

WONERSH CHURCH

St John the Baptist, Parish of Wonersh with Blackheath

Wonersh with Blackheath Parochial Church Council

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

Monday 26th April 2021

A. Annual Meeting of Parishioners (Joint Vice Chairs: Alex Vinall and Guy Pakenham)

1. Minutes of the Annual Meeting of Parishioners held on 5th October 2020 via Zoom
For approval as a true record.
2. Election of Church Wardens
3. Thanks

B. Annual Parochial Church Meeting (Joint Vice Chairs: Alex Vinall and Guy Pakenham)

1. Opening Worship
2. Apologies for Absence
3. Minutes of the Annual Meeting held on 5th October 2020
For approval as a true record. Pg. 3-4
4. Matters Arising
5. Curate's report Pg. 5-6
6. Churchwardens' Reports: Wonersh and Blackheath Pg 7-8
7. Annual Report and Financial Statements of the PCC for 2020
8. Youth and Children's Work Pg. 9-12
9. Safeguarding Pg. 13
10. Buildings Report Pg. 14
11. Electoral Roll Report Pg. 15
12. Activities of PCC Pg. 16
13. Deanery Synod Report Pg. 17

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| 14. | Reports from some Church Groups | Pg. 18-23 |
| 15. | List of Wardens and Sidespeople | Pg. 24 |
| 16. | Election of PCC (and Deanery Synod) Members | |
| 17. | Appointment of Independent Examiner | |
| 18. | Any other business | |

**Minutes of the Annual Meeting of Parishioners and the Annual Parochial Church Meeting
held on**

Monday 5th October 2020 via Zoom

Joint Chairs: Guy Pakenham (GP) and Alex Vinall (AV)

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

GP welcomed everyone to the meeting and outlined how it would be conducted. The Annual Meeting of Parishioners would be chaired by CC.

A. Annual Meeting of Parishioners

1. The minutes of the 2019 meeting were approved as a true record.
2. Guy Pakenham, Alex Vinall and Patricia Allen were all elected to continue in their roles as Churchwardens.
3. CC advised that, in the probable absence of a successor to Patricia Allen at the end of her term of office next year, it would be prudent to suspend the rule limiting the term of office of Churchwardens until 2024. This was agreed without objection.

B. Annual Parochial Church Meeting

1. Opening Worship

The Revd. David Peters (DP) opened with a reflection on our Lord making us 'fishers of people'.

2. Apologies for absence

No apologies for absence had been received.

3. Minutes

The minutes of the 2019 meeting were approved as a true record of the meeting.

4. Matters arising

There were no matters arising.

5. Associate Vicar's report

The Associate Vicar's report had previously been published on the church website. DP expanded on this by giving thanks to the wardens, Colin Matthews, Kia Pakenham and Heather Hope and to many others, but especially to God who had held us and our worship together during recent times. DP had been overwhelmed and humbled by all that had gone on.

DP did not wish to go into detail about his vision for the future of the parish, but the leading items were that it would be a church of community and hospitality, with the Word of God at its heart, and a mission community.

6. Churchwardens' reports

The wardens' reports, together with the buildings report, had been published and were taken as read. Patricia Allen expanded on the Blackheath report, saying the church there had moved forward in a different way over recent months, highlighting the work of the care team in that time. She also described forthcoming Advent projects.

7. Finance report

The Finance and Trustees' reports had been published previously. Charlie Wakefield (CW, Treasurer) ran through a high level balance sheet, and advised that in future the Springfield property would have to be classified as an investment property and treated accordingly in the accounts. £20,000 had been added to the fabric fund, thanks to a legacy from Barbara Barter. Total reserves had increased by £27,000. £18,000 had been spent on improvements at Lawnsmead, of which £13,000 had been donated by a parishioner for that purpose.

CW advised that the church would be moving to new accounting software which would be considerably more efficient. He outlined the work that had been going on to review financial controls, develop new hardship and investment policies and provide Covid related reviews for the Diocese. Work would soon be undertaken to update Gift Aid and a conduct a general review of giving.

It had been proposed that the church could adopt a scheme run by Amazon, under which a very small part of church members' spending could be donated to the church. James Cooke questioned whether the church wished to be associated with the company; CW replied that it would be considered by the PCC.

8. Youth and Children's Work

The Youth and Children's report had been published. Sarah Rowden wished to extend a warm welcome on behalf of the church to Jas, who would be working as an intern over the coming year.

9. Safeguarding

Alex Vinall thanked Marion Peters for her past work as Safeguarding Officer, and advised that Catherine Keech was taking over the role.

10. Electoral Roll

The electoral roll showed 171 members at Wonersh, and 41 at Blackheath. Questions were raised about some members who had moved away or who had died. The necessary corrections would be made.

11. Activities of PCC

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

12. Deanery Synod report

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

13. Reports from various church groups

The reports had been published previously and were taken as read. The list of wardens and sidespeople was noted. JM felt that this should include those at Blackheath. CC advised that the appointment of sidespeople was no longer a matter for the APCM, but that Blackheath sidespeople could be included in such lists in future.

14. Election of PCC and Deanery Synod members

Darren Alford (for a second term) and Martin Keech (previously co-opted) had been proposed for election to the PCC for full terms, and Caroline Stearman for the balance of a term until 2021. There being four vacancies, all were elected.

Patricia Allen, Nansi Parker and Jackie Vass were all elected as Deanery Synod representatives, with one vacancy unfilled.

15. Appointment of Independent Examiner

Charlie Wakefield proposed, and CC seconded, the reappointment of CN Barnard FCA of Brayne, Williams and Barnard Ltd as Independent Examiner. This was passed unanimously.

16. Any Other Business

Graham Jelley said how impressed he was with the detail and thoroughness of the reports prepared for the meeting.

The Revd. Kia Pakenham closed the meeting in prayer.

APCM 2020

Curate's letter Report

The last seven months have continued to be laced with uncertainty and ever-changing parameters. It has been an incredibly challenging time to be in church ministry and my heartfelt thanks and gratitude must go to the wonderful team that we are blessed with here at Wonersh – Colin, Paddy, James, Keith, Liz, Patsy, Sarah, Heather, Guy and Alex in particular. They have given of themselves in the most trying of circumstances and I couldn't be more grateful – Thank you!

Thanks also to Bryan, Liz, Ann, Fra and John for sharing their gifts and talents with us in terms of tech and music.

What follows is a broad brush overview of the last seven months, other reports will give more detail.

We have been able to respond to the various degrees of lockdown lifting and closing throughout the last few months by maintaining our on-line presence either streaming this in church or just being on Youtube. We managed to offer various in person and on-line services over Christmas and these were well received with good numbers attending.

Unfortunately we had to close the church buildings from January until Easter as the infection rates soared. Throughout this time we kept an on-line presence with our Sunday morning services, continued to provide an email/hard copy Thursday morning service, youth met on-line and Big Worship continued, again on-line.

We became involved in 'Meals for you', an initiative run by St Saviours church. With their increased capacity and new kitchen they were able to extend their reach and offered this service to us. We now take meals every Thursday to those in need in our Parish (and beyond).

Regular telephone contact has ensured that, wherever possible, we have kept our community spirit and connectivity with those more isolated within our Parish. Everyone has played their part in this – thank you! Over Lent we even managed to run three Lent courses on Sustainability, Art and Meditation and my thanks go to Jane Boswell and Patsy for their commitment, perseverance (with technology mainly!) and gifts for organising and delivering these.

As you read Sarah's report you will see that holding our families and youth together in these times has been really difficult. But with Abby and Jas they have done wonderful work in dropping round family worship packs, lent surprises and delivering inspiring on-line content. A huge thank you to you all!

Our Home groups have also continued to meet in gardens (when permitted) and online via zoom. These groups have been vital during this tough season as we support each other emotionally, spiritually, mentally and practically and my thanks go to the home group leaders in keeping them flourishing.

Our parish magazine remains online and my thanks go to Camilla and John Gosden for their tireless work and commitment to this.

In January we welcomed a new member to our team in the form of Jackie Waterfall who is now our Bereavement support liaison. This role will play an important part within our overall pastoral care commitment as we care for those who are grieving.

Looking ahead we have six weddings booked for this year and a couple of baptisms on the horizon which is wonderful! We are running a marriage preparation course for these couples in May.

I remember thinking in the first lockdown a year ago how glad I was that we weren't doing it in winter! But, I hope and pray that the worst is over and as we emerge again and re-kindle our 'in person' church life that new life will indeed take hold and that the future, although different, will be bright. We have a very special community of believers and I thank you all for your prayers, support and encouragement over the last few months.

Rev. Kia Pakenham
Curate
April 2021

Church Warden's Report – WONERSH

Both Alex and I have been extremely grateful to everyone throughout the last 6+ months since the last APCM in ensuring that we have been able to meet all our obligations as churchwardens. This has obviously included all the legislative and sensible requirements that surround being Covid compliant / secure.

The life of the church in the period since the last APCM has, in many ways, been a continuation of the previous year in so much as the majority of services have been on line and we have had only a few weeks of attendance in church. The decision to close the church in January we believe was the correct one and again we would like to express our thanks to those who supported in making these tough decisions.

The services, despite being either only available on line, viewed in church or outside the church, socially distanced, have been extremely well received. Their quality in terms of content, delivery and technical make-up has been exceptional and no doubt we will continue to use these talents and experiences for many years to come. However, the third lockdown has been very difficult for so many of us and it great that services are again able to be viewed in church, giving the ability for those who are willing and able to meet again.

It is also worth highlighting the fabulous outdoor church services at Christmas and Easter. Thanks to everyone who made these possible and of such great quality. Again, we certainly think that outside services may well become a "feature" in time to come.

Of particular note was the fact that after Christmas our Associate Vicar, David Peters, took the opportunity to take a break from the Parish and finish his secular role in preparation for his return as our Incumbent on 26th May this year. The church has unanimously expressed their delight with this appointment and many have observed how it has revealed that God's timing is not always in line with our own expectations or desires. We have a fantastic outcome and we eagerly await his arrival and all that that will mean for the life of the Parish.

All the various church groups and committees have continued as before with video conferencing facilitating the majority of these. We would like to take the opportunity to thank all the members of these various groups for your dedication and perseverance, especially the PCC, who have responded to virtual meetings admirably.

It is certainly worth mentioning the Buildings Committee, chaired by Martin Keech. They have been extremely busy with a number of projects and you will all be delighted to know, and eventually have sight of, the newly re-ordered Vestry when you are next in church.

On a personal note, I step down as churchwarden after this APCM. It has been a genuine honour and pleasure to serve in this way. It has given me the opportunity to get to know you all so much better and tangibly help during challenging times. I would like to express my love for you all and gratitude for the support, encouragement, affirmation and love that you have shown me. Guy

Guy Pakenham and Alex Vinall
Wonersh Church Wardens
April 2021

Church Warden's Report – BLACKHEATH

Due to the outbreak of Covid-19 and the postponement of last year's APCM it has been an unusually short period since the last APCM in October 2020. This will therefore be a slightly shorter report than usual.

Harvest was celebrated differently this year as there was no Harvest Service but instead a magnificent response for donations to support Vaughan House and the homeless of Guildford and the Surrey Hills Hygiene Bank. The church porch was filled with items and the two charities were delighted.

Sadly, Remembrance had also to be marked in a different way as it wasn't possible to hold the usual service at the Memorial on the Heath, which is attended by up to 150 people. Wreaths were placed at the Memorial by individuals on behalf of the community and a beautiful wreath of poppies decorated the arch over the west door of St Martin's. Our young trumpeter from St Catherine's School recorded herself playing the Last Post and the Reveille, which we were then able to circulate round Blackheath village.

Services in church ceased during the lockdown after Christmas but I do look back with joy that we were still able to celebrate Christmas in church. Early in December, a short Torchlight Carol Service was held. The porch doors were open wide with some sitting inside for warmth whilst music from the organ drifting out to accompany the singing outside. Nearer Christmas, a small group of Carol Singers visited some older members of the village, those on their own, or those who had experienced a particularly difficult year and this was very well received. Small Christmas gifts and cards were given later to the elderly and was subsequently repeated at Easter with cards and posies. The Christmas Midnight service took place with a choir of 4 and Christmas Morning with an even smaller choir of one, plus the organist! For the first time we floodlit the front of the church for Advent and Epiphany which was much appreciated, as was the illuminated Nativity Scene in the church window. This formed part of the Parish Nativity Trail and the Blackheath Village Advent Calendar initiative. Again, the west door had a beautifully decorated 'Christmas' arch.

We took Communion in one kind from our seats at Christmas and Easter, and this spring are gradually returning to holding some of the regular services in church such as Evensong and Julian Meetings. In February there was an Evening Prayer service via Zoom, led by Jens Mankel, and a Good Friday service of Meditation also on Zoom. Both were well supported.

Blackheath District Church Council meetings have continued on Zoom and the DCC is looking forward to Sue Wallis joining as a new member. The Church Care Team has done a wonderful job responding to people's needs and the Blackheath Home Group has given spiritual support to its members at its twice monthly sessions on Zoom.

St Martin's has stayed open for Private Prayer and Reflection on Wednesdays and Sundays and opened on the National Day of Reflection on 23 March and Good Friday. The church bell has been rung to mark special times of national commemoration. One funeral took place in church between October and April, no weddings and no baptisms.

Many have continued to follow the excellent on-line services provided by the Parish and it has created an opportunity to reach those who would not normally be attending church. Our heartfelt thanks go to all who have helped make these possible and to Kia for leading us during the period since David Peters left and his installation as our new Vicar. We are looking forward to welcoming David back in May as Vicar and holding a special service at St Martin's to mark this, followed by a Reception for him and Marion in the Village Hall.

Patricia Allen
Blackheath Church Warden
April 2021

Children's and Youth Ministry Report

In all our children's and youth work, we operate with three aims; to have fun, to make disciples and to grow leaders. During the past year, our ministry to children, young people and their families has naturally consolidated as all of our activities and age-appropriate worship has needed to move online entirely. We have maintained meaningful contact with many families, children and young people, and in small ways we have expanded the range of families and young people we are serving through our online offering. However, there are many challenges ahead as we begin to emerge from the effects of Covid-19, and welcome our younger church family members back to worship and fellowship in person.

There have also been changes in our children's and youth 'team'. We offer huge thanks to Fiona Allen who has wholeheartedly invested in our Sparks and Blaze groups over the past few years and stepped down from this role in September. Her contribution and enthusiasm in this ministry area is already greatly missed. In October, we also welcomed Jasper Parsons as our Church Ministry Intern. Jas has been working closely with our young people, in particular, and continues to grow and develop through Guildford Diocese Leadership and Theology Training programme.

Big Worship Family Praise

Since September, I (Sarah) have been leading a 'Big Worship' YouTube family worship service almost every week on Sundays at 4pm. This has been our primary connection with children under the age of 12 and their families, and offers Bible teaching, worship and creative prayer for families to engage with together, often including some children as presenters. Additionally, most weeks I have sent out an accompanying craft activity pack to every family we usually have regular contact with, and additional families who have requested them. The age range of children regularly participating in Big Worship is 1-11yrs.

Big Worship has been particularly attractive to our traditionally more 'fringe' families who would usually only attend Church Services occasionally. In particular, several families who were sporadic attendees at 10.45am are now eager Big Worship participants, receiving the weekly craft packs and can tell about their own discipleship journey for children and parents alike through participating in this worship pattern. Furthermore, two of these families have decided to make a regular giving commitment as a sign of them growing to feel they are now committed members of our Church family.

Additionally, Big Worship has been picked up by the National Church of England team, and has been used as a precedent of best practice Online Family Ministry in Guildford Diocese and National Church training webinars.

Each Big Worship Service is receiving unique viewing figures of around 28 views after 4 weeks (Although the range varies between as few as 8 or as many as 60). Known variables include the weather, the level of lockdown in place, the timeliness of a reminder email, and the place in the school term. It's very difficult to accurately judge how many people these viewing figures relate to, so we must supplement with anecdotal evidence. From speaking with a range of parents I know that;

- Most families are participating in the service together, rather than the children being set to watch without parents. So, for every unique view we might read a family of at least 2 persons (1 parent, 1 child) but often more, up to 2 parents, 3 children per unique view. 28 views potentially relates to between 56 to 140 people.
- Around a third of families are watching as the service premieres at 4pm. The timing of the service has suited active families keen to get out for exercise in the morning. Around tea time is a good time for children to settle to join in worship, and families enjoy the routine of Sundays being a day for Church time.
- A further third watch at some point during the weekend, but not 'live'. Some watch last week's service on Saturday afternoon, or watch just before bedtime, etc. Interestingly, most families are tending to participate at weekends rather than catch up during the week.

- The final third are less regular participants and tend to watch only every 4-6 weeks. Sometimes this will mean they are catching up on 2 or 3 services in a row, but often it just means they've skipped some.
- Not every family we previously had contact with has stuck with us. Despite attempting contact with all families known to us over the past year, not all have taken up our invitation to join in. Some have dipped into Big Worship but found it was not for them. Some families are connecting with churches further afield who offer children's ministry programmes online, instead of engaging with Wonersh Church. For very few, the parents are engaging with Wonersh Morning Worship and the children are not connected at all.

A few reflections to make:

Why has it been so attractive to fringe families?

- Families have been able to dip into something anonymously, at a time to suit them, with the option of switching off if it wasn't to their taste, without anyone questioning them, or noticing them leave. It's a no-pressure opportunity to participate.
- The style and content is easily accessible. We don't shy away from complex theology but do take opportunities to explore and explain Jesus and the Bible at a level that 'beginners' can understand, with enough meat to chew on! This works for children, and grown-ups alike.
- There is a story to follow week by week, it's varied, and the worship and prayer is understandable, creative and fun even if it may feel unfamiliar.
- There's opportunity for interactivity within families. Often there are questions or activities to talk through together, and conversation starters to carry on throughout the week. There is always a way to respond. In small ways we are equipping parents to keep faith in conversation in their home.

Why is a children's service often being watched by adults?

During the past year I've observed that an increasing number of parents are preferring to participate in 'Church' alongside their children, rather than seeking something more 'grown-up'. For the families I have spoken with, there is a high value to doing something together as a whole family. Parents are generally not tending to participate in worship services separately to their children, and children do not easily engage with adult focused worship. Some families report that regularly participating in a service together has enabled them to have a greater focus on nurturing faith at home, and there is a deep joy found in sharing with their children as they discover more about Christ and God's good news together.

There is clearly much to give thanks to God for, and equally as many lessons to learn and challenges to face as we begin to return to in-person Worship as a whole Church body.

Young People's Ministry

This term has brought further challenge and pressure for our 12-18 year olds, many of whom are struggling with an increase in the pressure in education arising from the continual assessment many now face in lieu of GCSEs and A-Level examinations. As a result, following a strong start to our term's activities, participation in our weekly zoom discipleship group and Sunday Late Night Worship dropped dramatically, to the point where as we entered this latest lockdown our weekly Wednesday Huddle dropped to a fortnightly occurrence, and Late Night Worship came to an end entirely.

It has been important to be led by the young people in this; pushing them to participate in our fixed programme at a time when they feel so under pressure in other areas was likely to undo their faith-building more than help it.

Throughout this time, Abby Cowey, Jasper Parsons and I have invested in building relationship with our young people, through encouragement and prayer for them. We have sent each young person (16 persons) a weekly gift and note throughout Lent, and held fortnightly social events on Zoom to lift spirits. These have been well attended and young people have invited friends to join in too. It's clear our teenagers are

struggling, and struggling to engage with Church online (whether Sunday Worship or Youth specific ministry) in a meaningful way. Recent studies show that contrary to what we may expect, young people struggle more than older generations to make meaningful connections online.

As lockdown restrictions ease, we plan to offer a weekly outdoor youth discipleship group in the Church grounds, and continue to journey with our young people into deeper faith.

School Connection

Nicky Cooke is working with Wonersh & Shamley Green School to enable the re-introduction of Open the Book Assemblies. This comes with many complications for both school and OTB team, however Nicky and Tim Cheesman are working together to overcome the obstacles. There is a possibility that OTB may be able to lead one or two assemblies as ‘one offs’ before the summer holidays, but most likely that they work towards preparing a programme for the new school year in September.

Other assemblies led by myself or Clergy have not yet been possible, but this too is evolving and we hope to be able to support school better in the coming months.

With thanks to Martin Keech, we have made school aware of our rare Bat colony in the Church Green Tower, and put them in touch with Surrey Bat Society who will (hopefully) be leading some activities with class groups specifically about our local bats. This will encourage children and their families to visit Church Green as they pass in order to ‘Bat Spot’! Additionally, Jane Boswell and I are developing ideas around inviting more children and young people to engage with our Church Sustainability activities in the future.

Volunteer Teams

Over the course of the past 2 years our children’s and youth ministry volunteer team has shrunk dramatically for a number of reasons. As we begin to plan and dream of a return to in-person children’s and youth work, most former volunteers are opting out of returning to their roles. It’s clear that there is much work to be done to rebuild a sustainable team to serve our children and young people in the coming years.

At present, our teams look like this:

Group (Age Range)	Volunteer Leader Roles	Current No. Volunteers
Chatterbox, SmallTalk (0-4s and Parents/Carers)	1-2 Hospitality team (Tea & Coffee) 1-2 Play equipment set up (incl. cleaning) 3 Family welcomers	1 volunteer available from September
Sparks, Blaze, In-person Big Worship (4-11yrs)	2 Group Leaders per group, per week (preparing and delivering pre-written programme)	0 volunteers
Wednesday Youth Huddle (12-18yrs)	2 group leaders per week	1 volunteer
Youth Café (12-16yrs) Not currently active	3-4 Café Hosts per week (setting up room, manning tuck shop and kitchen, welcoming and befriending youth)	TBC, some volunteers previously involved may be willing to return- currently being explored!

The weekly programme for the summer term should look like this:

Group	When?	Age Range	Plans
Chatterbox Toddler Group	Thursday mornings	Under 5s and their families.	Preliminary plans to re-open limited numbers for in-person sessions following Easter holidays. Dependent on recruiting more volunteers, and Gov. restrictions permitting.
Big Worship	Sunday afternoons	1-12yrs and their families	Continue to offer online Big Worship weekly, make plans for occasional outdoor in-person Big Worship services. Due to social distancing requirements it will not be possible to restart separate children's groups before 21st June, and there is limited space in Church to accommodate returning families alongside 10am regulars, therefore in-person children's work will not be possible until the new term in September. <i>A survey will be sent to all families to invite their views on how they would best like to return to in-person worship</i>
Wednesday Youth Huddle	Wednesday evenings	12-18yr olds.	Preliminary plans to restart in-person activities, in liaison with young people to ascertain what would be most useful for them.
Late Night Youth Worship	Sunday evenings	14-18yrs.	This will be gradually re-introduced and remain online only. In the longer term, I hope that young people will be encouraged to join and participate in Morning Worship services, when space in Church allows.

Sarah Rowden
Youth & Children's Ministry
April 2021

Safeguarding Report

The PCC and the incumbent have a duty of care to ensure the protection of the vulnerable in their church community although the outworkings of the ethos of safeguarding are included in every part of our ministry. This report covers a 6 month period since the last APCM, since when there has been one Safeguarding issue which was handled in line with Diocesan advice and the case is now closed. Safeguarding continues to be a priority at Wonersh and Blackheath although due to Covid restrictions all face to face church and youth activities have been suspended since the last APCM in Sept 2020. You Tube services and Zoom meetings have continued during pandemic restrictions. A new Social Media Policy will shortly be adopted by the PCC to replace the Social Media Policy for Youth and Children's work which was updated in response to the pandemic restrictions.

The Parish Safeguarding Self Audit was submitted to the Diocese in November 2020 and will be updated later in the year.

A new Bereavement Support worker (Jackie Waterfall) has been appointed in line with Diocesan Safer Recruitment guidelines and will work alongside Kia. She has completed a DBS check and the necessary safeguarding training.

To comply with Diocesan requirements safeguarding training at either Basic or Foundation level, whichever is specified, has now been completed online by all PCC members, Home Group leaders and Youth and Children's workers. Leadership and Safer recruitment training using Zoom has also been completed by those with particular responsibilities in these areas.

All DBS checks for those who require them are up to date. Churchwardens have completed their enhanced (without barred list) DBS check for adult and child workforces. To comply with Diocesan recommendations, PCC members are now also eligible for an enhanced (without barred list) DBS check for adult and child workforce and this will be implemented after the APCM.

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

Safeguarding continues to be an agenda item at all PCC meetings. I am grateful to Alex Vinall as PCC Safeguarding lead and to Heather Hope who continues to process all DBS applications ensuring that our volunteer clearance is up to date.

Catherine Keech
Safeguarding Officer
April 2021

Buildings Report

Church

Updating of the church lighting

The lighting in church has now been updated with LED fittings which will be energy efficient with significantly lower running costs and also much lower maintenance. The opportunity has been taken to improve/enhance the lighting in areas of the church where the lighting was deemed inadequate and to provide lighting suitable for streaming of services. The external floodlights, car park lights plus those in the Hope garden have also been replaced with LED fittings. Work is ongoing to update the lights in Church Green although they will be switched off when bats are present in the gateway (usually March-October).

Re-ordering of the vestry

The work on what was the vestry is now complete to provide a good quality open space with purpose built oak cupboards and shelving plus a new screen and improved space for the organist. The new area will provide an open space for private prayer, small meetings, small acts of worship and counselling plus to act as an overflow when the pews are full.

SmartWater

You may have noticed new signs at Lawnsmead and on the church notice board regarding SmartWater. All external metal surfaces at both sites have now been painted with SmartWater to deter further theft of metal.

Church heating

The gas boiler used to heat the church is reaching the end of its life and discussions are ongoing with a view to replacing it before next winter.

Blackheath Cemetery

Extension area

The first plot in the extension area of the cemetery has now been occupied. Work has been undertaken on the path in the extension area to improve accessibility but further work is required to ensure it is wheelchair friendly. It is hoped to renovate the benches as some are in a poor condition and remove those beyond repair. Updated cemetery regulations will shortly be adopted by PCC.

Pengilly Tree

The Pengilly family have planted an Amelanchier canadensis tree at the cemetery in memory of their mother Mrs Pamela Pengilly, a long standing resident of Wonersh, who was awarded an MBE for services to elderly people in Wonersh.

Lawnsmead

One tree and a lot of overhanging branches have been removed to tidy the site and improve airflow to the sheds which were experiencing some damp. Work will be undertaken shortly to replace some of the rotten external woodwork and then everything will be repainted.

I should like to thank my fellow members of the Buildings Committee - Thiew Tan, Malcolm Pickering and Darren Alford as well as the assistance of the churchwardens.

Martin Keech

Chair of the Buildings Committee

April 2021

Electoral Roll Report

Electoral Roll figures as at 19th April 2021:

St. John the Baptist Church, Wonersh	168	(171)
St. Martin's Church, Blackheath	42	(41)
	<hr/>	
Total	210	(212)

(Figures for 2020 in brackets)

Wonersh – 1.8% drop from electoral roll figures of 2020.

A couple of people have moved away from the area, we have had one death since the October Roll and a movement from the Wonersh Roll to the Blackheath Roll. We have also had 3 new people join the Electoral Roll since the last count.

Blackheath - 2.4% increase from electoral roll figures of 2020.

This is due to a movement from the Wonersh Roll to the Blackheath Roll.

Heather Hope
Parish Administrator
April 2021

Activities of the PCC for the period October 2020 to April 2021

This report is necessarily very brief, as it only covers a short period and the majority of the PCC's activities are described in Wardens' and Trustees' reports, and elsewhere in the meeting papers.

The PCC held three meetings during this period, all conducted via Zoom. In addition a number of matters were discussed and agreed, between meetings, via email.

The PCC has continued to fulfil its role of trusteeship of the church, with responsibility for safeguarding, health and safety, finances etc. Most of these roles are delegated in some way and our thanks go to all those who give their time to ensure the smooth running of the church.

The PCC will soon be adopting, in line with Charity Commission and Church guidance, new policies regarding Anti-Bribery practice and Conflicts of Interest. After the APCM the PCC will require DBS checks to be carried out on all members.

The PCC had to take the decision that, regrettably, church services in church would be suspended for a period leading up to Easter.

Otherwise, a considerable amount of time has been taken up in discussion about lighting, heating and the cemetery at Blackheath.

Clive Couzens
Secretary - PCC
April 2021

Deanery Synod Report

Only one meeting has taken place in the period. A Zoom meeting on 9 March. This considered the Annual Report and Finances to year end 2020, a report of elections to the Diocesan Synod, a vacancy for Lay Chairperson of the Deanery Synod, and a catch up of news from around the parishes. The next meeting is planned for July – hopefully in person.

Patricia Allen
Deanery Synod Representative
April 2021

Reports from some Church Groups

Seniors Ministry

Our connection with the seniors' ministry has been over the last seven months mainly connected with the Thursday Morning service congregation.

This fellowship continues to be a special nurturing community that has remained in regular contact with each other either by phone, email, zoom or in person (when allowed).

Special thanks must go to Nansi, who despite her physical limitations, has made it her mission to phone round our group on an almost weekly basis to ensure their well-being. Nansi – you are an inspiration!

Keith, Liz, Patsy James and I have produced a written service every week which has been either emailed or delivered by hand to all who would normally attend in person, plus a few extras. Big thanks to them!

Despite the challenges of trying to keep a community together without a physical presence my belief and hope is that our Thursday morning fellowship has indeed felt connected, supported and loved through these difficult times.

We are planning to meet again for in church services from May with the majority feeling comfortable with this – and we can't wait! For those not ready for this step we will still provide a hard copy of the service.

Pastoral Care Report

As a church we have, in the past, prided ourselves on our pastoral care. In the last few months I think the practical application of this has never been more evident.

It has not been easy and I'm sure we could have done better but the love and support from all quarters has been a joy to see and experience.

From Families and youth to seniors and all those in between we have witnessed a coming together of people supporting and caring for each other.

As mentioned in the curate letter we have joined with St Saviours in providing meals for those in need in our parish, we continue to support the North Guildford foodbank through Rosie Couzens and I know that a number of people have volunteered outside the structure of our church in helping those around them. This is faith in action and is wonderful to see.

Over the last year we have all experienced loss, whether that is the death of a loved one, a loss of income or simply our freedom. With grief at an all time high it is with gratitude that we welcome Jackie Waterfall to our pastoral team as our Bereavement support liaison. Jackie is well versed in pastoral care having taught on the pastoral course a little while ago and she brings with her experience, wisdom and, most importantly, a heart for this ministry.

As part of our pastoral care to our wedding couples I'm delighted that we will be running a marriage preparation course in May for the 6 couples due to marry this year and I'm hoping that we may also have two people willing to take this on in the future as part of their ministry.

Rev. Kia Pakenham
Curate
April 2021

Caleb Group Report 2021

The group is for what might be described as the ‘actively retired’ members of the church and we aim to go for walks, one every season, as well as occasional other events such as the always popular “Boules and BBQ” in August (though sadly it didn’t happen last year). If you think that this group might be just right for you, then do get in touch with me and I will make sure you receive our publicity: james.cooke2015@gmail.com.

Since the last APCM we did manage one walk (inevitably one that was very sparsely attended), visiting Thursley & Hankley Commons, with a slight detour to include the “Atlantic Wall” – a man-made construction, built to enable D-Day training to take place ahead of June 1944. It was much enjoyed by the few of us that went, but a post-walk group lunch wasn’t possible.

I’d like to use this opportunity to pay tribute to Bruce Morley following his move to Rudgwick. Bruce devised and led many of our walks, liaised with nearby pubs about having lunch afterwards, and organised car sharing. I can’t think how we will manage without him!

We hope to restart quite soon, at the end of April or the beginning of May. Past walkers will of course get the usual email about this, but if you’re interested and haven’t walked with us before, please get in touch using the email address above.

James Cooke
April 2021

Home Groups Report

Our Home groups continue to do a remarkable job under difficult circumstances. Our home group leaders have battled with technology in keeping meetings going on zoom where possible, meeting outdoors (weather and restrictions permitting) and by keeping in contact by phone.

Huge thanks go to these leaders for persevering through tough times!

Most home groups follow the sermon series with supporting material made available. Some have followed biblical study more suited to their groups’ needs and interests and both are encouraged.

Home groups continue to be the bedrock of how our pastoral care is delivered and where need is perceived, and I want to take this opportunity to thank all those involved in this vital part of the life of our church.

We currently have 14 groups meeting either weekly or bi-monthly with the majority of our regular church congregation being involved.

If you are not in a home group but would like the opportunity nurture your faith, make deep friendships and learn more about how to walk the Christian path then do please get in touch!

Rev. Kia Pakenham
Curate
April 2020

Sustainability Report for APCM – April 2021

While Covid restrictions have prevented us from holding in-person events over the last year – and will continue to do so for some time – we have made the most of new opportunities to raise awareness of the importance of sustainability and its relevance to our Christian faith.

A highlight of the year so far has been the Christianity & climate change course, an online course held over six Thursday evenings during Lent that explored different aspects of the climate crisis and how Christians are called to respond. Around 20 of us met on Zoom each week, watched a series of videos featuring an internationally renowned Christian climate scientist, and talked about our response. A number of ideas and suggestions came out of this course, some of which we are already following up on.

We also held a sustainability-themed Advent service on 29 November, featuring a number of congregation members sharing their reflections and experiences on seeking to live more sustainably. On 25 April we will be holding a Climate Sunday service, aimed at raising awareness of the seriousness of the climate crisis and exploring what a Christian response might look like.

We are also seeking to make further improvements in how we manage our buildings and land. Charlie is exploring more environmentally friendly options for heating the church building, and we've worked with the Parish Council to adopt a mowing regime in the churchyard that will encourage biodiversity: many thanks to Thiew, Zelda, Malcolm and Darren for their support in this area.

Many church members will be aware that we gained the Bronze Eco Church award about three years ago. Eco Church is an initiative started by Christian charity A Rocha to equip churches to care for God's world in a number of areas – worship and teaching, buildings, land, community engagement and lifestyle – and to recognize churches that are making progress. We are delighted that we have now qualified for the Silver award, which is a testament to the input and commitment of a range of people. We hope to receive and be able to display our award in church very soon! There is more we can do of course, and we'll be looking to take further steps in the coming months, including registering as a Fairtrade church and thinking about how we can work with other groups in the village.

Members of our sustainability group are Jane Boswell, Malcolm Pickering, Caroline Stearman, Charlie Wakefield and John Wallis, and we've recently welcomed Margaret Darvill and Anne Heine-Carmichael, who have joined us since the Lent course. We would love to hear from anyone else who is keen to be involved in any way or has ideas or suggestions.

Jane Boswell & Charlie Wakefield
April 2021

Mission Committee Report

Mission Committee membership comprises Alex Vinall, Keith Bateson, Jane Boswell, Liz Tilley, Nick Bamber and Caroline Stearman. We meet four times per year and aim to publish two newsletters a year with Mission Partner news. As a Mission Committee the focus of our activity is the following:

- Building and maintaining strong relationships with our Mission Partners
- Praying for our Mission Partners
- Being a conduit for communication between the Mission Partners and the church family
- Making stewarding decisions around the allocation of the annual mission giving budget across our partnerships, and recommending this to the PCC
- Proposing the giving focus for events such as the Harvest Appeal etc.

Our 5 main Mission Partners are:

- Viva International and Mim Friday
- World Horizons and Charlotte R
- Wonersh and Shamley Green School
- YMCA Downslink Group
- Ema and Viorel Tulpan

We continue to have strong connections and relationships with our Mission Partners, and have tried to stay in close contact over the last year. We hope that others enjoy reading of their news in our newsletter. When David Peters arrives we aim to carry out a review of the Mission Committee and our partnerships, probably in the autumn. This seems an appropriate moment to pause and reflect on how we approach this area of the life of our church family.

A summary of our annual allocation for this year is below. For the second year, our overall budget was lower than the previous year, so our priority with allocation was to maintain the level of the annual gift to our core Mission Partners and to the other local organisations we donate to annually. This resulted in a slightly lower gift to Tearfund and the Bible Society. We have had to reduce the gifts to our core Mission Partners by 15% this year.

Mission Partners	Allocation 2021
Charlotte R	£2,893
Ema and Viorel Tulpan	£2,893
VIVA	£2,893
YMCA Downslink Group	£2,893
Wonersh and Shamley Green School	£2,893
Bible Society	£525
Tearfund	£1,325
4 Villages Day Care	£300
Guildford Bell Ringers	£150
Church Green Trustees	£350
Age Concern	£200
Woncares	£100
TOTAL GIVING	£17,415

We want to thank everyone in the church for their ongoing prayer and financial support of our mission partners and partnerships, we are certain that this is valued by our partners.

Caroline Stearman
Mission Committee
April 2021

Bell Ringers Report

We have just six ringers, which for eight bells is clearly inadequate. We had one new volunteer who began to learn to handle a bell in mid-March 2020, but after several lessons where she was progressing well the Covid-19 lockdown was announced and all ringing teaching had to stop. I have maintained contact with the learner and hopefully she will return to training once the social distancing rules are relaxed. Once that happens we would be pleased to welcome more new ringers to join our band at any time. It takes a long time and a lot of determination to become a proficient ringer (as recent recruits will testify) but it is a very rewarding activity and we would love to teach anyone who is willing to make that commitment. We have in Wonersh a magnificent tuneful peal of eight bells to ring to the glory of God and to call people to church each Sunday. Please encourage others to join our band. Ringing really is both enjoyable and challenging.

Until March 2020 we rang the bells for services every Sunday and for all the major church festivals. All ringing was then stopped by order of the Church of England, and it was only restarted in August 2020, but with strict social distancing rules which mean we could only ring four or five of our eight bells, and could only ring for 15 minutes at a time. We can only ring five when three of our band (the Pickerings) are from one family, so can ring adjacent bells. When the church closed to live services in the third lockdown we ceased ringing altogether as there was no sense in calling worshippers to a church that they could not enter. We were delighted to restart ringing on Easter Sunday.

In addition to calling worshippers to services bells are traditionally rung to celebrate personal and national events. I feel particularly sorry for people who wanted to marry during the government and CofE restrictions on church weddings over the last year. The ringers are delighted that we now have four weddings scheduled for which we will be ringing in the next four months. We also rang the bells for Catherine Thompson's wedding on 5th December when the rules were temporarily relaxed to allow weddings with just six people.

More recently our bells have been rung half-muffled to mark the death of Prince Philip. Had he been a local we might also have marked his passing with the traditional 'Nine Tailors'. Most people just know it as the title of a murder mystery by Dorothy L Sayers but she took the title from an old tradition of marking deaths in the parish. It consists of a bell being tolled nine times for a man, six times for a woman and three times for a child. After a short interval the bell is then tolled once for each year of the deceased's life. I last did it at Wonersh for the death of a ninety year old woman, and to help in counting up to ninety I employed an able tolling counting assistant in the ringing chamber.

Stephen Darvill
April 2021

Wonersh and Shamley Green School Report

Unfortunately, due to Covid restrictions it has not been possible to be in school over the last few months. Rev. Sally and I were due to alternate in taking weekly assemblies and hope to resume this when restrictions permit.

We have had regular email contact with Tim Cheeseman (Headteacher) in offering prayer support and offering the 'Meals for you' initiative which has been taken up.

As Covid restrictions lift we are looking forward to resuming our in person contact with the staff, children and parents and will be actively pursuing our involvement.

The staff at WSG have been doing an incredible job in producing online school for their pupils and juggling all the Covid protocols in returning to in person teaching. It has been an exhausting and stressful time and not the first year that new Head Tim would have envisaged I'm sure!

Re. Kia Pakenham
Curate
April 2021

Open the Book Report

Obviously our "Open the Book" Assemblies in Wonersh & Shamley Green School and Bramley Infants Schools have been unable to happen in recent months, with even the carefully planned one for November 2020 having to be cancelled at the last minute, because of a further rise in Covid-19 infections. However, we have started preparing to restart as soon as is permitted and possible, hopefully sometime during the second half of this Summer Term.

The team continues to pray for the schools, using this interim period for planning the programme of stories (in conjunction with Tim Cheesman at WSG), laundering and repairing costumes and doing risk assessments etc.

There will be a few changes in the team, as sadly (for us!) one member is moving from the area and one or 2 others have decided to step down for a while longer until they feel totally confident to mix with more people again. Nevertheless, we are very much looking forward to seeing the children again and sharing God's Word with them through the dramas, which bring the stories to life for them so vividly and memorably.

Nicky Cooke
April 2021

List of Wardens and Sidespeople 2021

Wardens:

Guy Packenham
Alex Vinall

Duty Wardens:

John Nolan (8am)
John Wallis
Darren Alford

Sidespeople:

David Hutchins (8am)
Barbara Hutchins (8am)
Martin Maybrey (8am)
Malcolm Pickering
Susannah Alford
Clive Couzens
Rosie Couzens
Kim Gibbs
Christine Sweeting
Janet Spall
Nicky Cooke
Seana Willmott
Sheila Lonsdale

Sarah Jo Gray - occasional