

St Nicholas Church, Longparish, Hampshire
Annual Report of the Parochial Church Council for the
year ended 31 December 2013

St Nicholas Parish Church is situated in the village of Longparish. It is part of the Benefice of Hurstbourne Priors, Longparish, St Mary Bourne & Woodcott in the Diocese of Winchester within the Church of England. The correspondence address is:- The Vicarage, St Mary Bourne, Andover, Hampshire, SP11 6AY.

The Parochial Church Council (PCC) is a charity excepted from registration with the Charity Commission.

PCC Members who have served since the Annual Church Meeting last April until the date this report was approved are:

Incumbent	Revd Canon Michael St John Channell (from October 2013)	
Assistant Priests	Revd Terry Hemming, Revd Dodie Marsden, Revd Richard Sutcliffe	
Wardens	Jonathan Evans John Young	
Patron	John Woodcock	
Representatives on the Deanery Synod	John Young Vacant	
PCC Secretary	Jane Young	
Treasurer	Alice Evans	
Elected Members	Eila Chamberlain Jean Chambers John Collins Karen Marie Dinesen Barbara Duxbury	Graeme Francis Sarah Nicholson Joanna Roebuck Pippa Sawyer Jessica Ward
Co-opted Member	Jennifer Sanders	

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 activities

During the interregnum St Nicholas's PCC had the responsibility of co-operating with the churchwardens, the Assistant Priests, Revd Terry Hemming, Revd Dodie Marsden and Revd Richard Sutcliffe in promoting the whole mission of the Church, pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical. It endeavours to join and liaise with the other three churches in the benefice in the pursuance of these objectives. It has maintenance responsibilities for the church fabric and churchyard at St Nicholas.

Achievements and performance (2012 figures in brackets)

After the revision of the Electoral Roll, there are 62 (62) parishioners on the Church Electoral Roll, 2 (2) of whom are not resident in the Parish. The average weekly attendance was 24 (29) adults and 6 (8) children, but this number increased at festivals

and the total number of worshippers at the Christmas (Eve and Day) Services was 203 (227) adults and 114 (130) children. There were 6 baptisms, 2 marriages, 3 funerals in church and ? funerals at the crematorium.

Review of the Year

Over the weekend of 5th and 6th January 2013 we sadly said farewell to Revd Canon Martin Coppen and Christine. A lovely lunch was organised in the Community Hall on the Saturday to which over fifty people came and there was also a good attendance at the service in St Mary Bourne on Sunday. There followed a nine month's interregnum and we are grateful for the all the work done by our assistant priests, Revd Terry Hemming, Revd Dodie Marsden and Revd Richard Sutcliffe during this time and also the church wardens for their additional contributions both in the recruitment process and the day to day running of the church.

There was a good response to the advertisement for a new incumbent and six candidates were interviewed over two days. Revd Canon Michael St John Channell was subsequently appointed and he was installed on 5 October with a pilgrimage through the parishes with services and meals in each church. People attended the variety of events in all the villages and it was a very happy occasion. We were delighted to have secured such an eminent and talented man to lead us forward. He settled in immediately and having transformed the vicarage opened it up as a resource for use by parishioners, entertaining us on several occasions. It is of a great sorrow that in February 2014 he died quite suddenly and we are suffering from the loss of him personally and of the expectation of all he had planned for the benefice.

During the interregnum services continued to be held every Sunday alternating between an early Holy Communion service at 8 am, parish communion and family service at 9.30 am and a later service of matins at 11am thanks to the endeavours of our assistant priests. The services at the main festivals in the year (Mothering Sunday, Easter, Harvest, Remembrance and Christmas) were very well attended and the presence of the Longparish choir greatly enhanced the worship at these services augmented with some children from the school. . At Easter the churchwardens commissioned a large rustic cross which was placed in the church with a shroud and a crown of thorns. This created a thoughtful visual-aid for the Easter services. A splendid lunch was organized in the Community Hall after the harvest service which was well attended by villagers.

Cross benefice fellowship meetings were organized during Lent taking place in the comfort of the barn room at the Bourne Valley Inn.

PCC Meetings - The PCC met on six occasions during the year and continued to ensure that the church and churchyard was maintained and cared for. Clive Kent continued to mow and tidy the churchyard to a very high standard during 2013. The PCC authorized the purchase of new altar linen and purifiers and bibles to be put in the pews. Although the Diocesan Advisory Committee had no objections to the plans to relocate the electricity and water supply to the church (including a simple kitchen area behind the organ), there was less progress than anticipated in taking this work forward.

In November the PCC meeting incorporated a meeting with other PCCs in the benefice at which Canon Michael set out his thoughts and vision for the way forward which sadly we shall now have develop without his guidance.

Other Activities

The event of the summer was the Longparish Pageant. It was Revd Terry Hemming's inspiration and he persuaded the talented Rev Professor June Boyce-Tillman to write much of the script and the music. It was a wonderful performance which told the history of God's generosity expressed in the story of St Nicholas. Over 100 performers and musicians worked together drawn from the Longparish Village Choir, the school choir, the Spotlight Singers from Andover, and the Andover Town Band. The Longparish Players resurrected the ancient Longparish Mummers Play which had last been performed in the 1930's by local farm labourers who needed extra money before Christmas. The mummers costumes were sewn by a large team of villagers in the village hall. The performance was split between the school playing field (thankfully it was an almost dry evening) and the church linked by a processional hymn. It was very successful and despite a number of running expenses, made a profit which was given to the school for use in the music department.

Regular contact with Longparish School continued during 2013 with weekly assemblies taken by one of the clergy and communion services each term to which members of the congregation are invited. In addition, each month Revd Terry Hemming organized an informal 'scramblers session' in church for the reception class together with toddlers from the village.

Revd Terry Hemming was tireless in his provision of pastoral care to all the villagers, regularly visiting the sick and bereaved in their homes and in hospital. Terry and Ruth entertained some of the older parishioners to tea on a regular basis, transporting some of those who are now living in care homes to meet their friends.

The parish continued to provide a team of volunteers to help at the Winchester Cathedral refectory for three days during the spring/summer months. The cathedral management relies on the goodwill of volunteers from a number of parishes to offset the substantial daily cost of running the cathedral.

In October a group of five people linked to the village went to Uganda as part of Revd Dodie Marsden's group. Longparish School is linked with Bukanaga school in Mityana, a diocese near Kampala. St Nicholas had donated some of the proceeds from the Christmas Fair in 2012 to the church at Bukanaga who had used it to install a concrete floor in the altar area and an altar rail and the group enjoyed a wonderful service at the church on Sunday and spent several days at the school during the week along with visits to other schools and organisations. Prior to the trip the Longparish ladies had organised some fund raising events, a supper and a cream tea, which raised about £3,000. Some of this was used to provide a water tank for a rural school and just a month later, the head teacher sent photos showing it fully installed. It is hoped to strengthen the link between Bukanaga Church and St Nicholas in the future.

The Longparish Fete and St Nicholas Christmas Fayre were both very successful occasions with good profits and enjoyed by everyone in the village and grateful thanks are recorded to the organisers.