

ALL SAINTS RECTORY, M40 1LR

5th September 2025

Dear friends,

Greeting from Felpham on the West Sussex coast where I am staying with Mary, my mother, and from which I will be making a few excursions which may benefit the work we do here. One will be a day trip into London; the other to Rochester (see below re my car) where there is the Huguenot Museum and archive. We know of Huguenot presence in the 'Chapelry' of Newton, as was, from as early as the late C16. Records in Manchester are scant or not readily available to me, hence the trip. I am waiting for a reply to my email to say I am on my way. Hopefully on Tuesday. There may be some Huguenot charities we can approach as part of our programme of restoration and development which will include a celebration of our history.

My car misbehaved on the way down and I lost 5th gear about 100 miles out. It's going to a local dealership later today for some 'analysis'. Fingers crossed.

That's the immediate future, what about the recent past and present?

PCC (The Parochial Church Council)

We've added to our worshipping number recently. The following may be helpful in understanding how we are governed and run.

You may well hear the term 'PCC' bandied about from time to time. What is it?

A PCC is a charity which exists 'for the purposes of furtherance of religion'. It is basically the governing body of a parish church. The members of the Council are elected, usually for a term of three years, by those on the Electoral Roll of the parish church, at the Annual Parochial General Meeting. The PCC works with the Incumbent (here it's a Rector) in fulfilling the mission of the parish, and makes sure it is compliant with the law of the land and ecclesiastical law. With the Rector and the Church Wardens it is also responsible for the care and maintenance of the building and grounds (see below). The Incumbent is the Chairperson of the PCC, and usually chairs the meetings which in our case are held every other month.

Its size is determined by the number on the electoral roll. The roll is revised annually, and drawn up from scratch every six years. We are able to have six elected members. Church Wardens are ex officio members of the PCC. If they are already members when they are elected annually, then they can be subtracted from that six to allow for a slightly larger PCC. As we are entitled to six elected members, we can co-opt another member on to the Council. We haven't done this yet during this triennium. If this available place interests you, please let a member of the PCC know!

PCC members are, in no particular order: Nicola (also Church Warden); Janet (Treasurer); Catherine; Diana; Rachel, and Maisie.

We have agreed to put up photos and names so that members of the PCC are more easily identifiable.

Meetings

The PCC has met twice since my last letter to you. The minutes of meetings, redacted as necessary, are public documents and can be inspected at any time. Ours are posted on a panel on our site on *A Church Near You*. These are a meeting or behind the most recent to allow for the approval of minutes : <https://www.achurchnearyou.com/church/15869/page/79859/view/>

I will write to you separately about our work concerning the restoration and development of the church building, and boosting our finances. For now you may be interested to know that our current work includes

Young people's ministry

Our Junior Church has been in abeyance for some time. We are looking to restore it and include a 'Sunday School' at least once a month, as well as activities aimed at those 18 and under. Here we would also have a kernel of a Youth Group.

Groups

Plans include a revival the men's group and to bring the Mother's Union out of abeyance in the form of a women's group, which together can be a revival of the former 'Church Institute.

We have some patron saints 'spare' from those daughter churches which have come and gone in the last 150 years; so maybe we could have the Institute under the patronage of St Wilfrid and St Ann; and the Youth Group under the patronage of St Cuthbert.

There have been some expressions of interest in assisting at the altar on Sundays. Look out for more news on that. We have some robes for youngsters who haven't stopped growing; and it would be useful for those who have to source their own.

There is a national body called *The Guild of the Servants of the Sanctuary* which is all-age and meets locally; a great way to meet other Christians.

All Saints Garden

All Saints Garden is the name for the churchyard the other side of the fence from our school playground (which is legally still part of the church yard). The churchyard was closed in 1854. Aside from the damage caused to the railings by cars crashing into them, and the damage caused to the bedding stones by the feral ash trees we removed last March, this has been a headache to maintain for some years. In January 2023 the PCC voted to 'invite' Manchester City Council to assume 'joint occupancy' of All Saints Garden, which means that in consultation with us, and after a short-run in time, they have a statutory duty to maintain it. Two and a half years passed, dozens of emails were exchanged, but no progress.

Lately things have been moving very swiftly, reasons for which I won't commit to print. To show willing and good will, the PCC engaged G4orce to clear large areas of overgrowth some of which was affecting the pavement, and to remove some more diseased trees. Later this month, we are meeting with officers from MCC to plan a scheme of work to make the garden safe. The ultimate aim is to provide a restful green space opposite the Peace Garden, which was church land with church buildings on it, including the old school and head-teacher's house, until the 1960s.

Schools

All Saints.

Many blessings on Rachel Flatman who started, officially, as Head Teacher on 1st September.

After decades of service, Olive Wadsworth stepped down from her role as Chair of the Board of Governors at the end of last term and resigned as a Governor. Most of her time on the board was as Chair, to the relief of my predecessors and me. There was a presentation at the Yr 6 Leavers Service in church in July. There will also be another chance to say thank you and farewell later this month.

As Vice-Chair of Governors for 15 years now, I have shadowed Olive especially over the last few years since COVID. Governance is very different now from what it was when I began my ministry 25 years ago, as Chair for a few of those, when it was all much 'lighter touch' and there were fewer hoops to jump through. I am so very grateful for Olive's wisdom, especially that shared with me, her patience, her determination and tenacity. How this was mixed with such charm and good humour all the time leaves me in awe. We are forever in her debt.

Governors are volunteers who rarely claim for the expenses they incur, which over time can be considerable. I think the expenses claims at All Saints come to zero! It is much more demanding of time, knowledge and skill than it used to be. Recruiting governors is hard, especially Foundation Governors (7) for a school such as ours which must outnumber the staff and parent governors combined by 2.

The Board is a little thin for now, but with promise of some reinforcement in the Spring. Even so, there are some gaps. If you would like to explore school governance, please let me know. The challenges are great, especially with the school due to be rebuilt. It is hugely rewarding.

St Wilfrid's

This is also one of our schools. It takes its name from the founders of the mission here from Rossall School in Fleetwood, founded by The Reverend St John Beechy, whose son was Rector here. The school came first in 1878; the church, on Oldham Road, and now closed and used by another denomination, came in 1908.

By virtue of their office, the Rector of Newton Heath is an *ex officio* Foundation Governor.

At the end of last term, the Head Teacher, Sarah Brereton, announced she was leaving to take up another post. The forthcoming vacancy has been advertised, with interviews at the end of September.

Events, past present and future.

Malandra Jacks

At the end of June, Josh from Malandra Jacks got in touch about a film project featuring communities in North Manchester, *Shout Out North Manc* in which Newton Heath and us were to feature prominently. Those of you at the concert on 17th July (see item below) may recall a young man roving around with a camera. In addition, I spent a couple of hours being interviewed. There was to have been a screening of their work on 23rd September 5.00 – 7.30 pm at HOME, but on Wednesday I was informed that owing to circumstances beyond their control it has had to be postponed. More news when I have it.



“ The film celebrates the creatives from across all 8 wards of North Manchester featuring an array of North Manchester talent from solo visual artists, poets and performers to brass bands, arts collectives and dance troops.”

Greater Manchester Police Male Voice Choir, Thursday 17th July 2025



All Saints Newton Heath
Greater Manchester Police
Male Voice Choir



7.20 pm Thursday 17th July, 2025



Tickets on the door
£10.00 Adult
£5.00 those in full-time higher education
£3.00 school-age

Raffle
Refreshments

Proceeds 50/50 All Saints Church and GMPMVC Charity Work

At the start of the year, Graham from GMPMVC approached us about hosting a concert, proceeds of gate money was to be split 50/50 between their charity work and our funds. We would keep the proceeds of, say, the raffle. I was a bit nervous of the suggested £10 a ticket. Along to the rescue came Charles Oates, who has been so generous to us over the last year and a bit, and it was possible to make the concert free entry with a retiring collection.

It was a wonderful evening with the Rector doing a couple of turns. It was to have been one, but their soloist was ill, so it was two in the end.

We were able to send just under £490.00 to GMPMVC, and just under £820.00 will go towards supporting our mission.

They enjoyed it so much they asked to come back. They're booked in for 7.30 pm Thursday 18th December, for a Christmas Concert. Don't miss it.

Wedding

On Saturday 9th September, David and Claire were married here. I was sorry to miss it, as it promised to be quite a lively affair. I enjoyed helping them prepare for it. The Reverend Sarah Riding, Curate at St Cross took the service, with great aplomb so I understand, and a very good time was had by all.

Holy Baptism Sunday 31st August



During the 'main service' 10.00 am on our monthly Book of Common Prayer Sunday, the Lord added baby Jason to his number. Our continuing prayers for his family and god parents, especially his sister who joined All Saints School Nursery this term.

Dates for your Diaries

October stewardship campaign

Throughout the Sundays in October we will be looking at various aspects of stewardship, and asking you to consider ways in which you may help and enrich our ministry in different ways.

Remembrance

Remembrance Sunday will be Sunday 9th November. At the end of our 10.00 am service we will observe the traditional Act of Remembrance.

Armistice Day, 11th November, will be marked locally from 10.45 at the Peace Garden, with the laying of wreaths and the Two Minutes' Silence with live bugler.

Dedication Festival

Our Dedication or Patronal Festival for All Saints is transferred to ***Sunday 16th November*** when we will be able to celebrate with all the saints the fruits of our stewardship campaign and share some details of our plans for the restoration and development of the building. The Bishop of Bolton, The Rt Revd Dr Matthew Porter will preach; in attendance will be our MP The Rt Hon Lucy Powell; The Lord Lieutenant of Greater Manchester, and the Dean of Manchester. We are waiting to hear from the Ceremonial Office at Manchester Town Hall whether the Lord Mayor will be able to attend. The Lord Mayor is one of our Ward Councillors: Carmine Grimshaw. Please make every effort to attend.

Newton Heath Xmas Tree switch on

This will take place on Saturday afternoon, 29th November, the eve of Advent. The hub for this will be the church, with the switch on taking place at 5.00pm. The Smith Brass Quartet which lead the music last year is booked.

Xmassy events

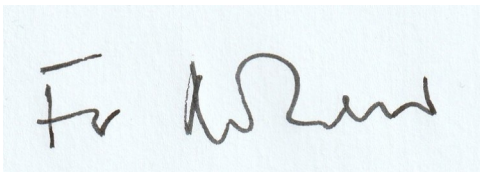
I am in discussion with our Ward Coucillors, an other interested parties about weekend events across Newton Heath in December. We will have a leading role, if all this comes off!

- Advent Sunday: 30th November (BCP Sunday, so 9.00 am said, and 10.00 am sung)
- Toy Service: Sunday 7th or 14th (tbc depending on the deadline for Christmas donations to charities)
- Christingle Service: 3.30 pm Sunday 21st December
- Christmas Eve, Wednesday 24th December.
- 3.00 pm Crib Service
This was revived last year after a number of people asked about it, and the idea received a lot of support. A wonderful format was devised by The Reverend Lynn Busfield and but in the end only two children came, accompanying six adults. It is too good a serviced to mothball, so here is advance notice.
- 8.30 pm The First Eucharist of Christmas
- We suspended 'Midnight Mass' some years ago, and replaced it with this earlier service.
- Christmas Day, Thursday 25th December
10.00 am Festal Eucharist

NB, The Church of England is not especially demanding when it comes to receiving Holy Communion, however it does expect that those baptised and confirmed, and admitted to communion receive it at Christmas (which means Christmas Night or Christmas Day or both). If you are away for Christmas, please do all you can to receive the Blessed Sacrament where you are.

Thanks for getting to the end of this. I hope you have found it as useful as I did writing it as an *aide memoire*.

With all good wishes and every blessing,

A handwritten signature in dark ink on a light blue background. The signature appears to be 'Fr Andrew Wickens' written in a cursive, flowing style.

The Reverend Andrew Wickens, LL.M, FRSA, ARCM
Rector, Newton Heath.