

The Parish of St Mary the Virgin, Ross-on-Wye

ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING

**Wednesday 18th April 2018 at 7.30pm
St Mary's Church Hall**

Contents of booklet

Agendas	2
Churchwardens' Report	3
Minutes of last meeting	4
Organisations' Reports	14
Brampton Abbots School Report	27
Church House Trust Report	28

Annual Report and Financial Statements

Separate Appendix

The Parish of St Mary the Virgin, Ross-on-Wye

Annual Parochial Church Meetings

Wednesday 18th April 2018 at 7.30pm in St Mary's Church

Agendas

Meeting of the Parishioners for the Election of Churchwardens

1. Apologies for Absence
2. Churchwardens' Reports
3. Election of Churchwardens

Annual Parochial Church Meeting

1. Minutes of last Annual Parochial Church Meeting
2. Matters arising from the Minutes
3. Electoral Roll Officer's Report
4. PCC Secretary's Report
5. PCC Treasurer's Report
6. Presentation of the Annual Reports for 2016 and any comments required
7. Fabric, Goods & Ornaments Report
8. Deanery Synod Report
9. Election of four members to the Deanery Synod
10. Election of twelve members to the Parochial Church Council
11. Appointment of Sidespersons
12. Appointment of Independent Examiner for the Accounts
13. Incumbent's Report
14. Organisations' Reports including CHAMP

Meeting of the Parochial Church Council

1. Election of Vice Chairman
2. Appointment of Secretary
3. Appointment of Treasurer
4. Appointment of two Deputy Wardens
5. Dates of future meetings
6. AOB

NOTES

1. All persons whose names are entered upon the Church Electoral Roll of the parish (and such persons only) are entitled to vote at the election of parochial representatives of the laity.
2. Subject to the provisions of rule 14(3)(c), a person is qualified to be elected a parochial representative of the laity if -
 - (a) his name is entered on the church electoral roll of the parish and, unless he is under the age of eighteen years at the date of the election, has been so entered for at least the preceding period of six months;
 - (b) he is an actual communicant which means that he has received Communion according to the use of the Church of England or of a Church in communion with the Church of England at least three times during the twelve months preceding the date of the election; and
 - (c) he is of sixteen years or upwards;
 - (d) he is not disqualified as referred to in paragraph 3 of these Notes.
3.
 - (a) A person shall be disqualified from being nominated, chosen or elected from serving as a churchwarden, a member of a parochial church council, a district church council or any synod under these rules if he is disqualified from being a charity trustee under section 72(1) of the Charities Act 1993 and the disqualification is not for the time being subject to a general waiver by the Charity Commissioners under subsection (4) of that section or to a waiver by them under that subsection in respect of all ecclesiastical charities established for purposes relating to the parish concerned.
In this paragraph "ecclesiastical charity" has the same meaning as that assigned to that expression in the Local Government Act 1894;
 - (b) A person shall also be disqualified from being nominated, chosen or elected from serving as a churchwarden or member of a parochial church council if he has been so disqualified from holding office under rule 7(3) of [the Incumbent (vacation of Benefice) Measure 1997].
4. Any person whose name is on the electoral roll may be appointed as a sidesman.

Revd Sarah Jones

CHURCHWARDENS' REPORT

CHURCH FABRIC

A faculty was obtained in January for the re-ordering work including the removal of 23 pews from the west end of the nave and the south aisle, and the installation of toilets, childrens' room and servery – the biggest change in St Mary's since Victorian times. A contract was awarded to CJ Bayliss of Hereford and the building work and installations were completed just before Christmas 2017. New oak floors were installed and the new, stacking, chairs obtained. The work of the re-ordering team of Bryan Jones, Mark Sanderson, Judith Landau and Margaret Mason is acknowledged with immense thanks for an excellent project completed on time and under budget. Thanks also must go to the clergy team and the whole congregation for patience and tolerance during the work, with particular mention of our superb cleaning team. The re-ordered church has received many compliments, and the flexible space offered will support current plans to increase use of and attendance at St Mary's in the future.

The Westfaling plaque has been refixed to the wall in the south aisle and other minor repairs identified in the Quinquennial Inspection are completed.

In December the parish received the generous gift of a new nave altar, designed and carved by the Herefordshire craftsman, Timothy Hawking.

CHURCH SECURITY

A faculty was obtained for installation of CCTV and a single camera system was installed with the re-ordering project. The system will be live in early 2018. There were no significant vandalism or theft events in 2017.

CHURCHYARD

Volunteers continued to be the main source of grass cutting for the open churchyard and Garden of Remembrance. The Probation service who cut the GOR offered further help and an additional area has been designated for their efforts in 2018. Once again, enormous thanks to Bob Ryan whose tireless strimming adds to the efforts of the monthly volunteers.

Memorial stones have been placed in the Garden of Remembrance to two major benefactors of the church, Margaret Jones and Jessie Cater.

FUTURE PROJECTS

We are hoping to complete Phase 2 of the re-ordering project in 2018. This will involve removal and sale of the remaining pews and installation of chairs. A new sound system is under consideration together with other repair work. In the open churchyard we have discovered a significant problem with unsafe memorials. These will be identified and made safe as time permits.

THANKYOU

We are always so impressed with the help given to us by the whole team and congregation. We are very fortunate to have such talents offered freely in the service of Our Lord at St Mary's. Well done Everyone and THANKYOU!

Drs Janet Cooper & John Setchfield
Churchwardens

Annual Parochial Church Meeting
Wednesday 5TH April 2017 at 7.30 in the Parish Hall
Minutes

Present: Rev S Jones, K Vitale, P Eward, Canon F Davies, A Purvis, T Raddenbury, P Raddenbury, J Spencer, J Spencer, C Leggat, P Leggat, A Morris, M Mason, P Mason, E Richards, K Richards, P Reynolds, V Allen, C Glover, F Davies, J Setchfield, S Edwards, J Harrison, J Cooper, P Waters, T Waters, B Wardle, the Rev S Tarlton, and B Jones.

1. **Apologies were received from:** D Glover, H & G Lovett, A Morris, T Davies, D Eward, M Bickerton, P Luker, N & J Davies, J Landau, M Sanderson and H Setchfield.
2. **Churchwardens Report:** J Setchfield informed the meeting that the Faculty had been granted and received. A quotation for the building work has been received and work will start later this year.
The Rector thanked the Church Wardens for all of their hard work.
3. **Election of Churchwardens:** J Setchfield and J Cooper were duly re-elected as Church Wardens.

Meeting closed at 7.40

Annual Parochial Church Meeting

- 1 **Minutes of the APCM held on 27th April 2016.** The minutes were previously circulated and were accepted as a correct record and were agreed and signed.
Proposed by P Eward
Seconded by S Edwards
2. **Matters Arising:** None
3. **Electoral Roll Officers Report:** The Roll opens after this APCM, it is currently 156.
4. **Secretary's Report:** P Reynolds informed the meeting that the Australian Government was doubling charitable donations and therefore our donation of £800 to See Beyond Borders had been increased to £1600.
5. **Treasurers Report:** P Raddenbury gave a summary of the balance sheet, Unrestricted funds were £242,485 and Restricted £422,016. The budgeted deficit of £10k, will actually be £1783. Some bank charges have been refunded, income from both the Flower Festival and rent from Redwood Close have contributed to decreasing the original deficit figure.

Only one member of the congregation has put forward a suggestion for fundraising, P Raddenbury asked for everybody to get involved with suggestions.

J Spencer questioned the collection amount and asked how much the congregation needed to increase their giving by. P Raddenbury said each individual has to make their own decision on what they are able to contribute.

The Rector said we should aim to give 10% for good causes, this doesn't necessarily mean giving to Church. Legacies are very important and are worth considering.

6. **Deanery Synod Report:** No report
7. **Appointment of Sidepersons:** Volunteers detailed on P13 were all re-elected as sidepersons.
Proposed: V Allen
Seconded: P Leggett
Unanimous
8. **Incumbents Report:** No questions were asked. Having had only 50% of staff it has been a difficult time, however on the 27th April the Rev Canon C Blanchard will be joining the team, based in Walford and the Rev Canon M Bamforth will join us in July, based in Brampton Abbots.
9. **Election of four members to the Deanery Synod:** No new nominations have been received.
Canon F Davies was re-elected:
Proposed: A Morris
Seconded: P Eward

PCC and Deanery Synod members should only serve for 3 years, but the rules have been relaxed and now people can serve for longer. The Rector asked if we should extend the period to 4 years, the APCM can put a limit on service time if it wishes. P Eward read the new ruling to the meeting.

The Rector asked the meeting if anybody would like to set a time limit, no request for this was made. The Rector asked the meeting if it was happy to continue with our current system and re-elect each year. P Reynolds thought we should continue with the current system, J Cooper also felt the current system is working so there is no need to change it.

10. **Election of twelve members to the Parochial Church Council:** B Jones is the only new member. No vote is needed as there are less applicants than vacancies.
11. **Appointment of Independent Examiner for the Accounts:** P Raddenbury has spoken with D Bennett, who has been the examiner for the last few years, he is happy to continue.
Proposed: P Raddenbury
Seconded: J Setchfield
Unanimous

Traditionally there has been a Fabric, Goods and Ornaments Report, C Leggate asked who was suppose to provide this report. Historically it has been included in the Church Wardens report, there has not been a separate report for many years. Insert as separate item for the next APCM.

12. **Organisations Report including Church House Trust:**

Alter Servers: Canon F Davies highlighted the role of an Alter Server, as some people were unaware of the duties of a Server and informed the meeting we are in urgent need of more Servers.

Bell Ringers: There is a lighting and hand rail issue which they have discussed with J Setchfield, this is being investigated.

Bereavement Support Group: No report. Preb J Talbot-Ponsonby is greatly missed.

Bible a Month club: No questions

Bible study group: No questions

Cana Ministry: No questions

Catering Team: The Rector thanked the team on behalf of the PCC.

Commercial and Industrial Chaplaincy: No questions.

Church Prayer Group: No questions

Church Watch: No questions

Community Larder: M Mason said the Job Club is very much missed, The Rector agreed that it was a great shame, however we currently do not have anybody to take on the role, we are actively looking and if anybody knows anyone who could help run this group it would be a greatly appreciated.

Flicks in the Sticks: No questions

Flower Rota: No questions

Home Communion: No questions

Hospital Chaplaincy: No question

Men's supper club: No questions

Mothers Union: No questions

Music: No questions

Piecemakers: No questions

Play & Praise: No questions

Prayer Group: No questions

Safeguarding: No questions

Sunday Kids: No questions

Friends St.Mary's Church: P Reynolds requested everybody put the 24-25th June in their diaries for the Open Gardens event, helpers will also be required.

Neighbourhood Team: No report, Rev L Mathew was previously responsible for this.

Brampton Abbots Primary School: No questions

Church House Trust: The Rector thanked K Richards for all his hard work, there is a lot to be done.

The hall finance report, does not include some rent which we hadn't got in as the correct paperwork had not been submitted, this rent has now been collected. P Reynolds noted the water rates seem to be high, Canon F Davies said it is not metered and just on the standard rate.

The meeting closed at 9.10pm

P Landau asked if the two missing reports could be submitted by somebody else in the next APCM.

The Neighbourhood Team are continuing to work in a similar way, they also try to look around the Church to see if regulars are there.

S Edwards said new leaflets would be useful.

LMDG: H Setchfield requested discussion on ways of improving communications and S Johns work with young people.

J Spencer raised his concern about the sound system, it is not always easy to hear. The Rector explained that one mic had been broken, but it is now repaired so we are back to having two. The Rector requested that the congregation report to the Ministry Team who they can not hear and who is too loud. A new system will be installed this year.

T Waters commented that often the lectern mic can be difficult to hear, but this is often due to the different heights of the speakers. Cannon F Davies did suggest if people can't hear they sit at the front.

C Leggate reported positively on welcome at the Church Door and the Rev S Tarlton responded that our spirit during refreshments after the 9.30 had greatly improved.

Electoral Roll Report for the year 2017-2018

Unlike the other reports, the annual Electoral Roll Report runs from one Annual Meeting to the other. The Roll closes shortly before each APCM for revision and the number on Roll will be reported at the Meeting. At the time of writing we have had two deaths and three members moved away to leave 151 as the number of Roll.

Peter Raddenbury – Electoral Roll Officer

PARISH CHURCH OF ST MARY THE VIRGIN, ROSS-ON-WYE

Structure, governance and management

The method of appointment of PCC members is set out in the Church Representation Rules. All Church attendees are encouraged to register on the Electoral Roll and stand for election to the PCC.

Objectives and Performance

The PCC has the responsibility of co-operating with the incumbent in promoting the ecclesiastical parish the whole mission of the Church, pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical. It has also had the responsibility for maintenance and development of the Church buildings.
Achievements and Performance.

Sarah Jones
Incumbent

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF ST MARY THE VIRGIN, ROSS-ON-WYE

PCC Responsibilities in relation to the Financial Statements

The PCC is responsible for all parish finance, its management and control, including the appointment of a treasurer. While it may delegate some of its duties, this does not remove its legal responsibilities.

Charity Law requires the PCC as trustees of the Church to prepare the annual report and its financial statements for each financial year, that give a true and fair view of the Church's financial activities during the year and of its financial position at the end of the year. The PCC is also required to ensure that these are subjected to an annual independent examination or audit and to present these to the Annual Parochial Church Meeting in accordance with the Church Representation Rules.

In preparing these financial statements, the PCC are required to:

- Select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- Make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;

- State whether applicable accounting standards and statements of recommended practice have been followed subject to any departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements; and
- Prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the PCC will continue in operation.

The PCC are responsible for keeping proper accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the Church and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Charities Act 1993 and applicable accounting standards. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the Church and hence taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

Approved by the PCC and signed on its behalf by:

.....

Date:

Independent Examiner’s Report to the PCC of St Mary the Virgin, Ross-on-Wye

Sarah Jones, Rector

Review of the year

PCC Secretary's Report 2017

The PCC welcomed a new member, B Jones.

The PCC consists of:

The Rector, J Setchfield and J Cooper (Church Wardens), P Eward (Vice Chair), P Raddenbury (Treasurer), K Vitale (Secretary), F Davies, D Glover, A Morris, K Richards, P Reynolds, V Allen, T Harding, M Sanderson, B Jones and Rev S Tarlton.

6 meetings have been held with no extraordinary meetings being called.

The Rev C Blanchard and the Rev M Bamforth have now joined the Ministry Team.

Cllr R Mayo has attended most of the meetings and provided a town council report, maintenance of the closed churchyard has been undertaken where needed, Cllr R Mayo has worked closely with the Church Wardens to discuss and carry out any work which is required.

Final discussions for the Church developments have formed a large part of the PCC meetings, the approved faculty has allowed us to complete Phase 1, plans are in place for Phase 2 and relevant paperwork is being finalised.

The hall renovation talks have continued with K Richards continuing discussion with the relevant bodies on the future offering of the hall and how we can best accommodate the future needs of its potential users. No decisions have been made as we do not know what funds are available until the Church re-ordering has been completed.

The PCC was pleased to welcome Christine Cattanach as the Intergeneration Missioner, she joined us in January, the aim is to increase our offering to young families, start clubs and other initiatives relevant to this target group.

Charitable giving amount this year was £3915, this was split equally among the following:

Missions to Seafarers £783

Kinkizi £783

Hope £783

Addaction £783

SHYPP £783

The Annual Accounts for 2017 were approved and signed as was the Budget 2018.

At the January PCC Mr Richard Jones, Parish Giving Scheme Adviser, explained how operating a Direct Debit scheme would reduce administration time and in his experience always increased the giving amount. It was agreed that we adopt this scheme, Direct Debit forms are now available and the system has been implemented.

Funding for bibles for the year 3 children at Brampton Abbots School was approved.

A new Nave Altar design was discussed, agreed and commissioned.

The PCC approved the purchase of a headstone for Margaret Jones, who left a substantial amount for the rebuilding of the Church Organ. Her grave in the Garden of Remembrance did not have one.

The PCC resolved to ask the Charity Commission to clarify if we can use the J Cater legacy for the purpose of providing facilities in the Church. This has subsequently been approved.

Mission Action Plan: Prebendary C Pascoe led the PCC through her draft paper for submission to the Diocese, this was subsequently accepted.

Karen Vitale

Treasurer's Report for the year ended 31st December 2017

The Annual Report and Financial Statements for the year ended 31st December 2017 are published as a separate booklet and contain much of interest concerning the financial work of the Parish. I would commend it to you and, in particular, page 4 contains a Financial Review for the

year that I will not set out again here. In short, we made a profit of £111 on our unrestricted funds if work on the reordering is taken out of the equation. There were exceptional income receipts that helped us to convert a deficit into a small profit but we continue to be faced by deficit budgets going forward and I am running out of ways to offset this!

I would like to thank David Bennett who has carried out the Independent Examination again this year and is always amenable to the timescale that I impose upon him. His co-operation ensures that the PCC are able to approve the Financial Statements in timely fashion before the Annual Meeting.

John Setchfield, Paul Eward, Nigel Lewis and Sue Edwards have again assisted me by meeting as a Finance Group every two months to review the figures and generally provide me with their support. I am very grateful to them all for their interest and enthusiasm.

Peter Raddenbury – Treasurer

Deanery Synod Report

Ross and Archenfield Deanery Synod met in February, June, September and December 2017. The Rural Dean (currently The Rev'd Dr Mark Johnson) has responsibility for the administration of Deanery synod. For some time Synod had no Secretary which hampered its processes. Deanery Synod has also been unable to find a new Lay Co Chair following the resignation of Canon Freda Davies who had served as Lay Co Chair for many years. I found a suitable candidate for the Secretary position and she was appointed mid-year.

In June, there was a presentation from Catherine Cashmore our new Diocesan Communication Officer on 'What's new and what's changing in the world of church communications' as well as an unsuccessful attempt to elect a new Lay Co Chair. In September, the major business was a Presentation by Richard Jones (Stewardship Advisor, Hereford Archdeaconry) on the Parish Giving Scheme. December's meeting was largely a 'Come and Sing' event.

Sarah Jones

Appointment of Sidespersons

There have been 38 people acting as Sidesperson this year, enabling us to provide a welcome and give out appropriate books and leaflets to congregations attending all main Sunday services throughout the year. In addition many weekday services on church festivals have also been covered along with services of Baptism that take place separately. Unfortunately we have lost a few of the team due to ill health or moving away from the area

Sidespersons for approval by the meeting (in no particular order):

Mrs S Greer	Miss N Rees
Mrs D Robertson	Mr B Jones
Mr J Hallett	Mr G Aintree
Mrs C Glover	Mrs V Allen
Mr P Landau	Mrs J Landau
Mr B Ryan	Mrs S Ryan
Mr W Hazelton	Mrs J Hazelton
Mr J Spencer	Mrs J Spencer
Mr D Mander	Mrs J Mander

Mr T Harding	Mrs P Harding
Dr J Davies	Mrs N Davies
Mr C Beddows	Mrs E Beddows
Mrs M Francis	Mr G Francis
Mrs J Harrison	Mrs A Remmington
Mr P Jenkins	Mrs S Jenkins
Mr G John	Mrs S John
Mr N Nelson	Mrs J Nelson
Mr P Reynolds	Mrs M Reynolds

From Janet Nelson

Incumbent's Report 2017

The reports in this booklet cover the calendar year from 1st January 2017 to 31st December 2017.

Over this time there have been 26 baptisms, 7 Marriages and 64 funerals within the parish.

Our treasurer Peter Raddenbury has continued the modernisation of our accounts system and his contribution to our parish structures has been immense. Peter has ensured that we comply with the increasing amount of legislation which covers our accounting procedures. He has also provided the PCC with timely and accurate advice.

Once again the PCC has been a joy to work with and our meetings continue to be professional and positive. Our administrator Louise Jarvis left us mid-year to take up full time work and we were joined by Nick Richmond. Nick has settled in very well and has provided us with good administrative support.

We have been fortunate that Janet Cooper and John Setchfield have continued as churchwardens. Both Janet and John have worked tirelessly and have brought many projects to fruition. Our organists and choir have served us well. Thanks must go to Mark Sanderson who does a tricky job of producing good music from a choir whose members are not always available week by week.

The Rev'd Laurence Mathew retired in February 2017. The Rev'd Canon Chris Blanchard joined us in April 2017. The main locus of his ministry is Walford though we also benefit from his ministry in Ross. The Rev'd Canon Marvin Bamforth was appointed as House for Duty priest in Brampton Abbots and joined us in July 2017. His brief is to build on the work we have done there in these past 18 months and also to minister in the parish of Ross.

The Rev'd Simon Tarlton was priested in July 2017. Simon joined us in July 2016 as a Self-Supporting Assistant Curate. Simon started by giving us 2 days per week but has increased this to 4 days upon his priesting. Simon has been a real asset to our ministerial team and to our outreach. He has re-started the Job Club which had to close with Jill Talbot-Ponsonby leaving us last year and he is building links with the Community Larder. The Rev'd Colin Leggate, Prebendary Caroline

Pascoe and our Readers Derek Glover and Freda Davies contribute enormously to our common life.

As you will see from the Treasurer's Report we have a small financial surplus for 2017. Our thanks are due to the members of the Fundraising Committee and also to Sue Edwards who runs the 100 Club.

Our regular giving needs to be the foundation of our funding and we do need to review our personal levels of giving and to increase them where possible. Fundraising is also very important. Both will become increasingly important over the coming years and we ignore them at our peril.

During 2017, we have developed the inside of St Mary's. Pews have been taken out from the West End and South Aisles and chairs have been bought after a very successful donation campaign. Thank you to everyone who bought chairs. We have a new Children's Room and a new refreshment area and we now have toilets inside St Mary's. The St Mary's Redevelopment Committee has worked very well to bring this reordering about. Phase One is now complete. We plan to remove the remaining pews in the Autumn of 2018 (Phase Two) and then we plan to modernise the entrance to St Mary's to make it more accessible for everyone including those with disabilities and also more welcoming (Phase Three).

The emphasis on the development of the church has led to us not moving any further with our hopes for the development of St Mary's Hall. Nonetheless we now have a renewed Church Hall Committee and we hope to be able to move things on a little more in 2018.

We were chosen by Hereford Diocese to be part of the Intergenerational Missioner project. Fortunately, the diocese was successful in receiving a grant from the Church Commissioners and so Christine Cattanach, our new Intergenerational Missioner will start with us in January 2018.

Sarah Jones
Rector

Organisations' Reports

ALTAR SERVERS.

During the last twelve months we have had some changes to our serving teams – some have decided that they are no longer able to continue largely due to family commitments, but fortunately we have also had some new recruits though more would be welcomed.

Thanks to the flexibility of some of our team we have managed to provide two Acolytes and a Crucifer at every 9.30am Parish Communion and for other special services.

Some of our albs were very badly worn but thanks to the generosity of one of the team we have been able to buy some new ones and also some white girdles. The colour of servers' girdles reflects the colour recommended for the seasons of the church year and our white girdles were no longer functional.

Altar Servers, in addition to duties during the service, are responsible for setting up the items required for Communion before, and clearing up after the service as well as attending to the needs of the priest during the service. I would be delighted to hear from anyone who would like to join the team.

Freda Davies.

Bellringers Report

St Mary's Ross-on-Wye Bellringers Report on 2017/18 Activities

Objectives

The primary objectives of St Mary's bellringing team are to provide the personnel to ring the bells prior to Sunday services and other festivals, and to build and maintain an inclusive team of bellringers within the local and regional community to continually develop their ringing skills and capabilities.

Bells

St Mary's Ross-on-Wye is fortunate to possess what are generally acknowledged to be one of the best rings of bells in the county. The bells (8 bells, ranging in weight from 4cwt to just over 1 ton, plus a separate service bell of approx 1cwt) hang in a massive oak frame installed in 1881. The last major restorations were carried out in 1976 when one cracked bell was recast and the major fittings (bearings, clappers, wheels, ropes and pulleys) were replaced, and in 1982 when a new metal grillage was installed beneath the timber frame.

Service and Maintenance

Regular maintenance of the installation is carried out by the local ringers (as is the case with many rings of bells across the country), who also voluntarily fund and resource the replacement and/or repair of items such as ropes, stays and clappers.

Condition

All major fittings (frame, headstocks, bearings and wheels) are in good condition, although there is an investigation underway at present to check the conditions of the bearings on the tenor bell. Secondary items are as follows:

- **Clappers**

Clappers are a high wear item and most have been repaired over the past 10-15 years, so it is anticipated that we will continue to see an average of one failure per year. Failures include broken shafts, where the metal shaft breaks above the ball, or worn bearings, causing excessive play and eventual failure. Both require specialist repair or replacement by one of the bell foundry companies. We have an established relationship with John Taylors Bell Foundry, who performed the last major restoration, and provide a fast and efficient service. Work is planned over the next few weeks to overhaul the clappers on the 5, 6 and 8 that are showing signs of wear.

- Stays

Stays (used to hold the bell still when not ringing) are subject to stress damage, especially when training new recruits. 2 stays were replaced this year, the stay on the 3 as a preventative measure and the stay on the 6 that failed due to old age (40 years!).

- Ropes

Bell ropes are subject to constant wear so require frequent inspection and adjustment. Over the past year 4 ropes required repair or binding to resolve and avoid damage. A new set of ropes was purchased in 2017 (as a memorial to 2 of our previous ringers) and are being fitted as required to replace worn items. Some of the bells (1, 3, 4, 7 & 8) have also been fitted with 'flapper boards' that help the ropes run straight and avoid hitting the frame to reduce wear.

- Rope Bosses in Belfry

The bosses (metal fittings that guide the ropes between floors) in the belfry were replaced in 2017 with stainless steel alternatives that will dramatically reduce wear on the ropes and improve handling of the bells.

- Sound Control

Boards previously fitted over the lower set of louvres to reduce the volume of the bells in the immediate vicinity of the church had come loose, so the existing boards have been refitted and an additional layer of boarding has been applied to enhance sound control.

Environmental

Lighting

Lighting in the ringing chamber is by 2 x fluorescent light fittings installed in 1982, one of which was replaced in 2013.

Lights in the stairwell have mostly been replaced by low energy compact fluorescent bulbs.

The internal light fitting above the entrance door was replaced with an equivalent fitting in September 2016 due to the old fitting being cracked.

An exterior light adjacent to the tower door would be very beneficial, especially during the winter months, as there is no visible street lighting on that side of the Church (planned).

Heating

Occasional heating in the ringing chamber is provided by 2 x fan heaters, both of which were replaced with new items in 2014. These heaters have subsequently been replaced in 2016 with more energy efficient alternatives.

Access

Access to the ringing chamber is by 35 steps, which some of our more mature and less able ringers find increasingly difficult to climb. Investigation with a reputable stairlift company has proved that installation of a stairlift in the existing stairwell is not a viable proposition.

There is a rope fixed to the newel of the spiral, however, this does not provide adequate support.

A secondary rope or handrail to the outer wall of the first stage of the spiral staircase is required to improve accessibility, both for our less able-bodied ringers and all other visitors to the tower (planned).

Security

The entrance door to the staircase has been subject to occasional vandalism and may require further repair or reinforcement. In 2015 the old mortice latch and lock failed and was subsequently removed, leaving no means to keep the door closed other than being locked with the security key, which cannot generally be used when people are in the tower to ensure a means of exit. In windy conditions the door often blows open making the stairway less secure and open for intrusion and vandalism.

Reinstatement of the mortice lock would improve security and weatherproofing of the stairway.

Ringers

Our service band comprises a group of 11 regular ringers, 5 of whom live outside Ross town (1 in Peterstow, 1 in Much Marcle, 1 in Bridstow and 2 in Littledean), plus itinerant support from 4 ringers from Bridstow, Monmouth and Huntley. We have been fortunate to gain 5 new recruits over the past year, 4 of which are teenagers, which has dramatically reduced the average age of our band. On Tuesday practice nights we attract regular support from ringers from other towers in South Herefordshire and the Forest of Dean, plus occasional visitors from further afield.

Changes

We gained 1 experienced ringer and 2 new recruits when Sally Clark moved to Ross and encouraged her daughters to learn to ring.

Officers

Officers of the St Mary's Ross-on-Wye Bellringers band are as follows:

- Tower Captain Roman Sadowski
- Secretary Pauline Leggate
- Treasurer Frances Taylor
- Safeguarding representative Karen Howard

Recruitment

We welcome and encourage all new recruits (from 9 to 90!).

Following a visit by the local Guides and an 'open tower' event in Summer 2017 we gained 3 additional recruits. All members of the public, and especially the P.C.C., are very welcome to visit the tower to see what we do!

Safeguarding

Our recent recruits are teenagers from 11 to of 16 years in age, so we have adopted Church and bellringing guidelines to fully implement safeguarding procedures for the protection of young people and vulnerable adults. 3 members of the tower who are primarily responsible for the tuition and protection of recruits have undergone DBS checks and we have added Safeguarding as a shared responsibility for all members of the band.

Achievements and Events

We rang for all major Church events and Sunday service throughout the year.

We hosted various visiting groups of ringers and other events during the year (details on request).

Roman Sadowski – Tower Captain

Bereavement Support Group

No report

Bible-A-Month Club

No report

Bible Study Groups

At the present time we have two permanent Bible Study groups.

One at Paul & Margaret Mason's home on the second and fourth Monday evenings of the month and another at Colin and Pauline Leggate's home on every other Monday evening.

Both of these groups are well attended and during Advent and Lent meet every week and study the same thing.

During Lent and Advent there are three other groups who meet. One on a Monday evening at Margaret Clarke's home, one on a Tuesday morning at Marvin and Sue Bamforth's home and the third on a Tuesday evening at Chris and Sarah Blanchard's home.

The Lent groups this year followed "Walking Towards Glory"; five studies based on the lectionary gospel reading for the Sundays in Lent and this culminated in a "Prayer Walk" on Palm Sunday followed by a bring and share lunch.

Over the years we have studied a wide range of books from the Bible, both Old and New Testaments. We usually have study books either from the 'Lifebuilder' or 'Cover to Cover' series. If you would like to join any of the groups we would be very pleased to see you and promise that none of us are experts; we study together to try to learn more of God's will and purpose in our lives and also to share fellowship and support with one another.

Sadly in January one of the members of Pauline's group, Doreen Jennings, died after a short illness, all the other members attended her funeral which was greatly appreciated by her family.

We miss her input in the group very much.

On a more cheerful note we usually combine both permanent groups for a bring and share supper and social evening in the rectory garden in the summer and also have a supper in our individual groups at Christmas.

Cana Ministry – a befriending initiative developed to support couples getting married within the Benefice of Ross and Walford and Brampton Abbots

The aim of the Cana Ministry is to provide a link between the couples who come to be married in our churches and the church community.

Members of the Cana Team contact couples (with their permission) who are planning a wedding and offer to assist them during the period leading up to the wedding, for example they might welcome the couples to church if they attend services before the wedding, sitting with them and helping them to find their way through the service.

On the Wedding Day the 'befriender' attends the ceremony and thanks to the generosity of the Mothers' Union in the Diocese, presents the couple with a gift of a handmade bag containing a candle and a greetings card.

The team also provide refreshments and welcome couples attending Marriage Preparation sessions.

For more information please contact Freda Davies on 01989 562366.

Freda Davies

Catering team report 2017

The catering team have had another busy year organising food for the Epiphany celebration, Lent Lunches, John Kyrle's birthday celebration, Open Gardens, August Sunday Teas, Harvest supper, the Christmas Tree Festival and the Job Club Christmas lunch, all of which raised over £2000 for St Mary's and Christian Aid. All these occasions were part of the hospitality of St Mary's. Thank you to everyone who provided food and spent time working hard in the kitchen.

Margaret Mason
On behalf of the Catering Team

CHRISTIAN AID 2017

The annual house to house collection for Christian Aid, organised by representatives from all the churches in Ross & District, took place from May 14th – 20th. The emphasis of the week was on the needs of refugees. A total of £7746.97 was raised.

The efforts of twenty collectors from St Mary's contributed £1401.56 towards this total amount. This was achieved by distributing envelopes through letter boxes and returning a few days later to collect the, hopefully, filled envelopes. On many occasions this entailed returning a second time. 318 filled envelopes were returned of which 46 were gift aided. In some instances, where householders were away, envelopes were left with an address in town to which they could be taken.

A Christian Aid assembly was held on Monday May 15th at Brampton Abbots School. The children learnt about building a world where every child had a safe home.

Jean Harrison

Commercial and Industrial Chaplaincy

At the open week-end in February I ran a quiz with the mammoth prize of a “Crunchy Bar” and asked people to guess how many shops there were in the town centre or how many firms there were on the Industrial Estates.

The first question people asked was, how do I define the town centre and/or the Industrial Estates? Yet it is the second question that shines the most light on our perception of our town. The second question was “Do you include the empty shops?” The number of empty shops pales into insignificance compared to the total number yet they are vitally important as they are the ones that stick out like a sore thumb and detract from the beauty of our town.

The numbers are a lot larger than most people guessed.

I have compiled a visiting list, meaning that I start at number one, have some sort of contact and go on to number two, returning to start at number one again sometime between a year to a year and a half later.

On my visiting list there are 389 separate firms, of which about two hundred and seventy are in the town centre and about one hundred and nineteen are on the Industrial Estates. So you can see that a handful of empty shops can represent no more than a couple of percent of the succeeding firms. Yet it is those premises that define our perception, and the perception of our tourism visitors.

May I finish with a plea for the succeeding firms. On their shoulders rest the responsibility for employing our families and neighbours; for contributing to the rents/rates for our council; and for providing the goods and services that we need for our nourishment and enjoyment.

They deserve our support.

Colin.

Colin Leggate

Contemplative Prayer Group.

The aim of the practice of Contemplative Prayer is to empty the mind and try to achieve an inner silence thereby enabling all our being to focus on God. Contemplative Prayer is not easy but over time those who try it will begin to develop an increasing awareness of God’s love.

Our group aims to meet on the third Wednesday of each month for half an hour or so when in the stillness, we focus our minds on God usually aided by a sentence from scripture. During the penitential seasons of Advent and Lent we meet every Wednesday in church as part of the Seasonal Meditation Group

While this form of prayer is not for everyone, the group would be happy to welcome anyone who might like to try this for themselves. Do ask me for more information.

Freda Davies

Church Watch and Welcome

Church Watch Welcome and Care for 2018

Firstly I would like to say a big 'Thank-you' to the members of our church and friends of St Mary's who have given their time and knowledge to visitors to St Mary's answering their questions and dispensing facts about The Church, The Re-ordering and details on the town of Ross. Plus, there is still a lot to tell people about our continuing refurbishing plans over the next 12 months to our church.

Unfortunately our numbers have now depleted down to Twelve, that's including Bet & myself, so understandably the church is left unattended a lot more frequently. I do hope that we will be able to recruit a few more helpers during the next few months.

I was wondering if there is anybody else who would be willing to take this job on during the next year as I would now like to relinquish it.

Betty Beddows (01989 567420)

Ross Community Food Larder

Yet again the Food Larder has had a busy year; sadly – mainly due to the introduction of Universal Credit (which no one seems to fully understand) and the lack of suitable employment opportunities locally, numbers using the Food Bank have increased. For the first time in many years we have noticed a trend of more women and children needing support from the Community Larder.

However, on a positive note in many ways we are 'fortunate' in that our food stocks never run low, we are incredibly well supported by so many individuals, organisations, companies etc in Ross. We have NEVER run out of food and we also receive generous financial donations to enable us to top up supplies. From Harvest right through to Christmas and the New Year we receive so many donations that we have to seek additional storage space. Each year the number of local organisations supporting us increases – recently we have received large donations from collections by the students at JKHS and also the local Leo Group has generously donated Easter Eggs.

Of course, it is just as important to have regular support throughout the year and we are very appreciative of local groups such as Rotary and all the local Churches who give us donations all year, not just at the 'high profile' times of Harvest and Christmas. Our collection points at Sainsbury's and Morrisons are also well stocked, week after week.

We continue to serve Tea and Toast (plus bakery goods generously supplied by Greggs) each Tuesday morning and have now extended this to offer the facility year round alongside the Job Club.

We have not yet received the results of the research survey led by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation, investigating rural deprivation in the UK but this work will be shared as soon as possible.

Thank you, as always, to everyone at St Mary's Church for your support in both donations, time and prayer for the work of the Community Larder in Ross.

Lindsay Cole

Secretary – Ross Community Food Larder

Flicks in the Sticks

Flicks has had a reasonably good season. As both the Phoenix and the Library are now both showing films as well we are grateful for our loyal core of followers who support us every month. As always our involvement in The Borderlines Film Festival (The biggest Rural Film Festival in Europe) and World Cinema led to some interesting films not normally shown in county towns. One again we were able to contribute funds to the Church Hall, last year handing over some £600 plus.

My thanks go to John and Norma Davies, John and Jean Spencer, John and Avril Taylor, Hilary Robin, Ruth Kirchmeier and Claus Kopp and, of course, Judith Hazelton, who have all contributed

to making this happen. This season we have lost Hilary but the committee has now been augmented by Chris and Gill James.

William Hazelton

Flower Rota

As always I should like to thank those who provide and arrange the flowers which week by week enhance the beauty of our church. Sadly each year there are fewer volunteers so we would be delighted to hear from anyone who would like to join us.

The 'Flower Rota Year' begins after Easter and I would love to hear from anyone who would like to be included either as a flower arranger or if you would prefer, to donate money towards flowers perhaps to mark some special occasion or in memory of a loved one - we can then ask one of the group to arrange the flowers on your behalf.

Lindsay Ray ensures that the church is suitably decorated for festivals such as Christmas, Easter and Harvest and is grateful to all who spend many hours arranging the flowers for these events. Generous donations from members of the congregation for Easter Lilies and Christmas flowers are much appreciated.

Celia Glover continues to be our link for those who marry at St Mary's sometimes liaising with Florists or with the bride herself and ensuring that wherever possible, special requests for colours etc. are catered for.

Freda Davies.

Home Communion and Visiting

Visits continue to the residential homes, sheltered accommodation and individuals. There has been a drop in communion numbers because of changes of residents in Rosedale, and the loss of three other individuals but the popular monthly meetings for Woodside and Evensong at Ross Court and the addition of two other individuals mean that the team still maintains contact with over 100 people each month. Anne Morris has joined Derek in offering monthly individual visits, communions and a corporate service to meet the diverse needs of dementia sufferers at Westbank.

We can still arrange for more home visits if members of the congregation let us know of people who would appreciate a call.

Celia Glover

Hospital Chaplaincy

We continue to provide chaplaincy for the Community Hospital. The ward visitors for Peregrine and Merlin offer continuing weekly support especially for longer term patients and those from a distance with few visitors. They also are a link with the staff and the four ministerial chaplains who also visit each week on their monthly rota with an opportunity for patients to take communion then. Additional communions have been arranged on Sundays under special circumstances. The Rector responds to all emergency visit requests or arranges for a substitute visitor.

Derek Glover

Job Club APCM Report 2017

After its temporary suspension we were delighted to be able to restart Job Club from 1st July. Running alongside the Community Larder on a Tuesday morning Job Club provides the resources to help people look for work, register for benefits, prepare cv's etc. as well acting as a warm and welcoming place to congregate for conversation and fellowship. Each week up to 25 people drop in to see us. We have been helped enormously by a willing team of volunteers from the Community Larder who provide tea, coffee, toast and a listening ear. Thanks are also due to Gregg's the bakers who have generously donated cakes and pastries as well as to a small band of friends who come along each week to listen to stories and provide support and advice. The highlight of the year was a Christmas lunch at which over 30 sat down to roast turkey and all the trimmings. Many thanks to everyone who has helped this year.

Simon Tarlton

Local Ministry Development Group for Ross, Walford and Brampton Abbots

LMDG Report

In 2017, the LMDG met in February and September. It has tried to ensure that the coordination of communication and children's work within the benefice was as good as possible. It has also been kept up to date with outreach developments such as the recruitment of our House For Duty priests in Walford and in Brampton Abbots, the diocesan School of Ministry, our Intergenerational Missioner project and our Social Media presence.

Sarah Jones

Men's Supper Club

This group is still going very well with usually between 20 and 30 men attending the meal and talk each time. Our July 'Open Evening Buffet' is also proving very popular with this year having 54 people present. The meals have, as always, been first class and we thank The Castle Lodge Hotel for providing us with an excellent meeting room and gourmet food.

I would also like to thank our many speakers who make the evenings such a success.

William Hazelton

Mothers' Union report 2017

Our talks throughout the year covered a wide range of subjects connected with the aims and objects of the society, one of which is 'to uphold Christ's teaching on the nature of marriage and promote its wider understanding'. With this in mind, at our November meeting, we celebrated

the Queen and Duke of Edinburgh's 70th wedding anniversary with special prayers and a reading of the sermon preached at their wedding. Of course, being the Mothers' Union, we had to have cake!

We continue to provide marriage and baptism bags and the posies for Mothering Sunday and provide cake and serve coffee at the Bereavement Café.

We have provided items for Hospital bags which are given to people who have been admitted to hospital as an emergency and also items to help the Syrian refugee families who have been settle in Hereford.

A report of our meeting is sent to the Ross Gazette each month which is a way of letting the town know of our work.

Being a member of the Mothers' Union is not solely about attending the meetings, but in supporting the work. We have a membership of 29, ladies and gentlemen, with 2 ladies unable to attend the monthly meeting but still supporting the work of the Mothers' Union in prayer and financially by their membership.

Our society is based on prayer and we would welcome your prayers for the work not only in this parish but worldwide.

Margaret Mason - Branch Leader

Music Report APCM 2018

The choir continues to sing every Sunday morning for the 9.30 Sung Eucharist and a full Choral Evensong on the second and fourth Sunday of each month, rehearsals take place on Fridays at 7.00.

We continued to run "Come & Sing" events through 2017 with a liturgical performance of Faure's Requiem on Palm Sunday and an evensong in the summer term. We plan to continue these events on a termly basis stmarysmusic.org/come-and-sing.

We continue to offer choral scholarships for suitably qualified young people who are willing to sing for evensong as well as the 9.30 services, though take-up remains low. Cameron Hill is still our only choral scholar (Bass) and receives a scholarship funded by Nev Crabbe. More information on scholarships is on the music website.

A highlight for some members of the choir was our weekend in Chester at the very beginning of the autumn term. We sang six services in the space of two and a half days, staying for Friday and Saturday nights mainly in University accommodation in the centre of the city. It was great fun and particularly lovely to be joined by Nev Crabbe who timed a trip to the UK (from the USA) to make it possible. We are making a similar visit to St David's Cathedral in August this year.

There have been a number of new faces during 2017: Mike Donovan is with us full time on the bass line, and Roger Hanson has joined us to sing Tenor in a move eastwards from his seat in the nave! We see Adrian Kendry from time to time in the tenor line-up too, Fiona Dean sings soprano with us quite frequently (travelling from Lydney to do so), and Grace and Bea Keating are with us on Sunday mornings and Friday evenings on the front row of the choir stalls. We welcome all of

them. We also said goodbye and thanks, for many decades of service to the choir and church, to Chris and Andrew Wheatley.

In closing I'd like to thank all members of the choir for their dedication. I'd particularly like to thank my colleague Adrian Taylor, our organist, for his wonderful accompaniments, great sense of humour and his willingness to be so adaptable and accommodating. It's great to be working with such a professional. In 2017 Adrian also took over as conductor of Ross Choral Society. My thanks also go to David Lane for playing for funerals in the week; and to Rachel Lewis for her continuing willingness to direct the choir when necessary.

Mark Sanderson
Director of Music- stmarysmusic.org

St Mary's Piecemakers

Costumes made by members of the group were worn during the commemorations for John Kyrle in the summer of 2017, and can be seen in the film that the children helped to make.

Currently, designs are being drawn for a set of new pulpit falls for St Mary's. Detailed plans will be submitted soon for approval.

The group meets once each month in St Mary's Church Hall and is open to anyone interested in all things hand/needle craft.

Margaret Willis

"Play and Praise"-Coffee, chat and fun activities for Young Families

There have been three 'Play and Praise' Sessions this year with around 15 children and their carers attending. At each session there is a period of 'play' with craft activities and toys situated around the Church with refreshments available. We then gather together for 'Praise' -a story, singing and some prayers.

During the first session of the Year our activities were based around Mothering Sunday with the children making a posy of flowers for their Mums and joining in the story of Moses in the bulrushes.

In June the session took place during the Open Gardens Weekend and our theme was Growing. The children planted beans in jam jars so they could watch them grow, made paper plate flowers and listened to the story of the tiny mustard seed.

In November we focused on the Story of Noah's Ark creating decorations for our Tree at the Christmas Tree Festival. The children enjoyed acting out the story of Noah especially when building the 'Ark' out of kneelers and pretending to be the animals climbing onto the Ark! I would like to thank the team of people who plan and help with such enthusiasm at the sessions, helping to make them a great success.

Anne Morris

Prayer Group

No Report

Residential Homes

The ministerial team continues to take additional responsibilities for the people associated with residential homes and the Woodside Day centre. In addition to the monthly communion services for Lawfords House, Ross Court, Rosedale, Fontaine Court, Bernard Hackett Court, Westbank and Woodside, we have developed bi-monthly Evensong services alternating with a well-supported discussion group looking at religion and social issues at Ross Court. During the year we have been involved with the pilot project for integrated mental health services for Ross and district.

Derek Glover

Safeguarding APCM report 2017

Since taking over responsibility for Safeguarding from Derek Glover on 1st July there has been, mercifully, very little to report. This is in no small part due to the impeccably kept records Derek has handed over and the professionalism and care Derek has given to the role in the past. He has left very large shoes to fill.

Since assuming this role I have held meetings with our Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser, Mandy McPhee, who gives invaluable support and advice. We are fully up to date with all requirements at present but this an ever changing landscape. Revised and clarified Safeguarding Policy documents to new national standards are being prepared and will be presented for adoption by the PCC in 2018.

It is clear that safeguarding is an area where the Church, both locally and nationally, is going to be in the spotlight in the months and years ahead. We have well-formed and robust procedures in place to ensure we remain on top of our legal and moral responsibilities.

Simon Tarlton

Sunday Kids

Sunday Kids continue to meet every 1st, 3rd and 5th Sunday during the 9.30am service. We currently have seven children attending on a regular basis which is very encouraging. We normally base our activities around the bible readings being read in church. However, on the third Sunday we sometimes prepare something to bring to the All Age Worship service the following week. The children particularly enjoy showing the congregation what they have been working on.

We would be very pleased to hear from anyone who would like to know more about the Children's Ministry or from anyone who feels they may be help in any way.

We are very much looking forward to moving into our new purpose built room at the back of the church. This will mean we will all feel more part of the main church service. We hope our move will take place very early in 2018.

Sharn John

Friends of St Mary's Annual Report for 2017

2017 was a successful years for the Friends.

Our second Open Gardens event raised £6750, and subscriptions and other fundraising a further £4500.

We were able to support Phase One of the Reordering project by funding with £5,777 the move of the stained glass windows in the North Aisle. We have agreed to fund the new sound system, when it is installed, to the tune of £20,000 and expect the PCC to request grants to help phase 2 and 3 of the reordering.

We will be running an open Gardens event in 2019, and will need a number of new gardens – please help us by telling us of interesting gardens around the town whose owners might be persuaded to open.

Peter Reynolds

Chairman.

The Neighbourhood Team

No Report

Brampton Abbots Primary School 2017

The Church of England School in Ross

National newspapers like to produce Primary School league tables based on Key Stage 2 SATs results and in 2017, The Times and The Telegraph placed Brampton Abbots as the 33rd best school in England, some 200 places above the next best school in the county! However a better picture of the quality of education throughout the school is gained by including performances at KS1 as well as KS2. In 2017 the DfE compared 26 sets of the pupils' performances at KS1 and KS2 with the 'National Average' and in 25 of these comparisons Brampton Abbots exceeded National Average, sometimes by a significant margin. All in all this is an excellent tribute to some hardworking staff and children. Perhaps not surprisingly the school has been oversubscribed in each of the last three years.

In addition to Ofsted, all church schools are subjected to a Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) every five years. The SIAMS inspector who visited the school in 2017 concluded, among other things, that "Religious education is outstanding at Brampton Abbots School and it plays an important part in making children aware of biblical study, Christianity and other faiths." The report contained few criticisms but did suggest that one area to improve was to "create a wider and more fully shared understanding of spirituality so that all members of the school community may experience spiritual growth". This would be quite a challenge for a church let alone a primary school.

The governors had a presentation from the Bishop Anthony Educational Trust (BAET) outlining the case for joining this Multi Academy Trust. (There are around 80 Primary Schools in the diocese and currently only about 10 have become academies under the umbrella governance of BAET.) The government have removed the requirement that all schools should become academies by 2020 and the governing body have decided they will not be applying for academy status in the immediate future. The federation with Bridstow School is now in its second year and our headteacher is doing an excellent job in developing a shared culture while maintaining the uniqueness of each establishment.

With thanks to the PCC we have continued the practice of presenting (The Lion) Children's Bible to each child when they enter Key Stage 2. They are then 7 years old and have acquired reading skills that are at a very exploratory stage. It is to be hoped that they will enjoy reading "the world's greatest story retold for every child" and sharing it with other family members.

Mr Peter Raddenbury retired as Foundation Governor during the year and we thank him for his contribution particularly as a member of the Finance and Personnel committees. The others who served as Foundation Governors in 2017 were Rev'd Canon Marvin Bamforth, Mrs Karen Bennett, Mr Peter Jenkins, Rev'd Sarah Jones, Mr Paul Mason and Mr Keith Richards. The continued good health of the school is due in no small part to the work of the Governing Body. Thank you one and all.

Thank you, on behalf of the school, to all come in to school as volunteer helpers and thank you also to everyone for the supermarket vouchers, they do help to purchase some small but much valued extra resources.

More information about the school can be found on the display boards in church (first window ledge on North wall) and on the school's website www.bramptonabbotts.org.

Paul Mason

Church House (Church Hall)

The Church Hall has continued to be run by a committee chaired by Keith Richards. In the course of the year Margaret Mason, Leah Lewis, Margaret Willis and Revd. Simon Tarlton have joined the committee.

The relationship of the hall and the committee to the PCC has been uncertain for some time. In November Peter Raddenbury was able to confirm that the Hereford Diocesan Board of Finance is the Custodian Trustee of the Church House. The PCC is the Managing Trustee, and the Hall Committee manages the hall on its behalf. The Hall Committee is not itself a trust of any sort.

Minor repairs, including replacing the damaged flooring in the upstairs corridor and one of the heaters in the main hall, have been carried out throughout the year. Plans were obtained from Hook Mason for a major refurbishment, but the estimated costs were considerable, and it was agreed that the committee could not proceed further with the work in the immediate future. Having the plans will at least make it easier in due course to apply to grant-giving bodies for funding. In December, it was agreed to clear out the basement.

The Community Larder has continued to use two of the offices on the first floor of the hall, although access up the narrow stairs is difficult for some people.

Addaction, a charity working with addicts, has leased one of the upstairs offices and used the former children's room on occasion. There have been some problems over the standard of the accommodation, and the committee agreed to carry out improvements, notably installing a basin in the toilet at the bottom of the stairs to the Addaction office.

The committee agreed to raise the charge for the hire of the main hall to £10 an hour from January 2018.

Janet Cooper

Church House Trust Treasurers Report

The Church House Trust accounts are incorporated in the PCC financial reports.

Terry Davies