

2017

Annual Report of the PCC



Didcot

All Saints'

Church

Aim and Purpose

Open to God

Open to Everyone

Open to Change

This report aims to reflect the life at All Saints' and outlines the wonderful activities that members of the PCC and wider congregation undertake in order to sustain our life of faith, prayer and fellowship. We extend a heartfelt thank you to everyone who makes All Saints a warm and welcoming community.

All Saints' Parochial Church Council (PCC) has the responsibility for working with the incumbent, the Reverend Karen Beck, in promoting the whole mission of the church, pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical. The PCC also has responsibility for maintaining the church of Didcot All Saints', the churchyard and the Youth and Community Hall.

Objectives and Activities

The PCC is committed to enabling as many people as possible to worship at our church and to become part of our parish community at All Saints. The PCC maintains an overview of worship throughout the parish and with the development of our Mission Action Plan aims to witness to the love of God within the local community and the wider world. Our services and worship put faith into practice through prayer and scripture, music and sacrament.

When planning our activities for the year, we have considered the Commission's

guidance on public benefit and, in particular, the supplementary guidance on charities for the advancement of religion. In particular, we try to enable everyone to live out their faith as part of our parish community through:

- Worship and prayer; learning about the gospel and encountering God.
- Provision of pastoral care for people living in the parish.
- Missionary and outreach work.

To facilitate this work it is important that we maintain the fabric of the church, the churchyard and the Youth and Community Hall.

All Saints' is also responsible for the legal overview of Great Western Park Church, which is designated as a Fresh Expression of Church.



Achievements and Performance

In 2016 the Annual Parish Church Meeting approved a Mission Action Plan for the church and the church community has continued to build on this vision throughout 2017. The four focus areas were:

- worship, prayer and faith development
- mission and outreach
- sustaining the work of the church
- maintenance and development of the church buildings and environment

Worship, prayer and faith development

The PCC is keen to offer a range of services during the week and over the course of the year that our community find stimulating and spiritually fulfilling. There are regular Sunday 8.00am and 10.00am and Tuesday morning communion services and occasionally we hold an all-age non-Eucharistic service. Monthly evening quiet time provides an intimate and reflective environment for prayer and contemplation, while opportunities are provided for people to engage in focussed worship at Lent and Advent. Each month we take communion to the Meadows residential home and, with St Peter's Church, to Didcot Hospital. These are times of conversation, music and prayer.

During Ordinary time in 2017 the worship sub-committee decided to explore the Bible in the main Sunday worship to deepen people's understanding. Various people took their part in leading the exploration of different books of the Bible.

The worship sub-committee also hope to have a sermon series on Science and Faith from time to time in the coming year.

This year we have welcomed new people into our congregation, particularly from 25 – 35 age group. We were greatly saddened, however, by the deaths of two

of our most committed members, Dr. Helen Walker and Mrs. Amy Walker.



At present there are 98 parishioners on the church Electoral Roll. 9 names were added during the year and 4 were removed either through death or because they moved away from the parish. The average weekly attendance was 58 adults but this number increased significantly at festivals.

As well as our regular services, we enable our community to celebrate and thank God at significant times in their lives. Through baptism we thank God for the gift of life, in marriage public vows are exchanged with God's blessing and through funeral services friends and family express their grief and give thanks for the life which is now complete in this world and to commend the person into God's keeping. We have celebrated 29 baptisms and 11 weddings and held 15 funerals in our church this year.

Music

Unfortunately Margaret Cotterell, our music leader, had to step down early in the year. We are very grateful to Dr. Robin Rees, a former music leader, who stepped into the breach and guided the choir and congregation through the Easter season.

Shortly afterwards, Dr. Paul Hedley was appointed as music leader.

The year has been a busy one in musical terms at All Saints. We introduced a new mass setting in the summer, which is now being enjoyed by choir and congregation alike. We welcomed a new member into the choir in Eleanor Barraclough, whose contribution has already been substantial, and the standard of singing in the church as a whole has been steadily improving over the course of the year. Confidence is a key element of singing, and it is wonderful to both see and hear the voices of all during rousing final hymns.



The choir has also begun to sing during communion from a different part of the church, by the main door, which has had a positive impact both for their singing, and for the congregation as they go up to the altar rail. We hope that we can continue to experiment, and find further ways to integrate music into worship, and provide different experiences to enable and facilitate deeper engagement with the liturgy. Whether actively participatory, or experienced purely through the ear, sacred music can be a tonic and a place of calm, an energising influence and a creator of prayerful reflection, and if we can achieve that even some of the time, we are doing our job well.

Plans for 2018 include participation in a concert in the church, the addition of a sung Benedictus for Morning Prayer, and

the widening of the choir's repertoire as we look to the musical future together.

Prayer

Quiet Space continues to meet every month and is generally led by Peter and Lottie Sumner. A number of people from other denominations in the town attend alongside members of All Saints'.

The church was opened during the week beginning Pentecost Sunday as a part of the national week of prayer 'Thy Kingdom Come' and was visited by members of other churches in the town as well as All Saints' members.

The healing group meets monthly to pray confidentially for those in need who request it. They also offer prayers for healing at a quarterly 10 a.m. healing service.

Faith development

An Emmaus course was completed in February 2017 and Leanne Morrow was confirmed in June at Christ Church, Abingdon.



Lisa Duffy began an Emmaus course at the Ladygrove Church and will be confirmed in April 2018.

In early 2018 an opportunity will be offered after the 10 a.m. Sunday service to look at Bishop Steven's course on the Beatitudes. After Pentecost in 2018 there

will be a further opportunity to explore his other course, 'Abundant Life'.

Tim Scane is now in his second year of his training for licensed lay ministry and Peter Sumner is exploring the possibility of training as a spiritual director.

Fellowship groups

The Monday evening group has met on the 1st and 3rd Mondays of each month and has covered a number of topics.

The Thursday morning group, led by Philip Shipman, met every 2nd and 4th Thursday of the month and is a great source of support and friendship for the more elderly members of our congregation. In 2017 they looked at 'Stalwarts of the Old Testament' and 'Jesus: Yesterday, Today and Forever is the Same'.

The Monday evening group have watched lots of different films and reflected on what they show about – or challenge – the Christian faith. They have also looked at St. Mark's gospel in depth and tried to plot a path through the various positions people take when it comes to working out what we can know what actually happened in Jesus' life and ministry from what the Gospels contain, including the crucifixion and resurrection. They also explored the value of the healing and exorcism ministries in the church with contributions from visitors.

Sunday School

We believe that our young people are the future of the church and that it is important they have an opportunity to develop their knowledge and understanding of Christian values and a Christian way of life. Our weekly Sunday school explores the teachings of Jesus in a structured way, employing a diverse range of stimulating materials tailored to the different ages of the children.



Throughout 2017 the Sunday School continued to thrive with a steady core of 5 children (aged 7 – 2) and other children joining on a regular basis.

Two members of Sunday School, Esther and Adam Hedley, were prepared to receive holy communion by Tim Scane, the trainee lay minister, and Karen Beck, the priest-in-charge, and they took communion for the first time at the All Saints' service in November.

Unfortunately Kathryn Roberts-Lock had to step down as Sunday School leader in the summer due to ill-health and Karen Prickett took over as leader. In December all the members of the Sunday School team met with Yvonne Morris, the diocesan children's worker, for a training session, which they found enlightening and effective in building their team. We are very grateful to them all for their dedication and hard work in encouraging and enabling the children.

Bellringing

There is a team of five ringers at All Saints' Didcot lead jointly by Peter Jones and Kathryn Roberts-Lock. All ringers are members of the Oxfordshire Guild of Church Bellringers and, as a tower, we are members of the Old North Berks Branch. We also have support from Philip Roberts, of St Matthew's Harwell, for which we are very grateful. We continue to ring for the 10am Service every Sunday and hold practices every Monday (excluding Bank

Holidays) from 6pm to 7:15pm with a very popular tea/coffee break! We also ring regularly for weddings and special occasions.

In September 2017 we lost a much valued ringer, Dr Helen Walker. She has been sorely missed at our practices and service ringing. Following the success of our 2016 coffee morning, we held another one in October 2017 and all donations were donated to Macmillan in memory of Helen. The total raised was £315 including gift aid.



We were able to see the fruit of our fundraising efforts in February 2018, when we installed a new set of three bell ropes! We kept the red, white and blue Sallies (the fluffy part) after giving Helen the deciding vote. The main difference is that the new ropes have pre-stretched polyester tops, making them more durable and less susceptible to wear. It also meant that we were able to install them straight away (usually ropes have to be stretched before they are attached to the bell, and in the past we have stretched our previous ropes along the ladder in the belfry).

We have continued to play an active role in our local branch, hosting the training course for new ringers a few times, and have welcomed visitors, both local and from further afield. One particular highlight was a quarter peel (approximately 45 minutes of continuous

ringing) that a group of visitors from Cirencester rang on 22nd April 2017. They kindly left us a copy of the method that they rang naming it "Didcot Singles".

The next maintenance check from Whites of Appleton is due to take place on Tuesday 10th April 2018.

We always welcome new ringers and both Peter Jones and Kathryn Roberts-Lock have current DBS checks to ensure we are covered for young learners (ages 11 years plus).

Mission and evangelism

The mission and outreach sub-committee continued to meet every two months. It was decided that our financial support for TRAIN would continue and 10% of our income was allocated to them and a number of other charities, both national, international and local. (Details available in our annual accounts.)

A focus on homelessness was made in October with a number of initiatives being held. The congregation responded generously to an appeal for clothes and camping equipment for a charity in Oxford which works with those living on the streets.

A soup kitchen was held on Saturday, October 14th which unfortunately didn't attract those in need but did attract people from other churches and links were established with Stonham the Hagbournes, a homelessness charity based in Great Western Drive which supports young homeless people into regular employment and a home.

On October 15th Miriam Morris from Church Housing Trust preached at the 10 a.m. service and received a very positive response and provided another dimension to the issue of homelessness.

Tim Scane and Karen Beck also led a harvest assembly at Manor School on the same subject which the children found thought-provoking.

The church continues to support Didcot Foodbank with ongoing collections.

The committee are continuing to review how All Saints' might best engage with and support Christian Aid.

During 2018 the committee will focus on a different charity each month which is supported financially by the church. It is hoped that in this way the congregation might become more aware of the issues facing these charities and how we might respond.

Schools

It is a huge joy and privilege to have good links with our local schools. Children from All Saints' School still come to half-termly services at All Saints' to mark significant events in the church's year. Tim Scane has continued to take assemblies at Stephen Freeman School as part of an ecumenical team and he established links with the new headteacher at Manor School, Mrs. Jessica Robinson in the autumn. This has led to his taking assemblies on a termly basis there and Prayer Spaces in Schools will be held there for the first time in June.

Our priest-in-charge has continued to participate in religious and moral education days organized by Didcot Girls' School.

As part of Churches Together, we again took part in Prayer Spaces at Stephen Freeman, All Saints', Ladygrove Park, Willowcroft and Northbourne Primary Schools and Didcot Girls' School as well as participating in Treasure Times, a weekly drop-in during the summer holidays for children aged 5-11 and their carers.

We continue to make the church available to the youth choir Didcot Sings for their weekly meetings.

23rd Didcot Scout Group

The group, which meets every Friday in term time, have struggled to find sufficient leaders and, therefore, Beavers and Cubs are run concurrently with the cubs staying on for an extra half an hour for more focussed activities.

Rachel and Steve Hunter have been tireless in their management of the group and we are extremely grateful to them. Joint activities have been held with 15th Didcot and East Hagbourne.

There are currently 4 Beavers, 12 Cub Scouts and 15 Scouts. It is hoped that a Cub Camp can be organised during 2018 although it is unlikely that a sleepover will be possible for Beavers.

Adults

Young at Heart, organized by Mrs. Betty Kendrick meets every month on the second Monday in the Kneller Room offering an opportunity for socializing for older members of the community. At holiday times they share a meal.



Natters/Knitters meets on the last Monday afternoon of each month and again offers opportunities for socializing but also for fundraising for various good causes in creative ways.

The monthly parish magazine is distributed to those who request it in the community and copies are available in church. The magazine keeps people informed of the important matters affecting our Church and articles that help develop our knowledge and trust in Jesus.

We have a church page on Facebook which updates people about forthcoming events and from time to time reflects on issues of wider interest from a Christian perspective.

Sustaining the work of All Saints'

We were successful in meeting the parish share for 2017 but the financial sustainability of the church proves to be the greatest challenge that All Saints' faces. The fundraising committee organised various successful events and by the end of the year, Sue Scane and Alison Goodall were actively seeking grants from various sources.

A stewardship campaign will take place in Lent 2018 for 4 Sundays and will introduce the Parish Giving Scheme.

Finance Review

The Accounts, which are available in conjunction with this report, have again included Great Western Park Church, but whereas in previous years there were only small sums involved, this year there have been far more movements, and it impacts on how the accounts need to be viewed, as the Bank totals reflect both Churches.

The All Saints' Funds (General and Restricted) have decreased by £8,700 in the year, reflecting in the main, the significant cost of the work to the Spire and the Churchyard

Wall. Whilst some grants were obtained for the work, it has utilised the majority of the Building Fund, plus £17,500 from the General Fund, which was available due to the legacies received in year.

More detail on the Income and Expenditure is set out below, along with a review of the other funds.

Income

The levels of stewardship – both direct to the bank, through envelopes, collections and the associated Gift Aid has again decreased, down to £53,275 from £56,587 in 2016. Fundraising was also well down on the previous year.

Donations and PCC Fees have countered that decline by £6,045 combined, and the recovery of the overpayments for gas and electricity of £3,483 along with two legacy payments, has meant that we did end up with greater income in the year than in 2016.



Expenditure

The costs of running the church have generally been constrained during the year, with only Maintenance and Training increasing. The level of grants (paid to mission organisations) fell because it reflected the fall in the previous years' income.

Overall General Fund position

The overall Surplus for the year, having transferred £17,500 in the Building Fund to pay for the works to the Spire and Churchyard Wall, was £4,656. This took the General Fund balance at the year end to £40,078.

FUNDS AND BALANCES

Building Fund

This fund has seen considerable movement in the year, with not only the works to the Spire, but also the remaining work to the Wall along the Churchyard, and some preparatory work for the Path and Lighting project. The receipts include grants of £13,500 received from the Gladiator Trust and Oxfordshire Historic Churches Trust. The cost of the Spire work was £36,620, although we were successful in reclaiming £6,100 of VAT from the Government. This left £17,020 to be funded.

In addition, £11,694 was spent on the other projects, which meant that the building fund would have been £106 in deficit. One of the legacies for £2,500 was specifically requested to relate to the building, and it, along with a further £15,000 was therefore transferred from the General Fund. This leaves the Building Fund to start the new year with only £378, so additional funding will be required to do any further work on the Path, or on any other projects.

Churchyard Fund

There has been increased expenditure on this fund during the year, with Tree Surgery in addition to essential maintenance of equipment and grass cutting.

Miscellaneous Funds

There has been little movement on these funds, although it was found that there were a number of unpresented and out of date cheques from previous years which were written back to the accounts. Some of these related to Bell Ringers fees and these have been put back into the previously closed Bell Fund, which has been reopened.

In addition, the Knitters and Knatters group collected £320 which they wanted to keep separate to fund the Flower festival and History Project. So this has been identified within the Miscellaneous funds.

GWP Fund

2017 has been a positive year for the Great Western Park Church financially, with the consolidation of its finances, which were previously spread across All Saints' Church, the Deanery and the Diocese. This has allowed for the first time, a comprehensive picture of its funds. The Accounts are managed by All Saints' Church, but held in a separate restricted fund.

The largest income figure relates to the transfer of grants previously held by the deanery and diocese, which makes up the bulk of the £19,374 of grants received. However, grants of £1,350 were also specially raised in year to support the running of the church and its activities.

There has been a significant increase in Stewardship giving, which has increased through the year as members of the congregation have committed to regular giving. This along with collections and donations has meant that, even without the Church grants, the Church has been able to raise more in the year than it spent.



The café, as well as being a major outreach work into the community, has also been able to contribute positively to the finances of the church, making a net £556 in the year.

The activities, and especially the activities week, also generated far more money this year than last year, but the costs were also far

higher, and taking all the activities together actually made a loss of £512.

Church expenditure has also increased as the levels of services increased from 2016. The figures are not comparable from the tables provided, as all of Mark's expenses for 2016 were paid from the deanery, whereas they were paid through All Saints' in 2017. It was agreed part way through the year to pay for additional administrative support, and the full year effect of this will be seen in 2018.

It is worth pointing out though, that services moved to a weekly basis from monthly, far sooner than the original planning expectation for the church.

OVERALL SUMMARY

So to summarise the overall position, the General Fund made a surplus of £4,656 in 2017. The Miscellaneous Funds also increased by £864. However, the Building Fund and Churchyard funds both decreased in value by £11,210 and £3,020 respectively, which when taken together account for the £8,710 decrease in the All Saints' Funds.

However, our financial position remains insecure – without the substantial legacies received in the year, we would not have been able to proceed with the Spire and Wall projects and would have eaten heavily into our reserves. Additional funding will need to be secured in order for the proposed Path and Lighting project, and the Memorial Wall project to proceed. Both of these projects are essential to our future ability to improved access and to continue with an open churchyard.

The Youth and Community Hall



Income

Income increased this year from £25,555.71 in 2016 to £30,845.73 in 2017, following an increase in fees at the start of the year and continued good use of the hall. The booking fees will be reviewed by the committee again in November 2018. Contribution towards the admin costs from the PCC and GWP have increased due to an increase in workload and hours.

Expenditure

Expenditure is down this year to £23,574.77 as compared with £28,368.86. This left a surplus against income of £7,270.96.

Wages have increased due to an increase in hours towards the end of the year and an increased reliance on casual staff to cover absences. In June the hall purchased a floor polisher at a cost of £465.72. In October we paid £1378 to Price & Myers to inspect the cracks in the hall building and provide advice on how to resolve this. It is highly likely this will lead to other expenditure in 2018 and beyond.

In December the hall purchased two new tables at £129.60.

Paul Smith has been hired to carry out maintenance jobs, resulting in a slight increase to our maintenance/fixture and fittings expenditures.

Future notes

The Didcot branch of Nat West will be closing later in 2018. At the moment we plan to use the Post Office for deposits.

Reserves Policy

It is PCC policy to try to maintain a balance on free reserves (net current assets) to smooth out fluctuations in cash flow and to meet emergencies. The balance of the free reserves at the yearend was £50,713 which is lower than last year by £8,711.

The balance of £10,635 in the restricted funds is principally retained towards maintaining the upkeep of the churchyard and other miscellaneous funds.

It is our policy to invest the short-term investment fund balances with the CCLA Church of England Deposit Fund.

Maintaining and developing the church building and churchyard

We are very grateful to a small number of people who work extremely hard to maintain the church and hall buildings and the churchyard.



A number of projects happened or progressed throughout the year.

For over 2 years we have been planning to replace the path from the lych gate and extend it round to the hall. During a related visit from the Church's Architect in 2016, he recommended first cutting back the trees that overshadowed the path. This work was done in January, as well as felling some dead or dying trees, subsequent working parties also removed self-set saplings and shrubbery near the boundaries to reduce the 'overgrown' feel that parts of the grounds around the church had acquired. However, the path project is not going to be simple and at the end of 2017 we were working with SODC's Planning Department on a plan for a path that wouldn't threaten the roots of the existing mature trees during construction, or itself be damaged by tree roots long term.

In 2016 it was noticed that grey squirrels (tree rats) were nibbling substantial parts of some of the shingles on the spire, allowing the weather to enter. The project to replace them (and repair some damaged or missing internal bracing) was completed in July by Attley's Roofing at a cost of £29,000 + VAT (which was reclaimed in full from the Listed Places of Worship VAT refund scheme) including fees for the Structural Engineer required for the bracing. The materials have an anticipated life of 40-50 years.

Spaces for the interring of ashes are running out and although the exact nature of a solution was still to be decided, the bushes and undergrowth on the eastern edge of the New Churchyard were removed to allow us to assess how much useful space might be available.

Although we intend to replace the path lighting as part of the path project the existing lighting started to fail during wet

weather and trip the breaker for the outside circuit, so a stop gap solution was installed on a temporary faculty (permission) which has made a huge difference to accessibility of the path during the evening.

Pastoral care

Some members of our parish are unable to attend church due to sickness or age. A small group of volunteers visit all church members who have requested it, to celebrate communion with them either at their homes or in hospital. Anyone who is sick or in need of extra support and wishes to be kept in touch with church life will be visited. The pastoral visiting team aims to meet twice a year.

In 2017 the support and care of All Saints' was demonstrated when 3 members of our congregation were taken seriously ill. People responded by offering time and support not only to those who were ill but to their closest families. Everyone worked well together and, following safeguarding guidelines were able to take on significant responsibilities. As a result the pastoral visitor team has increased in numbers but has also grown in pastoral skills.



We take huge pleasure in welcoming 4 people from Home Farm Trust as members of our congregation each week and recognize the distinct contribution that they make to All Saints'. 2 members of the congregation maintain pastoral links with them and the church seeks to work with their support workers to ensure that they always feel safe and secure in the church environment.

The Ladygrove Church

At the end of 2017 the Ladygrove Church, an Anglican/Baptist Local Ecumenical Partnership became a parish in its own right. It is still, however, a part of the All Saints' benefice.

Deanery Synod

Three members of the PCC sit on the deanery synod together with the clergy. This provides the PCC with an important link between the parish and the wider structures of the church.

The Wallingford Deanery includes Didcot (All Saints', St Peter's, GWP and Ladygrove), Harwell, Chilton, Blewbury, Upton, South & North Morton, Aston Tirrold & Aston Upthorpe, Wallingford, Crowmarsh Gifford & Brightwell-cum-Sotwell. The Deanery Synod provides the PCC with an important link between the parish and the wider structures of the church. Bishop Colin, the Bishop of Dorchester, asked the Revd David Rice, to take on the role of Area Dean for the Wallingford Deanery in May 2017. David was licensed at St Peter's Church, Didcot on 2nd May 2017 in the presence of the

Bishop Colin and Archdeacon Judy, at a meeting of the Deanery Synod.

This year the Synod focused its attention on creating a new Mission Action Plan for the Deanery, as well as negotiating the Parish Share for 2018. Also discussed was the creation of Ladygrove, currently part of the parish of All Saints Didcot, as a separate Parish; it will stay within the Benefice of All Saints.

The Mission Action Plan resulted in three main areas upon which to focus:

1. Development of ministry to Children, Young People & Families
2. Development of appropriate patterns of worship
3. Developing our outreach to new & settled communities

Deanery Synod meetings in 2018 will take each of the three areas above in turn and, using an appropriate facilitator, develop the strategy for the Deanery.

In addition, a fourth focus has been identified:

4. Development of the Ministry in the Greater Didcot Garden Town area, both financially & structurally. This will be an on-going initiative.

The November 2017 meeting was primarily dedicated to a presentation by Jonathon Farnhill, Generous Giving Advisor, whose role is to stimulate greater giving in the Oxford Diocese. His presentation covered the new Parish Giving Scheme (PSG), which is designed to make it easier to grow 'giving'. The PGS is basically a Direct Debit scheme for regular

giving, with automatic processing of Gift Aid and which allows the giver to automatically increase their giving by the rate of inflation every year if they chose to do so.

Great Western Park Church

At the beginning of 2017 Revd. Mark Bodeker focused all his attention on Great Western Park Church and formally left All Saints' as curate in June 2017.



GWP church began meeting on a weekly basis in January 2017 and there were also opportunities to meet regularly in small groups for prayer, bible study and fellowship. Although these activities have been happening for a relatively short time, the congregation are conscious of not getting too comfortable in the way they go about things and are challenging themselves to focus outside of the church on those who have not yet made contact.

Under the Mark's leadership and with God's provision the church has a building to worship in, community space for outreach, growing links with groups working in Great Western Park and a growing number of those coming to worship regularly. Mark has been greatly supported by a capable group of committed leaders and volunteers who

work extremely hard and dedicate their time to witnessing in this new, vibrant community. All Saints' PCC and congregation also provide a solid foundation from which to develop this work and their ongoing commitment to us is invaluable to the development of the church.

Worship

The congregation currently numbers 25 – 30 adults and 7 – 10 children. Numbers of regular worshippers are growing although there is significant fluctuation week by week. The Leadership Team meets regularly to plan our worship and outreach, and to review what is working and what is not. A great advantage in being a new church and using a modern building which is warm and light-filled is that changes can be made. The challenge is not to do this for change sake, but to build a regular pattern of worship and outreach that holds to the traditions of the Church of England yet is contemporary and appropriate and inviting.

More people are contributing regularly to worship. It is encouraging to see new readers getting involved, more people leading prayers and the number of preachers regularly reflecting on God's Word now at 4. Everyone is encouraged to welcome new people coming to church. There are also around 15 people who help with everything from church set-up to meal preparation.

A monthly Holy Communion service is held and this has recently been separated from a shared lunch, also monthly.

Music and worship continue to develop. Under the capable leadership of Brian Barrett there is now a keyboard, vocals and guitar. A grant from the Deanery has been used to pay for a mixing desk and speakers which are for use not only during services but also for social and outdoor service events.

Services remain rather 'organic', allowing movement and chat. This seems comfortable and natural but times of quiet for reflection and prayer, and to hear the Holy Spirit speaking are also an integral part of worship.

Children in worship

Rebecca Kerry has taken on the role of Children's Coordinator continues to develop children's work. There is a big age range to cater for and a crèche was recently set up. Fiona Brennan-Scott has kindly begun this work but additional volunteers will be needed to make it sustainable.



Community Outreach

This is a vital part of our focus and is shown in a number of ways:

- Community café: run by Rebecca Kerry, this regularly hosts 35 people in the Northern

Neighbourhood Community Centre every Thursday morning. Rebecca is supported by a large number of volunteers, many from other Didcot churches.

- A regular Men's night offers space for a pint and a chance to put the world to rights. There are also social events for the whole church family from time to time, most recently an afternoon tenpin bowling.
- The Activities Week was a big success breaking all records in terms of attendance at various events throughout the first week of August. This year it is planned to hold an outdoor service on the Sunday at the end of the Week drawing on the contacts made and aligning fun and faith. An Easter Celebration at the Northern Neighbourhood Community Centre is being held on 31st March for all ages and there will be a reflective service on Good Friday and Holy Communion on Easter Sunday.
- Involvement in the community continues to grow: involvement in the Residents Association, support for Stephen Freeman School with Assemblies and regular visiting. Mark is chair of governors at UTC College and a trustee on the board of GWP Sports Association. The church is also ably supported by Community Chaplains, Libby and Sarah.

Mission

The church decided to contribute financially to 4 giving partners, supporting Didcot Food Bank as a local charity, Prospects/Liveability as a national partner and two international charities, Kirima Schools Uganda and Freeset International.

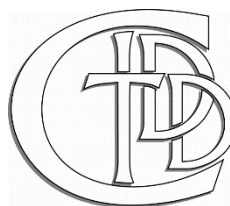
Administration

Helen Barrett now provides a vital service of Admin support, working for the Church and community 6 hour per week.

Didcot Clergy Group

This year clergy from All Saints', St. Peter's, the Ladygrove Church, St. Matthew's Harwell and the Churn Benefice continued to meet every two months. The aim of these meetings is to strengthen relationships between the churches and to discern a common vision for the whole of Didcot as it grows and develops. The main focus has been the future of Didcot as the town develops and the response to the retirement of Karen Beck in 2018.

Ecumenical relationships



The church is a member of Churches Together in Didcot and in 2017 we continued to support the children's work in

the town through Prayer Spaces and Treasure Times as well as the joint worship organized by other churches.

In April last year the AGM failed to be quorate and this has led to uncertainty about the successful functioning of the group. Ministers have met every two

months to pray and discuss the way forward and a service to celebrate all that has been accomplished by CTDD was held in November. The service was followed by a discussion which underlined the commitment of the churches to CTDD.

A further service and discussion is planned for Pentecost Sunday (May 20th) 2018 when it is hoped that a new constitution will be agreed and members of churches might be found to fill the statutory posts.

All Saints' Youth and Community Hall

The hall continues to flourish and good reports are received from users with word-of-mouth recommendations providing many bookings.

Maintenance

Many jobs have been completed during the last year by the usual small band of volunteers – Alastair Adams, Julia and Paul Buckel and Andrew Jones. The PCC is very grateful for all their hard work. However, it was decided that the ongoing maintenance of the hall placed too great a burden on them and the decision was taken to employ a handyman on an ad hoc basis to carry out maintenance work. Paul Smith has completed a number of jobs on the hall during the last year and has proved very reliable and efficient.

Two cracks were noticed on the external walls of the hall – one in the Kneller Room and one in the main hall. A structural engineer was called in and both cracks have been temporarily sealed against bad weather with a view to more permanent measures being taken when the weather improves. It is suggested that the crack in

the main hall be cut out and turned into an expansion joint, and the Kneller Room crack should be fitted with tell tales and monitored.

Finance

The PCC is grateful to Barbara Kennedy for all she has done as hall treasurer during the past year. As well as fulfilling the regular duties of the treasurer, she has introduced the new pension scheme for staff efficiently and effectively. For personal reasons she is stepping down this year and a successor needs to be found.

Secretary

Peter Sumner became secretary to the hall sub-committee in the summer and continues to fulfil the role.

Staff

The administrator, Helen Barrett, now does work for GWP as well as the hall and All Saints' church and consequently her hours have been increased. Nicky Tarling continues to work as the cleaner.

A new sickness policy, approved by the PCC, was introduced in November.

Volunteers

We would like to thank all the volunteers who work so hard to ensure the smooth running of our church – its services, community outreach, the building itself, the hall and the churchyard.



In particular we would like to mention our churchwardens, Alastair Adams and Brenda Andrews who work so tirelessly on our behalf and who face even greater demands in the coming year when Revd. Karen Beck retires. We would also mention Peter Sumner who stood down at the 2017 APCM as treasurer after 5 years in the role and Sue Scane who took on that role and has ensured a smooth transition.

Structure, Governance and Management

The Parochial Church Council is a corporate body established by the Church of England. The PCC operates under the Parochial Church Council Powers Measure. The PCC is a Registered Charity.

The method of appointment of PCC members is set out in the Church Representation Rules. At All Saints' the membership of the PCC consists of the incumbent (our vicar), the curate, a licensed lay minister, churchwardens, and members elected by those members of the congregation who are on the electoral roll of the church. All those who attend our services / members of the

congregation are encouraged to register on the Electoral Roll and stand for election to the PCC.

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. New members receive initial training into the workings of the PCC.

The full PCC met six times during the year with an average level of attendance of 90%. Given its wide responsibilities the PCC has a number of sub-committees each dealing with a particular aspect of parish life. These committees, which include worship, mission, fundraising, building development and the Youth and Community Hall Management Committee, are all responsible to the PCC and report back to it. Apart from the Standing Committee, which is the only committee required by law and has power to transact the business of the PCC between its meetings as directed by the PCC, the sub-committees are advisory and do not have executive powers.

During the latter part of the year there have been meetings between the PCC, deanery and diocese to discuss the way forward following the retirement of Revd. Karen Beck in September 2018. These will continue in the coming year.



Safeguarding

All Saints' has oversight for safeguarding matters for the Great Western Park Community Church. We seek to be a church that provides a safe and secure environment for the most vulnerable in our church and in the wider community and, therefore, place major importance on the implementation of all safeguarding policies to enable this. We are working towards a vision where every member of the church sees themselves as a part of providing this environment for the most vulnerable.

DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service)

A number of people again received DBS clearance for work with children, young people and vulnerable adults although some still remain to be processed. Towards the end of the year the diocese changed its clearance provider from the Churches Agency for Safeguarding to Access Personal Checking Services Ltd. which is the recommended provider by the Church of England. This has meant changes to the process of verification for the DBS which Gill Kent, our verifier, has implemented.

We are very grateful to Gill for all her hard work over many years.

Safeguarding Policies and Training

The recommendations in the Safeguarding Policy are adhered to in all activities

relating to safeguarding and recruitment. During the last year the Church of England and the Diocese of Oxford have responded to public concern over historic sex abuse cases and are introducing more rigorous procedures and training. We are currently responding to these changes. Consequently Clare Hamer, the safeguarding officer, has attended two training days. Clare will be standing down for personal reasons at the Annual Parish Church Meeting and Eleanor Hards will be succeeding her. We are very grateful to Clare for all her hard work over the last year and to Eleanor for stepping into this vital role.

Safeguarding issues

There were two major pastoral issues during 2017 which raised safeguarding issues. In consultation with the Diocesan Safeguarding Officers appropriate procedures and actions were followed. There was a further issue which was again dealt with in consultation with the Diocesan Safeguarding Officer.

Health and Safety

During the past year the church's Health and Safety policy has been updated, the fire safety of the church has been assessed, and risk assessments have been reviewed. During the coming year we will be starting to have regular fire drills and making sure we have a full set of up-to-date risk assessments. All Saints' has oversight of health and safety for the GWP church and they are creating their own policy and risk assessments.

Administrative information

All Saints' Church is situated in Lydalls Road, Didcot. It is part of the Dorchester Episcopal Area in the Diocese of Oxford within the Church of England. The correspondence address for the church is Mrs. Helen Barrett, the hall and church administrator, All Saints' Youth and Community Hall, Roman Place, Didcot, Oxon, OX11 7ER.

The website address is:

www.didcotallsaints.org.uk



The Didcot All Saints' Church Community Page can also be found on Facebook.

PCC members who have served at any time from 1 January 2017 until the date this report was approved are:

Ex-Officio members:

Incumbent: The Reverend Karen Beck (Chairman)

Associate Minister GWP:

Wardens: The Reverend Mark Bodeker
Mr Alastair Adams
Miss Brenda Andrews (from April 2017)

Lay Minister: Dr Nick Hards

Treasurer: Mrs. Sue Scane

Secretary: vacant

Elected members:

Dr Peter Baker

Mrs. Julia Buckel

Mr Bertie Doy

Mrs Clare Hamer

Scott-Paul Johnston (left June 2017)

Mrs. Gill Kent (from April 2017)

Mrs. Dawn Lake

Mrs. Karen Prickett (from April 2017)

Dr Tim Scane (trainee lay minister)

Mrs Lottie Sumner

Mrs. Alison Adams representative on Deanery Synod from September 2017

Mrs Eleanor Hards representative on Deanery Synod from April 2017

Mr. Andrew Jones representative on Deanery Synod

Dr. Helen Walker representative on Deanery Synod (died September 2017)

Signed:

Reverend Karen Beck

Date:

