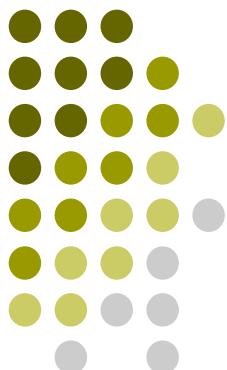


Published for Annual Parochial Church Meeting

23 May 2021

Annual Reports for St Paul's Church, Shurdington

(a member church of
The Greenway Benefice)



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The Greenway Benefice Team 2020

(supporting Holy Trinity Badgeworth, St Paul's Shurdington, and St Mary's Witcombe with Bentham):

VICAR

The Revd Susan Cooke

The Vicarage, School Lane, Shurdington GL51 4TF

Tel: 01242 321806

revsusancooke@gmail.com

Curate

The Revd Rebecca Spear nedspear@icloud.com

Reader and Funeral Minister

Mr Robert Poole Tel: 01452 855660 reader.rob.bswb@gmail.com

Local Ministry Team: *The Greenway Team*

Revd Susan Cooke	Revd Rebecca Spear	Mr Robert Poole
Mrs Sue Padfield	Mr Paul Stanfield	Mrs Christine Jeffs
Mrs Clare Stewart	Mrs Rachel Cottell	Mrs Catherine Milsom

Retired Clergy:

The Revd Ian Gobey Tel: 01242 863977

Benefice Administrator

Mrs Chris Langham greenway.bswb.office@gmail.com

Mainly working from home during the pandemic. In the office by appointment.

Benefice Safeguarding Officer and Care Homes Liaison:

Mrs Rachel Cottell home: 01452 715034 admin.bswb@googlemail.com

The St Paul's Parish Team 2020:

Churchwardens

Mrs Clare Stewart

Mr Mike Cass (to October 2020)

Mr Andrew Spence (from October 2020)

PCC Treasurer

Mr Mark King

PCC Secretary

Mrs Lisa Pearson

Gift Aid Officer

Mrs Joan Puffett

Sacristan

Mr Andrew Spence

Verger

Mr Mike Cass

Electoral Roll Officer

Mrs Lisa Pearson

Friends of St Paul's

Mrs Clare Stewart

Church Flowers

Mrs Helen King

Contents

Please note that this document only contains the Annual Reports for St Paul's Shurdington.

For a full picture of church life and worship, including the Vicar's report, it should be read in conjunction with the Greenway Benefice Annual Review. The Annual reports for Holy Trinity, Badgeworth and St. Mary's, Witcombe with Bentham are also available as separate documents.

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ST PAUL'S SHURDINGTON CHURCHWARDENS' REPORT

2020 started as normal for the members of St. Paul's with our usual pattern of worship, meetings and coffee in the hall. Gradually a new type of flu was noticed to be spreading across the country causing strain on the NHS. The Government was required to take drastic action and soon our churches along with many other institutions were closed and no gathered worship could take place.

A short service of Reflective Prayer was produced and a weekday service at noon on Facebook and YouTube began, soon to be followed by a Sunday Service on Zoom: - for many of us, a very different way of 'Church'. It was also difficult for those who found modern technology trying to manage and understand. Throughout lockdown the Benefice continued to function under the leadership of our vicar the Rev'd Susan Cooke and Robert Poole the reader. Regular contact was made by phone, letters and emails to all, especially those who found the isolation difficult to cope with. Throughout this period regular checks were made inside St. Paul's to ensure the fabric of the church was intact and no noticeable damage seen. The churchyard was regularly mowed by Mr. Derek Jones, and a number of the listed lime trees suffered in the gales and will need attention when safe to do so.

At the end of June we welcomed the Rev'd Rebecca Spear as our new curate with a virtual tea party. From July 9th we were able to have a Reflective Service of Prayer in the churchyard and an in church Eucharistic service, each once a month at 3pm on a Sunday. The church was opened twice a week for private prayer and by appointment. Face masks were worn at all times and hand sanitizer applied on entering, the soft furnishings were removed from use and pews cleaned before and after services. There was always an arrangement of flowers in the porch to welcome visitors during lockdown and later. At all times inside and out a social distance of two metres applied. Gradually a pattern of worship developed with each parish taking ownership of an online Sunday Service.

Normal methods of fundraising were difficult at St. Paul's, as the fete, lunches and sales due to restrictions were illegal to hold safely. As autumn approached it was decided to hold a raffle and make floral decorations and wreaths to order at Christmas, both were a great success raising £800 and £343 respectively, well done to all involved. We are grateful to all who have supported St. Paul's financially, your generosity has been amazing.

Another great success was Greenway Gifts, inspired by Catherine Milsom (a prospective ordinand) who was aware of the lack of state help to families of schoolchildren in need during autumn half term and a new member of our congregation. She worked with a number of organisations and the local supermarket which enabled over 70 activity and grocery bags to be distributed. At Christmas the idea included adults as well and a hot festive meal was available to those who needed it.

From March all benefice and church meetings have been held online, with each of our churches working closely together consulting frequently on the best and fairest way forward for the benefit of all.

The Flower Guild were able to distribute door step potted plants for Mothering Sunday at the start of lockdown. Harvest was celebrated very appropriately outside, as was a very memorable Remembrance Service brought forward so local organisations were able to lay their wreaths prior to a second lockdown. The weather was not kind to us for the Carol Service - we started with light rain gradually becoming torrential, we resorted inside for the final carol sung by Susan. A service was held on both Christmas Eve and Christmas Day. We have maintained a steady number attending in person worship especially Eucharistic services.

In October a belated Annual Meeting was held, Kate Thompson and Helen King stepped down from the PPC and were thanked for their contribution and support. Andrew Spence replaces Mike Cass as Church Warden, Mike remains a PPC member and Verger. Mark King continues as Treasurer, John Noble as Auditor and Christine Langham as Deanery Synod Representative, thank you for your support. During the year the Bronze Eco-Church Award was achieved by the church our thanks go to Chris Langham. We ended the year entering Lockdown 3 on Boxing Day.

We said farewell to three longstanding members of our church community Di Shannon, Pat McConkey and Mick Puffett all in various ways supported St. Paul's Church. We wish to thank Robert Poole for his Funeral Ministry within the Shurdington Community.

Once again we thank you all for the support you have given to St. Paul's during this very strange year, your prayers, generosity and time which we appreciate, also Susan and her family for their support, Rebecca and Robert for maintaining the work of the Church in Shurdington.

Clare Stewart and Andrew Spence

TRUSTEES' REPORT

Introduction

The year 2020 will always be remembered for the arrival of the Coronavirus (Covid-19) worldwide pandemic, which has affected us all. It has been a time of unprecedented loss and hardship for many, but some good things have come out of it too. We have found new ways to worship, and to support and care for members of our church family and our local communities. And we have worshipped together more as a benefice, due to our online services. It is hoped that we will continue to build on this in the future.

Administrative Information

St. Paul's Church is situated in Shurdington and is part of the Diocese of Gloucester, within the Church of England. The correspondence address is The Vicarage, School Lane, Shurdington, Cheltenham GL51 4TF.

Parochial Church Council (PCC) members, who have served at any time from 1st January 2020 to the date this report was approved, are:

Title	Name	Position in PCC	Dates served if part year
Incumbent	Revd Susan Cooke	Chairman	
Curate	Revd Rebecca Spear		From June 2020
Reader	Mr Robert Poole		
Church Warden	Mr Michael Cass		As Church Warden until October 2020
Church Warden	Mr Andrew Spence		From October 2020
Church Warden	Mrs Clare Stewart	Vice-Chairman from August 2020	
Deanery Synod Member	Mrs Christine Langham		
	Mr Michael Cass		As a PCC member from October 2020
	Mrs Helen King		Until October 2020
	Mrs Catherine Milsom		From July 2020
	Mrs Christine Nation		
	Mr George Porter		
	Miss Katrina Spence		
	Mrs Kate Thompson	Vice-Chairman until July 2020	Until July 2020
	Mr Mark King	Treasurer	
	Mrs Lisa Pearson	Secretary	

Please note that the APCM scheduled for April 2020 was postponed until October 2020.

Structure, Governance and Management

The Parochial Church Council is a corporate body established by the Church of England. It operates under the Parochial Church Council Powers Measure, and is a charity exempt from registration within the Charity Commission. PCC members are responsible for making decisions on all matters of general concern and importance to the parish. The method of appointment of PCC members is set out in the Church Representation Rules. All Church attendees are encouraged to register on the Church Electoral Roll, and to stand for election to the PCC.

Aim and Purposes

St. Paul's PCC has the responsibility of co-operating with the incumbent to promote, throughout the ecclesiastical parish, the whole mission of the Church; pastoral, evangelical, social and ecumenical. It also has maintenance responsibilities for St. Paul's Church, churchyard and church hall.

Electoral Roll

During the annual revision of the Church Electoral Roll no-one was removed, and five people were added. This made a total of 51 people on the roll.

Church Attendance

During October 2020 there were two gathered services, and the average number of people attending these was 26. There were also many online services in October, which were viewed by many.

Personnel

Our curate, Revd Rebecca Spear, was welcomed into the benefice at the end of June 2020. Her ordination service was postponed until September 2020. There were several changes in personnel throughout the year. Mr Michael Cass stepped down as church warden at the APCM (but will remain on the PCC), and was replaced by Mr Andrew Spence. Mrs Catherine Milsom, our ordinand, joined the PCC. Mrs Helen King and Mrs Kate Thompson resigned from the PCC (and Mrs Clare Stewart has taken over from Mrs Thompson as the PCC's vice-chairman). The PCC wishes to express its gratitude for their long and faithful service.

Everyone has worked extremely hard this year in many different capacities. We would like to give special thanks to Revd Susan Cooke for her steadfast leadership throughout these uncertain times, to our curate, Revd Spear, and to our Reader and Funeral Minister, Mr Robert Poole, who has continued to take funerals throughout the year during extremely difficult circumstances. Also, we are very grateful to Mrs Stewart for her ministry, care of the church buildings (especially during lockdowns) and for ensuring Covid-safe procedures are followed during private prayer and gathered services etc. We also wish to thank Mrs Milsom for initiating the Greenway Gifts project, and for all the hard work this has entailed.

The Local Ministry Team has continued to consider and plan their strategy for implementing the Diocesan's 'LIFE' Vision throughout the benefice. In addition, during 2020 they have worked very hard, considering how we can carry out worship safely under such difficult circumstances.

Review of the Year

The year started as usual with our normal pattern of services i.e. 1st Sunday – Parish Eucharist, 2nd Sunday – Let's Worship/Morning Worship, 3rd Sunday – Parish Eucharist and 4th Sunday – 8 a.m. BCP service and Morning Worship. Following our 9.30 a.m. Sunday morning services we all enjoyed coffee and fellowship in the church hall. St. Paul's also held Morning Prayer on the 1st Thursday of the month and 'Prayers and Cake' on 3rd Sunday afternoons. There were opportunities to do weekly Bible study and to attend monthly Julian meetings and School prayers. We held a 'Three Wise Men' themed family workshop on 12th January, a Baptism/Christening celebration tea and worship on 2nd February and a benefice Away Day at Prinknash on 29th February. Lent began with Ash Wednesday services at Badgeworth Court and St. Mary's Church, and Friday evening Compline at St. Mary's.

Then the pandemic hit, and on 17th March the Church of England announced that all public worship, apart from weddings and funerals, was suspended. Immediately our worship moved online, whilst we did our best to keep in touch with members of the congregation who were unable to use modern

technology. Revd Cooke began broadcasting midday prayers, Monday to Friday, and a 10 am Sunday morning service, both on Facebook. Single use resources were left in the church for people wishing to carry out private prayer, until we were asked to close the church buildings on 24th March. Meanwhile, we began ‘being church’ in the community, helping each other practically or by offering support.

All Easter services in church were cancelled, but we had online worship and lots of resources were sent out, by email or post, for the period from Palm Sunday through to Easter Day. The benefice continued to combine resources to provide the following online services/fellowship; Sunday morning Facebook services with Zoom coffee afterwards, midday prayers Monday to Friday with Zoom coffee for this community on Tuesday lunchtimes, Zoom Bible study on Monday afternoons, a Zoom Morning Prayer service on Thursdays with Zoom church coffee afterwards, and on 5th Sundays an additional Zoom Praise service in the afternoon. In October, a Zoom School Prayers service was added on the 1st Thursday of the month. The big advantage of using Zoom was that people could use their telephones to dial in and listen to the service or join in with fellowship. We also set up a YouTube channel for the benefice.

Private Prayer

The benefice church wardens met on 19th June to discuss opening the benefice churches for private prayer. As a result of this St. Paul’s began opening for two sessions a week or by appointment. Risk assessments were carried out and stewards were in attendance to ensure Covid-safe procedures were followed.

Gathered Worship

In July we started taking steps towards resuming gathered worship. We knew that a lot of people were keen to start worshiping together again, but we were also aware that we had a duty of care to our congregation to keep them safe. Our gathered worship began with a non-Eucharistic churchyard service which was held at St. Paul’s at 3pm on 19th July. All services had to comply with Covid-safe procedures, and we continue to be very grateful to everyone who has helped us to implement these.

In August, our ‘benefice Covid pattern of worship’ was set up. As well as online services every Sunday morning, on the 2nd Sunday of the month St. Paul’s had an outdoor non-Eucharistic service at 3pm, and on 4th Sundays a Holy Communion service at 3pm in the church. All online services/fellowship continued when gathered services resumed.

Special events were celebrated with themed online services for Eco-week, a lovely gathered outdoor Harvest Festival service in the churchyard, and an online All Souls’ service. Our gathered Remembrance Day churchyard service was brought forward to 4th November, as another national lockdown was due to begin on 5th November. Mrs Milsom filmed the service so that it would be available for everyone to see. Wreaths were laid in the church following Covid-safe procedures, and the Poppy Project saw many poppies attached to the railings of St. Paul’s as a tribute to the fallen.

Christmas

Our Christmas festivities began with a 5th Sunday Advent Praise and ‘Make your own Christingle’ online service in November. There was an online version of the Posada with photos of Mary and Joseph travelling around the benefice, and an online community carol service involving the school and chapel. We also had a gathered outdoor carol service at St. Paul’s. On Christmas Eve there was an online Crib service in the afternoon, and a gathered 9pm benefice Christmas Communion service at St. Paul’s (in place of Midnight Mass), which was recorded. We welcomed a guest priest for our gathered Holy Communion service on Christmas Day.

Outreach

Mr Matthew Richardson continued to run the Benefice Choir until their activities were suspended. When allowed to do so they plan to reform as a community choir with the help of some funding.

We have maintained close links with Shurdington Church of England School, throughout a very difficult year for the school community. Revd Cooke, Mrs Milsom and Mrs Sue Padfield have been recording worship videos for the children, and the AllStars after-school club, run by Mrs Padfield and Mrs Milsom, has continued as an online activity when necessary. The school has contributed material for several of our online services, and a competition was held again for the best pictures to go on the front of the December Three in One magazine and the benefice Christmas card.

The Pastoral group worked harder than ever before in 2020 due to the pandemic. Many people became very lonely and isolated due to shielding for health reasons, or by being cut off from family and friends due to lockdowns etc. The Pastoral group helped by offering support over the phone, by prayer and by helping to organise practical help if needed. We thank them very much for all their ministry.

Taking our services online has attracted new people who now join with us regularly for online worship.

One of the most successful outreach programs has been the Greenway Gifts project. Much has been written about this, but to summarise it was originally set up to help impoverished families (many of whom have suffered loss of earnings due to the pandemic) to feed their children (who would ordinarily receive free school meals) during the October half-term holiday. During the school summer holiday the Government had assisted these families, but no help was available in half-term. The church collaborated with many different organisations/people and Morrisons supermarket, in particular, donated very large quantities of free food. We were then able to provide children's activity packs and family food bags, which were greatly appreciated. We decided to repeat this outreach at Christmas when we again gifted to even more children and families, as well as to deserving adults in the benefice. This has been an excellent example of Christian outreach into the community.

Church Finances

Please refer to the treasurer's report below.

Fundraising

We held a successful Snowdrop Day in February but were unable to hold our usual summer fete because of the pandemic. Mr and Mrs Langham kindly offered to do a sponsored walk, on behalf of St. Paul's, for the Ride & Stride fundraiser. Mrs Stewart organised a Christmas raffle, and Mrs King took orders for Christmas wreaths, between them raising £1,143. A big thanks to them both, and to everyone who has so generously supported our fundraising efforts throughout this difficult year.

Church Fabric

The PCC is responsible for the good maintenance of the church fabric, churchyard and church hall. During times when the church buildings were closed, inspections were carried out externally every day and internally once a week.

Church

Investigation into an upgrade to the church heating system has begun.

Churchyard

A new shed has been erected behind the church hall to replace the two dilapidated sheds that were there previously. Several generous donations helped to pay for this. Three new motion-sensitive external security lights have been installed. The trees in the churchyard have been professionally inspected and maintenance work will be carried out next year.

Church Hall

There had been a leak inside the main front door. The seal on the underside of the door was fixed and a new piece of carpet sourced. A new letterbox has also been fitted.

The PCC would like to express its gratitude to all volunteers that have helped in whatever capacity this year. We would also like to thank the congregation for embracing new ways to worship, and the technology required to do this, and for sharing Christian love for each other throughout our communities.

Trustee's report approved by Revd Susan Cooke and St. Paul's PCC.

ST PAUL'S TREASURER'S REPORT

Income from regular giving has increased, both from new members and from some switching from cash to electronic payments. The Tax refund is on income during the financial year, so there is a lag in that. With all major events cancelled, fundraising was much reduced, although a raffle and the sale of Christmas wreaths raised £1143. The most significant reduction in income has been from the church hall hire, and the church hall upkeep cannot be assisted by the restricted funds. The churchyard mowing costs have gone up in line with inflation over the last 5 years. Costs relating to trees in the churchyard are unpredictable, but do qualify for restricted funds. Fee income had been expected to be reduced following the pre-covid changes to the charges for cremations, but is lower than expected as there were no weddings.

An insurance claim for loss of part of the income was made, but dropped following a decision of the High Court. Various funds have been suggested, but each time St. Paul's has been out of scope. The main new activity has been Greenway Gifts, which has been generously supported, and listed separately in the accounts.

There have been minor adjustments to the investments, but no money has been drawn out and so there is no change to the book value. Valuations have fluctuated wildly, and the end of the calendar year values are of little more than academic interest. At no point has the value gone below the book value.

Some expenses have temporarily reduced, notably the cost of organists and of electricity.

The guidelines for handling and accounting for funds did not envisage lock-down restrictions, and although there is no indication of anything untoward, to ensure accountability and avoid errors, it is expected that routine two-person handling in a consistent way will be brought back as soon as possible.

The parish has made the same charitable donations as in 2019, and continued to pay the full 'Parish Share': a third of the amount expected from the benefice, which has now significantly drawn down our unrestricted reserves. These are now down to the minimum recommended for charities, and the commitment for 2021 has been reduced to what appears to be sustainable, with the expectation that it will be increased when activities return to nearer normal.

Thanks to our long-serving Gift Aid officer, Joan Puffett, and to Cheryl Gobey for agreeing to take over in the new financial year, as well as to John Noble, the Independent examiner.

Mark King

ST PAUL'S SHURDINGTON - ACCOUNTS FOR 2020

ST PAUL'S CHURCH, SHURDINGTON BALANCE SHEET as at 31st December 2020

	2019	2020
	£	£
ASSETS		
Cash in hand	1,035	0
CBF Deposit	1,110	1,119
Barclays Current	4,537	6,377
Barclays Base	12,222	8,242
Aviva investment at cost	81,565	81,565
Benefice owing for 3 in1	342	0
CBF shares at cost	586	586
Overpayment to Proactive Ltd	98	0
St Mary's Office share	29	1,007
Holy Trinity Office share	(28)	83
Parish Council	<u>(552)</u>	<u>20</u>
	100,944	98,999
CREDITORS		
Benefice Funds returned (Note)	1,292	1,292
Other	<u>331</u>	<u>1,623</u>
NET ASSETS	<u>99,321</u>	<u>97,528</u>
Church & Churchyard Fund	72,704	68,998
Greenway Gifts	<u>0</u>	<u>71</u>
	<u>72,704</u>	<u>69,714</u>
DESIGNATED FUNDS		
Church Hall	5,666	3,951
CBF shares at cost	<u>586</u>	<u>586</u>
	<u>6,252</u>	<u>4,537</u>
UNRESTRICTED FUND		
General Fund at 1st January	20,296	20,365
Surplus in year	<u>69</u>	<u>2,912</u>
	<u>20,365</u>	<u>23,277</u>
	<u>99,321</u>	<u>97,528</u>
Market Value of Investments at December 2020		
CBF Shares	£7,641	
Aviva Investment	£127,000	

Note: In preparation for closing the Benefice account, £1,292 was credited to St. Paul's in 2019. Part of this will be fees payable to the Diocese, and part from funds provided when the Benefice account was originally opened. It would not be correct to treat this as a surplus.

ST PAUL'S SHURDINGTON - ACCOUNTS FOR 2020

<u>GENERAL FUND</u>	2019 £	2020 £
INCOME		
Collections and Planned Giving		
Envelopes	6,154	5,145
Standing Orders	5,521	6,547
Parish Giving	3,007	4,973
Open Plate	3,383	1,082
Tax recovered	<u>3,994</u>	<u>3,959</u>
	22,059	21,706
Other income		
Fees Net	3,476	3,613
Other Giving & Donations	655	926
Three in One Contribution	0	500
Special Events Net	3,048	1,143
Children – investment income	36	36
Dividends	<u>31</u>	<u>72</u>
TOTAL INCOME	<u>29,305</u>	<u>27,996</u>
EXPENDITURE		
Running Costs		
Upkeep of services	571	326
Organist's Fees	3,030	513
Ministerial expenses	336	203
Visiting Clergy	114	35
Children's events	45	0
Electricity & Water	3,313	2,082
Office Expenses	584	493
Office Administrator	<u>675</u>	<u>742</u>
	8,668	4,394
Diocesan Common Fund	20,000	20,180
Synod Fee	10	10
Charitable donations	<u>560</u>	<u>500</u>
	<u>20,570</u>	<u>20,690</u>
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	<u>29,238</u>	<u>25,084</u>
SURPLUS	<u>67</u>	<u>2,912</u>
	<u>29,305</u>	<u>27,996</u>

ST PAUL'S SHURDINGTON - ACCOUNTS FOR 2020

	2019	2020
	£	£
CHURCH & CHURCHYARD FUND		
Balance at 1st January	69,311	72,704
Additional legacy from Mary Davis	<u>13,246</u>	0
	82,557	72,704
Payments		
Insurance of church & churchyard	1,605	1,650
Church maintenance	2,850	332
Deficit on Churchyard	1,875	1,724
Sound system	<u>3,523</u>	0
	9,853	3,706
Balance at 31st December	<u>72,704</u>	<u>68,998</u>
GREENWAY GIFTS		2,346
Disbursements		<u>1,630</u>
Balance at 31 st December		<u>716</u>
CHURCHYARD		
Receipts		
Donation in memory of Harry Cole	1,044	0
Donations for shed	152	1,100
Parish Council grant	550	550
CBF Dividends	171	135
Deficit borne by Church & Churchyard Fund	<u>1,875</u>	<u>3,792</u>
	1,724	3,509
Payments		
Notice Board	1,044	0
Tree surgery	468	0
Shed	0	1,750
Maintenance	<u>2,280</u>	<u>1,759</u>
	<u>3,792</u>	<u>3,509</u>
CHURCH HALL		
Receipts		
Fund raising & donations	527	0
Hire of Hall	<u>4,339</u>	<u>2,268</u>
	4,866	2,268
Payments		
Insurance	894	968
Utilities ¹	1,313	1,520
Repairs & maintenance	<u>2,374</u>	<u>1,495</u>
	4,581	3,983
Surplus/(Deficit)	<u>285</u>	<u>(1,715)</u>
Fund at 31st December	<u>5,666</u>	<u>3,951</u>