

Trustees' Annual Report - 2019
For the Parochial Church Council of St Michael Aynho

*Part of the Astwick Vale Benefice Churches with
All Saints Croughton, St George Evenley, Most Holy Trinity Hinton-in-the-Hedges with Steane
and St. Michael and All Angels Farthinghoe*

Aims and Purposes

General. Aynho St. Michael Parochial Church Council (PCC) has the responsibility of cooperating with the incumbent in promoting in the ecclesiastical parish, the whole mission of the Church, pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical. This accords with the Church of England direction for the role of PCCs¹.

In March the new Incumbent, Reverend Suzanne Cooper, was installed in the Benefice at St Michael's Church by the Archdeacon of Northampton.

The PCC aims

- To provide a warm, welcoming, open church, where everybody is and feels valued.
- To offer a variety of well attended services and opportunities for spiritual development for all in the parish
- To contribute to community life at all levels

The PCC's purpose is to support the Rector and enable parishioners to worship God and to help each other on their journey to learn more of the love of God. In striving to achieve our aims and purpose the PCC values being part of the larger Astwick Vale Benefice. It brings opportunity to worship together and to help, encourage, and support each other.

Recognising the importance of the role the young will have in the future of the Church and in our own parish life, we strive to maintain our links with the Church school in Charlton and have supported the Benefice Holiday Club financially, in prayer, and with practical help over the years. The Holiday Club was not run during the year for a number of reasons and we are re-examining how we are going to involve the children in the Church's activities.

Objectives and Activities

General. For the last 4 years the PCC has used the template of a Growth Action Plan to provide added focus to our responsibilities and activities. We review our progress against both the overarching vision statement and the plan objectives over a 2 year period. The existing Plan is our third plan.

Through the current Plan we have maintained an overview of worship throughout the parish to provide the variety of worship which reflects the needs of the parishioners. We try to involve

¹ Parochial Church Councils (Powers) Measure 1956

the many community groups in the parish. Services and worship put faith into practice through prayer and scripture, music and sacrament. At our PCC meetings we review the services and note those points which we consider need some adaptation for the next time.

The core of our worship through the Growth Action Plan process has been the establishment of a regular family Communion Service held at 11 o'clock - and to encourage all different ages to participate.

Alongside the regular Communion Service we have maintained a bi-monthly Matins service together with different types of services within the Benefice which may have a wider appeal to the community – Candle Lit, Taize and Evensong which provide a more intimate and reflective environment for worship. We are very grateful to William Usher, our Lay Reader, with the support of Mayleng Chong for delivering the Matins service and to the choir who support it.

A regular monthly Benefice service is held at one of the six churches and parishioners are encouraged both to attend and to help others who cannot make the journey on their own. St Michael's takes its turn in hosting the monthly Benefice services.

We are very conscious that we have a number of parishioners who were regular church attenders but now are unable to attend church due to sickness or age. The Rector visited all church members who have requested it, to celebrate communion with them either at their homes or in hospital. As the age profile of the congregation continues to rise we are committed to carrying out our pastoral responsibilities.

Conclusion. In particular, we try to enable all people to live out their faith as part of our parish community through:

- Worship and prayer; learning about the Gospel; and developing their knowledge and trust in Jesus.
- Provision of pastoral care for people living in the parish.
- Missionary and outreach work supporting local, national and international charities.
- Provision of activities for the cohesion of the local community.

Achievements and Performance

Worship and Prayer

We normally hold at least three Sunday services a month at St Michael's and one weekday service (Tuesday). Within the Benefice there will be a service on the 3rd and 5th Sunday in the month and services on other weekdays.

We have an open baptism policy in which children and adults are baptised as part of the main worship of the family of the church. This includes a communion. We have an open confirmation policy which encourages and supports children to receive communion before confirmation.

We accept and encourage marriage and blessing services for all couples from inside and outside the parish and appreciate the time given by the Rector in her support of all the couples in their lead up to the service.

We have held a number of funeral services and interment of ashes during the year.

We recognise the importance and attraction of services which involve families and our community life. We held successful services to celebrate the key feasts of Easter and Christmas, with both a Carol Service in the church and a community “Carols” in the Village Hall on Christmas Eve. Mothering Sunday, Harvest Festival and Remembrance Sunday were well supported.

We decide at our PCC meetings how to respond to the needs of our communities – both near and afar – with charitable giving. Close to home we support the local hospice (Katharine House) and Banbury Young Homelessness Project, and nationally, Crisis at Christmas. We support Diocesan charities and national charities as well as responding to Disaster Emergency Committee appeals – and the financial details are later in the Report.

We have continued to have special printed service sheets which many have said are easier to follow making the services more accessible.

We have enjoyed another year of regular bible studies during Lent and autumn with members from around the parish attending. The Monday morning Bible Study group continues to meet every month with an average attendance of 8 -10 people.

We are very lucky to have the benefit of the services taken by the Rev Hugh Warwick and the Rev Terry Richards in their support of the Rector.

St. Michael’s Church enjoys both a local bell ringing team, led by Peter Phillips, Tower Captain, and a robed choir to assist in Worship. We are very lucky to have our long-standing organist, Sybil Stevens, regularly supported by Andrew Mills and when necessary by Graham Gibbs and Jonathan Clinch.

The community has supported the Church with its fundraising efforts over the years. The fete at Aynhoe Park involved a large number of PCC members and parishioners in organising the fun event and raised more than £9,000 for church funds.

Pastoral Care

Within our village community the Rector and members of the church regularly visit parishioners during times of ill health and bereavement. This can be at home, in hospital, or at a residential home. They offer a listening ear and practical help by shopping, delivering prescriptions, and transport to hospital appointments.

Our monthly prayer meeting, held in a village home, welcomes requests from anyone who would benefit from this support.

Ecumenical Relationships

We have no Ecumenical links within the Parish albeit that the churches across the Benefice welcome those of all faiths and those of none to any of the services.

Safeguarding

The duty of safeguarding of all people is taken very seriously by the PCC which has adopted a suitable safeguarding policy which is consistent with the Church of England House of Bishops’ “Protecting All God’s Children”². The policy is reviewed annually. Regular reports are given

² 4th edition 2010, “Promoting a Safe Church” 2006 and Interim guidelines relating to Safer Recruitment 2010

by the Benefice Safeguarding Officer. PCC members have received 'Basic' safeguarding awareness training and all the C1 level. The PCC is very grateful for the work done by Carrie O'Regan, the Benefice Safeguarding Officer.

Deanery Synod

Two members of the PCC sit on the Deanery Synod. This provides the PCC with an important link between the parish, the deanery, and the wider structures of the church. Three Deanery Synods were held this year focusing on "A Journey into Prayer"; "The Work of the Hope Centre in Northampton" and the "Value of the Laity in sustaining and expanding the Church locally".

Growth Action Plan

The Growth Action Plan took effect at the beginning of 2018 and lasts for two years. Our vision statement has survived very well and the objectives which have not been mentioned earlier in this Report include:

- Not forgetting those who have been regular church goers but are now too old and infirm to attend
- Encouraging preparation for lay led services when needed.
- Establishing an occasional Evensong service in St Michael's
- Supporting a regular Church youth group
- Inviting visiting speakers to our services

Electoral Roll

As at 31 December on the Church Electoral Roll there are 54 parishioners, 4 of these are not resident within the parish. Six names were added during the year and Eleven were removed either through death or because they no longer qualified. The average weekly attendance, counted during October, was 32 but this number increased at festivals and Christmas as explained above..

The Church and Churchyard

Our church is open to all on a daily basis for private prayer and quiet meditation with the added opportunity to be informed about the history of St Michael's. We were pleased to have the services of our Verger, Jane Wade, to organise access, welcome visitors and support the many weddings and blessings.

We are in the third year since receiving the last Quinquennial Report carried out by Acanthus Clews of Banbury. The priority work and our approach to it, focuses on the following in the Church:

- The re-decoration of the internal walls and ceiling of the main building, chapel and vestry was completed in January-March on schedule and on budget.
- Church Tower. A Bell Safety Inspection was last carried out in April 2017 and minor work was completed as required. All bells are safe to use.
- Electrical. A full electrical check of all the church wiring was completed during

2018.

- Heating. The CH boiler is still working after its difficult time in the winter of 2018. A plan is in place should it need to be replaced.
- The lead roof is causing concern and we have undertaken maintenance repairs to try to stop the leak over the chancel. We are beginning to consider how we replace the lead roof and how to incorporate measures which would help with climate change.

In the Churchyard:

- Burials were completed on the Eastern burial ground at the end of the year and future burials will now take place on the Southern part of the churchyard.

Structure, governance and management

The PCC members are responsible for making decisions on all matters of general concern and importance to the parish including deciding on how the funds of the PCC are to be spent.

The PCC Meetings were held on the following dates in the year:

Thursday 21st February 2019

- update on the Interregnum
- update on Church redecoration
- notification about new Incumbent
- approved the annual accounts for 2018 and prepared for the APCM.

Monday 8th April 2019 following the APCM

- appointed its officers for the coming year.

Thursday 9th May 2019

- First meeting with the new Rector

Monday 22nd July 2019

- Reflected on the sad death of Helen Boswell, Deputy Chair
- Charitable Giving amounts approved

Tuesday 24th September 2019

- Planned harvest festival and Christmas services
- Discussed the future service rota across the Benefice
- Concern expressed about the level of the Parish Share

Wednesday 13th November 2019

- Broad discussions about the service rota and inclusion of Lay led services and the phasing out of Matins
- Votive candle stand approved

Full details of all meetings are recorded in the Minutes which are approved meeting by meeting and signed by the Chair.

PCC Meetings follow the standard Agenda below:

1. Apologies
2. Minutes of previous PCC Meeting – attached
3. Matters arising
4. Worship Update
5. Safeguarding and Training
6. Secretary's Report / Correspondence
7. Churchwarden's Report (including about the fabric of the Church)

8. Treasurer's Report
9. Deanery Synod Report
10. Stewardship and Fundraising
11. Any other Business
12. Date of next Meetings

The meetings follow a standard review of those items which matter to the Rector, PCC and parish. The focus for each meeting is the review of services.

The APCM/APM was held on Monday 8th April 2019 at which the reports were presented to the parishioners attending and the elections made to appointments and roles for the following year until the next APCM/APM. As a result:

Ex Officio members of the PCC:

Incumbent: The Reverend Suzanne Cooper (Chair)

Reader: Mr William Usher

Warden: Mr Graham Gibbs

Elected members:

Sybil Stevens	2018-2021	
Annabel Bellamy	2018-2021	
Norman White	2018-2021	(Deanery Synod Representative)
Helen Boswell	2019-2022	(Vice Chair)
Dr Mayleng Chong	2017-2020	
Kathy White	2017-2020	
Ted Sutton	2017-2020	(Deanery Synod Representative)

Appointed officers in 2019:

Jane Wade	Verger
Andrew Bellamy	Treasurer
Annabel Bellamy	Secretary
Kathy White	Electoral Roll Officer
Carrie O'Regan	Benefice Safeguarding Officer
Mayleng Chong	Parish Safeguarding Contact

Readers

William Usher	Lay Reader
Carrie O'Regan	Lay Reader

Volunteers

We would like to thank all the volunteers who work so hard to make our church the lively and vibrant community it is. In particular, we want to mention our churchwarden, Graham Gibbs, assisted by Kathy White who have both worked so tirelessly on behalf of the PCC. The day to day and week to week activity in the church throughout the year could not happen without a host of other parishioners volunteering for all aspects and the PCC would particularly like to thank the flower ladies, choir and organists, bell ringers, tea/chocolate makers, church cleaners, church openers/locker uppers, 'welcomers' and sides- persons.

Sides-persons

The following acted as side-persons during the year, after appointment by the PCC:

Annabel Bellamy Mayleng Chong Andrew Bellamy Gillian Reynolds

Ted Sutton

Jenny Pusey

Kathy White

Jane Wade

Administrative Information

St. Michael's Church is situated just off Roundtown in Aynho. The parish is part of the Diocese of Peterborough, the Brackley Deanery, and the Astwick Vale Benefice within the Church of England.

The correspondence address is The Rectory, Croughton Road, Aynho, Northants OX17 3BD.

Communications

Our parish Newsletter is distributed monthly to the whole community in Aynho, and we are thankful for those who create it and to those who distribute it. The Newsletter keeps our parishioners informed of the important matters affecting our Church and articles that help develop our knowledge and trust in Jesus; it acts as the single village mail drop to the 300 homes in the village and covers most community activities. It is supported by local businesses and self-employed trades people.

The Apricot Village website has its space for the Church Newsletter and the Rector posts her PASTORAL LETTER each month. We have a GAP objective to continue to seek the development of the church section.

Financial Review

The annual accounts for the St Michael's Church for 2019 are published in detail at the end of this Report. In accordance with the Diocesan rules the annual accounts have been prepared by the Treasurer, independently examined, and approved³ by the PCC. They have been published on the church notice board for 28 days prior to presentation at the APCM. The Treasurer will submit an Annual Parish Finance Return summarising the finances for 2019 and giving details of regular giving.

In summary

- The overall financial position of St Michael's is sound. We have cash in the bank and reserves immediately available if needed.
- Our income through the Stewardship Scheme and the Gift Aid Small Donations Scheme, benefiting from Gift Aid, was a close mirror of 2018.
 - The amount from the stewardship scheme, collection plate and general donations are consistent with the previous year.
 - Maintained the level of fundraising through the fete,
 - We drew £26,000 from the deep reserves (Aynho School Trust Fund) for the redecoration project
- Our pattern of normal expenditure was followed again in the year.
 - The cost of-Ministry went up (the £1,500 increase in the Parish Share)
- Our charitable giving during the year totalled £3,391 which represents approximately 15% of the church's normal income from individuals in the year. The detail of the giving is on the last page of the statement of the annual accounts below.

³ At the PCC Meeting on 21 Feb 2019

Reserves Policy

It is PCC's aim to keep 25% of running costs in reserve plus £5000 to cover emergency building work which cannot be planned into the Quinquennial cycle; our target for the Reserve Fund is met at £13,500. To achieve this we will put money aside from our income or conduct fund raising to ensure the reserves are there when needed.

Approval

The Church Accounts for 2019 were approved by the PCC of St Michael's Church, Aynho on 19 February 2020 and signed on its behalf by

{Signed – SC – 16 March 2020}

Chair of the PCC, Reverend Suzanne Cooper

On the following pages are:

The approved Statement of Accounts for 2019 which include

- Balance Sheet
- Statement of Income
- Statement of Expenditure
- Statement on the Aynho School Trust Fund – income, withdrawals and valuations
- Details of the Charitable Giving made and the recipients

And on the said Statement of Accounts

The Independent Examiner's Report (18 Feb 2020)