



**St James**  
Hampton Hill

# Annual Parochial Church Meeting 2022

## **Agenda**

## **Reports for 2021**



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## **Ark Playgroup Team**

The Ark did not meet in 2021 due to Covid but is resuming on Monday 9 May.

*Debbie Nunn*

## **Bell-ringing Team**

With no church closure since the last APCM, we have been able to resume normal ringing. Bells have been rung for the main service every Sunday, at Christmas for the Carol Service and Midnight Service, and to ring in the New Year. Additionally, we have tolled to mark both the death of Prince Philip and also the Grenfell tower anniversary.

We have rung for two weddings, and we joined in the worldwide celebration of the 200th anniversary of Ellacombe bells (the type of ringing frame we have at St James's). Visitors were welcomed up the tower to see the view and to try ringing the bells on both St James's weekend in July and our Big Green Weekend in September. Three new young ringers attended bellringing training from October to January and have now joined the team.

*Susan Horner*

## **Care and Contact (formerly Parish Visitors)**

The visitors' team was renamed to Care and Contact, to reflect that because of COVID the prime focus could not be visiting but contacting in a wider range of ways. The group continued to meet and watch over the congregation.

The return to church, of some but not all, has slightly muddied the water in spotting who is vulnerable. We have lost three key members recently and are looking to include others in the team. One member of the team takes out Home Communion to the housebound.

*Derek Winterburn*

## **Charity Support Team**

Last year at about this time I was exclaiming what a year 2020 had been. Last year was much the same, yet despite two difficult years, our giving has held up.

We have not been able to host many of our traditional charity events, such as a quiz night, wine-tasting and the auction and raffle on St James's Day, yet we have been able to make up for these losses in other ways.

Our Lent appeal raised £3,925, up 50% on the previous year, and this enabled us to make generous donations to three charities: ALMA, the Diocesan of London appeal challenging youth violence, and the local sports ministry, Activate.

Our harvest appeal raised £721 for The Upper Room, well down on last year, though up on 2020. The amount of food and other goods collected, including from local schools and the nursery, saw a big rise, according to the collections driver who had to make two fully loaded van collections. £375 was also raised for the London Churches Refugee Fund. The church PCC again approved £1,500 for Welcare and Bishop Wand School.

The big story in the autumn was the success of the appeal for St Luke's Hospital, Milo, mostly due to our vicar's idea of a sponsored cycle ride. He and Liz Wilmot cycled 20 miles in Bushy and Richmond Parks. This event and a book sale raised £2,600, very close to three times as much as last year. This amount will go a long way towards the refurbishment of the paediatric ward which the volunteers there, Drs Adrian and Hilary Murray, had been asking for help with. They have asked for their heartfelt thanks to be given to the church.

The total collected for charity in 2021, traditionally excluding Christian Aid and the Children's Society, was £ 9,121. This is up considerably on 2020 (£6,894). Again, our supporters seem to have responded very positively despite no face-to-face contact.

Thank you on behalf of all the very good causes St James supports. 2022 should see us supporting a new church link in northern Mozambique, and the Diocese of London Lent Appeal for 2022 is supporting three charities which are helping churches to support people with mental health crises, as well as wellbeing issues and domestic abuse.

*Dennis Wilmot*

## **Children and Families**

In 2021 our 11.15 service was initially held on Zoom, returning to church in September.

Messy Church began again with a Christmas-themed service in December. We held two children's carol services on Christmas Eve.

Engagement with schools has also been limited. We were not able to offer Christmas or Experiences, and I have only been able to take assemblies by video. Some schools held their carol services in church, others cancelled.

*Derek Winterburn*

## Church Flower Team

Another year with not a great deal to report about! Covid restrictions are now relaxing, and we are beginning to recover our enthusiasm for getting together and 'doing the church flowers'. We were able to decorate our church at the major festivals and have re-established a rota for providing arrangements on a regular weekly basis .

We have, in the recent past, had an annual allocation of money from the church finances and occasionally also been given additional donations from church members for specific uses . This has not been widely known and, as with other areas of 'Covid change' might be beneficial to re- establish .

We are a small and friendly team and enjoy either working on our own or in the company of others . We welcome and appreciate having Nick as our 'refreshments manager' when he is available! Thank you .

*Coryn Robinson*

## Churches Together Around Hampton

Churches belonging to the group include All Saints', Hampton, St Mary's, Hampton, St James's, Hampton Hill, Hampton Mission Partnership, Hampton Hill United Reformed Church, New Life, Hampton, St Francis de Sales' Hampton Hill, and St Theodore's, Hampton.

The main focus of the ecumenical group was simply supporting the ministers across the area by meeting together for sharing news and praying. For the first part of the year this was by Zoom, but the group began to meet 'in person' in the autumn.

There have been no joint services. However, an open-air picnic was organised for a Sunday in August, at St Mary's School; this was well attended. Rev Derek Winterburn has been the chair. The World Day of Prayer in March was at St Mary's, and was written by Christians from Zimbabwe.

*Derek Winterburn*

## Churchwarden's Report

After a second and third lockdown, the church re-opened for regular services in Holy Week 2021, just four weeks before our 2021 APCM. I am very glad to say that there have been no further closures and the year has seen a gradual return to normal in all areas.

As far as services are concerned, we have considered throughout the year what we thought was safe and appropriate. The main service on Sundays continues to be streamed for those who are unable to come or who live further away and still wish to be in touch.

We still sit in alternate pews and open the upper windows for increased ventilation. However, much as we appreciated the efforts of Thom and the choir to provide recorded music, it has been a joy to have them return to church and for the congregation to be able to sing again.

Bellringers, flower-arrangers, servers, readers and intercessors have returned, and we offer the chalice to those who wish to receive it. Masks are now optional, and the congregation have welcomed the chance to meet each other over coffee in the hall following the 9:30 service.

I am grateful to all those who help in any way with the services and refreshments, and particularly to those who oversee the various areas and organise the rotas.

The use of the hall and church has increased considerably during the year as restrictions have eased. The nursery continues to use the hall during term-time and many of our former hirers have returned, together with new ones. The result is that the hall is now fully used, and several groups also hire the church, giving us much-needed income.

We have returned to having PCC meetings and study groups in person in the church, although it has been found convenient to continue with some other meetings via Zoom. Nick returned to the office in September, so the church is now open again for at least part of every weekday for visitors and enquiries. Derek has been able to return to visiting schools and we have also been to Laurel Dene again.

We were able to have our traditional *Open to View* day in July and a second one during our Big Green Weekend in September, at both of which we welcomed many visitors. Connections and Messy Church have resumed monthly, providing a welcome for both old and young. The weekly Ark sessions will be resuming next month. Other social events have also resumed. The Good Guys are meeting again, and we have had a walk and pub lunch, a pancake party and a Lent lunch together in the hall.

The fabric of the church is generally in good repair, thanks to Bryan and his team who do all the routine maintenance and only call in specialists when absolutely necessary. There have been a few issues during the year, detailed in Bryan's report, which have all been dealt with. One of the main problems was the failure of the old

floodlights resulting in a loss of power and disruption to services. Bryan and Graham have not only discovered the cause of the problem, but also undertaken a major upgrade of the chancel lighting, offering a great improvement. The churchyard has also been kept in good order by the gardening teams.

This has been my first year as churchwarden and I have become even more aware than I was before of how much goes on unseen on a day-to-day basis. There is nearly always somebody cleaning, replacing lightbulbs, doing maintenance or repairs or working in the garden or churchyard. Many of those coming for funerals or baptisms, or residents of Hampton Hill, have said how welcoming and well-maintained the church is or how they appreciate our lovely churchyard.

Less visible is the work of the Finance Team, led by Laurence, Dawn and Carol, who spend many hours ensuring that our accounts are in good order, and the Care and Concern Team (formerly parish visitors) who keep in touch with those who are housebound or unwell. The website and Spire magazine and the leaflets we distribute throughout the year ensure that we are visible and open to the community.

So many people contribute to the overall running of the church, and some have even taken on additional tasks during the year. It is impossible to mention everybody, but I am very conscious of the hours put in and that it is a 'team effort' – the church simply would not exist without you all.

Of course, those we must thank above all are our clergy, Derek, Jacky, Julian and, more recently, Tim. In addition to leading our Sunday and weekday worship, they sustain us throughout the week with *Time to Pray*, study groups, and their participation in our meetings and social events. We are truly blessed to have them all to share their insight and friendship. We are also most grateful to Sandra and Alan for their support and help, both visible and in the background.

Much of this report has mentioned things returning to near-normal, but of course, in the coming year, as the refurbishment goes ahead it will seem far from normal again! There will inevitably be disruption and we will have to adapt to the circumstances. However, I am confident that we will all pull together and ensure that St James's continues to serve the congregation and the community.

Thank you to all of you who love and support our church and make us all feel part of St James's family.

*Susan Horner*

## Churchyard Team

Churchyard Team and Gardening Team activities have begun to have some community outreach in a small way. Local neighbours joined activities on more than one occasion over the past year and it is hoped to be able to extend this.

The Churchyard Team's main tasks, which are usually carried out by three or four congregation regulars, include:

- Liaising with Continental Landscapes Ltd (Richmond Council's churchyard maintenance subcontractors) re. grass and hedge cutting and churchyard maintenance
- Attending to any minor damage or hazards and reporting major damage and hazards to the incumbent and the council, including tree and pest hazards and following this through; clearing fallen timber throughout the year
- Controlling unwanted saplings growth throughout the year; ensuring that families have clear access to tended graves; clearing litter on a weekly basis
- Placing memorial crosses on all war graves and preparing the War Memorial and surrounds for Remembrance Sunday
- Facilitating ashes interments in The Garden of Remembrance
- Providing assistance for families re memorial roses and servicing these
- Keeping the inner courtyard and the car park clear of fallen leaves
- Tidying and attending to the car park recycling bins
- Mowing The Garden of Remembrance and tidying and preparing for ashes interments
- Mowing the new lawn in the Northwest Garden
- Weeding the new shrubbery to the west front; watering lawns, flower beds, the new shrubbery, and any newly planted trees during dry spells.

The Gardening Team usually meets some four times a year when volunteers from the congregation gather to carry out various gardening maintenance tasks including planting, weeding, bramble clearing and any shrub and hedge trimming that may be required in the church gardens and the churchyard generally as well as any other tasks needed under the general Churchyard Team agenda.

In 2021 owing to Covid staff shortages Continental Landscapes were unable to do an overall churchyard grass cut until much later in the summer but did maintain mown edges to the pathways.

The Gardening Team was able to meet on 19/06/21, 06/11/21 and 05/03/22 when particular focus was given to clearing and digging out the extensive brambles on the east border near the lych gate with a view to making this a wildflower area. Couch grass is gradually being cleared from the graves behind the church hall.



The Garden of Remembrance is maintained, and the adjacent new memorial rose area is kept mown as well as the grass behind the vestry and around the War Memorial.

A fallen tree was cleared from the southern churchyard perimeter and a wildlife log pile created. Storm damage fallen trunks and branches were cleared in March.

A stag beetle hotel has been built and two insect and one ladybird hotel have been sited and fixed. Four predator-proof nesting boxes were positioned in early spring. The Commonwealth War Graves Commission have appointed a registered volunteer to clear, clean and maintain the scattered war graves in the churchyard. See attached June 2021 report to the PCC.

A three-year forward planning management strategy for the churchyard was created in July 2021 and this was approved by the PCC. The report is available on our website if you would like to learn more about this.

There were five interments of ashes into The Garden of Remembrance during the past year and five new roses with commemorative plaques were introduced to the new memorial rose area.

It is hoped that the Canadian Sweet Maple, which died in 2018, will be able to be replaced in the foreseeable future subject to the approved pollarding of the overgrown bay tree which is cutting the light from the Canadian War Graves area.

*Ros Daly*

## Connections

As soon restrictions were relaxed and we felt comfortable meeting again, we did! From October 2021 we have regularly met on the first Tuesday of each month. The only exception was for our Christmas meeting, when due to church commitments to outside groups, we met on a slightly different date .

Nick always advertises the meetings in plenty of time and we are steadily re-establishing our pre-Covid numbers of between 15 and 20 people. Some are regulars, some are newcomers, some are church members, and some are not, but they are all assured of a warm welcome with a cup of tea or coffee and a delicious homemade cake. (Thankyou Zena!)

We have been very fortunate to have David Thompson offering his hearing aid clinic. This was originally provided by the NHS but is currently being offered on an independent voluntary basis whilst NHS regulations are being assessed. This has

been an extremely popular service and we are pleased to offer hospitality to any members of the public who call into the church for David's help.

We usually have an activity, a board game, jigsaw or interest to share with each other, but mostly we just enjoy sharing time and conversation together. We hope to reach out to more people who would enjoy attending but may be reluctant or would find mobility an issue. Please encourage anybody who might like to come along as we would love to have them join us .

Many thanks to all those who support and come along to our group – the lovely smiles and happy atmosphere is only made possible with your help!

Coryn Robinson

## Eco-Church

Following the Lent Course on *Caring for Creation*, the team was reconstituted. We looked again at the survey from Eco-Church and planned some actions in the church and the churchyard as well as deciding to support the *Churches Count on Nature* and *Great Big Green Weekend* campaigns. Consequently, we applied for and were granted a Bronze Eco-Church award.

The species counting for *Churches Count on Nature* was a great collaboration; groups from the Nursery, HHJS, the Brownies and the Cubs all added to the list. The results: 29 animals, 23 trees and 42 grasses and flowers.

In September St James's marked the COP26 Summit with the *Great Big Green Weekend*. We ran an open day on the Saturday with information about sustainability, a prayer walk, and treasure hunt, supported by an opportunity to visit the tower, and ring the bells. On Sunday, we reflected on the environmental challenges and prayed for the summit.

We are working towards the silver award. The PCC have agreed to part-fund a new cycle shelter in the courtyard to replace the old-style concrete parking blocks. Various 'swap shops' have been planned for Lent.

## Hampton Deanery Synod

The Deanery Synod met three times in the past year, on the first occasion via Zoom. The first meeting, on 9 June 2021, chaired by the Area Dean, Rev Tim Garrett, vicar of Holy Trinity, Twickenham. There were updates on the Diocesan Synod elections and the Common Fund. A £3m deficit was forecast in the diocese for 2021/22.

The main items on the agenda were *Shared Learning from our Pandemic Experiences*, in which three of the clergy shared their views on parish life over the past 18 months, and *Creation Care in our Vision for 2030*, a presentation delivered by Rev Derek Winterburn, Area Lead for Creation Care. He highlighted several areas of climate concern and suggested what the Church could and should do now to help improve the situation.

The second meeting was held on 4 November 2021 at All Saints, Hampton. The main topic was *Social Prescribing*, introduced by Rev Chris Kennedy, Pioneer Minister, Activate Wellbeing and Sports Church, Teddington. He explained that Social Prescribing was when a person was referred to a link worker who then works with them to identify and link them to activities to improve health and wellbeing. He described what Activate was currently doing – 5 days a week missional outreach, underpinned by a daily invitational act of worship. He then introduced the CEO of Ruils, a charity that works with local GPs to deliver Social Prescribing in the London Borough of Richmond upon Thames.

The third meeting was held on 22 February 2022 at St Mary's, Hampton. The Area Dean announced the resignation of the Bishop of Kensington, who is moving to a new post as head of the Centre for Cultural Witness. Rev Debs Wignall, St Richard's, Hanworth, has been appointed Area Dean of Women's Ministry and Rev Anna Evans is joining St John's, Hampton Wick, as Associate Vicar.

Members' attention was drawn to the *Pastoral Principles* for living well together, as requested by the Bishop of London, in the light of abusive emails sent by some Deanery Synod members to at least one candidate in the General Synod election.

The main item on the agenda was *National Trends in Youth Ministry*, an examination of the current situation in the CofE by Jimmy Dale, the National Youth Evangelism Officer. He talked to nine trends, highlighting the impact of the pandemic on numbers of young people and volunteers. He said that collaborative youth ministry between different churches could be the way forward for growth.

A full report of each meeting is available from the Secretary to the PCC.

*Lesley Mortimer*

## Hampton Fund

I succeeded Clive Beaumont as the nominated trustee from St James to the Hampton Fund (known formerly as the Hampton Fuel Allotment Charity) which supports families and individuals on low incomes and makes grants to the local charity and voluntary sector.

In my role as trustee, I will be bringing my skills and expertise to the Community Grants panel and the Finance and Investment panel of the Fund. In its last financial year to June 2021, the Hampton Fund awarded 1,847 fuel grants and 84 other individual grants totalling £971,238; and made 76 community grants to the value of £1,354,600.

*Laurence Sewell, Trustee*

## Hampton Parochial Charities

HPC oversees two almshouses: Jubilee House, Ashley Road and the War Memorial Cottages, Oldfield Road – as well as two grant-making funds: *Relief in Need* and the *School of Industry*.

St James's provides three trustees: Anne Pietsch, Dr David Wile and Rev Derek Winterburn (Chair).

It has become harder to find residents for Jubilee House. This year the charity's beneficiaries were widened to give the trustees more flexibility. Anne was instrumental in achieving this. The charity continues to upgrade the heating and facilities in the properties, often when there is a vacancy.

As one might imagine COVID was challenging for an almshouse. Nicki Hall, the Clerk, did an admirable job in creating a safe and supportive community.

*Derek Winterburn*

## Life Groups

COVID obviously has made it harder to meet in members' homes, but we have continued to offer opportunities to meet midweek for study and prayer.

In Lent a large group met on Zoom each week to consider the York Course *Care for Creation*. Listening to recordings of speakers and talking together the group covered much ground. The course provided a renewed impetus for the Eco-Church team.

After Easter, again on Zoom, we studied the book of Ruth, using the London Institute of Christianity's study guide. Through the summer a smaller group worked through the Church of England's study material on human sexuality *Living in Love and Faith*.

In the autumn a group met in church for the video-based Prayer Course 2 – a follow up to Pete Greig's Prayer Course, based on his book *God on Mute*.

*Derek Winterburn*

## Music

Music-making has continued to be affected by the continuing pandemic, working within government regulations and our own individual sense of risk. Sung music remained pre-recorded until late July, with the choir continuing to work tirelessly at recording their vocal lines and sending them to be made into complete performances.

We returned to live singing in midsummer, and the choir returned with joy to in-person rehearsal and singing at the start of September. To reduce the risk of infection, the choir are placed in the north aisle. This has entailed some additional arrangements to keep choir and organist together - the introduction of a monitor camera has made a world of difference.

We have supported services throughout the year, including (for Good Friday) the Seven Last Words from the Cross; the Act of Remembrance; a wedding; and the Christmas Carol Service.

We have continued to develop the repertoire, with music by Purcell, Price, Gounod, and Tchaikovsky; as well as familiar works by Mozart, Rutter, and Fauré.

We have also continued to explore the hymnody, introducing new texts, where possible with familiar tunes.

I express sincere thanks to the choir for their refreshing enthusiasm throughout the year; and especially to Jane Newman and to Martin Hinckley, who have continued to act as consultants on the work of the choir.

### **The St James Players**

Our particular thanks must also go to Martin Hinckley for his leadership over 25 years with this group. Martin has led, cajoled, and encouraged us; and also arranged, programmed and planned works to support worship fittingly and delightfully.

The Players were not able to meet during the pandemic; with the departure of key members over the last year, Martin and Derek have taken the decision to bring this group to a close. We thank Martin and the St James Players for their work over many years.

*Thom Stanbury  
Choir Director and Organist*

## Parochial Church Council

This was Derek's fifth full year as vicar, and, inevitably, Covid-19 again impacted on church life.

The PCC has 19 members, including the vicar (chair), curate and two churchwardens (from April 2021), and three Deanery Synod representatives, who sat as ex-officio members. One vacancy was unfilled.

It met six times and attendance averaged 16 people or 85%. PCC members are trustees of St James's, which is a registered charity, and can serve a maximum of two consecutive three-year terms of office without a break, either starting or standing down after the Annual Parochial Church Meeting, usually held in April. Only churchwardens must stand for re-election every year. They can serve a maximum of six consecutive years without a break.

Covid restrictions meant it wasn't possible to hold our annual away day. Instead, the PCC met via Zoom. Finances dominated proceedings. A budget for 2021 was agreed, and the challenge was once more to get close to breaking even. The PCC had previously agreed to significantly reduce its contribution to the Common Fund, and rental income was projected to be significantly higher. Members also heard about progress in our redevelopment plans. We had conducted a virtual meeting with the Diocesan Advisory Committee, the church equivalent of a planning committee. The DAC were broadly supportive of our plans.

In the absence of a children's worker, Derek was planning to relaunch Messy Church himself with volunteers. He reminded members that he was exploring various avenues to recruit a children's worker, but this was not proving to be easy.

In March, Derek tried to help members see through the various vision statements that came out of the Church of England and the Diocese of London. Their themes were similar, with some distinctions. Both came out of the 5 Marks of Mission: to proclaim the Good News (Tell), to teach, baptise and nurture (Teach), to respond to human need (Tend), to tackle all forms of injustice and violence (Transform), and to safeguard the integrity of creation, and sustain the earth (Treasure). The CofE looked at how to apply these marks to the Church over the next decade. These were reshaped into three main areas: learning and growing our faith and passing it on, providing churches of differing styles to engage with all people, and a Church that needed to be more diverse and appeal to younger people. Not to be left out, the Diocese produced a Mission to be confident disciples, compassionate communities, and to grow. To achieve this, we needed to be younger, safer and more racially just.

Our April meeting, ahead of our annual meeting, reported how Covid had impacted on the church in 2020. Inevitably it amounted to a fall in income, and fewer numbers attending church. In other ways, however, there were positive signs. Our regular donors had largely continued the same level of support. Streaming continued to be the key way that many still worshipped with us. In April we held a service to mark the death of Prince Philip. As restrictions reduced, we were also able to resume offering post-service refreshments.

Derek was appointed Area Champion for Creation Care, the Church's contribution to encouraging us all to care for God's earth.

Our annual meeting was held in church and on Zoom. Gwynneth had stood down as churchwarden, replaced by Susan Horner and, following a request from Derek, Nick Bagge, who had agreed to become second warden, but having previously served six years, with the hope that others considering the role would step up.

In May the focus was on safeguarding. Annalea, Derek and Nick led the way with new and refresher training. Derek said that he expected Nick to be working his full hours in the office by September. Sunday services were gradually returning to normal, though mask wearing remained compulsory. St James's Day would be the start of *Project Rebuild* as far as St James's was concerned.

By September, services were a little more relaxed, and the numbers attending was steadily rising, though not back to pre-Covid numbers. Although giving was still down, so was spending, and hall hire was significantly higher, with several new regular users. St James's had formed a link with St Luke the Evangelist in Mecurbi, in northern Mozambique. The aim was to create awareness, understanding and support for each other. The Eco Church group had created a churchyard management plan to make the area a haven for people and diversity. We had achieved a Bronze award with little difficulty, but much would need to happen before we reached Gold!

The PCC also began shaping its own vision statement to become an authentic Christian community: compassionate, growing and reaching out. This would be achieved through prayer and worship, by caring for others, and investing in young generations. With fewer volunteers and growing demands on them, members discussed what its priorities were.

When the PCC met in November, we learnt that the Diocese had recognised the problems facing parishes and had cut budgets. After much discussion we agreed to a

modest increase in our Common Fund giving for 2022, recognising that we had managed to increase our income. Our Vision had evolved and our main areas of were Caring for each other, Bearing fruit by growing in faith and number, and Shining out by raising our profile and becoming a more significant part of our community. *Project Rebuild 2022* was born!

Nick Bagge  
PCC Secretary

## Properties Team

### Responsibility

The Properties Team has the responsibility to the PCC for the maintenance, upkeep and care of the church, the hall, the vicarage, the garage, the shed and all other structures; apart from the moveable items that are the legal responsibility of the Churchwardens. The churchyard is maintained by the London Borough of Richmond upon Thames, overseen by the team.

### The Church - Summary State & Quinquennial Survey

The Church building is considered to be in generally good order. The latest Quinquennial Survey was conducted in August 2017. Whilst the architect reported favourably on the general fabric and regular maintenance of the church the survey listed 9 items in Category 1 (Items of utmost urgency) and 29 items in Category II (Essential within 2 years). All Category 1 items have been addressed together with all relevant remedial work on Category II items relating to the building. In addition to these, three items relate to ongoing monitoring whilst three items will be addressed as part of the Reordering programme.

### Routine Maintenance and Works

With church usage again reduced because of ongoing COVID-19 restrictions the level of maintenance work has been lower. Notwithstanding this, heating, electrical services, fire appliances, lighting, the clock, the bells, the lightning conductor, and the drains all have regular professional inspections that have been done when access was permitted. All records of inspections and certificates are recorded and filed in the Church Logbook held in the church office.

As stated above, maintenance activities have been limited during the reporting period. In line with our agreed policy of only replacing light bulbs when they fail, a number in the chandeliers and globes have been replaced. In all cases, the failed bulbs have been replaced with more efficient LED equivalents.

A more permanent spliced repair has been made to a bell rope that failed last year, deferring the need for the full replacement of all ropes in the foreseeable future.



There has been a further failure of the clock's automatic chiming mechanism that now requires replacement; this work is in hand, being undertaken by the clock maker, Smiths of Derby.

A wire grill on one of the higher quatrefoil windows in the spire became displaced allowing pigeons to enter; this has been replaced by professional steeple jacks. The central heating system failed repeatedly in the autumn necessitating the replacement a heat exchanger at significant expense. As this was not covered by our annual maintenance contract, we are changing our maintenance policy.

A loose floorboard in the south aisle has been re-seated, although this has brought to light evidence of earlier repairs/modifications that are being researched/investigated.

The lighting in the chancel is undergoing a major upgrade. Failures in the old floodlights resulted in the loss of power throughout the church on several occasions, disrupting services. These have now been removed and replaced by units using the latest LED technology that offer significant improvements in overall lighting. These are to be augmented shortly by further units that will enhance the lighting capabilities.

Whilst the paintwork on the brick walls remains in a poor state of repair because of the earlier ingress of water, particularly in the south aisle and Chancel, redecoration is being deferred to spread both the cost and disruption and is now expected to be completed as part of the reordering programme when the building will be closed for an extended period. Damp within the external fabric of the church remains a concern and is the subject of regular monitoring.

The 2021 spring clean was deferred until restrictions on church access were lifted, with a reduced clean undertaken in readiness for St James' Day. The 2022 spring clean has not taken place as it is considered nugatory given the major disturbance expected during the imminent re-ordering work. The annual leaf-sweep and gutter clearance was undertaken on 4 December 2021. This was augmented by a commercial company that clears and inspects the state of gutters on the church, hall and vicarage; the resultant report did not identify any areas that required attention.

### **Church Roof**

The state of the church roof is the subject of ongoing monitoring particularly with respect to minor repairs effected in previous reporting periods. Whilst there continues to be minor ingress of water during heavy rain it is not considered

sufficient to warrant major investment in complete refurbishment that would not guarantee resolution of the intermittent problems. The roof is monitored by CCTV.

### **Church Hall**

Further water ingress in the cupboards occurred during the torrential rain in the summer storms, caused by a fundamental design flaw in the construction of the gutter. The circumstances were exceptional, and it may be experienced again under similar conditions, but regular quarterly inspection/clearance of the gutters takes place to reduce the impact.

### **Graveyard**

As mentioned above general maintenance of the graveyard is now the responsibility of Richmond Council and is undertaken by its contractor, Continental Landscapes. The Properties Team works with other church groups in the general development of the graveyard, where its efforts are focussed particularly on the more manual activities. The major intervention this year has been the clearance of fallen trees that have impeded paths and graves.

### **Membership**

The committee meets four times a year, with routine work being undertaken as required outside these meetings. With an average age of members well over 60, the Committee needs to recruit new, younger members, particularly those with an interest in the maintenance of old buildings, some special knowledge or expertise, and anyone with enthusiasm. If you could contribute, please contact me.

*Bryan Basdell  
Chair, Properties Team*

## **Safeguarding**

No safeguarding issues have been raised this year. I continue to attend the focus groups for Church Safeguarding Officers which have been organised by the local diocesan safeguarding team which continue to prove valuable and a chance to meet with fellow safeguarding officers for advice and tips!

I have now completed my level 3 safeguarding training which has highlighted a few areas that we could do to reach out to people who may need support, I will be working on this throughout the upcoming year. Although many of the PCC have completed safeguarding training we are aware that some members would prefer face to face training. This is starting to happen more regularly, and we will be signposting these courses to those in need of safeguarding training. There has been

a change to the frequency of DBS checks, these now need to be updated every three year instead of five. Nick continues to hold a list of DBS expiry dates.

*Annalea Grattoon  
Church Safeguarding Officer*

## **Servers' Team**

Seven servers were available for regular duty since services resumed in church in mid-2021. The servers now only cover one service at 9.30am on Sundays in addition to midweek festivals, so we have lost the input of Moya Meredith Smith, who used to serve at 8.00am. Our thanks to her for all her support over the years.

We have managed to provide two servers every week to date (crucifer and acolyte). However, although the Gospel procession has been reinstated, other elements of the servers' duties are still in abeyance for reasons of safety and hygiene.

St James's is fortunate to have a very reliable and professional group of servers – my thanks to all of them for their work throughout the year and for rising to the challenge of amending their duties to conform to Covid constraints.

We are always seeking new servers to add to the rota – none of us is getting any younger! The more of us there are, the easier it is to fit serving duties around people's other commitments. I would be pleased to speak to anyone who feels that they would like to offer their services by assisting at the altar on a regular basis.

*Lesley Mortimer*

## **Spire Team**

Janet Nunn – Chair and Editor

Nick Bagge – Design and Sub-Editor    Rev Derek Winterburn

Susan Horner – Proof-reader/Distribution    Dennis Wilmot – Charities

Despite the restrictions of Covid 19 we were able to print a limited number of copies of each edition and towards the end of the year we were able to put them back in the Post Office. We still send email copies once a month and a few by post.

We did manage to undertake an appeal in June and raised £1,700, including Gift Aid, which was an excellent result going towards the annual cost of the Spire which the PCC continue so generously to fund. Our printers, Paul and Julie Venn, have continued their excellent service and were very supportive during Covid 19.

During the year the Team said goodbye to Prill Hinckley after many years. She will still support us with information or pictures from the website when we need it. Dick Wilde was no longer able to proof-read, so Catherine Gash kindly stepped in.

We are continually grateful to all the regular contributors who very rarely need a gentle reminder about deadlines! Our star contributor is Canon Rev Julian Reindorp, who has continued unfailingly for more than 10 years producing his *Opinion* well ahead of time. We are always open to offers if anyone has a particular topic which they would like to write about.

It has not been an easy year, but hopefully we can look forward to getting back to some form of normality. We are a small team which meets 12 times a year to produce and plan each edition. We enjoy our work and are grateful for all the positive feedback we receive from parishioners and the local community.

*Janet Nunn*

## **Sunday Kitchen Team**

The Sunday Kitchen Team was not active during the first half of the year because of Covid restrictions. However, we were able to resume the offering of refreshments following Sunday service from September. Although the opportunity to socialise had clearly been missed during lockdown, attendance was understandably slow to begin with, but with increasing confidence, I believe attendance is now near normal and the atmosphere is very good.

There are seven teams of two people for each team. Thanks to the rota system established by Gwynneth (and administered by Nick) the teams work well together. There is a lot of goodwill and willingness to co-operate.

Having stepped into Gwynneth's shoes in January, I want to place on record our thanks to her for her efforts over the past few years. I also want to thank Anne and Pip Rowett who stepped back towards the latter part of the year. The team is working well, and I see no reason to change anything. But we are always happy to receive comments and suggestions. It would also be helpful to have two or three volunteers able to help fill in for holidays and illness. Many thanks to all involved.

*Patricia Newton*

## **The Good Guys**

The men's group fell victim to Covid-19 in March 2020, but resumed in the latter part of the year, even managing a safe and entirely legal Christmas meal together. We meet most months at the Beech House, in the High Street. It is a casual, sociable

affair, and we support each other through good times and bad. Attendance is regularly 8-12 members, and we would welcome new faces.

*Nick Bagge*

## Welcome Team

The Welcomers (traditionally known as Sidespersons) have a very important role in ensuring that when people come into the church (be it as a regular member of the congregation or a visitor) they are greeted, given information about the service and assisted to their seat if wished. We also invite them to come to the Church Hall for refreshments at the end of the service.

Welcomers have a formal, but little exercised responsibility to support the churchwardens in their maintenance of order and safety in church.

In the past year we have made an important contribution to the safe lifting of Covid restrictions within our church. Welcomers have encouraged appropriate mask wear, directed people to seats maintaining social distancing and directed the flow of congregation around the building when arriving, leaving and during communion. We thank the congregation for their cooperation in achieving this.

During the year some Welcomers left the team. Ann Collins retired after many years of valuable service and Clive and Ria Beaumont have moved to East Anglia. Our thanks to them.

We ask the meeting to elect the following Welcomers for the coming year:

Wendy Baker	Alan Cammidge	Linda Cargill
Susan Horner	Moya Meredith-Smith	Ann Peterken
Anne Rowett	Pip Rowett	Janet Taylor
Darrell Webb	Linda Webb	Dennis Wilmot
Elizabeth Wilmot	Jenny Wright	

We would encourage new welcomers to join the team. The only requirement is that you should be on the Electoral Roll. – Please speak to members of the clergy or to Janet Taylor for more information.

*Janet Taylor*