

THE PARISH OF PLUMPTON WITH EAST CHILTINGTON CUM NOVINGTON

ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING

ALL SAINTS CHURCH 23<sup>rd</sup> APRIL 2023

ANNUAL REPORT

**Administrative information.**

The Parish is a charity but exempt from registering with the Charity Commission within the meaning of the Charities Act 1993.

During the year the following served as members of the Parochial Church Council.

Priest in charge	Rev. Anne Dunlop
Churchwardens	Mr Howard Wood (Chair) Mr Jay Haque Mrs Amanda Inglis (until July 2022) Deputy: Mr David Dawson
Representative on Deanery Synod	Rev. Anne Dunlop
Elected members	Mrs Josephine Butler (Social Committee Officer) Mrs Janice Doran (Parish Safeguarding Officer) Mr Alan Fraser-Harris Mr Eric Gill Mrs Tina Lambert Mrs Angela Spinks
Ex-officio/Co-opted	Mr Kelvin Speirs (Treasurer) Mr Robert Doran (SQP Risk Assessment and Safeguarding) Mr Mark Brunt (until January 2023) Mrs K Gold Secretary (until October 2022)

Membership of the PCC is determined under the Church Representation Rules and consists: the Priest in Charge/Incumbent, Churchwardens/Deputies, members of the Deanery/Diocesan/General Synod, and members of the Church who are elected at the Annual Parochial Church Meeting (APCM) and co-opted members voted on by the PCC. The number of lay members on the PCC is governed by the number on the Electoral Roll which in this year was six.

Members are encouraged to stand for election to the PCC and we try to ensure a balance of skills and experience where possible.

The primary objective of the PCC of Plumpton with East Chiltington cum Novington is the promotion of the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ as expounded in the doctrines and practices of the Church according to the usage of the Church of England. The PCC has the responsibility for the care of the buildings. They also work with the with the Priest in Charge/Incumbent, in promoting in the ecclesiastical parish the whole mission of the Church, pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical.

A service of Holy Communion is held every Sunday in the Parish. On occasion during the year this service is held at East Chiltington and St Michael and All Angels. In addition additional services are held

at Easter (The Triduum) and at Christmas as appropriate. A regular service of Compline is held nightly via ZOOM. A midweek service of Holy Communion is held on Tuesday.

There were 46 on the Electoral Roll in 2022, with the October count averaging 30. There was one marriage, two baptisms, twelve funerals, five interments of ashes during the year.

The PCC met twelve times during the year; Finance and Safeguarding are Standing Items.

## **ANNUAL REPORT – Rev Anne Dunlop**

Firstly may I thank all of you for the many ways you have contributed to the work and mission of the Church during the year. We have achieved a lot and the church is growing not just in numbers but also in our faith and commitment to being disciples of our Lord Jesus Christ.

### **Developing Faith**

Those many of you who have begun to engage with daily reading notes and attend the different courses we have held will, I am sure, attest to how this has helped promote the understanding of what we believe and a growing familiarity with the scriptures. During the year we held an eight-week course The Bible Story using film and reflection to help us 'get to grips' with the Bible – it's a big book! We will hold this course again during 2023/4. We also had study groups meet via ZOOM studying Psalm 103 and Old Testament theology, and lately one reflecting upon individuality of our prayer response. These ZOOM courses included people from Offham Parish and outside.

### **Our weekly services.**

Our worship together each Sunday is the expression of the Body of Christ in this place. Gathering together builds friendships, forms networks and develops ideas. We each have a part to play and something to offer. My thanks to those of you who lead the prayers, read the lessons, welcome, provide transport, and refreshments afterwards. Thank you for your commitment, I know that you put a lot of preparation into what you do.

Early in the year we welcomed our new hymn books which have enabled us to engage with some modern hymns. We also replaced the 'Covid sheets' with service books and reusable service booklets for the Remembrance Service

The choir has been a significant addition to our services and our thanks to Geoff and Angela Spinks and Judith Miller for bringing this into being. People from within the Parish of Plumpton and Offham and from the village have joined and their contribution, particularly at the Jubilee was splendid. We look forward to a regular inclusion of the choir in our services and welcome other singers who may wish to join. Of course our grateful thanks to Judith Miller who plays the organ for us almost every Sunday in the year and at many other occasions.

We have a quiet, reflective mid-week service of Holy Communion at 11.30 a.m. Compline is said nightly via ZOOM.

At present we are still administering the bread and wine simultaneously but are conscious of Bishop Martin's request that churches return to the use of the shared chalice as soon as they feel able.

### **Other developments**

We registered as a Fairtrade Church in July and as much as possible use only products which meet fairtrade specifications.

During the year we installed Broadband in the annex and were successful in bidding through the Diocese, for a Sumup machine to enable card payments. This has been of great help – especially at the,

now traditional, 'Harvest Produce Auction' when we raised over £700 for Ripple (formerly Send a Cow). Your generosity also raised £226 for the Royal British Legion, and the Lent Appeal 2022 raised £500 for the solar panels for the girls' school in Malawi. It looks like we are on track with this year's Lent project: Steve Bodsworth's Gambia charity has raised around £500 to date. Significantly we have we have restored our Diocesan contribution (Parish Share) which was over £14000 in 2022.

You cannot fail to notice the new signage board which has made the church look up-to-date. Our grateful thanks for a donation which made its purchase possible. Similarly a donation to the Annex helped towards the purchase of a new cooker.

The churchwardens will address the buildings, but at this point I would like to express my thanks to Peter Woodhouse for the cheerful willingness he offers us in fixing just about everything that needs fixing.

### **Our life together**

In many ways the congregation contributes to the life of the church and its place within the village of Plumpton. We launched the Tuesday Lunch about a year ago and now have a regular attendance of almost thirty. It is much appreciated as a focus for developing friendships and socialising, as much as it is for its delicious meals. These are managed by a team of volunteers – tirelessly and with considerable commitment and dedication and I am grateful for their commitment to this work.

Jesus spoke a lot about hospitality – it is a human need. In a teaching he said *"I was a stranger and you welcomed me..."* with the idea that what we do for others in his name is as to him. Those attending are not always strangers to one another, although we do welcome new people, but many live on their own and the Tuesday Lunch 'gets them out of the house' to meet friends.

In a similar way, the new Thursday 'Pop in Café' evolved as a response to providing a warm space over the winter months. It is run by people from the village and my thanks go to Paul Mitchell, Jo and Nick Hale, and also to Anna Mackenzie Dodds, for their commitment to this project.

So many of you give in various ways to make this Parish welcoming. My thanks to Sally Huband and the team who clean the church, Jean Eagle who organises the flowers, Kate Gold and Howard Wood who find the volunteers to clear the churchyard, those who meticulously draw up rotas and much more. You all make it what it is.

Our website has had an 'overhaul' and is now up and running, our thanks to Jay Haque.

The highlight of last year must be the Jubilee in June. Lee Stevens and Carole Nicholson put in so much work along with many others to make this a splendid and memorable occasion. It was the final use of the Rectory grounds and what a good use it was. The catering provided by Sharon Vaisey, Amanda Inglis and the many others of you who provided wonderful cakes, could not be bettered. Although a bittersweet event as the Queen died so soon after, we nonetheless, have the commemorative bench in place to mark the occasion.

Our Harvest services both at the church and at the college were a great success and our thanks to Carole Nicholson for managing the village event and Josephine Butler for all the work needed to set this up at the College.

Our service of Remembrance was well attended as was the later service at the Polish War Memorial.

Our work at Plumpton College has continued to develop and I am grateful to the Principal, Jeremy Kerswell and his team for facilitating this. Each Wednesday during term time we open St Michael as 'Reflective Space' and a team of volunteers some from the church along with others are there in the afternoon when the students have an 'enrichment period' – an opportunity to engage with different activities, one of which is explore the church situated in the centre of the college. My thanks to all who

volunteer to be part of this. It has also been my privilege to take part in the College service to mark Remembrance Day.

I have continued my engagement with the schools as a Skylark Foundation Governor and undertaken with others, inspections of the schools during the year, looking at quality of education and personal development. We hope this year we can welcome the children from Plumpton to sing again at our carol service.

We plan to provide something suitable for young families and children and this is an ongoing project; this may be a Family Service once a month. We hope to renew the sound system in All Saints in due course.

The Diocesan plan is to become a United Benefice with Offham and Hamsey. During the year we have had opportunity to join together for services, Easter, Pentecost and Christmas. I hope that this engagement will increase over time.

Amanda Inglis churchwarden for East Chiltington and Kate Gold secretary to the PCC, both stepped down from their role during the year. We are grateful for their time and input and that they continue to be involved in the life of the Parish. Jay Haque is now the contact point for East Chiltington and there is a shared secretarial post managed by Liz Meredith Jones and Carole Nicholson.

My licence to the Parish was due to end on 23<sup>rd</sup> April 2023. However with the support of both Parish PCCs it will be renewed for a further two years. Towards the end of this time it is hoped that an incumbent can be appointed to a United Benefice.

As we look back over the year, let us give thanks to God for all that has begun and continues within the Parish. There is a growth in faith and fellowship amongst us, we have a much stronger foundation and a welcoming community.

So I encourage you. The living water that Jesus Christ gives us is not to be held inside but to outflow to those around. Begin to be sensitive to opportunities among the people you know. Ask God to help you share the joy and the love, the forgiveness and healing – the Gospel. Hear again the words of Jesus “You are to be my witnesses...”. May God give his blessing.

Rev Anne Dunlop  
Priest in Charge Parish of Plumpton and  
East Chiltington cum Novington  
23 April 2023

#### **ELECTORAL ROLL – David Dawson**

During the year two persons were removed from the Roll (deceased). The Electoral Roll has been revised and stands at 56. Over 50 means our PCC number of lay members may increase to nine.

#### **SAFEGUARDING - Janice Doran, Parish Safeguarding Officer**

There have been no significant incidents concerning Safeguarding in the last year. An email which raised some concern was addressed and found to be a minor misunderstanding and no further action taken. All volunteers attending St Michael's Church had their DBS checks by the College. There are lots of courses that I can sign up for via Zoom and I will be attending a Modern Slavery course which will explain what it is today and how to recognise, respond, record and refer concerns.

#### **SAFEGUARDING – RISK ASSESSMENT – Robert Doran, Risk Assessment Officer**

Since the introduction of pre-event Diocese Simple Quality Protects (SQP) Risk Assessment (RA) requirement, we now have forms specific to each church. The RA informs and protects both the church

and the hirer. After a somewhat slow start, these are being completed for all known events. At the present time, we have covered many different events some regular and others just one-off. We have had no physical accidents to date. We have had one event, a Birthday party, where the locking-up procedure was not followed, and the side door of the Plumpton annex was left open all night. Luckily nothing was damaged or stolen. We will shortly be introducing a revised RA form after discussions with Church House in regard to our qualifying for SQP Certification.

I will be meeting shortly with the churchwardens to address changes to the distribution of the RA forms at the point of inquiry. As I do not have contact verbally with applicants, when the sheets are returned to me I cannot assess accurately the comments against each question. This meeting will enable us to improve this practice.

## **FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31<sup>ST</sup> DECEMBER 2022 – Kelvin Speirs, Treasurer**

### General Fund Receipts and Payments

<b>Receipts</b>	2022	2021
Offertories	310	2252
Free Will Offering	15486	9578
Tax Credits	2917	1237
Donations and Legacies	7295	15327
Fund Raising	1423	261
Interest	416	369
Weddings/Funerals	5952	8549
Annexe	2505	1240
E. Chiltonington church hire	180	
Hymn Book donations	1220	
Miscellaneous	1736	1195
	<b>39440</b>	<b>40008</b>
<b>Expenses</b>		
Diocese	14400	
Utilities	10196	4324
Repairs/Maintenance	3546	7726
Church Yard	779	300
Bank Charges	81	101
Insurance	3377	3279
Parish Expenses	1660	962
Annexe	326	1545
Miscellaneous	48	422
Hymn Books	1903	
Notice Board	1667	
Donations	1461	
Fund Raising	307	
	<b>39751</b>	<b>18833</b>
Excess of Receipts over payments	(311)	21175
Bank Account 1/1/2022	39073	17898
Bank Account 31/12/2022	38762	39073

### PCC Other Funds

	2022	2021
General Fund 1/1/22	8695	8690
Interest	114	5
General Fund 31/12/22	8809	8695
Church Hall Fund 1/1/22	1163	1163
Interest	16	
Church Hall Fund 31/12/22	1179	1163
Sunday School Fund 1/1/22	12943	12840
Interest	293	143
Sunday School Fund 31/12/22	13276	12943
Current Value of Shares		
621 CBF Shares	12831	14543
3061 Fixed Interest Securities	4197	4843

## **CHURCHWARDENS' REPORT – Howard Wood, Jay Haque**

### **All Saints**

The old, worn-out church noticeboard was replaced after a great deal of deliberation by a new stand out board, re-sited adjacent to the annex car park in a more appropriate position. A letter box was fitted in the church annex allowing us to register the address and enable an application to be made to a broadband supplier. This was installed successfully in October 2022. Uneven flag stones leading from the annex car park to the church were lifted and re-laid and replaced as necessary to remove trip hazards. Arrangements are being made to site the Royal Legion Standard in the church to the left of the Altar.

Mark Brunt, acting as our Safety officer, has made several suggestions which have now been implemented. He has also volunteered to PAT test our portable appliances.

The lightning conductor at All Saints has failed its recent test. The current system is only designed to protect the tower. Remedial works could cost £1000, with further work costing £2000 being recommended. We are taking further advice.

The PCC spent £3500 to upgrade our electrics in both the church and annex after receiving an electrical installation report.

Enthusiastic volunteers carried out strimming, raking up and cutting back in the churchyard at the end of October, with some chain saw work in the churchyard and annex car park taking place at a later date.

The ex-Glyndebourne church organ has been serviced, repaired and tuned under the guidance of Judith Miller and Geoffrey Spinks.

Recently, we have handed over the church glebe land and rectory to the developers. At the time of the original agreement with the PCC the Diocesan Board of Finance agreed to pay £25,000 upon the granting of planning permission to the glebe, and a further £25,000 when the DBF actually banks the proceeds from the sale of the rectory into our church account. During the coldest wettest winter for quite a while, some of the Bath stonework has been affected by a combination of frost and rain, resulting in cracks and bits shearing off. We are currently obtaining quotes for the necessary repairs. I would like to thank all those who give their time and expertise to the maintenance of the church and grounds and in particular Peter Woodhouse, David Richards, Roger Ellis and Bob Doran.

## **St Michael and All Angels - a Grade 1 Listed building**

We are working with Plumpton College to achieve a legally binding arrangement for the joint use of St Michael. This will require substantial repairs and improvements both externally and internally, which in turn will require large sums to be raised.

In a competitive process four architects, with the relevant qualifications and experience to work with a grade 1 listed building, have been asked to tender schedules of work to find solutions for dealing with perimeter drainage and water ingress into the walls, removing internal seating and levelling floors, replacing old fashioned heating systems, improving lighting and acoustics etc whilst protecting the ancient wall paintings. Tenders must be in by the end of March. Many thanks to Rev Anne, Eric Gill and Roger Ellis who are supporting me in this project.

We have experienced a spike in electricity bills at St Michael this winter despite its infrequent use. The meters have been checked and our own electrician has checked for any leakage of supply, of which he has found no evidence. The matter went to the ombudsman who did not support our case. The power to the old storage heaters is now turned off! A report from a leading expert on wall paintings Mr Thomas Organ was commissioned and has now been received as requested by the Diocesan Advisory Committee, who will be the body who can give us a faculty or planning permission for the proposed works. The report indicates that the wall paintings will be enhanced by the measures we intend to take to improve the church environment.

At long last, we have heard back from the architect at Historic England who will deal with our submission to have St Michael added to the "Heritage at Risk Register". Any listing would significantly enhance our chances of attracting funders further down the line.

Plumpton College have supplied two wooden benches to replace the dilapidated ones outside the church facing south. The college continue to maintain the churchyard in an attractive but environmentally sensitive way.

### **Church Annex**

The church annex continues to attract regular booking from such diverse organisations as: First aid courses, Tai Chi, children's parties, visiting PCC retreats, Happy Circle, Yoga classes, Pantomime Society, Good neighbours, Turning Point dance classes, Wildlife group, Photography group, residents' groups, Society of Catholic Priests, as well as for our church gatherings, Tuesday lunch club, Thursday warm space gatherings and funeral wakes.

We have seen a steep rise in electric charges with storage heating which is difficult to regulate. Prices have been raised by £2 per hour. As previously mentioned, the updating of our church and annex will mean that we can replace these heaters with much more efficient and controllable ones this summer. We are seeking to carry out maintenance of the annex windows and frames this Spring so volunteers required please!

We are hoping to provide an accessible toilet in the annex replacing the separate WC's but utilising that space and more. Plans have been prepared and a local builder consulted. We are seeking quotations from three different builders.

Howard Wood

### **East Chiltonton**

Over the past year, East Chiltonton Church has made several improvements and changes. The outside lights have been repaired, and the broken pintel on the gate has been renewed. The churchyard has also

undergone some changes, with a new graveyard area being extended and wilding in the old churchyard being cut back around graves on an ongoing basis.

Church services at East Chiltonton had been amended in February due to difficulties with parking on the wet field, services are now restricted to May to September during dryer months.

With respect to the future of East Chiltonton Church, we have been exploring the process and scope for restoring and adapting the church for community use, in line with Church of England guidelines. The restoration of the church is estimated to cost around £150K, and modifications will need to be made to make the building more suitable for community use. The Diocese has advised that grant funding for the church is more likely to be successful if the restoration and modification projects are combined. The project is expected to take around 5 years to complete, and after completion, the church can either become a festival church, with a community charitable trust set up to take on responsibility for its maintenance and running, or the parish can take on ownership of the church. Next steps include updating the existing 'works agreement', consulting with the residents of East Chiltonton, and meeting with the Archdeacon to discuss viable options and financial responsibilities. The proposed plan will be presented to the community to gauge their interest in using the church as a community space.

Jay Haque

#### **HEALTH AND SAFETY REPORT – Robert Doran**

The footpath around All Saints had become uneven and action has been taken to re-lay the whole path which is now level and safe. During the winter the car park became hazardous, and this was addressed by David Dawson and Howard Wood who put down sand and salt. We now have a supply of salt in store. There was one trip-fall at the chancel steps, the person was not badly injured but in this case, they will avoid using the steps in future.

#### **DEANERY SYNOD - Rev Anne Dunlop**

During the year the meetings have focussed on regaining financial stability after COVID, the use of the Family Support System, the final reports from General Synod on Living in Love and Faith, and information on managing churchyards well.

#### **SOCIAL COMMITTEE – Josephine Butler**

A number of social events took place during the year: Pancake Sunday at the beginning of Lent; a Pet Service at St Michael; the Platinum Jubilee celebration for Her Majesty the Queen with a service taken by Archdeacon Martin followed by tea in the Rectory garden; two Harvest Festival services, one at the church and the other at Saint Michael in the College; Christmas village carol service and Crib Service; and a Parish outing to Gradwell park for lunch. The regular commitment to Tuesday Lunch continues and the new Pop in Cafe on Thursday mornings.

#### **WEB SITE – Jay Haque**

During the year the web-site has been reinstated and is kept up to date.