during the summer and at Christmas. We hope to continue building upon these relationships.

Considering the cost of living and winter heating crisis, Linda Stratford has ably led a team to deliver weekly winter warmer lunches. These have been greatly appreciated and attended and very well served by a team of parishioners and opened up an important conversation about reducing isolation. Our weekly Art and Crochet Groups serve a particular need in this area.

Finally, but not marginally, the attention to communicating our church life, with our posters, bulletin communications, leaflets and Cross Keys has continued through the commitment and time given by Neville Chalkley and Christine Cooke, and I know they are much appreciated and play a crucial role in keeping our church life together.

The Chapel Rooms

Following COVID-19 our chapel rooms soon became busy again, under the careful stewardship of Jacqueline Head. It is so good to see groups from across our community using the space again, but it has also become apparent that after thirty years of ownership the building is in need of significant repair and maintenance. This has led the PCC to carefully consider the Chapel Rooms in terms of viability and ministry.

From this work, and the careful eye of our Buildings Officer, we have identified areas of the building that require attention. This has led to a small increase in our hire charges, but in line with other organisations. With Jacqueline Head retiring from her role after six hardworking years we have migrated our hirers across to an online booking system during December and Sylvie Aston, with the support of Carly Taylor has taken this up. The future looks encouraging for the Chapel Rooms, and I am committed to seeking funding from other sources to facilitate the protection and maintenance of this valuable community resource. To this end, Jeff Clarke and I held a very productive meeting with Kathryn Prior, fundraising advisor from the Diocese of Chichester, in November.

Closing comments

As Rector, and chair of the PCC, I close this report with immense thanksgiving to the whole church community and everyone mentioned above. We believe in a God with whom all things are possible, and our continued commitment to the presence of Christ in the Eucharist surely finds its fullest expression in the how we make his presence known to each other and in the community. We have been through a time of negotiating much change and it feels as though we have finally reached a stable point in our life. However, the energy crisis has impacted greatly on our finances and though we do have fiscal challenges ahead of us I ask the whole church community to join me in giving thanks and prayer for all that has been, and to join me in saying 'yes' to whatever lies ahead.

I commend this report to your thanksgiving and prayer. Thank you all for all you do to make St Peter's as vibrant as it is.

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 2022 and the Treasurer's report.

With the impact of the COVID virus having lessened we saw St. Peter's return to a full year of activity. Income increased 9%. to £107,497 but expenditure also rose 31% to £156,303 which has produced a deficit of £46,106 necessitating the need to draw from our reserves to fund the difference. Part of this increase in expenditure was pre-planned, such as the improvements to the nave, but there was also an urgency to remove the worn away roof guttering hangers and replace with wider width guttering. The old radiators in the Chapel rooms were also replaced. Expenditure on these items amounted to £34,340 so the operating deficit was £11,766.

Income

Planned giving continues to be the mainstay of our support which at £42,715 together with associated tax relief of £10,272 represents 40% of our income. This scheme is a great asset to the PCC with budgeting and I would advocate that anyone who is not currently using the scheme join. Activities for generating funds saw an increase of 41% to £4,276 mainly through the excellent plant and book sales.

The ability to hire out the Chapel rooms for a full year saw a 58% increase in revenue to £10,415. A new computer booking system will commence in January 2023 and together with a considerable number of new hirers the prospects of further increases in revenue are extremely good.

Expenditure

Total expenditure was £156,303. For reasons mentioned above, Church Maintenance was £35,384 compared to £11,295 the previous year, and Chapel Rooms repairs/improvements were £5,920 compared to no expenditure in 2021.

Charitable giving increased to £2,325 (£369)

Church running costs increased by 13% to £18,092. Every effort is made to keep costs under strict control, but some things are out of our hands. One of our investments during the year was to install a NEST operating system in the church to give greater control over our heating in view of the drastic increase in price following the war in Ukraine. Nevertheless, there has been a 68% increase in our energy costs to £16,454.79 (£9,762.27) and these costs will continue to have significant impact in 2023.

Reserves

We started the year with £98,560 on Deposit with CCLA. It has been necessary to withdraw £40,000 to fund R & R activity but we have received £11,514 in interest and income from stock market investments, so at 31 December 2021 these deposits stood at £70,074

Longer Term Investments

These are stock market funds managed on our behalf by CCLA. On 1st January 2021 the book value was £393,446. The war in Ukraine and other global events have had a negative impact on investment markets and our funds are now valued at £347,137.

Conclusion

The PCC is truly grateful for the wonderful financial support it has received from across the parish with donations big and small, but it has been a very disappointing and difficult year financially. Although we are posting a considerable deficit this year, it is my considered opinion that East Blatchington PCC is a viable enterprise. However, it is essential that we bring our income and expenditure into balance. In 2023 it will be imperative to explore avenues to both increase income and reduce overheads as a matter of priority.

We have commenced some actions to establish a better knowledge concerning the provenance of our restricted funds and this also will need to be addressed in 2023 in order that we can establish a sound reserves policy.

Chris Reynolds, Treasurer

4d) Churchwardens report on the Fabric and Grounds of the Church and Chapel Rooms

This year we were pleased to appoint Christa Lindner as our Buildings Officer, working closely with the churchwardens and under the auspices of the Buildings & Health & Safety sub-committee of the PCC. The Rector, Treasurer and H&S Officer are part of this sub-committee. Christa wasted no time in getting to grips with the tasks in hand and the great bulk of the achievements listed below are down to her hard work.

The H&S aspect of the work will be covered in the H&S report. There is a certain amount of crossover, for example the replacement and maintenance of fire extinguishers, which is why it is so useful to work closely together.

Quinquennial Inspection The architect Tim Wells has carried out the 5 Yearly Inspection of the church and grounds and produced a report listing areas that need attention. Some are more urgent than others. I will not give you details here, but if you would like to know any more or see a copy of the report, please ask Geraldine or Christa.

Church

In February 2022 the long-planned re-ordering of the nave took place with the removal of pews on either side of the aisle, creating space for users of disability aids and families. The space is now referred to as The Lady Chapel and provides a lovely area for small groups. There is a carpeted ramp to the chancel.

Arwen arranged for the statue of Mary to be sent away to be re-painted and a beautiful job has been done.

A butler sink has been installed in the sacristy enabling the flower arrangers to safely access water within the church and providing an appropriate place for the sacristans to wash cruets etc.

A Google NEST thermometer has been fitted for better control of the heating.

Lighting in the vestry has been improved and non-slip tape placed on the steps. The door to the sacristy no longer catches on the floor.

Alan Oatway has done a lovely job of repairing the exterior porch light, and making it look better than ever, and the inner porch light has been replaced. There is a new mat in the porch.

The organ requires new speakers, and their replacement has been organised but the company will not be able to supply and fit until 2023.

Churchyard and Grounds

Nick Linsell continues to care for the churchyard and with the help of Margaret has begun a sympathetic planting scheme in the Memorial Garden opposite the South entrance.

Lewes District Council have levelled the path at the Belgrave Road entrance and put tarmac at the lychgate entrance.

The soakaway has been cleared outside the South door.

Nick has scraped moss and weeds from the steps to the North door, boiler room and path to priest's door and Dave Batchelor has painted yellow lines on exterior steps to improve safety.

A light has been fitted in the shed and a problem with the lychgate light has been sorted. The exterior floodlights continue to be an issue by dazzling people, and as a temporary measure the light nearest the gate to Belgrave Road has been disconnected and this has helped a little.

Chapel Rooms

New radiators have been fitted throughout.

Following a serious leak from the flat roof in heavy rain in November, a temporary repair was carried out. Plans have been made for a permanent repair which will take place in 2023.

The damaged and unsafe concertina divider has been removed from the main hall.

All the strip lighting was replaced in the office and the upstairs meeting room as well as new bulbs on the staircase. Bulbs replaced to improve lighting in the lavatories. All the lighting is energy efficient. The motion-activated light outside the main entrance and light above the fire exit are now in working order.

Dirtbuster mats purchased for the entrance hall.

There is a key safe fitted on the brick pillar near the front door.

Record keeping and communication

The office has been reconfigured and all documents and information on buildings and grounds are stored there, as well as being on a shared electronic Google drive. Christa has created a schedule of works which is on the shared drive.

Our thanks go to the rector Arwen for her support, and to everyone who has (and continues) to help with the care of our beautiful church, grounds and hall. Some of the projects listed have been made possible by donations and we thank those individuals for their generosity.

Other business

Thanks go to the team of sidespeople who meet, greet and care for everyone who attends our services in such a friendly way. If this is a role that you are interested in, or would like to know more, please let us know.

We would also like to thank the people who lock the church at the end of the day, Daphne Dempster, Christine Cooke, Neville Chalkley and occasionally Jill Morgan and Penny Reynolds.

Geraldine Hedgecock and Juliet Mitton, Churchwardens

4e Safeguarding

I have been the Parish Safeguarding Officer since the APCM in April 2022.

All required DBS checks are up to date. PCC members currently do not require DBS checks but this will change if a children's and families worker is appointed in the future.

The majority of PCC members and church volunteers needed to renew their safeguarding training this year. After discussion with the diocesan safeguarding team regarding the difficulty for some volunteers in accessing online training it was agreed training could be offered in group sessions to those who needed this. Group training was also offered to those volunteering in the Seaford for Ukraine Community Cafe and English Language Classes.

All volunteers in church activities requiring safeguarding training are now up to date. There is one PCC member who still needs to complete their training. They are aware and have been reminded.

The safeguarding policies were all updated and approved by PCC on 30/08/22.

The Annual Safety Quality Protects review was carried out in September which showed we are meeting the expected safeguarding requirements.

Two improvement points were raised in the review.

1. To improve the access and visibility of our safeguarding policies - This has since been achieved. Our safeguarding policies are now available on the benefice website and a paper copy is kept in the church porch.
2. To update our pastoral policy - The pastoral policy has been reviewed by Rev'd Joe Padfield and Carly Taylor. An updated draft policy will be put to the PCC in March 2023.

This year there have been five safeguarding concerns which have all been documented and reviewed in line with parish and diocesan safeguarding procedures and policies.

If you have any concerns regarding safeguarding, please contact me on pastoralassistant.ebb@gmail.com or 09764 101553

Carly Taylor, Parish Safeguarding Officer

4f) The Deanery Synod

We are members of the Lewes and Seaford Deanery Synod.
The Deanery Synod meets 3 times per year.

There were the regular reports on financial matters, including parish share and presentations on *Fair Trade* and *Family Support Work*. Of particular note this year were 1) the consideration of the Mission Action Plans from all the parishes in the Deanery with the purpose of drawing up Deanery Action Plan to help churches work together more collaboratively. The Deanery Plan was subsequently completed and distributed. 2) The dropping of costs for parishes/benefices like ours with a house for duty priest.

Kay Blackburn

4g) Health and Safety

Work continues for the boiler house steps to be enclosed. New risk assessments were completed for the Jubilee Celebrations and concerts held in the church. All risk assessments have been uploaded to the parish google drive.

The 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 and have sought advice from Ecclesiastical Insurance.

Debbie Phipps H&S Officer

5) Pastoral Team Report

The Outreach, Learning and Pastoral and Safeguarding (OLPS) sub-committee was formed at the St Peter's PCC meeting on 21 June 2022. At the first meeting of the sub-committee on 23 July, the following Terms of Reference were agreed:

This sub-committee will oversee the ministry of the church, its engagement with different age groups, partner organisations, outreach projects, young people, faith development and every activity that furthers the Mission of God in our wider world. At present this will include: Little Fishes; Café Church; Bible Study Group; Courses; Pastoral Team; Care Homes; Forget-me-Knot Café; The Bereavement Cafe & follow-up; welcome and inclusion. The committee will also oversee effective safeguarding across the church's ministry.

The sub-committee has met on three occasions at time of writing and can report on progress in the following areas:

Ministry to Children and Young People

The Little Fishes pre-school group continues to meet each month and has grown slightly over the year. Sessions are a combination of play, craft and learning based on a biblical or church seasonal theme.

Lighthouse (formerly Café Church) now meets twice per month – once for fun activities around a biblical or church seasonal theme and once for Bible Study (known as Café Church Extra).

The sub-committee would particularly like to thank Anne Collison for her work with and commitment to both of these groups.

The job description for a salaried part-time Children, Young People and Families (CYPF) Worker is currently being finalised.

Bereavement Support

The Bereavement Café was not well attended, and the general feeling was that it wasn't meeting a particular need. However, the sub-committee is conscious that bereavement is a significant issue for many people, so other options are being considered.

Members of the bereavement support group provided a knitted square and prayer (with contact details) to everyone who attended the memorial services at St Peter's and St Andrew's in November, and these were well-received.

Kay is undertaking follow-up with families, at 3 months and then 12 months after each funeral.

Pastoral Visiting and Home Communion

Visits are taking place as required and home communion offered where needed. The pastoral care policy has been revised.

Care Home Ministry

Care homes are now being managed individually rather than centrally, with the following co-ordinators, with other members assisting:

- Abundant Grace – Fr Eric
- Beachlands – Fr Joe
- Blatchington Manor – Geraldine
- Clifden House – Arwen
- Threeways – Carly

We will need to consider offering a service to Claremont House and the new care home being built on Homefield Road.

Forget-me-Knot Memory Café

This is still very well-attended. Tony G and Geraldine have done excellent work on this project but have now had to step back, so more volunteers are being sought.

Winter Warmer Lunches

The Winter Warmer lunches held on a Friday have been very successful, and the sub-committee would like to thank Linda for her hard work in co-ordinating these.

Art Group

The weekly Art Group run by Kay continues to be well attended and is a good source of fellowship.

Bible Study Group

The weekly Bible Study Group has a total membership of 17, with about 11-12 attending each week. Feedback from those attending has been excellent, and the group's numbers swelled during Lent when others joined them for the Lent Course.

The sub-committee would like to thank Aileen, Carly and Jeff for their leadership of this group.

Theological Seminars

Two seminars have been held so far, on the Trinity (Rev'd Arwen) and The Blessed Virgin Mary (Fr Joe). These have been well-attended and well-received. Ideas are being discussed by the sub-committee for future seminars.

Safeguarding

The sub-committee has continued to oversee safeguarding policy and practice (but not individual cases or confidential matters). The Safeguarding Officer will report to the APCM separately.

Fr Joe

A Report on The Choir

It is wonderful to have a congregation willing to sing everything put in front of them and to do it so well! To hear their singing filling the church, ably led by the clergy and choir, is music to our ears!

We would like to thank clergy and congregation for taking on the Kilcreggan Mass and making it part of our worship. On the occasions we are able to sing all four parts, it sounds wonderful, but its lyrical melodies work even when we have everyone singing the main tune. We are all, congregation and choir, able to worship through song, using the Thomas or the Kilcreggan Mass, depending on the mood required — and thanks to Arwen for her permission. We hope to continue to expand the repertoire of both choir and congregation.

We have introduced and included 'chants' into some events and services and also brought back some beautiful hymns from the past such as, 'It is well with my soul' which again was sung beautifully by you all. The text was written by Horatio G Spafford in 1873 and the tune by Philip P Bliss in 1876. Those of you who heard Father Chris's sermon, which told us the story of Horatio, will know what an expression of faith the hymn portrays.

Thank you to St Andrew's Bishopstone, our united benefice church, for joining us and leading the music for one of the carol services at Christmas with a wonderful instrumental group. Hopefully this will happen again this year as it was greatly appreciated. They will be welcome whenever they come.

Coryn, Angela and Neville, helped with the organisation and production of two charity concerts which supported the displaced people of Ukraine, and the Woodland Trust.

We are always happy to welcome new members: just tell us you want to join. Thank you to Arwen for her support and encouragement and the willing participation of all the clergy who lead our services in St Peter's. Thank you also to Danny for putting the words of hymns on screen so that those at home can participate fully.

We would like to thank our present choir members for their constant support and encourage those in the congregation who enjoy singing and are able to spare the time, to join the choir. To find out more, any interested person should talk to Coryn, Angela or any choir member.

Coryn Roberts, Organist and Angela Chalkley

Report on East Blatchington Mothers' Union

Mothers' Union had a good year in 2022 with many interesting speakers starting in January with Kay telling us about many 'Great Female Artists' with slides. This was followed by Rosemary talking about 'Dante', a talk about 'Seaford and Climate Change' by Keith Blackburn, 'Russia, Ukraine and Me' by Fr Chris Collison, Kathryn Anderson telling us about 'Her time at the Lambeth Conference', Kay giving a talk on 'Giotto', and Chris Collison talking about 'St Hilda and Friends in Hartlepool'. Apart from all the talks we held a quiz on 12 July which was fun. We also held the 'Wave of Prayer' as usual at the end of February.

At each Meeting we had tea and a raffle and were able to send more than £250 to Mary Sumner House for the A.F.I.A holidays and the Contact Centre in Eastbourne. We sent £50 for Mothering Sunday and also £50 for the Summer of Hope. We held a 'Challenge 22' where some of us were able to save £1 each week for up to 22 weeks.

In December we were invited to St Leonard's Church for the annual Advent Carol Service. The highlight of the year was the Garden Party for Mary Sumner Day at Kay and Keith's new house in Alfriston, which luckily fell on a beautiful day. We had a lovely tea with cakes and a raffle, and everyone enjoyed themselves enormously thanks to Kay and Keith's wonderful hospitality.

Marilyn Haydon

Report on Children, Young People and Families

Our work to engage with the youngsters and families in our Benefice churches has continued this year with monthly Sunday afternoon gatherings for Little Fishes and their families. The older youngsters, now all at Secondary school, chose to change their group name from Café Church to Lighthouse in the Autumn.

Although the numbers of both groups remain quite small there is valuable seed sowing and nurturing going on – both for the youngsters and their parents.

A highlight for both groups this year was having access to a Beach hut in May half-term. Fun times were had by all – as well as ice creams!

In September we held a beautiful ‘Blessing of the Backpacks’ Eucharist at the newly formed Kairos Saturday service to bless the youngsters as they returned, started or changed schools.

All the mothers of our registered children received a beautiful hand-knitted gift at Christmas, made by members of the Mothers’ Union. They were greatly appreciated – it was a lovely way to recognise all they do for their young ones.

Little Fishes

Highlights for our small people have been hunting for lost sheep in the Churchyard, meeting Anne’s friends (Micky and Pebbles the puppets), listening to our Bible stories – sometimes enacted with Godly Play, getting sticky with cutting and sticking crafts, sharing in games together, eating refreshments, bubble prayers and our All Hallows Light Party. Several Little Fish families also joined in the Shepherd’s Trail at Christmas. A big Thank you to Linda for often helping with refreshments.

Our EBB youngsters - Café Church becomes Lighthouse

The young people continue to meet regularly, to share friendship and fellowship and to support one another in their daily life and faith journey. We have a core group of 8 youngsters which allows us to have fun with various games and activities and to have an intimate feel to the Eucharist services that we often share together. One of those services was to celebrate their year anniversary of being confirmed in October.

The youngsters expressed an interest in ‘Digging Deeper’ into the Bible and were very grateful to all be given a Bible by St. Andrew’s Church, and a beautiful cover made by Linda. As a result, the group now meets for an Extra session, in the Upper room, once a month based around the Bible. Our first Extra session was spent attaching book tabs to their new Bibles to help them become familiar with finding their way around. It has been a real joy to witness the enthusiasm the youngsters have shown for looking things up for themselves. We are very blessed to have such supportive parents who often join us, especially for the Eucharists, and in helping out.

Please continue to hold these precious families and young people in your prayers.

We look forward with hope to the appointment of a Children, young people and families’ worker to develop what has been started and to find new ways to reach and nurture those in our care.

Anne Collison

A report on the East Blatchington Lectures

When the COVID restrictions were lifted, it was decided to restart the EB Lectures. Unfortunately, Shirley Linsell who started the lectures and organized them for more than ten years, raising thousands of pounds for St Peter’s, decided it was time for her to step down. Fortunately, she was willing to act as ‘consultant’ to whoever took them on.

A successful summer season of lectures took place starting in April with ‘The Night Sky’ by Fr Joe who brought along his telescope and shared one of his hobbies with us. May brought a more intimate experience with local author Simon Parke talking about his recent book, ‘Gospel – Rumours of Love’ which describes the final years of Jesus’ life, death and resurrection imagined from Jesus’ point of view as well as that of one of his women followers. In July the rector, Arwen told us how the Bible came to be in English. In July Shirley and her team of family and friends organised Shirley’s

last lecture – a talk by Revd. Peter Blee about the paintings in Berwick Church, their recent restoration and the changes to the church building to make it a more suitable environment in which to display valuable works of art. At the end of the lecture Shirley was warmly thanked for all her work over the years and presented with an icon. The 2022 season ended with a lecture in December by Kay Blackburn on ‘Leonardo da Vinci’.

Christine Cooke

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 8th May 2022 at 2.00pm

There were 22 attendees in church and 6 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 Joe Padfield, Christa Ovenden, Tina Bacon, Beryl Henley, Barbara Prendergast, Karen Jones, Rosemary Leech and Jeffery Clarke.
2. Minutes of the meeting held on 18th April 2021 were approved with no matters arising.
3. Nomination and election of Churchwardens.

Nominations:

Juliet Mitton was proposed by Linda Stratford and seconded by George Rix.

Geraldine Hedgecock was proposed by Beryl Henley and seconded by Susan Adams.

Both were duly elected.

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

Annual Parochial Church Meeting

1. Apologies were received from Fr. Joe Padfield, Christa Ovenden, Tina Bacon, Beryl Henley, Barbara Prendergast, Karen Jones, Rosemary Leech and Jeffrey Clarke.
2. Minutes of the meeting held on 18th April 2021 were approved.
3. Matters arising: Work on the memorial garden suggested by Valerie Skues to remember those lost in the pandemic has gone ahead. Donations have been received, a curved bench purchased, and planting begun.
4. To receive from the Parochial Church Council and be free to discuss:-

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

The Electoral Roll currently stands at 111 names. Since last year there have 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 continues at the figure of 12 people.

Since the written report, following the revision of the Electoral Roll, Debbie Phipps informed us that on March 27th there were 116 names with 9 additions and four removals *There were no questions and the report was unanimously accepted*

The Rector thanked Debbie, she welcomed those who have joined; we pray 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.

Arwen detailed what has been achieved during the year and expressed her awe and delight at how in the wake of the pandemic we have recovered so much of our common life and begun a new chapter for our parish thanks to the efforts of the large number of people contributing to this. She expressed her thanks to them all.

As a registered charity we have demonstrated that we meet our charitable purpose.

Arwen Folkes Rector

Christine Cooke PCC Secretary

There were no questions, and the written report was unanimously accepted.

The rector then addressed the meeting.

Rector's Address: The year of 2021, as I have outlined in my report has been a demanding one where much energy, flexibility, patience and tolerance has been required as we negotiated the careful balancing of faith, legality, and regard for the care of our community both inside and outside the parish. It is to the parish of East Blatchington's credit that so many people need thanking and that it is simply impossible to begin thanking individuals – knowing that I will have missed people out, as I do this, please forgive me and know that I am indebted to each of you. Recovering our life of events, worship, seeing the changes in the church building, the churchyard looking beautiful, the greater range of ages engaging with us, our better working with our sister church of St Andrew, and the recovery of our life of serving the community has filled me, and many of you I know, with such joy. It isn't exactly as it was, but then God doesn't always put things back in place as we imagined.

But I would like to begin this address today by thanking God. His faithfulness to us, in the midst of turbulence, frustration, sickness, and tiredness has been remarkable. Through you, he has blessed us with increased giving – the welcoming of new people and new skills, the incredible gift of financial resource keeping our head above water and a fuller congregation – undoubtedly more diverse in age and background than we were before the pandemic. At times it has been hard to see how it would all come back together, the process of change has troubled some, delighted others, but I do stand here today as your grateful and somewhat relieved Rector. We have worked hard, but we have always worked prayerfully and discerningly, ready to try new things, ready to adapt, but most of all ready to pray.

Our Mission Action Plan, shaped by the new things we tried and learned during this time of pandemic, has become a MAP for our next steps, and so we leave 2021 full of hope and promise for what lies ahead. But most of all understanding anew that prayer works, that handing over to God to lead us, works, that God is busy working here in this place, through us, around us, and helping us to go into and serve the corner of the world entrusted to us by him.

We have said goodbye to two members of our congregation who will be sorely missed – Malcolm Breckon and Bill Young. We have also seen changes in our core ministry team – Nick Linsell handed over the role as churchwarden to Geraldine and brings his role as Building Officer to an end as the big church projects are completed. Daphne Dempster hands over the role of Safeguarding Officer to Carly Taylor. Shirley Linsell handed over the management of the lectures. Barbara Prendergast handed over the role of sacristan to Linda Stratford, Kay Blackburn handed over the role of chair of the pastoral team and coordinator, to Fr Joe and Geraldine, Alan and Claire Yates have handed over the management of the website to the benefice administrator, and Ann Lloyd James handed over the role of Chapel Rooms 'pixie' to our churchwardens. I thank those who have let go of their responsibilities and acknowledge the deep foundations that they have laid for us to work with. I also welcome Anne Collision who in 2021 became a significant and vital lay lead for our children and young people's work, and of course we welcome Fr Joe and Carly who I am not sure I will know what I'd do without! Our enduring thanks goes to our retired clergy who continue to contribute so much to

the life of this benefice. Fr John, Fr Chris, Fr Eric, Rev'd Lucy, Fr Colin and sometimes Frs Stephen and Martin. How blessed we are by their experience and gifts in our midst.

The churchwardens, Geraldine and Juliet, our treasurer Chris, our secretary Christine, George, Linda and Neville have been amazing as they have helped to lead us with the decision making demanded of us all and being ready for all the challenges that we have faced. Flowers, cleaners, stewards, door openers and closers, have been the mainstay. Christine Cooke and her network of deliverers have helped us to keep in contact through Cross Keys with an increasing number of parishioners, and last but by no means least...Jaqueline Head who is remarkably important as the key person who engages with all our users of the Chapel Rooms.

We continue to thank Nick Linsell, Lorraine and Ian whose service to our churchyard and buildings above and beyond what we pay them.

Today we welcome new faces onto our PCC. - almost a third is renewed with new people – but that means we are also saying goodbye to some important voices in our church leadership: Ann Lloyd-James, Barbara Prendergast, Tina Bacon, Sue Williams, and Jill Morgan. We will miss you on the PCC and we thank you for all you have contributed to the life of this church, knowing that you continue to hold the life of this church in your prayer and moral support will be as important as ever. Prayer is the primary and foremost contribution that anyone can make to this church and please don't forget that!

The other PCC members and I warmly welcome Jenny Spicer, Jeff Clarke, Aileen Rickard, and Sam Mavuko. We look forward to discerning with God through your presence, the next steps of our church life and putting it into practice.

You join a remarkable team – both on and off the PCC – who by praying and working together are able to achieve remarkable things and I pray that we remain, as our Mission Action Plan says: Open-hearted, open-minded, open to God, and, open to All.

Going forward I hope that we will continue to deliver and fulfil all that God has in mind for us. I hope that we will see continued learning, the emergence of vocations, the appointment of a new children's worker, the continued presence of our admin assistant Jan, and a greater emphasis on our inclusivity, welcome and maybe even an increase in weddings. We are alive and joyfully buoyed by what we are witnessing, but we mustn't rest on our laurels.

I wait with bated breath for what else God will do through us and in the next chapter in the life of St. Peter's.

I welcome any questions that may come from the floor now – this is your church, and you are free to query, comment or suggest anything that will contribute or clarify the life of this church.

Revd. Arwen Folkes

There were no questions, just a comment from Valerie Skues that we should also thank the technical team for all their work with live streaming the services.

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

A copy of the Financial Statements and report had been available at the back of the church so Chris hoped people had had a look prior to the meeting. He mentioned that from July we again had income from the Chapel Rooms lettings, some re-instated fundraising activities and generous donations but the majority of our income came as usual, from Planned Giving. Stock market results had been good. Expenditure however exceeded income by £9,277 (over £2,000 less than in 2020) mainly due to the

need to expend considerable sums on Repairs and Replacements. However, we had been able to absorb the loss.

The rector thanked Chris for his hard, invaluable work as Treasurer.
There were no questions, and the report was unanimously accepted.

4d) A report on the building and fabric of the Church of the Parish.

The comprehensive written churchwardens' report detailed what had been achieved in another demanding year. Aileen Ricard commented on how well Juliet and Geraldine had worked and coped during this difficult time.

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

4e) A report on Safeguarding.

Since the submitted report nothing new has happened. Daphne Dempster is handing over the role of Parish Safeguarding Officer to Carly Taylor this month. She thanked everyone for their support during her time in office and asked the same for Carly. Arwen thanked Daphne for her work. *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 questions and the report from Kay Blackburn and Maggie Chitty, our Deanery Synod representatives, was unanimously accepted.

4g) A report on Health and Safety.

There is little to add to the written report. Covid has continued to feature highly in the H & S team's work and updated risk assessments, all based on the national guidance and rules and guidance from the Church of England website.

Arwen thanked Debbie for her oversight of safety, help and guidance during another difficult year.
There were no questions, and the report was unanimously accepted.

5. A report from the Pastoral Team.

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

A report from the Choir

There were no questions and Coryn's report was accepted unanimously.

A report from East Blatchington Mothers' Union *The report was accepted unanimously.*

A report from EBB Church Café and Little Fishes

Anne Collison's joyful report on the progress and activities of these two groups was unanimously accepted. Anne added that it has been a great privilege to work with our younger members and their families and she asked us to pray for them, particularly those at school who can find it tough dealing with comments about their faith.

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. Jenny Spicer was nominated for election, proposed by George Rix, seconded by Linda Stratford and duly elected.

7. To elect up to 6 representatives of the Laity to the Parochial Church Council.

Jeffrey Clarke was nominated by Valerie Skues and seconded by Jean Allen.

Daphne Dempster was nominated by Kay Blackburn and seconded by Christine Cooke.

Samukeliso Mavuka was nominated by Geraldine Hedgecock and seconded by Penny Reynolds.

Aileen Ricard was nominated by Juliet Mitton and seconded by Linda Stratford.
All four were duly elected.

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

9. To consider any other matters of Parochial or general church interest

AOB: Speech by Valerie Skues

I first came to Saint Peter's in 1969, a bit of a shock as I thought I'd strayed into Rome. Fortunately, I soon found out I was wrong, and I was welcomed so warmly I stayed on and I'm still here 52 years later.

I look around the church and listen to the names, and just as Arwen can look at the long list of rectors since 1257, to the year's minds each week and can picture a goodly number who gave so much to keep our little community together.

I have worshipped with seven rectors and served as churchwarden to three of them for 13 years, including two interregnums, after which the PCC bestowed on me the honorary title of 'churchwarden emeritus' which I so appreciated.

Therefore, in that capacity and length of service I feel qualified to speak on behalf of all members of the congregation older and recent who now come and take part in our services, prayer and other important groups; you can read all about them in Cross Keys.

It has been a difficult and really challenging time for all of us specially for the clergy and wardens. With our faces covered for so long it's difficult to recognise each other as well as the effects of general ageing and decline.

So, on behalf of you all, I would like to thank Arwen and her team for keeping us together during the last couple of years and for all her inspirational hard work and commitment to building our congregation and reaching out to all who cross our threshold.

Thank you, Arwen we were very blessed, when you blew in on a southwest wind.

The Rector closed with The Grace.

Christine Cooke PCC Secretary